

Non-discrimination Statement as Part of the School's Admission Policy

It is the policy of Heritage Academy to comply with all state and federal regulations regarding admission and not to discriminate during the admission and the lottery process on the basis of gender, national origin, ethnicity, religion, disability, academic, artistic, athletic ability, or the district the child would otherwise attend.

Application Requirement

Heritage Academy requires applicants to submit a complete application form in order to be considered for admission. The Superintendent or designee shall set a beginning and closing date for the application window for each school year.

In order to be eligible for admission, the applicant or qualifying occupant specified by Education Code 25.001(b) must generally reside in the geographic boundaries set by the Heritage Academy charter, and satisfy any other admissions criteria specified in this policy. See **Verification of Residency** below.

Lottery Provisions

A "lottery" for purposes of this policy is a non-weighted, random selection process that determines the order of enrollment of student applicants. A lottery is to be conducted if the number of applicants exceeds the maximum enrollment. The lottery shall take place within 30 days after the closing date of the application period.

Development of Waiting List

Once all available spaces, per grade, have been filled, the remaining names will then be drawn and placed on a waiting list in the order in which they were drawn. As space become available, applicants will be called from the waiting list beginning with applicants with the lowest number assignment. Applicants selected by lottery will be "deemed admitted" and may proceed from provisional admission (Texas Education Code Section 25.002) to enrollment.

Admission Process of Returning Students

Returning students (students who currently attend Heritage Academy and intend to return the next school year) are exempted from the lottery if they notify Heritage Academy of their intent to return for the next school year by the deadline designated by the Superintendent or designee for the then-current school year.

Siblings Policy and Children of the School's Founders and Employees

Siblings of returning students currently enrolled at a Heritage Academy campus and who timely notify Heritage Academy of their intent to return for the next school year are exempt from the lottery and, space permitting, are automatically enrolled. For this policy "sibling" shall mean a biological or legally adopted brother or sister residing in the same household as the applicant. Cousins, nieces, nephews and unrelated children sharing an address with the applicant are not siblings. Sibling enrollment is dependent on available space and does not guarantee enrollment of each listed sibling.

Children of Heritage Academy' founders, teachers, and staff (so long as the total number of students allowed constitutes only a small percentage of the total enrollment) are exempt from lottery requirements, as permitted by federal guidance on the Charter Schools Program.

Applications Submitted Outside the Designated Application Period

If a student applies to Heritage Academy outside of the designated application period, the student will be placed on a waiting list in the order of the date in which the application is received.

Students with documented histories of a criminal offense and/or misconduct

As authorized by Education Code § 12.111(a)(5)(A), Heritage Academy shall exclude from enrollment those students who have a documented history of a criminal offense, a juvenile court adjudication, or other discipline problems under Subchapter A, Chapter 37 of the Education Code.

Documents and Information Applicants are Required to Provide

Applicants must submit a completed application form to be considered for admission. The application form must be signed and dated by the parent(s). The application form must include the following items:

- Applicant's name (first, last, and middle names)
- Applicant's birth date
- Applicant's current grade level and grade applied for
- Applicant's residential address
- Phone numbers
- Applicant's current school and district names
- Applicant's parents' name and signature
- Whether the applicant has a sibling already admitted to or attending Heritage Academy

Applicants are not required to provide transcripts or other academic records until after they are offered admission.

Verification of Residency and Immunization Records for Enrollment

Verification of residency and current immunization records are required for all students enrolling. Every student enrolling for the first time must present a signed statement from a physician or documentation of immunizations as required by the Texas Department of Health, no later than 30 days after enrolling. Students who submit an affidavit from a physician stating immunizations should not be administered for medical reasons, and students who submit an affidavit signed by the student's parent or guardian declining immunizations for reasons of conscience, will be excepted from this requirement. The parent or guardian must furnish records that verify the identity of the student.

A person's "residence," for the purpose of this policy is the true, fixed and permanent place where the qualifying occupant ordinarily lives and sleeps, not less than four nights during the school week and to which, when temporarily absent from the residence, the occupant intends to return. The qualifying occupant specified by Education Code 25.001(b) must generally reside in the authorized geographic boundaries of Heritage Academy, as described in the Heritage Academy charter. A person who is homeless, as defined by 42 U.S.C. 11302, need not reside within the geographic boundaries of Heritage Academy. In order to verify residency for enrollment, acceptable evidence of residency includes:

- Current property tax bill with parent/guardian's name and property address;
- Current rental or lease agreement with parent/guardian's name, student name, and address, as well as manager or owner's name and telephone number;
- Documents related to the purchase of the residence with the parent/guardian's name and property address;
- Mail dated within 60 days before the application date from the following sources:
 - Social Security Administration;
 - A Texas State government agency;
 - Utility companies;
 - Credit card bill;
 - Financial institutions; including checking or savings;
 - Insurance companies;
 - State and Federal Revenue documents;
 - Paycheck information.
 - Other sources or documents demonstrating residency.

If, at any time, a student's or qualifying occupant's residence is in question, Heritage Academy may ask for additional documents for verification. If the parent or legal guardian cannot provide evidence of residency because the parent or legal guardian is living with a relative or friend, a notarized statement by the relative or friend may be accepted by Heritage Academy with the following stipulation:

- Notarized statement must state that the parent or legal guardian and child are living with the relative/friend;
- Notarized statement must state the name of relative or friend who is on the relative who is on the relative or friend's proof of residence;
- Notarized statement must state the same address of relative or friend who is on the relative or friend's proof of residence;

- A copy of the relative or friend's proof of residence must be attached to the notarized statement (meeting the documentation criteria described above); and
- The notarized statement must be signed by same name of relative or friend who is on the relative or friend's proof of residence.

