

Revised: February 2021

Board Approved Date: Mar 22, 2021

Board Chair: *John D Werderman*  
John D Werderman (Mar 22, 2021 17:08 EDT)

## **Anderson Creek Academy Admissions and Enrollment Policy**

**Purpose: This policy is in place to address the process for handling admissions at Anderson Creek Academy. The goal of this admissions policy is to declare the process and methods that will be used to admit students in a fair and consistent way that does not offer priority to any student except those specifically noted in charter school law 115C-238.29F(g)(5).**

Anderson Creek Academy is a nonprofit, tuition-free charter school authorized by the state of North Carolina. As a charter school, Anderson Creek Academy will be open to all students who would otherwise qualify for enrollment in North Carolina Public Schools. (G.S. 115C-218.45(a) To qualify to attend a NC Public School, a student must be a resident of North Carolina. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Division of Charter Schools, mandates that out of state residents are not eligible to participate in the lottery. A student who is not a domiciliary of the State shall, however, be permitted to register to enroll in Anderson Creek Academy or participate in the lottery for admission to Anderson Creek Academy by remote means, including electronic means, prior to commencement of the student's residency in the State if all of the following apply:

1. A parent or legal guardian is on active military duty and is transferred or pending transfer pursuant to an official military order to a military installation or reservation in the State.
2. Upon request by Anderson Creek Academy where the student seeks to register to enroll or participate in the lottery for admission, a parent or legal guardian provides a copy of the official military order transferring to a military installation or reservation located in the State.
3. A parent or legal guardian completes and submits Anderson Creek Academy's required enrollment forms and documentation, except that proof of residency and documentation related to disciplinary actions pursuant to subsection (i) of G.S. 115C-218.45(a) shall not be required until the student transfers into the State, at which time they shall be required prior to commencing attendance.

County boundaries or school attendance areas do not affect charter school enrollment. No child may be compelled to attend a public charter school by the local school administrative unit. Public Charter Schools are schools of "Choice."

The School will not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability. (G.S. 115C-218.55). Except as otherwise provided by law or the mission of the School as set out in the charter, the School shall not limit admission to students on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, race, creed, gender, national origin, religion, or ancestry. Unless otherwise provided by law, Anderson Creek Academy may refuse admission to any student who has been expelled or suspended from a public school under North Carolina General Statute 115C-390.5 through 115C-390.11 until the period of suspension or expulsion has expired.

Anderson Creek Academy's lottery open enrollment will begin mid-January and will end mid-to-late February. The lottery date, time and location will be published on the school's website by January 15th of each year. During the enrollment period, Anderson Creek Academy shall enroll for the coming year any eligible student who apply unless the total number of applications exceed the capacity of the program, class, grade level, or school building as designated by the school's Board of Directors. If the number of applications exceeds the number of available spaces, a lottery will be held at the conclusion of the enrollment period to fill vacant seats for the coming school year. After seats are filled, the drawing will continue to determine the order of a waiting list. Current year waiting list are valid only until the conclusion of the calendar year, prior to the next enrollment.

No criteria for admission will be used except the completed application. The application may be completed online through our website unless a family is unable to access the site. In that case, ACA shall provide a paper application to parents when requested. The application shall include the student's name, parent/guardian names, current address of student, phone number of parent/guardian, email of parent/guardian, county of residence, current grade level, their grade level for the coming year, student's date of birth, current school, the name of any siblings already enrolled at the school, declaration of the student's residence in the state of North Carolina, confirmation of access to email, parent email address and an indication as to how the family would like their children entered into the lottery.

During the lottery open enrollment, Anderson Creek Academy (ACA) will accept applications for new students. Once admitted to ACA, students are not required to re-enroll in subsequent lottery enrollment periods. The school may routinely request that parents complete an enrollment intent request form, to ascertain if students will return to Anderson Creek Academy for the following school year. After the lottery selection has been completed, the open enrollment schedule and application for admission packet shall be available on the school website. The Student Registration packet must be submitted subsequent to acceptance.

**Grade Level for the Lottery Application:**

Parents will be asked to confirm both their student's current grade as well as the grade for the coming year. Parents may not choose which grade they would like their child enrolled in for the coming year, they must enter the actual current grade and the next year's grade as confirmation. Parents wishing to have their child considered for retention must still submit their student for the subsequent grade level and then if admitted, the student will be evaluated by the Head of School and child's teacher before a retention decision is made. If the student's current school recommends a student for retention and has it documented in the student's file, the student will be moved to the appropriate grade if they have been admitted to school and will retain enrollment status with Anderson Creek Academy. If the student is on the wait list at the time the retention decision is made, they will be moved to the correct grade level and placed on the wait list of their new grade based on the number they were pulled during the lottery.

