

Enrollment Policy and Procedures July 1, 2021

ADMISSIONS OVERVIEW

Salem Academy is a public charter school that operates as an independent school district, and is therefore open to all Massachusetts students on a space available basis. Applications to Salem Academy are integrated with those of the district; therefore a separate application process for the district is not required. Salem Academy accepts applications for enrollment in grades 6, 7, 8, and 9, and also backfills vacancies in these grade levels when they arise to meet statutory requirements. Each year Salem Academy will determine the number of spaces available each year in each grade. This level of enrollment is in accordance with Salem Academy's current 480 maximum student enrollment cap and the pre-enrollment submission to the Department in the previous spring in accordance with 603 CMR 1.08(5). Grades 10 - 12 are not eligible for new enrollment, or vacancy backfilling.

Salem Academy Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or in a foreign language, or prior academic achievement when recruiting or admitting students. Moreover, Salem Academy will not set admissions criteria that are intended to discriminate or that have the effect of discriminating based upon any of these characteristics. M.G.L. c. 71, § 89(1); 603 CMR 1.06(1). In accordance with MA state law, Salem Academy does not charge an application fee for admission or use financial incentives to recruit students. 603 CMR 1.05(3)(a).

Salem Academy Charter School has an interest in making sure that all prospective students and their families understand the mission and focus of the school and are interested in being a part of the school community.

Salem Academy Charter School **requires**:

1. Candidates for admission who apply for the grade immediately following their current grade must successfully complete that grade to be admitted.
2. Students to be residents of Massachusetts at the time that they submit a Lottery Enrollment Form (attached) and at the time that they are offered admission.¹
3. That primary preference for admission be given to siblings of students "currently attending" the school in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations.
4. That secondary preference for admission is given to students **who are Salem** residents (as defined in 603 1.06(4)) at the time that they are offered admission to the school.
5. Except in the case of homeless students, residency is determined by where the child actually lives, and the school requires documented proof of the declared residency.

Note: Any candidate who fails to meet any of the above requirements will be notified as such in writing and may reapply when the requirements can be met. Eligible students who are declined an offer of admission for lack of available space will in all cases be offered a place on the waiting list according to the procedures

¹ Students are offered admission if their names are drawn in the lottery or if another student declines an offer of admission/transfers out of the school and their name comes up on the waitlist

below. Any student who declines an offer of enrollment may reapply at a later date according to the enrollment policy guidelines.

and **strongly advises and requests, but does not require:**

6. Parents/ guardians and students attend informational sessions and orientation sessions prior to enrollment.
7. Parents/guardians and students sign compacts that demonstrate their agreement with and understanding of the school's mission.

Salem Academy Charter School **will not:**

1. Give preferences to children of staff members or Board members;
2. Give preference to siblings of students accepted to the school but not yet attending;
3. Predicate enrollment on the results of any test of ability or achievement; or
4. Make statements in meetings intended to discourage, or that have the effect of discouraging, parents/guardians of students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, or any other protected group of students from submitting an application to the school. See M.G.L. c. 71 § 89(1).

OUTREACH

Salem Academy Charter School provides information about the school to those who are interested throughout the year in the school's advertising materials, on the [school website](#), and also in our student/parent handbooks (which are updated and uploaded onto www.salemacademycs.org annually). To apply for an available space, parents are asked to complete a simple, one page Lottery Enrollment Form and submit it to the school prior to a scheduled lottery. Lottery Enrollment Forms are available from the school's website. They are also available in print from the school office, and they are included in the school's annual mailing to students enrolled in the District schools. In addition, Salem Academy Charter School distributes Lottery Enrollment Forms at its Information Sessions held in December, January, and February of each year for interested families.

The recruitment and enrollment process is an extensive, city-wide outreach effort that includes advertisement and formal, public information sessions as outlined in G.L. c. 71, § 89(f), and 603 CMR 1.05(1). Attendance of Orientation Sessions is strongly encouraged for students and their families. Salem Academy will strive to make accommodations for families with individual hardships. In an effort to serve the diverse population of Salem, the outreach program specifically targets the following groups:

- A. Special education students
- B. Limited English-proficient students
- C. Students eligible for free lunch
- D. Students eligible for reduced price lunch
- E. Students who are sub-proficient (as determined by a previous score of "Needs Improvement" or "Warning/Failing" on the mathematics or English language arts examinations of the MCAS for the previous two years)
- F. Students at risk of dropping out of school
- G. Students who have dropped out of school
- H. Other subgroups of students who should be targeted to eliminate the achievement gap

