Dear Parents and Students:

Thank you for your interest in the Chicago Public Schools Selective Enrollment High Schools and Programs. Our mission is to provide academic programs that challenge students to achieve their maximum potential, and learning environments that foster excellence, responsibility, and diversity.

This Principal Discretion Handbook is designed to guide students and parents through the Principal Discretion process, and provide the Principal Discretion procedures and guidelines for the 2019-2020 school year.

The Magnet, Selective Enrollment, and Other Options for Knowledge Schools and Programs Admissions Policy (#17-0426-P02) allows principals of Selective Enrollment High Schools to select five percent of their incoming freshman class through a centralized process. Applications and related supplementary material will need to be submitted to the Office of Access and Enrollment, as described within the Student Section of this handbook.

**It is important to read the handbook carefully so that you understand your roles and responsibilities.**

Should you have questions or need further information regarding the Principal Discretion process, please call the Office of Access and Enrollment at (773) 553-2060 or email pocps@cps.edu.

Sincerely,

Tony T. Howard  
Executive Director, Office of Access and Enrollment
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## Timeline

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 29:</td>
<td>First-round notifications released (including announcement of</td>
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<td>Principal Discretion application process)</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 29:</td>
<td>Posting of handbook (without application)</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 8:</td>
<td><strong>Start of application period</strong></td>
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<td>Application available online at go.cps.edu</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 19 (6 p.m.):</td>
<td><strong>Application deadline</strong> (Packages must be received by the Office of Access and Enrollment on or before this date.)</td>
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<td><strong>APPLICATION PACKAGES CANNOT EXCEED A TOTAL OF 10 SINGLE-SIDED PAGES.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED VIA EMAIL, FAX, OR CPS MAIL RUN.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>April 8 – May 10:</td>
<td>Principals review applications</td>
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<td>May 13:</td>
<td>Principals submit lists of recommended candidates</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 14 – June 4:</td>
<td>Panel members review Principal Discretion selections</td>
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<td>June 5:</td>
<td>Panel convenes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week of June 3:</td>
<td>OAE mails notification letters to all Principal Discretion applicants</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 14:</td>
<td>Confirmation deadline</td>
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Student Section

The Principal Discretion application process requires a series of steps to complete the Application Package. In order to make navigating the process easier, we have created a step-by-step process.

Remember, **YOU DO NOT HAVE TO DECLINE AN OFFER IN ORDER TO APPLY FOR PRINCIPAL DISCRETION.**

**IMPORTANT:** Your Application Package CANNOT exceed 10 single-sided pages, not including the Statement of Non-Interference, if applicable.

Do NOT include report card grades from the 2017-2018 school year or the NWEA MAP scores that were used for selections. This information is already in your file.

Do not submit your Application Package to the Office of Access and Enrollment until it is complete. Once you submit your Application Package, you cannot submit additional material.

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**Step 1**

If you are interested in applying for Principal Discretion for ninth grade, you will first need to determine if you are eligible to apply. In order to qualify to apply for Principal Discretion, you must have:

- Applied and tested for a Selective Enrollment High School for ninth grade; **and**
- Listed the school on the final version of your Selective Enrollment application.

**YOU CAN ONLY APPLY FOR PRINCIPAL DISCRETION FOR ONE SELECTIVE ENROLLMENT HIGH SCHOOL.**

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**Step 2**

If you have not already done so, download or print a copy of this handbook. If you download this handbook prior to April 8th, please revisit [go.cps.edu](http://go.cps.edu) between **April 8th** and **April 19th** to print a copy of the application.

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**Step 3**

In order to apply for Principal Discretion, you must identify the criteria under which you will be applying. Keep in mind that you will have to provide support for the criteria you choose. You may choose **one or more** of the following criteria:

- **Unique Skills or Abilities.** This category requires evidence of the applicant's skill or ability in one or more extracurricular activities, including, but not limited to, visual and performing arts, athletics, school clubs, language skills or other particular skills or abilities that would enhance the learning environment at the Selective Enrollment High School.

- **Activities Demonstrating Social Responsibility.** This category requires evidence that the applicant has demonstrated a consistent commitment to social concerns, special interests or civic activities, including work experience and charitable or community service work, either in school or outside of school. Activities in this area may include demonstrated family and/or community responsibilities, awards for leadership or service
work, civic or neighborhood projects, peer support or mentoring or evidence of leadership or other socially responsible positions held in an organization.

- **Extenuating Circumstances.** This category requires evidence that the applicant’s grades or standardized test scores are not a true representation of academic ability (for example, experiencing homelessness, recent personal family crisis, death in family during period when GPA dropped, etc.).

