

GreatHearts®

Texas Academies

Enrollment Policies and Procedures

Revised November 2020

Enrollment Policies and Procedures that apply to the following Great Hearts Texas academies:

Great Hearts Monte Vista North

Great Hearts Monte Vista South

Great Hearts Northern Oaks

Great Hearts Western Hills

Great Hearts Forest Heights

Great Hearts Live Oak

Great Hearts Lakeside

Great Hearts Irving Lower School

Great Hearts Irving Upper School

Great Hearts Online *(see policy addendum on pages 10-11)*

Enrollment Resources:

www.Greatheartsamerica.org:

The Great Hearts website (<http://greatheartsamerica.org/>) contains a wealth of information on the Great Hearts' curriculum, locations, and educational opportunities offered by the school. Great Hearts Texas currently operates five campuses in San Antonio and one in Irving and plans to open additional campuses in the coming years.

Online Application Log-in:

You can access the online application for Great Hearts at <https://greathearts.schoolaxis.com/>. Computer portals as well as any needed assistance are available at each location upon request.

Confirmation Emails:

Parents can expect to receive an email confirming our receipt of a completed application within 30 minutes after submitting the application to one of our schools. This confirmation will reference vital information, such as the child's name and birthdate, parental contact emails, and grade and schools for which the child's application was submitted. The confirmation email also indicates the date the application was submitted. Parents should be strongly encouraged to save the confirmation email.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Great Hearts Academies does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or immigration in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

- 504 Coordinator:
Diane Jones
824 Broadway St, San Antonio, TX, 78215
210-888-9475
diane.jones@greatheartstx.org
- Title IX Coordinator:
Dr. Dan Scoggin
824 Broadway St, San Antonio, TX, 78215
210-888-9475
dscoggin@greatheartsamerica.org

General Enrollment Overview:

Differences Between Enrollment & Admission

Enrollment of a student applicant is different from **admission** of a student. In order for a Great Hearts Academy to admit a student, an offer will be extended by the school to the student applicant for a physical seat in a specific brick and mortar campus. Once any offer is extended by Great Hearts, the guardian of the student must then decide to: 1) accept the physical or virtual seat offered to attend the Great Hearts Academy, or 2) decline the offer to attend the physical campus or online school. When a Great Hearts Academy enrolls a student, the student is indicating his or her intention to attend the school and be included in the school's student count. Although a public charter school may offer admission to students simply upon submission of an application, before a student may be fully enrolled and admitted to a school, Great Hearts must obtain certain documentation from each student's parent or guardian (e.g., birth certificate, proof of residency, etc.). Specific requirements can be found on pages 9 and 10.

Enrollment of students shall be open to persons who reside within the geographic boundaries stated in the Great Hearts Texas charter and who are eligible for enrollment based on lawful criteria identified in the charter and in law. The total number of students enrolled at Great Hearts Texas shall not exceed the number of students approved in the charter or subsequent amendments and will also be based on staff/classroom capacity.

It is the policy of Great Hearts Texas to comply with all state and federal regulations regarding admission and not to discriminate during the admission and enrollment process on the basis of sex; national origin; ethnicity; religion; disability; immigration status; academic, artistic, or athletic ability; or the district the child would otherwise attend under state law.

As a public charter school, Great Hearts Texas is subject to open enrollment laws. Typically, our academies receive more applications for enrollment than there are seats available. If this is the case for any grade level at an academy, a lottery will be held to determine the order of the offers to be made. Students who do not receive offers as a result of the lottery process will be placed on a waitlist and will be offered enrollment in order as seats become available. The waitlist resets each academic year and current waitlist positions are not retained for the following year. All waitlist applicants will need to reapply for the next academic year should they not receive an offer in the current academic year. Students who are enrolled will have the opportunity to re-enroll and will not have to submit a new application each academic year as long as they provide timely written notice of intent to remain at their current academy.

Exception to Admission

As authorized by its open-enrollment charter and Texas Education Code § 12.111(a)(5)(A), Great Hearts Texas reserves the right to deny admission to students with a documented history of a criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or other discipline problems listed under Texas Education Code Chapter 37, Subchapter A.

