



ABBY KELLEY FOSTER CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

10 New Bond Street Worcester, MA01606
Phone: (508) 854-8400 Fax: (508) 595-0370
www.akfcs.org

Enrollment Policy

GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

Introduction

The Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School is a classical liberal arts K-12 school, located in the Greendale neighborhood of Worcester. Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School will accept applications for students entering Kindergarten through Grade 6. The school will backfill any vacancies that may occur in Kindergarten through grade 6. Abby Kelley Foster does not enroll new students in Grades 7-12.

Non-Discrimination Statement

Abby Kelley Foster does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed or religion, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or in a foreign language, or academic achievement in admitting students, nor may charter schools set admissions criteria that are intended to discriminate or that have the effect of discriminating on any of these bases.

Student Recruitment and Retention

The School will develop and implement a student recruitment and retention plan in accordance with Massachusetts laws and regulations. [M.G.L. c. 71, § 89\(I\)](#); [603 CMR 1.06](#)

Enrollment Preference

Enrollment preference is first given to siblings, residents or non-residents, of students who attend the school at the time an offer of admission is made, then to students residing in the towns designated in the charter: Auburn, Leicester, Millbury, Oxford, Shrewsbury, Sutton, Wachusett Regional School District (*Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, and Sterling*), West Boylston and Worcester. Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School is open to all Massachusetts residents. Applicants are required to submit reasonable proof of residency and sibling status at the time of admission. The school's application process is not integrated with any school district.

All applicants will be notified in writing of the rights of students with diverse learning needs to attend Abby Kelley Foster and receive accommodations and support services, including students who may have disabilities, require special education and/or are English language learners. Information regarding the availability of services is included on the school's website, enrollment information, school handbook, special education policy manual, and English language learner policy manual.

The school does not charge an application fee for admission or use financial incentives to recruit students.

The school will not admit students in excess of the school's approved maximum enrollment.

The total number of students attending the school will not exceed the total number of students reported in the pre-enrollment submission to the Department in the previous spring.

Disclosure of Student Information

With few exceptions, information in a student's record will not be released to a third party without written consent of the eligible students and/or a parent having physical custody of a student under the age of 18 years of age. Two notable exceptions are:

- Directory information includes a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class, participation in official school extracurricular activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards and post-high school plans.
- Upon request from military recruiters and/or representatives from postsecondary educational institutions, Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School will provide the name, address and telephone listing for all secondary students. Under federal law, local education agencies are required to provide military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as they provide to postsecondary institutions and prospective employers.
- Upon request, a charter school will provide the names and address of students enrolled to a third party mail house for mailings unless a parent requests the school withhold their child's information.

If an eligible student and/or parent do not want directory information or recruiting information released, they must notify the principal/assistant principal in writing within 5 days of an offer of admission. Otherwise, the information will be released without further notification. A parent and/or eligible student may specify that only certain types of directory information or recruitment information may be released, and that parent or eligible student may rescind a release at any time during the school year by providing written notification to the principal/assistant principal.

Transportation

All students in kindergarten through grade 12 are eligible for transportation services. Information regarding bus transportation is available at the beginning of each school year on the school's website and in the elementary, middle, and high school main offices. Transportation services will be provided in accordance with the Transportation Technical Advisory 16-1.

Eligibility Criteria for Enrollment

- The applicant must be a resident of Massachusetts to apply to enroll and to attend a Massachusetts charter school.

All applicants must provide the school upon admission provide proof of residency:

