

NOVATO CHARTER SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

I. PURPOSE

To define application and admission policies and procedures for enrollment at Novato Charter School (“NCS” or the “Charter School”).

II. AUTHORITY

Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(H).

III. BACKGROUND

NCS may develop and adopt its own procedures for student enrollment consistent with its charter petition and Education Code Section 47605.

IV. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Lottery** means the public random drawing procedure by which applicants’ names are randomly selected to determine enrollment in the Charter School in grades that have more applicants than capacity. The lottery also determines placement on an admission wait list, once impacted grade levels are full.
- B. **Priority category/admission preference** means the assignment of admission priority/preference based on criteria described in this policy.
- C. **Rank** means the position of an applicant within a priority category.
- D. **Order** means the sequence in which applicants are distributed within a priority category.
- E. **Capacity** is defined as the maximum possible number of students who can be enrolled in a single grade, as established by the Board, guided by the recommendations of the Director. When considering grade-level capacity, the Director and Board shall, at a minimum, take into consideration the following: number of returning students and their educational needs, physical constraints of the facility, Academic Program, and fiscal viability.
- F. **Grade level placement** means the age parameters that determine in what grade a specific student can enroll. It is determined by birth dates described below. Exceptions to grade-level placement may be made by the Director as determined by pupil assessment, except as otherwise required by law.

V. POLICY

- A. All students who reside in the state of California who meet minimum age requirements are eligible for admission to the Novato Charter School.
- B. This enrollment policy is guided by the goal of the Novato Charter School to provide quality alternative educational service to its students.

VI. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Parents of prospective students:

1. Are strongly encouraged to attend a school tour prior to the lottery date, and to carefully consider the School and Family Partnership Agreement before applying.
2. Must complete and submit an application by the established deadline. Applications received after the established deadline will be held in abeyance for a subsequent lottery in the event openings occur at relevant grade levels.
3. After admission, students will be required to submit an enrollment packet, which shall include the following:
 - Student enrollment form
 - Proof of Residency
 - Proof of Birthdate
 - Proof of Immunization
 - Home Language Survey
 - Completion of Emergency Medical Information Form
 - Proof of minimum age requirements
 - A home visit may be required to verify address
 - Release of records¹

VII. LOTTERY PROCEDURE

If there are more applications than spaces available in any grade level, NCS will hold a public random lottery. All applications shall be separated by grade level and enrollment priority/admission preferences. Admission preferences in the case of a public random drawing shall be given to the following students in the following order:

1. Children of NCS employees²
2. Siblings of students admitted to or attending NCS^{3 4}.

¹ The Charter School shall not request a pupil's records or require a parent, guardian, or pupil to submit the pupil's records to the Charter School before enrollment.

² If there are more employee applicants than available spots in one specific grade, the order of admission will be established through the lottery process. This category applies to NCS full-time employees who gain this priority preference upon hire. All other employees qualify for this preference after one full year of employment prior to the school year in which they are seeking enrollment of a child. An employee loses this preference immediately upon termination.

³ Sibling priority for the applicant becomes effective in the lottery after the admission of the first child. If there are

3. Students residing in the Novato Unified School District (“NUSD” or the “District”)⁵.
4. Students residing outside of NUSD.

By approving the Charter School’s charter renewal petition, which attaches a copy of these admission policies and procedures, the Charter School and the District agree to adhere to the requirements related to admission preferences as set forth in Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B)(i)-(iv).

The Board of Directors will take all necessary efforts to ensure lottery procedures are fairly executed. Lottery spaces are pulled in order of grade level by the designated lottery official (appointed by the Director). NCS currently uses the SchoolMint software to run its lottery. Separate lotteries shall be conducted for each grade in which there are fewer vacancies than pupils interested in attending. All lotteries shall take place on the same day in a single location. Lotteries will be conducted in ascending order beginning with the lowest applicable grade level. There is no weighted priority assigned to the preference categories; rather, within each grade level, students will be drawn from pools beginning with all applicants who qualify for the first preference category, and shall continue with that preference category until all vacancies within that grade level have been filled. If there are more students in a preference category than there are spaces available, a random drawing will be held from within that preference category until all available spaces are filled. If all students from the preference category have been selected and there are remaining spaces available in that grade level, students from the second preference category will be drawn in the lottery, and the drawing shall continue until all spaces are filled and preference categories are exhausted in the order provided above.

