



## PROGRAMS

### Q. What is the difference between magnet and fundamental programs?

A. Magnet schools have a focused theme and curricula that aligns to the theme. PCS offers a variety of themes, such as, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), Visual and Performing Arts, International Baccalaureate, International Studies, Career and Technical Education (CTE), Dual Language and many others.

Fundamental programs are family-oriented schools which provide a very structured environment and joint parent-teacher-student commitment to provide quality education for all students. Key features include a focus on student responsibility and self-discipline, daily homework, a dress code that exceeds that of the school district and required attendance at conferences and monthly parent meetings.

### Q. Are there any new programs for 2024-2025?

A. We have five new programs this year:

- Azalea Middle Civil Air Patrol Cadet Program
- Mangrove Bay Middle Health and Wellness Leadership Academy
- Oak Grove Middle Spanish Dual Language Immersion
- Seminole High R.I.S.E
- Walsingham Elementary Spanish Dual Language Immersion

### Q. What are DAP Fairs?

A. DAP Fairs provide families the opportunity to learn about different magnet and fundamental programs. Think of a trade show- each program will have representatives at a table with displays to give you a better idea of what they have to offer families. Many programs provide handouts and takeaways so you can research more later. DAP Fairs are a great way to learn about the different options PCS offers.

### Q. When are DAP Fairs?

A. We have 3 scheduled DAP Fairs:

**October 21 from 9:00 - 11:00 AM at Pinellas Park High, 6305 118<sup>th</sup> Ave N, Largo**

- 9:00- 11:30 AM

All DAP programs and schools will be in attendance.

**October 26 from 6:00 -7:30 PM at Countryside High, 3000 SR 580, Clearwater**



## District Application Programs Frequently Asked Questions

The following schools will be in attendance:

- ❑ **Attending DAP Elementary Schools Programs/ Schools:** Curtis Fundamental, Elisa Nelson, Garrison-Jones, Kings Highway, McMullen-Booth, Sandy Lane, and Tarpon Springs Fundamental
- ❑ **Attending DAP Middle School Programs/ Schools:** Clearwater Fundamental, Dunedin Highlands, East Lake, John Hopkins, Oak Grove, Safety Harbor, and Tarpon Springs
- ❑ **Attending DAP High School Programs/ Schools:** Clearwater, Countryside, Dunedin, East Lake, Gibbs, Hollins, Largo, Osceola Fundamental, Palm Harbor University, Pinellas Park, Richard O. Jacobson Technical High, and Tarpon Springs
- ❑ **Attending CTAE High School Career Academies:** Countryside High Early Childhood, Dunedin High Cosmetology, East Lake High Bio Med, Largo High Early Childhood, and Tarpon Springs High Early Childhood.

### **November 2 from 6:00 -7:30 PM at Gibbs High, 850 34<sup>th</sup> St S, St. Petersburg**

The following schools will be in attendance:

- ❑ **Elementary:** Bay Point, Bay Vista Fundamental, Douglas L. Jamerson, Gulf Beaches, Gulfport Montessori, James Sanderlin, Lakeview Fundamental, Madeira Beach, Melrose, Midtown Academy, Pasadena Fundamental, Perkins
- ❑ **Middle:** Azalea, Bay Point, James Sanderlin, John Hopkins, Mangrove Bay, Madeira Beach, Thurgood Marshall, Tyrone
- ❑ **High:** Boca Ciega, Dixie Hollins, Gibbs, Lakewood, Largo, Northeast, Osceola, Pinellas Park, Richard O. Jacobson Tech High, St. Petersburg

### **Q. What is the difference between a DAP Fair and a Discovery Night?**

- A.** DAP Fairs have multiple schools and programs for parents to get a working knowledge of what PCS has to offer. They provide a general overview of the programs and provide materials and handouts to learn more about what they provide. This allows parents to start to narrow down which programs hold their interest. To learn more about the DAP Fairs, visit: <https://www.pcsb.org/Page/40281>

Discovery Nights are a great way to learn more about a program at a more in-depth level. Each program hosts a Discovery Night on their school campus to give families a feel for the campus and program. Families will learn about the program, meet teachers and students, and get a campus tour. There will be time to get questions addressed and answered. To get Discovery Night Information, visit: <https://www.pcsb.org/Page/17234>

### **Q. If I miss the DAP Fairs, how can I learn more about the different programs?**

- A.** Start by visiting [www.pcsb.org/dap](http://www.pcsb.org/dap). This site has a guide with information about each program that you can download as well as links to each of the program websites to be able to visit and learn more.

The best location to find information will be on the school's website. If schools are still offering tours, you may be able to visit the campus to learn more. That information will be on individual school sites.