1. A Utility Bill (not water or cell phone) dated within the past 60 days

2. A Deed, Mortgage Payment dated within the past 60 days, or Property Tax Bill dated within the last year
 3. A current Lease, Section 8 Agreement, or Landlord Affidavit
 4. A W2 form dated within the year or a Payroll Stub dated within the past 60 days
 5. A Bank or Credit Card Statement dated within the past 60 days
 6. A Letter from an Approved Government Agency* dated within the past 60 days
 *Approved government agencies: Departments of Revenue (DOR), Children and Family Services (DCF), Transitional Assistance (DTA), Youth Services (DYS), Social Security, any communications on Commonwealth of Massachusetts Letterhead
- . Any student who may be considered homeless is not prohibited from applying to or enrolling at Abby Kelley Foster. Students who may be considered homeless may apply regardless of documentation and may not be barred from attending due to a lack of required documentation. In order to receive preference for admission based on residency, however, students who may be considered homeless must provide documentation about their residency. Such preference will be based on the location of the student's current or temporary residence. If the student's current or temporary residence is located within the school's-chartered region, they are entitled to receive a residential preference for admission. The location of a student's permanent or prior residence does not provide a residential preference for admission. Applications from students who may be considered homeless will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the school's homeless liaison to support the collection of proof of residency, as required.
 - Parents and applicants are not required to attend interviews or informational meetings as a condition of application, admission and attendance.
 - The school does not administer achievement tests or predicate acceptance for admission on results from any test of ability or achievement as a condition of enrollment.
 - Students entering Kindergarten must be 5 years of age on or before August 31. Students entering first grade, without any Kindergarten experience, must be 6 years of age on or before August 31.
 - Students must successfully complete the grade prior to the grade for which they seek admission and provide documentation at the time of admission. If the student is unable to provide evidence of successful completion by the request deadline, then the offer of admission will be rescinded, and the student will be unenrolled.
 - The school's enrollment policy is available on the school website and with an enrollment application.
 - Any student who remains on the waitlist for the (current) school year must reapply for admission before the principal application deadline for the upcoming school year.
 - AKFCS prohibits the submission by parents and/or students of false statements and documents. In the event that a parent or student submits falsified statements or documents that impact upon a student's eligibility or ineligibility (for example, minimum age requirements for kindergarten admission or successfully completing prior grades), AKFCS will retract or rescind offers of admission, unenroll students, or terminate the enrollment of currently attending students. The notification of this determination will be made available in the parent/guardian's native language and ensure that they understand the enrollment consequence.

Application Process

Applications for enrollment for kindergarten through grade 6 are available annually beginning in October with an application deadline during the month of February. If the application deadline date falls on a weekend, the applications must be submitted on the previous Friday. Applications are submitted electronically through the school's online application system. If a parent or guardian does not have access to an electronic device, the application may be completed with the assistance of school personnel. Applications will not be accepted after the established deadline. The school must conclude its enrollment process no later than March 15 annually.

If the school receives more applications than seats available a public enrollment lottery is held. The school will publicize the time, date and location of the public lottery at least one week in advance. Information about the upcoming lottery, if one is necessary, can be found on the application, in social media accounts school newsletters and school website. Public notice of all application deadlines is given at least one month in advance. Abby Kelley Foster requires all parents/guardians to complete and submit an application for each child requesting admission.

If the school does not fill all available seats in accordance with the process stated above, the school will hold a subsequent application cycle, as necessary, until all available seats have been filled.

Description of the Lottery Procedures

All parents/guardians must complete an application in order for a sibling, resident, and non-resident applicant to participate in the enrollment process.

Abby Kelley Foster will determine the number of spaces available based on the number of returning students and grade level capacity annually. If there are fewer spaces than eligible applicants, students shall be accepted for admission by a lottery process.

Abby Kelley Foster will set a date for a public enrollment lottery, with reasonable notice of at least one week before the lottery date. The lottery will be held in public in the school's auditorium. [603 CMR 1.06\(5\)\(6\)](#).

All applicants who applied by the principal application deadline will be included in a single lottery for each grade. The lottery will be conducted electronically, and a neutral party shall verify that the process is fair and that the selection is random. The lottery shall determine the initial random rank order for each applicant. After the initial lottery rank order has been established, preferences for admission will be applied.

Siblings, residents or non-residents, of students who attend the school at the time an offer of admission is made receive a preference for admission over non-siblings. Residents receive a preference for admission over non-residents. Reasonable proof of sibling (birth certificate, legal documentation) and proof of residency to establish residents' status is required at the time an offer of admission is made.

- **Siblings:** *Students, residents or non-resident, who currently have siblings actually attending the charter school at the time an offer of admission is made. Siblings are children who share a common biological or legal parent through adoption.*
- **Residents:** *Students who live in the city or the town as defined by the school charter. Students residing in Auburn, Leicester, Millbury, Oxford, Shrewsbury, Sutton, Wachusett Regional (Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, and Sterling), West Boylston and Worcester receive enrollment preference.*
- **Non-residents:** *Students who live in a city or town in Massachusetts that is not specified above.*

Charter schools must ensure they do not enroll too many students from a sending district and cause the student's sending district to exceed its net school spending cap as specified in G.L. c. 71, §89(i). If the enrollment of a student would cause the sending district to exceed its tuition cap, then the charter school must skip over the student and kept on the school's waiting list. 603 CMR 1.06(4)(d). A sibling of an enrolled student may enroll in the school regardless of the school district tuition cap, as long as the school has not admitted other students prior to admitting the sibling. In such cases, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts shall provide the school with the tuition payment which is subject to appropriation. G.L. c. 71, §89(i).

The enrollment office will contact the parent/guardian by phone and/or email when their child has been selected in the lottery for an available seat. The parent has three business days to accept the offer of admission by phone or email. Once a parent/guardian has accepted the offer of admission following the initial lottery, the school may mail or a parent may meet with the admissions offices to complete the registration process. Registration packets will be mailed within seven school days. Applicants must complete the registration process within ten school days. The school will contact the parent/ guardian if the process has not been completed. Applicants failing to complete the registration process may be prohibited from attending the school.

