

Student Recruitment, Marketing, and Lottery Best Practices

SCSC New School Training

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CHARTER SCHOOLS ACT OF 1998

Who's eligible to apply?

- Shall enroll students who reside in the attendance zone.
- Attendance zone is specified in the charter.
- Submits timely application (specified in the charter)

How can we admit students?

- Random selection process if applications exceed program, class, grade, or building
- Can not discriminate on any basis that would be illegal if used by a school system

How can students withdraw?

- Students may withdraw without penalty from a charter at any time and enroll in the local school system school.
- Students expelled for disciplinary action at the charter school may enroll at the local school under the disciplinary policy of the local system.

ENROLLMENT PREFERENCES

- Define Enrollment Preferences
- Enrollment Preference Timing
 - Only during open enrollment period?
 - Year Round?

ENROLLMENT PREFERENCES

SCSC ALLOWABLE PREFERENCES

Pre-lottery enrollment priorities

Enrollment priorities during the lottery

- ◆ Enrollment priorities must be used in the order provided in the charter contract
- ◆ Sibling of a student enrolled in the start-up charter school,
- ◆ A student whose parent or guardian is a member of the governing board of the charter school or is a full-time teacher, professional, or other employee at the charter school;

FEDERAL ALLOWABLE PREFERENCES FOR CSP FUNDING

- ◆ Students currently enrolled in the school.
- ◆ Siblings of students already admitted to or attending the same charter school
- ◆ Children of charter board members and full-time teachers



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FEDERAL CHARTER SCHOOL GRANT ELIGIBILITY

- Implementation and Dissemination
 - If a school has enrollment preferences outside the allowable federal preferences, then the school is NOT eligible to receive CSP funds. For example:
 - No high school clusters
 - No sibling preferences at a different school
 - Children of part-time faculty
 -



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CHARTER CONTRACT

- Charter contract includes:
 - Open Enrollment & Admissions
 - *Attendance zone*
 - *Application*
 - *Random lottery*
 - *Statutory enrollment priorities*



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STATE BOARD RULE GUIDANCE

SBOE Rule Guidance has the following provisions:

- May not use **admission** criteria or **admission** applications that would not be used at a traditional public school
- May not use **admissions** applications that require submission of letters of recommendation, essays, resumes, other narrative summaries of student's school or community activities, grades, test scores, attendance record, or disciplinary history
- **Admissions** applications may only be used for the purpose of verifying residency within attendance zone, grade level, and basic contact information for the parent
- School may provide info. related to mission, vision, curricular requirements, academic and behavioral expectations.



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GENERAL ENROLLMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- How long you want the period to last (first year and on-going...they may be different).
- Does your authorizer require notification of enrollment at a particular time?
- Formulate the PROCESS before the admissions/enrollment period...develop, adopt and publish policies related to:
 - Time period of enrollment process
 - Forms
 - Documentation
 - Waiting lists
 - Communication
 - Deadlines for submission or acceptance of slots
 - Twins, multiples, multiple children in the same grade
 - Required method of submission (mail, email, fax, etc.)
 - How/where you will post info.



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GENERAL ENROLLMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Forms needed:

Admissions Application form (pre lottery)

- Should only include name, residency, grade, siblings.
- Should absolutely NOT require info. related to race, home language, discipline, special programs (SPED, etc.)

Enrollment form (post lottery)

- May include all other information necessary for enrollment
- Align data requested with data fields in SIS

Practical matters such as:

- How people access forms
- Where they submit them
- Staff to handle the process
- Publicizing (newspaper, newsletter, website, etc.)
- Costs (copying, publishing notifications, refreshments, venue rental if lottery is required, etc.)



