

ENROLLMENT AND LOTTERY

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References	G.S. 143-218.10(a)

The Anderson Academy Charter School (AACS) is a tuition-free public charter school. Any child who is qualified under the laws of North Carolina for admission to a public school is qualified for admission to a charter school. To qualify to attend an NC public school, a student must be a resident of North Carolina. County boundaries or school attendance zones do not affect charter school enrollment. The AACS does not limit admission to students on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of academic achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion or ancestry. Children entering kindergarten must be at least five years old on or before August 31 of the year they start school.

Application Timeline:

The application timeline may be decided by the board on a yearly basis, however, the application period will be open for a minimum of 30 days. The application timeline is posted on the school's website by January 1 of each year.

Application Details

Families/Guardians may submit only ONE application for admission. The application will include space to list all children that wish to apply. Applications must be submitted by the published application deadline. Applicants submitting after the deadline will be eligible for any seats remaining after the lottery or will be placed on the wait-list. If there are fewer applicants than slots available in a grade level, all applicants to that grade level will be admitted.

Lottery Considerations and Eligibility

1. Accepted families who enroll in The AACS must read and agree to follow The AACS policies and procedures.
2. Students attending The AACS may live in any county in North Carolina and must reside in North Carolina at the time of application.
3. All applicants must be able to prove NC domicile (lease, utility bill, mortgage bill, etc.) at the time of enrollment.
4. AACS will send an enrollment packet to each student chosen through the lottery. This enrollment packet must be completed, signed and returned to the school by the published deadline. This will be used to confirm your commitment to AACS and release your student's records from their current school. Failure to return your enrollment packet (electronically, in person, or have it

postmarked) by the deadline will nullify your student's acceptance.

5. Students not admitted through the lottery will be placed on a wait list. If a spot becomes available we will contact students in order of their wait list number.
6. Students will be kept on the waitlist until the next application process begins for the next school year. If a student does not get a space through the lottery/waiting list process, that student must re-apply to be considered the following year as current wait lists dissolve when the next enrollment period begins.

Weighted Lottery for Economically Disadvantaged Students

The application will include the opportunity to apply for the Economically Disadvantaged weight. Applicants who wish to apply for the weighted lottery based on economic disadvantage are responsible for using the school's optional form for assessing their own eligibility to enter the weighted lottery and providing consent for the school to verify eligibility, and then if eligible, indicating this in the appropriate place on the lottery application.

For the purposes of the Weighted Lottery, economically disadvantaged status is defined as a family who can show, at the time of being offered a seat in the AACS weighted lottery, documentation of currently receiving any of the following benefits: WIC, Food Stamps (EBT card), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or SNP) benefits, Cash Assistance (CA) or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Weighted Lottery applicants are also responsible for providing verification of eligibility status for economic disadvantage at the time of enrollment and by the school's communicated deadlines. No specific information from the weighted lottery application will be obtained beyond eligibility status, and the information will not be retained.

The weighted lottery application will be clearly labeled as optional and choosing not to provide the information will not alter chances in the general lottery.

Lottery Details

Lottery procedures will comply with NC Open Meeting laws provided in G.S. 143-218.10(a). The school will publish the date and time of the meeting and allow anyone to attend. A lottery will be held if any grade level has more applicants than seats available. Applicants are invited to be present, but do not have to be present for the lottery in order to secure admission.

Twins/multiples are entered as one "applicant" and will be admitted together if chosen and space is available for at least one. All applicants will be placed in a lottery by surname using a unique identifier and/or surname with children's names. **One** unique identifier or surname with children's names will be used to represent all applicants from that same household.

The lottery will take place using an electronic random draw tool using a unique identifier for each family, or paper with the family's surname and student names drawn from a bowl.

In each system mentioned above, we will "draw" every family, placing all families in order, from first drawn to last. If an electronic system is used, the electronic system will conduct the "draw". Being "drawn" does not mean the child(ren) from that family is/are automatically placed. See below for how students are placed.

How Students are Placed

The Board of Directors will begin by placing all priority placements (see priority placements). The Board reserves the right to hold open 1 or more slots in each grade for enrolling students of staff yet to be hired.

Ahead of the “general lottery,” priority placements will be placed in order of preference. Students who qualify for the Economically Disadvantaged preference are randomly chosen by family name (see below) until the specified target percentage for that year is filled. Then, the remaining students who qualify for the weighted lottery, but were not selected, are placed into the general lottery pool, and the remaining general seats are filled through a general lottery.

Following the weighted lottery, families will be responsible to provide verification to the school of qualification for the priority placement with their enrollment packet. The school will provide assistance with identifying the necessary income verification items to provide during the specified time frame to families who require assistance. Should the family not provide the verification of qualification for the priority placement, all students from that family drawn in the weighted lottery will be placed at the bottom of the general wait list.

