



## **Brilla College Preparatory Charter Schools**

*This policy applies to all school operated by the education corporation, “Brilla College Preparatory Charter Schools”, which currently includes “Brilla College Prep”, “Brilla Veritas”, “Brilla Pax”, and “Brilla Caritas”.*

### **Introduction**

The Brilla College Preparatory Charter Schools (“Brilla” or the “Schools”, and when referring to a particular school- the “School”) admission policy is non-sectarian and does not discriminate against or limit the admission of any student on any unlawful basis, including on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, athletic ability, race, creed, national origin, religion or ancestry. Brilla will not require any action by a student or family (such as an admissions test, interview, essay, attendance at an information session, etc.) in order for an applicant either to receive or submit an application for admission to a School. Any child who is a resident of New York State and is qualified under New York State law for admission to a public school is qualified for admission to Brilla. Brilla will eventually enroll students entering K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Brilla will ensure compliance with all applicable anti-discrimination laws governing public schools, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; and Section 2854(2) of the New York Education Law, which governs admissions to charter schools.

### **Recruitment and Eligibility Criteria**

Brilla, K-8 schools in the classical tradition, helps students to grow intellectually, socially, and physically into young men and women of good character and spirit, and to be prepared for excellence in high school, college and beyond. The development of the virtues of Justice, Self-control, Wisdom, and Courage in students is central to our educational mission. Brilla is open to all students eligible for public education in New York State. Student recruitment efforts will focus on attending community events and fairs, and conducting outreach at after-school programs, elementary schools and community-based organizations serving the very diverse populations of the community school district (“CSD”) in which each of the Schools (currently, CSD 7) and will be designed to meet the Schools’ enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners and students eligible to participate in the federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch (“FRPL”) program. Each year, to provide opportunities for the community to learn about the Schools and encourage families to apply for admissions, Brilla

will offer informational sessions during the months of February and March in the day and evening hours at locations within the CSD including local community recreation centers (such as West Bronx Recreation Center in Highbridge), manage an information booth at local community events (street fairs, celebrations, etc.), and speak at civic organizations, with a particular focus on the African American and Hispanic communities. Brilla will post flyers and visit local places of worship, local daycares and preschools to talk to school leaders and parents.

For admission to a School's kindergarten class, a student must turn five (5) years of age by December 31<sup>st</sup> of their incoming year. Every year, Brilla will add a grade level until a School reaches K-8. Admission to Brilla will be limited each year to pupils within the grade levels to be served by a School.

## **Applications**

Applications for admissions will be made available at the informational presentations, on our website, and by mail at the request of a student or family. Brilla will use the uniform application form (the "Application") created by the New York State Education Department ("NYSED") and it will be available in English, Spanish, the languages predominantly spoken in the community in which the school is located, and any other language requested by parents. Applications can be mailed, emailed, or hand delivered by April 1<sup>st</sup>. Applications submitted by mail must be postmarked no later than April 1<sup>st</sup> (applications submitted/post marked by April 1 hereinafter referred to as "Timely Applications", and the students on such completed applications hereinafter referred to as "Eligible Applicants")<sup>1</sup>. If the number of Timely Applications for Eligible Applicants exceeds the capacity of the grade level, Eligible Applicants will be accepted for admissions from among the Eligible Applicants by a random selection process (lottery), which shall take into account the enrollment preferences and weighted admissions procedure set forth below.

### **I. Enrollment Preferences While a School is Receiving Charter School Planning Grant Funding ("CSP Funding")**

Consistent with the New York State Charter Schools Act, enrollment preferences will be provided to Eligible Applicants:

- (1) Returning students;
- (2) Siblings of students currently enrolled at the School (or any of the Schools);
- (3) Eligible Applicants of employees of the School (or any of the Schools) or the School's charter management organization Seton Education Partners (Eligible Applicants who fall into this preference cannot exceed 15% of the School's total enrollment);
- (4) Eligible Applicants who reside in the School's CSD; and
- (5) Eligible Applicants who reside outside of the School's CSD

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<sup>1</sup> Note: returning students do NOT have submit an Application to be re-enrolled for the following school year but shall be deemed Eligible Applicants for this purposes of this Enrollment Policy.

## **II. Enrollment Preferences After a School Ceases to Receive CSP Funding**

After a School ceases to receive CSP Funding, enrollment preferences will be provided to Eligible Applicants as follows:

- (1) Returning students;
- (2) Siblings of students currently enrolled at the School (or any of the Schools);
- (3) Eligible Applicants of employees of the School (or any of the Schools) or the School's charter management organization Seton Education Partners (Eligible Applicants who fall into this preference cannot exceed 15% of the School's total enrollment);
- (4) Eligible Applicants who qualify for FRPL and reside in the School's CSD;
- (5) Eligible Applicants who do not qualify for FRPL and reside in the School's CSD;
- (6) Eligible Applicants who qualify for FRPL and reside outside of the School's CSD; and
- (7) Eligible Applicants who do not qualify for FRPL and reside outside of the School's CSD.

