

STEM SCHOOL HIGHLANDS RANCH POLICY
Enrollment

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define the enrollment process and requirements for enrollment into STEM School Highlands Ranch (STEM). STEM is a free, public charter school authorized by the Douglas County School District (DCSD) and serves grades Kindergarten through 12 and school of choice.

II. POLICY

4A. Open and Choice Enrollment

STEM participates in DCSD's annual open enrollment and choice enrollment processes, adhering to all applicable dates and deadlines. Parents/guardians must submit an application to enroll their student(s) in STEM. STEM utilized DCSD's open enrollment application software platform for open enrollment.

B. Prioritizing for Enrollment Applicants

When the number of eligible applicants during the open enrollment period exceeds the spaces available in a particular program, grade or school, as determined by the Executive Director or designee, applications will be prioritized by grade level on the annual prioritized list by the priorities listed below.

~~STEM gives priority for enrollment to the following:~~

- ~~● First Priority: Founding Families~~
- First Priority: Siblings of current STEM students
- Second Priority: Founding Families and children and grandchildren of current STEM staff and board members
 - An Enrollment Priority Request Form is required to provide proof of enrollment priority
- Third Priority: Student applicants who are DCSD Residents
- Fourth Priority: ~~Prior waitlisted families~~ Student applicants who are not DCSD residents.

~~* Families will need to email registrar@stemk12.org in order to provide proof they meet these criteria.~~

~~Enrollment Priority in enrollment does not guarantee enrollment if there is no availability at the applicant's student's grade level.~~

Due to enrollment priorities, STEM ~~does not~~ cannot release information regarding a particular ~~prospective student's~~ applicant's position on the list. Founding Families, staff

Enrollment Policy

members, and board members must complete the Enrollment Priority Request Form in order to provide proof they meet these enrollment priority criteria prior to the First Round Open Enrollment Application period.

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Applicants ~~Families~~ not accepted during enrollment by STEM during the First Round Open Enrollment Application period will automatically be placed on the annual prioritized list and will have priority over those applicants by applying during the Second Round Open Enrollment Application period. STEM's annual prioritized list will be purged upon the close of the Second Round Open Enrollment period of each ~~the current school year~~, in accordance with DCSD policies. Applicants not offered enrollment ~~following~~ must reapply the following year, as the list does not carry over from year to year.

C. STEM Interest List

STEM offers prospective families the opportunity to complete the STEM Interest Form to receive notifications about open enrollment dates and enrollment related information. Completing the STEM Interest Form is separate from the DCSD/STEM Open and Choice Enrollment processes, and is not considered an open or choice enrollment application. The STEM Interest Form does not guarantee enrollment nor does it obligate families to enroll in STEM.

2D. Admission Phase

As per the DCSD Open Enrollment process, STEM offers a First Round Open Enrollment Application period and a Second Round Open Enrollment Application period. Once issued an offer of enrollment during the First Round Open Enrollment Application period, parents/guardians must accept the offer by the First Round Open Enrollment Application period deadline. Once issued an offer of enrollment during the Second Round Open Enrollment Application period, parents/guardians must accept the offer within 48 hours.

~~Enrollment will follow the District's open enrollment timeline. The District opens enrollment on November 1 of each year. The District offers enrollment on December 1. STEM allows parents to place their names on the list throughout the year, and notifications will begin on December 1 for the following school year. ¶~~

~~If the number of students prior to the deadline is less than or equal to the number of student spaces available for any grade, STEM will extend an invitation to enroll every student in that grade. ¶~~

~~Should the number of students listed prior to the deadline be higher than the number of available spaces, students are offered space based on the priorities and then by date entered in the enrollment tool. ¶~~

~~3. Deadline for Acceptance ¶~~

~~Invitations to enroll shall be extended via email through the DCSD EngagED Parent Portal.~~

Enrollment Policy

~~After the family is contacted and enrollment is offered, the school will require a decision by a parent or legal guardian. Parents and legal/guardians are responsible for providing a reasonable way for STEM to reach them regarding enrollment and are also responsible for informing the school of any change to their contact information. While STEM will make every attempt to notify families, the school is not responsible for the inability to contact families should they be unreachable (i.e., traveling, inaccurate information, etc.). Failure to respond to the enrollment offer by the deadline may result in the enrollment offer becoming void and the opening will be offered to the applicant next on the annual prioritized list.~~

E. Enrollment Phase

~~To complete the enrollment phase, parents/guardians must complete and return all Completion of the registration end enrollment forms within five working days of when the enrollment offer was issued. Failure to complete and return all required registration and enrollment forms by the deadline may result in the enrollment offer becoming void and the opening will be offered to the applicant next on the annual prioritized list. Under DCSD guidelines, by accepting an offer of enrollment at STEM, you have established STEM as your student's assigned school through 12th grade. packet is required to initiate the registration/transfer process.~~

F. Enrollment for Students Receiving Special Education Services

~~Requests from the parents/guardians of students receiving special education services for choice enrollment to STEM shall be considered in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. Consideration of whether or not a student receiving special education services is able to enroll in a school of choice shall be implemented in a two-step process. The first step of the process is the Admissions Phase and the second step is the Enrollment Phase. In order for a student receiving special education services to enroll and attend a school of choice, the student must be admitted after completion of the Admissions Phase of the process and then must be approved for enrollment during the Enrollment Phase of the process.~~

