RMSA's Admission, Enrollment and Lottery Policy

- Adopted:
- Revised: 11.19.2025

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set forth admission and enrollment procedures that Rochester Math and Science Academy (RMSA) utilizes.

II. General Statement of Purpose

(Content intentionally blank as provided.)

III. Admission Limitations

A. RMSA may limit admission to:

1. Pupils within an age group or grade level;

2. Pupils who are eligible to participate in the graduation incentives program under Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.68; or

3. Residents of a specific geographic area in which the school is located when the majority of students served by the school are members of underserved populations.

B. RMSA shall comply with the Minnesota Human Rights Act, which prohibits educational institutions from discriminating against students based on a protected class including race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability.

C. Charter schools must disseminate information about the school's offerings and enrollment procedures to families that reflect the diversity of Minnesota's population and targeted groups. Targeted groups include low-income families and communities, students of color, students at risk of academic failure, and students underrepresented in the school's student body relative to Minnesota's population. The school must document its dissemination activities in the school's annual report. The school's dissemination activities must be a component of the authorizer's performance review of the school.

IV. Enrollment

A. RMSA shall enroll an eligible pupil who submits a timely application, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or building. In this case, pupils must be accepted by lot. Review section VII for the lottery process.

B. RMSA is located in Rochester, Minnesota, and primarily serves students residing in Rochester and the surrounding communities. Admission to RMSA must be free to any eligible pupil who resides within the state. A charter school must give enrollment preference to a Minnesota resident pupil over pupils that do not reside in Minnesota. A charter school must require a pupil who does not reside in Minnesota to annually apply to enroll in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.11, paragraphs (a) to (f).

C. RMSA must give enrollment preference to a sibling of an enrolled pupil and to a foster child of that pupil's parents and may give preference for enrolling children of the school's staff before accepting other pupils by lot. A staff member eligible for an enrollment preference for their child, including a foster child, must be an individual employed at the school whose employment is stipulated in advance to total at least 480 hours in a school calendar year.

D. A person may not be admitted to RMSA (1) as a kindergarten pupil, unless the pupil is at least five years of age on September 1 of the calendar year in which the school year for which the pupil seeks admission commences; or (2) as a first grade student, unless the pupil is at least six years of age on September 1 of the calendar year in which the school year for which the pupil seeks admission commences or has completed kindergarten; except that RMSA may establish and publish on its website a policy for admission of selected pupils at an earlier age, consistent with the enrollment process in paragraphs A and B.

E. Except as permitted in paragraphs D and H, RMSA may not limit admission to pupils on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or athletic ability and may not establish any criteria or requirements for admission that are inconsistent with this section.

F. RMSA or any agent of the school must not distribute any services or goods, payments, or other incentives of value to students, parents, or guardians as an inducement, term, or condition of enrolling a student in a charter school.

G. Once a student who resides in Minnesota is enrolled in the school in kindergarten through grade 12, the student is considered enrolled in the school until the student formally withdraws, the school receives a request for the transfer of educational records from another school, the school receives a written election by the parent or legal guardian of the student withdrawing the student, or the student is expelled under the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act in Minnesota Statutes, sections 121A.40 to 121A.56.

H. A charter school serving at least 90 percent of enrolled students who are eligible for special education services and have a primary disability of deaf, deafblind, or hard-of-hearing may give enrollment preference to students who are eligible for special education services and have a primary disability of deaf, deafblind, or hard-of-hearing. The charter school may not limit admission based on the student's eligibility for additional special education services.

I. RMSA is committed to ensuring full and equal access for students experiencing homelessness as defined under the McKinney–Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. §11431 et seq.). Homeless students may enroll immediately, even if they lack typically required documents such as proof of residency, immunization records, or previous school records. The school's McKinney–Vento Liaison will assist families in obtaining necessary documentation and ensuring transportation and support services in compliance with federal and state law.

V. Procedures

A. Information regarding enrollment deadlines and procedures will be published on the school's enrollment forms and school website. Information regarding Minnesota Statute 124D.10 will be included in the form.

B. Each year RMSA will inform the public of the deadline for submitting enrollment forms for admissions for the following school year.

C. RMSA will publish annually a date for its initial annual lottery for admission for the following school year if needed.

D. Applicants who are siblings of students currently enrolled in the school do need to fill out an application for their spot and submit it prior to the lottery deadline.

VI. Grade-Level Parameters

RMSA serves students in Kindergarten through Grade 12. To ensure a high-quality learning environment and maintain appropriate class sizes, the school establishes a maximum number of students per grade level each year based on classroom space, staffing levels, and program needs.

The typical grade-level capacity is as follows:

Kindergarten – 25 students

Grades 1–5 – 25 students per grade

Grades 6–8 – 28 students per grade

Grades 9–12 – 30 students per grade

If the number of applications exceeds the available seats in any grade, RMSA will conduct a random lottery in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 124E.11. Applicants not selected during the lottery will be placed on a waiting list in the order drawn and will be offered admission as space becomes available.

Mid-year enrollment may be accepted if space remains in the requested grade level. If the grade is at capacity, the applicant will be placed on the waiting list for the next available opening.

RMSA reviews grade-level enrollment parameters annually to ensure compliance with state law and to align capacity with available staffing, space, and resources.

VII. Lottery Process

1. If the number of applications exceeds available spots in any grade, a public lottery will be conducted to determine admission.

2. The lottery will take place on a publicly announced date and time, witnessed by school officials and open to the public.

3. Names will be drawn randomly and assigned to available seats.

4. Once all available seats are filled, remaining applicants will be placed on a waiting list in the order drawn.

VIII. Notification and Enrollment Confirmation

1. Parents/guardians of students selected through the lottery will be notified via email and/or mail within five business days of the lottery.

2. Families must confirm acceptance within ten (10) business days of receiving notification.

3. If a family declines or fails to respond within the deadline, the spot will be offered to the next student on the waiting list.

IX. Waiting List Policy

1. The waiting list will be maintained for the school year but will not carry over to the following academic year.

2. If an opening becomes available, students will be admitted in the order they appear on the waiting list.

3. Families on the waiting list will be notified immediately if a seat becomes available and must confirm enrollment within five (5) business days.

X. Additional Enrollment-Related Procedures

1. When a family has applied for more than one student, when one of the students is accepted, the other family members attain sibling status.

2. A foreign exchange pupil (such as J-1) enrolled in a district under a cultural exchange program registered with the Office of the Secretary of State under section 5A.02 may be counted as a resident pupil.

Average Daily Membership:

- The date of withdrawal for a student shall mean the day the pupil permanently leaves the school or the date it is officially known that the pupil has left or has been legally excused. However, a pupil, regardless of age, who has been absent from school for 15 consecutive school days during the regular school year or for five consecutive school days during summer school or intersession classes of flexible school year programs without receiving instruction in the home or hospital shall be dropped from the roll and classified as withdrawn.

- In cases when school is in session but pupils are prevented from attending for more than 15 consecutive school days during the regular school year or five consecutive school days during summer school or intersession classes of flexible school year programs because of epidemic, calamity, weather, fuel shortage, or other justifiable cause, the commissioner, upon application, may allow the district to continue to count these pupils in average daily membership. A lawful employees' strike is not a justifiable cause.