Enrollment Timeline:

The following is a general timeline for offers to be extended to students who submit applications for the next school year. Specific dates will be added to the main Great Hearts America website (greatheartsamerica.org) each year before open enrollment begins.

Open Enrollment Policy and Lottery- November of prior school year

Open Enrollment is a period of time that applications for new students are accepted for the following school year. If, at the close of the Open Enrollment period, the number of applicants for a particular grade level exceeds the number of available positions, a lottery will be conducted to determine enrollment and waitlist placement. Only those completed applications submitted during the Open Enrollment period will be included in the lottery. Once the lottery is conducted and any priority statuses have been verified, offers for enrollment will be made based on the number of available positions. Once all available spaces have been filled, all subsequent applications will be placed on the waitlist and any additional offers for enrollment will be made as seats become available. The lottery is typically scheduled to occur in mid-January, with results being made available late January.

Post Open Enrollment Policy and Period-After Open Enrollment period

Any completed applications submitted after the Open Enrollment period through the upcoming school year will still be accepted. If a seat is available at the time the completed application is received, the student will be offered an enrollment seat. If there are no seats available at the time completed applications are received, applications will be processed on a prioritized first-come, first-served basis on the waitlist behind the applications that participated in the lottery.

Re-enrollment Policy and Period- Early Spring of current school year

Any guardian/parent of a current student who plans to return the following school year at the same academy will complete re-enrollment paperwork to confirm the student's intent to return. During the re-enrollment period, if a parent/guardian withdraws from the enrollment system or a withdrawal form is submitted campus registrar, the student has relinquished his/her seat for the following year, and the academy can offer that position to another student waiting to receive an offer. The family will receive an email confirming the re-enrollment completion or withdrawal after the online re-enrollment registration is e-signed and submitted by the parent and accepted by the academy; it will include the name of academy, re-enrollment grade, student name and DOB.

Predicting Waitlist Outcomes:

It is not possible for us to determine a child's chances of being offered an enrollment seat. Once classes are full, any spots that open are the result of an admitted student deciding not to enroll or by an enrolled student's withdrawal. Although we do typically see a number of spots open up before the start of school, we have no way of knowing in which grades spots will open up or how many spots will become available.

Applicants may move up or down on the waiting list. For example, consider an applicant to the 1st Grade who is offered an enrollment seat and who has a sibling who is placed on the waitlist for 3rd Grade in spot #50. The sibling applying for 3rd Grade will be given a "sibling priority," and will therefore move to the top of the 3rd Grade waitlist (or near the top; there may be other siblings ahead of them).

Geographic Boundaries for Enrollment:

According to the Great Hearts Texas' charter, we are only authorized to accept students who reside with a qualifying parent or guardian within the geographic boundaries of within the following independent school districts.

San Antonio

Alamo Heights, Bandera, Blanco, Boerne, Charlotte, Comal, Comfort, D'Hanis, Devine, East Central, Edgewood, Floresville, Fort Sam Houston, Harlandale, Hondo, Jourdanton, Judson, Kerrville, Knippa, La Vernia, Lackland, Lytle, Marion, Medina, Medina Valley, Natalia, New Braunfels, North East, Northside, Pearsall, Pleasanton, Poteet, Poth, Randolph Field, Sabinas, San Antonio, Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City, Seguin, Somerset, South San Antonio, Southside, Southwest, Stockdale, Uvalde.

Dallas/Ft. Worth

Aledo, Arlington, Azle, Birdville, Burseson, Carroll, Carrollton-Farmers Branch, Castleberry, Cedar Hill, Coppell, Crowley, Dallas, Desoto, Duncanville, Everman, Fort Worth, Frisco, Garland, Godley, Grand Prairie, Grapevine-Colleyville, Highland Park, Hurst-Euless-Bedford, Irving, Keller, Kennendale, Lake Worth Lancaster, Lewisville, Mansfield, Mesquite, Northwest, Plano, Richardson, Sunnyvale and White Settlement.

Section 25.001 of the Texas Education Code outlines certain conditions that permit students who do not reside within the approved geographic boundaries listed above to attend Great Hearts. Below are a two of the most common cases for students not residing within the approved boundaries:

- A student is eligible for enrollment if the parent/guardian of the applicant resides within the approved boundaries.
- A student is eligible for enrollment if the grandparent of the applicant resides within the approved boundaries and provides a substantial amount of after-school care to the child as determined by the Board of Directors.

