

West Buffalo Charter School Enrollment Policy

West Buffalo Charter School serves students in grades kindergarten through fifth grade and will add one grade per year through grade eight by 2019-20. WBCS opened with students in grades K, 1 & 2 then added 60 third grade seats in 2013-14 and 60 fourth grade seats in 2014-15 and 2015 – 2016. For the second charter term, WBCS will add a middle school program and will enroll students according to the following chart:

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Kindergarten	60	60	60	60	60
1 st Grade	60	60	60	60	60
2 nd Grade	60	60	60	60	60
3 rd Grade	60	60	60	60	60
4 th Grade	60	60	60	60	60
5 th Grade	N/A	50	50	50	50
6 th Grade	N/A	N/A	50	50	50
7 th Grade	N/A	N/A	N/A	50	50
8 th Grade	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	50
Total	300	350	400	450	500

Note that all 60 grade four students may advance to grade 5 thus grades five through eight could enroll up to 60 students. However, historical re-enrollment patterns indicates that approximately 10 students will exit WBCS between fourth and fifth grades. WBCS will not enroll new students to the school unless the total enrollment in any grade, fifth through eighth, dips below 50 students total. Students will range in age from four years to 15 years old; four year-old students who will have their fifth birthday on or before December 31st of that school year are eligible for enrollment in kindergarten.

Non-discrimination policy: *“A charter school shall not discriminate against or limit the admission of any student on any unlawful basis, including on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, race, creed, national origin, religion or ancestry. A school may not require any action by a student or family (such as an admissions test, interview, essay, attendance at an information session, etc.) in order for an applicant to either receive or submit an application for admission to that school.”*

West Buffalo Charter School shall be open to any child who is eligible under the laws of New York State for admission to a public school, and WBCS shall comply with the requirements of Education Law §2854(2) and all other applicable laws.

Prior to the start of its first year of operation, WBCS will open admission to children wishing to enroll in kindergarten through second grade. All children eligible for enrollment in public schools in New York State in these grades are eligible to enroll in WBCS, subject to availability and the process set forth below.

WBCS will admit each eligible student who submits a timely application, unless the number of applications exceeds the enrollment capacity of the student's requested grade level or of the school. WBCS will admit no more than 10% more than the total number of students listed in the enrollment chart on page one of this policy.

Prior to the start of each school year, WBCS will open admission to children wishing to enroll in kindergarten through the highest grade pursuant to the WBCS expansion and enrollment plan. All children who will be eligible for enrollment in public schools in New York State in these grades will be eligible to enroll in WBCS, subject to availability and the process set forth below.

WBCS will admit each eligible student who submits an application by April 1st of the previous school year, unless the number of applications exceeds the enrollment capacity of the student's requested grade level or of the school. Enrollment is capped at 500 students by the 2019-20 school year.

Process:

At school and community meetings, personal meetings and school tours to interested families, prospective students and their parents/guardians will hear a comprehensive presentation about the school. Discussions will include the school's academic program, the schedule for an extended school day and year, expectations for student behavior, and parental involvement opportunities.

Parents/guardians who want to submit an application for a student who did not attend one of the several outreach meetings will be provided with a packet of written materials covering all the topics discussed during those meetings. If desired, a meeting will be scheduled with appropriate school staff and each interested parent/guardian to verbally review all the material and answer any questions the parent/guardian may have.

For academic years after the initial year of the charter, students and their parents or guardians will be encouraged to tour the school, observing classroom instruction and visiting any additional programs offered before and after school, in order to be sure that students and their parents/guardians understand the school's philosophy and the academic and social expectations prior to making a decision to enroll. (NB: Any meetings, open houses, etc. are optional. The school will not require parent attendance at such events as a condition for enrolling their child.)

Interested parents/guardians will be required to complete and submit an application form. Such forms will be made available at the school and at accessible locations throughout the community. The application (attached) conforms to the NYS uniform application form and requests basic biographical information (name, age, etc.), contact information, and other important facts (e.g., school district of residence). The school will make staff available to any parent or guardian who needs help completing the application. In order to be eligible for the placement lottery, completed applications must be submitted to the school by April 1. Any student who submits an application by April 1 will be enrolled, if there is space available. In addition, the school will not extend the application deadline beyond this date, unless it still has seats available.

If the number of eligible applications for admission exceeds the spaces available for students, a random lottery will be held. Such a lottery will be publicized at least one week in advance, open to the public, and drawn by representatives of a dispassionate outside organization (such as the United Way). Notice of the lottery will include the number of places and grades for which spaces will be drawn. The admissions lottery will have the following features:

In the school's first year:

First preference for admission will be given to students living in the school district of location, plus any of such admitted students' siblings also applying for admission to WBCS.

If any space remains, students from outside of the school district of location will be admitted, plus any of such admitted students' siblings also applying for admission to WBCS.

In future years:

To the extent a vacant space is available in the school:

First preference will be given to students who attended WBCS the previous year and are returning to the school, and their siblings.

Second preference will be given to applying students who live in the school district of location, plus any of such admitted students' siblings also applying for admission to WBCS.

And finally, students who do not live in the school district of location and plus any of such admitted students' siblings also applying for admission to WBCS.

Separate waiting lists will be maintained for each grade level, in the event that vacancies occur. The random lottery process used for student admission also will serve to place students in preferential order on these waiting lists. New waiting lists will be created each year.

Parents/Guardians will be notified in writing that their student is being offered placement at WBCS and will need to sign and return a form to accept or decline the placement by April 30. Parents/Guardians will be informed of the documents they need to provide in order for their child to be enrolled at WBCS:

- A notarized copy of the child's birth certificate
- Proof of address (such as a copy of a recent utility bill)
- A copy of the child's immunization record
- A copy of the child's dental record
- Busing request form (if not submitted with the initial application)
- Emergency contact form

In the event that a response is not received, or placement is declined, the student will be removed from all lists and the placement will be offered to the next student on the wait list; the school will maintain a non-responding/declined file.

Whenever a vacancy occurs, either prior to the start of a particular school year or during the course of that school year (up to May 30, at which date the school will cease to enroll new students for the current school year), the school will contact the parent or guardian of the student next on the appropriate waiting list. Reasonable and multiple attempts will be made to contact the family of the student on the top of the waiting list and get confirmation of whether the student is still interested in enrolling at WBCS before proceeding to the next name on the list. If reasonable and multiple attempts to contact the student's parents/guardians are unsuccessful, the school may remove that student from the waiting list; documentation of all attempts will be maintained by the school. Waiting lists will not be carried-over from year to year, but instead the annual admission lotteries will be used to create newly randomized waiting lists. The school will send a new enrollment application directly to the parents/guardians of each child on the prior year's waiting list.