

HOWARD GARDNER MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCE CHARTER SCHOOL

	Students/Families	SF19-0501
	ENROLLMENT AND ADMISSIONS POLICY	ADOPTED DATE: May 21, 2019 REVIEWED DATE: REVISED DATE: August 18, 2026

Howard Gardner Multiple Intelligence Charter School

Board of Trustees

ENROLLMENT POLICY

The Board of Trustees of Howard Gardner Multiple Intelligence Charter School (“Charter School”) recognizes that its enrollment policy must reflect current requirements of the Pennsylvania Public School Code and 22 Pa. Code, Chapter 11, the Pennsylvania Charter School Law at 24 P.S. §17-1723-A, Pennsylvania Public School Code, and Pennsylvania Department of Education’s (“PDE”) Basic Education Circulars on Enrollment of Students and Charter School Law. Therefore, the Charter School, as a public charter school, complies with these enrollment procedures to ensure that both resident and eligible non-residents are promptly enrolled through the policy provisions set forth below.

Every child of school age who is a resident of a Pennsylvania school district is entitled to a public school education and include:

1. resident students residing with their parent(s)/guardian(s);
2. emancipated minors residing in the district;
3. non-resident students living with a district resident who is supporting the child gratis and seeking enrollment under section 1302(a.2) of the School Code; .
nonresident students living in a facility or institution; and
4. nonresident students living in a foster home.

Once the required enrollment documentation described below is provided, the Charter School must enroll resident and non-resident children and permit them to attend school. A child shall normally be permitted to attend school on the next school day after the day on which the child is presented for enrollment, and in all cases within five (5) business days. However, enrollment is conditioned upon the receipt of the Charter School’s receipt of the required enrollment documentation, if a space exists pursuant to the school’s Admission/Lottery Policy.

Except when a child is homeless, whenever a child of school age is presented for enrollment by a parent(s), a Pennsylvania school district resident, or any other person having charge or care of the child, the Charter School shall require that the following information be documented before enrolling the child and allowing the child to attend school:

- **Proof of the child's age**

Any one of the following constitutes acceptable documentation:

- birth certificate;
- notarized copy of birth certificate;
- baptismal certificate; copy of the record of baptism (notarized or duly certified and showing the date of birth);
- notarized statement from the parents or another relative indicating the date of birth;
- a valid passport;
- a prior school record indicating the date of birth.

This list is non-exhaustive; schools should be flexible in consideration of the child's circumstances.

- **Immunizations required by law**

The Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) promulgates immunization regulations (28 Pa. Code §§ 23.81-87) that require parents or guardians of students enrolled in grades K-12 to have their children immunized against various communicable diseases. The regulations, which implement section 1303a of the School Code, apply to kindergarten, elementary, and secondary students enrolled in a public school, private school, other nonpublic school, and home education. While recommendations on immunization requirements may be made at the federal level, the authority to establish immunization requirements for school enrollment remains with DOH.

Any one of the following constitutes acceptable documentation:

- the child's immunization record;
- a written statement from the former school or from a medical office that the required immunizations have been administered, or that a required series is in progress; or
- verbal assurances from the former school or a medical office that the required immunizations have been completed with records to follow.

There are certain exceptions to this requirement for students who have medical/religious exemptions, who are experiencing homelessness, who are moving

or transferring into a school in the Commonwealth, or who are in foster care and are not able to provide immunization records at the time of enrollment.

Please consult the Immunization of Students Board Policy for more information.

- **Proof of residency**

The School Code defines a student's school district of residence as the school district within the Commonwealth in which the parents or guardians of a child reside. With limited exception as detailed further in this Policy, proof of residency must be provided when enrolling a student in school.

When enrolling in a school district, charter school, regional charter school or cyber charter school, any one of the following containing the name and current address of the child's parent or guardian constitutes acceptable documentation:

- A current deed;
- A mortgage statement no more than three months old;
- An active residential lease agreement;
- A utility bill no more than three months old;
- An internet bill no more than three months old;
- A credit card bill no more than three months old;
- A bank statement no more than three months old;
- A tax bill no more than three months old;
- An insurance document no more than three months old; or
- A piece of mail sent in the past three months by the federal or state government such as benefits information, voter registration, or tax documents.