- **Demonstrated Ability to Overcome Hardship.** This category requires evidence that the applicant can do well academically at the Selective Enrollment High School based on the applicant’s demonstrated drive and ambition to overcome hardship (for example, student experiencing homelessness, single-parent family dependent on documented public assistance, etc.).

**Step 4**

You are strongly encouraged to include letters of recommendation. We suggest that you submit no more than three letters; however, you may include any number, as long as you do not exceed the 10-page application package limit. Recommendations can be from teachers, coaches, counselors or principals who taught, coached, or counseled you. The person providing the recommendation must have dealt directly with you and have personal knowledge about you. **Do NOT submit recommendation letters in sealed envelopes.**

Each letter should:
- Include your name;
- Be on official letterhead from the reference; and
- Provide facts that support the criteria under which you are applying.

**Letters of recommendation from elected or other public officials are not permitted.** Letters of recommendation need to be given to you by your reference so that you can include the letters in your Application Package. **Do NOT submit recommendation letters in sealed envelopes.** Letters of recommendation sent separately to the Office of Access and Enrollment will not be processed.

**Step 5**

You are strongly encouraged to include a personal statement. A personal statement is written by you (the student) and should include a summary of relevant personal characteristics, activities, honors and achievements that make you a candidate for Principal Discretion selection.

Your personal statement should be an example of your best writing skills. A typed statement is preferred, but handwritten statements are accepted. **Your personal statement must be no more than 1,000 words.**

**IMPORTANT:** Your Application Package CANNOT exceed 10 single-sided pages, not including the Statement of Non-Interference, if applicable.

**Do NOT** include report card grades from the 2017-2018 school year or the NWEA MAP scores that were used for selections. This information is already in your file.
Step 6

You are strongly encouraged to include relevant, recent documentation of your honors and achievements. You can provide this documentation by including a list of the honors and achievements in your package. See below for an example:

**HONORS AND AWARDS**

2015: Perfect Attendance, Main Elementary School
2015: Most Improved, Volleyball Team, Main Elementary School
2016: Citizenship Award, Main Elementary School
2017: First Place, Floor Exercises, Illinois State Gymnastics Competition
2018: Perfect Attendance, Main Elementary School

If you prefer, instead of providing a list, you can take photocopies* of medals/awards or other artifacts that support your criteria for applying.

*Application materials will NOT be returned. Therefore, we do not recommend that you include original items that are of importance to you.*

*All submissions must comply with the following format regulations:

- 8 ½ x 11 size (paper that is larger or smaller than 8 ½ x 11 will NOT be accepted)
- single-sided documents only
- no binding or staples
- no photo paper (pages submitted on photo paper will NOT be accepted)

**IMPORTANT:** Your Application Package CANNOT exceed 10 single-sided pages, not including the Statement of Non-Interference, if applicable.

**Do NOT** include report card grades from the 2017-2018 school year or the NWEA MAP scores that were used for selections. This information is already in your file.

**Do not submit your Application Package to the Office of Access and Enrollment until it is complete. Once you submit your Application Package, you cannot submit additional material.**

Materials or items that do not comply with these regulations will not be considered. An 8 ½ x 11 photocopy of otherwise non-conforming supportive items or materials (such as actual medals, pins, trophies, or original certificates) will be accepted as long as it complies with the above-mentioned requirements.

Step 7

Determine if a signed *Statement of Non-Interference* is required.
If either of your parents or guardians is a Chicago Public Schools employee, officer, or Board member, or a Local School Council member at the school to which you are applying, the Application Package must include a signed *Statement of Non-Interference*, even if the parent/guardian is on leave of absence from his/her position.

The *Statement of Non-Interference* can be found on page 10 of this handbook.

(If it is determined during the Panel review process that the applicant is a child of a Chicago Public Schools employee, officer, or Board member, or the child of a Local School Council member at the school to which the student is applying, and the *Statement of Non-Interference* is not included in the Application Package, then the applicant will be ineligible for selection.)

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**Step 8**

Complete the Principal Discretion application. Please note that the application for Principal Discretion is available on the GoCPS website (go.cps.edu) between April 8, 2019, and April 19, 2019, only. If you download this handbook prior to April 8th, please revisit go.cps.edu between April 8th and April 19th to print a copy of the application. Ensure that the application is signed by your parent or guardian.

**Step 9**

Compile the Application Package. No items outside of the list below will be accepted or considered.

- Student Application for Principal Discretion
- Personal Statement of no more than 1,000 words
- Letters of recommendation (We suggest that you include no more than three, but any number will be accepted.)
- List or photocopies of recent honors and achievements
- If necessary, completed *Statement of Non-Interference* form

Ensure all items are provided on 8 ½ x 11 single-sided paper (NOT photo paper) and not bound or stapled. **IMPORTANT:** Your Application Package CANNOT exceed 10 single-sided pages.

