

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS, LOTTERY, RECRUITMENT POLICY FY 26

Christopher House elementary School is a public charter school. Admission is open to all residents of the City of Chicago.

Christopher House works to ensure that all children and populations, including diverse learners and homeless students, are welcome and able to apply for and enroll in our school. Our recruitment strategy is grounded in our belief that all students can learn, and in our desire to welcome all students and families and their diverse learning and social-emotional needs.

We make a significant effort to make sure that all families receive information about our school. If a family does not have a phone number or address, Christopher House will work to ensure that families receive all the information needed, and that communication takes place in a face-to-face meeting at or near the school.

Under Illinois Charter School Law, preference for admission must be given to those who have siblings already enrolled at Christopher House Elementary School. If there are more sibling applications than there are available spots in a grade, Christopher House Elementary Charter School will be required to hold a lottery of the sibling applications. Those siblings not admitted through the lottery will be put on the top of the waiting list for that grade, in the order that their names were drawn from the pool. If there are no spots available in a grade, a lottery will still be held to determine the order of the siblings at the top of the waiting list for that grade. For definition purposes, “siblings” are two or more children that are related either by 1) birth, by means of the same father or mother, or by 2) legal adoption.

Lottery Policies

We admit students to Christopher House Elementary Charter School using a blind lottery. Our lottery does not take grades, testing, race, disability, or any other criteria into account. The lottery is open to any child (who will be 5 years old by September 1, 2026 residing in the city of Chicago. To be entered the lottery, students (including siblings) must apply by the deadline. Christopher House will conduct a lottery when demand exceeds available seats at the school. The lottery is open to the public and conducted manually. The lottery procedure is listed below.

Timeline and Delegation of Key Responsibilities

Task	Person Responsible	Date
Finalize lottery process for SY25	CEO	Sept. 19, 2024
Application process opens	FSS Director/Principal	Jan 21, 2025
Recruit new scholars and maintain pre-lottery applications	FSS Director	Jan 21- Feb 28, 2025
All enrollment and lottery compliance documents submitted to CPS	Principal	Dec. 28, 2024
Application deadline	FSS Director	Feb 28, 2025

Finalize list of all applications received during application period	FSS Director	March 2025
Maintain Waitlist of all applications received after Feb 28, 2025 in the order they were received	FSS Director	Ongoing from March 1, 2025
Determine need for lottery	CEO	Jan. 13, 2026
Notify perspective 2026 kindergarten families of need for lottery	FSS Director	Jan. 20, 2026
Hold lottery in compliance with CPS and CH policy	CEO	Feb. 2, 2026 5:00 p.m.
Inform perspective 2026 kindergarten families of the lottery results	FSS Director	Feb. 6, 2026
Completion of elementary School enrollment for incoming kindergartners	FSS Director	March 7, 2026
Additional Vacancies filled using the Waitlist	Principal	May 13, 2026

Determining the Need for Lottery

Depending on the number of applications received, Christopher House will take one of two courses of action to ensure an equal chance of admission.

Scenario	Course of Action
Christopher House receives more applicants than seats available.	Siblings of current Christopher House Elementary School students, who applied by application deadline, will be given preference. A lottery will take place on the date stated in the application for the remaining spots available. The lottery will be a random manual drawing of names. The lottery will be public and take place at one of our family resource centers. The lottery will be videotaped. The first names drawn for each grade level that fill available spots will receive the opportunity to enroll at the school. Remaining names will be added to a wait list in the order that they are drawn. Additional applications received after the lottery deadline will be added to the wait list after any names drawn through the lottery, in the order they are received
Christopher House does not receive more applications than available seats.	In Scenario B, there is no legal obligation or need to hold a lottery as all students will gain admittance into the school so long as necessary enrollment paperwork is completed. Additional community outreach will be conducted to fill remaining slots. Students will gain admittance in the order that their applications are received and once all slots are filled, names will be added to a wait list. Siblings of current Christopher House Elementary School students will be given preference. If there are spots available, they will be accepted immediately. If there are no spots available, siblings will be placed on the wait list and moved to the top of the wait list, below any siblings that may already be on the list.

In both scenarios, once the lottery deadline has passed, applications will be enrolled or added to a waitlist in the order they are received. This wait list will become active after all scholars placed in the lottery have been admitted into Christopher House Elementary School.

Logistics and Compliance: Procedures to take in the event a lottery is needed:

1. Determine the date of the lottery
The lottery date is scheduled to ensure the participation of the principal, the CEO, and the third-party auditor (CPS Designee)
 - a. Must be at least two weeks after applications are due
 - b. Must be after the CPS selective school admission window
 - c. Must be published on all recruitment and application materials and the Christopher House Elementary School website
2. Confirm lottery logistics
 - a. Arrange for the lottery to take place in a large room with space for all families to attend
 - b. Arrange for procurement of a lottery bin, a microphone, check-in table, data entry table, and projector
 - c. Confirm the independent auditor's attendance. The third-party auditor must not be someone with children enrolled at the elementary school or with children applying for the elementary school.
 - d. Determine the number of students that can be enrolled in each grade. Prepare all notices to families that have been selected through the lottery and those that will be placed on the waitlist within 48 hours of the lottery.
 - e. Contact CPS Designee and invite to participate in lottery
 - f. Arrange for videotaping of lottery.
3. Monitor the progress of application submissions and waitlist for all scholars
 - a. Finalize the list of returning students and siblings of current students
 - b. Maintain list of new student applications
4. Submit all necessary paperwork to authorizer
 - a. Submit a copy of the lottery results, a written summary of the lottery process and the manner in which it complies with Article 27A of the Illinois School Code, and any supporting documentation to Chicago Public Schools within ten (10) business days of the lottery date
 - b. An electronic copy of the lottery videotape must be archived on CHES drive and submitted to CPS.
5. Notify Families of selection of lottery
 - a. Mail letters with contract to families selected in the lottery.
 - b. Mail letters to families regarding placement on waitlist.
 - c. Allow two weeks for families to respond and accept opening.
 - d. After two weeks, the following outreach procedures will be initiated:
 - i. The first follow-up contact will be made by phone, requesting that the applicant come in to complete the enrollment process. If initial contact is not successful, then;

- ii. A second phone contact will be initiated, and letter will be hand delivered the same day (2nd contact) requesting the applicant to follow-up with the site Parent Advocate within five (5) days of the date the letter was delivered.
 - iii. The third and final contact will be made two (2) days after the second phone call and letter delivered. If the Parent Advocate does not hear back from the applicant within seven (7) days of the first contact attempt
 - e. If no progress on the application process is made after the outreach described above the application will be archived and the next scholar on the waitlist will be contacted.
- 6. Complete enrollment materials
 - a. Schedule and host “Enrollment Workshop” to assist families with the completion of all enrollment forms.
 - b. Set deadline dates for collection of enrollment forms.
 - c. If families do not supply the appropriate enrollment forms by the deadline, the outreach procedures described in 5d and e will be followed.
- 7. Manage the waitlist as necessary
 - a. Once each grade level is at capacity, new applicants to be placed on the waitlist
 - b. To contact families for an opening: 2 contact calls/emails with a 48-hour deadline before moving on to the next name on the waitlist.
 - c. Submit waitlist to CPS with financial reports on a quarterly basis including which students were removed from the waitlist and the reason for removal.
 - d. Waitlist will be maintained until the last day of the new school year with a reason recorded for each declined offer.