Subsequently, within 60 days, at least two current documents, Heritage Academy must be provided confirmation of residency from one or more of the following sources:

- Credit card companies;
- U. S. Treasury;
- Social Security Administration, including benefits letter;
- Texas State government agencies (including city and county agencies);
- Utility companies;
- Financial institutions including checking, savings, or investment account statements;
- Insurance companies;
- State and Federal Revenue departments.

Heritage Academy may conduct home-visits, at any time, to confirm residency of applicants and enrolled students. Falsification of residence on an enrollment form is a criminal offense.

Adult Student Attendance Requirement for Continued Admission

A person who voluntarily attends school after his or her 19th birthday shall attend school each school day for the entire period the program of instruction is offered. Heritage Academy may revoke, for the remainder of the school year, the enrollment of a person who has more than five (5) absences in a semester that are not excused under Education Code 25.087, except that Heritage Academy may not revoke the enrollment on a day on which the person is physically present at school. A person whose enrollment is revoked under this subsection may be considered an unauthorized person on school grounds and a criminal trespass warning may be issued. Prior to revoking the person's enrollment, Heritage Academy shall issue a warning letter to the person, after the third unexcused absence, stating that the person's enrollment may be revoked for the remainder of the school year if the person has more than five unexcused absences in a semester. As an alternative to revoking enrollment, Heritage Academy may impose a behavior improvement plan.

Student Residency Separate From Parent/Guardian

In order to protect the best interests of students enrolled, for purposes of students under the age of 18 who have established a residence apart from the person's parent, guardian, or other person having lawful control, such persons must establish their separate residency and verify it with documentation acceptable to Heritage Academy in the same manner as other students. However, a student under 18 and not living with

parents or guardian, who has engaged in conduct in the preceding year that has resulted in a disciplinary removal, alternative placement or expulsion, or who has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision and is on probation or other conditional release for that conduct, or has been convicted of a criminal offense and is on probation or other conditional release, shall not be admitted to Heritage Academy.

McKinney-Vento Policy Statement

“Homelessness” means lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The Superintendent or designee shall appoint a Liaison for Homeless Children and Youths to serve as the primary contact between homeless families and school staff, shelter workers, and other service providers. The liaison will also assist in obtaining necessary immunizations, if needed. If a dispute arises over the enrollment of a homeless child, he shall be immediately admitted to Heritage Academy until resolution of the dispute.

McKinney-Vento Compliance

Heritage Academy shall strive to enroll and have attend, homeless children who are not currently attending school and shall adopt policies and practices to ensure that students, including homeless children are not stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their homeless status. Heritage Academy shall review and revise policies which act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children. In determining homelessness, Heritage Academy shall give consideration to factors such as transportation, immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records and other documentation, and guardianship.

As a condition of receiving funds under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act, Heritage Academy shall serve homeless children according to their best interests. In determining the best interest of a child, Heritage Academy shall:

1. To the extent feasible, keep a homeless child in the school of origin—the school that the child attended when permanently housed or the school in which the child was last enrolled—except when doing so is contrary to the wishes of the child’s parent or guardian;
2. Provide a written explanation to the homeless child’s parent or guardian, including a statement of appeal rights, if Heritage Academy sends the child to a school other than the school of origin or a school requested by the parent or guardian; and
3. In the case of an unaccompanied youth, consider the views of the child and provide the notice required in the event of an enrollment dispute.

The school selected for attendance in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Improvements Act shall immediately enroll a homeless child even if the child is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment. Heritage Academy shall immediately contact the last school the child attended in an attempt to

obtain relevant academic and other records. If the child needs immunizations, or immunization or medical records, Heritage Academy shall immediately refer the child's parent or legal guardian to Heritage Academy's homeless liaison for assistance.

Should a dispute arise over school identification and/or enrollment thought to be homeless, the child shall be immediately admitted to Heritage Academy pending resolution of the dispute. Heritage Academy shall provide the child's parent or guardian with a written explanation of the decision regarding school selection or enrollment, including the right to appeal Heritage Academy's enrollment decision. Heritage Academy shall also refer the child, parent, or guardian to the homeless liaison, who shall conduct a dispute resolution process as expeditiously as possible.

Discrepancies in Student Name

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the Missing Children and Missing Persons Information Clearinghouse if a child is enrolled under a name other than the name that appears on the identifying documents. If a student's records have not been received within 30 days of a request, the Superintendent or designee shall notify local law enforcement for a determination of whether the child has been reported as missing.

Food Allergy Information

The parent of each student enrolled with Heritage Academy must complete a form provided by Heritage Academy that discloses (1) whether the child has a food allergy or a severe food allergy that should be disclosed to Heritage Academy to enable Heritage Academy to take any necessary precautions regarding the child's safety and (2) specifies the food(s) to which the child is allergic and the nature of the allergic reaction.

For purposes of this requirement, the term "severe food allergy" means a dangerous or life-threatening reaction of the human body to a food-borne allergen introduced by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact that requires immediate medical attention.

Heritage Academy may also require information from a child's physician if the child has food allergies.

Food allergy information forms will be maintained in the child's student records, and shall remain confidential. Information provided on food allergy information forms may be disclosed to teachers, school counselors, school nurses, and other appropriate school personnel only to the extent consistent with Board policy and as permissible under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 ("FERPA").