



Lottery Policy & Process 2024-25

LOTTERY RATIONALE

Great Lakes Academy is open to all students who live in the city of Chicago regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, or disability. Under charter school agreement with Chicago Public Schools and under mandate by Illinois Charter School law, Great Lakes Academy ("GLA") will be enrolling new students via public, virtual lottery. Members of the public, including parents and representatives from CPS, may be present. Parents/Guardians will be notified of results via text and email following the lottery.

Lottery Applications

The application deadline for the 2024-25 school year is Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at 10:59 PM CT. In 2024-25, Great Lakes Academy will hold lotteries for Kindergarten through 8th grade students. Applications can be submitted via our website (www.glachicago.org).

Before the lottery takes place, GLA staff will check all applications to make sure:

- All Kindergarten applicants will be 5 years old by 12/31/2024*.
- All sibling applicants are flagged.

Applications can be submitted after the lottery deadline however these applicants will not be eligible for the lottery and will be added to the bottom of our waitlist in the order the applications were submitted.

*** EARLY ADMISSION**

Eligibility

- Student birth date falls between September 2, 2019 and December 31, 2019 as displayed on birth certificate.
- Pre-K certification required as evidenced by written letter from program. Note: grades, student attendance, or letter of recommendation are not considered written evidence.
- Homeschooling and online learning does not qualify as Pre-K certified programming, and it will be recommended that these students apply for Kindergarten for the 2025-26 school year.

- Must meet all Great Lakes Academy application requirements, including entry assessments.

Early Admission Process

- Families interested in Early Admission consideration at Great Lakes Academy can apply online at www.glachicago.org.
- Parent/Guardian must submit the following as part of the application process by email to GLA at info@glachicago.org:
 - Written evidence of student attending current school year of preschool
 - A copy of student's birth certificate
- Only applications with students whose birth date falls between September 2, 2019 and December 31, 2019 will be considered for Early Admission. GLA will review the documents submitted.
- If both the written evidence and birth certificate are not on file with the front office when a seat becomes available, the student's application may be withdrawn.
- For lottery consideration, the parent/guardian must submit application with required documents by 10:59 PM CT on Tuesday, March 12, 2024.
- Applications received after the deadline will be added to the waitlist in the order they are received.
- If a seat becomes available, a GLA school representative will contact the parent/guardian via email and/or text (dependent on the parent/guardian's Schoolmint preferences) and at least one phone call. An in-person assessment must be scheduled and take place within five (5) business days of the pending offer made.
- If the student meets all Early Admission requirements, parents/guardians will receive an email and/or text with an official offer for acceptance. The parent/guardian will have a five (5) business day window to both accept and complete enrollment paperwork for the accepted child from the date the official offer is made.
- The parent/guardian may decide to accept or decline upon receipt of the official offer of admission.
- If the student does not meet the Early Admission process requirements, it will be recommended to apply for Kindergarten for the 2025-26 school year. This will come via email and/or text (dependent on the parent/guardian's Schoolmint preferences) and the student's application for the 2024-25 school year will be withdrawn.

FAMILY PREFERENCE

GLA's preference is to keep families together; therefore, per Illinois charter law, we allow for a sibling preference policy in our lottery. For definition purposes, "siblings" applies only to natural siblings, step siblings, foster siblings, and adoptive siblings.

Siblings of existing (current) Great Lakes Academy scholars will be given priority in the lottery the following year. Any siblings of current students will be put in a "family lottery" to be drawn from before the broader lottery pool. If there are more siblings applying than there are open seats, then any not drawn in the family lottery will be given first priority on the waitlist.

In an effort to keep families together that have students in more than one grade that are applying to Great Lakes Academy for the first time, applicant siblings will be given wait list priority if not drawn for open seats in respective grade level lotteries once the sibling who was accepted has their registration verified. For siblings in different grades applying together where a lottery is not required for one or more of the grades to which the siblings are applying, the siblings of students in the grades where a lottery is held will be moved to the top of their waitlist once the sibling's registration is verified if they are not drawn for an open seat in their grade.