If your student does not live within the approved geographic boundaries and you believe you may qualify through a condition listed in TEC 25.001, please contact the school office where you intend to apply.

Priority Status Order:

Certain applicants may be exempted from an enrollment lottery, or given “priority” status in the enrollment process. Priority status is given in the order listed below with applications ordered by application type: Open Enrollment or Post-Open Enrollment status.

1. Current students who have submitted timely notice to re-enroll in their current academy.
2. Children of a Great Hearts teacher or staff member, so long as the total number of students admitted through this exemption constitute only a small percentage of the school’s enrollment.
3. Applicants with siblings attending, or alumni siblings of, the same academy.
4. Transfer student(s) who have submitted a timely notice of intent to transfer from one Great Hearts Texas academy to another.
5. Board member child.
6. Non-prioritized Open Enrollment applicants (by original lottery number)
7. Non-prioritized Post Open Enrollment applicants (by date of application).

Please note: Priority status does not guarantee an offer of enrollment for any grade or academy. Further, any false statement on an application, including falsely indicating priority eligibility, may result in revocation of enrollment or offer of enrollment.

Priority for Children of Great Hearts Teachers and Staff:

Priority for children of Great Hearts teachers and staff is available to the children of full-time or part-time benefits-eligible Lead Office staff, Academy Faculty, and Academy Administrators. The following guidelines also apply:

1. The qualifying employee must have a signed offer sheet with Great Hearts Academies before the enrollment priority benefit will be applied to employee child application/s.
2. The employee must be the parent/legal guardian to the applicant through birth, marriage, adoption or legally placed guardianship.
3. The eligible applicant will receive priority status at any academy within the Great Hearts Texas network.
4. The employee is responsible for notifying the academy/s to which he or she applies of the submitted application and of his or her priority status eligibility.
 - a. If employment is terminated by the employee or Great Hearts before a student applicant is offered enrollment, or before the student attends one day at a Great Hearts academy, priority status will be revoked.
5. If an employee signs an offer sheet with Great Hearts Academies but is terminated or resigns before an official employment agreement is signed, priority status will be revoked.
6. Once marked as an “employee” application, these priority applications are ordered by original lottery number.
 - a. If the student/applicant does not apply during Open Enrollment to be in the lottery, the application will be a post-open application and be organized after the prioritized open enrollment applications by time/date stamp.
7. Priority status does not guarantee placement.

Sibling Priority Policy:

Sibling priority only applies when the applicant has a sibling that is officially enrolled, currently attending, or has graduated from the same academy to which the applicant is applying.

1. A “sibling” is defined as an immediate family member of the applicant, or a blended family member of the applicant through marriage, adoption or legally placed guardianship. Birth certificate, marriage certificate or court documentation is necessary to verify the sibling priority.
 - a. Does not apply to extended family of siblings unless legal documentation of guardianship is provided.
2. The sibling must be currently enrolled at or graduated in the most recent school year from the same academy or designated feeder/recipient* academy to which the applicant is applying.
3. The applicant can only receive priority status for the same academy or designated feeder/recipient* academy at which their sibling is currently enrolled or from which they have recently graduated.
4. If the sibling withdraws from the academy before the applicant is offered enrollment, priority status will be revoked. If the sibling withdraws from the academy before attending at least one day of attendance for the year they are registered, the priority status and any offer/registration of the applicant will be revoked.
5. Once marked as a “sibling” application, these priority applications are ordered by original lottery number.
 - a. If the student/applicant does not apply during Open Enrollment to be in the lottery, the application will be a post-open application and be organized after the prioritized open enrollment applications by time/date stamp.
6. Priority status does not guarantee placement.

*Please note that Monte Vista South and North are considered designated feeder/recipient academies along with Great Hearts Northern Oaks Upper and Lower academies, and Great Hearts Irving Upper and Lower academies for the purposes of sibling priority status.

Transfer Policy (for Currently Enrolled Students):

Transfer priority is for students who are currently attending a Great Hearts Texas academy and would like to transfer to another Great Hearts Texas academy.

