

ADMISSIONS POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. River Oak Charter School (ROCS) is non-sectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. Students in grades K–8 who reside in the state of California will be considered for admission to ROCS without regard to actual or perceived disability, gender, race or ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, or association with individuals with one or more of the above characteristics. Admission to ROCS is subject only to capacity and the school’s admission requirements.
- 1.2. ROCS is open to all grade K – 8 students, including those with special education needs. ROCS will support the administration of all special education services at the school site through an agreement with the charter-authorizing agency or other approved entity and recognizes that students are mandated to receive all services as delineated in an IEP. No student will be denied admission based on disability or lack of available services. The staff will notify Ukiah Unified School District (UUSD) when a special education student enrolls, becomes eligible, becomes ineligible, or leaves ROCS on the monthly report provided to the district. If the student’s district of residence is not UUSD, the staff will notify the designated person at that district.
- 1.3. Recruitment and admission practices will support the enrollment of a diverse student population which is reflective of the racial and ethnic balance of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the Ukiah Unified School District (UUSD).
- 1.4. ROCS is a public school. ROCS does not charge tuition.
- 1.5. Mission: “River Oak Charter School strives, as a dynamic community of teachers and parents and students, to inspire in the child a love of life and learning beginning with one’s own heart and head and hands and working toward making a contribution to the community.”
- 1.6. ROCS offers an educational program in a stimulating, nurturing and safe environment, which stresses natural developmental stages. The instructional method emphasizes the whole child; its academic components are framed within an artistic, creative and imaginative context allowing each child’s full potential to unfold.

2. CAPACITY

- 2.1. Total school enrollment capacity = 238
- 2.2. The ROCS Charter Council has the sole authority to change total school enrollment capacity with the approval of the Ukiah Unified School District Board of Trustees.

3. ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

3.1. For All Students

- 3.1.1. Parent/guardian submits application for admission. The application for admission may be submitted for only one grade level per student. The grade level requested must be that recommended by the student's previous school (new kindergarten students excepted). Incomplete or falsified applications may be grounds for denial of admission or disenrollment.
- 3.1.2. Parent/guardian submits most recent attendance record and most recent grade report from previous school (new kindergarten students excepted).
- 3.1.3. California residency established.
- 3.1.4. Parent/guardian and student visit classroom by appointment. For grades 1 – 8, the visit is from 8:20 – 10:20 am. For kindergarten, the visit is one hour during the early morning. During summer recess, visits are not possible. Two missed appointed **classroom visits** disqualify the student from admission to ROCS. The administrator may make exceptions for extreme extenuating circumstances.
- 3.1.5. Parent/guardian, student, teacher, and administrator attend an intake meeting by appointment. Two missed appointed **intake meetings** disqualify the student from admission to ROCS. The administrator may make exceptions for extreme extenuating circumstances.

3.2. For Seventh Grade Students

- 3.2.1. Parent/guardian presents evidence of immunizations required to enter seventh grade, or documentation of a medical exemption, or documentation of a personal belief's exemption to immunization.

3.3. For Kindergarten Students

- 3.3.1. Parent/guardian submits an application for admission for the kindergarten program that corresponds to the student's date of birth (ref. 4.2, 4.3, 4.4). Parent/guardian cannot appeal kindergarten program placement. The student's date of birth determines placement.
- 3.3.2. Parent/guardian presents evidence of immunizations required to enter kindergarten, or documentation of a medical exemption, or documentation of a personal belief's exemption to immunization.
- 3.3.3. Parent/guardian presents evidence of minimum age required to enter kindergarten (ref. 4.1 – 4.4).

4. KINDERGARTEN AGE REQUIREMENTS

4.1. The School's age requirements for its three kindergarten programs may be different from traditional public schools. The School bases its age requirements on the Steiner-inspired developmental model and state kindergarten minimum age requirements.

4.2. **The One-year Kindergarten Program** is for students who turn five years old on or before May 31. Students are enrolled in kindergarten for one year.

4.3. **The Two-year Kindergarten Program** is for students who turn five years old from June 1 – December 2. Students are enrolled in kindergarten for two years, and the second kindergarten year cannot exceed one year beyond the kindergarten admission anniversary date. ROCS claims ADA for students attending a second year of kindergarten. Students are admitted for their second year of kindergarten only if the School has the following documented and available for audit:

4.3.1. State form is completed for student to continue for a second year of kindergarten;

4.3.2. State form is signed and dated by parent/guardian near kindergarten admission anniversary date. The intent of the law is that the parent/guardian consent not be too far in advance of the end of the school term; the form should be signed in late May or June at ROCS.