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GENERAL ENROLLMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Transparency
 - Public notification with plenty of time provided
 - Date (and time) stamps for registration and enrollment forms
 - Must follow FERPA regulations
 - May disclose/post directory information (name, grade level) during enrollment
 - But, must provide notice that it will be disclosed/posted and parent must have adequate time to request non-disclosure, be sure to inform parents of rights under FERPA
 - Suggest providing notice on registration form and directions on how to request non-disclosure.
 - Can also assign a student number rather than posting names
 - **If a lottery is necessary...**
 - Have a 3rd party non-school individual draw names
 - Read lottery directions aloud and provide opportunity to ask questions before beginning
 - Use a glass bowl or wire basket
 - May use computer program (consider cost, transparency, accuracy, etc..)
 - Read every name/number BEFORE it goes in the bowl/basket
 - List students who meet criteria *for enrollment priorities*
 - Write the names large on posted charts for all to see
 - **Video the event and save it!**



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GENERAL ENROLLMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Twins, Multiples, and Students in Same Grade

Define “sibling” in your policy

Suggest custodial relationship

Suggest living in a household or joint custody

How will you treat twins, multiples, and students in same grade?

Each child gets own ticket?

Each child shares one ticket?

If one child is pulled, are others guaranteed a spot...what if they were the last child pulled and there isn't space?

Consider “fairness” for other students in the lottery (i.e., does your decision make it more likely for the twin, multiple, or students in the same grade to get pulled?

Does your decision negatively impact the family of twins, multiples, or students in the same grade?



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GENERAL ENROLLMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Wait Lists

- What does your charter say about enrollment priorities?
 - How will you manage a wait list with various priority categories?
 - Suggest multiple wait lists prioritized according to your charter...
- Do you have a policy in place for notification of open positions and required timing to accept the slot?
- Do your wait lists carry from year to year or do individuals have to re-register each year?



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LOTTERY PREPARATION (I)

- **Consider maximum attendance**
 - Avoid potential conflicts with times, days and community events
 - Evenings
 - Weekends
 - Location
 - School Timeline
- **Site**
 - Seating
 - Tables for materials
 - Visibility
 - A/V accommodations
 - Adhere to legal facility requirements (maximum occupancy)



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LOTTERY PREPARATION (2)

- **Attendees**

- Applicants
- Board, teachers, administrators, staff
- Community leaders
- GCSA
- Press
- Authorizer
- A/V Equipment

- **Drawing**

- 3rd Party Person to read rules, call names, certify the lottery
- 1-3 people for administration
- Must be transparent to all (glass, random number generator, lottery balls, etc)
- Read aloud all rules and allow questions before starting (Rules should be the same as published prior to the lottery)
- Read out names BEFORE putting them in
- Post priority names and read aloud reason for priority
- Read names aloud and write on paper visible to all



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POST-LOTTERY PERIOD

Things to Consider

- Cut off date for new enrollment
- Enrollment Preference Waitlist
- Accepting Enrollment Forms Year Round
- Process and timeframe for giving away an unclaimed slot
 - Notification process needs to be communicated to each applicant multiple times, pre-enrollment, lottery, post-enrollment
- Process to determine students who lose their eligibility to attend
- Re-enrollment notification process



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Marketing your Charter School



True or False?

***“If You Build it They Will
Come....”***



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Why Marketing?

The “Bad News”

- Even with nearly 40,000 estimated children on waiting lists for charters, marketing is needed to get the word out about your school.

The “Good News”

- With a little bit of planning you can make a small marketing budget go a long way.

TRUE OR FALSE?

You Must Hire an Expensive Consulting Firm to Create your School's *Marketing Plan*?



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FALSE!

A Marketing Plan can be created internally with a few simple steps.

TIP: Create a Marketing Committee of volunteers, parents and other community members to help create and execute your plan.



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Step 1 – Know Your School

- Identify 2-3 points that explain what makes your school unique.
 - Agree on these points internally.
 - Make sure these points coincide with your mission.



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Step 1: Know your school

What Makes Our School Unique?	Who Does this Appeal to? (i.e. parents, students)
#1:	
#2:	
#3:	



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Step 2 – Establish Marketing Goals

- Set a maximum of three, specific, measurable marketing goals for the year.
- Make sure your internal “stakeholders” understand and buy into these goals.