## ENTRY GRADE LEVELS

### **Q. Are there programs for incoming kindergartners or are they required to attend their zoned school?**

**A.** Most of our elementary DAP programs offer kindergartner seats. There are a couple of exceptions: the Centers for Gifted Studies and Literacy Innovation.

### **Q. At what grade level does the gifted program start?**

**A.** The Centers for Gifted Studies start in first grade.

### **Q. Can you only enter a high school Magnet program as a freshman?**

**A.** Grade levels that would allow a student to successfully complete the program are allowed to enter. Most high school magnet programs take freshmen and sophomores.

Seminole HS' CEL only accepts first-year students due to the course sequence and progression.

## AVAILABLE SEATS

### **Q. Are seats available at every grade level?**

**A.** No, typically the only available seats are at entry level grades (KG, 6<sup>th</sup>, or 9<sup>th</sup>). Once you are accepted into a program, you remain until the highest grade level. This means unless a family leaves, there will not be seats in other grade levels. There is an exception in 4<sup>th</sup> grade for most programs as the teacher-student ratio increases from 1:18 to 1:22. Most elementary programs, except for Curtis Fundamental and Perkins, will have a handful of available seats in 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

### **Q. Do the number of available seats change from year to year?**

**A.** Typically, the number of seats is about the same every year. Available seats are dependent on many factors including available building capacity, the staffing model, and more.



## TRANSPORTATION

### **Q. Is transportation provided?**

**A.** Arterial school bus transportation for magnet and career academy program students (not fundamental) who live more than two miles from their schools. Arterial routing restricts bus operation to main roads and limits the number of stops to keep bus rides as short as practicable. Arterial School bus stops may be farther than one and one-half (1 1/2) miles from the students' residences. Students may be required to cross a multi-lane road (3 or more lanes).

For programs with application areas, transportation is only provided to eligible students within the application area. Some programs have unique application and transportation areas.

### **Q. Is specialized transportation provided?**

Specialized transportation (ESE students who have an IEP that requires transportation or Section 504) is provided to a student's zoned school not a DAP program. If parents choose to enroll the student in a DAP, arterial transportation will be provided, consistent with the transportation provided to non-disabled students.

### **Q. Does the IB program offer transportation?**

**A.** Arterial transportation is offered within the IB application area.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

### **Q. How do I find my application area?**

**A.** Go to [www.pcsb.org/zone](http://www.pcsb.org/zone) and enter your address. Your zoned middle and high school will appear. This will help you identify your application area. You can find application areas on the back page of the DAP Guide found at [www.pcsb.org/dap](http://www.pcsb.org/dap) or listed at [www.pcsb.org/Page/10037](http://www.pcsb.org/Page/10037)

### **Q. When can I apply?**

**A.** The initial application period runs from January 9 through January 19, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. The Late Application period will open on March 21, 2024.

**Q. Is there any advantage to applying early in the application period?**

**A.** No. Applications are NOT processed on a first-come, first-served basis. All applications received during the application period, January 9-19, 2024, are randomized giving applications equal treatment.

**Q. If my child is in fundamental school and I want to move them to another fundamental school, do they have the opportunity to do so when I apply for the new year application?**

**A.** You can apply for a different fundamental program during the initial application period. Please remember that the best chance of entering any program is the entry grade level. After that, little to a few seats are offered as once you are in a program, you have that seat until you decide to leave, or your child is dismissed.

**Q. May I apply to more than one program?**

**A.** Yes, you may apply to up to five programs in order of preference (first ranked choice is the top choice). Priority preferences will only apply to the first ranked program.

Some programs have eligibility criteria that applicants must meet (Centers for Gifted Studies, Literacy Innovation, and high school AICE & IB programs). The District Application Programs procedures manual contains the entrance criteria for each program. You can find it at [www.pcsb.org/choice](http://www.pcsb.org/choice).

**NOTE:**

- You may only apply to one of the two Center for Wellness and Medical Professions Programs at Boca Ciega High or Palm Harbor University High, the Centers Digital Learning at Gulf Beaches, and Kings Highway (based on student's address), or Sandy Lane Conservatory for the Arts or Perkins.
- For application area programs, parents may only apply to the program located within the application area in which they live.

**Q. Can I apply to any of the programs?**

**A.** No. Some programs have application areas, which are geographic locations where students must live to apply for certain programs. These areas are usually based on students' zoned schools. Some programs have unique application areas. Many programs do not have application areas and are available to students countywide. See page 24-25 of the DAP Guide or review the District Application Programs procedures manual at [www.pcsb.org/choice](http://www.pcsb.org/choice).

### **Q. What is the academic entrance criteria?**

**A.** Only three types of programs have academic entrance criteria, all other programs do not. The Centers for Gifted Studies require gifted eligibility or an active Educational Plan (EP). The Centers of Literacy Innovation require a screening process and a passing score. The high school Cambridge

AICE and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs have entrance criteria including Alg. 1 Honors and FSA or norm-referenced test scores.