4.4. **The Interim Kindergarten Program** is for students who turn five after December 2. Students who are admitted mid-year for interim kindergarten will complete the balance of their first kindergarten year, and then return to complete a full year of kindergarten the following year. Interim kindergarten applicants may be considered for admission to the School when all of the following are documented and available for audit:

4.4.1. The student is 5 years old.

4.4.2. The kindergarten has a vacancy.

4.4.3. The admissions process is conducted on a case-by-case basis.

4.4.4. The admissions requirements are met (Ref. 3.3).

4.4.5. The parent/guardian approves of the student's interim kindergarten placement.

4.4.6. The parent/guardian is counseled on pros/ cons of interim kindergarten placement.

4.4.7. The Charter Council takes action to 'certify' these steps have been completed.

5. FIRST GRADE AGE RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. The School's age recommendation for the first grade program may be different from traditional public schools. The School bases its age recommendation on the Steiner-inspired developmental model.

5.2. Students admitted to first grade should turn six years old on or before May 31.

5.3. The School gives first grade admissions preference to enrolled kindergarten students who turn six years old on or before May 31.

5.4. Parent/guardian of enrolled kindergarten students who turn six years old *after* May 31, and who do not agree to continue their students in kindergarten for a second year, may place their students on the first grade wait list. Requests for first grade wait list placement are due in writing by June 1st. If more than one enrolled student is wait listed for first grade, students are ranked from oldest to youngest.

6. ADMISSIONS PREFERENCES

6.1. An admissions preference is a condition that gives an applicant a higher enrollment priority. Preferences can be statutory or discretionary, and statutory preferences are applied first.

6.2. Existing students of ROCS are extended the highest preference for continued enrollment.

6.3. Point values are assigned to each type of preference (ref. 6.4, 6.5): the higher the number of points, the higher the level of enrollment priority. When a student qualifies for more than one preference, the sum of the preferences is applied to the student's application for admission.

6.4. Statutory Preference Point Values

1 point Children who reside within the territorial jurisdiction of UUSD

6.5. Discretionary Preference Point Values

5 points Children of school faculty or staff
Definition of school faculty or staff: ROCS employees who work a minimum of 10 hours per week.

4 points Siblings of students currently enrolled at ROCS
Definition of sibling: a brother or sister (either blood, step, adopted, or foster) living in the same household.

2 points Alumni or family of alumni
Definition of alumni: formerly enrolled students who successfully completed at least two years of school at ROCS. Eighth grade ROCS graduates qualify as alumni immediately after graduation.
Definition of family of alumni: siblings of ROCS alumni or children of ROCS alumni.

1 point Children who do not reside in the territorial jurisdiction of UUSD but whose parent(s) are employed within the territorial jurisdiction of UUSD.

7. OPEN APPLICATION WINDOWS

- 7.1. The School accepts applications for admission during widely publicized open application windows. The School does not permit selection of students based upon the order in which applications are received—no “first come, first served”. Public random drawings determine admission when the number of students who wish to attend ROCS exceeds the school’s capacity (ref. 8.1).
- 7.2. **Fall Registration:** The School publicizes multiple open application windows from January – August when applications for new students are accepted for the fall. When more applications are received than space is available, admission is determined by a public random drawing. The School closes classes to further enrollment at any point when classes are determined to be full.
- 7.3. **Mid-school Year Registration:** When a vacancy becomes available during the school year, and when no wait-listed student is available to fill the vacancy, a secondary open application window may be developed and admissions procedures reapplied. The receipt of a new application for a mid-year vacancy triggers a brief open application window of five (5) school days. When more applications are received than space is available for a mid-year vacancy, admission is determined by a mid-year public random drawing.
- 7.4. **Interim Kindergarten Registration:** The School accepts applications for interim kindergarten (ref. 4.4) registration during one open application window which is from November 1-30. When more applications are received than space is available, admission is determined by a public random drawing.