Each child is entered in the lottery separately. If a student is selected and has a sibling, the other sibling(s) will be selected for their grade level(s) if spots are available and will be placed in the appropriate grade level(s). If there are no spots available, they will be placed as priority on the wait list for those grade level(s) at that time.

**Returning Students:**

Current students at Anderson Creek Academy will not be required to re-enroll. They will be asked to sign a letter of intent for the coming year during January to allow the school to plan appropriately for the lottery.

**Enrollment Priority:**

ACA shall follow all rules and regulations regarding enrollment priority as specified in charter school law 115C-238.29F(g)(5) and 115C-218.45.

Anderson Creek Academy is authorized to give enrollment priority to certain student as provided by North Carolina General Statute 115C-218.45(f). The enrollment priorities recognized by Anderson Creek Academy at this time include the following:

1. Children of the school's full-time employees or School Board Members not to exceed 15% of student enrollment. (minimum of 30 hours a week)
2. Sibling of currently enrolled students (as determined by Charter School law G.S. 115C-238.29F(g)(5a) who are admitted to the charter school in a previous year and siblings of students who have completed the highest grade level offered by the school who were enrolled in at least four grade levels offered by the charter school.
3. A student who was enrolled in the charter school within the two previous years but left the school to participate in academic study abroad program of a competitive admission residential program or because of vocational opportunities of the student's parents.

These priorities are followed in order and are provided only when space is available for the students in question.

**Multiple Birth Siblings:**

If multiple birth siblings apply to the school, their surname will be entered each time to represent all the multiple birth siblings. If the multiple birth siblings are pulled in the lottery when there is still at least one spot remaining in their grade level, all multiple birth siblings shall be admitted. If their application is pulled after the spots are all filled, they will be added to the wait list in the order they are listed on their application.

**Lottery Procedure Considerations:**

Anderson Creek Academy has set up the following procedures in accordance with Charter School Law G.S. 1 15C- 238.29F(g)(5b) that states "If siblings apply for admission to a charter school and a lottery is needed under G.S. 1 15C- 238.29F(g)(6), it is our intent to provide Lottery Procedures that benefit families but are fair and consistent for all of our applicants.

**Lottery Procedures**

Prior to the general enrollment lottery, the school will conduct a sibling lottery of the students admitted in the prior year if more siblings have applied than there are available spots. If there are more siblings that have applied than there are spots available, a grade level wait list will be started and students not receiving spots will be added to the wait list in the order in which they are pulled.

Once the sibling lottery has been completed (if needed) the general lottery will begin. Anderson Creek Academy will place all applications received during the open enrollment period into one school wide lottery. If the application has more than one child listed on it, all children will be placed in their respective grades. If there are still spots remaining in the grade, they will be admitted. If there are no spots remaining in their respective grade, they will be placed on their grade level wait list at that time.

The school will add remaining applicants to the wait list in the order they are pulled from the lottery. This wait list will be used in the event that a spot opens, and the school chooses to fill the vacant position

Lottery procedures will comply with the North Carolina open meetings law provided in North Carolina General Statute 143-218.10 (a). Anderson Creek Academy will publicize the date, time and location of the lottery, and all persons are allowed to attend.

All students selected in a lottery must certify acceptance of enrollment within 5 business days or the seat will be forfeited to the next person on the waiting list on the 6<sup>th</sup> business day.

**Lottery Results:**

The school will post the results of the lottery on the website up to 10 business days of the lottery. If a student has been admitted to the school, the parent/guardian of the student will be contacted via email unless they indicated on their application that they did not have access to email. If the parent is unable to receive email, an acceptance letter will be mailed to the child's residence.

The results and the wait list will be updated regularly to allow parents to determine their current place on the wait list. Parents of students placed on the wait list will not receive communication via email or mail as to their student's place on the wait list. They will be asked to look at the wait list information placed online to determine their spot on the wait list.

**Students Applying after the Open Enrollment Period:**

Any students applying after the open enrollment period will be placed in their respective grade if there is still space available. Otherwise, they will be placed directly after any wait listed students from the lottery in the order the application was received.

**Enrollment:**

Once the lottery has been conducted and parents have been notified that their child(ren) has been selected to attend by lottery, they will have five (5) days to accept or decline enrollment. After acceptance, the parents will be notified of open enrollment times that they may come to the school to fill out the enrollment paperwork. If the parent is unable to attend any of the scheduled open enrollment times, they will be notified to schedule an alternate time to fill out enrollment paperwork. If parents do not fill out enrollment paperwork within 7 days of the last open enrollment date, the child will be placed back on the wait list.