1. Students eligible for transfer are required to start attending their current academy in semester one or by the beginning of the second semester and must successfully complete the academic year at that academy to be eligible to transfer to their new academy of choice for the next school year.
 - a. Students are not eligible for transfer between Arizona and Texas academies.
 - b. In the case of siblings, all transfer requests submitted must be for the same academy or feeder/recipient academy as transfer requests submitted for all other siblings. Sibling priority will be applied once any of the siblings have been registered at the requested transfer academy.
 - c. Transfer applicants must not be in the process of being expelled or recommended for expulsion from their current academy.
 - d. The following criteria will be considered by the Great Hearts Texas academy to which a student requests a transfer:
 1. Family residence move or relocation – The transfer applicant has moved or relocated and now resides closer to another academy.
 2. Parent employment change - A parent has a change in employment to a workplace location that

is closer or more accessible to another academy. The parent may be asked to provide confirmation from an employer stating that the parent's work site has changed.

3. After school care arrangements have changed - A family's after school care arrangements change, leaving another academy closer or more accessible.
 4. Military/Reserve duty considerations - A parent is an active duty service member and has a change of station or base that leaves another academy closer or more accessible. The parent may be asked to provide confirmation of a change in duty orders.
 5. Discipline history - the recipient academy will review the applicant's discipline history.
 6. Successful completion of the academic year at current academy - Transfers cannot occur during a student's first year of enrollment; transfer applicants must be a part of the Great Hearts Texas network for at least a year. Transfers are only possible during the second year of enrollment or later.
2. Students may only submit for one transfer request per academic school year.
 3. Students requesting a transfer must:
 - a. Complete an application for the next school year to their desired transfer academy.
 - b. Complete and submit a Transfer Request form to the Registrar of their desired transfer academy. (<http://www.greatheartsamerica.org/enroll/transfer-requests/>)
 - c. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the academy of the intent to transfer, to complete a new application and to submit the completed transfer form to the receiving academy.
 4. A family's request to transfer does not guarantee the transfer priority will be accepted and applied to the application. The transfer priority approval is based on the discretion of the Headmaster of the receiving academy.
 - a. If the Headmaster does not accept the transfer priority, the application to the academy will remain in the order which it was originally submitted.
 5. Once marked as a "transfer" application, these priority applications are ordered by original lottery number.
 6. Priority status does not guarantee placement at the desired academy, but rather it places the transfer application in a prioritized position on the waitlist for the desired academy / grade.
 7. If a student is being retained at their current academy, their transfer application and any other enrollment applications will be changed to the retained grade level.

Great Hearts Board Member Child Priority Policy:

Board Member Child priority is for children of an official, board-approved member per Lead Office. For the purposes of federal and state law and guidelines on charter school admission, Great Hearts considers a Board Member to be a member of staff.

1. The board member must be the parent or legal guardian of the applicant through birth, marriage, adoption or guardianship.
2. The board member must be an official, board-approved member.
3. The board member must be an active participant and serve on the academy site board for a minimum of 6 months before the student can receive the "board child" priority.
4. The eligible applicant will receive priority status at any academy within the Great Hearts network.
5. The board member is responsible for notifying the academy/s to which they apply of their submitted application and of their priority status eligibility.
6. If the board member's service on the board ends before the applicant is offered enrollment at a Great Hearts academy, priority status will be revoked.
7. Once marked as a "board" application, these priority applications are ordered by original lottery number.
 - a. If the student/applicant does not apply during Open Enrollment to be in the lottery, the application will

be a post-open application and be organized after the prioritized open enrollment applications by time/date stamp.

8. Priority status does not guarantee placement

Enrollment Application Submission Policies:

Enrollment for Expelled Students

As authorized by section 12.111(a)(5)(A) of the Texas Education Code, the Great Hearts Texas charter allows an academy to refuse to admit any applicant who has been expelled from another educational institution, or who has a documented history of a criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or other discipline problems listed under Texas Education Code Chapter 37, Subchapter A.

