Advantage Academy
“Building Champions with a Future and a Hope”
www.advantageisd.org

ENROLLMENT MANUAL
Enrollment Manual
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ADMISSION

Advantage Academy is an open enrollment charter school which is a public school of choice. For a child to be admitted, the parent must follow the established guidelines for the admission and lottery process which includes all children who are within the geographical area described in the Advantage Academy charter contract. Students will not be discriminated against on the basis of sex; national origin; ethnicity; religion; disability; academic, artistic, or athletic ability; or the district the child would otherwise attend under state law.

Each applicant will be required to submit an application. Parents/guardians and prospective students must complete all enrollment requirements as established by the Texas Education Agency. If at the close of open registration more applications are received than spaces available, the waiting list will be filled by lottery.

Advantage Academy may make reasonable inquiries as permitted by law to verify a person’s eligibility for admission. Advantage Academy requires evidence that a person is eligible to attend Texas public schools.

Every student enrolling for the first time must present a signed statement from a physician or documentation of immunizations as required by the Texas Department of State Health Services, no later than thirty (30) days after enrolling.

Students who submit an affidavit from a physician stating immunizations should not be administered for medical reasons, and students who submit an affidavit signed by the student’s parent or guardian declining immunizations for reasons of conscience, will be exempted from this requirement. The parent or guardian must furnish records which verify the identity of the student.

General Eligibility for Admittance

The Board shall admit into the public free schools of the District, free of tuition, all persons who are five and not over twenty-one years of age on September 1 of the scholastic year, if such person or his parent, guardian, or person having lawful control resides within the district. The District requires that the person eligible to enroll the student provide proof of residency in the district, acceptable proof may include items such as a current lease agreement, closing contract on a home, a letter from their builder or realtor with an estimated closing date, or a current utility bill (gas, light, or water) in the parent or guardian's name. For further details regarding proof of residency, please contact the school’s Administrative Division. The District may withdraw any student who ceases to be a resident. A student who fails to attend school without parent contact or other notification to the District regarding the student’s absences for ten (10) consecutive days may be withdrawn.

Residency Requirement

In order for a person under eighteen years of age to establish, for the purpose of attending the public free schools, a residence separate from his/her parent, guardian, or other person having lawful control of him/her, he/she must demonstrate that his/her presence in the district is for the primary purpose of attending the public free schools and not for the primary purpose of participation in extracurricular activities. The Board shall determine whether an applicant for admission qualifies as a resident of the district and may adopt reasonable guidelines for making that determination as necessary to protect the best interest of students. For further details regarding proof of residency, please contact the school’s Administrative Division.
Discipline
Under Texas Education Code chapter 37, the school district is not required to admit a person if he or she has:

1. Engaged in conduct or misbehavior within the preceding year that resulted in removal to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) or Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP);
2. Engaged in conduct or misbehavior within the preceding year that resulted in an Expulsion;
3. Excessive Discipline History;*
4. Serious documented behavioral incidents under subchapter A; such as a Felony;
5. Engaged in Delinquent Conduct and is on Probation or other Conditional Release;
6. Been Convicted of a Criminal Offense and is on Probation; or has a
7. Criminal History.

*Excessive Discipline History
Student (a) acquired more than one serious Code of Conduct Violation or Conduct Infraction; (b) accumulated 4 or more Code of Conduct Violations or Conduct Infractions; or (c) served more than one O.S.S within the preceding year.

Falsifying Enrollment Information
Falsification of enrollment information is a serious offense. There are civil and criminal penalties for knowingly providing false information on a student enrollment form, including reimbursement and criminal sanctions. See Texas Penal Code Section 37.10 and Texas Education Code Section 25.001 (h).

In addition to the penalty provided by Section 37.10, Penal Code, a person who knowingly falsifies information required for enrollment of a student in a public school will become ineligible for enrollment and will be subject to immediate withdrawal.