### **Q. Is there any other kind of entrance criteria?**

**A.** For secondary students, there is a behavioral entrance criterion. Per school board policy, students with 10+ referrals in the past two semesters and/or any SESIRs may be determined to be ineligible.

### **Q. If I apply to a magnet or fundamental program, does my child lose the seat at the current school?**

**A.** No. Students do not lose their current seat by applying to one of these programs during the initial application period. The seat is surrendered for the following year only if the parent receives and accepts an invitation to a different program.

However, a student cannot end the school year in a DAP program and on another's wait list. At the end of the school year, any current DAP student will be asked if they wish to remain on the wait lists (and attend the zoned school) or remain in the program (and be removed from all wait lists except Gifted).

### **Q. If we apply for a DAP, can my child lose his/her seat at the charter school?**

**A.** Applying for a DAP program will not cause your child to lose his/her seat at a charter school. However, once you accept an offer and take the DAP seat, you forfeit the charter school seat.

### **Q. If we do PVS and decide halfway through the year we want to apply to culinary at our zoned school is that an option?**

**A.** You can apply for a high school magnet program in ninth or tenth grade. You can start out in PVS and after the semester decide to apply for a different program. You would first have to enroll in the zoned school to be able to make a late application for the culinary program. You can make a late application up until Dec. 31.



## District Application Programs Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q. Can I apply to a program if I am not a Pinellas County resident?**

**A.** Yes, you may apply, however, you would apply using a Special Attendance Permit (SAP) and not through the Student Reservation System (SRS). SAP applications can be found on the Student Assignment Page located at [www.pcsb.org/registration](http://www.pcsb.org/registration).

### **Q. What if I miss the Initial Application Period?**

**A.** There is a late application period that opens on March 21, 2024. You can apply at that time.

### **Q. What can I do if I have a question or problem with the application process?**

**A.** If it is a technical question about the online system, parents may contact the Tech Help center at (727) 588-6060 or email [help@pcsb.org](mailto:help@pcsb.org). For all other questions, call Student Assignment, (727) 588-6210.

## **PRIORITIES**

### **Q. Do priorities apply to all applications and selected schools?**

**A.** No. Priorities are ONLY available during the initial application and acceptance period. Priorities ONLY apply to your top-ranked (first choice) program. Priorities DO NOT apply to any late application **except for** Military Transfers.

### **Q. What are Feeder Pattern Priorities?**

**A.** Students attending certain schools or programs are given program continuation priority to attend related programs at the next level. For example, fundamental students receive a priority for a seat in a fundamental school at the next level. To receive this priority, an initial application with a #1 program ranking must be submitted and invitation accepted during the acceptance period. See program descriptions for feeder pattern priorities.

### **Q. What is a Sibling Priority?**

**A.** Students are given priority if they meet eligibility criteria, and they have a sibling who will be attending the program at the same time. If a student attends a school-within-a-school, sibling preference does not extend to the traditional portion of a school or to any other programs at that school. The only exceptions are for elementary and middle schools with two or more programs (Elisa Nelson Elementary, Midtown Academy, John Hopkins Middle and Thurgood Marshall Middle).

Siblings are defined as brothers, sisters, stepbrothers, stepsisters, or other children with common legal guardianship (Policy 5500.01) who live in the same household. In the case of shared custody, the address used will be the address designated for school assignment purposes (Policy 5500.01).

### **Q. If I work for Pinellas County Schools can I get priority?**

**A.** Professional Courtesy Priority is given to a child of a staff member of Pinellas County Schools who lives in the district and works full-time at the school to which they are applying. If you do not work at the school with the program, you do not receive a professional courtesy priority.

### **Q. What is a Proximity Priority?**

**A.** Proximity priorities are applied to the remaining available seats for kindergarten, sixth and ninth grade applicants after feeder, sibling, and professional courtesy priorities have been applied. Proximity means the distance a student lives from the school and all proximity distances are computed using Manhattan Distance formula to the nearest hundredth of a mile.

Pinellas County schools use the longitude and latitude values assigned to each address in the Pinellas County Tax Appraiser's Property Atlas. Each property's values and the school's values are used in the Manhattan Distance formula to create the distances that will be used to determine the proximity priorities given.

For example, let's say a school has 132 seats. 32 seats go to feeder pattern, sibling, and professional courtesy. That means there are 100 seats left. For elementary and middle schools, there is a 20% proximity priority (except for Tarpon Springs Fundamental, East Lake Middle, and Mangrove Bay Middle which have a 50% proximity priority) and a 25% proximity priority for high schools. This means, 20, 50, or 25 seats respectively are given a proximity priority. Those seats go to the lowest Manhattan distance numbers in the formula. The rest of the seats are given to randomly selected applicants.

