



GoCPS High School FAQs 2020-2021 School Year

GENERAL QUESTIONS

What is GoCPS?

GoCPS is the platform that manages the research, application, assessment, and notification process for all district and charter high schools, all district elementary schools, and the four magnet preschools. For applicants to ninth grade, you can use GoCPS to research and favorite all of your school and program options, schedule appointments for admissions screenings, submit your application and receive your offer(s), accept and decline offers, and withdraw from waitlists.

Does a student have to live in Chicago to attend a high school in Chicago?

Yes, students have to live in Chicago to enroll and attend a Chicago public, charter, or contract school. The student does NOT have to live in Chicago in order to apply, participate in the testing process, and even be selected, but the student must provide proof of city of Chicago residency by July 1, 2020, for the 2020-2021 school year, in order to enroll and attend a Chicago public school.

Does my child have to do anything in addition to submit an application in order to be considered for high school?

A number of schools and programs require admissions screenings. These are events in which students must participate in order to be considered for the schools/programs: admissions exams, auditions or portfolio reviews, information sessions, or interviews. In addition, some programs may require essays or letters of recommendation. Information regarding admissions screenings can be found on your GoCPS online application account and attached to the GoCPS paper application.

Do students have to take a pre-qualifying exam in order to apply to high schools?

Many high school programs have minimum eligibility requirements in order for students to apply. In most cases, eligibility is based on scores from the NWEA MAP, which is a standardized achievement skills test. In order to be considered for programs with NWEA MAP eligibility requirements, students must take the NWEA MAP. CPS district and charter students are administered the NWEA MAP at school.

Non-CPS students must register for the NWEA MAP in order to be administered the NWEA MAP by CPS. NWEA MAP scores from outside of the Chicago Public Schools cannot be accepted. Contact the Office of Access and Enrollment at 773-553-2060 or gocps@cps.edu for information on the NWEA MAP for non-CPS students.

Which NWEA MAP scores are used for the 2020-2021 application process?

For CPS students applying to grades 5-9 for the 2020-2021 school year to schools/programs with academic criteria, we use the NWEA MAP scores from spring 2019. If the CPS student did not take the

spring 2019 NWEA MAP, they will be tested during the first possible testing window at their school in the 2019-2020 school year, and these are the scores that will be used for the application process.

For non-CPS students applying to grades 5-9 for the 2020-2021 school year to schools/programs with academic criteria, we use the scores from the NWEA MAP administered by CPS in September 2019, October 2019, or January 2020, if the student did not register for the September or October exams. (If a current non-CPS student attended a Chicago public school last year, we use the student's spring 2019 scores.)

What does "primary address" mean?

When you fill out your child's application -- whether online or paper -- you must indicate your child's "primary address." The primary address is defined as your child's regular, fixed nighttime residence. Note that you must use the address that is your primary address at the time that you apply. You cannot apply using an address where you plan to live after the application deadline.

I share joint custody with my child's mother/father. Whose address should I use?

If you share joint custody and your child sleeps at night at only one residence the majority of the time, that is the child's primary address, and that is the address that must be entered on the application. In cases of joint custody where a child's residence is equally divided between two addresses, either address may be used. Note that the address of only ONE parent can be used; your child cannot be considered for schools/programs by using more than one address, and your child cannot submit applications with different addresses. The address that is used for the application and selection process must be the same, single address.

Is transportation provided?

Transportation is not provided unless the student has an IEP or 504 Plan which specifies that the student is eligible for transportation.

What is Principal Discretion?

Principal Discretion is a process that allows principals of the Selective Enrollment High Schools to fill a designated number of seats for ninth grade, outside of the regular selection process, and in strict compliance with the Principal Discretion guidelines. The Principal Discretion process takes place in March, following the first round of regular selection. Information about the process will be posted at go.cps.edu in March. Principal Discretion only applies to the 11 Selective Enrollment High Schools.

My child is currently enrolled in high school. I would like for him to transfer to a different high school next year. What should I do?