Incorrect Grade Submission

Parents/guardians must submit a completed enrollment application to be eligible for an offer from an individual academy. An offer is for a specific grade at an academy and is not a network or a school-wide offer. The parent/guardian must apply for the correct grade for the enrollment year to which they are applying since each grade level at each academy's waitlist is independent from other waitlists.

Great Hearts cannot change the application grade for a student after the original application has been submitted. If the parent/guardian applies for the wrong grade, the parent must cancel the original enrollment application and apply again for the correct grade and be given a new submission date and waitlist number. Parents/Guardians are strongly urged to verify that applications are correct at the time of submission.

Editing/Adding an Academy

Separately, if a parent/guardian wants to edit or add an additional academy to the original application, the new academy's application will be submitted as of the date the updated application is submitted and added to the waitlist. Editing an application or adding an academy will not affect the wait list position of previously submitted academy applications.

Duplicate applications

Great Hearts does not allow more than one application per applicant at the same academy for the same/multiple grades because it does not allow a fair and equitable enrollment process. If the Great Hearts' enrollment team or front office of any academy finds a duplicate application for a student, the guardian/parent of the student will be notified to determine which application should be canceled so there is only one valid application for that academy.

Offer Policies:

Initial Offer of Enrollment

Every family will receive an email via the enrollment Parent Portal and/or a phone call from the academy to which they applied if and when an offer is extended to their child. Please contact the main office of the specific academy if you have any questions concerning the initial offer of enrollment.

If a family declines an offer, they will be removed from the waitlist. If a family does not respond to an offer of enrollment by the date determined by that specific academy, the offer will automatically rescind and they will be removed from the waitlist. They must reapply and receive a new waitlist position if they wish to be considered again for enrollment in the current or future school years.

Registration Packet

Submission of an admissions application or acceptance of an offer of enrollment from Great Hearts Texas *does not* constitute official registration. Applicants offered admission will receive a registration packet via the enrollment Parent Portal, and must complete the registration packet by the accepting academy's deadline in order to finalize registration. *Failure to submit a registration packet by the accepting academy's deadline will result in the offer of enrollment being rescinded.*

Following is a list of some of the documents that will need to be submitted with a registration packet. This is not a comprehensive list, but it can be useful to begin gathering these documents now in order to have them ready if and when you receive an enrollment offer.

1. All Texas schools must obtain age and identity documentation from students when they enroll. Specifically, within 30 days of enrollment, the person enrolling the student must provide the school with **ONE** of the following:
 - The child's birth certificate or another document suitable as proof of the child's identity; and
 - A complete copy of the child's records from the school the child most recently attended if the child has been previously enrolled in a school in Texas or another state. Texas Education Code § 25.002.

Any of the documents listed above are acceptable to verify a student's age or identity.

2. As with all public schools in Texas, charter schools are required to obtain and maintain verifiable documentation of a student's Texas state residency upon enrollment. Texas Education Code § 25.001(b). Residency documents are different from citizenship or immigration documents. Great Hearts does not request or require documentation regarding a student's citizenship or immigration status in connection with enrollment or at any other time.

1. Proof of Texas residency and residency within the geographic boundaries in which Great Hearts Texas operates may be demonstrated by (**two** items from the list below):
 - a. Valid TEXAS Driver's License
 - b. Mortgage statement*
 - c. Rental agreement or lease (including Section 8 agreement)
 - d. Utility bill (water, electric, gas)*
 - e. Valid motor vehicle registration
 - f. Valid voter registration card
 - g. Current tax return
 - h. Bank or credit card statement*
 - i. W-2 or 1099 tax form for the current year
 - j. Payroll stub*
 - k. Automobile insurance policy or statement*
 - l. Cable bill*
 - m. Internet bill*

*dated within 90 days of the student's registration appointment date.

3. Immunization Records
 - Within 30 days of enrollment, the person enrolling a student must provide a record showing that the child has the immunizations required under Texas Education Code § 38.001, or proof showing the child is not required to be immunized or that the child is entitled to provisional admission. Texas Education Code § 25.002(a)(3).
4. Social Security Number
 - Upon registering, campuses will request a child's social security number for the purpose of using it as a

student identification number. Providing the social security number is voluntary and if a parent chooses not to provide the child's social security number, then they will be asked to fill out a separate form to request a state assigned ID.