Students must begin attending Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public, in accordance with the school's attendance policy, within ten (10) school days of their anticipated start date (e.g., the first day of school). Students who fail to attend the school will be considered to have declined their offer of admission and will be unenrolled.

Students not selected in the lottery for enrollment will be placed on the waitlist in the order the names were selected. Abby Kelley will take into consideration sibling and resident preference, both of which may change over time. It is important that parents/guardians provide up-to-date and accurate contact information, as this may affect the applicant's position on the waitlist. The school must exhaust the initial waitlist prior to holding additional lotteries.

If the school does not fill all available seats in accordance with the process stated above, the school will hold subsequent application cycles, as necessary, until all available seats have been filled. The process will be fair and open and reasonable public notice of at least one month prior to the application deadline will be provided.

As spaces become available during the school year, the school may repeat the enrollment process to fill openings and to meet the requirements of G. L. c. 70 s89(n) CMR 1.05(8).

Description of the Waitlist

Abby Kelley Foster will maintain an electronic waitlist by grade. The waitlist is determined in accordance to the procedures detailed under the lottery procedure.

If a student leaves Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School or declines an offer of admission the next student on the waitlist for that grade will be offered the vacant seat until it is filled.

No student will be added to the waitlist except through the lottery process. No student will be admitted ahead of other eligible students on the waitlist except in cases where enrollment preferences change or described in 603 CMR 1.05 (10) (b).

Applicants will remain on the waitlist for the year in which the student applied for admission. Applicants who are not offered a seat or have declined an offer of admission during the school year are required to reapply in a future open enrollment period.

The school will maintain a waitlist only for the school year for which the students sought admission.

The school will maintain an accurate record of the waitlist which includes the student name, date of birth, residency (address), contact information (parent/guardian, phone, email).

When a student in kindergarten through grade 6 stops attending the school for any reason up to February 15th, the school will fill those vacant seats. Abby Kelley Foster will only fill vacant seats through February 15th annually. If the school is unable to fill the vacancy in kindergarten through grade 5 at the end of the school year, the seat will move into the subsequent grade level to be filled at the start of the upcoming school year.

Students who have withdrawn from the school may reapply for future enrollment opportunities in accordance with the school's application process.

Students placed on the waitlist will be notified in writing of their waitlist number and the process for admitting students from the waitlist within 7 school days after the lottery is held. Parents or guardians will be contacted by phone and/or email as openings become available.

If an offer of admission is made, parents/guardians must accept or decline an offer of admission from the waitlist verbally or in writing within 3 school days. If the parent/guardian does not respond to the school's offer of admission by the response deadline, the student will be considered withdrawn from the admission process.

Once a parent/guardian has accepted the offer of admission, the school will mail a registration form within 7 school days after accepting the offer. All applicants accepting admission from the waitlist during the school year must complete the registration process within 5 school days. Failure to complete the registration process will limit the student's ability to attend the school.

If an applicant's sibling, resident or non-resident status changes at any time during the school year, the applicant's current waitlist status will be subject to change. The applicant's position on the waitlist will be adjusted based on their preference change and their initial random rank order. Parents/guardians should notify the school if any of this information changes.

Application for Admission Requirements

Applications for admission in Kindergarten through Grade 6 are available electronically on the school's website during the designated enrollment dates. The application must be submitted by one parent/guardian and does not include a request for a student's social security number. The application includes the following required information:

- Student name (first, middle, last)
- Date of birth
- Cities/towns of residence
- Grade level
- Home address
- Telephone number
- Email address

In addition to the requirements stated above, the application includes the school's non-discrimination statement. Any and all information requested in the application such as language spoken at home or race/ethnicity is not intended and will not be used to discriminate.

The school will maintain electronic copies of the application information in the school's admissions database in accordance with 603 CMR 23.00. Applicants must contact the admissions office if they wish to have their information deleted from the database.

Academic Placement

Students must successfully complete the grade prior to the grade for which they seek admission. If the student is unable to provide evidence of successful completion by the request deadline, then the offer of admission will be rescinded, and the student will be unenrolled.

All Kindergarten students are assessed through our first-year screening process.

Withdrawal/Transferring Students

For more information about withdrawing from the school, please refer to the student handbook and/or the school website www.akfcs.org regarding our withdrawal process.

Information Sessions

All potential families are invited to our information sessions. Information sessions are usually held October – January. The schedule will be posted on the school's website. The sessions include an overview of our academic program, tour and question and answer period with the school administration. The information session schedule is determined at the beginning of each school year. Attending an information session is not required as a condition of application, admission, or enrollment and will not influence receiving an offer of admission.