

# Enrollment and Lottery Policy 2021-2022 SY

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## **Purpose**

FCA is committed to maximizing open enrollment for students in grades K-11 within its annually set enrollment limits, while carefully considering student/teacher ratio to ensure students are provided with quality instruction and support. Each year the school will conduct an open application period. After accounting for returning students, their eligible siblings, and other preferences outlined below, if the number of enrollment applications completed during the annual open application period exceeds the available slots, FCA will ensure applicants have an equal chance of admission through means of a publicly held random lottery selection process.

## **Nondiscrimination Assurances**

FCA does not discriminate against any person on the basis of ethnic group identification, race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, physical or mental disability, athletic performance, language proficiency in English or another language, prior academic achievement, or age in the admission to, participation in, or receipt of any educational services or activities.<sup>1</sup>

## **Open Application Period and Waitlist**

FCA will have an open application period each year at a time to be specified in the second semester of each year for the following year. During this period, applicants who are interested in enrolling must begin by:

- Completing the Registration Form, Family and Student Information Forms which are available on the school's website.
- Submitting required documentation as indicated on [FCA's Enrollment Checklist](#) for proof of residency.

No new students will be enrolled for the school year during the open application period. If there are more completed registrations than available slots at the end of the application period, a lottery will be conducted. If the school is not oversubscribed at the end of the application period, students will be admitted on a first come/first served basis until the enrollment cap is met. Once the enrollment cap is met, the school will continue to accept applications from students who will be placed on the waiting list in the date order the application is received.

## **Lottery Procedure**

Upon accounting for returning students, their eligible siblings, and other preferences, if the number of completed enrollment applications exceeds the available slots at the end of the open application period, a random lottery will be conducted in accordance with this policy. FCA will post the date, time, and location of the lottery on its website Enrollment page.

- The lottery may or may not be conducted in grade clusters.

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<sup>1</sup> This statement is in accordance with the provisions of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendment of 1972 (Title IX), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and state regulations as applicable.

- The grade order in which the lottery is drawn and the total number of students selected may vary each year depending on the number of students who receive an enrollment preference.
- The lottery will be open to the public, but attendance is not required.

When all slots are filled via the lottery, students not selected will be placed on a waiting list in the order of their lottery number and made an offer to enroll in descending order as space becomes available. The waiting list is limited to one school year only and will not carry over to the next school year. A new application must be submitted each year.

### **Randomization of Lottery**

In order to ensure a random lottery without the possibility of human bias and error, ARCA will utilize a computer-generated randomization. The program will randomly select a student name from the pool of enrollment applicants for a specific grade cluster until the number of available slots are filled, or the pool of enrollment applications is exhausted.

### **Enrollment Preferences**

FCA will give enrollment preference in accordance with F.S. §1002.31 and F.S. §1002.33 as follows:

- Dependent children of active duty military personnel of any branch of the United States Armed Forces (including those students whose move resulted from military orders),
- Children who have been relocated due to a foster care placement in a different school zone,
- Children who move due to a court ordered change in custody due to separation or divorce, or the serious illness or death of a custodial parent,
- Students who are siblings of a student enrolled in the charter school (year 2 and beyond),
- Students who are the children of a member of the governing board of the charter school,
- Students who are the children of an employee of the charter school,
- Students who attended or are assigned to failing schools pursuant to F.S. §1002.38(2), and/or
- Students residing in Hillsborough County Public Schools.

Spaces for these students will be reserved until a published date and will be released if not filled. Recruitment and admissions policies and practices will meet all federal requirements.

### **Student Selection Process**

Students selected in the lottery will be provided an offer of enrollment which must be accepted within a specified period or the student will forfeit his/her space to the next student on the waiting list. After an offer has been accepted, students will have a designated period of time to complete all enrollment requirements or forfeit their space to the next student on the list.

Siblings of applicants who are selected in the lottery will also be offered enrollment, provided that the sibling is also eligible to participate in the lottery as long as space is available in the grade or grade cluster. Any sibling may withdraw at any time without affecting the status of other enrolled siblings.

### **Annual Review of Enrollment Process and Training**

Each year, FCA personnel will review, edit, and approve the enrollment and eligibility requirements via Connexus. In this web page, school staff and the School Leader review, edit, and approve "required" and "requested" information and documentation that can be accepted to satisfy enrollment

requirements.

There is comprehensive training program for Connections staff in the Enrollment Service Center that includes instructions for determining valid documentation for enrollment in a virtual school in Florida as well as requested documentation.

## **Stages of Enrollment Process**

Families may commence the enrollment process online using Connexus or by calling a toll-free number for assistance. Connexus is available to students and their families, and to other authorized users according to their permissions, 24/7/365. Completion of the enrollment process is conditional on the completion of the following stages:

1. **Stage One** – The parent/legal guardian accurately completes the Parent/Legal Guardian (Caretaker) Acknowledgement Form (one per household). Student Information Form (one per student) and the Family Information Form (one per family). This information is used to ensure appropriate course placement and gathering of information that will be helpful to school personnel in assisting student success in the program. Information such as ethnicity is also collected for federal reporting requirements and is not used for enrollment purposes.
2. **Stage Two** – The parent/legal guardian-submitted documentation is verified and course placement completed by the FCA enrollment and academic placement teams.
  - a. FCA will work with Connections' Academic Placement Team to collaborate and establish recommended practices to use when finalizing course placement for all students. This includes, but is not limited to, placement of general education, special education, and gifted education, for all students. These practices will align with Florida standards and Connections Education curriculum to provide a personalized course placement for all enrolling students.
  - b. Using the submitted academic documentation and information provided by the Caretaker during the enrollment process, the academic placement team will consider the following factors to ensure an accurate placement of all enrolling students:
    - i. Age (Is the student age appropriate for the grade level requested?)
    - ii. Grade level completed and grade level requested (Is the student asking to skip or repeat a grade level?)
    - iii. Academic documentation (Is the student passing or failing courses?)
    - iv. Academic background (What level of courses did the student complete?)
    - v. Skills Assessments (Is the student showing readiness for the Florida-aligned curriculum?)
    - vi. FCA and State requirements (What courses are available? What courses does the student need to take based on the course progression and to meet graduation requirements?)
      1. Specific to incoming 4<sup>th</sup> grade students, did the student successfully show proficiency on the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA)?
  - c. Questions or concerns that may arise upon review of these factors are escalated to the Manager of Counseling or School Leader, as appropriate.
  - d. Academic documentation is reviewed and the student is provided with his or her personalized learning plan on the basis of the factors described in Stage 2.b.
3. **Stage Three** – The parent/legal guardian reviews course placement and agrees to the terms and conditions of enrollment.
4. The student is then considered officially enrolled in FCA.