

501 ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

The Executive Board of Sussex Academy of Arts & Sciences does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or any other classification otherwise protected by applicable state and/or federal laws in administration of its education policies, admission policies, hiring policies, scholarship and aid programs, and other school administered programs and operations. It shall heretofore be the policy of the school to admit students of any race, sex, color, national origin, religion or sexual orientation regardless of disability and to afford such students all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Interested parents of Delaware students who are eligible to attend grades 6 through 12 may apply for admission to the Sussex Academy of Arts & Sciences.

DEFINITIONS

In the Admissions and Enrollment policy, the following definitions will apply:

1. Application: All applicants must complete an application for admission to Sussex Academy of Arts and Sciences.
2. Open Application Period: A period of at least 25 instructional days designated by the Director during which an applicant submits an application for admission to Sussex Academy of Arts & Sciences. The period typically starts the Monday before Thanksgiving and ends on Friday of the first full school week in January.
3. Waiting List: Names of applicants who applied during the Open Application Period and were part of the lottery and those names of applicants who applied outside of the Open Application period.
4. Preference Category: Are the classes of students which shall be afforded preference in the admission policy to Sussex Academy of Arts & Sciences when filing positions available in any of the seven grades in one of the following categories: Children of Founding Board Members, Children of Staff Members, Children Exercising Sibling Preference and Children Demonstrating Specific Interest in Sussex Academy of Arts & Sciences' teaching methods, philosophy, or educational focus. These preferences are further described

ADMISSIONS

In accordance with Delaware Code, Title 14, Chapter 5, Section 505, the Sussex Academy of Arts & Sciences has established an application admissions process that provides the local districts in which its students reside with a preliminary roster of its students for the subsequent school year on or before April 1 and again on May 1 of each year. This is reported through the electronic student records database maintained by the DDOE.

Prior to November the Director shall estimate the number of openings for grades 6 and 9. The Open Application Period is established on the Monday before Thanksgiving to the first full school week in January ending on Friday. All applicants must complete an application for Admission. Should the applicant wish to be considered for any of the Preference categories, the applicant must so designate on the approved application form.

During the Open Application Period, applicants must mail or hand carry to the school their completed applications. Upon receipt of an application, the school reviews it for completeness and if complete, enters an applicant number and enters applicant data into the database. Incomplete applications are returned. Applications that are submitted outside the open application period are placed on the waiting list in accordance with the student admissions preference category and the order in which they were received.

Selection Process If the number of applicants is less than the number of available seats, then all applicants shall be offered seats in the school. For 9th grade seats all Sussex Academy of Arts & Sciences 8th grade students shall be offered seats first. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of available seats for grades 6 and/or 9, then the School shall determine the eligibility of each applicant for admissions in accordance with the preferences as described below. All applicants must identify which, if any, preference they are seeking by the correct designation on their application form. The school shall evaluate the preferences to ascertain whether they meet the stated preference category. The school will use the pre-approved application and pre-defined rubrics for preferences and interviews. The Director shall have the authority to forward the applications, essays, and rubrics to the Executive Board for approval of preferences. The School shall offer seats in the priority order of eligible preferences. A random lottery shall be used to allocate seat offers (i) in cases of equal-preference-priority, and (ii) among applicants who have no eligible preferences.

At the end of the application period, all applicants shall be sent a letter advising them of their enrollment status. Applicants who do not make the lottery shall be placed on a waiting list in accordance with their student admissions preference category.

Lottery When a random lottery is required as described above, applications must be placed in unmarked, sealed envelopes and grouped by preference classifications. The applications of siblings applying for the same grade, including multiple births (twins, triples, etc.), shall be placed together in one envelope.

The lottery shall be held in public on a date that shall be announced in advance. An objective community member or DDOE representative shall draw one envelope at a time from the box to determine order of admission. As each envelope is drawn, it shall be given a ranked number to indicate the order in which the student will be offered the opportunity to enroll. All students are kept on the waiting list for the duration of the years they are eligible to attend Sussex Academy of Arts & Sciences.

Preference: Some applicants are given preference during the Open Application Period and are not subject to the lottery. The student admission preferences that shall be used by Sussex Academy of Arts & Sciences are identified below. These preferences are defined in Delaware Code (Title 14, Chapter 5). The preferences are shown below in order of their priority when applied with each one being subordinate in priority to the preferences that appear above it in the list:

1. Founding Board Members

The Founding Board of Sussex Academy of Arts & Sciences was in place and active between fall 1997 and the opening of school, September 2000. These founders' names are posted on a placard located in the main hallway of the school and are on file in the school. Children of Founding Board are defined as "Children of a school's founders, so long as they constitute no more than 5% of the school's total student population. For the purposes of this paragraph "founder" shall not include anyone whose sole significant contribution to the school was monetary, but otherwise shall be determined by the founding Board of Directors subject to Department of Education regulations."

2. Children of Staff Members

Children of staff members are defined as “Children of persons employed on a permanent basis for at least 30.0 hours per week during the school year by Sussex Academy.”

3. Children with Siblings Concurrently Enrolled

Children of siblings are defined as “Children who are brothers or sisters living in the same household and being enrolled concurrently in the school.” Sussex Academy of Arts & Sciences shall recognize these relationships as valid under sibling preference of a concurrent attending student living in the same household:

1. Any individuals having the same parent or parents, either natural, adoptive, or foster.
2. Any individuals who are step-siblings and share a common custody or legal residency arrangement, each of whom have to have a natural or adoptive parent in the same residence

4. Children with Specific Interest in Teaching Methods, Philosophy, or Educational Focus

Children with Specific Interest in Teaching Methods, Philosophy, or Educational Focus are defined as “Children who express an interest to be considered for such preference and are identified through an essay and interview submitted during the open application period and evaluated by a committee of the Executive Board. Neither the essay nor the interview will be evaluated based on prior or present academic performance. Instead, it will be based on the extent to which the student has an interest and adaptability to the school program.” The rubric for such selection is subject to approval by DDOE. The number of special interest preferences will never exceed 5% of the school’s total population.

Validation of Factual Preference The school shall validate an applicant’s request for benefit of preferences (a), (b), (c), and (d) above and may require the applicant to provide relevant evidence or documentation.

Intentions to Remain for Current Students In February a letter shall go out to all students who are currently enrolled who are eligible to return the following year requesting a signed “Intention to Remain” at Sussex Academy of Arts & Sciences. From these documents, along with new registrations, more accurate enrollment can be supplied to each district and the state for enrollment projections on April 1 and May 1.

ENROLLMENT

Immediately following the lottery and the student selection process, all applicants are contacted and informed of their status by mail. The applicants that were assigned numbers during the lottery proceedings that are within the number of anticipated openings are invited to enroll during the enrollment period as announced on the school’s website. The results of the lottery are posted on the school’s website.

The applicants whose numbers exceed the number of anticipated openings are placed on a waiting list in accordance with their lottery number drawn.

COMPLIANCE

The Executive Board shall ensure that this Policy is reflected in the School’s design, delegation and execution of all admissions and enrollment procedures. The Executive Board may elect to review the admissions processes to ensure reasonable Policy compliance.

Date(s) Adopted:10/17/12
