

GoCPS HIGH SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FIRST-ROUND RESULTS

1. How will families find out the results of their applications to ninth grade?

Online applicants will receive their first-round results on March 30th via their online GoCPS account. Paper applicants will receive a notification letter sent via U.S. mail to the home address on their application. In addition, paper applicants can view their results on an online GoCPS account that has been opened for them by the Office of Access and Enrollment. All applicants will receive more information on this process the week of March 26th via email and robocall. Results will be posted after school hours on March 30th, and before 11:59 pm.

2. Will the Non-Selective Enrollment letter and the Selective Enrollment letter appear on the same screen online, or will families have to navigate to two different screen to accept or decline a seat?

The results on the online account will all be on the same screen, along with a button that allows families to also download and print a hard-copy Non-Selective Enrollment letter and a Selective Enrollment letter. The letters that are mailed to the home address of paper applicants are two separate letters, one for Non-Selective Enrollment programs and one for Selective Enrollment programs.

3. How many offers can a student receive in the first round?

A student can receive, at most, one Non-Selective Enrollment offer and one Selective Enrollment offer. These offers will be for the highest-ranked program on the student's application for which they qualify, if any. There is no guarantee, however, that students will receive either a Non-Selective Enrollment or a Selective Enrollment offer. If students are currently enrolled at a school that also serves grades 9-12 (known as a "continuing" school), they will receive an offer from this school, and all students who entered a city of Chicago address on their application are guaranteed a seat at the designated neighborhood school for their home address.

ACCEPTING AND DECLINING OFFERS

4. How do students accept or decline an offer?

Online applicants will accept or decline offers via their online GoCPS account. Paper applicants can accept or decline offers by submitting a paper confirmation form that they will receive with their paper notification letter *or* via the online GoCPS account that was opened for them. Applicants will have until Friday, April 13th to accept or decline an offer.

5. Can a student accept both a Selective Enrollment offer and a Non-Selective Enrollment offer, and decide which one they want later on?

No. Students can only accept one offer.

6. Can students change their mind about accepting or declining an offer if they want to change it before the decision deadline?

If a student **DECLINES** an offer, they cannot go back and change that decision once it is submitted. If a student **ACCEPTS** an offer and later decides that they want to decline it, they can do so.

7. What is the deadline to make a decision on April 13th?

The deadline to accept or decline offers is 5 pm on Friday, April 13th if the applicant is submitting a paper confirmation form, and 11:59 pm on Friday, April 13th if the applicant is making their decision via their online application account.

8. Will the families receive an email confirmation after they have made their decisions to accept or decline offers?

No. Families will see a confirmation page online after they submit their decision. For their records, they should either print this page or save it to PDF.

WAITING LISTS

9. How does a student know if they are on the waitlist?

The student's waitlist status will be provided with the results that families receive on March 30th.

10. When will the waitlist process open?

The waitlist process will open on Wednesday, April 18th. Beginning on that date, schools can begin filling seats in Non-Selective Enrollment programs by contacting waitlisted students, beginning with the student with the number 1 for their program. Note that waitlist seats are offered based on the selection category, if applicable. For instance, if a seat is declined by a student in a program's the proximity category, that seat will be offered to the student who is number 1 on the proximity waitlist.) This process can continue through the remainder of the current school year and the summer, and into the new school year.

11. What is the next step if a student is on a waiting list for a high school?

If a student is waitlisted, the family has the option of withdrawing from the waitlist, if they no longer wish to be considered, or remaining on the waitlist. If the student remains on the waitlist, there is no action to take. If the school has a seat available, and the student's number on the waitlist is reached, the parent will receive a phone call from the school. The offer will also appear on their online application account, beginning at 9 am on the morning after the call is made. Families have 48 business hours to accept or decline a waitlist offer. The 48-hour response period to accept or decline the offer begins at the point that the offer appears on the online application account. Online applicants will accept or decline waitlist offers via their online application account. Paper applicants can accept or decline waitlist offers via the online application account that was opened for them, or they can accept or decline the offer via phone.

12. What happens to the other waitlisted schools when a student receives a waitlist offer? How long can a student keep accepting waitlist offers?

If a student receives a waitlist offer, they will remain on any waitlists on their application that are ranked higher than the program from which they received the offer. Let's say a student applied to five programs and was waitlisted for all five. If they receive a waitlist offer from one program, remaining on the waitlist for other programs will depend on how the program was ranked from which the student received the offer. For instance, if the offer was from their top-ranked program, they would then be removed from the waitlists of the remaining four programs, because they were ranked lower than the program from which the offer was received. In another example, if the offer was from the program the student ranked third, they would then be removed from the waitlists of his fourth and fifth choices, but would remain on the waitlist for his first and second choices. Students can continue accepting waitlist offers until their list is exhausted.