ENROLLMENT PROCESS

1. For a given school year beginning in September, Salem Academy will accept lottery enrollment forms during an initial application process between the day after the previous lottery and March 1st prior to the next given school year. If students were placed on the waiting list in the previous school year, they must reapply for the next grade level in the following year.²
2. When an application is received, the primary contact will be notified in writing of the rights of students with diverse learning needs to attend the charter school and to receive accommodations and support services, including students who may have disabilities, require special education, or are English language learners. 603 CMR 1.05(4).
3. The school will conduct a lottery after this initial lottery enrollment period on Wednesday of the second week of March at 6:00 pm in the school's Learning Common, 45 Congress Street, Salem, MA, and will publicize the date, time and location with reasonable notice of at least one week before the lottery date. 603 CMR 1.06(6). The lottery is open to the public, all are welcome and will also be available to watch online.
4. Letters informing families of the results of the lottery will be prepared and mailed the next day to all families whose children were included in the lottery. Families who have been offered an available space will be given a final date of April 1 to accept offers of enrollment.
5. Any Lottery Enrollment Forms submitted after the March lottery will be accepted for additional lottery enrollment periods between April 1 and August 30.
6. Salem Academy will publicize all lottery enrollment deadlines and the fact that there will be a lottery if there are more eligible applicants than there are available spaces within a given application period, with reasonable public notice at least one month in advance.

After the application deadline passes, Salem Academy Charter School will divide all applications into three categories under 603 CMR 1.06(4)

- *Siblings* – Students who share a common parent, either biologically or legally through adoption. Marriage does not constitute legal parenthood, and step children not legally adopted are not siblings. Whether the children reside in the same household has no bearing on determining if the children are siblings for purposes of a sibling preference. Children who live in separate households may be siblings and those who live in the same household may not be. If siblings are placed in foster homes and one of them enrolls in the charter school, then the siblings of that student are entitled to admission preference. Foster children are not considered siblings of other children in the foster home unless they share a common parent.
- *Residents* - Students who live in the city or town in which the charter school is located. Residents enrolled in district, charter, private or parochial schools or enrolling in schools in the district get equal preference.
- *Non-residents* - Students who live outside the city or town in which the charter school is located but within Massachusetts. Non-Residents enrolled in district, charter, private or parochial schools or enrolling in schools in the district get equal preference.

Preference for admission is given first to applicants in the "Siblings" category followed by applicants in the "Residents" category and then by applicants in the "Non-Residents" category without regard to when their

² In accordance with state regulations, SACS will not set any principal application deadlines or hold any enrollment lotteries for student admission for the upcoming school year until after January 1st and shall conclude its principal enrollment process no later than March 15th of each year.

application was submitted as long as it was prior to the application deadline. Schools must either extend an offer of admission to all applicants within a group, Siblings, Residents or Non-Residents, that meet the application deadline or select applicants randomly using a lottery. Salem Academy Charter School will not offer admission to applicants on a first come first serve basis.

LOTTERY

The school will determine the number of spaces available each year by grade level. If there are more eligible applicants in any of the categories (“Siblings”, "Salem Residents" or “Non-Salem Residents”) than there are spaces available, Salem Academy Charter School will hold a lottery to determine which applicants will receive an offer of admission. [603 CMR 1.06\(3\)\(a\)](#). As previously mentioned, the school will give reasonable public notice of the lottery at least one week before the lottery date. Salem Academy will run an electronic lottery using Rediker Software, which has been [certified as a randomized lottery mechanism](#). After the available slots are filled, the software shall keep drawing the preassigned lottery ID numbers of the remaining applicants in each category and place them on a waiting list in the order they are drawn.

If the school does not reach capacity after admitting all eligible “Siblings” and "Salem Residents," then it may admit non-Salem resident applicants. In this case, the school must hold a lottery, under the same rules as outlined above, to select non-Salem resident students for the remaining spaces if there are more non-Salem resident applicants than spaces available. [603 CMR 1.06\(4\)\(b\)](#). In the event spaces become available during the school year, a school may repeat the enrollment process to fill these openings and to meet the requirements of G.L. c. 70, § 89(n). [603 CMR 1.05\(8\)](#).

