

Approved by the
Board of Trustees on
March 10, 2008

Rising Tide Charter Public School Enrollment Policies and Procedures

The Rising Tide Charter Public School (Rising Tide) is a grades 5-8 public charter school whose enrollment policies and procedures are consistent with Massachusetts' Charter School Statute (MGL, ch.71, sec. 89). As a public school, Rising Tide is open to all students who reside in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In admitting students, Rising Tide does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or in a foreign language, or academic achievement. Students are admitted by Lottery and/or by Waiting List. Each year, a Lottery is held in March for available spaces for the upcoming school year; additional lotteries are held throughout the year, as necessary. When openings arise during the school year in any grade level, students are admitted according to their placement on a Waiting List. The policies and procedures described below have been created and developed by the Rising Tide Charter Public School Administration and Board of Trustees.

Initial Application

Any parent or student who inquires about admission to Rising Tide Charter Public School will be given information about the school, and encouraged to attend an Open House information session, offered several times throughout the school year. Rising Tide also offers regular Wednesday morning school tours. These tours are conducted by school personnel and student tour guides. The Head of School and Assistant Head of School may interview prospective students; both are available to answer questions from prospective families upon request. Interested students and their parents must complete an Enrollment Application to be included in the Lottery. The school must receive all Enrollment Applications on the day before the publicized Lottery date.

Eligibility Criteria

1. Rising Tide requires that applicants be residents of Massachusetts at the time of the application, and applicants may be asked for proof of Massachusetts residency.
2. Rising Tide requires each student and his/her parents or guardians to read the Welcome Packet and sign the Rising Tide Family Agreement prior to enrollment.
3. Rising Tide requires that applicants successfully complete the grade preceding the grade to which they apply.
4. Rising Tide requires that each student and his/her parents or guardians read the Student Handbook by the end of the first week of the school year.
5. Rising Tide will notify applicants who do not meet the eligibility requirements in writing within 2 weeks of receiving the application.

Lottery Procedures

Rising Tide holds its annual admission Lottery in March for available spaces in the upcoming school year. This Lottery date is publicized on the Annual School Calendar and the school website, as well as on announcements to the community displayed for enrollment purposes. Open House information sessions and lottery dates will be advertised through local media. Additional lotteries may be held periodically throughout the school year as Enrollment Applications accumulate. For such lotteries, Rising Tide will publicize the Lottery date and the Enrollment Application deadline at least one month in advance of the Lottery. The Lottery policies and procedures are as follows:

1. Rising Tide determines the number of available spaces in each grade level prior to the annual admission Lottery, based on the school's capacity and the estimated number of returning students.
2. The deadline for accepting enrollment applications is the day before the Lottery date.
3. Each time a Lottery is held, a disinterested party will draw names; a disinterested person is someone who is not affiliated with the school.
4. Siblings of students who are already in attendance at Rising Tide in the year of the application have preference for admission over non-sibling resident students. Siblings of alumni/ae are not given a preference. Siblings of applicants who have been accepted for admission, but are not yet attending (including twins), are not given a preference.
5. Residents of Plymouth have enrollment preference over non-resident applicants because Rising Tide is located in Plymouth. Students must be residents of Plymouth at the time of application to get preference.
6. Students who live within Massachusetts but are not residents of Plymouth are admitted or placed on the waiting list through the lottery, after siblings and Plymouth residents.
7. Students for whom enrollment in Rising Tide would cause the sending district to exceed the 9% tuition cap may not be offered admission.
8. For those students to whom the above policy applies but who are also siblings of students currently in attendance at the school, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts may pay the child's tuition, subject to the availability of state appropriations.
9. All applicants for a given application and enrollment process will be drawn in the lottery and assigned a number.
10. Applicants who have been granted admission to Rising Tide must accept enrollment within two weeks of the acceptance date.
11. A student is considered enrolled at Rising Tide Charter Public School if an offer of admission is made and an acceptance is received in the form of the Student Registration Form and a signed Family Agreement.
12. Enrollment Applications submitted to Rising Tide after the annual admissions Lottery will be included in subsequent lotteries as necessary.

Waiting List Policy

At the time of an enrollment Lottery, if Rising Tide receives more applicants than available spaces, the Lottery will continue past the number of available spaces so that students not granted immediate admission may be placed, by number, on a waiting list. If Rising Tide holds additional lotteries after the annual admission Lottery, each applicant from such lotteries will be given a numbered place on the waiting list. As spaces become available, these students on the waiting list will be offered admission according to their numbered place on the waiting list.

Applicants on the waiting list who decline an offer of admission but desire to attend Rising Tide in the next school year will be rolled over into the subsequent school year's annual admission Lottery. Applicants on the waiting list who have not yet been offered admission will retain their waiting list position for the subsequent school year.

Notification and Enrollment

Within a week after any lottery, students who gain admission through the lottery process will be notified by telephone of their admission. A letter will be sent to the family of each admitted student, along with a Registration Form and a Family Agreement. Admitted students/families must accept or reject an offer of admission within two weeks of notification of admission. In order to be enrolled at Rising Tide, each student and his/her family must return a completed Registration Form and sign the Family Agreement. Newly enrolled 5th graders are expected to attend a New Student Orientation on a Saturday morning in May.

Students who have gained admission through the lottery process, and have been home schooled prior to attending Rising Tide, will be asked to submit examples of grade level work to enable proper placement.

Within a week after any lottery, students who are placed on the waiting list through the lottery process will be notified by letter of their position on the waiting list. If a space becomes available before the beginning of the new school year, students offered admission from the waiting list will be notified by telephone that a space has become available. If the student and family are still interested in enrolling at Rising Tide, a letter will be sent to the family of the admitted student along with a Registration Form and a Family Agreement. Admitted students/families must accept or reject an offer of admission within two weeks of notification of admission.

If space becomes available during the school year, students offered admission from the waiting list must come to the school for a shadow visit to ensure that the student as well as his/her family is informed about the choice that will be made. It is also recommended that the parents/guardians of the student meet with the Head of School or Assistant Head of School to discuss the transition.