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***COLOGNE ACADEMY ONLINE  
MANUAL OF SCHOOL POLICIES APPROVED BY THE BOARD***

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**POLICY 301: APPLICATION, ADMISSIONS, ENROLLMENT, AND LOTTERY POLICY**

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is two-fold.

- 1) This policy was created to explain enrollment and admissions at Cologne Academy Online, so that families may make enrollment decisions in an informed and timely manner.
- 2) Admission to Cologne Academy Online is open to all students, without regard to ability, race, religion, or any other factors, other than the capacity of the program, class, grade level, or building.

**II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

Cologne Academy Online is a public school and is required to enroll an eligible student who submits a timely application, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or building. When that occurs, students will be placed on a waiting list. State statutes require that Cologne Academy Online give preference for enrollment to: (1) a sibling\* of an enrolled student and to a foster child of that student's parents before accepting other students by lot, (2) children of Cologne Academy staff before accepting other pupils by lot, and (3) remaining students will be selected by lottery. However the School Board of Education can give first priority to current CA students to attend CAO.

Therefore, preference for enrollment to: (1) current enrolled CA student (2) a sibling\* of an enrolled student and to a foster child of that student's parents before accepting other students by lot, (3) children of Cologne Academy staff before accepting other pupils by lot, and (4) remaining students will be selected by lottery.

Cologne Academy Online may not limit admission to pupils on the basis of gender, race, intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or athletic ability.

\*A **sibling** is one of two or more individuals having one or both step/parents in common.

### **III. APPLICATION AND ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES**

The annual enrollment period shall be determined by the school administration and shall be published no later than November 1<sup>st</sup> of each upcoming school year. Currently, open enrollment is held from the Tuesday after Labor Day through the third Friday in January. By January 5<sup>th</sup>, each year, the school board will establish and publish the available enrollment by grade applicable to the following school year. All prospective students must complete and submit a timely application for admission in order to be considered for enrollment in the school term following the enrollment period. This requirement is applicable to both preferential and non-preferential applicants. An application is considered to be timely if it has been marked as “received” in the main office of the school before the end of the enrollment period. Each enrollment application received is date-stamped and also either time-stamped or sequentially stamped by number designating the order in which applications were received for each such date.

**Admissions.** All applications received during the open enrollment period are automatically accepted for enrollment (i.e. admitted) unless more applications are received than the available enrollment established by the Board for the applicable grade(s). In this situation, all submitted applications for such grade(s) are placed in the lottery; however, siblings of currently admitted students and children of staff employed in school have preference.

**Siblings of Admitted Students:** Siblings, who submit an application before the expiration of the open enrollment period, of currently admitted students are automatically admitted unless the number of sibling applications exceed the available enrollment established by the Board for the applicable grade(s). If the number of sibling applications exceeds available enrollment in any grade, a sibling lottery is held for each such grade. Siblings are admitted to the school in the order in which they are drawn in the lottery. If all available enrollment in a grade is filled by siblings, the sibling lottery continues and establishes the sibling waiting list (preferential list), which has preference over both the staff-children waiting list and the general waiting list.

**Children of Staff Employed at Cologne Academy Online:** Children of staff employed at the school who submit an application before the expiration of the open enrollment period, are automatically admitted provided that all siblings (of already admitted students) who submitted a timely application are admitted, and provided there is available enrollment as determined by the Board for the applicable grade(s). If the number of children of staff exceeds the available enrollment established by the Board for any grade (and after all siblings (of admitted students) who submitted a timely application are admitted), a staff-children lottery is held. Children of staff are admitted to the school in the order in which they are drawn in the lottery. If all available enrollment in a grade is filled by children of staff, the staff-children lottery continues to establish the staff-children waiting list (preferential list) for each such grade.