Contact the high school in which you are interested for information on transfer opportunities and guidelines. Each school establishes its own guidelines and requirements, and manages its own process, for transfer students to grades 10-12.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Which high school programs can I apply to?

Programs are divided into two categories: (1) Selective Enrollment Programs and (2) Choice Programs.

Selective Enrollment Programs are the 11 Selective Enrollment High Schools: Brooks, Hancock, Jones, Lane, Lindblom, King, Northside, Payton, South Shore, Westinghouse, and Whitney Young. All other schools/programs are Choice Programs.

All Selective Enrollment Programs and some Choice Programs have minimum eligibility requirements in order for students to apply. Based on their eligibility, students can apply to up to 6 Selective Enrollment Programs and up to 20 Choice Programs.

How do I apply?

Go to go.cps.edu. To apply using the online application site, click 'Log In' to access your account. (If you have not yet created an account, click 'Sign Up.')

To apply using the paper application, click 'High Schools' and 'Apply.' You can apply to up to 20 Choice Programs and up to 6 Selective Enrollment programs. You will rank your school/program choices in the order of your preference.

If you apply using the online application site, you will click the RSVP button, after you submit your application, in order to schedule appointments for any admissions screenings that may be required for the schools/programs to which you applied. If you apply to a school/program and your child does not participate in the required admissions screening, they will not be considered in the selection process for that school/program.

Your application must be received no later than December 6, 2019. If you apply online, your application must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on that date. If you mail or hand-deliver a paper application, your application must be received no later than 6 p.m. on December 6, 2019, by the Office of Access and Enrollment, 42 W. Madison St., Garden Level, Chicago, Illinois 60602.

What does it mean to “rank school/program choices in the order of preference”?

The selection process is designed to offer the student the highest possible choice on their application that they are qualified for and where there are available seats. **It is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT for you to list the schools/programs on the application in the ORDER OF YOUR CHOICE. You will list the program you want MOST as your first choice, the program you want next as your second choice, and so on. This is the order in which the student will be considered.**

Note that if you apply for both Selective Enrollment Programs and Choice Programs, you will rank your selections on two separate lists.

Do I have to apply for the maximum number of programs?

No. You are not required to apply to the maximum allowed number of programs. You should only apply to schools/programs where you would accept an offer if your child receives one. If a school is too far from your home address, or if there is any other reason why you would not want your child to attend a school/program, you should not include that school/program on your application.

However, you should carefully research the available programs and apply to as many programs as you would accept an offer from. The more programs you apply to, the better your chances of receiving an offer.

If I submit an online application, how can I be sure that it was received?

You will receive an email confirmation and/or a text confirmation, depending on the contact method you selected when you opened your online account.

If I mail a paper application, how can I be sure that it was received?

If you mail your application, we strongly recommend that you:

1. Send the application via certified mail so that you will have a receipt;
2. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope or postcard, which will be mailed back to you as a receipt once your application is received; and

3. Mail the application in plenty of time to ensure that it is received by the Office of Access and Enrollment no later than December 6, 2019.

If you do not have a receipt and your application does not reach the Office of Access and Enrollment, your child will not be considered for any of the schools to which you applied. Applications received after the application deadline cannot be processed.

I want to apply to more than 20 Choice programs and 6 Selective Enrollment programs. Can I submit a second application?

No. You can only submit one application.

What should I do if I move after I submit my application?

If you apply online, you can make updates via your online application account to your address and telephone number. If you apply via paper application, contact the Office of Access and Enrollment at 773-553-2060 or gocps@cps.edu to request a paper Contact Information Modification Form. For the purposes of determining tiers, attendance/overlay boundaries, and proximity boundaries, address changes must be submitted no later than December 6, 2019. NOTE: If you change your address after you apply, and you accept an offer from a school, you will be required to provide proof of both the address on the application, and the new address, at the time of your child's registration.

How can I correct other information on my application?

To correct your child's CPS ID number, IEP/504 Plan status, current grade, or other student-related information, you will need to submit a paper Student Information Modification Form, whether you apply online or via paper application. To request the Student Information Modification Form, contact the Office of Access and Enrollment at 773-553-2060 or gocps@cps.edu. Corrections must be submitted no later than December 6, 2019.