**Do NOT** include report card grades from the 2017-2018 school year or the NWEA MAP scores that were used for selections. This information is already in your file.

**Do not submit your Application Package to the Office of Access and Enrollment until it is complete.** Once you submit your Application Package, you cannot submit additional material.

**YOU CAN ONLY APPLY FOR PRINCIPAL DISCRETION FOR ONE SELECTIVE ENROLLMENT HIGH SCHOOL. If you submit an Application Package for more than one Selective Enrollment High School, you will only be considered for Principal Discretion for the first application that is processed by the Office of Access and Enrollment.**
Step 10

Mail or hand-deliver the Application Package to the Office of Access and Enrollment, 42 W. Madison St., Garden Level, Chicago, Illinois 60602. If you mail your package, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope, which will be mailed back to you as a receipt. If you hand-deliver your package, you will receive a paper receipt. Application Packages CANNOT be submitted via fax, email, or CPS mail run.

Application Packages will be accepted by the Office of Access and Enrollment between April 8, 2019, and April 19, 2019. **Note: this is not a “postmarked by” deadline.** It is the parent or guardian’s responsibility to ensure that the Office of Access and Enrollment receives the application no later than 6 p.m. on April 19, 2019.

**SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED VIA FAX, EMAIL, OR CPS MAIL RUN.** Application Packages received after 6 p.m. on April 19th will not be considered. Application packages should NOT be submitted directly to the school to which you are applying. **Application Packages submitted to schools/offices other than the Office of Access and Enrollment are void.**

Step 11

The Office of Access and Enrollment will mail official notification letters to applicants the week of June 3, 2019. If the student receives a Principal Discretion offer, the Selective Enrollment High School will follow up with a registration communication. Only official notification letters from OAE are valid.

If the student receives an offer, the offer will be posted to the student’s GoCPS file, where they can accept or decline the offer.
To apply, please submit this completed application, along with any supporting documentation identified below, to the Office of Access and Enrollment, 42 W. Madison St., Garden Level, Chicago, IL 60602. The application must be RECEIVED by the Office of Access and Enrollment by APRIL 19, 2019, at 6 p.m. No late applications will be considered. You can only apply for Principal Discretion to a school listed on your Selective Enrollment application, and you can only apply for Principal Discretion for one school. DO NOT SUBMIT APPLICATIONS DIRECTLY TO ANY SELECTIVE ENROLLMENT HIGH SCHOOL. You will receive a letter the week of June 3, 2019, notifying you whether or not you received an offer from the school to which you applied. Your completed application must be signed by your parent/guardian. To ensure your application is as competitive as possible, it should be accompanied by: (a) a personal statement, not to exceed 1,000 words, written by the applicant, which includes relevant personal characteristics, activities, honors and achievements, and addresses the criteria under which you applied, (b) documentation of recent honors and achievements, and (c) letters of recommendation from teachers, coaches, counselors or principals who actually taught, coached or counseled the applicant, or other individuals who have dealt directly with the applicant and are personally aware of particular circumstances that may affect their eligibility. No letters of recommendation from elected officials are permitted. In addition, Application Packages must be accompanied by a signed Statement of Non-Interference if either parent of the applicant is a CPS employee, officer, or board member, or LSC member at the requested school. All submissions with the Application Package must be 8 ½ x 11, single-sided documents, with no binding or staples. Non-conforming materials or items will not be considered. An 8 ½ x 11 photocopy of otherwise non-conforming supportive items or materials (e.g., actual medals, pins, trophies, or original certificates) will be considered. PLEASE NOTE: Application materials will not be returned. SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED VIA EMAIL, FAX, OR CPS MAIL RUN. Application Packages must be no more than 10 pages.

### Student Information

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<th>Student's Last Name</th>
<th>Student's First Name</th>
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(CPS ID can be found on notification letter)

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<th>CPS Student ID</th>
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<th>Student's Current School (8th grade)</th>
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<th>Birth Date (MM/DD/YYYY)</th>
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<th>Parent/Guardian Last Name</th>
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<tr>
<th>Parent/Guardian First Name</th>
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The student’s primary address, parent email address, and primary/secondary phone numbers will be obtained from the application record from the first round of selections. If your home address has changed since you submitted your child’s application, please submit a Contact Information Modification form to update this information. To obtain a Contact Information Modification form, contact the Office of Access and Enrollment at 773-553-2060 or oae@cps.edu. Forms must received no later than May 1, 2019.

