

Middle and High School Choice FAQs for Choice Placements in the 2021-22 School Year

City Schools is in the process of finalizing plans for this year's Middle & High School Choice process, inclusive of a virtual Choice Fair that is scheduled to launch on December 4, 2020. Using Campus Portal, 5th and 8th grade families will be able to complete and submit their Choice applications **between December 1st and January 22nd.**



Please visit

→ www.baltimorecityschools.org/choice ←

for additional information.

General Questions

Why wasn't my child accepted to their top choice school?

A student who is not accepted to their first choice, was either not selected during the lottery (if it is a lottery school) or their composite score did not rank high enough (if it is a school with entrance criteria).

Can my child just go to their zoned high school?

There are no zoned schools at the high school level in Baltimore City Public Schools. Placement at all high schools is determined by the school choice process or through separate charter school lotteries.

Can my child go to their zone middle school?

Some parts of Baltimore City have zoned middle schools. If you live in one of these areas, your student can attend their zoned school. If you do not live in an area with a zoned middle school, your student must be placed through the school choice process.

Can a school accept my child directly?

Some schools have a separate acceptance process, including some charter schools. In those cases the school can issue acceptance. In addition, a student can be accepted from a waitlist. In both cases the school will contact you directly.

What happens if my student has a sibling already attending a school?

Sibling preference is considered only at the middle school level, and is not considered at entrance criteria schools. Having a sibling at a school increases the likelihood of placement, but does not guarantee acceptance.

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What is P-TECH?

P-TECH (Pathways in Technology Early College High School) is a unique school model for students that offer early college and career technology education and real world experience to prepare students for jobs in the healthcare, technology, or transportation industries. Students commit to a four to six year program in which they complete high school and earn an associate in arts degree from Baltimore City Community College tuition free. Some of the program highlights include field trips, guest speakers, real work simulations, 1:1 mentoring, paid internship, and first in line for job opportunities after program completion. P-TECH is offered at three sites; Dunbar (Healthcare), Carver (Information Technology), and New Era (Transportation and Logistics). For more information, please connect with the P-TECH coordinators for the preferred P-TECH program.

When can I submit my application for the 2021-22 School Year?

Using Campus Portal, families can access, complete and submit a choice application from December 1st through January 22nd.

Lottery

How are students assigned to schools with lotteries?

A lottery means that students are selected at random from among those who applied to the school. Students are placed based on their lottery ranking.

How are lotteries conducted?

Students who choose schools that use lotteries for admission are assigned a number, generated at random by computer, and then put in order according to that number.

Entrance Criteria

How are students assigned to schools with entrance criteria?

Students are ranked in order by composite score. The available seats at these schools are filled with the highest-qualified students. After a school fills, the next 50 highest qualified students are placed on the wait list. **Please note: Because of the popularity and competitiveness of the programs, some of our entrance-criteria schools reach capacity before all qualified students can be offered a seat. If your child qualifies for one of these entrance-criteria schools but their composite score is not in the top ranking, City Schools cannot place them at that school. In the 2019-20 school year, the minimum composite score accepted at City was 682. The minimum accepted score at Poly was 714. The minimum score accepted at Roland Park was 385.**

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What is the composite score my child needs to qualify for entrance criteria programming?

It depends on the entrance-criteria school a student is applying to but for the 19 20 school year, the average composite score admitted to **Baltimore Polytechnic Institute** through the Choice process was 753 with lowest composite score receiving placement being 714. The average composite score admitted to **Baltimore City College** was 721 with lowest composite score receiving placement being 682. The average score accepted at **Roland Park** was 385.

How are composite scores calculated?

The district will also be adjusting the formula to calculate a student's composite score for those seeking entry into an entrance-criteria program/school. In a typical year, a student's composite score is calculated using attendance, academic grades, and standardized test scores. This year, the district will hold students harmless for attendance and test results given the circumstances of the COVID-19 global pandemic that has disproportionately affected families throughout the city of Baltimore. This decision mitigates participation challenges during COVID-19 school closures, as well as disparities in achievement data and test administration logistics during a pandemic. Most importantly, the decision aligns with City School's commitment to equity and ensures that all students will have fair access to safe, supportive learning communities.

Waitlist

Will my student be accepted from the waitlist?

When a seat becomes available at a school, that school will contact the next student on their wait list to offer them that seat. Please note that this is not common, and families may not be notified of an available space until the upcoming school year.

How long is a waitlist active?

Wait lists are active for an entire school year. Afterwards, families must re-apply to the school.

Special Education

My student has an IEP; does that affect the choice process?

All students have equal access and opportunity to participate in all educational programs, including high school choice. IEP teams will work with school-based staff to make sure students with disabilities receive all necessary support, both while they are choosing a high school and after they begin 9th grade. (The only exception is when a student has a documented need within an IEP for a citywide special education program, nonpublic school, or separate public day school - contact City Schools' Special Education team at 410-396-8900 for more information.)