How can I change my school choices?

We encourage you to attend Open Houses and conduct any other school-related research BEFORE submitting your application, to decrease the need for changing school choices. If you wish to make changes to your school choices, you will need to do so by the December 6, 2019, deadline. If you apply online, you can make changes by deleting your application and submitting a new one. If you apply via paper application, contact the Office of Access and Enrollment at 773-553-2060 or gocps@cps.edu to request a paper Application Modification Form.

If you want to re-rank your school choices, you can do so up until February 3, 2020. (Note that you cannot add new school/program choices to your application after December 6, 2019.) Please contact the Office of Access and Enrollment at 773-553-2060 or gocps@cps.edu for instructions on re-ranking after the December 6th deadline.

If I want my child to attend our neighborhood school, do I have to apply?

You are not required to submit an application if you want to enroll in the general education program at your neighborhood school, as you are automatically guaranteed a seat in this program. However, we encourage you to do so, so that the school will have an indication of the attendance area students who plan to attend. Please note that your attendance area school may also have other programs in which you might be interested, and for which you may be required to apply in order to be considered.

CUSTODY AND GoCPS ACCOUNT QUESTIONS

Can two GoCPS accounts be created for one student?

No, only one GoCPS account will be authorized for a student. Students cannot be attached to multiple GoCPS accounts. The only way for both parents to have access to make application and results decisions, and view notification letters, which includes student scores, is to share the login information.

Can both parents be the primary parent/guardian on a GoCPS account?

No. The GoCPS application system only allows for one parent/guardian to be listed as “primary,” but does allow for additional parents/guardians to be added to the account.

What does it mean to add another parent or guardian to a GoCPS account?

Contacts who are added to the GoCPS account after the account is opened by the primary parent/guardian will receive automated messages of application submission and admissions screening. At this time, the GoCPS system does not have the capacity to share the results decisions or notification letters with the contacts who added to the account.

I am separated from my child’s other parent. Can either one of us open a GoCPS account?

No. Only one parent can open a GoCPS account. We recommend that the GoCPS applications be opened by the student’s primary parent/guardian. If a student’s parents are separated and there is a dispute over which parent is the primary parent/guardian, or who should have primary access to the GoCPS application file, CPS must receive a parental agreement which indicates the parent who has educational decision-making authority, or the parents must go to court to obtain this documentation. If the court document indicates that parents have joint educational decision-making, parents must share the GoCPS login.

What happens when parents disagree about how to use the GoCPS account?

In the case of a student’s parents not agreeing about how to use the GoCPS account, the parents will need to provide us with a court order that states which parent has the educational decision making authority so that we can determine who should have primary access to the GoCPS application file.

IEP/504/SERVICE PLAN AND EL STUDENTS

Can students with disabilities apply to Selective Enrollment High Schools? Can English Learners?

Yes. Some programs may have different eligibility requirements for students with an IEP or students receiving bilingual education services. The eligibility requirements can be found on your GoCPS online application account and attached to the GoCPS paper application.

If your child attends a Chicago public, charter, or contract school, CPS will obtain their IEP or 504 Plan from the CPS Student Information System. CPS can also access the IEPs/504 Plans of non-CPS students who have had their IEP/504 Plans developed by the Chicago Public Schools.

If your child attends a non-CPS school, and their IEP or 504 Plan was developed by a public school system outside of Chicago, please submit the most recent version of your child’s IEP or 504 Plan to the Office of Access and Enrollment at asjeffers@cps.edu. If your non-CPS student has an IEP or 504 Plan that was not developed by a public school system, or if your child has a Service Plan, your child’s documentation will be reviewed by the testing team to determine if it meets CPS guidelines for acceptance. Please submit the most recent version of your child’s documentation to the Office of Access and Enrollment at asjeffers@cps.edu.

ADMISSIONS SCREENINGS

What are admissions screenings?