### Selective Enrollment High Schools

- Brooks College Prep
- Hancock College Prep
- Jones College Prep
- King College Prep
- Lane Technical
- Lindblom Math & Science
- Northside College Prep
- Payton College Prep
- South Shore Int'l College Prep
- Westinghouse College Prep
- Whitney Young Magnet

### Selective Enrollment High Schools Principal Discretion Application

Select one school only -- if more than one school is selected, your application for Principal Discretion will not be considered.

- [ ] Brooks College Prep
- [ ] Hancock College Prep
- [ ] Jones College Prep
- [ ] King College Prep
- [ ] Lane Technical
- [ ] Lindblom Math & Science
- [ ] Northside College Prep
- [ ] Payton College Prep
- [ ] South Shore Int'l College Prep
- [ ] Westinghouse College Prep
- [ ] Whitney Young Magnet

Indicate one or more area(s) below that you feel qualified for consideration on the basis of Principal Discretion.

- [ ] Unique Skills or Abilities
- [ ] Activities Demonstrating Social Responsibility
- [ ] Extenuating Circumstances
- [ ] Demonstrated Ability to Overcome Hardship

I affirm that the information provided on this form is true and correct. I understand that this application does not guarantee acceptance into any selective enrollment high school. I understand that an incomplete application will not be accepted. I understand that my child may be subject to immediate removal from a selective enrollment high school if admission was gained based on a falsified application. I understand that if my child is removed from a selective enrollment high school based on a falsified application, including, but not limited to, a falsified address, my child will be permanently banned from attending any selective enrollment school or program. I understand that Application Packages submitted via fax, email, or CPS mail run will not be accepted.

**Signature of Parent/Guardian - REQUIRED**

**Date**

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**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

- [ ] Submitted SEHS application and was tested
- [ ] Listed school on original application
- [ ] Signed
Statement of Non-Interference

I, ______________________________, am currently ___ a CPS employee
(parent/guardian name) ___ a CPS officer
___ a CPS Board member
___ an LSC member at the requested school

My official CPS title is ______________________ at ______________________ [school/job
location/department].

My child [insert applicant’s full name], ______________________________, is applying for a Principal
Discretion admission to a CPS Selective Enrollment High School for the 2019-2020 school year.

I have not, and will not, use my official CPS title or position to improperly influence or intervene, either directly or
indirectly, in the Selective Enrollment High School principal’s consideration of the aforementioned student’s pending
application.

I acknowledge and understand that any relative of my child who is a CPS employee, officer, or Board member, or an LSC
member at the requested school, shall not attempt to influence the selection process on behalf of my child, and that
such influence could invalidate my child’s application.

I acknowledge and understand that any evidence to the contrary may render the applicant ineligible for a Principal
Discretion selection and subject me to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Note: If applicable, this form must be submitted in the student’s Application Package to the Office of Access and
Enrollment, 42 W. Madison St., Garden Level, Chicago, IL 60602. This form is required even if the parent/guardian is on
leave of absence from his/her position. (This form does NOT count toward the 10-page Application Package limit.)

Do not send this form to the school to which the student is applying.

Printed Name: ____________________________

Signature: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________
Selective Enrollment
High School Principal
Discretion Guidelines
2019-2020
The Chief Executive Officer hereby establishes the following Guidelines for Principal Discretion Selections in Selective Enrollment High Schools and Programs for the 2019-2020 school year ("Guidelines") in accordance with the Policy on Magnet, Selective Enrollment, and Other Options for Knowledge Schools and Programs #17-0426-P02 (the “Policy”).

Under the Policy, principals of Selective Enrollment High Schools are authorized to select up to five percent of their incoming freshman class on the basis of discretion. The criteria and process for these selections, as set forth below, will be strictly applied and subject to internal review and audit.

No student may be admitted to a Selective Enrollment School or Program who has been found to have engaged in fraud. If a student who is admitted to a Selective Enrollment School or Program is later found to have engaged in fraud, the student is subject to removal from the school. Fraud includes, but is not limited to, a Board of Education finding of non-residency in the City of Chicago, or a Chief Executive Officer finding that a student or a student’s parents provided a false address to gain an advantage in any application process. A finding of fraud operates as a lifetime ban on admission to a Selective Enrollment School or Program.

Each year, the Board of Education of the City of Chicago (“CPS”) considers many more excellent applicants for freshmen admission into its Selective Enrollment High Schools than it can possibly admit. The Principal Discretion selections are separate from the general admissions process. These applicants are among those who would contribute the most to the dynamic learning environments in CPS Selective Enrollment High Schools; they are also the applicants who would make the most of being immersed in these environments. Academic ability is an important factor in the consideration of an applicant, but extracurricular involvement, individual interests, personal characteristics, and special talents also are considered, as described more fully below. The Principal Discretion process also permits principals to consider the importance of student diversity and the ability of particular students to contribute to a rich and stimulating learning environment in the Selective Enrollment High Schools, one that best prepares leaders-in-the-making for the global challenges and opportunities that await them. Principals have access to student/parent demographic information, all Selective Enrollment application choices and rankings, and all Selective Enrollment admissions exam scores.