Proximity distances vary year to year and may be less than half a mile up to over 10 miles depending on the number of applicants and where those applicants live in comparison to the school.





## District Application Programs Frequently Asked Questions

For more information, refer to the District Application Programs Procedures Manual, available at [www.pcsb.org/choice](http://www.pcsb.org/choice).

### ACCEPTANCE PERIOD/ LOTTERY RESULTS

#### **Q. Will I receive any official written notification if my child is accepted into one of these programs?**

**A.** No. You must log into the Student Reservation System (SRS) during the acceptance period, February 14 -23, 2024. There you will find out if you have received an invitation to a school/ program. Then you either accept the invitation or take no action to remain on all wait lists.

#### **Q. What happens if my child is invited to a program, but I do not log back into the SRS during the acceptance period?**

**A.** To guarantee your child's seat at the school from which an invitation was offered, you must log in during the appropriate dates to accept the invitation (February 14-23, 2024). If you do not log back into the SRS system to accept an invitation during this period, your child's invitation will no longer be valid.

#### **Q. If I apply to one of these schools and accept an invitation, can I change my mind and try to get into a zoned school instead?**

**A.** You may, but there is no guarantee that a seat would be available in the zoned school. Students entering kindergarten, sixth, or ninth grade are assigned to their zoned school in most cases. Students in other grades will be assigned based on seat availability.

#### **Q. Does accepting an offer for a dap school affect the student's ability to later decide to attend their zoned school?**

**A.** No. At any point, you can choose to decline the DAP seat and attend the zoned school if there is capacity at the zoned school. If there is not capacity, Student Assignment works with transportation to find the closest school with capacity. If it is more than 2 miles away from your address, transportation will be provided.

### WAIT LIST

#### **Q. How long can my child stay on a wait list if no invitation is received?**



## District Application Programs Frequently Asked Questions

**A.** Applicants stay on the wait list for all the programs to which they apply until they accept an invitation to one of the programs or the wait list expires. Accepting an invitation to a program automatically removes a student's name from all other waiting lists (except for the Centers for Gifted Studies).

For grades K-7, waiting lists expire on March 1. For grades 8-12, waiting lists expire on the 11th day of the second semester.

### **Q. What happens at the end of the school year if my student is currently in a DAP program and on the wait list for a different DAP program?**

**A.** At the end of the school year, you will need to decide whether you want to stay at the current program and be taken off the wait list of the other program or transfer to your zoned school to remain on the other program's wait list.

**SIGNING IN AT [HTTPS://FOCUS.PCSB.ORG](https://focus.pcsb.org)**

### **Q. Why won't my username and password work?**

**A.** There are several different possibilities:

- You may need to reset your password. Go to <http://focus.pcsb.org> and select the "forgot my password link."
- You need to sign in with your parent account not your work account If you are a staff member.
- You may need to clear your computer's internet cache. Your browser has a folder where certain items are downloaded for future use and/or saving some time when downloading webpages. This is known as a cache or temporary internet files. This cache has been known to interfere with SRS' application program. Just clicking the refresh button will not work because it will just reload using the old files from the cache. You need to bypass or clear your cache to be able to sign in and apply.
  - Clearing the Cache:
    - Google Chrome:
      - Click the **Tools menu** (three dotted lines in the upper-right corner).
      - Select **History**.
      - Select **Clear Browsing Data** from the left-hand side. Set the **Time Range** set to **All Time**. Check-mark **Cookies and other site data** and **Cached images and files** and select **Clear Data**.
      - If on a Windows computer, close and re-open Chrome to save your changes. If on an Apple computer, go to the **Chrome** menu on the top menu bar and select **Quit** for the changes to take effect.
    - Microsoft Edge for Windows 10



## District Application Programs Frequently Asked Questions

- Click the Tools menu (three dotted lines in the upper-right corner) and open the Settings menu.
- Click Privacy, search, and services on the left-side menu.
- Under the section Clear browsing data, Click Choose what to clear.
- Select Cookies and other site data and Cached images and files.
- Click Clear Now.
  
- Close Microsoft Edge completely for your changes to take effect.
- Safari for Mac OS
  - Click on Safari on the top menu bar.
  - Click Preferences.
  - Click the Privacy tab.
  - Click Manage Website Data...
  - Click Remove All.
  - Click Remove Now.
  - Go to the Safari menu on the top menu bar.
  - Select Quit to close Safari and save your changes.
- It may be that you are trying to apply using a cellphone or tablet. SRS works best on a desktop computer. If you do not have one, you can go to any PCS school or the Student Assignment Office for application help.
- If you notice an error, you can contact your school or the Student Assignment Office.

**Q. Do parents have to use the same parent username to log in to check their student(s) application(s)?**

**A.** Yes. The exact same username must be used to log in to check your student(s) application(s).