Admissions Screenings are events required by some schools/programs in order for students to be considered in the selection process. These consist of admissions exams, auditions or portfolio reviews, information sessions, and interviews.

How do I know which schools/programs require admissions screenings?

See the following list of Admissions Screenings in order to determine whether they are required for the schools/programs in which your child is interested.

Audition

- ChiArts - Dance
- ChiArts - Vocal
- ChiArts - Instrument/Brass & Woodwinds
- ChiArts - Instrument/Guitar
- ChiArts - Instrument/Percussion
- ChiArts - Instrument/Piano
- ChiArts - Instrument/Strings
- ChiArts - Musical Theatre
- ChiArts - Theatre
- Curie - Dance
- Curie - Music
- Lincoln Park - Drama
- Lincoln Park - Music/Instrumental *
- Lincoln Park - Music/Vocal *
- Senn - Dance
- Senn - Music
- Senn - Theatre

Essay

- Kelly - AVID
- Von Steuben - Scholars

Information Session

- Air Force Academy - Service Leadership
- Amundsen - IB
- Back of the Yards - IB
- Bogan - IB
- Bronzeville - IB
- Carver Military - Service Leadership
- Chicago Military - Service Leadership
- Clemente - IB
- Curie - IB
- Farragut - IB
- Hubbard - IB
- Hyde Park - IB
- Juarez - IB
- Kelly - IB
- Kennedy - IB
- Lincoln Park - IB
- Marine Leadership - Service Leadership
- Morgan Park - IB
- Ogden - IB
- Phoenix Military - Service Leadership
- Prosser - Career Academy
- Prosser - IB
- Rickover Military - Service Leadership
- Schurz - IB
- Senn - IB
- South Shore International - IB

- Steinmetz - IB
- Taft - IB
- Washington – IB

Interview – In Person

- Kelly - AVID
- Simeon - Career Academy
- Taft – NJROTC

Interview – Written Format

(visit newdyett.org or call school at 773-535-1825)

- Dyett - Band *
- Dyett - Choir *
- Dyett - Dance *
- Dyett - Digital Media *
- Dyett - General Education *
- Dyett - Theater *
- Dyett - Visual Arts *

Portfolio Review

- ChiArts - Creative Writing
- ChiArts - Visual Arts
- Curie - Visual Arts
- Lincoln Park - Visual Arts
- Senn - Visual Arts

Teacher Recommendation/Letters of Recommendation

- Kelly - AVID
- Von Steuben – Scholars
(visit vonsteuben.org)

Testing

- Brooks - SEHS
- Hancock - SEHS
- Jones - SEHS
- King - SEHS
- Lane Tech - SEHS
- Lindblom - SEHS
- Northside - SEHS
- Payton - SEHS
- South Shore - SEHS
- Westinghouse - SEHS
- Whitney Young - SEHS

* Students who live in the school's attendance boundary are not required to participate in admissions screenings for this program.

How do I schedule an appointment for a Fine and Performing Arts audition or portfolio review?

If you apply using the online application site, you can schedule your child's appointment for the audition or portfolio review via your online account.

If you apply using the paper application, the school will contact you directly to schedule your child's appointment.

Does my child have to attend an Information Session for each International Baccalaureate (IB) program to which he/she applies?

No. Your child will only need to attend ONE Information Session. In addition, your child can attend an Information Session at any IB High School, even if you do not plan to apply to it.

How do I schedule an appointment for an IB Information Session?

If you apply online, you can schedule your child's appointment using your online application account.

If you apply using a paper application, you can review the list of available sessions and attend the session of your choice. (The list of IB Information Sessions and contact information is attached to the paper high school application.)

What will happen at the IB Information Session?

Students will receive details regarding the IB Program, including the IB philosophy, curriculum, and benefits of the program.

Do parents have to attend the IB Information Session?

Parents are welcome to attend, but their attendance is not mandatory.

Does my child have to attend an Information Session for each Service Leadership Academy to which he/she applies?