A person who knowingly falsifies information on a form required for a student's enrollment in the district shall be monetarily liable to the District if the student is not otherwise eligible for enrollment, but is enrolled on the basis of false information. For the period during which the ineligible student is enrolled, the person is liable for the maximum tuition fee the District may charge or the amount the District has budgeted per student as maintenance and operating expense, whichever is greater.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ENROLLMENT

State Certified Birth Certificate
Original birth certificate (or certified copy which includes a certificate number and is issued by the state), passport or other document suitable as proof of the student’s identity.

State law requires a parent, guardian, or custodian to present proof of the child's identity. School districts are required to notify the police if this information is not provided. Furthermore, if this information is not provided, Advantage Academy will request from state officials whether the child has been reported as missing. The school is required to notify the Missing Children Information Clearing House if the name on the identifying document or other provided records differs from the name under which the parent, guardian, or custodian is enrolling the child.

Your Child's Social Security Card
Social Security card (if available; if not, the student will be assigned a state ID number)

Immunization Records
Current immunization record signed by a physician. Immunizations, per Texas requirements, must be up to date with proper documentation prior to enrollment and attending class. Date, month and year of every immunization received.
Proof of Residency
Current utility bill: electric, water, or gas; homeowners or apartment lease agreement with parent's name; or a property tax statement.

Report Card
Most recent report card for student’s entering grades 1-12.

Proof of Withdrawal
Proof of withdrawal from your child's former school only if withdrawal was during the school year.

Official Transcripts
If applicable for high school credits.

Parents/Guardian ID
Parent’s valid driver’s license, or state issued identification card, or guardian information form and guardian’s driver’s license or state issued identification card. If parent or guardian is not a licensed driver or has not obtained a state issued ID card, other photo ID will be considered including, but not limited to, a passport.

Custody Documents
It is the parent’s responsibility to provide the campus registrar with current legal documents when custody rights have been determined by a court of law. Legal documents are those that have been signed by a judge and contain the court’s stamp.

Homeless Students
The enrollment process includes a Student Residency Questionnaire (SRQ) as one part of the comprehensive effort to identify students and their families. If a student is identified as homeless, he/she is entitled to the following:

A. To continue to attend the school in which he/she was last enrolled, even if the student no longer resides in the attendance zone
B. To automatically qualify for Child Nutrition Programs (free/reduced-price lunch and other district food programs)
C. To participate fully in all school activities and programs that he/she is eligible

For additional information or assistance in this area involving; Enrollment, Attendance, and Academic Success, please contact the Special Programs Division.

STATE IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS
The law requires that students be fully vaccinated against specified diseases. A student shall show acceptable evidence of vaccination prior to entry, attendance, or transfer to a child-care facility or public or private elementary or secondary school in Texas. Full immunization should be completed by the first date of attendance. A student who wants to enroll in a public school must have a copy of his/her immunization record indicating full immunization. Validation of immunization records by a physician or public health clinic will be required for entering school. Only documents signed by a physician or a public health clinic will be accepted. Official documentation must list each immunization, the month, day, and year in which it was given.

Provisional Enrollment
Provisional enrollments may be allowed under certain conditions. A student may be enrolled provisionally if the student has an immunization record that indicates the student has received at least one dose of each specified age-appropriate vaccine required by this rule. To remain enrolled, the student must complete the required subsequent doses in each vaccine series on schedule and as rapidly as is medically
feasible and provide acceptable evidence of vaccination to the school. A school nurse or school administrator shall review the immunization status of a provisionally enrolled student every 30 days to ensure continued compliance in completing the required doses of vaccination. If, at the end of the 30-day period, a student has not received a subsequent dose of vaccine, the student is not in compliance and the school shall exclude the student from school attendance until the required dose is administered.

