

BCCS-Girls Student Admission Policy

The Brighter Choice Charter School for Girls will be a nonsectarian public school for Girls attending grades K-5. The Brighter Choice Charter Schools shall not discriminate against or limit the admission of any student on any unlawful basis, including on the basis of ethnicity, gender, disability, intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, race, creed, national origin, religion or ancestry. The schools do not require any action by a student or family (such as an admissions test, interview, essay, attendance at an information session, etc.) in order for an applicant to either receive or submit an application for admission to that school.

All Girls who are residents of New York State and eligible for enrollment in public schools in New York State in grades K-5 will be eligible to enroll in Brighter Choice-Girls, subject to availability and the process set forth below. Students entering Kindergarten must turn five years old by December 31st of their Kindergarten year.

Brighter Choice-Girls will admit each eligible student who submits a timely application, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of the student's requested grade level or of the school building. The school does not require any action by a student or family (such as an admissions test, interview, essay, attendance at an information session, etc.) in order for an applicant to either receive or submit an application for admission to school.

Process

The application process will occur in three stages.

1. At outreach events held in winter and spring (see "Outreach," below), prospective students and their parents or guardians will hear a comprehensive presentation about the school. Discussions will include the school's academic program, the schedule for an extended school day and year, and expectations for student behavior and parental involvement. Also discussed will be any other community programs that exist to support the operations or mission of the school.

Parents and guardians interested in submitting applications for their children who did not attend one of the school's outreach events will be provided with a packet of written materials covering all the topics formally discussed at the open houses; any parent or guardian interested in meeting to verbally review all the material and ask any questions will be scheduled for an appointment with appropriate school staff.

Students and their parents or guardians also will be encouraged to spend time visiting the school and sitting-in on classrooms.

It is important the school ensures that students and parents/guardians understand the unique mission of the school and its academic and social expectations before parents and guardians are asked to make a decision to enroll their children. The school will take whatever additional steps deemed necessary to make sure that parents/guardians are armed with this important information.

It is also important the school ensures that parents/guardians understand the application process including: the required information on an application, the April 1st deadline for application submission to the school, the April 1st application deadline for district transportation, the school

lottery (see below), enrollment process, and documents required by districts. It is especially important that parents/guardians understand that districts require proofs of residency (PORs). PORs will be collected during enrolment process along with Parent ID, Student Birth Certificate, Health & Immunization Forms, and applicable district registration form. PORs must show parent name and address, and can normally be satisfied by a utility bill, lease, or pay stub. Students who are experiencing homelessness will meet with school homeless coordinator to complete required paperwork in lieu of PORs.

2. Interested parents/guardians will be required to complete and submit an application form. Such forms will be made available at the school's outreach events, continuously at the school, and online at the school website. The application requests basic current student information including name, residence, and sibling information. Also, applicants will have the opportunity to provide any additional information to assist the school in determining student programming including: eligibility for the federal free or reduced-price lunch program, eligibility for Special Education services, eligibility for ESL/ENL services. Such information and eligibility determinations will be made through a process similar to that prescribed by the State Education Department and in accordance with applicable state and federal regulations.

The school will make staff available to any parent or guardian who needs help completing the application. Completed applications may be submitted to the school beginning in January for subsequent Fall enrollment, or at any time during the year for immediate consideration.

3. The deadline for application submissions is April 1st. While applications will be accepted after April 1st, only those received through April 1st will be entered into the school's admissions lottery, should the number of applications exceed the number of available spaces. Such a lottery will be open to the public, attended, audited, and drawn by a disinterested party. The admission lottery will have the following features:

