



## Public Random Drawing/Lottery Policy

The Cottonwood School (the “Charter School”) is committed to providing quality education to all students who wish to attend, who reside within the Charter School’s geographic limitations<sup>1</sup>. Based on capacity, it may be necessary to limit admission. In that event, a public random drawing (“Lottery”) will be held to determine admission. The Cottonwood School ensures admission will not be based on any protected characteristics, including, but not limited to, Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status, or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics).

- 1. Enrollment:** The Charter School operates an independent study program and a classroom-based Montessori high school. Admission to the Charter School is open to any student who resides within the boundaries of El Dorado County or an adjacent county. The Charter School will admit all students who wish to attend, so long as it has the capacity to serve them. The Charter School’s Governing Board (the “Board”) will annually determine capacity based on, among other factors, the annual budget, staffing, and available resources, prior to the start of the Open Enrollment Period. Limits may be established by grade level and for the Charter School as a whole.

The Board or the Executive Director will set an Open Enrollment Period each year. Applications will be accepted during the publicly advertised Open-Enrollment Period each year for admission in the following school year.

**Current Families Required to Confirm Intent to Return:** Families of students currently enrolled in The Cottonwood School, who wish to continue enrollment at the Charter School for the following school year, must submit Intent to Return Form to confirm their intent to return to the Charter School by the published deadline. The Charter School cannot guarantee continued enrollment for forms/applications that arrive after the deadline.

Families of students currently enrolled in another charter school but assigned to a The Cottonwood School teacher, who wish to gain enrollment at The Cottonwood School in order to remain with their assigned teacher, must submit the Intent to Return Form to confirm their intent to enroll in the Charter School by the published deadline. If such a student fails to provide this form/application by the published deadline, the Charter School cannot guarantee enrollment. This means the student loses their enrollment opportunity and will have to submit an application for admission, if they are interested in admission to the Charter School for the following school year.

Following the close of the Open Enrollment Period, applications shall be counted to determine whether the Charter School has received more applications than maximum enrollment capacity.

- If there is more capacity available than applicants, the Charter School will not conduct a lottery. The Charter school will admit all applicants and follow up with them about

enrolled.

- If the number of pupils who wish to attend the Charter School exceeds the Charter School's capacity for a specific grade level, admission in the impacted grade level or levels will be determined by a Lottery conducted in accordance with the procedures set forth in this Policy and applicable law. Admission preferences will only be extended consistent with this Policy, the Charter School's charter, and applicable law.

Admission preferences will not limit enrollment access for pupils with disabilities, academically low-achieving pupils, English learners, neglected or delinquent pupils, homeless pupils, or pupils who are economically disadvantaged, as determined by eligibility for any free or reduced-price meal program, or foster youth.

- 2. Lottery Procedures:** In the event that there are more students who wish to attend the Charter School than there are spots available upon closure of the Open Enrollment Period, the

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<sup>1</sup> Any student who lives in El Dorado County or an adjacent county (Placer, Sacramento, Amador, and Alpine) may attend the Charter School.

Charter School will conduct a Lottery during the Spring semester prior to the academic year for which admission is sought.

All pupils, except for existing students<sup>2</sup> of the Charter School, who are guaranteed admission as provided in this Policy and the Charter School's charter, who wish to attend the Charter School must participate in the Lottery. Preference in the public random drawing shall be granted in the following order:

1. Siblings of students admitted to or attending the Charter School
2. Children of The Cottonwood School employees
3. Children of The Cottonwood School founding team
4. Children with one year prior Montessori experience
5. All other residents of the District
6. All other applicants

Public notice of the Open-Enrollment Period and date of the Lottery will typically be posted on the Charter School's website at least 10 days prior to the commencement of the Open-Enrollment Period. The notice will provide the date, time, and location of the public, random drawing. This information will also be included in application forms. The Lottery will be conducted by grade-level. The Principal or his/her designee shall conduct the Lottery using a random method of selection. Unique identifiers will be assigned to each applicant. The conduct of the Lottery will be open to the public and families shall be encouraged, but not required, to attend. The Principal or his/her designee will announce each applicant who is granted admission through the Lottery. Once capacity has been reached, the Principal or his/her designee will continue to draw applicants who will then be placed on the waitlist in the order drawn. Applicants chosen in the Lottery shall be notified electronically or by mail.

If a student claims an admission preference noted in this Policy and the Charter School's charter, the Charter School may request supporting documentation as part of the enrollment process. The Charter School will conduct a verification of such documentation prior to finalizing the student's enrollment and may rescind admission for an applicant submitting materially false information.

After the Lottery, and once an offer has been accepted by the family, additional information may be requested as part of the enrollment process. Following the Lottery, students who are offered admission at the Charter School at the time of the Lottery will have five (5) calendar days to complete the enrollment process. If a student fails to timely complete the process, the offer of admission will be rescinded the spot may be filled from the waiting list.

Admission offers are valid only for the academic year for which the Lottery is conducted. There is no option to defer an offer of admission. Students in the independent study program

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<sup>2</sup> For the 2021-22 school year, students "currently enrolled in the Charter School" include students who were served by a teacher employed by The Cottonwood School during the 2020-21 school year or employed by the Charter School as of 2021-22 school year. Students who are enrolled in the network of schools and/or who move during the course of an academic year into El Dorado County or an adjacent county and wish to attend CCS, shall be deemed "existing students."

accepting admission must complete required independent study agreements prior to the beginning of the school year.

- 3. Waitlist:** If a spot becomes available because an admitted student declines enrollment, fails to timely complete the enrollment process, leaves the Charter School after the start of the academic year, or additional spots otherwise become available, the Charter School may notify families on the waitlist in the order they appear on the waitlist.

Students admitted from the waitlist shall have three (3) school days to accept the admission spot (via telephone or email to the Charter School) and proceed with the enrollment process. Applicants must complete an enrollment packet with all required documentation by the deadline given by the Charter School to confirm enrollment.

Applicants who fail to timely accept the offer of admission or to complete the enrollment packet with all required documentation by the deadline will be placed at the bottom of the waitlist. After being placed back on the waitlist two (2) times, the application will no longer be valid for the current school year. The waitlist shall not carry over from one year to the next. Students who have not been admitted will be required to submit a new admission application for the next school year and shall be required to participate in the Lottery to gain admission, if conducted.