**General Lottery:** State statutes require that Cologne Academy Online give preference for enrollment to: (1) currently enrolled CA student, (2) a sibling of an enrolled student and to

a foster child of that student's parents before accepting other students by lot and (3) children of Cologne Academy Online staff before accepting other pupils by lot (4) remaining students will be selected by lottery.

If the number of applications received during the open enrollment period exceeds available enrollment established by the Board for any grade (and after siblings (of admitted students) who submitted timely applications are already admitted or establish a sibling waiting list, and after all children of staff employed at the school who submitted a timely application are already admitted or establish a staff-children waiting list), the school conducts a general lottery. All applications for each such grade(s) (excluding applications from siblings of already admitted students and excluding applications from children of staff employed at the school) received before the expiration of the open enrollment period are included in the general lottery. Students are admitted to the school in the order in which they are drawn in the lottery, as long as there is available enrollment as determined by the Board for the applicable grade(s). If all available enrollment in any grade is filled, the lottery continues and establishes the general waiting list for each such grade in the order drawn, until all applications are drawn. If a student is admitted through the general lottery and that student has one or more siblings in other grades also subject to a lottery, those siblings are automatically admitted as long as available enrollment as determined by the Board remains in the applicable grade(s).

- (1) Applications received after the open enrollment period expires are automatically admitted as long as there is available enrollment as established by the Board in the applicable grade, in the order received. If, or once, there is no available enrollment in any grade, applications are added to the applicable waiting list for each such grade, in the order received.
- (2) The School conducts all lotteries through a method of random selection.
- (3) If a family declines an available spot the next child on the waiting list will be offered the spot.
- (4) Families who decline an available spot must re-apply to be considered for enrollment.

Once the enrollment period is closed, if there are more applicants than spots available, all timely applicants will be placed on one of two lists by grade: (a) a preference list of students given a preference by state law or this policy and (b) all other applicants. Additions to the preference list and all other applicants will be shuffled by lot, and offers of enrollment will be made to students in the order in which they are listed for each grade until classes are full, first exhausting the preference list, and then proceeding to the remaining non-preference applicants. Applicants previously on the non-preference list who submit a timely application for the upcoming school term will be reshuffled along with all new applicants on the non-preference list.

If a family declines an available spot the next child on the waiting list will be offered the spot. Families who decline an available spot must re-apply to be considered for enrollment.

All applicants still on the waiting list at the beginning of the next enrollment period must submit a new written application for enrollment and all applicants are subject to the enrollment process described above. The waiting list does not carry over from year to year.

#### **IV. OTHER CONDITIONS**

An applicant to Cologne Academy Online may apply only for one grade. Applicants who wish to be considered for early entrance to kindergarten or whole-grade acceleration must follow the procedures laid out in Cologne Academy's board policies (607.1). In all instances, however, Cologne Academy Online reserves the right to place an enrolled student in the most academically appropriate grade regardless of the student's age.

If two or more applicants move to the preferential status waiting list on the same day, they will maintain the ordinal ranking that they had before. An applicant who has been placed on the preferential status waiting list will continue to have preference for that school year as long as he or she maintains a valid application with the school.

An applicant is eligible to receive preference as the child of a current member of Cologne Academy's faculty after the faculty member has begun his or her term of employment at Cologne Academy. The applicant shall immediately be placed at the end of the existing preferential status waiting list. Again, if two or more applicants move to the preferential status waiting list on the same day, they will maintain the ordinal ranking that they had before. An applicant who has been placed on the preferential status waiting list will continue to have preference for that school year as long as he or she maintains a valid application with the school and his or her parent continues to be an employed member with the school. If the faculty member's term of employment is ended for any reason, the child moves to the end of the non-preferential waiting list.

Siblings enrolling in the same grade will be considered individuals and each will have a separate entry in the lottery. If one of the multiples is drawn in the lottery, the other sibling(s) is/are enrolled. The siblings would be first on the waitlist if there are no more available seats.

Applicants will be contacted from the waiting lists as spots become available. Open seats in grades K-8 can be filled at any time.

