

12. Admissions Policy and Criteria

- a. Describe how the recruitment and admissions policy of the charter school will, to the maximum extent possible, seek the enrollment of a cross-section of the community’s school-age population.**

The Princeton International Academy Charter School (PIACS) will serve children in grades K – 2 in its first year of operation. One grade a year will be added. The PIACS mission clearly outlines diversity and inclusiveness as a stated goal. The School shall admit students to appropriate grades on a space available basis. The School will admit children without regard to their intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, disability, ethnicity, English or Chinese language proficiency, race, creed, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, ancestry, or any other basis that would be unlawful for a public school.

The recruitment and admissions policy has no criteria that would bar or discourage any resident applicant. The application process ensures that race, religion, gender, academic ability, etc. are never considered as part of the admission process. The School will encourage all district students entering the appropriate grades, regardless of any of the above factors, to apply for admission.

- b. Provide a detailed recruitment plan to publicize the charter school in the community and to attract a cross-section of students from the district of residence or region of residence. Provide the tentative dates of the recruitment and application periods.**

PIACS will undertake an aggressive recruitment plan that will attract a cross-section of students from the region. Efforts to attract a diverse student population will include:

- Communicate with residents in the region that children of all cultural and ethnic backgrounds are eligible.
- Focus on International Baccalaureate curriculum framework to make families of all backgrounds comfortable.
- Recruit members of each community to spread the word about PIACS within their personal circles.
- Identify ethnic enclaves in each community and post flyers in niche businesses serving diverse community.
- Hold Informational Sessions at a variety of locations, such as local libraries, community centers, places of worship, etc. A Chinese and/or Spanish translator will be on site when appropriate.
- “Mix-and-match” founders of diverse backgrounds as speakers at Information Sessions.
- Employ print and radio advertisements throughout the region to ensure that a diverse array of families who may have an interest in an inquiry-based, language immersion program for their children have an opportunity to learn about the school and submit an application.

Princeton International Academy Charter School
Part 1 – Section 12. Admissions Policy and Criteria

- Invite all local media outlets to our major outreach events to widely publicize the school.
- Conduct outreach events and distribute a variety of bilingual marketing materials (such as brochures, FAQs, newsletters, etc.) at strategic locations throughout the region, such as daycare centers, public libraries, and music and dance classes, to introduce the Chinese language element of the program to families, including those for whom English is not the primary language and who might not ordinarily consider a Chinese immersion curriculum for their children.
- Educate every community about young child’s capacity for acquiring the second and third languages.
- Post multilingual flyers in local supermarkets, restaurants, cafes, community centers, apartment complexes, doctor’s offices, hair salons, banks, etc.
- Staff information booths at grocery stores and shopping areas to distribute information about the school.
- Visit local community-based organizations and develop relationships with key community leaders to access various segments of the region population.
- Post information, educational materials and events to local blogs, listservs, and websites.
- Set up a comprehensive bilingual website to promote the school and educate the public.
- Participate in well-attended community events (such as Communiversities in Princeton) to further reach interested families.

The tentative recruitment and application dates for the first year are as follows:

January 15, 2010	Announcement of application approval to local media (both English and Chinese)
January 18, 2010 – February 6, 2010	Initial Recruitment Period
February 8, 2010	Lottery (if necessary)
February 15, 2010 – June 4, 2010	Second Recruitment Period
June 10, 2010	Second Lottery (if necessary)
June 14, 2010 –	Ongoing monthly recruitment periods until the school opens and weekly recruitment periods after the school opens. Lotteries will be held at the end of each recruitment period if necessary.

During Year 1, the initial recruitment period will be 3-week long because the school shall submit to the Commissioner the number of students by grade level, gender and race/ethnicity from each district selected for enrollment from its initial recruitment period for the following school year by February 15, 2010 (N.J.A.C. 6A:11-4.4 (a)).

To ensure a solid outreach effort to a cross section of the community for the application, there will be a 16-week long second recruitment period accepting applications during Year 1 following the initial recruitment period.

After the second recruitment period, the school will accept applications throughout the year; those applications received after the second lottery date will either be admitted, if spaces remain in the appropriate grade(s), or be added to the waiting list in the order they are received.

In subsequent years, there will be only one regular recruitment period beginning in October, and a lottery will be held on or about February 1 annually. The School will accept applications throughout the year; those applications received after the final lottery date will either be admitted, if spaces remain in the appropriate grade(s), or be added to the waiting list in the order they are received.

The waiting list for a given year will remain in effect until the end of the school year for which the application was received, and if any students leave the school during the course of the school year, applicants will be accepted from the waiting list. However, a new waiting list must be initiated for each new academic year, if necessary.

c. Describe student admission policies, including the random selection process (lottery).

The school will be open to all children in the region of residence for its Grades K-2 in Year 1 and then add one grade per year in subsequent years. The school will attempt to enroll a group of children representative of all of the region's diverse groups, though the application process will ensure that race, religion, national origin, academic or athletic ability, status as a person with a disability, or proficiency in the English or Chinese language, etc. are never considered as part of the admission process.