No. Your child will only need to attend ONE Information Session. In addition, your child can attend an Information Session at any Service Leadership Academy, even if you do not plan to apply to it.

What will happen at the Service Leadership Information Session?

At the Information Session, students will sign a Commitment Agreement, complete a Motivation and Perseverance Assessment, and write a brief essay.

How do I schedule an appointment for a Service Leadership Academy Information Session?

If you apply online, you can schedule your child's appointment using your online application account.

If you apply using a paper application, you can review the list of available sessions and attend the session of your choice. (The list of Service Leadership Academy Information Sessions is attached to the paper high school application.)

How do I schedule an appointment for an interview?

If you apply online, you can schedule your child's appointment using the online application site.

If you apply using a paper application, you will contact the school directly to schedule your appointment.

SELECTIVE ENROLLMENT HIGH SCHOOLS

What is required in order for my child to be eligible to take the Selective Enrollment High Schools admissions exam?

The eligibility requirements can be found on your GoCPS online application account and attached to the GoCPS paper application.

What is on the Selective Enrollment High Schools admissions exam?

The Selective Enrollment High Schools exam is an achievement skills test that assesses students in four subject areas: reading comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, and math word problems.

How many Selective Enrollment tests will my child have to take?

Your child will take only one Selective Enrollment High Schools exam, regardless of the number of schools to which he/she applies.

How long is the test?

The test is approximately three and a half hours long.

When are the test dates?

The Selective Enrollment High Schools exam will be administered on the following dates:

- November 16, 2019
- December 7, 2019
- December 14, 2019
- December 15, 2019
- January 18, 2020
- January 19, 2020
- January 25, 2020

The test will be administered at five sites: Lane Tech, Lindblom, King, Westinghouse, and Whitney Young. (The test is not offered at all sites on all dates.)

When will Selective Enrollment test scores be released?

Students who take the Selective Enrollment exam in November or December will receive their test scores by mid-February 2020. Students who test on all other dates will receive their test scores in March 2020, when application results are released.

Do you provide sample questions or study materials for the Selective Enrollment High Schools exam?

The Chicago Public Schools does NOT recommend, endorse, or provide study guides, test preparation courses, or sample tests/questions for the Selective Enrollment High Schools admissions exam. The Selective Enrollment High Schools admissions exam is designed to assess student ability, knowledge, and potential for success in programs for academically advanced students.

My child attends a non-CPS school and is not applying for a school with academic criteria for the 2020-2021 school year, but I would like to have her take the NWEA MAP this year so she can become familiar with the test. Can I do this?

No. The Chicago Public Schools does not have the financial or personnel resources, or the physical capacity, to test students who are not planning to apply for the upcoming school year.

SELECTIONS

How does the selection process work?

If you apply to both Choice Programs and Selective Enrollment Programs on your application, your child will be included in two separate selection processes. Your child will be considered for the schools/programs to which you apply, based on the order in which you rank the schools/programs.

Choice Programs

Some Choice programs select students through a computerized lottery, while others base selections on a point system. The specific selection criteria/methodology for each school/program on your child's application will be used to determine your child's status for that school/program. Your child will be considered for the schools/programs on their application, **in the order that you listed them on your application**. Your child will then receive an offer from the highest-ranked school/program on their application for which they qualify, based on seat availability, their status for the specific program's selection process (lottery number or final points), the status of other students who applied to those schools/programs, and the order in which they ranked them.

From the Choice Programs to which your child applies, your child can only receive, at most, ONE Choice Program offer. If your child does not qualify for any of the Choice Programs to which you apply, your child will not receive a Choice Program offer. Students are guaranteed a seat in the general education program of their designated neighborhood school.

Selective Enrollment Schools

The selections for Selective Enrollment Programs are based on a 900-point scale, comprised of NWEA MAP scores (300 points), seventh grade final grades (300 points), and the student's performance on the Selective Enrollment admissions exam (300 points). Applicants are ranked in order of their total point score, from highest to lowest. The selection process starts with the top-scoring student and proceeds down the list. Your child will be considered for the schools on the application in the order in which they are listed. If your child scores high enough to receive an offer, it will be from the highest-ranked school on their application for which they qualify and where there are seats available.