Under the Policy, principals of each Selective Enrollment High School will use a holistic review process when recommending applicants for Principal Discretion admissions. The highest importance is placed on providing each application with a comprehensive review. To that end, each principal is required to certify that he or she has reviewed and considered all timely received applications and submitted materials. Additionally, each principal’s allotted number of recommendations for discretionary admissions will be reviewed by the Panel, as described below, for final review and approval. The qualifications of each recommended applicant and the applicant’s and principal’s compliance with the selection process will be assessed and reviewed by the panel.

Definitions and Threshold Eligibility Considerations

The number of students who may be selected on the basis of Principal Discretion shall be determined by the Office of Access and Enrollment by multiplying by five percent the district’s official “Twentieth (20th) Day Enrollment File” for each Selective Enrollment High School’s ninth grade, freshman class from the 2018-2019 school year (Selective Enrollment
students only; students in CTE or IB programs are not included in this number). In addition to this number, each principal may provide a list of up to five recommended alternates, ranked in order from one to five. A Selective Enrollment High School principal may exercise their discretion to select qualified applicants who are deemed uniquely suited to the school’s defined educational mission. Students admitted under a Selective Enrollment High School principal’s discretion must meet threshold qualifying admissions criteria:

(a) The student must have submitted a timely Selective Enrollment High School application during the general admissions process;

(b) The student must have participated in the Selective Enrollment High Schools’ standardized admissions testing process; and

(c) The student must have listed the school to which he or she is applying for Principal Discretion on his/her general admissions process application.

Standardized Principal Discretion Application

Students seeking a Principal Discretion selection to a particular Selective Enrollment High School must timely submit a standardized Principal Discretion application, with supporting materials as detailed below (the “Application Package”), directly to the Office of Access and Enrollment on or before the published deadline. Students are limited to one Principal Discretion application only. Only complete Application Packages received on or before the published deadline will be considered.

The Application Package shall be established by the Office of Access and Enrollment and will consist of at least a completed application form signed by the parent/guardian. To make the application as competitive as possible, the following additional items should be included: (a) a personal statement written by the applicant, not to exceed 1,000 words, which includes relevant personal characteristics, activities, honors and achievements, (b) recent documentation of honors and achievements, and (c) letters of recommendation from teachers, coaches, counselors or principals who actually taught, coached or counseled the applicant, or other individuals who have dealt directly with the applicant and have personal material knowledge of the student’s qualifications to perform in the Selective Enrollment High School. No letters of recommendation from elected or other public officials are permitted. In addition, if either of the parents or guardians of the student is a CPS employee, CPS officer, or member of the Board of Education, or a Local School Council member at the requested school, a signed Statement of Non-Interference must be submitted, as described in these Guidelines. If either of the parents or guardians of the student is a CPS employee, CPS officer, or member of the Board of Education, or a Local School Council member at the requested school, and a signed Statement of Non-Interference is not submitted with the application package, the student will be ineligible for the Principal Discretion process. Application materials will not be returned to the student.

Because all submissions will be scanned, all documents in the Application Package must be 8½ x 11, single-sided documents, with no binding or staples. Non-conforming materials or items will not be considered. An 8½ x 11 photocopy of otherwise non-conforming items or documents (e.g., medals, pins, trophies, or original certificates) is acceptable. Please note that submissions will be scanned and reviewed in black and white, not color.

The Office of Access and Enrollment will scan and document the receipt of all timely received Application Packages into a designated database system, by school, in such a manner that the information is accessible to Selective Enrollment High
School principals. The Office of Access and Enrollment also will scan any materials submitted by schools in relation to an Application Package. The Office of Access and Enrollment will maintain records pertaining to such Application Packages, indexed by school, for a period of time that is consistent with applicable record retention laws.

Principal Selection Criteria and Consideration Process

The following criteria shall be the exclusive bases upon which a principal may offer an available seat to an otherwise qualified Principal Discretion applicant. Each principal’s consideration of timely submitted applications shall reflect a thoughtful consideration of the full spectrum of each applicant's qualifications based on the listed criteria, as evidenced in the Application Package and viewed in the context of each applicant’s academic and personal circumstances and the overall strength of the Principal Discretion applicant pool for each Selective Enrollment High School.

