



Frequently Asked Questions

Updated January 5, 2022

Q Where do I find general School Choice information?

A For general information, please visit the [School Choice](#) website, call the Office of School Choice at (713) 556-6734, or email SchoolChoice@HoustonISD.org

Learn more about HISD [Vanguard \(G/T\)](#) programs or call the Advanced Academics Department at (713) 556-6954 or email GiftedandTalented@HoustonISD.org.

Q How many school choice programs may I apply to?

A You may apply to a maximum of 10 programs with no more than 5 Magnet selections.

Q In my letter, I see a “Not Qualified” status beside a Vanguard Magnet school, what does that mean?

A The “Not Qualified” status means that the student did not meet the Vanguard qualification requirements to be identified as gifted and talented.

Q Can a special needs student apply to Magnet/Program Choice Transfers?

A Students with disabilities are required to follow the HISD application process for School Choice programs. A student with disabilities who meets the specified school choice criteria and is accepted for admission is required to have an Admission, Review, and Dismissal/ Individualized Education Program (ARD/IEP) or Section 504 committee meeting prior to enrolling in the program to ensure that the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan can be implemented in the school choice requested program.

Q How do I know if my student is eligible for tuition-free Pre-K4 or Pre-K3?

A To be TEA eligible, a student must meet the following criteria:

- 1) Be three or four years of age on or before September 1 of the enrollment year
- 2) Live within the boundaries of the Houston Independent School District, AND meet at least one of the criteria listed below:
 - 1) Be unable to speak or understand English
 - 2) Be economically disadvantaged
 - 3) Qualify for the National School Lunch Program to include all children who meet any eligibility criteria for Head Start, not only those who meet the low-income eligibility criteria for Head Start. The TEC, §5.001(4), defines educationally disadvantaged as “eligible to participate in the national free or reduced-price lunch program.” Consequently, all children who are eligible for Head Start are eligible for free prekindergarten, based on their eligibility for the NSLP. [1][1] Public Law 110-134, which amended 42 USC,1758
 - 4) Be homeless
 - 5) Student is or ever has been in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services following an adversary hearing held as provided by Section 262.201, Family code.
 - 6) Be the student of an active-duty member of the U.S. military or one who has been killed, injured, or missing in action while on active duty.
 - 7) Be the student of a person eligible for the Star of Texas of Award as (1) a peace officer as defined in Section 3106.002, Government Code. (2) a firefighter under Section 3106.003, Government Code. (3) an emergency medical first responder under Section 3106.004, Government Code. The Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division honors recipients annually in September. A list of past honorees may be viewed on the Criminal Justice Division webpage.

Q When and how will I know if my student was accepted by a school?

A If you applied online, you will receive an email notification prompting you to view the status of the application on the **parent dashboard**. Letters stating the status of your student’s application will be mailed on notification day if you submitted a paper application.

Q I was offered a seat to one of my ranked schools of choice. What should I do next?

A Accept the offered seat either online (for applications submitted online) or in person. Upload or deliver required documents and sign the entrance agreement if applicable. For more information, contact the school directly. Complete the campus enrollment process.

Q What if my student is not accepted into a Magnet or Choice Program that I want him or her to attend?

A Even if some School Choice programs fill up completely, there are usually similar programs at other schools with space available. Additionally, many non-Magnet programs provide quality opportunities for students.

If you have concerns about the lottery results, email SchoolChoice@HoustonISD.org

Q What if I have accepted one school, but another school calls me from the waitlist. May I accept the new offer?

A Yes.

Q What if I am offered a seat to the school I ranked first on my list, but I am interested in a school that I ranked lower? Can I get on the wait list of a school I originally ranked lower?

A Yes. You may reapply to a lower ranked school. However, your application will be considered in the phase of the new submission date. If you receive a new offer, you cannot hold two seats at the same time and would need to decline the higher ranked choice to accept the lower ranked school. You will have 72 hours from the date of the lower ranked offer to respond and deliver any required documentation to the lower ranked school.

Q I am on the waitlist for all the schools on my list. What should I do next?

A If you have not exceeded 10 applications, you may consider applying to schools with space available.

Q When I check on the status of my student's application on the parent dashboard, it says that the application is "Submitted, In Processing." What do the different statuses mean?

A For applications submitted after the Phase 1 deadline, "In Processing" means that your application is being processed by our system. No further action is required. If you are missing any documentation, you will be contacted. For applications submitted during Phase 1, "In Processing" could mean the application was not completed or you live outside the HISD boundary map. Applications may also be left "In Processing" for schools that have long waitlists and are no longer processing applications during Phase 2 and Phase 3.

Q I cannot remember my login/password for my parent dashboard. How do I reset it?

A Use the "Forgot your password?" feature on the [parent login](#) website.

Q When can I apply if I'm out-of-district?

A Out-of-district applications will be considered at the beginning of Phase 3, once Phases 1 and 2 are complete. Applications from HISD residents will be considered first. Students of out-of-district employees are considered as in-district applicants. After HISD resident applications are processed, out-of-district eligible students will be considered in the order that applications were submitted. For magnet-only programs (schools that do not have an attendance zone, such as the Kinder High School for Performing and Visual Arts) out-of-district Magnet transfers must be approved by the superintendent of schools, and tuition may be required.

Q My student is currently enrolled at a school of choice on a transfer. Do I have to apply again to remain for the next school year?

A Except for Pre-K4, 5th, and 8th grades, students will not need to reapply, and their transfer will “roll over” to the next school year. The school can choose to non-renew the transfer, but only after the student is put on a growth plan and does not meet the criteria established by the school.

Q I missed the transfer application submission window. What can I do?

A If you are new to HISD and your student did not attend an HISD school last year, then you can submit a student transfer application request. If your student attended an HISD school last year and your student is eligible for any of the following transfer types: Boundary Option, Hardship, Homeless, Language of Instruction, Public Education Grant, Special Education, and Violent Crime Victim; a transfer application request can be submitted for principal approval. If your student is not eligible, then a transfer application request will need to be made during the student transfer application window for the following school year.

Q What do I do if one of my students was accepted to a school of choice and the other has been denied by the same school?

A In some cases, another transfer type can be requested for principal approval to keep siblings together. Please contact the Office of School Choice for more information.

Q I made an error on my student's transfer application. Is there a way to fix it, or should I create a new one?

A If able to edit the incorrect information, you may update the application. If not able to edit, please contact School Choice at SchoolChoice@HoustonISD.org or by calling (713) 556-6734.



How would I know what programs are available at a school of choice?



Information about different programs can be found on the [School Choice website](#). For more information, contact the school of choice directly.



How can I find my zoned school?



Visit [Find a School](#) and enter your address. The Find a School tool will provide a list of your zoned elementary, middle, and high schools.

For a comprehensive overview of frequently asked questions, please visit

www.HoustonISD.org/SchoolChoiceFAQ