13. If a student receives a waitlist offer, do they automatically forfeit the first-round offer they accepted?

No. If a student receives a waitlist offer, they will have 48 business hours to accept or decline that offer. If they accept the waitlist offer, this will be reflected as a decline for the first-round offer they previously accepted. If they decline the waitlist offer, they will retain the first-round offer.

14. Can students change their mind about withdrawing from a waitlist?

No. Once a student withdraws from a waitlist, they cannot go back and change that decision once it is submitted. However, if the student does not initially withdraw from a waitlist, and they later decide that they want to withdraw, they can do so.

15. What should a student do if they accepted a seat in the first round, and are later offered a seat from a program where they were waitlisted?

If a student accepts a first-round offer, and later receives an offer from a program where they were waitlisted, the student can accept the waitlisted offer, which will automatically decline the first-round offer they accepted. If the student does not prefer the seat in the waitlisted program, they will decline the waitlist offer and keep the first-round offer they previously accepted.

16. When the second round starts, does the waitlist from the first round go away?

No. Students can continue to receive waitlist offers through the end of the school year, into the summer, and into the following year.

17. Will students get waitlist offers even if they've accepted an offer in the second round?

Unless a student withdraws from a waitlist, the student will remain on waitlist for any program that is ranked higher than the program from which the offer was accepted. As a result, a student can accept a first- or second-round offer and later receive a waitlist offer.

18. Will students be able to track their waitlist numbers in real time?

No. The online site will only show the student's initial waitlist numbers and any waitlist offers the student receives. The site will also show if the student accepts or declines a waitlist offer.

19. How many attempts will be made to reach students when a waitlist offer is extended? How will they reach out to families?

Schools are directed to try to reach families through any available contact numbers and the primary email address on the account. They will not be expected to make multiple attempts, however.

SECOND-ROUND APPLICATION PROCESS

20. How does the second round work?

The second round consists of schools/programs that still have seats available. Students will be able to apply to programs in the second round if they are interested in being considered for these programs. However, students who accepted a first-round offer should be certain that they only apply to programs in the second round if they prefer those programs to the program they accepted in the first round. If a student accepts a first-round offer, and then **receives** a second-round offer, the first-round offer will be **automatically forfeited**. (NOTE: The first-round offer is not forfeited if the student simply APPLIES for schools/programs in the second round. The first-round offer is only forfeited if the student RECEIVES a second-round offer. The first-round offer is not impacted if the student does not receive a second-round offer.)

21. What is the timeline for the second round?

The second round will open on Monday, April 30th. The application deadline is Friday, May 4th and second-round results are released on Friday, June 1st. The second-round waitlist process opens June 13th.

22. How will students apply in the second round?

Students can apply via the online application site or via paper application. The second-round application process opens April 30th. Students who haven't already done so can open an online application account, starting April 30th, by going to go.cps.edu and clicking "Apply" or access the paper application at go.cps.edu – click 'Apply' and 'High School.' Students who already have an online application account can use that account to apply to schools and programs in the second round.

23. Can students apply to programs during the second round that they did not select during the first round?

Students can apply to up to 20 programs with available seats in the second round, as long as they meet the programs' eligibility requirements, if applicable. They can also apply again to programs for which they are eligible and to which they applied in the first round. (NOTE: A program cannot be offered during the second round unless

it has exhausted all waitlists, or anticipates that it will exhaust all waitlists. Accordingly, a student cannot apply in the second round to a program where they are on the waitlist.)

24. If a student decides to apply for the second round, do they forfeit first-round offers and waitlists?

No. A student will only forfeit a first-round offer if they receive a second round offer – not if they simply apply in the second round. Also, a student’s waitlist status is not affected by their second-round application or offer.

25. If a student missed the first round, what should they do to apply in the second round?

Students who enrolled in CPS after the December 22nd application deadline, or did not apply during the first round for any other reason, can apply for the second round by using the online application site or via paper application. To open an online account, the user will go to go.cps.edu, click ‘Apply,’ and open an account. They will not need an Activation Code, but they will be required to enter their CPS ID number.

26. Will admissions screenings, such as IB Information Sessions and auditions, be required for students applying for the second round?

Yes, if students apply in the second round to programs that have admissions screenings, the students will have to participate in these events, if they have not already done so. The only exception to this is the admissions exam for Selective Enrollment High Schools. If any Selective Enrollment schools are included in the second round, only students who have taken the Selective Enrollment exam will be able to apply.

27. If students applied to 20 Non-Selective Enrollment schools, can they still apply to other schools in the second round?

Yes. Students can apply in the second round to any Non-Selective programs with available seats for which they are eligible, up to 20.

SELECTIVE ENROLLMENT HIGH SCHOOLS

28. Do Selective Enrollment schools have sibling preference?

No.

