GO CPS

TIER PROCESS

SELECTION PROCESS FOR MAGNET AND SELECTIVE ENROLLMENT SCHOOLS: AN OVERVIEW

Note: The tiers for the 2020-2021 school year have been updated.

On August 24, 2011, the Chicago Board of Education approved the Admissions Policy for Magnet, Selective Enrollment and Other Options for Knowledge Schools and Programs. This policy is designed to ensure equal access and equity in the provision of magnet and selective enrollment schools and programs offered by the District. The following provides information regarding the impact of the policy on the selection process.

HOW TIERS ARE CREATED

Every Chicago address falls within a specific census tract. We look at five socio-economic characteristics for each census tract: (1) median family income, (2) percentage of single-parent households, (3) percentage of households where English is not the first language, (4) percentage of homes occupied by the homeowner, and (5) level of adult education attainment. We also look at a sixth characteristic, the achievement scores from attendance area schools for the students who live in each census tract.

Based on the results of each of these six areas, each census tract is given a specific score; these scores are ranked and divided into four groups – or 'tiers' – each consisting of approximately the same number of school-age children. This is how we establish the four tiers. Consequently, every Chicago address falls into one of the four tiers, based on the characteristics mentioned above.

HOW TIERS ARE USED FOR SELECTIONS

Siblings and Proximity

For magnet schools, magnet cluster schools, and open enrollment schools, the first seats are offered to applicants who are siblings of students who are currently enrolled, and who will be still enrolled, in the school in the upcoming school year. (If more siblings apply than there are seats available, a computerized sibling lottery will be conducted to fill the available spaces.) Sibling preference will only be given if the application indicates that the student is applying as a sibling, and this information has been verified.

After the siblings are accommodated, the next 40% of the available seats in magnet schools are designated for students who live within the school's proximity (a 1.5 mile radius of the elementary magnet school).

After the proximity students are accommodated, the remaining seats are distributed evenly among the four tiers, and the seats are filled by computerized lottery.

(Note that the distribution of seats among the four tiers applies to the entry-grade level only – for most elementary schools, the entry-grade level is kindergarten. In two of the Montessori magnet schools – Drummond and Suder – the entry-grade level is the PreK-3 level, and in Inter-American Magnet School, the entry-grade level is the PreK-4 level. For high schools, the entry-grade level is ninth grade.)

There is no proximity or tier consideration for non-entry grades in magnet schools, elementary magnet cluster schools, open enrollment schools, or high school magnet programs. In addition, proximity lotteries are not conducted at magnet schools that have an attendance boundary.

Selective Enrollment Schools

For the entry grade level for Selective Enrollment Elementary and High Schools and programs, the first 30% of available seats are filled strictly according to the student scores – also referred to as the "rank" score – the seats are filled by the top-scoring students. The remaining seats are equally distributed among the four tiers and are filled by the highest-scoring students in each tier. There is no sibling or proximity consideration for these schools.

HOW TO FIND YOUR TIER

1. Go to cps.edu/map
2. Type in your address in the box at the top left of the page.
3. A box will appear on the left side of the page that identifies your neighborhood schools. The box also shows the tier in which you live.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

See below for a Tract-to-Tier chart, Tier map, and Summary Tier Information.

- Tract-to-Tier
- Tier Map by Census Tract
- Summary Information