The weighted lottery wait list will be maintained until the first day of school for the year. If a weighted lottery applicant fails to enroll, withdraws, fails to provide proof of qualification, or fails to attend school on day #1, the school will first offer the open weighted lottery seat to a weighted lottery wait-list applicant who is not already placed. At 11:59PM on the first day of school, the weighted lottery wait list will be discarded, and all open seats will be filled using the general wait list.

Then the Board will conduct the general lottery. The Board will review the first “drawn” family and place all students from that first family into open slots. Next, the Board will review the second drawn family, and place all students from the second family into open slots. The Board will follow the same procedure for the third drawn family, the fourth, and so on. Once slots for the grade are filled, children will be placed on the waitlist. Therefore, a complete, ordered list will be created for each grade which includes priority enrollments, held seats, lottery enrollments, and waitlisted students.

Once the lottery has taken place and all applicants have been ordered and issued a seat in a grade, or a waitlist number, any remaining open seats will be filled on a first-come-first-served basis.

Priority Placement

AACS has decided to implement the following enrollment priorities and implement them in the manner described below.

1. Children currently living in residential foster care on the Crossnore Communities for Children’s Winston-Salem campus.
2. Siblings of *currently enrolled students* receive preference in the lottery for the following year. Siblings will be placed prior to opening the lottery to the public so long as the sibling application is received by the published deadline for sibling applications. If there are more siblings than spaces open in the school, a lottery will be held for the siblings prior to the public lottery. The definition of a sibling according to current law includes: half-siblings, step-siblings and children residing in a family foster care home.

3. Economically Disadvantaged Students.
4. Children of the school's Board, the teachers and *full-time* staff receive priority placement. Priority placement for Board and staff member children may account for no more than 10% of the school population unless the board petitions the state board of education for a waiver to raise the percentage.

Enrollment Notification

An offer of enrollment will be sent electronically, by phone or mail within one week of the lottery. Enrollment packets will be due 5 days after acceptance letters are sent out. Families accepted via the Weighted Lottery for the economic disadvantaged priority placement must include the verification of economic status documentation with other enrollment documents. Packets can be sent back electronically, in person, or by mail. The date the acceptance email is received in the in-box, or the post-mark date, or the date the enrollment packet was hand-delivered, will be used to determine timeliness.

If an enrollment packet is not delivered within the required time-frame, that student will be determined to have forfeited their spot in the school. The next student on the wait-list will be contacted and given the opportunity to enroll. Wait list students are given the same 5 day period to enroll.

An exception to this rule occurs within the last three calendar weeks before the first "student day" of school. If a spot opens in this timeframe, AACCS personnel will make at least 2 attempts to contact waitlisted students. After being contacted on AACCS's second attempt, the wait-listed student will have 72 hours after being contacted to complete and deliver their enrollment packet. Should the wait-listed student fail to complete and deliver the enrollment package within the allotted time, the student will forfeit their seat and the next student on the wait-list will be contacted and offered the seat.

First Day of School

An enrolled student must be in their seat by 8:30AM on the first day of school to retain their spot unconditionally. If a student is a no-show or is not in their seat by 8:30AM on the first day of school, the school will begin a 24 hours countdown to hold the student's spot.

The school will attempt to contact the family via email twice, and via phone twice to determine what has happened. Unless the student is in an extenuating circumstance as outlined below, and that student has not come to school within 24 hours (By 8:30 AM the next school day) that student has forfeited their seat and the next person on the waitlist is called.

Extenuating circumstances forcing a student to be absent on the first day of school include:

- Death in the immediate family (notice needs to be provided to the school).
- Illness of enrolled students requiring doctor's care. (Doctor note must be provided to the school).
- Hospitalization of the student (doctor's note must be provided to the school).

Waitlisted Students and Start Date

If a waitlisted student is contacted on the second day of school, the parent will be asked to give a verbal confirmation within 24 hours that their student will attend before the next waitlisted student is called. Waitlisted students called on the second day can enroll and attend school on that day.

Within the first month of school, a waitlisted student may provide the enrollment package and begin class on the same day if deemed appropriate by the school administration. After the first month of school, the student will attend school the day after the enrollment packet has been received.

Re-Enrollment

Once enrolled, students are not required to re-enroll for the following year. In order to properly plan, the school will routinely inquire of parents/guardians in early Spring through letters of intent to ascertain if students will return to The AACCS the following year.

If the completed letter of intent is not received by the school the school will use reasonable means to try to contact the parent/guardians to determine intent to re-enroll. If for some reason, contact is unable to be made, the school will hold the seat until the first day of class the following year. If a student is a "no-show" by 8:30AM on the first day of school the following year, and that student has not returned a letter of intent, and all school attempts to contact the family have been unsuccessful, that student is determined to have forfeited their seat.