#### **General Admission Procedures:**

(1) **Order of Admission:** Currently enrolled CA students, Siblings of Already Admitted Students, then Children of Staff Employed at the School, then General Admissions.

(2) **No waiting list carry over from year to year:** Each waiting list is subject to a lottery and redrawn during each admission process each year. All applicants still on the waiting list at the beginning of the next enrollment period must submit a new written application for enrollment and all applicants are subject to the enrollment process described above. The waiting list does not carry over from year to year.

(3) **Multiple births** (twins, triplets, etc): Each student seeking admission completes an application (i.e. not one application for the family). In a lottery situation, each student

receives an individual number/lot in the lottery. Siblings enrolling in the same grade will be considered individuals and each will have a separate entry in the lottery. If one of the multiples is drawn in the lottery, the other sibling(s) is/are enrolled. The siblings would be first on the waitlist if there are no more available seats.

(4) **Lottery Grade Order:** Applicable lotteries occur from highest grade to lowest grade. For example, if a lottery is required in grades K and 3, the grade 3 lottery is conducted first, followed by the K lottery.

A. Standards that may be used for rejection of application In addition to the provisions of Paragraph II.A., the school may refuse to allow a pupil who is expelled under Section 121A.45 to enroll during the term of the expulsion if the student was expelled for:

1. possessing a dangerous weapon, including a weapon, device, instruments, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury, with the exception of a pocket knife with a blade less than two and one-half inches in length, at school or a school function;
2. possessing or using an illegal drug at school or a school function;
3. selling or soliciting the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school function; or
4. committing a third-degree assault involving assaulting another and inflicting substantial bodily harm.

B. Standards that may not be used for rejection of application. The Director shall establish lottery and enrollment procedures consistent with Minnesota State Law 124D.10. The school may not use the following standards in determining whether to accept or reject an application for open enrollment:

1. previous academic achievement of a student;
2. athletic or extracurricular ability of a student;
3. disabling conditions of a student;
4. a student's proficiency in the English language;
5. the student's place of residence; or
6. previous disciplinary proceedings involving the student. This shall not preclude the school from proceeding with exclusion as set out in Section D. of this policy.

C. Exclusion

1. Director's initial determination. If a school director knows or has reason to believe that an applicant has engaged in conduct that has subjected or could subject the applicant to expulsion or exclusion under law or school policy, the director recommends whether exclusion proceedings should be initiated.
2. Director's review. The Director may make further inquiries. If the Director determines that the applicant should be admitted, he or she will notify the applicant and the school board chair. If the Director determines that the applicant should be excluded, the Director will notify the applicant and determine whether the applicant wishes to

continue the application process. Although an application may not be rejected based on previous disciplinary proceedings, the school reserves the right to initiate exclusion procedures pursuant to the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act as warranted on a case-by-case basis.

D. Termination of Enrollment

1. The school may terminate the enrollment of a nonresident student enrolled under an enrollment options program pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 124D.03 or 124D.08 at the end of a school year if the student meets the definition of a habitual truant, the student has been provided appropriate services for truancy under Minn. Ch. 260A, and the student's case has been referred to juvenile court. A "habitual truant" is a child under 16 years of age who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for seven school days if the child is in elementary school or for one or more class periods on seven school days if the child is in middle school, junior high school or high school, or a child who is 16 or 17 years of age who is absent from attendance at school without lawful excuse for one or more class periods on seven school days and who has not lawfully withdrawn from school under Minn. Stat. § 120A.22, Subd. 8.