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Step 2: Establish Marketing Goals for the Year

Marketing Goals	Target Audience	Completion Date
Example: Secure 500 applications for enrollment and increase applications for enrollment among minority students by 10% from last year.	Parents	March 15, 2017
Goal #1:		
Goal #2:		
Goal #3:		



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Step 3 – Identify Your Target Audience(s)

- Identify up to three, specific target audiences
 - i.e. parents of preschoolers who will be entering Kindergarten in 2017 – who reside in your approved attendance zone
- Determine how to reach these audiences.
- Think about what appeals to these audiences, what is important to them?



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Step 3: Identify Target Audiences

Target Audience	What is important to this audience	How can we reach this audience?	What action do we want the audience to take?
Example: Parents of pre-school aged children who will be entering Kindergarten in 2009. Preferably these parents live in Southeast Aurora.	Quality education, more individualized attention from teachers, hands on/ project based learning environment.	Preschools MOPS Groups Kids Expos	Attend an informational meeting to learn more about our school.
Audience #1			
Audience #2			
Audience #3			

Step 4 – Develop Clear Message

- Create value proposition
 - This is a combination of what makes your school unique and how it will **benefit** your target audience based on their needs.
- Develop 2-3 key messages
 - These support the value proposition and motivate target audience to take action.
- List supporting points
 - Use data-based details and facts to back up key messages.



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Step 4: Develop Clear Messages

Value Proposition

(combination of what makes your school unique/and benefit to target audience based on their needs)

Key Message #1:

Key Message #2:

Key Message #3:

Supporting Points:

Supporting Points:

Supporting Points:



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Step 5 – Create Marketing Tactics/Execute

- Develop specific tactics to meet each of your marketing goals
 - i.e. Send direct mail piece, place fliers at preschools, host informational/community meeting, etc.
- List which target audience each tactic applies to, and what action you want them to take as a result of tactic
- Determine cost of each tactic
- Assign staff or volunteer to execute each tactic.



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Step 5: Create Marketing Tactics

Target Audience	Type of Marketing	Description (include call to action)	Cost	Responsibility



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Marketing Tips

Website

- Have an easy-to-navigate website and keep it up-to-date
- Put your school mission in a prominent place on the website
- Ensure that website is consistent with other marketing materials and incorporates key messages
- Make sure upcoming events are easy to find on your site
- Make sure it's easy to find enrollment information on your site



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Marketing Tips

Media Relations

- Find out who the education reporters are in your area and send them info about your school at the beginning of each school year.
- Create an annual media calendar with story ideas and send a press release or announcement every 1-2 months.
 - School awards, student achievement, special events, etc.
- Invite media to your school's events, such as "back-to-school night," student performances, etc.
- Take advantage of tools such as Yourhub.com if available in your area.



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Marketing Tips

- **Build Relationships with Other Charters**
 - Especially if you are a high school, get to know the K-8 charters in your area - invite their students to shadow your students for a day.
 - Especially if that schools curriculum/mission is similar to yours.



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Policy Implications

- School attendance zone
- Student recruitment
- School admissions
- Transfers and withdrawals
- Student records
- Before and after school programs
- Clubs and extra curricular programs
- Technology acceptable use policy
- Parent and student complaints and grievances
- Lottery
- School day/year
- Others??



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Common Mistakes

Common Enrollment Mistakes

- **Conflating Admissions with Enrollment Forms**
 - asking for too much, or for the wrong information
 - “pre-enrolling” students
- Imposing withdrawal penalties, explicitly or implicitly
- Not understanding the difference between state and federal enrollment preferences
 - Schools may choose to forego federal grant money, but this should be a conscious strategy



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Common Mistakes

Insufficient Lottery Documentation

- Each step must be rehearsed and discussed
- Publish process and results on website
- Approach with the thought that you may need to “reproduce” process later

Not Considering Funding-Cycle Timing

- The importance of “backfilling” from the waitlist as vacancies occur



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Common Mistakes

Common Marketing Mistakes

- Targeting to the Point of Exclusion
- Focusing on the Negative
- Not combining Marketing and Outreach
- Not Utilizing Existing Connections
- Not Diversifying Marketing Approach



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Additional Resources

- National Charter Schools Institute
 - Measurement: The Key to Charter School Marketing by Brian Carpenter
- National Alliance for Public Charter Schools
 - Public Charter School Lottery Day Event Tool Kit



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