



POLICY TITLE: Open Enrollment Policy	
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE: June 24, 2013	MOST RECENTLY UPDATED: March 22, 2016

**PURPOSE**

As stated in the School Reform Act, §38-1802.06(a) Enrollment in a public charter school shall be open to all students who are residents of the District of Columbia...and (b) A public charter school may not limit enrollment on the basis of a student’s race, color, religion, national origin, language spoken, intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or status as a student with special needs. In addition, according to D.C. Code § 2-1402.41(1), a public charter school may not limit enrollment on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identification. The now named *Open Enrollment Policy* employs several strategies to ensure schools are in compliance with these laws.

**POLICY**

The DC Public Charter School Board (“DC PCSB”) staff monitors open enrollment using the tools outlined in the table below. These tools were identified as ways to allow DC PCSB to ensure that schools do not:

- Request information about an applicant’s race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identification, language spoken, intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or status as a student with special needs<sup>4</sup>, prior to enrollment;
- Create exclusionary application submission processes, such as mandatory in-person meetings;
- Admit students off of a waiting list other than in the order designated by the school’s lottery policy;
- Request information during the enrollment process that may discourage students or families from enrolling at the school (i.e. requiring a single form of identification); or
- Practice other forms of discrimination.

Any school found to be in any way discouraging students from applying, limiting enrollment, or implementing a preference outside of the preferences provided in the SRA shall be issued a notice of concern if the actions are deemed systemic.

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<sup>4</sup> Pursuant to the Special Education Quality Improvement Act of 2014, with prior approval from DC PCSB, LEAs may request information about students with disabilities to provide an admission preference.

Open-Enrollment Component	Monitoring Tools for Schools Participating in My School DC <sup>5</sup>	Monitoring Tools for Schools Not Participating in My School DC
<p>Mystery Caller Initiative</p> <p>This initiative was developed to monitor open enrollment, and specifically whether schools were intentionally advising students with disabilities or other needs not to apply to a school.</p>	<p>DC PCSB staff or consultants will call a school posing as a parent of a student who may require special education services or may need English language learning instruction, seeking to enroll their child in the school for the following year. The caller will ask several questions about the enrollment process. If the school answers all questions appropriately, indicating open enrollment for all students, DC PCSB will assess the school as <i>passed</i>. When schools give an inappropriate answer, indicating a barrier to open enrollment, a second call is made on another date to see if the first answer was an isolated incident or if a systemic problem could exist. If on the second call another inappropriate answer is given, DC PCSB will assess the school as <i>failed</i>.</p>	
<p>Application Intake</p> <p>This initiative was developed to ensure that applications do not ask for information that would prevent a student from applying and that, once submitted, they were maintained in such a way to guarantee a fair and transparent lottery wherein no student's record could get lost and no applicant could apply multiple times.</p>	<p>N/A: My School DC oversees the accurate and complete submission and retention of all applications on behalf of schools participating in the common lottery system.</p>	<p>DC PCSB staff will review application intake materials prior to the enrollment cycle to verify that no information is required that may limit open enrollment.</p> <p>If necessary, DC PCSB staff may also request to observe how the school manages student applications on site. Should DC PCSB staff find that the school has intentionally mismanaged student applications, this may be considered a</p>

<sup>5</sup> My School DC is a single, random lottery that determines placement for new students at all participating schools.

<b>Open-Enrollment Component</b>	<b>Monitoring Tools for Schools Participating in My School DC<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>Monitoring Tools for Schools Not Participating in My School DC</b>
		systemic practice.
<p>Lottery</p> <p>This initiative was developed to ensure that the lottery, if needed, is random, that only stated preferences are applied, and that they are applied according to the school's lottery procedure.</p>	<p>N/A: My School DC oversees the random selection process on behalf of schools participating in the common lottery system.</p>	<p>DC PCSB staff will collect each school's lottery procedures. Staff may attend a school's lottery to ensure the mechanism for the lottery will result in random selection and confirm that the school is implementing preferences in accordance with the School Reform Act and their stated policy.</p>
<p>Waitlist Management</p> <p>This initiative was developed to ensure that schools are filling open seats from the waitlist in accordance with internal school procedures and open enrollment expectations.</p>	<p>Though My School DC manages a centralized waitlist management system, schools are responsible for contacting parents regarding open seats. Therefore, DC PCSB staff may request to see evidence of the school's communications (attempted and/or successful) with families about their spot on the waitlist.</p>	<p>DC PCSB staff may collect each school's procedures for communicating with waitlisted students. Staff may also request to see evidence of the school's communications (attempted and/or successful) with families about their spot on the waitlist.</p>
<p>Enrollment Process</p> <p>This initiative was developed to ensure schools are not requesting information that may</p>	<p>DC PCSB staff will collect a list of materials from each school detailing what documents families must provide to complete the enrollment process. Schools asking for documentation (i.e. a single form of identification) that could discourage a student from enrolling may be required to revise enrollment materials. Failure to do so</p>	



<b>Open-Enrollment Component</b>	<b>Monitoring Tools for Schools Participating in My School DC<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>Monitoring Tools for Schools Not Participating in My School DC</b>
discourage a student from enrolling. <sup>6</sup>	would result in a finding of systemic practice.	

**Board Approval Acknowledged By:**

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Darren Woodruff  
DC PCSB Board Chair

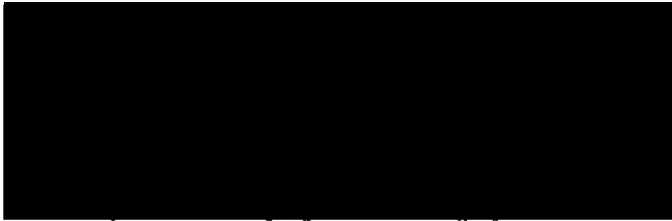
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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/crt/legacy/2014/05/08/plylerletter.pdf>



**Board Approval Acknowledged By:**



Darren Woodruff  
DC PCSB Board Chair

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