**AVAILABLE ENROLLMENT BY GRADE  
FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2024-2025**

**COLOGNE ACADEMY ONLINE**

Upon consideration of the number of currently-enrolled students at Cologne Academy Online, who are each by law provided enrollment preference, the Board of Cologne Academy establishes the following available enrollment/seats in each grade:

**Grade Available      Enrollment Seats**

**K-8<sup>th</sup> grade- 25 seats available/grade level**

Table 1: Grade Offerings and Expansion

	Grades K-2			Grades 3-5			Grades 6-8		
	K	1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH	5TH	6TH	7TH	8th
<b>FY22</b>	Complete								
<b>FY23</b>	Complete								
<b>FY24</b>	Enrolling								
<b>FY25</b>	Enrolling								

The Board reminds interested applicants of the Order of Admissions for Available Enrollment/Seats: Current CA students, Siblings of Already Admitted Students, then Children of Staff Employed at the School, and then General Admissions.

## **COLOGNE ACADEMY ONLINE LOTTERY PROCESS**

### **Preparing for the lottery:**

1. Enrollment dates and procedures will be posted on the website, in the school office, and other places as the school deems necessary.
2. As applications are received during open enrollment, applications are stamped with the date received, but all applications are on equal footing during this period (i.e. it is not first-come, first-serve situation).
3. A spreadsheet will be set up for each grade level. For grades with full enrollment, the lottery is simply a placement on a waitlist. No spots can be officially offered to families until current families formally withdraw.
4. For incoming siblings, we will place them first (according to MN Law 124D.10 which allows for sibling preference) according to lottery day procedures noted below.
5. Before the lottery, all students' names will be filled out on separate slips of paper. Also on that slip of paper are the siblings' names and grade levels. This needs to be carefully cross-referenced to make sure there are no omissions or errors.

### **The day of the lottery:**

1. The slips of paper with each prospective student's name on it must be cut apart, sorted by grade level, and put in alphabetical order according to last name within grade levels.
2. The spreadsheet will be projected on the wall, if possible, so people can see as names are drawn and typed in.
3. The lottery is open to the public, seating should be arranged for any parents who may want to attend.
4. One person will be designated as the person who draws the names, one person will type in names, and one person will cross-reference all names drawn for siblings, etc. If possible, one person will be designated to keep track of all forms, name slips, etc., after they are drawn.
5. A sibling lottery will be held for one of two reasons. A) if there are more siblings than space available such as in Kindergarten, or B) to determine placement on the wait list for all other grades. This portion of the lottery will be done first and will start with the highest grade, going grade-by-grade down to Kindergarten.

6. As names are typed into the spreadsheet, it is important to list all siblings and siblings' grade levels. There will be a significant amount of cross-referencing siblings among grade levels throughout the process.
7. Once all open slots are filled, we start placing names on the waitlist.

**After the lottery:**

1. All parents will be informed via U.S. postal service that they have been given a spot in next year's enrollment or a numbered spot on the wait-list. The office will keep a copy of all letters sent out.
2. Parents will have a finite period of time, to be determined by the office, in which they have to fill out a full enrollment packet or decline their spot. Parents declining their spot should do so in writing. Email notice is considered written notice of decline.
3. The office will devise a spreadsheet to track the status of each student's enrollment.
4. If a parent declines a spot and we go to the next student on the wait-list, we need to check to see if that student has siblings and if enrolling that student moves the siblings up on the wait-list or provides them with an "in" spot. For this reason, we discourage parental calls to the office asking where they are on the wait-list. There are many variables that can affect a student's standing. Office policy is to inform families when they move into the top 3 on the wait-list and then again when we have an "in" spot for them, but not to keep giving updates on a regular basis.
5. When a Kindergarten space opens, the top family on the wait-list is contacted and may choose to accept or may choose to retain their place on the waitlist and allow the opening to go to the next family on the wait-list.
6. If families are notified of a cleared waitlist do not respond by the due date, the office will make three documented attempts to contact the family. On the third and final attempt, it shall be by mail, informing the family that if we don't hear back from them by the second designated date, we will assume they are no longer interested in Cologne Academy and will be giving their spot to the next family on the wait-list. This documentation must include the kind of contact made (e.g. phone call, email, letter), the date of the contact, the person making the contact, and the response.