

# TCMS Admissions/Lottery for 2023-2024

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **I applied on the first day the application was available. Does that make a difference?**

The lottery is a random selection of applicant names submitted on the very first day right up until the running of the lottery. It does not matter when you applied. The only time where it would matter is if the number of applications does not exceed the number of openings, in which case the students would be offered a space on a first come; first served basis (based on the time and date submitted). To this date, this has happened only once – the first year that TCMS was in existence.

### **I completed an application, but I've changed my mind and do not want my child to be entered in the lottery. What should I do?**

**Please remove your child's information by using your *Lotterease* account before**

**February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 for the 2023-2024 School Year**

### **How does it work?**

*Lotterease* will randomly sort all applicant names in each grade level. We have no information about the student other than what you, the parent or guardian, entered into the online form. You may have completed a pre-registration form; however, the information you supplied on that form is only used once a child who has been selected in the lottery has confirmed attendance at TCMS. It is impossible for us to enter that information into *Lotterease*.

No criteria are used to select students at TCMS.

Example: If there are 500 applicants for 6<sup>th</sup> grade and there are only 150 available slots, *Lotterease* will randomly sort all student names and the first 150 will be offered a seat (after adjustments for siblings are made) The remaining 350 students will make up the waiting list, in the order in which they were randomly selected.

### **How is the number of openings determined?**

Siblings of currently enrolled students, as well as children of TCMS employees and board members do not participate in the lottery, per State Statute 1002.33. These children are automatically assigned a spot at TCMS. This number varies from year to year. For openings in both 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, the number of available seats is determined by current 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade families who respond to a survey sent in January each year which asks if their child plans to return as a 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grader. This survey is sent prior to the lottery and, typically, all parents notify us that their children will return.

### **What happens if there are no openings in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade at the time of the lottery?**

The lottery will still be held; however, the student names are randomly sorted to create a waiting list.

*PLEASE NOTE: The summer months are extremely active for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade waiting lists, so please do not be disappointed if there are no openings at the time of the lottery.*

## **Can I attend the lottery?**

We are required by law to hold the lottery in the “sunshine.” Because we are using an electronic system, it is completed within minutes.

Your attendance at the lottery has no impact on the results. We do not know who your child is 😊

We will use a laptop to run the lottery, and the *Lotterease* screen will be projected at our school in the Computer Lab, but you can check your status from the comfort of your own home.

## **How will I be notified?**

You can check the *Lotterease* website any time after 6:00PM the day the lottery runs.

1. Select the grade level/lottery your child will enter in 2023-2024
2. Select Control F and type your child’s last name in the box that appears in the upper right side of the screen (if using a Mac, use Command F)
3. Your child’s name will be highlighted in the listing of names and you will be able to see if he or she was selected or wait listed.

If your child has been selected, you can confirm attendance or decline attendance while on this page by selecting Edit and making your choice.

**-OR-**

The other option is to wait for your official e-mail notification, which should be delivered to your inbox within 2 hours of the lottery.

*When you receive your official notice from Lotterease, please open the e-mail and follow the instructions. Every year we have a family or two that forfeit their child’s seat because they were so excited their child was selected (subject line of the e-mail), they never opened the e-mail to read that they had to confirm attendance!*

If your child has been selected, you can confirm attendance or decline attendance by clicking the link in the e-mail from *Lotterease*.

We strongly recommend that you enter [tcms@lotterease.com](mailto:tcms@lotterease.com) into your Contacts to prevent the e-mail from being recognized as spam.

If you registered for the lottery using a School District of Hillsborough County e-mail account, please change it to an e-mail account that you use for personal e-mails. We have had difficulty sending e-mails to parents who use the sdhc.k12.fl.us account.

*We also recommend that you check your junk/spam folders on a regular basis for future notifications from Lotterease, especially if your child was placed on the wait list.*

### **What if I have two children in the same grade level?**

If one child falls into the selected group and the other does not, *Lotterease* will make the adjustment to ensure the placement of both students in the initial lottery run.

### **I have two children – one is in 6<sup>th</sup> and the other is in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. What happens if my 6<sup>th</sup> grader is selected and there are no openings in 8<sup>th</sup> grade?**

Once you accept the seat for the 6<sup>th</sup> grader, the 8<sup>th</sup> grader will be moved to the top of the waiting list and will be offered the next available slot. We cannot create space for the 8<sup>th</sup> grader because our enrollment is capped.

