



Attachment 1: Admissions Policies and Procedures

The Charter School of Inquiry (CSI) is Kindergarten through Grade 6 public school authorized by the New York State Board of Regents to operate as an independent New York education corporation. CSI is nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices and all other operations and does not charge tuition. Any elementary school-aged child who is legally qualified under the laws of New York State to attend public school is also qualified to attend CSI, with preference given to any child residing in the City of Buffalo. CSI will not discriminate in its admission policies on any basis, including income level, race, gender, intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, disability, national origin, religion, or ancestry.

CSI will admit 50 children each in K, Grade 1 and Grade 2 in its first year of operation. In each succeeding year, a grade level will be added; children remaining in the program will graduate into the next grade leaving 50 new spaces available for children entering Kindergarten each year. This document explains how children will be initially recruited and admitted to CSI, how we will fill seats that are vacated by enrolled students, the process we will use each year to enroll new students, and how we will ensure that we meet recruitment targets.

Initial Recruitment

CSI will engage in a rigorous recruitment process to attract students in Buffalo who reflect the same demographics as students in the Buffalo Public Schools. The demographics for BPS are 53% African-American, 22% white, 16% Hispanic/Latino, and 6% Asian. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of BPS children are eligible for free and reduced lunch. Eleven percent (11%) of children are Limited English Proficient and 17% are children with disabilities.

During the recruitment process, CSI will inform parents about the school, its key design elements, answer any questions they have about the school and its operations, and inform them about how to enroll. Information about the school and how to contact CSI will be provided on its web-site, on any printed material issued by CSI and in any radio and/or TV announcements sponsored by CSI.

A variety of strategies will be used to inform parents about CSI's educational program. A CSI web site will be developed to inform Buffalo's parents about the school and its educational program. Special sections of the web site will be devoted specifically to explaining our supports for special needs children, i.e., children with disabilities, English language learners, and children eligible for free or reduced lunches.

Targeted recruitment efforts will be conducted through Buffalo Head Start Centers, licensed child care sites, the Municipal Housing Authority, through the faith-based community, Boys & Girls Clubs, and by advertising in local neighborhood papers, running spots on Spanish-language radio and advertising in the Spanish-language newspaper, advertising in the two most popular African-American newspapers and reaching the refugee-immigrant community through the five resettlement agencies in Buffalo.

Other recruitment efforts will be made through special education and ELL advocates, community-based agencies that support or serve ELLs and special education children and children from low-income families. CSI will also schedule town hall meetings, and an open house at the school location. Flyers will be distributed across the city to barber shops, nail salons, libraries, community health clinics, pediatrician offices, Medicaid and food stamp offices, community centers, supermarkets and corner stores – anywhere parents of young children can be reached. Significant attention will be paid to recruiting special needs children.



Procedure for First Year Enrollment

Applications. During the recruitment process, CSI will inform parents who are interested in enrolling their children that they must complete an application. Copies of the application, along with a brochure about the school, will be left in all of the recruitment locations. The application will also be available on the CSI web site and at the school office once it is opened. A phone number and email address will be provided for parents who have questions.

The application for admission to CSI will be the NYS Education Department uniform charter school application form, only requesting contact information, and information required to determine if the student is eligible to attend (district of residence and date of birth of the child) and sibling preference. The application will be printed in English and Spanish. CSI will seek interpreters for parents who speak other languages.

Children applying for Kindergarten must be five years old by December 31 of the year they are applying. In accordance with state law, all applications must be **received** at the Charter School of Inquiry by 5:00 pm on the first day of April each year. Applications may be hand delivered, completed online, or sent via mail or email. Parents will be notified either by mail or email, depending on how the application was submitted, that their application has been received.

If CSI does not receive as many applications as vacant seats, all students who applied will be admitted. However, in the event that there are more applications than vacant seats, CSI will hold a public lottery within two weeks of the application due date. The lottery will be publicized as a public event, and will be overseen by a neutral third party to ensure that it is just and fair. All students' names will go into the lottery pool and will be chosen one at a time to fill each vacant seat until capacity is reached for each grade, with an enrollment preference given to applicants residing in the City of Buffalo. In accordance with state law, an enrollment preference is also given to pupils returning to CSI in the second and any subsequent year of operation and to siblings of pupils already enrolled in the school. All other applicants will be drawn randomly one at a time. Children who were not among those selected will be given the opportunity to be placed on a waitlist in the order in which they were drawn and will be notified in order if seats become available. If a particular grade is filled, then applicants who submit applications after the April 1st deadline will be placed at the end of the wait list in the order in which such applications are received. The waitlist is only valid for the current school year and students who are not admitted must reapply for the following school year.

Notification. Within three days of the public lottery, CSI will notify all applicants of their selection via email and mailed letter. Parents will be informed of whether their child was chosen in the lottery or placed on the waitlist. Parents of children placed on the waitlist will be notified of their position on the waitlist. When a seat becomes available CSI will contact the families on the wait list in the order they appear on the original list. Parents will be contacted via phone call and will have 24 hours to enroll their child at CSI. If a parent does not return the phone call or chooses not to enroll their child, CSI will proceed to the following child on the waitlist until all available seats are filled.

Required Documents. The email and mailed letter to parents of students who are admitted to CSI will inform them of the documents they will need to provide in order to enroll their child. They will need to bring an original birth certificate to verify the age of their child, proof of address, social security card, and immunization records. Students who are admitted to CSI are guaranteed



enrollment for all grade levels offered. Each spring, CSI will ask families to inform the school of their plans for the following school year and whether they choose to re-enroll their child. This information will be used to plan for the recruitment of students in grades one through six as needed.

Backfilling seats. Anticipating that there will be times when enrolled students move or leave the school either during the school year or at the end of the school year, CSI will backfill their vacant seats by notifying parents of children who are on the waitlist in the order they are listed. If a person on the waitlist is no longer interested, the next name on the list will be selected. Once the student(s) are selected from the waitlist, they will be invited to visit the school to meet the Head of School, the faculty, staff, their new teacher and the children.

Orientation and Preparation to Include Child into CSI Community. The Head of School will have an orientation for the parents and newly-enrolled child to cover topics such as start/end times of the school day, bus transportation, meals served, the culture of the school, and answer any questions that either the parents or the child have. The new student will visit the school nurse to get a general health assessment, including eye, hearing and scoliosis exams, and to make sure the child's immunization records are in compliance. CSI will also administer screening assessments to determine the child's academic needs in order to provide differentiated instruction from the beginning of their time at CSI.

Meeting Recruitment Goals

If our recruitment efforts do not yield a student population reflective of our demographic goals, CSI will revise its recruitment efforts to address inequities.