



# CHOICE SCHOOLS & PROGRAMS APPLICATION PROCESS 2018-2019

*As we continue to transform our district, one of our core strategies is to ensure that every child is in a best fit school that taps into their aspirations and interests, regardless of their academic abilities or geographic constraints.*

## TIMELINE

Month of October, 2017	Sibling Intent-to-Enroll forms distributed to all Choice School families
November 27, 2017	Choice Schools application window opens
January 31, 2018	Application window closes
Week of February 20, 2018	Notification emails, calls, texts, and letters sent to all applicants
March 20, 2018	Deadline for confirmation of seat
April 2018	Wait list notifications begin (through the first 4 weeks of school year)

<b><i>What grade-levels will hold a lottery? How many students will be accepted for each campus?</i></b>	Generally, lotteries are hosted for entry grades at Choice Schools and for Choice Programs. For elementary schools, entry grades are PK and kindergarten. For middle school, entry grade is 6 <sup>th</sup> grade. For high school, entry grade is 9 <sup>th</sup> grade.
<b><i>What kinds of lotteries are there?</i></b>	The following are examples of lotteries that could be utilized for selection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority Area (if priority is given to residents living within a certain area of the school, such as a 3-mile radius or a particular zip code)</li> <li>• In District/Out of District (if seats are set aside for out of district students)</li> <li>• Socioeconomic Status (Economically disadvantaged/non economically disadvantaged, if a specific percentage of seats are set aside for either classification)</li> <li>• Language (for campuses with dual language programs)</li> </ul>
<b><i>How does the lottery work?</i></b>	The lottery is a blind, randomized, computerized process done at the district level. Families are placed into appropriate categories, then the online platform conducts the lottery according to an algorithm programmed with the lottery parameters. The Office of Access and Enrollment Services (OAES) determines lottery guidelines for each campus.
<b><i>If I accept a seat, do I stay on the wait list of other schools?</i></b>	Yes. Families will only be removed from waitlists upon request.
<b><i>Some Choice Schools will be socioeconomically diverse schools. What does that mean?</i></b>	At some Choice Schools, a specific percentage of seats are reserved for economically disadvantaged students and students who are not economically disadvantaged, based on federal and state guidelines. Research shows that socioeconomically balanced schools are ideal learning environments for all students. Low-income student performance significantly increases, middle-class student performance sustains, and all students experience social benefits such as learning tolerance, learning to work with people from different backgrounds, and rejecting stereotypes.
<b><i>What percentage of seats will be held for economically disadvantaged families?</i></b>	Percentage of economically disadvantaged seats varies by campus.



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<p><b><i>What percentage of seats are for in-district vs. out of district families?</i></b></p>	<p>At all Choice Schools and Programs, a certain percentage of seats are set aside for in-district and out-of-district families. No more than 50% of seats will be set aside for out-of-district families, with the majority of campuses having no more than 30% of seats set aside.</p>
<p><b><i>If in-district seats are not filled, will additional out-of-district families be accepted?</i></b></p>	<p>In-district seats will not be filled by out-of-district families. The District will always maintain a specific percentage of seats for in-district families.</p>
<p><b><i>Do families in certain neighborhoods get preference? If yes, how does this work and what are the exact neighborhood boundaries or zip codes that will get preference?</i></b></p>	<p>For some Choice Schools and Programs, a percentage of seats in the lottery are held for families living within a priority area of the campus, such as an attendance zone, a zip code, or a designated mile radius. If the number of applications for the priority area exceeds the number of seats, a priority lottery will be conducted. Families living in the priority area not accepted through the priority lottery will be placed in the general lottery.</p>
<p><b><i>Do children of SAISD employees get preference? If yes, how does this work?</i></b></p>	<p>SAISD employees have the benefit of being considered in-district for the purpose of being able to apply for any SAISD school. They do not receive any additional preferences within the lottery.</p>
<p><b><i>Do children of Choice Schools and Programs employees get preference? If yes, how does this work?</i></b></p>	<p>Children of full-time employees at Choice Schools and Programs that report directly to the principal have the benefit of being considered as in-district families. Employee's children enter the lottery according to the parameters specified on their application and may still be considered for enrollment if not accepted through the lottery per District guidelines. Students of full-time employees hired after the application and selection window closes may also be considered for enrollment according to District guidelines.</p>
<p><b><i>Do siblings get preference? If yes, how does this work?</i></b></p>	<p>Siblings of currently enrolled students receive preference prior to the opening of the annual application and selection window. Sibling preference is capped at 25% of the total number of seats available through the lottery. A sibling lottery will be held if the number of anticipated siblings exceeds the number of available sibling seats. Siblings not accepted through the sibling lottery will be placed in the general lottery. Siblings not accepted through the general lottery may still be considered for enrollment according to District guidelines.</p> <p>Siblings applying to enter a Choice School or Program through the lottery in the same year will receive pull-in preference. If one sibling is accepted through the lottery and the other is not, both siblings are automatically accepted. This pull-in preference only happens for the lottery. If both siblings are placed on the waitlist and one is accepted, the other sibling is not automatically accepted.</p>
<p><b><i>I plan to move into SAISD, can I update my address before the lottery?</i></b></p>	<p>Families may adjust their applications as needed until the close of the application window on January 31. After that time, they must contact the OAES to update any information, and it is not guaranteed that the changes will be made prior to the conducting of the lottery. Families must provide proof of residency when confirming their seat if accepted to the Choice School or Program.</p>



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<p><b><i>How will backfilling work? Do families submit an online application for these seats? What grade levels are backfilled?</i></b></p>	<p>Families of currently enrolled students at Choice Schools and Programs will be given priority to add names of siblings to waitlists for grades that are not hosting a lottery. During the designated window, families will contact the OAES to add their names to the list. Contact can be done via phone, email, or text on a first-come, first served basis. The waitlists will be opened to the general public after the designated window for currently enrolled Choice Schools and Programs families. Elementary schools will backfill through third grade. Middle schools will backfill through 7<sup>th</sup> grade. High schools will backfill through 10<sup>th</sup> grade. The OAES will determine backfilling at schools with non-traditional grade configurations on a case-by-case basis.</p>
<p><b><i>Will transportation be provided?</i></b></p>	<p>Choice School and Program transportation utilize SAISD schools as stops and creates routes via a hub system. After students get picked up at a stop, they are brought to a central location where they transfer to a different bus that takes them to their destination school. In-district and out-of-district students may ride the bus to and from any of the stops provided.</p>
<p><b><i>Will extended day be provided?</i></b></p>	<p>Extended day is provided at most Choice Schools and Programs for grades kindergarten and above. Parents need to check with each school to determine the type of program provided, grade levels served, and cost involved.</p>
<p><b><i>Can students participate in UIL activities while attending a Choice School or Program?</i></b></p>	<p>Students enrolling in Choice Schools and Programs may participate in UIL activities. If the Choice School does not offer a particular UIL program, the student may participate in the program at their home school according to their address of residence per UIL guidelines. Students entering a Choice Program at a neighborhood school may participate in UIL activities at that same neighborhood campus.</p>

***For additional questions, contact the Office of Access and Enrollment Services:***

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