While more than one form of residency confirmation may be required, the Charter School should be flexible in verifying residency and should consider what information is reasonable in light of the family's situation. Therefore, the Charter School will request more than one form of proof only if the one provided by the prospective student's Parent/Guardian is not dispositive of residency per applicable law. Parents or guardians of students experiencing homelessness, as defined under applicable federal and state law, are exempt from this requirement.

Parents/Guardians must continue to provide the Charter School with residency information after enrollment when residency changes or may be questioned to ensure that Parents/Guardians comply with applicable residency requirements as Pennsylvania residents and/or if Student becomes a resident of a school district other than the one when originally enrolled.

- **Parent Registration Statement**

For a student to be admitted to any public school, the parent or guardian must submit a sworn statement attesting to the following:

- o whether the student has been or is suspended or expelled for offenses involving drugs, alcohol, weapons, infliction of injury or violence on school property; and
- o whether the student has been or is expelled under section 1318.1 of the School Code for being convicted or adjudicated delinquent of committing a sexual assault upon another student enrolled in the same school.

Any willful false statement by a Parent or Guardian shall be a misdemeanor of the third degree.

See PDE site for Parent Registration Statement:

<https://www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwppagov/en/education/documents/resources/codes-and-regulations/basiceducation-circulars/purdons-statutes/enrollment-students-attachment-afillable.pdf>.

The Charter School may not deny or delay a child's school enrollment based on the information contained in a disciplinary record or sworn statement. However, if a student is currently expelled for a weapons offense, the school can provide the student with alternative education services during the period of expulsion (24 P.S. § 13-1317.2(e.1)). If a student is or was expelled for an act or offense involving a sexual assault conviction or adjudication of delinquency, the school can provide the student with alternative education services. (24 P.S. § 131318.1(f)).

If the disciplinary record or sworn statement indicates the student has been expelled from a school in which they were previously enrolled, for reasons other than a weapons offense, it is recommended the school review the student's prior performance and school record to determine the services and supports to be provided upon enrollment.

5. Home Language Survey

All students seeking first time enrollment in a school shall be given a home language survey in according with requirements of the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. Enrollment of the student may not be delayed in order to administer the Home Language Survey.

Children and families with limited English proficiency must be provided translation and interpretation services to the extent needed to help the family understand the enrollment process and enroll the student in school promptly per the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VI, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq. and the Equal Education Opportunity Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1703.

Documents Which May Be Requested but Not As a Condition of Enrollment - Items Which May Be Requested

Although the Charter School may ask for any of the information below, the Charter School may not require it as a condition of enrolling or admitting a child and a child's enrollment or attendance may not be delayed until these documents are provided. In addition, a school district may not require that a physical examination be conducted as a condition of enrollment.

Below are documents that a school district, charter school, regional charter school or cyber charter school may request but may not require as a condition of enrollment:

- picture identification;
- health or mental health history;
- physical or dental examination records;
- academic records;
- attendance records;
- Individualized Education Program, and other special education records;
- documentation of physical examination; and
- documentation from other sources (i.e., Registration Form, Student Education Records, and Disciplinary Records);

Registration Form

School districts and brick-and-mortar charter schools may ask parents and guardians to complete a registration form when enrolling a child. However, failure to complete the form developed by the school district or brick-and-mortar charter school cannot be made a condition of the student's enrollment. These registration forms for student enrollment in a school district or brick-and-mortar charter school may include the following: name, address, telephone number, name of parent(s) or guardian(s) or resident adult(s) with whom the student is living, emergency contact information, former school information, and other locally required information.

Documentation Required from Other Sources

The Charter School is also entitled by law to receive information on an enrolling student from the previous school, public, charter, nonpublic or private, which the student attended. However, the provision of this information rests with the educational entity and not the family, and so, the Charter School, as the receiving local educational agency, will not require this information as a precondition to enrollment and will not delay a student's admission for lack of this information.

Student Education Records

Upon enrollment, the Charter School contacts the student's former school for a copy of the student's education records. The former school district or charter school, if within this

Commonwealth, is required to respond by forwarding the records within 10 business days of the date upon which a student's records are requested by the Charter School. School districts shall enroll students within 5 business days regardless of receipt of records from the previous local educational agencies.

