

**MOT Charter School**  
**Admissions Policies & Procedures**

**1. Authority**

The Head of School shall have the authority to design, delegate, interpret and execute all school practices which are related to student admissions provided that they conform to this Policy. The Board shall not act as a point of appeal for student applicants regarding any admissions decisions which the school has made in reasonable conformance with this Policy. The Board reserves to itself the sole discretion to decide upon matters of Policy conformance, and the Board shall only address such matters with the Head of School.

**2. Eligibility for Admission**

- a. MOT Charter School admits students based on the Delaware Education Code Title 14, Chapter 5 governing charter schools:

*Prohibit discrimination in admission policy on the basis of sex, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, academic, artistic, or athletic ability, or the district the child would otherwise attend in accordance with this code, although the charter may provide for the exclusion of a student who has a documented history of a criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or discipline problems.*

- b. It is the intention of the school to reflect the community it serves and be open to any resident in the area that would otherwise attend a school in Delaware.
- c. All Kindergarten applicants must be at least five (5) years of age on or before August 31<sup>st</sup> of the upcoming calendar year and **MUST** be pre-registered with their Resident School District.
- d. All other applicants must apply to the next consecutive grade level to which they would advance if they were to remain in their current school. (For example, a student who expects to complete 3<sup>rd</sup> grade during the current year must apply to the 4<sup>th</sup> grade lottery). Parents/guardians of applicants cannot choose to retain their student in their current grade level. Parents/Guardians are responsible for notifying MOT Charter School if their student is retained at the end of the applicant's current school year and request the application be moved to the appropriate grade waitlist.

**3. Open Enrollment**

- a. Open enrollment is conducted annually to fill open seats in the school and to determine priority on the wait list for the forthcoming year.
- b. The "open" enrollment period is set by Delaware regulation and runs from the first Monday in November until the second Wednesday in January.
- b. The school will conduct an Open House each year prior to or during the Open Enrollment Period.
- c. Open House and the Open Enrollment Period will be advertised in the local media and on the school's web page. The application process will be explained during Open House.

#### 4. Application Process

- a. Each year, applications will be available through the SchoolChoice system and a link to SchoolChoice on the school's website. Should a parent need access to the online system they can contact the school to make an appointment to submit the online application.
- b. All applicants, including those currently enrolled in a private school, **MUST** be either pre-registered or registered with their Resident School District **PRIOR** to submitting an online application, otherwise the application will be considered incomplete and will **NOT** be included in the lottery.
- c. All applications must be completed through the online SchoolChoice system.
- d. Applications are only valid for one (1) school year. All applicants are required to submit an application each year (even if an application was submitted in the prior year) during the Open Enrollment Period. The waiting list does not carry over year after year.
- e. Siblings of currently enrolled students must submit an application during the open enrollment period to be included in the Lottery and considered for enrollment.
- f. All applications **completed** on or before the published close of the Open Enrollment Period will be placed in the Lottery.
  - i. **K-8 Application Process**
    1. Each candidate seeking admission to the K-8 Academy must complete the resident pre-registration noted above and submit a completed application through the SchoolChoice system on or before the published application deadline.
  - ii. **High School Application Process**
    1. Each candidate seeking admission to either the Academy of the Arts or the Academy of Science & Technology must complete the following application steps on or before published application deadline:
      - a. Complete the resident school district pre-registration requirement noted above.
      - b. Submit a completed application through the SchoolChoice system on or before the published application deadline. Completed online applications will include submission of the applicant's most recent academic report (report card or progress report).
      - c. Sit for the English/Reading placement exam on one of the published dates. Please note, the exam is not used to determine admissions, but will be used to place students in the relevant courses upon acceptance. In the event that students are unable to secure transportation to the high school campus to sit for the placement exam, parents should contact the school directly to discuss alternate transportation options.

#### 5. Admissions Selection Principles

- a. The following shall apply to all admissions practices:
  - i. If the number of eligible applicants is less than the number of available seats, then all eligible applicants shall be offered seats in the School.
  - ii. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of available seats, then the School shall:

1. determine the eligibility of each applicant for admissions preferences as described herein;
  2. follow the public lottery procedures below to allocate seat offers and determine the wait list order; and
  3. offer seats in the priority order of eligible preferences.
- b. Mid-year enrollment of students after the admission process shall be decided by the Head of School only if there are seat vacancies. Such cases are expected to be rare, and the Head of School shall give due consideration to budgets, resources, and fairness before deciding on such cases and the Head of School shall keep the Board reasonably informed thereof.

