

Applying to High School

Improving equity, transparency & simplicity

APRIL 2017



High School Application Redesign: Policy Amendments for Approval

Enrollment and Transfer of Students Policy (702.1)

- Added language that requires students applying for ninth grade seats outside of their attendance area must use the new high school application platform to apply for district managed and participating charter high schools and programs
- Added language that establishes specified time frames to facilitate ninth grade student transfers

Admissions Policy for Magnet, Selective Enrollment, and Other Options for Knowledge Schools and Programs (602.2)

- Added language that requires students seeking admission to ninth grade seats to participate in a single application process that will include all district managed schools and participating charter schools and programs
- Added language that establishes that students who participate in the single application process may receive one selective enrollment and one non-selective enrollment offer, for a maximum of two offers
- Added language that establishes a School Staff Preference Lottery, which allocates two seats at the entry grade level of all non-selective elementary and high schools for teachers or staff currently employed at the school

CURRENT SITUATION

Most families are frustrated with the high school application process and many families are not actively engaged.

Navigating current process is **complex** and poses barriers



More than 100 applications to high schools and programs with different deadlines



School and program **options are not visible** all in one place



A decentralized process leads to limited transparency in selection criteria and offer decisions

All numbers are approximate



Some students get
multiple offers while
other students get none

All numbers are approximate

51,000 offers
made to 20,000 students

resulting in 31,000 “unused” offers

6,000 students
get no offers

*from the centralized applications managed by OAE
(Selective Enrollment, IB, CTE, Military Magnet)*

Uncertainty
for families

*on where students will attend high school,
sometimes into the new school year*

OUR GOAL

**To increase access, equity,
transparency and efficiency by
unifying and simplifying the high
school application process for the
district**

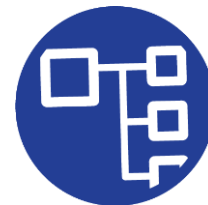
Core Principles



Common application
with all high school
options



Students rank school and
program **choices based**
on preferences



Matching process provides
students with their highest
possible choice

* Similar models have been successfully deployed in other major school districts (e.g., New York City, Denver, New Orleans, Washington, D.C., Newark, Camden)

** CPS selective enrollment high schools use a ranked choice, one offer model today

Key Benefits



Simplifies the process for families and increases equity of access



Earlier reliability of students' decisions enables schools to align the right resources sooner



Provides more transparent admissions decisions and enrollment offers



Established transfer windows **reduce academic disruption and enable more thoughtful planning**

Provides data on students' preferences to inform school recruitment strategy and planning

* Similar models have been successfully deployed in other major school districts (e.g., New York City, Denver, New Orleans, Washington, D.C., Newark, Camden)

** CPS selective enrollment high schools use a ranked choice, one offer model today

A single offer* for all non-selective enrollment schools

will give students their highest possible school choice sooner



Increases **equity** for students



Creates greater **transparency** and fairness due to the unified process



Increases **efficiency** by allowing schools to plan for the right resources on day one

*students selected for selective-enrollment will receive two offers

What we've done so far for the application redesign

May 2016 through April 2017

- Cross-functional **CPS project team** launched to drive policy design and implementation
- **Recommended policies be updated** to enable unified high school application
- **Steering committee and working group convened** at least once monthly to provide input on policy and planning
- **New technology system** selected and custom development has begun
- **Informational campaign planning** kicked off and public website to be launched soon
- Community-based organizations have been selected to serve as **hubs to support families** through new application process, with a focus on equity

What we have planned for the coming months

May through October 2017

- **Testing and training opportunities** for elementary school counselors & school leaders, participating charters, selected community-based organizations plus other key stakeholders in preparation to support families with the new process
- **School toolkits** with support resources and materials to share with staff, students and families
- **Public website launch** so families can **subscribe for updates, quick tips and resources** to help more easily research school options and navigate the new process
- **Families activate accounts** to rank their options after eligibility data is loaded in the new system
- **Schedule for school open houses and high school fairs** shared online so families can plan more easily and schools can market themselves more easily

How is this different?

For Families

Families will have access to school & program information in one place to **research school and program options earlier** to make good decisions when ranking choices for their student(s) in the application.

For Students

Students will receive a **single best offer** to their highest ranked choice for which they are eligible and has a seat available for them which means way **fewer unused offers** that could have gone to someone else because preferences are taken into account.

This is why early research of options is critical!

For Schools

Schools will be able to **plan better for the first day** because they will know sooner which students have accepted an offer to enroll.

Schools will be better equipped with the information they need to serve their students!

Applying to High School

Improving equity, transparency & simplicity

APRIL 2017