8. PUBLIC RANDOM DRAWINGS

- 8.1. Public random drawings determine admission when the number of students who wish to attend ROCS exceeds the School’s capacity. The School also generates waiting lists from students not admitted through its public random drawings. A neutral third party conducts the public random drawings. The school registrar keeps signed and dated public random drawing records in permanent files at the school.
- 8.2. Annual procedures to follow in advance of public random drawings
- 8.2.1. Registrar sets open application windows by December 15.
- 8.2.2. Charter Council sets school capacity by January 1.
- 8.2.3. Registrar develops application packet: Parent-Student Handbook, application for admission, and an attachment to the application that includes information about open application window dates, public random drawing dates, and wait list rules.
- 8.2.4. School advertises admissions information broadly to attract a diverse population, which is reflective of the racial and ethnic balance of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of UUSD.

8.3. Procedures for accepting applications for admission

- 8.3.1. Registrar begins accepting applications on the first day of the current open application window.
- 8.3.2. Registrar dates, time stamps, and signs applications upon receipt.
- 8.3.3. Registrar reviews applications for completeness and timeliness.
- 8.3.4. Registrar applies admissions requirements to applications, and documents with specific findings those applications that do not meet admissions requirements.
- 8.3.5. Registrar stops accepting applications for admission on last day of current open application window.

8.4. Procedures for preparing public random drawings

- 8.4.1. Registrar applies preference points (ref. 6.1 – 6.5) to applications.
- 8.4.2. Registrar completes a lottery ticket for each applicant. Information on the lottery ticket includes applicant's name, grade level applying for, siblings also entered in the same open application window, and preference points applied to the application
- 8.4.3. Registrar sorts lottery tickets into groups by grade level from earliest grade to oldest grade: two-year kindergarten program, one-year kindergarten program, first grade, second grade, third grade, fourth grade, fifth grade, sixth grade, seventh grade, and eighth grade.
- 8.4.4. Within each grade level, registrar further sorts lottery tickets into preference point groups, from highest point group to lowest point group.

8.5. Procedures for holding the public random drawing

- 8.5.1. Registrar takes sorted lottery tickets to neutral third party.
- 8.5.2. Neutral third party uses the lottery tickets to conduct the public random drawing.
- 8.5.3. The public random drawing begins with the two-year kindergarten program group and continues, in order, through the eighth grade group.
- 8.5.4. Within each grade level group, lottery tickets are randomly drawn from within each preference point group, beginning with the highest point group and continuing through to the lowest point group.
- 8.5.5. Neutral third party enters the name of each applicant, in the order drawn, on a public random drawing record. The hand written record is dated and signed by the neutral third party, and returned to the registrar.
- 8.5.6. Special procedures are applied to siblings (ref. 6.5) who are entered into the same public random drawing. After the first sibling's lottery ticket is drawn, the remaining sibling(s) is entered onto the public random drawing record in the next position(s) following the first sibling. No other applicants are drawn before this process is completed. The intention of this procedure is to keep siblings together at the School.

8.6. Procedure for assigning lottery numbers to each applicant

- 8.6.1. The registrar assigns a unique lottery number to each applicant.
- 8.6.2. Part one of the number is the date of the drawing: "012909"
- 8.6.3. Part two of the number is the applicants rank on the public random drawing record: "02"
- 8.6.4. Sample complete number: "012909-02"

- 8.7. Applicant assignments after the public random drawing
 - 8.7.1. Registrar assigns successful applicants to the appropriate grade
 - 8.7.2. Registrar sorts unsuccessful applicants onto wait lists

- 8.8. Notification of parent/guardian
 - 8.8.1. The registrar notifies parent/guardian by telephone and by mail when their student is admitted to ROCS. Telephone notification is within five school days (or five business days when school is not in session) of the public random drawing. Written notification is postmarked within five school days (or five business days when school is not in session) of the public random drawing. Written notification includes a copy of admissions procedures (ref. 3.1 – 3.3).

 - 8.8.2. The registrar notifies parent/guardian by telephone and by mail when their student is not admitted to ROCS, and alternatively, is placed on a wait list. Telephone notification is within five school days (or five business days when school is not in session) of the public random drawing. Written notification is postmarked within five school days (or five business days when school is not in session) of the public random drawing. Written notification includes a copy of wait list rules (ref. 10.1 – 10.12).

- 8.9. Replies by parents/guardian
 - 8.9.1. Parent/guardian of the successful applicant must reply to the registrar’s invitation to enroll within seven school days (or seven business days when school is not in session) of the postmark on the written notification. **If the parent/guardian does not reply by the deadline, the School will consider the student declined.**

 - 8.9.2. Parent/guardian may apply to the school administrator for an exception to the seven-day reply deadline under extreme extenuating circumstances. Documentation may be required.