School districts, charter schools, and career and technical centers must provide students who meet the definition of habitually truant with a school attendance improvement plan and pursue remedies to mitigate the student's habitual truancy for the remainder of the school year or until the student is no longer of compulsory school age, regardless of whether the student was enrolled in the school district, charter school, or career and technical center at the time of truancy. All schools should seek the attendance records, including any school attendance improvement plan, from a student's former school.

Disciplinary Records

Whenever a pupil transfers to another Pennsylvania school entity or nonpublic school, a certified copy of the student's disciplinary record shall be transmitted to the school entity or nonpublic school to which the pupil has transferred. The school entity or nonpublic school to which the student has transferred should request the record. The sending school entity or nonpublic school shall have 10 days from receipt of the request to supply a certified copy of the student's disciplinary record. Failure to receive the student's discipline record cannot be used to deny or delay the student's enrollment or school attendance. A school district or charter school may not deny or delay a child's school enrollment based on the information contained in a disciplinary record or sworn statement.

However, if a student currently is expelled for a weapons offense, the school district or charter school can provide the student with alternative education services during the period of expulsion (24 P.S. § 13-1317.2(e.1)). If the disciplinary record or sworn statement indicates that the student was expelled from their prior school for reasons other than a weapons offense, school districts and charter schools are advised to review the student's prior performance and school record to determine the services and supports to be provided upon enrollment in the district or charter school.

Prohibited Requests - Items Which May Not Be Requested

For both enrollment and also for residency determinations, the Charter School will not request or require any of the following:

- a social security number;
- the reason for a child's placement if not living with natural parents;
- a child's or parent's visa;
- agency records;
- a court order or records relating to a dependency proceeding, except in limited circumstances described below;
- Legal address for families enrolled in the Address Confidentiality Program ("ACP");

A child's right to be admitted to school may not be conditioned on the child's immigration status. The Charter School will not inquire as to the immigration status of a student as part of the admissions or residency process.

* Some families may enroll a student using an ACP card which lists a post office box as their address. This is their legal address and local educational agencies shall not require additional information about their residence. School records from the student's former school will be forwarded through the ACP.

Additional Considerations

- **Emancipated Students**

An emancipated minor is a student under the age of 21 who is otherwise entitled to enroll in school and who has established a domicile apart from the continued control and support of parents or guardians or who is living with a spouse. The school district in which this student is living is the student's school district of residence and the student may enroll at Charter School without any additional assistance from an adult.

- **Foster Students**

Nonresident children placed in foster care must be educated in accordance with 24 P.S. § 13-1305(a), which provides that a nonresident child in paid foster care is "entitled to all free school privileges accorded to resident children of the district. . . in the same manner as though such child were in fact a resident child of the district." A school district or charter school may request verification that the child is residing with a foster parent or is in a pre-adoptive or adoptive home in the form of a letter or the Identification of Students in Foster Care to School Points of Contact form from the appropriate agency, but the school cannot require a court order or agency records.

Children placed into foster care often move from one foster home to another and such moves may involve school changes as well. If an entry into foster care or change in placement occurs, a best interest determination (BID) must occur. Children in foster care should remain enrolled in the school of origin unless there is a determination that it is not in the child's best interest to attend the school of origin. If it is determined to be in the child's best interest, the child has the right to remain in the school of origin during the pendency of their time in foster care.

If a determination is made that remaining in the school of origin is not in the child's best interest, the child's new school must ensure that a child in foster care is immediately enrolled in their new school even if the student does not have the required documentation. The enrolling school must contact and collaborate with the student's prior school for relevant records.

- **Students Experiencing Homelessness**

The Charter School will ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth have equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, as provided to other children and youth. Homeless students may reside in shelters, hotels, motels, cars, tents or be temporarily doubled-up with a resident family because of lack of housing. In the case of homeless students, traditional concepts of "residence" and "domicile" do not apply. Homeless children and youth lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

Included within the definition of homeless children and youth are those who meet the definition of "unaccompanied homeless youth" pursuant to the Mc-Kinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. § 11431 *et seq.*). Unaccompanied homeless youth may enroll without documents and without the help of an adult. Unaccompanied homeless youth include any child who is "not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian." Falling within this definition are students who have run away from home, been thrown out of their home, or been abandoned or separated from their parents or guardians.