## 6. Public Lottery

- a. For the purposes of the following procedures and rules, "Lottery" shall refer to the selection of applicant names by an electronic random method
- b. All completed applications received during the Open Enrollment Period are placed in the Lottery irrespective of preference status.
- c. Only completed applications received during the Open Enrollment Period are placed in the Lottery. If an application is completed after the Lottery selection, it will be placed at the bottom of the waitlist.
- d. The Lottery will be conducted via an electronic method, independently executed through the State of Delaware's Data Service Center on a published date in February of each year.
- e. All Preferences for grades K-8 shall be considered in the following hierarchy:
  - i. Applicant child of a Founding Board Member
  - ii. Applicant child of MOT Charter School full time employee
  - iii. Applicant sibling of a currently enrolled K-8 student
  - iv. Applicant sibling of a currently enrolled high school student who graduated from the K-8 Academy
  - v. Applicant living within the Appoquinimink School District
  - vi. Applicant sibling of a currently enrolled high school student
- f. All Preferences for grades 9-12 shall be considered in the following hierarchy:
  - i. Applicant child of a Founding Board Member
  - ii. Applicant child of MOT Charter School full time employee
  - iii. Applicant sibling of a currently enrolled student.
  - iv. Applicants who have specific-interest in MOT Charter School's methods, philosophy or educational focus (up to 25% of each year's incoming class).
  - v. Applicant living within the Appoquinimink School District.
- g. Preferences for MOT Charter School Admissions purposes are defined as:
  - i. Applicant child of MOT Charter School full time employee: those employed on a permanent basis for at least 30 hours per week during the school year. For this preference to apply, the MOT Charter School full time employee must be:
    1. the child's biological or adoptive parent, guardian, foster parent, or
    2. living with the child as a family unit for at least 12 months prior to the time of the lottery and continuing through the first day of school.
  - ii. Applicant sibling of a currently enrolled K-8 student: the sibling of any applicant enrolling under sibling preference must be enrolled in order for sibling preference to be effect. An alumnus of the school with a sibling applying for the following year does not qualify as a sibling for entrance preference. Siblings who are applying together will receive a Lottery sibling preference only after one of the siblings has accepted an offer of enrollment.
    1. SIBLING by definition is a:

- a. Biological/adoptive sibling.
  - b. Stepsiblings residing in the same household.
  - c. Foster children residing within the same household.
  - d. Unrelated children residing in the same household “as a family” for at least 12 months prior to the time of the lottery and continuing through to the first day of school. In order to qualify for sibling preference under this subsection, the parents must provide proof that the children have been living as siblings in the same household for 12 months as of the date of the lottery and continue to reside in such household as of the first day of school. Acceptable proof would include anything that verifies that the parents and students have been living at the same address for the 12 months prior to the date of the lottery, such as prior school records verifying the students’ address, telephone or bank records that verify the address of the parents of both children.
  - e. Stepsiblings living in different households are not considered siblings entitled to sibling preference.
  - f. Same grade siblings will be treated as two separate students applying, rather than as a single unit.
- iii. Applicant living within the Appoquinimink School District: the applicant must live in the Appoquinimink School District at the time the preference is applied and the offer of enrollment is made to receive this preference.
- 1. Residency will be established prior to the lottery through the pre-registration/registration of applicant with their Resident School District. Residency verification will be required in order for an applicant to enroll. Residency must be with the applicant’s primary or shared custodial parent/legal guardian.
- iv. The Specific-Interest Preference
- 1. MOT Charter desires to create 2 magnet-type academies for students who have particular interest in pursuing studies in the arts or science and technology. As such, we feel it is important to provide a reasonable opportunity for students with this specific interest to gain admission. MOT will endeavor to achieve a critical mass of students in each of its two academies (The Academy of the Arts and the Academy of Science & Technology) by applying an interest preference capped at 25% of each year's incoming class.
  - 2. With regard to the interest preference above, eligibility for which will be determined prior to the lottery, a school-based committee will review the application materials and determine whether the applicant has demonstrated sufficient interest in the desired program.
  - 3. For those applying to the Academy of the Arts, interest will be demonstrated by a student's experience in music or performing or visual arts.
  - 4. For those applying to the Academy of Science & Technology, interest will be demonstrated by a student's experience in programs like Math League, Science Olympiad, and other extra-curricular math and science programs.
  - 5. Interviews: Applicants not provided the interest preference based upon the application materials may schedule an interview with the Head of School or their designee to determine eligibility for the specific-interest preference. The School shall conduct such interviews

to determine if the above process has screened out an applicant with an otherwise compelling eligibility for the specific-interest preference. The Head of School shall have the authority to consider such other additional information provided by the applicant in making this determination.