WAITING LIST

If a student stops attending Salem Academy or declines admission the next available student on the waitlist for that grade, subject to preferences at the time of admission, will be offered admission until the vacant seat is filled. Students who have withdrawn from Salem Academy, but seek to re-enroll must reapply for the next school year’s lottery. Salem Academy Charter School will maintain accurate records including names, dates of birth, addresses, telephone numbers, and grades of students on waiting lists for “Siblings”, “Salem Residents” and “Non-Salem Residents”. These lists will be regenerated each year when families reapply for the next grade level. Salem Academy must always accept “Salem Resident" students before accepting “Non-Salem Resident” students unless the “Non-Salem Resident” student is also a "Sibling,” and we acknowledge the residential/sibling status of student may change over time--so we will update our lists in accordance with these changes. No student may be admitted ahead of other eligible students who were previously placed on a waitlist during a prior enrollment process, except in cases where enrollment preferences change. Students will be notified in writing by mail of their place on a waiting list immediately following the lottery drawing.

There is one exception – if a space became available and the enrollment of a student from the waiting list would cause his or her sending district to exceed the net school spending cap, Salem Academy will skip over that student but keep the student on the waiting list. If that student on the waiting list is a sibling of a student currently enrolled at the charter school, the school may enroll that student and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts will pay the tuition to the charter school, subject to state appropriations.

SECONDARY LOTTERY

Salem Academy Charter School may hold a second lottery under the following conditions:

1. If by March 1st the school has received fewer enrollment forms than it has spaces available; or

2. If after March 1st, the school receives additional lottery enrollment forms for the upcoming school year.

ENROLLMENT CONFIRMATION

Families will be notified at the lottery and by mail of their admission status; either acceptance or placement on the waiting list. Families whose children are being offered enrollment will receive a form on which to indicate acceptance of the school's offer, and a form with guidelines for proof of residency. One formal document must be provided by the incoming students that states the parent's legal name and address (i.e. a lease, utility bill, rental agreement or other official document). If the incoming student is experiencing homelessness, the school's homelessness liaison (sroy@salemacademycs.org) will work directly with the family to 1) verify the student's current residency situation and 2) provide transportation to the school as needed. If a student is accepted through the March lottery, that family must confirm by April 1 that the student will attend the school. To ensure that the student is able to enroll, the family must fill out and submit the acceptance statement and proof of residency no later than April 1. Additional forms will be due during the course of the summer, and assistance in completing these will be provided on an as needed basis.

At any point prior to February 15 of the coming school year that an opening develops in grades six through nine, the school will notify the next student on the waiting list by phone and by mail with an offer of admission for that space. Since school begins in mid-August, if a student is selected from the waiting list after April 1 and if the family is notified before August 15th, the family will have 10 days to confirm enrollment. If the family is notified after August 15th, the family will have 3 days to confirm enrollment. A vacancy not filled after February 15th moves into the subsequent grade to be filled the following August if such grade is within 6th through 9th grades.

Salem Academy Charter School will report to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and to the individual students' sending districts the names and other identifying information of students enrolled in the school as appropriate. During Salem Academy's annual Summer Mailing process, the school will invite parents to consent to or deny permission to disclose information to other parties, and upon request to a third party mail house for mailings by other schools or districts. Parents/Guardians will receive this paperwork via email by July 30th, but paper copies will be made available for those families with technological limitations. We ask that this is completed prior to the first day of school so the necessary arrangements can be on a student-level basis.

OTHER LIMITATIONS

While Salem Academy primarily accepts students entering 6th Grade, Salem Academy will accept students in the 7th, 8th, and 9th grades when there are spaces available. All entering students must have successfully completed the grade preceding the grade to which the student seeks admission.

Lottery Enrollment Form
2021-2022 School Year

Student Name: _____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____
Last First Middle required month day year

Home Address: _____
Number/street city state zip code

Telephone Number: _____ Gender: female male

Name of Current School/Elementary School: _____
Name phone #

Present Grade (2019-2020): 5th 6th 7th 8th Preferred Language: _____
Anticipated Grade (2020-2021): 6th 7th 8th 9th

How did hear about Salem Academy? _____

Does the student have a brother or sister who currently attends Salem Academy? Yes No

Name of sibling: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____/
last first Relationship to student

Home Address: _____
Number/street city state zip code

Telephone Number: _____ Work: _____ Cellular Number: _____

Email Address: _____ Preferred Language: _____

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____/
last first Relationship to student

Home address: _____
Number/street city state zip code

Telephone Number: _____ Work: _____ Cellular Number: _____

Email Address: _____ Preferred Language: _____

Salem Academy Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, creed, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability, homelessness, socioeconomic status, academic status, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in English language or foreign language, or any other class of individuals protected from discrimination under state or federal law in any aspect of the access to, admissions, or treatment of students in its programs and activities, or in employment and application for employment. Salem Academy's policy includes prohibitions of harassment of students and employees, i.e., racial harassment, sexual harassment, and retaliation for filing complaints of discrimination.