Homeless youth are entitled to immediate enrollments, if a space exists pursuant to the Charter School Admissions/Lottery Policy and their families are not required to prove residency regarding school enrollment. These students are considered residents of the district where they are presently residing or continue their education in the district of prior attendance.

Homeless youth remain subject to compulsory attendance and truancy requirements under the School Code.

- **Pre-Adoptive and Adoptive Students**

The Federal Adoption Assistance Program, among other things, provides for adoption assistance payments to encourage the placement of certain hard-to-place children with adoptive parents. Pennsylvania has adopted companion legislation, known as the Adoption Opportunities Act. Children living with pre-adoptive parents who are receiving adoption assistance subsidies, pre-adoptive foster payments, or other payments such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Transitional Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), are entitled to attend school in the school district in which the pre-adoptive parents reside.

Notwithstanding receipt of any of the above payments, children living in pre-adoptive situations are considered residents of the school district in which their pre-adoptive parents reside. Children living with adoptive parents are entitled to all free school privileges accorded to resident school children of the respective school district under section 1302.

- **Re-Enrollment Of Students Returning from Delinquency Placements**

When a student returns to a school district or charter school from a delinquency placement, the school cannot automatically place the child in an alternative education program for disruptive youth merely because the child had been adjudicated delinquent. Like any other student being transferred to an alternative school, students returning from delinquency

placement are entitled to an informal hearing prior to being placed in an alternative education program.

The purpose of the hearing is to determine whether the student currently is fit to return to the regular classroom or meets the definition of a disruptive student. Factors a school should consider include whether the incident causing the adjudication occurred at school or at a school-sponsored event, the child's behavior in placement, and the recommendations of teachers and other adults (such as juvenile probation officers) who have worked with the youth.

- **Resident Students and Court Orders or Custody Agreements**

Every school-age child is entitled to attend the public schools of the child's district of residence, which is the school district where the child's parent(s) or legal guardian resides. In addition, based on specific circumstances described in this Policy, a schoolage child may be entitled to attend the public schools in a district as a non-resident.

When parents reside in different school districts due to separation, divorce, or other reasons, the child may attend school in the district of the parent with whom the child lives for a majority of the time, unless a court order or court-approved custody agreement specifies otherwise. If the parents have joint custody and the child's time is evenly divided between the parents, the parents may choose which of the two school districts the child will attend for the school year. If the parent who is enrolling the child is relying on a court order or custody agreement as the basis for enrolling the child, then the school district or charter school may require that the parent provide a copy of the order or agreement.

As stated below, a Charter School may also require a resident to provide a custody or dependency order when the resident is seeking to enroll the child under section 1302(a.2)(1) of the School Code which requires "appropriate legal documentation to show dependency or guardianship." A school district or charter school may not, however, require a custody order or agreement as a condition of enrollment in any circumstances other than the two circumstances specified above.

- **School-Age Children of Military Personnel**

When Pennsylvania residents who are military personnel are deployed and their school age children are living with relatives or family friends in a school district for that period of time, the students are entitled to attend school in the school district in which they are residing. These students should be enrolled using the Section 1302 Statement/ Affidavit process, except that the resident is to be presumed to be supporting the child without personal compensation or gain (gratis).

"Military Child Advance Enrollment" allows a child whose parent or guardian is an active-duty member of the armed forces, including the reserves, and has received orders to transfer into or within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is allowed to enroll in the charter school prior to establishing residency. The parent or guardian must provide a copy

of the official military orders and proof of their intention to move into the school district. Proof of intention includes a signed contract to purchase a home, a signed lease, or statement from the parent/guardian stating their intention to move into the specific school district. The parent or legal guardian of a child enrolled in the charter school must provide to proof of residence in the specific school district no later than forty-five (45) days after the arrival date specified in the military orders.

- **Students Experiencing Education Instability**

Section 1331.1 of the School Code requires school entities to identify eligible students who experience "education instability" and provide certain supports for these students. A student experiencing "educational instability" is a student who has one or more changes in school entity enrollment during a single school year as a result of any of the following:

- Homelessness, as defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and as determined by the school entity;
- An adjudication of dependency under 23 Pa.C.S. Ch. 63 (relating to child protective services) and 42 Pa.C.S. Ch. 63 (relating to juvenile matters);
- An adjudication of delinquency under 23 Pa.C.S. Ch. 63 and 42 Pa.C.S. Ch. 63 as disclosed at the discretion of the parent or guardian of the student; or
- An adjudication as part of court-ordered services under a voluntary placement or custody agreement.