**Exemptions**

The law allows exceptions to immunizations under the following conditions: an affidavit or certificate signed by a physician who is duly registered and licensed to practice medicine in the United States, in which it is stated that (a) the vaccine(s) required would be medically harmful or injurious to the health and well-being of the child, or an affidavit signed by the applicant or, if a minor, by the applicant's parent or guardian stating that (b) parents/guardians choose an exemption from immunization requirements for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief. The law does not allow parents/guardians to elect an exemption simply because of inconvenience (for example, a record is lost or incomplete and it is too much trouble to go to a physician or clinic to correct the problem).

**Note:** Exceptions will only be accepted by the school if submitted using official or approved governmental forms and submitted within allotted time frames. For children needing medical exemptions, a written statement by the physician should be submitted to the school.

**Documentation**

Since many types of personal immunization records are in use, any document will be acceptable provided a physician or public health personnel has validated it. The month, day, and year that the vaccination was received must be recorded on all school immunization records created or updated after September 1, 1991.

**Grace Period**

If a student meets one or more of these exceptions, the parent shall be granted a thirty-day (30) grace period to provide a copy of the immunization records to the school: (a) the student meets the "homeless" criteria; (b) the student has transferred from another school within the state of Texas; or (c) the student is a military dependent transferring from another state.

*Texas Department of State Health Services • Immunization Branch • MC-1946 • P O Box 149347 • Austin, TX 78714-9347 • (800) 252-9152 Stock# 6-14 Rev. 02/09/2010*

**DISTRICT ENROLLMENT PROCESS**

The State of Texas requires that children be five years old on or before September 1st to enter Kindergarten (Texas Education Code 25.001). To attend first grade at any public school in Texas, a child must be six years old on or before September 1st, or have been previously enrolled in the first grade of a public school in another state, or completed public school Kindergarten in another state (Texas Education Code 42.003(c)).

State law requires that students who receive approval for enrollment must attend school on the first day of the school year to be officially enrolled. If a child fails to attend school on the first day after school begins or any of the enrollment requirements have not been fulfilled, is inaccurate or remains incomplete, the child may lose their classroom or grade level spot and that spot may be awarded to another eligible child.

Students who desire to enroll after the first day of school or students who enroll mid-year must provide the district with an official attendance report and proper documentation of grade promotion from their previous school district. Students will be enrolled in the grade level that follows their last successfully completed grade or the grade level that is determined by the District Grade Placement Committee.
Open Registration
Open registration applications are accepted February 1 through February 29. It is recommended that parents visit their desired campus to begin the admission/enrollment process. Parents will be able to enroll their new student(s) at Advantage Academy as well as update their returning student’s information. Please review our campus locations to determine which school your child should attend. Prior to visiting the campus to enroll, it is recommended that parents collect all required admission/enrollment documentation for each new student.

To attend any public school in Texas, the State of Texas requires that children be five years old on or before September 1 to enter Kindergarten. First graders must be six years old by September 1 of the current year unless the child has completed public kindergarten in another state/country or has been receiving public first grade instruction in another state/country.

1. Initially, the school will place current students, siblings of current students, and intercampus transfers into appropriate spaces for the next school year.
2. The school then determines the remaining number of available spaces.
3. Registration thereafter shall remain open and students shall be placed in available spaces for each class having openings.
4. If at the close of open registration, the number of applicants exceeds available spaces, a lottery will be conducted.

Returning Students
Returning students must continue to remain admission eligible by meeting all established enrollment and admission requirements. Returning students and siblings of those students receive priority enrollment.

Intercampus Transfers
Advantage Academy’s intercampus transfer process applies only when a student’s parents/guardians wish to enroll their child/children at a different Advantage Academy campus during the current or following academic year. Advantage Academy will only accept intercampus transfer requests for the subsequent year from February 1st through February 28th. Intercampus transfer students receive priority enrollment.

New Students
New students seeking enrollment shall be placed at the grade level attained outside the district if the student is transferring from a school accredited by a state or regional accrediting organization. Students who do not meet this requirement shall be scheduled for academic evaluation by the district’s Grade Placement Committee and placed at the appropriate grade level determined by testing of the student’s academic skills.