For example, if a lottery is required for both Kindergarten and First Grade and there is a family with students applying to each of the grades, if the Kindergartener receives a spot on the waitlist during the Kindergarten lottery and the First Grader receives an open seat during the First Grade lottery, the Kindergarten sibling will move up to the top of the Kindergarten waitlist after the First Grade student's registration has been verified.

For multiple births (e.g. twins, triplets), each applicant within a set of multiples will receive the same lottery position during the lottery draw. While the lottery number is the same, each individual student will have a waitlist number that is sequential.

In the instance where siblings apply, are accepted, and then withdraw from the school, if the siblings were to apply again in the same school year, sibling preference would not be granted.

For example, say siblings in First and Third Grade apply, are accepted, and then withdraw. If the family decides to reapply in the same school year, both siblings would be added to the end of the waitlist. If the First Grade student was later accepted again, the Third Grade student would not advance to the top of the waitlist.

LOTTERY PROCEDURE

The lottery will take place on Wednesday, March 13, 2024, at 8:30 am virtually, recorded at Great Lakes Academy (8401 S Saginaw Ave, Chicago, IL 60617). All applicants will be entered into the lottery system "SchoolMint". To ensure compliance, our lotteries will be documented for public record via video recording. All lottery-related compliance paperwork and video recording will be submitted to CPS within 10 business days following the execution of the lottery. In the case where there are any technical difficulties and a video cannot be provided, a timestamped audit report of the lottery can be provided by Schoolmint.

LOTTERY NOTIFICATION

All parents/guardians will be notified of lottery results via text and email by 5:00 pm Thursday, March 14, 2024, providing there are no technical difficulties. An email and text (dependent on the person's Schoolmint preferences) will go out to parents/guardians of all students (both accepted and waitlisted).

- For parents/guardians of accepted students, the email and/or text will direct them to accept or decline the student's seat in SchoolMint. It will also contain information on how to begin filling out registration paperwork.
- For parents/guardians of waitlisted students, the email and/or text will inform them of their student's waitlist position. Anytime the student moves on the waitlist, the parent/guardian will be notified directly from SchoolMint.

GLA will begin enrolling students for the 2024-25 school year on Thursday, March 14 2024, after the lottery notifications have been sent. Families who are accepting their seat must complete their enrollment paperwork by April 11, 2024. Starting April 15, GLA may release the seats from any families who have not yet enrolled their child who were contacted after the original lottery.

In addition, if we are unable to reach families and do not get an affirmative response that the family is accepting the seat by April 1, 2024 at 4:00 pm (after at least: one phone call, one email, and one text), we will consider that seat released.

WAITLIST PROCESSING PROCEDURE

The waitlist is generated by Schoolmint based on the sibling priority described above. As seats become available, we will offer open seats to waitlisted students in the order they are available. Parents/guardians of waitlisted students who are offered an open seat will have a three-business day window to both accept and complete enrollment paperwork for the accepted child. GLA staff will make at least one phone call to families of students being offered a seat off of the waitlist and will send an email and/or text (applicant parent/guardians select how they would like to receive notification). If a family does not accept and complete required paperwork within the three business day

window, that seat may be released to the next person on the waitlist. The waitlist will be updated and submitted to the authorizer quarterly. If a student's name is removed from the waitlist for any reason, the reason will be documented on the waitlist that is sent to the authorizer. It will be maintained for the duration of the school year. A student not selected from the waitlist for a particular school year will need to re-apply for the next year's lottery.

LOTTERY/ENROLLMENT TIMELINE

- Application Deadline March 12, 2024 (Tuesday) @ 10:59 PM CT
- Lottery March 13, 2024 (Wednesday) @ 8:30 AM CT
- First Registration Window March 14, 2024 – April 11, 2024
- Deadline to accept seat from lottery April 1, 2024 (Monday) @ 4:00 PM CT
- Rolling Enrollment Begins April 2, 2024 (Tuesday)
- Deadline to Complete Enrollment April 11, 2024 (Thursday) @ 4:00 PM CT
- Start Waitlist Calls for Open Seats April 15, 2024 (Monday)