Race, gender, national origin and other protected characteristics may not be used as sole factors or predominant factors in the selection process. Those characteristics, however, may be considered as part of the principal’s holistic consideration of each individual applicant and the contribution that applicant may make to the diverse learning community in each Selective Enrollment High School. The quality of the educational experience of all students in a Selective Enrollment High School depends in part on the differences in the personal backgrounds and life experiences students bring with them. Thus, the critical criteria often are individual qualities or experiences not dependent upon race or national origin or other protected characteristics, but sometimes related to them.

Using a broad concept of merit in making recommendations for admission, each principal will employ the following criteria, which carry no pre-assigned weights:

(a) *Unique Skills or Abilities.* This category requires evidence of the applicant's skill or ability in one or more extracurricular activities, including, but not limited to, visual and performing arts, athletics, school clubs, language skills or other particular skills or abilities that would enhance the learning environment at the Selective Enrollment High School.

(b) *Activities Demonstrating Social Responsibility.* This category requires evidence that the applicant has demonstrated a consistent commitment to social concerns, special interest, or civic activities, including work experience and charitable or community service work, either in school or outside of school. Activities in this area may include demonstrated family and/or community responsibilities, awards for leadership or service work, civic or neighborhood projects, peer support or mentoring or evidence of leadership or other socially responsible positions held in an organization.

(c) *Extenuating Circumstances.* This category requires evidence that the applicant's grades or standardized test scores are not a true representation of academic ability (for example, experiencing homelessness, recent personal family crisis; death in family during period when GPA dropped).

(d) *Demonstrated Ability to Overcome Hardship.* This category requires evidence that the applicant can do well academically at the Selective Enrollment High School based on the applicant’s demonstrated drive and ambition to overcome hardship (for example, student experiencing homelessness, single-parent family dependent on documented public assistance, etc.).

During a defined time period communicated to Selective Enrollment High School principals by the Office of Access and Enrollment, principals will access the designated database, review all Admission Packages for their school and affirm all Admissions Packages they have reviewed.
There shall be no contact allowed between the principal of the requested school (or with any delegated school staff involved in the discretionary selection process) regarding the applicant, whether in writing or otherwise, with persons identified as “Prohibited Contacts.” The term “Prohibited Contact” refers to: (i) any elected official, public official or person acting on behalf of the official; (ii) any CPS Board member or employee of the Board office; (iii) any employee of the office of the CPS Chief Executive Officer; (iv) any Local School Council member of the requested school; or (v) any other officer or employee at CPS who has not actually taught or otherwise interacted as a principal, teacher, athletic coach or school counselor with the applicant in the applicant’s school. (Evidence that a Prohibited Contact influenced a recommendation for Principal Discretion will render the applicant ineligible for a discretion selection.)

The foregoing provision shall not apply where the individual is the applicant’s parent or guardian, except to prohibit contacts in which the parent/guardian uses, attempts to use, directly or indirectly, their official office or title to influence or otherwise intervene in the discretionary selection process.

The maximum number of discretionary student recommendations to be forwarded to the Office of Access and Enrollment shall be no more than five percent of “available freshman seats,” as defined above. In addition, each principal may provide a list of up to five recommended alternates, ranked in order from one to five. The basis for each discretionary admission recommendation must be documented by the Selective Enrollment High School principal in writing at the time of each individual decision, utilizing the form(s) prepared by the Office of Access and Enrollment and supported by the contents of the Application Package. The principal’s submission shall include evidence supporting the principal’s judgment that the student is capable of performing at a competitive academic level in the school.

By a date specified by the Office of Access and Enrollment, each principal must forward a written list of recommended discretionary admissions (including alternates, if applicable) and related principal selection forms to the Office of Access and Enrollment. A principal’s recommendations must be based only on supportive documentation in the Application Packages that conforms to the criteria noted above and these Guidelines. The Office of Access and Enrollment will review all submissions to verify that they comply with the Policy and these Guidelines. Principal recommendation forms submitted by the principal after the deadline and any supporting documentation and information unrelated to the criteria noted above will not be considered.

An applicant who is a relative\(^1\) of any CPS Board member, employee, Local School Council member of the requested school, or officer, as defined by the CPS Code of Ethics, is not disqualified from admission to a Selective Enrollment High School under the Principal Discretion process. CPS Board members, employees or officers, and Local School Council members of requested schools, however, are not permitted to advocate on behalf of relatives who are applying for Principal Discretion.