Homeschooled/Private School Students
Homeschooled/Private school students and other students from an unaccredited setting shall be scheduled for academic evaluation by the district’s Grade Placement Committee and placed at the appropriate grade level determined by testing of the student’s academic skills.

Lottery
Available spaces at Advantage Academy will be filled in the order in which applications are received prior to the conclusion of the Open Registration period. However, after the application deadline, if the number of children interested in a specific grade exceeds the number of seats available for that grade, names will be drawn through a random selection or lottery process and those names placed on a “waitlist.” If and when spaces become available, students will be selected and moved off the waitlist in order of where they are on the list. Lotteries will be conducted according to the following procedures:
1. Name and grade level of lottery participants will be written on individual slips of paper and placed in a container. The Superintendent or designee will draw the slips from the container. Drawn names will be placed onto the appropriate wait list based on the order of their draw. Parents will be notified of their child’s position on the list.

2. Once the lottery has placed all eligible applicants in order on the appropriate wait list, all subsequent applicants will be placed on waitlists on a first-come, first served basis.

3. When contacted by the school that a space has come available and a child has been selected from a waitlist to fill that space, the parents of the child selected will have 48 hours to notify the campus principal or campus designee in writing of their acceptance of the available position. Failure to notify the campus within the 48 hour period will be considered a declination of the offer of admission.

4. A voluntary or involuntary declination of an admission offer is an irrevocable decision and the available space will be immediately offered to the next child on that waitlist.

5. Once a child is selected from a waitlist, and the parent accepts the offer of admission, an Advantage Academy New Student Enrollment Form (step 2) must then be completed.

Families who fill out an Advantage Academy ‘Enrollment Application (step 1)’ after the application deadline will not be included in the lottery. Those children will be added to the appropriate waitlist on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Withdrawing from School**

A parent wishing to withdraw a student from school should notify or call the registrar at least 72 hours prior to withdrawal for information on specific procedures and times for withdrawals. The director or other campus administrator will verify the information when the parent arrives to provide the name of the new school, new home address, and phone number, if applicable, to the withdrawal. The formal withdrawal request must be signed for use as documentation that the student will continue to be enrolled in a school as required by the compulsory attendance laws.

On the student’s last day, the withdrawal form must be presented to each teacher for current grade averages and book clearance; to Child Nutrition for lunch balance; to the clinic for health records; and to the Guidance Counselor. A copy of the withdrawal form will be given to the parent, and a copy will be placed in the student’s permanent cumulative record.

A student who is 18 years or older, who is married, or who has been declared by a court to be an emancipated minor, may withdraw without parental signature.

All fees, dues or other outstanding balances must be paid in full upon withdrawal. Any fees or dues paid to the school by the student or his/her parent prior to the withdrawal cannot be reimbursed or refunded. Any purchase(s) made by the student or his/her parent, required or not, such as supplies, uniforms etc. will be considered the property of the purchaser and cannot be reimbursed or refunded.

**PART-TIME and FULL-TIME PRE-K PROGRAMS**

When the Texas legislature established the pre-kindergarten program the intent was, and still is, early learning experiences for students who are most at-risk for school failure. The eligibility is therefore limited. A high quality pre-kindergarten program could mitigate the impact of the at-risk characteristics, thereby assisting these students to become school ready when they enter kindergarten.

The pre-kindergarten program prepares children for kindergarten and beyond. The program teaches children the important social, physical, emotional and thinking skills they need for
success. Pre-kindergarten makes a big difference for small children, they learn their ABCs, learn to read and write simple words and their own name. They are introduced to counting, shapes, colors, make new friends and much much more. Our desire is that students who complete the Pre-Kindergarten Program will be ready and well prepared to enter Kindergarten.

Advantage Academy has two Pre-Kindergarten Programs for the purpose of ensuring that more students have a place to learn and grow using established methods and materials. Pre-K students will be prepared for kindergarten by learning and benefiting early from the high student expectations at Advantage Academy.