29. When will students receive Selective Enrollment test scores?

Selective Enrollment test scores and total points will be on the students’ notification letter that is released on March 30th.

30. What happens if there is a tie for Selective Enrollment Schools?

In cases where students have an identical total point score, tiebreakers are used that consist of the core percentile on the entrance exam, and the individual subject-area sections of the exam. In this manner, students with an identical score can be ranked from highest score to lowest score.

NON-SELECTIVE ENROLLMENT HIGH SCHOOLS

31. Will the CPS lottery be open to public?

No. The lottery is conducted via computer and the lotteries are conducted simultaneously for all programs.

32. Do all Non-Selective Enrollment schools have minimum criteria for applicants?

No. All Non-Selective Enrollment programs do not have minimum eligibility requirements. For the complete list of eligibility requirements, by school/program, visit cps.edu/oe. Click Schools and Programs > Apply to 9th Grades > Eligibility.

33. What happens if there is a tie for Non-Selective Enrollment programs?

It depends on the program. Some programs use tiebreakers that rank students based on their individual NWEA MAP scores and/or grades, while others use a computerized lottery to break a tie.

PRINCIPAL DISCRETION

34. Is Principal Discretion still available?

Yes, for Selective Enrollment High Schools only. The Principal Discretion Handbook will be posted on the GoCPS website (under 'Selection' and 'High School') on March 30th, after results are released. The handbook contains extensive information about the Principal Discretion process, including guidelines and step-by-step instructions.

35. When can students apply for Principal Discretion?

The application process begins April 9th and closes April 20th. The Principal Discretion application will be accessible at go.cps.edu during those dates.

36. Are there any changes to the Principal Discretion process this year?

Yes – application packages must be limited to 10 single-sided pages.

37. Do students have to decline an offer in order to apply for Principal Discretion?

No. Students can apply for Principal Discretion whether they decline any offer or accept any offer.

TRANSFER PROCESS

38. If students don't receive offers in the first or second round, what options are available?

After the second round, there will be a transfer process, during which students can transfer into programs that still have seats available and where they meet eligibility requirements. Students must transfer during a designated transfer window. The first transfer window opens July 1st and ends on the 20th day of school. A list of programs with available seats will be posted on the GoCPS website at the start of the transfer window and interested students will directly contact the school(s) to obtain a Transfer Application. If the student meets the program's eligibility requirements (if applicable), they will receive an acceptance letter from the school, which will contain the date on which the transfer is effective.

39. Can students transfer after the first transfer window is closed?

Yes. The next transfer window will open at the end of the first quarter.

PROXY FORMS

40. What is a Proxy Form?

A proxy form is a form that is completed by families and submitted to the student's school if the family wants the counselor or other designated school staff to participate in the application process on the family's behalf.

41. For families who filled out a proxy, are counselors allowed to go online and accept or decline on behalf of the family, or does the proxy only pertain to the application process?

A proxy form was distributed in March by the Office of Access and Enrollment to counselors and other pertinent school staff. Counselors and school staff who have a signed proxy form have the authority to accept or decline offers on behalf of the family. Counselors should consult with families before accepting or declining offers on their behalf. This is a different form than the proxy form that was distributed to schools in fall 2017, which only gave counselors and school staff the authority to submit applications, schedule appointments, and obtain student-level data on the family's behalf.

NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS

42. Are all students guaranteed a seat in their neighborhood school?

Yes, in the general education program. The results notifications for all students who entered a city of Chicago address on their application will identify the student's neighborhood school. The student is guaranteed a seat in

the general education program of their neighborhood school. This seat, as well as all offers received, is contingent upon proof of address.

43. If a student did not apply to the general education program of their neighborhood school, are they still guaranteed a seat there?

Yes.

44. If a student wants to enroll in the general education program in their neighborhood school, how do they accept a seat at this school?

Online applicants can accept the seat via their online application account. Paper applicants can accept the seat by submitting the paper confirmation form they receive in the U.S. mail with their notification letter, or they can accept it via the online application account that was opened for them by the Office of Access and Enrollment.

45. If a student does not accept or decline a first-round offer by the deadline, will they automatically be enrolled at their neighborhood school?

No. A student will not be projected to the general education program of their neighborhood school unless they have not accepted an offer by June 30th.

CONTINUING SCHOOLS

46. What is a “continuing” school?

A continuing school is a school or program that serves elementary grades, including eighth grade, as well as grades 9-12.

47. What should students do if they want to remain enrolled at their continuing school?

Students enrolled in a continuing school who submitted applications in the first round will see this school listed as an offer on the results notification they receive on March 30th. If they want to remain at the school, they can accept the offer on their online application account, submit a paper confirmation form to the Office of Access and Enrollment, or contact their current school.