Enrollment Start Date

Upon acceptance of an offer, the student will be scheduled to start on the first date of school or academies will set the anticipated start date if student receives an offer after the school year begins. Academies cannot indefinitely hold a position without a clear anticipated start date (within a reasonable number of days of the accepted offer) for the student or the accepted offer can be rescinded. Should a student not have positive attendance within 10 days of the anticipated start date, the offer may be rescinded, or the student may be withdrawn from the academy.

Enrollment Standards

Great Hearts Academies have no enrollment standards, as we are publicly funded charter academies; however, students may be required to attend summer school in order to meet graduation requirements.

Kindergarten Enrollment Policy:

We follow state guidelines which stipulate that a child must turn five (5) years old on or before September 1st in the year in which he/she is enrolled for Kindergarten. Our academies do adhere to the state guidelines regarding the minimum age for Kindergarten, and no exceptions are made for early Kindergarten admittance. Also, we do not offer early entrance testing for Kindergarten. Our standard Kindergarten offering is a full day program and meets all state requirements.

Great Hearts Online Policy Addendum:

Per the waiver granted on **Wednesday, November, 4, 2020** by Commissioner Morath of the Texas Education Agency (TEA), with the resolution subsequently approved by the Great Hearts Texas governing board on **Thursday, September 24, 2020**, the Great Hearts Online Academy may virtually enroll and serve any student residing in Texas both within the approved geographic boundaries and outside of the above geographic boundaries, as long as the student's legal guardian produces proof of residence. This waiver is in place for the 2020-21 academic year and is subject to change in accordance to Texas Education Agency.

For those who apply to and wish to enroll in the Great Hearts Online academy, Great Hearts Online will extend offers for admission to students who qualify for a virtual seat. Great Hearts Online will be serving grades K-6th and classes will begin January 4th, 2021. Requirements are:

- A student must be currently attending a public ISD or public charter. Private school and home school students are **NOT** eligible for public school funding.
- A student must live within the Texas boundary to enroll and attend.

Transfer Policy (from Great Hearts Online to a Great Hearts Campus):

Students who attend Great Hearts Online during the 2020-21 academic year have the option to transfer to a physical Great Hearts campus in the 2021-22 academic year. Families desiring this option must meet the following criteria:

1. The student must reside within one of our approved geographic boundaries (San Antonio, Irving, or Fort Worth).
2. Parent must submit both an **online enrollment application and paper Transfer form** to the desired campus

on before January 4th to receive transfer priority.

3. The transferring student must complete the full semester-long grading period with Great Hearts Online (01/04/2020 ending 05/28/2021) to receive transfer priority. If a student is accepted to a brick and mortar academy with transfer priority, yet fails to complete the full semester, the enrollment offer for 2021-22 will be revoked. If a student registers for Great Hearts Online **after** January 4, 2021, the student will not be eligible for transfer status to a brick and mortar school until January 2022.

Note: Great Hearts Online students are guaranteed an enrollment seat to a brick and mortar campus, if the above requirements are fulfilled. However, due to the limited availability of physical seats in our brick and mortar campuses, parents/guardians interested in taking advantage of the Great Hearts Online to Campus transfer option **may not receive an offer at their preferred campus**. For example, if Great Hearts Monte Vista South is your preferred campus but no seats are available in your child's grade level, your child can receive an offer from another Great Hearts campus - within geographic boundary - where seats are available. Upon completing a full academic year at a Great Hearts Academy, guardians may then request a transfer to their campus of choice for the 2022-23 academic year. More information about the Transfer Policy can be found on pages 6 and 7.

Transfer Policy (from a Great Hearts Academy to Great Hearts Online):

For Academic Year 2020-2021

1. Currently enrolled students are not eligible for transfer priority to GH Online

For Academic Year 2021-2022

1. Transfer applicants from a Great Hearts Texas academy to GH Online are required to complete the academic year at their current academy to be eligible to receive transfer priority to GH Online.
2. If a student is being retained at their current academy, their transfer application and any other enrollment applications will be changed to the retained grade level.

PENDING FINAL BOARD APPROVAL ON NOVEMBER 20, 2020