

Adopted: December 20, 2004
Reviewed: June 24, 2014



900 ENROLLMENT

I. PURPOSE

To establish a fair, consistent, and legally compliant enrollment policy

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- a. Spero Academy is a public charter school. Enrollment policies comply with Minnesota's Open Enrollment Law, Minn. Stat § 124D.10 subd.9. Enrollment in Spero Academy is open to all students, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, disability, or any other factors. Capacity of program, class, grade level or building cannot be based on student intellectual ability or disability.
- b. Definition of Enrollment: A student is considered to be enrolled in Spero Academy when the student's name is drawn by lottery.
- c. Enrollment Process:

- i. Application for Admission:

Admission applications are posted on Spero Academy's website. Additionally, applications may be mailed upon request.

In order to apply to Spero Academy, information requested on the Admission Application must be submitted during the Open Enrollment Period. The Open Enrollment Period for any school year falls between July 1 and January 31 of the prior school year. Admission Applications may be submitted via electronic submission, in person, or by mail. Open enrollment closes at midnight on January 31.

- ii. Offer of Admission and Lottery:

All applicants received during the Open Enrollment Period are automatically admitted unless more applications are received than the available enrollment capacity established by the Board. In this situation, all submitted applications for such program, class grade level or building are placed in the lottery. In the case of lottery admission, only current residents of the State of Minnesota may be accepted into the lottery.

iii. Preferences for siblings and children of current Spero Academy employees

1. Two classes of students have preference for enrollment at Spero Academy: siblings of currently admitted students and children of current employees. This preference is in accordance with Minn. Stat § 124D.10 subd.9(c).
2. Siblings, who submit an application before the expiration of the open enrollment period, of currently admitted students are automatically offered admission unless the number of sibling applications exceeds the available enrollment established by the Board for the applicable grade(s). If the number of sibling applications exceeds available enrollment in any grade, the sibling of the student with the lowest lottery number (first drawn) has preference and is awarded the placement.
3. If all available enrollments in a grade are filled by siblings, the sibling is added to the waiting list with priority over any other student.
4. Children of employees also have preference over the general public. Siblings have preference over children of current employees. Children of current employees, who submit an application before the expiration of the open enrollment period, are automatically offered admission unless the number of children of employee applications exceeds the available enrollment established by the Board for the applicable grade(s). If the number of children of employees applications exceeds available enrollment in any grade, the child of the employee with the most seniority has preference and is awarded the placement. Employees who wish to enroll their children at Spero Academy using this preference must maintain employment with the organization through the child's first complete year of school.
5. If all available enrollments in a grade are filled, Spero Academy places the child on the waiting list with preference over the general population, but not over siblings.

iv. Lottery

If the number of applications received during the open enrollment period exceeds available enrollment capacity established by the Board after siblings and children of employees have been enrolled, the school

conducts a general lottery within one week after expiration of the Open Enrollment period. All applications for each such grade(s) from current residents of Minnesota received before the expiration of the Open Enrollment Period are included in the general lottery. Applicant may only apply for admission into the one grade/class level into which the applicant will matriculate the next school year.

Spero Academy conducts all lotteries through a method of random selection. Students are admitted to the school in the order in which they are numbered in the lottery in accordance with Minn. Stat § 124D.10 subd.9(b).

v. Waiting Lists

There is one waiting list with two determinations of preference. Students who are siblings of currently enrolled students are given preference over all other students on the waiting list. The students of current employees are given next priority on the waiting list. Students who are children of current employees have priority over the general waiting list, but not over siblings on the waiting list. A student may only be kept on the current employees waiting list while their parent is employed at Spero Academy. When a student is admitted based on this priority, the parent must remain employed at Spero Academy for the first full year of the student's attendance at the school. All other students are put on the waiting list after those with a preference after all open places in grades are filled. The order of the waiting list is determined by the random numbering from the lottery. Applications received after the lottery are added to the end of the applicable waiting list for each such grade, in the order received. The general waiting list does not carry over from year to year.

A student may simultaneously be on two separate waitlists for two separate academic years, i.e. if a student is not accepted by July 1 of any year, that student can re-apply to Spero Academy for the next academic year without giving up his/her position on the current academic year waitlist.

The school board reserves the right to close admission in accordance with Minn. Stat § 124D.10 subd.9(b).

vi. Acceptance of Offer of Admission

Students are offered admission, or notified of status on the waitlist, by letter. Submitting an application to Spero Academy will not take a student out of their current school until registration is completed, nor will the current school be notified until Spero Academy receives an

acceptance of an offer of admission.

Upon acceptance of an offer of admission, by the deadline specified in the Offer of Admission letter, a student is then considered enrolled in Spero Academy. If Spero Academy does not receive a response of acceptance by the specified deadline, the student is placed at the end of the waiting list.

vii. Registration of Enrolled Students

1. Records Request: Upon acceptance of an offer of admission, Spero Academy requests academic records, transcripts, schedules, standardized test results, most recent three-year evaluation, and special education records, if any. Spero Academy includes a Consent to Release Records form to be signed and returned with the acceptance letter, although Spero Academy does not need such a form in order to request school records.

Pursuant to Code of Federal Regulations 34 § 99.31(a)(2) and Minn. Stat. § 13.32 subd. 3(e), generally, education data cannot be released without the consent of a parent or eligible student (a student who is 18 or attending a postsecondary institution). One exception is that a school district can release education data to school officials in another district where a student seeks or intends to transfer or enroll, or where a student already is enrolled as long as the release is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer.

2. Program Preparation: In order to best serve the student, upon receipt of school records, Spero Academy prepares for the student's first class day through several planning measures.
 - a. First Transition Meeting: Spero Academy invites the student's family and the student to meet with administration to discuss the student's transition to Spero Academy. At this time Spero Academy schedules an optional, half day for the student to shadow a current student. Spero Academy staff may also arrange to observe the student in his/her current academic setting,
 - b. Second Transition Meeting: Following the observation and optional student shadow described above, Spero Academy invites the student's family to meet with administration a second time to discuss the results of the student's experience and the observations of the supports

in the student's current school placement. All families are required to complete federal, state, and school registration forms prior to a student's first day of attendance at Spero Academy and can obtain required paperwork at this time. Additionally, Spero Academy schedules an Open House each fall prior to the start of school.

3. Location of Service and Educational Placement

Upon enrollment all students with a disability will receive services comparable to those in their current IEP. Once a student has accepted admission, any placement decision is made by the IEP team, including parents, and reviewed annually in accordance with federal special education law. Should the student be placed in another district or setting, the student remains enrolled in Spero Academy and will receive services, onsite or offsite, based on the IEP team's placement decision.

4. Declination of Admission

If a family declines admission to Spero Academy after an offer of admission is made, the student's name will be removed from the waitlist. If a family declines admission and then chooses to reapply, the Open Enrollment Period criterion applies, and the student will be considered for admission for the next academic year. Spero Academy in no way suggests, urges, nor compels neither declination of admission nor disenrollment of its students.

5. Enrollment Limitations

Enrollment limitations comply with Minn. Stat § 124D.10 subd.9(b) Also, the Spero Academy Board of Directors has determined that only current residents of Minnesota may be included in the lottery.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. § 363A.13 Minn. Stat. § 363A.14
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)