*\*\*Please note: Your child's placement at the top of the waiting list depends on how many other siblings were also moved based on the order of the selection. Example: Your 6<sup>th</sup> grader is the 4<sup>th</sup> one selected that has a sibling in 8<sup>th</sup> grade; therefore, the other 3 siblings would be moved to the #1, #2 and #3 spots, and your 8<sup>th</sup> grader would be moved to the 4<sup>th</sup> spot\*\**

### **My child was selected. What is the next step?**

After the initial lottery has been run, you will have 5 days in which to “confirm” (accept) or “decline.” These 5 days include weekends and holidays.

The lottery will be held on Monday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023. You will have until 11PM on Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023 to confirm attendance.

- **If you do nothing by the deadline, your child's name will be moved to the bottom of the waiting list.**
- If you confirm attendance, you will receive a welcome e-mail from the Principal, along with a link to a Registration Form (*please note: you will receive this link only if you did not complete a Pre-Registration form if one was sent to you previously*).
- If you decline attendance, the first child on the waiting list will be contacted.

*We respectfully request that you either confirm or decline as soon as possible. By allowing the 5 day deadline to pass, you are denying a child on the waiting list the opportunity to be notified promptly.*

### **What if I decline and then change my mind?**

Unfortunately, once you decline the offer, the next child on the waiting list is contacted. You can re-apply, but your child's name will be added to the end of the waiting list.

### **What if I want to confirm attendance but don't do it within the 5 day time frame?**

You forfeit your child's spot and the next child on the list is contacted by *Lotterease*. There are no exceptions.

### **I live in a county other than Hillsborough. Can I still apply? Can my child still attend TCMS if selected?**

If your child is selected and attends an out of county public school, your child must have permission to attend a school outside of his/her district. Please contact our registrar, Ms. Shambaugh, at [holli.shambaugh@tcmstornadoes.com](mailto:holli.shambaugh@tcmstornadoes.com) for more information. We cannot enroll your child in TCMS until he or she is released from the home district and has approval from the School District of Hillsborough County, and the documents are submitted to our registrar.

### **How am I notified if there is an opening?**

Once a parent declines a seat, *Lotterease* will automatically generate an e-mail to notify the next child on the waiting list. You will have a 5 day window in which to confirm or decline attendance.

You will receive a courtesy reminder e-mail if 3 days have passed and you have not responded.

*PLEASE NOTE: Over the past few years, we have noticed a growing trend of people ignoring notification e-mails or reminder e-mails. If your child is selected and you are not interested in having your child attend TCMS, please be courteous and decline right away, or reply to the courtesy e-mail. Thank you so much for your cooperation in this matter.*

Beginning with the first Monday in June, the time frame is changed to 3 days, and to 2 days on the first Monday in July. TCMS does not call to notify families or send notices through U.S. Mail.

### **My e-mail address has changed and I need to revise it so that I receive e-mail notices from you. What do I do?**

You can update your e-mail address and phone number by logging into your *Lotterease* account and making the change(s) yourself.

### **Will you call me to let me know each time my child's position changes on the waiting list?**

You can check your child's status on a daily basis, if you wish, by logging into *Lotterease* and selecting the applicant list for the grade level lottery you entered. For Windows: Use the Control F function to locate your child's name; for Mac: Use Command F to locate your child's name

*Lotterease will send you an update e-mail to notify you when your child has moved into the top 5, as well as each time he or she moves into a ten position (i.e., 50, 40, 30, 20, 10)*

**I am also applying to magnet and choice schools. Will that have any impact on my child's selection in the lottery?**

It has absolutely no impact on your child's selection or placement on the waiting list. We have no idea who is applying to choice, magnet or private schools. The school district does not share this information with us (and vice-versa).

We know that there are many options available through the school district for middle schools, and that TCMS may not be your first choice.

*Please note: If your child is selected in our lottery and you are waiting to hear from your first choice, whether it be public or private, we are not able to extend the deadline in which to accept or decline.*

**My child was selected to attend TCMS, but was accepted to a magnet/choice school as well. TCMS is our first choice. What should I do?**

You need to login into your CHOICE/MAGNET account and decline the offer. We will not be able to assign your child to our school and you may lose your spot. Please follow the directions, or call the Choice office directly for information.