

Application Procedures for The Lighthouse School

We are a K-8 public school, with one classroom per grade level and 25 students per class. All classes typically have waiting lists for the current school year. The Lighthouse School enrollment process follows Oregon Charter Law.

To apply for the upcoming school year:

1. Contact our school office before the final week of February to be formally invited to an orientation session.

Note: In Oregon, a child entering kindergarten must be 5 years of age, on or before September 1st, in order to enroll.

2. Attend an orientation. Typically held the last week of February, these events include presentations describing the school's charter history, resources, curriculum, instructional techniques, schedules, assessment strategies, behavior standards, volunteerism, general expectations, and an explanation of philosophies. Attendees are welcome to ask questions, tour the campus, and review student work samples. Information regarding completion of the application process will be fully expressed at the close of the event, and forms will be disseminated.

Note: If you live out of town or out of state, phone orientations can be arranged through our school office.

Ideally, we hope to serve families who find our educational philosophies to be relevant, and who strive to fully participate in shaping their children's education.

3. Orientation attendees have one week to return application forms to the school office, either by mail or in person. Families with multiple children must complete an application form for each child they wish to enroll.

Note: We cannot accept applications for kindergarten students until the year prior to their entering school.

4. As prescribed in charter school policy, a lottery drawing for positions in kindergarten will be held. At the same time, names are drawn and added to waiting lists in all other grades. These drawings are completed by the school's Director and involve two witnesses.

By the end of March, letters are sent home to inform families of their status:

A letter may state that a child has been selected for enrollment, in which case there will be additional information, including August registration dates and times.

Alternatively, families may receive a letter informing them only that their child has been selected to be on a waiting list, and are given their number. Once a name has been recorded on a waiting list it cannot be removed until parents instruct us to do so. Parents are welcome to contact the school at any time, to check on a child's status.

We recognize that this can be a difficult and worrying process; nevertheless, it has been created to keep things as fair as possible. We thank you for your patience.

Exceptions to the rules...

Ideally, we'd like the whole family to participate at Lighthouse. Therefore, charter law offers "sibling status". This rule states, that when one family member is enrolled, their siblings hold priority over other applicants at their grade level. Keep in mind however, that siblings may only enter a grade if there is an available opening. In addition, sibling lists are established in the order of names drawn, so there may be other families with siblings already waiting on a particular class list.

Charter law also states that we must provide "preferences", to families residing in our sponsoring district. Again, these students' names are drawn first by lottery, and then the names of outlying district students are drawn to complete the lists.

More information...

In the weeks prior to orientation, current families complete a form indicating whether or not they'll be returning to Lighthouse the following year. This is also their opportunity to let us know about kindergarten siblings. This information provides a hint as to the number of openings we *might* have, however we can never be certain of anyone's status until mandatory registration occurs mid-August. Class numbers can change dramatically over the summer, with families unexpectedly moving away or other unknowns.

We strive to let the next family on the list know of their potentials by the time school starts in late August. If your child is close to the top of a waiting list, and you have not received a phone call from us by the time other schools in the area begin, then you can assume they'll remain on the waiting list until further notice. Again, we'll make every effort to let you know *before* our school year begins, if the situation changes.

If it has been more than 3 years since you attended an orientation, and your child is finally invited to join a Lighthouse class, the Director or Curriculum Coordinator may ask to meet with your family, to answer questions, and to make sure you and your child are comfortable with the transition.

The Lighthouse School is intended to be an option for all families, but we understand it isn't always the best fit for all children. It is vitally important that families consider our structure, philosophies, and expectations before applying. Children can struggle in school for a variety of reasons. For families coming from other schools, or for those wishing to enter older students in particular, we must remind you, that respectful participation is important for everyone's sake. It will take the effort of the parents and the child, working closely with staff, to make the transition to our school a smooth one. Be prepared to hear our concerns should your child continue to struggle in this new environment. Sometimes it takes more than a change of venue to mend a situation.

If you have further questions or concerns about the application process for entering The Lighthouse School, please contact our school office at 541-751-1649.

Thank you.