 - 8.9.3. The registrar keeps students’ applications for admission whose parent/guardian declined enrollment invitations, or whose parent/guardian did not reply to enrollment invitations, in permanent files at the School.

9. WAIT LISTS

- 9.1. The School generates waiting lists from students not admitted through its public random drawings. Wait lists are created/ updated after each public random drawing.

- 9.2. Ranking students
 - 9.2.1. Higher preference points → higher wait list placement.
 - 9.2.2. Earlier public random drawing dates → higher wait list placement.
 - 9.2.3. Lower draw numbers → higher wait list placement
 - 9.2.4. Preference points trump public random drawing dates.

9.3. Sample second grade wait lists

9.3.1. The first sample demonstrates the addition of three students to the second grade wait list. Each student is ranked first by preference point value and then by draw number.

9.3.2. The second sample demonstrates the addition of two new students to the second grade wait list. In this scenario, even though Caitlin and Sue have a later draw date, they are ranked above Nan; Caitlin's and Sue's preference points trump Nan's earlier draw date (ref. 9.2.1, 9.2.4).

Grade 2 Wait List after a Public Random Drawing on 1/29/2009

Grade	Rank	Points	Lottery Number	Student
2	1	5	012909-03	Joe Smith
2	2	5	012909-04	Jose Alvarez
2	3	0	012909-06	Nan Grayson

Grade 2 Wait List after a Public Random Drawing on 2/28/2009

Grade	Rank	Points	Lottery Number	Student
2	1	5	012909-03	Joe Smith
2	2	5	012909-04	Jose Alvarez
2	3	5	022809-02	Caitlin Perry
2	4	1	022809-03	Sue Ng
2	5	0	012909-06	Nan Grayson

10. Wait List Rules

- 10.1. Wait lists are generated **only** from students entered into public random drawings.
- 10.2. Wait lists are established following the School's public random drawings.
- 10.3. Wait lists are established only after a class has reached capacity.
- 10.4. Parent/guardian of wait-listed applicants must reply to the registrar's written invitation to enroll within seven school days of the postmark on the written notification (or seven business days when school is not in session). **If the parent/guardian does not reply by the seven-day deadline, the School will consider the applicant declined.**
- 10.5. Parent/guardian may apply to the school administrator for an exception to the 7-day reply deadline under extreme extenuating circumstances. Documentation may be required.
- 10.6. Wait lists carry over from year to year, and from grade to grade.
- 10.7. A student may be ranked on only one grade level wait list at a time.
- 10.8. Wait list positions rise or fall when a higher-ranking applicant is withdrawn or added to the list.
- 10.9. Wait-listed applicants forfeit sibling preference points when the sibling withdraws from ROCS.
- 10.10. Wait-listed applicants gain sibling preference points when the sibling is admitted to ROCS.
- 10.11. When an offer of admission from the wait list is declined, the applicant is removed from the wait list.
- 10.12. Parent/guardian must update telephone numbers and addresses with the registrar in order to receive an offer of admission.

11. Challenges

- 11.1. Any parent or guardian who believes the Admissions Policy has been misapplied to his or her child(ren) may seek redress through the following process:
 1. Meet with the Administrator.
 2. Meet with a designated Charter Council Member
- 11.2. A final decision, if necessary, will be mutually agreed upon by the Administrator and the designated Charter Council member.

12. Disenrollment/Abandonment

- 12.1. The School notifies students and families in writing two weeks in advance of a student's disenrollment from ROCS.
- 12.2. The School disenrolls students who transfer to another school.
- 12.3. The School disenrolls students, if after 30 consecutive days of unverified absences, no forwarding address or request for records from another school is received.
- 12.4. If a student's attendance over a three-month period falls below 80%, the School cautions the family about the compulsory education law, and the School and Family Partnership Agreement is reviewed. If the poor rate of attendance continues for a six-month period, SARB strategies will be exercised.
- 12.5. Students are disenrolled if they are expelled from the school. Acts enumerated in Education Code Section 48900 may be grounds for recommendation for expulsion. A hearing (due process) with the Charter Council is offered to any student recommended for expulsion.
- 12.6. The school district or county office of education of the student's residence will be notified when any student is disenrolled for abandonment or expulsion.