Preference for enrollment in the charter school will be given to students who reside in the region of residence, but non-resident students may also apply for admission, if space allows.

In Year 1, a maximum of 60 children will be admitted to each of Grades K and 1, and 50 to Grade 2; once enrolled, Chinese-speaking and non-Chinese-speaking students will be allocated to each of the classes in Grades K – 2, so that proportions of each language group are roughly equal in each classroom.

As applications are received, students will be assigned lottery numbers, and applications will be grouped by grade level and residency status (resident/non-resident). If the number of applicants to the school exceeds capacity, a random selection process will be used to assign spaces. The lottery will be held publicly and will be conducted by an individual unaffiliated with the school selected by the board of trustees. Once the maximum number of students has been randomly selected for enrollment into each grade, the remaining lottery numbers will be drawn and placed on a waiting list in the order in which they are drawn with separate waiting lists for resident and non-resident students, respectively.

Students selected for enrollment will be informed promptly by mail. Each student selected for enrollment must inform the school within 30 days of notification whether he or she will attend. No response or an answer of nonattendance will activate the next name on the resident waiting list for admission.

In Year 1, if the resident waiting list is exhausted after the first lottery date, new applicants will be assigned lottery numbers for the second recruitment period and for the second lottery, if needed.

If the resident waiting list is exhausted after the second recruitment period in Year 1 or after the regular recruitment period in subsequent years, residents will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Applicants from the non-resident waiting list will only be accepted if available spots remain after the second recruitment period in Year 1 or the regular recruitment period in subsequent years. Waiting lists will be active until the end of the school year for which the application was received. A new waiting list will be initiated for each academic year, if necessary.

In Year 1, in the case of under-enrollment by the end of the first recruitment period, all the resident applicants will be accepted. At this point, a second in-region recruitment will be initiated, leading up to a second recruitment end and lottery, if necessary, for resident applicants to fill remaining spots. As described above, only if there are still spots available after the second recruitment ends will applicants from the non-resident be selected to fill the remaining spots.

Admission preference shall be granted to applicants in the following manner:

- First preference will be given to returning students, who will automatically be assigned a space within the school.
- Second preference will be given to in-region students who have in-region siblings already enrolled in the school. For definition purposes, “siblings” are two or more children that are related either by birth, by means of the same father or mother, or by legal adoption.
- New applicants who reside in the region.
- Remaining slots shall be available to all other applicants.

A school administrator will verify each applicant’s eligibility for admission to school upon enrollment. Proof of residence includes the legal home address of the parents or guardian and/or other appropriate documentation. Residency may be periodically re-evaluated.

d. Describe the waiting list process. Include the length of time a waiting list will be maintained.

The waiting list process will comply with N.J.A.C.6A-4.5. A waiting list will be initiated in January (or June as in the first year after the second lottery) of each year for the following academic year, and will be maintained until the end of the school year for which the application was received. If any students withdraw from the school during the course of the academic year, available spots will be filled from the appropriate waiting list. Once the school year is over, the waiting list for that year will be discontinued. Applicants on the waiting list must re-apply for the following school year, if they wish to be entered into the pool of applicants.

- e. **Describe the procedures for enrollment priority for siblings of students, if applicable, enrolled in the charter school for**
- **year one; and**
 - **subsequent years**

In Year 1, all resident siblings will be considered as a single applicant within the lottery and accepted or assigned to the waiting list together.

In subsequent years, resident siblings of existing students will receive first priority for enrollment, as space allows. If there is no space available in the grade level at which the sibling is entering, the student's name will be placed at the top of the waiting list. As in Year 1, resident siblings applying at the same will be considered as a single applicant within the lottery.

- f. **Describe the terms and conditions of non-resident student enrollment. Provide detail as to when the school will begin to recruit non-resident students, how the random selection process (lottery) will be conducted for non-resident students, and how the non-resident wait list will be established and maintained.**

Non-resident applicants may attend the school provided that unfilled spaces remain after the second recruitment period in Year 1 or the regular recruitment period in subsequent years. A separate lottery and waiting list will be maintained for non-resident applicants, if needed. After the second recruitment period in Year 1 or the regular recruitment period in subsequent years, the waiting list for resident applicants must be exhausted before students may be admitted from the non-resident waiting list. Once enrolled, non-resident students may stay enrolled until they age out of the school. Siblings of non-resident students currently enrolled in the school will not receive preference in enrollment.

The non-resident students shall not exceed 10% of the school's maximum capacity during the first year of operation.

- g. **If serving kindergarten, determine the date by which a kindergarten student must be five years old in order to attend the charter school. If not serving kindergarten, respond to the statement with the words "Does Not Apply." Pursuant to N.J.S.A.18:A38-5, all kindergarten students must be five years old by October 1 of each year. However, the charter school must follow the district of residence enrollment policies if that date is earlier than October 1.**

In accordance with N.J.S.A.18A:38-5, children must be five years old by October 1 of each year to be eligible for Kindergarten. A birth certificate will be required as evidence of age. If a birth certificate is not available, the school will accept legal evidence of age through appropriate government documentation.