- **Students Living in Institutions**

School districts in which children's institutions, including detention homes, drug and alcohol treatment centers and other similar facilities, are located (referred to as host school districts) are required to provide an education and, when appropriate, special education to nonresident students of the host district who are placed into the institution. This includes the right to attend the school district's public schools if appropriate for the child.

Enrollment of these students follows the same requirements as resident students of the school district.

- **Students Living With a Resident Adult other than a Parent**

When a child is living with a district resident other than a parent, who is supporting the child without personal compensation, (gratis) the child may attend the public schools of that resident's school district, provided that resident makes application and supplies the required enrollment information noted in the section entitled Required Enrollment Documentation. In addition, before accepting the child as a student, the Charter School shall require the resident to file **only one** of the following:

1. **A sworn and notarized statement** from the resident of the school district, consistent with the requirements of section 1302(a.2) of the School Code, indicating that the signer is a resident of the school district, is supporting the child without receiving personal compensation, that the child is living with the resident continuously and not just for the school year, and that the resident will accept all responsibilities relating to the child's schooling (See PDE Sworn Statement by Resident Under section 13-1302 at: <https://www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwppagov/en/education/documents/resources/codes-and-regulations/basiceducation-circulars/purdons-statutes/enrollment-students-attachment-c-fillable.pdf>); **or**

2. **Appropriate legal documentation to show dependency or guardianship**, which may include a custody order. The Charter School may require other information to be submitted by the resident to substantiate the sworn statement. The natural parent(s) or former guardian(s) of the student may not be required to provide information. Once the requested information is provided, the Charter School will enroll the child as it would enroll a resident student and permit the student to begin to attend school without delay, but in no case more than 5 days after requested information is provided if a space exists pursuant to the school's Admission/Lottery Policy. If the Charter School determines the resident is not supporting the child gratis or the student is not continuously living with the resident, the Charter School does not have to enroll the student.

A resident's receipt of payments, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Transitional Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), pre-adoptive or adoptive support, maintenance on public or private health insurance, support from the military or military personnel or other payments for or on account of the child such as child support, shall not be deemed to be personal compensation or gain.

• **Twins and Multiple Siblings**

While the Public School Code provision governing twins and multiple siblings is not applicable to charter schools pursuant to the Pennsylvania Charter School Law, the Charter School will use the Public School Code provision for guidance in such situations in conjunction with consultation with the Charter School's legal counsel.

Disenrollment of Students

The Charter School shall comply with all applicable provisions of the Public School Code and other applicable law governing student disenrollment. The Charter School shall provide any notice, hearing, grievance, appeal, or other procedural rights required by applicable law before disenrolling a student.

If a proposed disenrollment is based upon a residency determination, the Charter School shall comply with all applicable residency-related notice and appeal requirements imposed by law.

Because the legal requirements applicable to disenrollment may vary depending upon the circumstances presented, Charter School administration shall consult with legal counsel, as appropriate, before disenrolling a student.

Submitting Enrollment Complaints to the Department of Education

When a dispute arises regarding enrollment of a student, the person attempting to enroll the child or the Charter School may bring the dispute to the attention of the PDE's School Services Office.

To file a complaint, email, call or mail the PDE School Services using the following contact information:

School Services Office
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
Pennsylvania Department of Education
607 South Drive Harrisburg, PA 17120
Phone: 717-787-4860 Fax: 717-214-4389
Email: RA-PDE-SchoolService@pa.gov

After receipt of a complaint, a PDE representative will contact the Charter School, family or other involved parties to gather information and to try to resolve the dispute. These contacts, whenever possible, will occur within five (5) days of receipt of the complaint.

Written Policies

The Charter School's written policy on student admission is a public record and will be posted to the Charter School's website.

TO THE EXTENT THAT ANYTHING IN THIS POLICY COULD BE CONSTRUED TO CONFLICT WITH THE SCHOOL'S CHARTER OR APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS, THE APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS AND/OR CHARTER CONTROL.