Any application submitted for the child of a CPS employee, CPS officer or Board member, or the child of a Local School Council member of the requested school, must be accompanied by a Statement of Non-Interference from the parent/guardian that neither they nor a relative attempted to improperly influence or intervene in, by either direct or

\(^1\)The term “Relative” shall have the same meaning as is set forth in the CPS Code of Ethics, Board Report No. 11-0525-PO2 (May 25, 2011), at Section II.(DD), which states: “Relative(s)” means a Person who is a Spouse, Domestic Partner, Partner to a Civil Union, child, step-child, parent, step-parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, step-sibling, half-sibling, parent-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, aunt, great-aunt, uncle, great-uncle, niece, nephew, or first cousin and shall include any similar relationship created by blood, legal adoption, in loco parentis status, marriage, Domestic Partnership, Partnership to a Civil Union, or parenting relationship.
indirect reference to his/her official job title or position, the principal’s consideration of the student’s discretion application. This document must be included in the student’s Application Package and not delivered to the Selective Enrollment High School to which the student is applying. If the Statement of Non-Interference is not included in the Application Package of a student whose parent/guardian is a CPS employee, CPS officer or Board member, or whose parent/guardian is a Local School Council member of the requested school, the student will not be eligible for the Principal Discretion process.

If any recommended discretionary selection involves an applicant with a total composite general admissions score below 600 points, the principal shall provide an additional written statement detailing the reasons the principal is confident that the student will be able to perform satisfactorily in the academic environment of the Selective Enrollment High School, and the supports the principal will make available to the student to ensure his or her success.

Along with the recommended discretionary admissions submitted by principals to the Office of Access and Enrollment, each principal must execute and submit to the Office of Access and Enrollment a standardized Statement of Impartiality to be provided by the district, confirming the following: (a) each timely submitted Application Package was reviewed and evaluated by the principal based on merit only; and (b) there was no Prohibited Contact, as defined above, considered in the review of Application Packages and making of recommendations for Principal Discretion. The Statement of Impartiality also will reflect the principal’s understanding that any false statements or misinformation may subject him or her to discipline by the Board, up to and including termination of employment, as well as referral of the matter to appropriate law enforcement authorities. The Office of Access and Enrollment will maintain the original, signed principal affidavits for a period of time that is consistent with applicable record retention laws.

Following the principals’ submissions of recommended admissions to the Office of Access and Enrollment, a Panel assembled by the Chief Executive Officer will convene during a defined period to review these submissions. The Panel shall determine whether the recommended applicants complied with all submission requirements, and that the principals’ recommendations are consistent with these Guidelines. The Panel will consist of at least one representative from the Law Department and two other Central Office departments. The Chief Executive Officer also may appoint other individuals to the Panel.

The Panel will be empowered to reject any recommended admissions for failure to comply with these Guidelines. The Panel, however, is not authorized to supplant the judgment of the principal where the selection complies with these Guidelines.

Only the Office of Access and Enrollment will send out official letters of acceptance or declination. Students will be given a designated date by which they will need to accept or decline a Principal Discretion offer. If the principal also submits a list of alternates, these students will receive a letter informing them that they were selected as an alternate. If a selected student declines his/her Principal Discretion offer, the Office of Access and Enrollment will offer the seat to the school’s alternates, beginning with the alternate who is number 1 on the list, and continuing in numerical order as necessary until the seat is filled or the list is exhausted.
Statement of Impartiality

I, ______________________________, am the principal of ______________________________, a CPS Selective Enrollment High School.

I have reviewed and understand the Guidelines for Principal Discretion Selections in Selective Enrollment High Schools and Programs for the 2019-2020 School Year (the “Guidelines”).

I have reviewed each timely submitted Application Package for Principal Discretion admission made available to me for consideration as set forth in the Guidelines, based on merit only.

Neither I, nor, to the best of my knowledge, any of my school staff involved in the discretionary selection process, have allowed any Prohibited Contact to influence the selection process. A Prohibited Contact refers to: (i) any elected official, public official, or person action on behalf of the official; (ii) any CPS Board member, or employee of the Board office; (iii) any employee of the office of the CPS Chief Executive Officer; (iv) any Local School Council member of my school; or (v) any other officer or employee at CPS who has not actually taught or otherwise interacted as a principal, teacher, athletic coach or school counselor with the applicant in the applicant’s school.

Please Check One

☐ 5a. I had no communication with any Prohibited Contact.

☐ 5b. To the extent that I, or any member of my school staff, have been contacted by any Prohibited Contact regarding a Principal Discretion applicant, whether in writing or otherwise, I have conformed with the procedures set forth in the Guidelines, which require completion of a Prohibited Contact log-in sheet and a response to the individual advising against contact with a Prohibited Contact. A copy of each Prohibited Contact log-in sheet that I have had occasion to complete has been submitted to the Office of Access and Enrollment in further accord with the Guidelines.