- The lottery will be open to the public
- According to **§104**, Public notice of the time and place of the lottery scheduled at least one week prior thereto shall: be given or electronically transmitted to the news media; be conspicuously posted online and on front doors of school; and shall include number of spaces available each year by grade level.
- To the extent a vacant space is available in the school:
 - First preference will be given to students who attended Brighter Choice-Girls the previous year and are returning to the school;
 - Second preference will be given to siblings of students returning for a subsequent year at Brighter Choice-Girls who have submitted applications;
 - Third preference will be given to children of employees of the school, provided that such children of employees may constitute no more than fifteen percent of the charter school's total enrollment
 - Other students who live in Albany City School District next will be admitted, first those who qualify for special education or ELL services and qualify for free and reduced-price meal program (FRL)

and their siblings (these subgroups will be weighted according to a method that will be established by the board annually); then those who qualify for the FRL and their siblings; then those who qualify for special education or ELL services and their siblings; and then those who do not qualify for FRL and their siblings;

- And finally, students who do not live in Albany City School District, first those who qualify for special education or ELL services and qualify for free and reduced-price meal program (FRL) and their siblings; then those who qualify for the FRL and their siblings; then those who qualify for special education or ELL services and their siblings; and then those who do not qualify for FRL and their siblings;

Separate waiting lists will be maintained for each grade level in the event that vacancies occur. The random lottery process used for student admission also will serve to place students in preferential order on these waiting lists. The school will keep accurate records of the waitlist containing, the names, home addresses, telephone numbers, and grade levels of students who entered the lottery but did not gain admission.

Whenever a vacancy occurs, either prior to the start of a particular school year or during the course of that school year, the school will contact the parent or guardian of the student next on the appropriate waiting list. Three reasonable attempts by at least two different mediums will be made to contact the family of the student on the top of the waiting list and get confirmation of whether the student is still interested in enrolling at Brighter Choice-Girls before proceeding to the next name on the list. If reasonable and multiple attempts to contact the student's parents/guardians are unsuccessful, the school may remove that student from the waiting list. Documentation of the attempts made to contact the parents/guardians of any student removed from the waiting list shall be maintained by the school. Waiting lists will not be carried-over from year to year, but instead the annual admission lotteries will be used to create newly randomized waiting lists. The school will send a new enrollment application directly to the parents/guardians of each child on the prior year's waiting list.

Offers of admission will be made by at least two different mediums. Parents/guardians are normally contacted by mail and phone. If offer is accepted, parents/guardians will work with designated school personnel to complete enrollment process. If offer is not accepted within ten days, the offer of acceptance will be forfeited. A student who forfeits admission will not be added to the waiting list, and will need to reapply in the future to be eligible for enrollment.

If admission is declined, student forfeits spot. A student who forfeits admission will not be added to the waiting list, and will need to reapply in the future to be eligible for enrollment.

Outreach

Invitations to outreach events will be widely distributed to parents and students throughout Albany and the Greater Capital Region. The school will vigorously get these announcements to the public through as many available routes as practical, including (but not limited to):

- Community organizations of all kinds;
- Social media;
- Public and private elementary and pre-school;
- After-school programs;
- Youth and community centers;

- Businesses and civic organizations; and
- Flyers posted and distributed in various communities.

These methods will help ensure that the invitation to hear directly about the opportunities offered to children by Brighter Choice-Girls gets widely circulated.

Information about Brighter Choice-Girls and the application process and time frame also will be widely distributed in a similar manner, affording families who do not attend one of these “open houses” the opportunity to learn about Brighter Choice-Girls and to apply for admission for their children.

Voluntary Withdrawal from Brighter Choice -Girls

Brighter Choice Charter School for Girls is a school of choice. As such, there may arise circumstances in which a parent or guardian wishes to transfer their child to a different school. In these instances, school personnel will offer to meet with the family and discuss the reasons for the desired withdrawal from Brighter Choice-Girls, and seek solutions to any problems within the Brighter Choice community. This initial meeting will serve both to help staff remedy any problem and to receive direct feedback from families who are opting for alternatives other than Brighter Choice-Girls. Such feedback could form the basis for an alteration in school practices.

If the parent or guardian still wishes to transfer their child to another school, staff at Brighter Choice-Girls will make every reasonable effort to help the student find a school that better serves the family’s desires. Brighter Choice-Girls will ensure the timely transfer of any necessary school records to the student’s new school.