

The Magellan Charter School Most Frequently Asked Questions

How does the admissions lottery work?

- The number of openings at each grade level is determined by a survey of the intent of the families of current students and their siblings to return or enter third grade in the coming school year.
- The Magellan Charter School admits students without regard to race, sex, disability, color, religion, national or ethnic origin.
- All applications for the coming school year are assigned a lottery identification number.
 - On a predetermined date in the spring, numbers are randomly drawn from a hopper during a public lottery and openings are filled in each grade(3-5) in the order drawn.
 - A numbered waiting list for each grade level is then established to fill slots that become available at later dates. We draw 25 names for the wait list in 3rd grade and 15 in grades 4 and 5. A lottery of siblings will be held first, and those numbers will go at the top of the wait list. Due to the high number of sibling applicants, we only have a lottery for siblings of currently enrolled students for grades 6-8. All applicants will be notified whether they are accepted, on the wait list, or denied.

What are my chances of acceptance? Do siblings get admission priority?

- Because there is very little turnover in our student population, the greatest number of openings occur in the 3rd grade.
- Siblings of *current* Magellan students and children of staff are given admission priority. The current student, however, must be enrolled for one year before sibling status is accorded. After that year, if an opening is not available, he/she will be placed at the top of the wait list for the desired grade. If there is more than one sibling, a lottery will be held for siblings and they will be placed on the wait list in the order they were drawn.

What if I am applying for twins?

Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year lottery, House Bill 316 (signed into law on June 30, 2009) allows one lottery number to be entered into the lottery for multiple birth siblings. If that number is drawn, all multiple birth siblings will be allowed to enroll, providing we have space in that grade level for the upcoming school year.

How are classes organized?

- No grade will exceed 70 students. There are a minimum of 4 teachers (no assistants) at each grade level, and a typical classroom size is 16-19 students.
- The school day at Magellan is divided equally into the core subject areas: math, science, language arts and social studies. Language arts and social studies and math and science are taught in integrated blocks in the third grade. In the fourth grade, students change classes for math, science, and a social studies/language arts combined block. Students in grades five through eight change classes for all four core subjects.

What curriculum is followed?

- While we cover the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, our teachers use every opportunity to enrich the learning experience for the students.

- Although electives or specials are not scheduled into the academic day, we seek to integrate the arts on a regular basis and provide experiences that are interactive and experiential. Technology is integrated at all levels to enhance the curriculum.

What standardized tests are administered?

- North Carolina End of Grade Tests: Reading, Mathematics
- North Carolina End of Grade Science Test (Grades 5 and 8)
- North Carolina End of Course Tests (Algebra and Geometry)
- Our school has been designated a school of excellence since its inception in 1997. In all grades levels, EOG scores have consistently been above the 95 percentile.

Do you group classes according to ability? Do you have a pullout AG program?

- Students of varying abilities work together in each classroom, except math. Students at Magellan are grouped by ability in math. Math placement decisions are based on your child's performance and are made at the discretion of the school's math committee. The academic needs of students identified as academically gifted are met in the regular classroom through our accelerated, enriching program.
- Approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of our 8th graders take Geometry, $\frac{1}{2}$ take Algebra I, and $\frac{1}{4}$ take Pre-Algebra.

Do you meet state and local requirements for racial diversity?

- We encourage applications from all races, creeds, and religions.
- Our state mandated lottery process, however, results in a random sampling of children.

My child has an IEP. Can you accommodate him/her?

- Yes. We strive to optimize the educational experience of every child in the least restrictive learning environment.
- We have an outstanding staff in our Exceptional Children Program who work in partnership with the classroom teachers.

May we schedule a tour of the school?

- Due to tremendous community interest in our school and the priority placed on maintaining an environment conducive to learning, we cannot schedule general tours. We will host an open house in January where you will have the opportunity to see the classrooms, meet the teachers, and learn about Magellan.
- In the event that your lottery number is pulled, you are welcome to schedule a tour or a meeting with the staff in order to help you make an informed commitment decision.

Do you have sports teams or other after-school activities?

- Yes. 7th and 8th grade Magellan Mariners successfully compete in the Triangle Middle School Conference in Basketball, Soccer, Volleyball, Tennis, Baseball, and Cross Country. There is a fee associated with the sports program.
- "Arts at Magellan" after school programs are offered each afternoon for all students. Drama, art, musical theatre, newspaper, chess, and Lego League are some of the available opportunities. There is a fee associated with these programs.

What is a charter school?

- A charter school is an independent public school which is "chartered" by a local or state board of education and locally implemented and administered.

- Although a charter school is financed by the state, it is not a part of the county/city system, and as such is encouraged to be creative in educational, financial, and structural decisions as they may facilitate the stated mission of the school.
- There is no tuition. The funding received by a charter school covers a minimum amount of the operating expenses; therefore, fundraising is critical to the success of our school.
- The Magellan Charter School was established to serve children in grades four through eight. Third grade was added in the 2007-2008 school year. Our belief is that providing children with a small, personal, hands-on learning environment during the period of rapid growth and development in the middle grades helps them maintain their focus on academics, the number one priority at Magellan.

Where do your graduates attend high school?

- Most of our students attend their districted or magnet Wake County High School.
- Approximately 15% will attend Raleigh Charter High School in downtown Raleigh, although they offer no preferred admission status to Magellan students.
- A small percentage of students choose private high schools.
- We boast a successful transition of over 500 students into high school. These students have gone on to exhibit strong academic and leadership successes.

Is there a volunteer requirement for parents?

- Because charter schools do not receive capital funds or funding for general operations from the state, the volunteer needs at Magellan are extensive.
- Magellan parents are asked to volunteer a minimum of one recess/lunch duty per month. Parents are also needed to accompany students on both day and overnight field trips. Parents are also needed to volunteer to set up and sell pizza on Wednesdays for grade-level fundraising.
- We strongly encourage all of our parents to get involved!

What are your hours? How do I get my child to school? Do you follow the Wake County schedule?

- The official school hours are 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Students cannot be dropped off before 7:30, and should be picked up by 2:45 unless they are enrolled in an after-school activity.
- We do not provide busses; parents are responsible for their child's transportation needs. There is a volunteer committee to help families establish carpools.
- Our calendar is established internally. Teacher workdays and the first day of school may differ, but most holiday breaks are the same as Wake County Public Schools.