From the Selective Enrollment Programs to which your child applies, your child can only receive, at most, ONE Selective Enrollment High School offer. If your child does not qualify for any of the Selective Enrollment schools to which you apply, they will not receive a Selective Enrollment offer. Students are guaranteed a seat in the general education program of their designated neighborhood school.

Is it possible for my child to receive more than one Choice Program offer and one Selective Enrollment offer?

If your child attends a school that also serves grades 9-12 (known as a "continuing school"), your child will receive an offer from this school.

If I apply to a school where I have another child enrolled, will my child automatically be admitted?

Many schools and programs give preference to students who have a sibling who is currently enrolled and who will be enrolled in the school/program in the coming school year. Note that Selective Enrollment schools, International Baccalaureate High Schools, and other programs with academic criteria do not consider siblings as part of the selection process.

If I am employed at a CPS district high school, will my child automatically be admitted?

For magnet, magnet cluster and open enrollment elementary schools and all district high schools/programs that select students through a computerized lottery, two seats will be allocated at the entry-grade level for children of teachers or staff members currently employed at that school. If there are more than two children who qualify and apply for these seats, a lottery will be held and seats will be filled by computerized lottery. For the purposes of this policy, the term "children" means natural children, stepchildren, foster children and adopted children, as evidenced by documentation required by the CEO or designee. If there are minimum criteria for a school, the student must meet eligibility requirements in order to qualify.

Note that the staff preference seats are not guaranteed; they are based on space availability. The order in which available seats are filled varies according to school/program. For example, a program may fill available seats in the following order: (1) siblings, (2) proximity, (3) staff preference, (4) general. If all seats in the program are filled by sibling applicants and applicants who live in the school's proximity, no seats would be filled through staff preference.

If a parent or guardian is assigned to more than one Chicago public high school, they can only apply for staff preference at one of the schools. If a parent or guardian is not staffed at any specific Chicago public school, they cannot apply for staff preference.

If my daughter receives an offer, will she be waitlisted at any of the other schools on the application?

Your child will be waitlisted for any Choice Programs that are ranked higher than the school from which she receives an offer, and for which she is qualified for selection. For example, if your child applies to 10 schools/programs and receives an offer from her fifth-ranked choice, they will be waitlisted for the schools/programs ranked 1-4 (as long as they are qualified for a seat), and they will not be selected for the schools/programs ranked 6-10. Whether or not you accept the offer your child receives, your child will remain on these waitlists. If you accept the offer and later receive an offer from a school/program where your child was waitlisted, you can accept that offer and decline the offer you previously accepted. There is no guarantee, however, that your child will receive an offer from a school/program where she has been waitlisted.

RESULTS**When will I find out if my child has received an offer?**

Results will be released in March 2020.

How will I be notified of my child's results?

If you apply online, your child's results will be accessible via your online application account. If you apply via paper application, your child's results will be mailed to your home in March 2020. You will receive only one letter. In addition, your child's results will be posted to an online application account that will be opened on your behalf by the Office of Access and Enrollment.

SECOND ROUND

What can I do if I am not satisfied with the offer my child receives?

If you are not satisfied with the offer your child receives, or your child does not receive any first-round offers, or your child did not apply during the first round, you can apply in April 2020 for the second round for schools/programs that still have seats available. Second-round results will be released in May 2020. You do not have to decline a first-round offer in order to apply for the second round. **However, it is IMPORTANT to note that if you submit an application for the second round and your child receives an offer, you will automatically forfeit the first-round offer. You should only apply to schools/programs in the second round that you want MORE than the first-round offer you accepted.**

TRANSFER

If I decide after the second round that I want to transfer to a different school, what should I do?

If families are still interested in exploring school options after the second application round, students can transfer to any program that still has seats available and for which they are eligible. Transfers can only take place between July 1st and the 20th day of school, or at the end of a school quarter. Interested families can visit GoCPS starting July 1st for information.