~~During a school's Admissions Phase of the process, including any lottery or similar process, school shall not in any way inquire into the disability status of a student. If a student receiving special education services is admitted through the Admissions Phase of the process, the student must still be approved for enrollment into the school of choice. During the Enrollment phase of the process, the student's current Individualized Education Program (IEP) shall be reviewed to determine if the student's IEP can be appropriately implemented at the requested school or program so the student can be provided a ↵~~

~~NOTE: For students on an IEP (Individualized Education Plan/ Special Education) or receiving 504 accommodations: ¶~~

~~If your student is currently on an Individualized Education Plan or receiving 504 accommodations, please be aware that STEM provides services for mild to moderate need students. STEM's Learning Services Department will contact you during the enrollment process to ensure that Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). can be provided once you initiate the process by advising the registrar. This may require a meeting with the prior~~

Enrollment Policy

~~school's staff. No student with an IEP can be enrolled until this review occurs and it is the responsibility of the parent to initiate this review. If the review does not occur prior to enrollment and it is discovered. If there is a determination that the student's IEP cannot be implemented at the requested school, student enrollment may be that FAPE cannot be provided, the student will be denied acceptance and the student may be assigned to another school where the student's IEP can be implemented as developed by the IEP team. returned to a district school where FAPE can be provided. STEM School Highlands Ranch welcomes all students on IEP or 504, where FAPE can be provided.~~ Decisions to assign the student to another school shall be made with due consideration for the impact on the child's total education program and must include parent/guardian participation.

4G. Vacancies

~~Should a vacancy become available created prior to the end of the Second Round Open Enrollment Application period or after the school year has begun, the vacancy will be filled as specified above. A student who fills a vacancy will be considered a currently enrolled student, and that student's enrollment will continue beyond the current academic year.~~ Should a vacancy become available between the end of the Second Round Open Enrollment Application period and October 1st, the vacancy may be filled through the Choice Enrollment process. Should a vacancy ~~open up~~ become available after October 1st, it will be the decision of the Executive Director or designee to fill that vacancy or leave it open until the following school year.

H. Choice Enrollment

Following the close of the Second Round Open Enrollment Application period, STEM may offer choice enrollment to new DCSD and non-DCSD students throughout the school year based on availability. New DCSD students are those who have moved into DCSD after the Second Round Open Enrollment Application period has closed and/or have not yet enrolled in a DCSD school. For eligible students, STEM offers a STEM School Highlands Ranch New Student Choice Application process available on the STEMK12.org website.¶

Enrollment Policy

~~5. Open Enrollment Timelines ¶¶~~

~~Timeline Dates Unless otherwise specified, any dates identified in this Open Enrollment Timeline shall be applied such that if the date identified falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday, the enforced date for compliance shall fall on the following business day. ¶¶~~

- ~~• The first round open enrollment period opens on November 1. ¶¶~~
- ~~• The first round open enrollment period closes on December 1st at 4:00 p.m. annually unless either day is not a school day, in which case the next regular school day will be the opening or ending day, respectively. ¶¶~~
- ~~• Once notified of acceptance by the school, the offer of enrollment must be accepted by the parent or guardian by 4:00 p.m. by December 15th annually or the first workday following the 15th. ¶¶~~
- ~~• Applicants not accepted by the school during the first open enrollment round will stay on the list. If an opening becomes available during the second round application period, applicants will be notified by the EngageED Parent Portal through DCSD. ¶¶~~
- ~~• Charter must update the District shared "Accepted Offers Spreadsheet" with all students who have accepted their enrollment offers. ¶¶~~
- ~~• Lines of enrollment for the first round must be made by January 19th for current DCSD students as well as new to district students. ¶¶~~
- ~~• The second round of open enrollment opens on January 22. ¶¶~~
- ~~• The second round of open enrollment closes on August 1. ¶¶~~
- ~~• Second round lines of enrollment for accepted offers must be created as soon as possible after the offer is accepted. ¶¶~~

~~I. Transfers Movement after Open Enrollment closes (August 1st)~~

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~~Students may choose to enroll in STEM Charter School after Second Round Open Enrollment Application period closes on August 1; however, for students already enrolled in the District DCSD, the process for administrative transfers in accordance with District DCSD Policy JCA/JFB-R shall be followed. The administrative transfer option is only available for the purpose of moving a student from one school to another in those circumstances where the choice enrollment option may not be timely or may be inappropriate or inapplicable, considering the best interest of the student and the school. Administrative transfers are not intended to accommodate students who fail to request a change in assigned schools during the open enrollment period or whose open enrollment request was not accepted. DCSD Principals must communicate about the move as well as fill out the administrative transfer paperwork. ¶¶~~

~~6. STEM School Highlands Ranch Interest Form ¶¶~~

~~During the timeframe when the DCSD Open Enrollment Tool is not accepting names, families can put their name on STEM's Interest Form to receive notifications as to when the DCSD Open Enrollment Tool will open. This list will also allow our registrar to communicate with~~

Enrollment Policy

~~families on upcoming tours. Completing the STEM Interest Form does not guarantee enrollment for the potential student, nor does it legally bind families to enroll in STEM. Families can find the Interest Form at stemk12.org/enrollment.~~

Approved by the STEM School Board on _____.
(dd/mm/yyyy)

STEM School Highlands Ranch

By: _____
(Signature, Board Secretary)

(Printed name, Board Secretary)

Adopted: 2019

Revised: January 2023

Revised: August 2023

Revised: October 2023

Revised: October 2024 ~~TBD~~