At the conclusion of the public random drawing, all students who were not granted admission due to capacity shall be given the option to put their name on a wait list according to their draw in the lottery. This wait list will allow students the option of enrollment in the case of an opening during the current school year. Except as set forth herein, in no circumstance will a wait list carry over to the following school year.

Public random drawing rules, deadlines, dates and times will be communicated in the application form and on the Charter School’s website. Public notice for the date and time of the public random drawing will also be posted once the application deadline has passed.

The Charter School will also inform all applicants and interested parties of the rules to be followed during the public random drawing process via mail or email, typically at least

more sibling applicants than available spots in one specific grade, the order of admission will be established through the lottery process.

⁴ Sibling priority category will be carried-over from year-to-year, with wait list rank maintained, only in the case that the initial application was submitted while the sibling was still enrolled at NCS.

⁵ Applicants in this category must reside in the School District before the admission lottery. Acceptable proof of residence include: utility bill (current bill within 30 days); homeowner’s or renter’s insurance policy; lease agreement; current property tax bill from the County Tax Collector’s Office; official letter or form from a social services or government agency (current within 30 days); valid California driver’s license; current bank statement with proof of address, paycheck from employer with proof of address. Proof of residency is not required for homeless youth.

two weeks prior to the lottery date.

The Charter School will conduct the lottery in the spring for enrollment in fall of that year.

VIII. 4 GRADE LEVEL PLACEMENT (Minimum Age)

NCS follows a developmental approach and therefore has different requirements for minimum age in each grade level. Concerns about grade level placement must be indicated in written form and attached to a student's application. Grades are determined by the ages and dates listed below.

Kindergarten A/Transitional	Must turn 5 years of age between June 2 nd and December 2 nd of the year in which the applicant is seeking enrollment
Kindergarten B	5 years or older by June 1st, prior to the school year for which the applicant is seeking enrollment
First Grade	6 years or older by June 1 prior
Second Grade	7 years or older by June 1 prior
Third Grade	8 years or older by June 1 prior
Fourth Grade	9 years or older by June 1 prior
Fifth Grade	10 years or older by June 1 prior
Sixth Grade	11 years or older by June 1 prior
Seventh Grade	12 years or older by June 1 prior
Eighth Grade	13 years or older by June 1 prior

IX. KINDERGARTEN PLACEMENT

Kindergarten is divided by age criteria into K-A/Transitional and K-B (older). Each year, at the sole discretion of the Director, K-A spots could be limited to ensure space availability for siblings of currently enrolled students or new enrollees entering the second year Kindergarten class (K-B).

X. ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT PROCEDURE

- A. When an opening occurs, applicants will be notified via telephone in order of wait-list rank, to determine their interest, and complete the enrollment process. After direct contact has been made, applicants will be given one (1) business day to respond. Should they fail to accept or fail to respond, NCS will offer the opening to the next in rank. Completing the enrollment procedure includes a family conference (all grades) and an orientation (kindergarten only).
- B. NCS has the right to refuse enrollment to any child whose birth date falls outside of the age requirements in each grade level.
- C. All steps in the application process must be completed every year for admission consideration.

Enrollment Policy approved by the NCS Board on November 18, 2020

- D. Any information that is misrepresented on the Application for Admission could invalidate eligibility for enrollment in the Novato Charter School.

XI. AUTHORITY OF DIRECTOR

The Director shall have the authority to use their best judgment or seek Board input on matters related to admission that are not covered under this policy.