- h. Loss of Preference
  - i. If an applicant is offered admission to MOT Charter ahead of other students due to a preference and the applicant's eligibility for that preference changes, MOT Charter may revoke the admission offer. For example, if a student is admitted to MOT Charter ahead of other applicants due to a sibling preference and the enrolled sibling withdraws from MOT Charter School, the sibling preference will no longer apply and the offer of admission may be revoked.
- i. Validation of Factual Preferences
  - i. With regard to an applicant's request for the benefit of the other preferences above, the School shall evaluate such applicant's factual eligibility and may require the applicant to deliver relevant evidence or documentation. The Head of School shall have full authority to deny the benefit of any of these preferences where such evidence is false or is considered by the Head of School to be materially insufficient.
  - ii. If an application has been submitted for the incorrect grade level and the error is identified prior to the lottery, a correction will be made. If an application to an incorrect grade is discovered after the lottery has been drawn, the application will be moved to the bottom of the waitlist for the correct grade level.

## **7. Enrollment and Wait List**

- a. The number assigned to each applicant as a result of the Lottery and the application of preferences determines the order in which the applicant is offered enrollment at MOT Charter School. Enrollment is determined beginning with Kindergarten.
- b. Once all openings have been filled by grade, the remaining applicants are placed on the Wait List by grade in enrollment number order.
- c. All applications received after Open Enrollment will be accepted on a "First-Come, First-Serve" basis and will be added to the end of the Wait List in the order in which they were received by the school.
- d. The Wait List for any given school year will be maintained for that school year until the last day of school in that year. Waitlist numbers may change as applied preferences change.
- e. The school will use the waiting list for admissions. The Head of School may, at his/her discretion, fill or not fill any new openings.

## **8. Offers of Enrollment, Acceptance & Registration**

- a. Email notifications will be sent to all student applicants indicating their status. Those who fail to respond within the acceptance time period will be deemed to have declined the offer of admission and forfeit their right to enrollment. If the family wishes to be considered for enrollment after failure to accept within the acceptance time, the student applicant will be placed at the bottom of the wait list for that grade.
- b. By the last Friday of February, the school shall fill any vacancies remaining after registering returning students to the school, by offering enrollment to students based upon the results of the Lottery, application of preferences and the resulting Enrollment List for the next school year.
- c. Candidates offered enrollment will be required to accept enrollment on or before the state mandated registration deadline to be published each year and provide in the acceptance letter:
  - i. Completion of the "one year agreement" which states: "I understand that my

child is required to remain in this charter school, in the absence of any condition constituting good cause, for at least one school year.” The one year agreement will be available for inspection by the Department of Education, the State Auditor’s Office, or any other person(s) authorized by law to inspect such files.

- ii. Provide a copy of an official state birth certificate (hospital records are not permitted)
- iii. Provide a current proof of residency. Acceptable proof of residency includes a utility bill (gas, electric, water etc.) which shows a “service address”, copy of lease. We are unable to accept cell phone, credit card or other types of bills which do not include a “service address”.
- iv. **High School Students Only:** A NON-REFUNDABLE payment of the \$100 new student activity fee must be made by the registration deadline.
- d. Candidates will be required to complete the registration forms required by the school within 30 days of the offer of enrollment.
- e. Any applicant offered enrollment after the lottery and the registration period (e.g., students who come off the waiting list when a vacancy occurs) will be required to complete the acceptance and registration process within 2 weeks or prior to attending school, whichever comes first.
- f. Students who decline admission will be removed from the enrollment and wait lists.
- g. Families who decline their seat(s) for admission forfeit their right to enrollment at MOT Charter School. If the family wishes to be considered at a later date after enrollment is declined, the student applicant will be placed at the bottom of the wait list for that grade.

### **9. Failure to Attend the First Two Days of School**

There is a no tolerance cut-off for students who do not attend classes on the first two days of school for the current school year. If MOT Charter School does not receive a written explanation from the parent of an enrolled child prior to the first two days of school to explain the child’s absence, the child’s seat may be filled by the wait list for that grade.

### **10. Compliance**

The Head of School shall ensure that this Policy is fully reflected in the School’s design, delegation and execution of all admissions procedures. The Board may elect to audit such processes when appropriate to ensure reasonable Policy compliance.

### **11. Amendment**

The Board reserves its authority to amend this policy from time to time, with effect on a forward basis, whether by revision or restatement or by separate resolution.