### **Admissions Lottery**

If the number of applications received by a School exceeds the number of slots available, the School will conduct a lottery. The lottery will be independently observed by a disinterested party (8 NYCRR 119.5), a person who is not a board member or an employee of the School and who is not the parent, person in parental relationship, sibling, aunt, uncle or first cousin of any applicant to the School or of any student enrolled in the School. It will be conducted in a transparent, equitable and random manner.

The lottery will be held in a space that is open and accessible to the public as required by NYS Education Law § 2854 (2)(b) and capable of accommodating the anticipated number of attendees. If it is anticipated that attendance will exceed capacity, separate grade level lotteries will be held and each lottery will be publicized in a manner consistent with Public Officers Law § 104(1). At least one week prior to each lottery a public notice will publicize the lottery and the number of spaces available each year by grade level. Parents, guardians, persons in parental relationships and/or students will not be excluded from or required to participate in the lottery process.

The random process used in the lottery may be generated by a traditional ball system, technology-based software, paper ticket process or other methodology that generates random results. After enough students have been selected via lottery to fill all available spaces, a waitlist for each grade level will be formed from the remaining names. This waitlist will be based upon the random selection from the lottery and will be the only official, legal document identifying the names, home addresses, telephone numbers and grade levels of grade-eligible students with applications to the school pending acceptance. When vacancies arise, based upon the order of random selection from the lottery, families on the waitlist will be contacted by phone, mail, or email. The waitlist will expire annually at the lottery drawing for the next school year. Students applying for admission after the lottery is conducted will be admitted throughout the year on a space-available basis or placed on the waitlist.

Whenever a vacancy occurs in grades K-2, either prior to the start of a particular school year or during the course of that school year, Brilla will contact the parent of the student next on the appropriate waitlist. The same process will be followed for grades 3-5, up to six vacancies filled per grade per year. Additional backfilling in grades 3-5 during the same school year will require approval by the Head of School. Reasonable and multiple attempts (at least 3) will be made to contact the family of the student on the top of the waitlist and to obtain confirmation that the student is still interested in enrolling at a School before proceeding to the next name on the list. If reasonable and multiple attempts to contact the student's parents are unsuccessful, then Brilla may remove the student from the waitlist. Documentation of the attempts made to contact the parents of any student removed from the waitlist will be maintained by the School. Waitlists will not be carried over from year to year. Instead, the annual admissions lottery will be used to create newly randomized waitlists. The School will send a new admissions application directly to the parents of each child on the prior year's wait list.

Detailed documentation of the lottery process will identify the process used and demonstrated consistency with the procedures described above. The documentation will be recorded and made available to SUNY and NYSED upon request.

### **Student Registration and Enrollment**

Once the lottery has been conducted, Brilla will, within two weeks of the lottery, notify parents and guardians of applicants by mail whether their child has been granted a seat at the school or if they are on the waitlist. The School will ask each parent of a child who has been selected for admission to confirm within two weeks of this notification his or her intent to enroll or not to enroll the child in the School by signing and returning a letter of acceptance. Each year, the School will require currently enrolled students to confirm in writing their intent for the student to remain in the School the next year.

Prior to the commencement of each academic year, families of children who enroll at the School must complete the enrollment process. As part of this process, parents must provide verification of residency. Proof of residency must be established by presenting at least two of the following documents:

- A residential utility bill (gas or electric) in the resident's name issued by National Grid, Con Edison, the Long Island Power Authority, or other utility service dated within the last 60 days;
- An original lease agreement, deed or mortgage statement for the residence;
- A current property tax bill for the residence;
- A water bill for the residence dated within the past 60 days;
- Official payroll documentation from an employer such as a form submitted for tax withholding purposes or payroll receipt; a letter on the employer's letterhead will not be accepted; must be dated within the past 60 days; and/or
- Documentation or letter on letterhead from a federal, state or local government agency, including the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), City Housing Authority, Human Resources Administration (HRA), the Administration for Children Services (ACS), or

an ACS subcontractor indicating the resident's name and address; all must be dated within the past 60 days.

In addition to proof of residency families must provide a copy of the student's prior year academic record, birth certificate and immunization record. Brilla staff will be available to assist parents in understanding the registration requirements, obtaining required information and completing the required forms.

In compliance with the The McKinney-Vento Act, Brilla will immediately enroll students experiencing homelessness, even if the student is unable to provide documents typically required for enrollment (M-V Section 722(g)(3)(c)(i)). Students will have the right to attend classes while Brilla requests and awaits student records from the former school (M-V Section 722(g)(3)(C); N.Y. Educ. Law § 3209(2)(e); 8 N.Y.C.R.R. § 100.2(x)(4)(ii)).

### **Voluntary Withdrawal**

Brilla Schools are public schools of choice, both for application and withdrawal. At any time, a parent may wish to transfer their child to a different school. A parent wishing to withdraw their child from a School will be asked to complete a request for student withdrawal form. Brilla personnel will offer to meet with the family and discuss their reasons for withdrawing from a school, as well as to seek solutions to any problems that arise from these discussions. If the parents still wish to transfer their child to another school, Brilla will ensure timely transfer of any necessary student records to the student's new school.