48. If a student is enrolled in eighth grade in a charter school that also has grades 9-12, will they be guaranteed a seat at that charter school *instead* of their neighborhood school?

Students who attend a continuing school are guaranteed a seat in that school. (If they submitted an application, this school will appear as an offer in the student’s results notification.) Students are *also* guaranteed a seat in the designated neighborhood school for their home address.

49. If a student did not apply to their continuing school, are they still guaranteed a seat there?

Yes.

MISCELLANEOUS

50. If a student changed their email address or other contact information, how can they update it in the application system?

On the online GoCPS account, contact information can be updated under the Family Profile. Alternatively, families can submit a Contact Information Modification form, accessible upon request from the Office of Access and Enrollment.

51. Does each school conduct its own selection process?

No. The selection process for all district and charter high schools is managed centrally by the Office of Access and Enrollment.

52. Will students have to provide proof of address before seats are confirmed?

Students have to provide proof of address when they register for the school. If a student moved to a different address after they submitted their application, they must provide proof of address for both the address on the application and the new address. All offers are contingent upon this proof.

53. What happens with overage students who just transfer into the district? Do these students need to apply?

Overage students (known as AC15 students) who did not apply in the first round can apply to programs in the second round that do not have minimum eligibility requirements. School counselors will be given paper applications and codes for distribution to AC15 students for the second round.

54. If a student accepts a seat in the first round, but does not graduate at the end of the school year and must go to summer school, what happens to their seat?

If the student attends summer school and is promoted to ninth grade, they will retain the seat that they accepted.

55. What happens if the student moves after the first round? Does the offer change if the student received geographic preference?

If a student moves after an offer is extended, that offer does not change, even if geographic preference was considered as part of the selection process. The student can apply in the second round or via the transfer process to a school closer to their new home, if they choose.

56. Will scoring rubrics and cutoff scores be posted?

Scoring rubrics and cutoff scores will be posted after the results are released.

57. What can a family do if they have no computer access?

If a family applied via paper, they will receive a paper confirmation form that they can use to accept or decline an offer. If they applied online, or want to withdraw from a waitlist, they can seek assistance from the school, or use computers available at Chicago public library branches. Alternatively, they can sign a proxy form, giving the counselor or other school staff the authority to accept or decline offers, or withdraw from waitlists, on the family's behalf.

58. What should families do if they cannot access their online account?

Families or counselors with a signed proxy form from the family, can click the 'Forgot Username' and/or 'Forgot Password' links on the online application site if they cannot remember their account information. If they are still unable to access their account, they should contact the Office of Access and Enrollment from a telephone number or email address on their account.

SCHOOL-LEVEL QUESTIONS

59. How will counselors know what offers students received?

This information will be accessible via Dashboard, beginning April 2nd. Dashboard will show the offers that students receive, the offers accepted or declined, and the students' waitlist status, including their original waitlist numbers and any waitlist offers they receive, accept or decline.

60. What are the procedures for students attending charter and private high schools?

Charter high schools are part of the GoCPS high school application and selection process. Offers to all district and charter high schools will be offered at the same time; there is no different process for charter schools. Students who accept district or charter offers will be projected to those schools centrally via IMPACT; counselors will no longer have to project these students. The process for students who will be attending private schools will not change from previous years; counselors will be responsible for entering this information in IMPACT.

61. Are projections for all grades being done centrally now?

No. Projections for current *eighth grade* students will be done centrally; counselors will not have to project these students. For all other grades, the process is unchanged.

62. What is the counselor’s role in the second round of the GoCPS High School process?

The counselor’s role in the second round is to:

- Counsel students and families who participated in the first round who either didn’t receive an offer, or would prefer a seat in a program that still has seats available, and
- Identify students who didn’t participate in the first round and ensure that they participate in the second round.

63. What should students do if they didn’t enroll in CPS until after the first-round deadline in December?

Students who recently enrolled in CPS can apply to Non-Selective Enrollment programs during the second round. The second-round process will be accessible via the online application site as well as via paper application. To open an online account, families can visit go.cps.edu starting April 30th and click ‘Apply’ to begin. If the student was administered the NWEA MAP before the winter testing window closed in January, they will be able to apply to any program for which they are eligible, up to 20 Non-Selective Enrollment programs. If the student does not have NWEA MAP scores, they will only be able to apply to programs without minimum eligibility requirements. These students should be administered the NWEA MAP during the spring testing window, which will allow them to consider programs with eligibility requirements during the Transfer Window, if they wish.

64. Will the high schools receive a list of the students accepted on the first round and their contact information?

Information on the offers extended to students will be displayed on the Admin Portal. After the results are posted, schools will reach out to offered students with registration instructions, orientation schedules, and other pertinent information.

65. Is there information available that schools can present to families?

Numerous videos and information guides are available at go.cps.edu. Click ‘Selection’ and ‘High School.’