Parents should determine which program would be most beneficial for their child prior to registering. Parents should review the district’s pre-kindergarten eligibility requirements and other important enrollment information below. When registering please bring the following:

- State Certified Birth Certificate
- Child’s Social Security Card
- Current Immunization Records
- Proof of residency (current utility bill: electric, water, or gas; homeowners or apartment lease agreement with parent's name; or a property tax statement)
- Parent/Guardian valid government issued ID (driver’s license, state ID, passport, etc.)

*Both Part and Full-Time Programs require parent/guardian to attend orientations and each must sign an AA Attendance Commitment Letter.

Part-Time Pre-Kindergarten Eligibility Requirements
To be eligible for enrollment in Advantage Academy’s Part-Time Pre-K Program, a child must be 4 years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year AND must meet ONE of the following criteria:

- The child of an active duty member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or a reserve component of the armed forces, who is ordered to active duty by proper authority; or

- The child of a member of the armed forces of the United States, including the state military forces or a reserve component of the armed forces, who was injured or killed while serving on active duty; or

- The child is or has been in conservatorship (foster care) of the Department of Family and Protective Services following an adversary hearing held as provided by Section 262.201, Family Code; or

- The child is unable to speak and comprehend the English language based on test results; or

- Eligible to participate in the national free / reduced meal program based on family income (must qualify according to the National Free/Reduced Lunch Program income eligibility guidelines); or

- The child is or has been homeless, as defined by 42 U.S.C. Section 1143a, regardless of the residence of the child, of either parent of the child, or of the child's guardian or other person having lawful control of the child.

Full-Time Pre-Kindergarten Eligibility Requirements
To be eligible for enrollment in Advantage Academy’s Full-Time Pre-K Program, a child must be 4 years of age on or before September 1 of the current school year; meet ONE of the Part-
Time PK Program Eligibility Requirements above; and the following shall apply:

- A registration fee of $200 (per semester) must be paid prior to the first day of attendance;
  - In order to hold a space, a minimum of $100 of the registration fee must be paid in advance. The balance of the $200 fee must be paid prior to first day of attendance.
- Monthly fee of $100;
  - Payment of monthly fee is due on the first day of each month, beginning September through May; the grace period for payment extends to the 5th of each month; after that, there will be a $15 charge per day.
  - Delinquent monthly fee payment of more than 1 month will cause student to be dropped from the Full-Time program.
  - Qualifying Full-Time Pre-K4 students who have a current, non-Pre-K enrolled sibling at Advantage Academy (for the duration of the same school year), will have their monthly fee waived. Registration fees still apply.
- Applicant’s not eligible for the Part-Time Program under TEA guidelines will be charged a monthly fee of $450 to participate in the Full-Time Program;
  - Siblings of current AA students and children of AA employees will receive a 10% discount on the monthly fee.
- All fees are non-refundable;
- Both Part and Full-Time Programs require parent/guardian to attend orientations and sign an AA Attendance Commitment Letter;
- All Pre-K supplies must be purchased prior to first day attendance;
- Advantage Academy does not accept children who are not potty-trained; and
- Advantage Academy does not provide transportation; parents must accommodate their child’s transportation needs to and from school.

Additional PK Enrollment Information

- Siblings of enrolled students receive priority enrollment.
- Fulltime students attend from 8am to 3:15pm; any student left after 3:45 will be charged $15 for each 15 minute period. Students who are continually left after end of class will be dropped from the program.
- All Pre-K supplies must be purchased prior to first day attendance.
- Enrollment “caps” are determined by campus and classroom size.
- Children who require bilingual testing must be tested prior to enrollment and no later than July 31st, unless enrollment is after that date.
- PreK students are subject to the Attendance Policy. If student accrues excessive unexcused absences the student will be dropped from the program.
- To participate in the PreK-3 program, child must be 3 on or before September 1.
- To participate in the PreK-4 program, child must be 4 on or before September 1.