I understand that any evidence that a Prohibited Contact influenced a recommendation for Principal Discretion may render the applicant ineligible for a discretion selection and subject me and/or members of my school staff to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, as well as referral of the matter to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Signed: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________
Instructions Regarding Communications from Prohibited Contacts

In accordance with the Guidelines for Principal Discretion Selections in Selective Enrollment High Schools and Programs for the 2019-2020 School Year:

There shall be no contact allowed between the principal of the requested school (or with any delegated school staff involved in the discretionary selection process) regarding the applicant, whether in writing or otherwise, with a group of persons identified as “Prohibited Contacts.” The term “Prohibited Contact” refers to: (i) any elected official, public official, or person acting on behalf of the official; (ii) any CPS Board member, or employee of the Board office; (iii) any employee of the office of the CPS Chief Executive Officer; (iv) any Local School Council member of the requested school; or (v) any other officer or employee at CPS who has not actually taught or otherwise interacted as a principal, teacher, athletic coach or school counselor with the applicant in the applicant’s school.

Evidence that a Prohibited Contact influenced a recommendation for Principal Discretion will render the applicant ineligible for a discretion selection.

The foregoing provision shall not apply where the individual is the applicant’s parent or guardian, except to prohibit contacts in which the parent/guardian uses, attempts to use, directly or indirectly, their official office or title to influence or otherwise intervene in the discretionary selection process.

In the event a Prohibited Contact contacts the Selective Enrollment High School principal or any delegated school staff, and conveys information related to the student’s qualifications to perform in the Selective Enrollment High School, the principal must adhere to the Prohibited Contact (Verbal and Written) Communication direction found on pages 19 and 20 of this handbook. The report must be completed prior to the Panel review process by sending an email message and any related attachments to the Office of Access and Enrollment, which will maintain a log of all such communications.

All information from Prohibited Contacts will be reviewed during the audit process.
Prohibited Contact (Verbal) Communication

The principal of the Selective Enrollment High School, upon receiving a verbal communication about an applicant from a Prohibited Contact, shall inform the contact and document as follows:

The CEO has issued Guidelines that prohibit any communications about an applicant by me or my staff with CPS Board members, CPS employees, CPS officers, LSC members at my school, or elected or public officials (or any person acting on behalf of the official).

To ensure the integrity of the CPS Principal Discretion application process, I am obligated to immediately report this communication, and my response to it, to the CPS Office of Access and Enrollment.

My written reporting obligation includes the date/time of call, caller identification, message and/or stated subject matter of call, and the substance of my response.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this protocol, please direct your inquiry to the Office of Access and Enrollment, Executive Director, Tony T. Howard, or his designee.

Thank you so much for your understanding.

Date of Conversation: _______________________

Name of Contact: ________________________________

Form of Communication: (e.g., phone call, direct conversation) _______________________

Student Name: ______________________________________________________________________

I hereby acknowledge by my signature below that I responded to the aforementioned call exclusively by communicating to the person that I am prohibited by Board Guidelines from engaging in communications about an applicant with any Prohibited Contact.

Signed: ________________________________

Principal of: ________________________________

Dated: ________________________________

After completing the log-in sheet, send the signed form and any related documents to tthoward@cps.edu.
Prohibited Contact (Written) Communication

If a Selective Enrollment High School principal receives a written communication about an applicant from a Prohibited Contact, he/she is required to send a response letter indicating that the written communication will not be considered in the selection process and complete the log below.

Principals must retain the original communication and send it to the Office of Access and Enrollment with a copy of the response letter to the Prohibited Contact.

The letter to the Prohibited Contact should contain the following statement and include a copy of Prohibited Contact’s original letter:

The CEO has issued Guidelines that prohibit any communications about an applicant by me or my staff with CPS Board members, CPS employees, CPS officers, LSC members at my school, or elected or public officials (or any person acting on behalf of the official).

To ensure the integrity of the CPS Principal Discretion application process, I am informing you of my obligation to immediately send to the CPS Office of Access and Enrollment this letter and your original communication.

My reporting obligation includes verification of the date of your communication, transmittal of the original communication (including any enclosed documents), and a copy of my response to you.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this protocol, please direct your inquiry to the Office of Access and Enrollment, Executive Director, Tony T. Howard, or his designee.

Thank you so much for your understanding.

Date of communication: _____________________  Date communication received: _____________________

Sender (name, title): _____________________  Student name: _____________________

Date of your response letter: _____________________

Attachments to this form:

a. Copy of your response letter to the Prohibited Contact
b. Original documents submitted by the Prohibited Contact

Signed: _____________________

Principal of: _____________________

Dated: _____________________

After completing the log-in sheet, send the completed sheet and any related documents to tthoward@cps.edu.