If enrollment is declined and then a parent later decides they would like to send their student after all, they will be asked to submit a new application and they will be placed on the wait list in the next available spot.

As seats at the school become available, the parent/guardian of the student will be contacted via email or phone. If the parent does not have access to email and has specified that on their application, the school will mail a letter of acceptance to the child's residence.

**Anderson Creek Academy's Right to Refuse Enrollment**

Anderson Creek Academy reserves the right to refuse to enroll any student currently under a term of expulsion or suspension by his or her school until that term is over. Anderson Creek Academy reserves the right to refuse to enroll a student if a parent willingly and knowingly provided incorrect information on the enrollment application. If a student has accepted enrollment at the school but does not appear at the school in the first 2 days of school, the school will make reasonable attempts to contact the parents. If there is no response from the parent by the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of school, the school reserves the right to remove the student from their enrollment roster and offer the next student on the wait list the spot.

**Enrollment Meetings and Enrollment Forms:**

At least one parent or guardian will be encouraged to attend an Enrollment Meeting to learn more about the school and to turn in enrollment paperwork. At the Enrollment Meeting, the parent/guardian will sign enrollment documentation and turn in remaining enrollment paperwork. Each family will be expected to complete all information as required by the NC DPI for enrollment including proof of residence in NC. If a child is admitted to the school after the initial Enrollment Meetings, the parent will be encouraged to return their completed packet to the front office. If the parent is unable to attend one of the Enrollment Meetings but notifies the school of their inability to do so, they will be given the available times to drop off enrollment paperwork through the front office.

**Handling of Error:**

If any mistake is made by Anderson Creek Academy in administering the lottery (or if any discrepancy occurs in the lottery process as a result of the actions of Anderson Creek Academy that is not corrected during the lottery), such mistake or discrepancy will not invalidate the lottery and the lottery results will stand with respect to all applicants who were admitted at the appropriate grade level through the lottery. The mistake or discrepancy will be corrected at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors (after recognition of the mistake). If a mistake is made by an applicant resulting in the applicant not being placed at the appropriate grade level in the lottery, the applicant will not be admitted and may submit a corrected application, which will be subject to the process followed for students applying after the enrollment period.

If too many students were included in the lottery at a grade level or if a student name was duplicated in the lottery at a grade level, the student or students who should not have been included (or the duplicate with the lower priority placement number, as applicable) will be removed, and any applicants with placement numbers behind the applicants who were removed will be advanced in order on the list.

If an applicant is left out of the lottery by mistake, the number of students who were included in the lottery will be determined. For each applicant not included by mistake, a random application number from the full pool of applicants received will be assigned, and the applicant will be assigned that number as his or her lottery placement number and appropriately placed as if they were pulled at the same time as the randomly assigned placement number. Any applicants with placement numbers on the wait list behind the applicants who were left off by mistake will be moved down in order on the list. As noted above, lottery results will stand with respect to all applicants who were admitted at the appropriate grade level through the lottery.

**Parent Errors:**

If a student name is duplicated in the lottery and Anderson Creek Academy administration determines that the student was intentionally registered more than one time, the student will be assigned the lowest priority placement number assigned to the student in the lottery.

If an applicant has been incorrectly placed in a grade because a parent wishes to have their student retained, the applicant will not be admitted and may submit a corrected application, which will be subject to the process followed for students applying after the enrollment period.

The school shall make every effort for the population of the school to reasonably reflect the racial and ethnic composition of the general population residing within the local school administrative unit in which the school is located.

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Final Audit Report

2021-03-22

Created:	2021-03-22
By:	TERRI YOUNG (YOUNGT@ACACHARTER.COM)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAiA5mA0PihHpI7kY90r383dtVjeUx0Mgc

## "Board Admissions and Enrollment Policy revised February 2021" History

 Document created by TERRI YOUNG (YOUNGT@ACACHARTER.COM)

2021-03-22 - 1:36:49 PM GMT- IP address: 152.26.197.26

 Document emailed to John D Werderman (werdermanj@acacharter.com) for signature

2021-03-22 - 1:38:05 PM GMT

 Email viewed by John D Werderman (werdermanj@acacharter.com)

2021-03-22 - 9:07:28 PM GMT- IP address: 66.102.8.17

 Document e-signed by John D Werderman (werdermanj@acacharter.com)

Signature Date: 2021-03-22 - 9:08:04 PM GMT - Time Source: server- IP address: 174.24.167.164

 Agreement completed.

2021-03-22 - 9:08:04 PM GMT