

2024-25 Admissions Guidelines

Who can attend Gathering Waters?

All students eligible for enrollment in New Hampshire public schools are eligible for enrollment at Gathering Waters Chartered Public School. GW is a tuition free, public school for students residing in NH. Students from out-of-state who wish to attend are subject to tuition and accepted according to available space after NH residents have been admitted.

How do I enroll my student at Gathering Waters?

Every year, during our Open Enrollment period, current Gathering Waters families submit an Intent to Return Form, indicating whether their children will continue to attend GW the following school year. This information tells us how many available spots we will have in each class.

Because more students want to enroll at Gathering Waters than space allows, we hold a system-generated, random lottery to fill available seats and create waitlists in each grade level. Parents or guardians can fill out an Enrollment Lottery Form to have their student included in our Enrollment Lottery. When the lottery is held, each applicant is given a random lottery number. Then, students are offered available spots based on their Priority Status (details below) and their lottery number, in ascending order (the smallest number is placed first). Once all available spots in a grade level are full, students are placed on a waitlist according to their priority status and lottery number, in ascending order (the smallest number is placed first). Note: if the number of Enrollment Lottery Forms submitted does not exceed the number of seats available in a specific grade level, a lottery is not necessary for that class.

For the 2024 - 25 school year, Enrollment Lottery Forms, including proof of NH residency, must be received between Dec.1, 2023 and 5pm on Feb. 29, 2024 to be entered in the Enrollment Lottery. All Enrollment Lottery Forms received within the time period stated above will have an equal opportunity for admission, regardless of whether they are submitted on the first day or the last day of Open Enrollment.

Lottery Priority Status:

Lottery Priority Status entitles an applicant to be offered an available seat ahead of applicants without a priority status. Gathering Waters offers priority status to students who meet any of the following criteria, in the order listed:

1. Applicant children of a full-time, salaried employee of Gathering Waters.
2. Applicant sibling of a currently enrolled student.
3. Siblings of students admitted in the lottery: When a student is admitted, their siblings' names are automatically drawn for their prospective grades. *If there is space*, siblings are admitted as well. If not, they will be placed at the top of the appropriate waitlist as "sibling priority."
4. Applicant child of a board member.

Age Requirements

All applicants will be eligible for the classroom that corresponds with their age as of Sept. 30, 2024.

Age requirements are as follows: (*As of September 30, 2024)

K - At least 5 years old*	5th - At least 10 years old*	10th - At least 15 years old*
1st - At least 6 years old*	6th - At least 11 years old*	11th - At least 16 years old*
2nd - At least 7 years old*	7th - At least 12 years old*	12th - At least 17 years old*
3rd - At least 8 years old*	8th - At least 13 years old*	
4th - At least 9 years old*	9th - At least 14 years old*	

Students with IEPs:

After the lottery, parents or guardians of students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will be contacted to discuss Special Education support services. The student's parent or guardian will provide additional application components as needed, such as a completed educational history, transcripts from previous schools, and releases of information needed for obtaining records from prior schools. As a public school, we accept all students with IEPs, **as long as we can properly meet their needs**. Please note that IEP services are provided through the student's home district. Parents or guardians of students who are supported by IEPs will need to notify their child's IEP team to set up a decision-making meeting with the sending school, Gathering Waters, and themselves to determine if Gathering Waters is the right school for their child.

Admissions Process Timeline

Dec 1 - Feb 29, Open Enrollment:

- Students who are already attending Gathering Waters have a right to continue attending. In order to retain enrollment for the following year, current students must submit a completed Intent to Return Form during the Open Enrollment period.
- Parents or guardians of students who do not attend Gathering Waters can enter our enrollment lottery by submitting an Enrollment Lottery Form, including proof of New Hampshire residency for each child they wish to attend Gathering Waters. The Enrollment Lottery Form can be found on our website, www.gatheringwaterscharter.org.
- A paper application can be requested by emailing admissions@gatheringwaterscharter.org or calling (603)-733-8701. Paper Enrollment Lottery Forms should be delivered or mailed to Gathering Waters Charter School | 98 South Lincoln St | Keene, NH | 03431. Enrollment Forms must be received by 5pm, February 29, so please plan ahead.

- All Enrollment Lottery Forms submitted within the Open Enrollment period will have an equal opportunity for admission, regardless of whether they are submitted on the first day or the last day of Open Enrollment.
- You will receive confirmation that your Enrollment Lottery Form is complete by email to the address you provided in the form.

Feb 29, 5pm, Open Enrollment closes

- All Intent to Return Forms and Enrollment Lottery Forms with proof of residency must be *received* by 5pm, February 29th to be processed for the March 4th lottery.

March 4 - Enrollment Lottery Drawing:

- The lottery drawing is a public event. The drawing will be held at 98 S. Lincoln St., Keene, NH 03431 at 4pm. (See Lottery Procedures for details.)

March 5-6: Lottery Results Announced

- All applicants will receive confirmation via email of their enrollment status within two days of the posted lottery date, (whether or not a lottery was necessary.) The notification will indicate whether the student is accepted or on the waitlist.

Acceptance and Registration:

- **Acceptance:** Once notified of an offer to enroll at Gathering Waters, an applicant will have three calendar days, starting from the date an offer is made, to respond to the offer by either accepting or declining via email to admissions@gatheringwaterscharter.org. If the applicant fails to respond, the offered seat may be rescinded and offered to the next applicant on the waiting list. Should the applicant accept the offered seat, they will receive an email confirmation within two days of their response. This communication will contain instructions for completing the registration process.
- **Registration:** Starting the day of the confirmation of the applicant's acceptance, they will have 14 days to complete the online registration forms and provide the required documents. If the registration forms and documents are not submitted within 14 days, the applicant may lose their seat.

Lottery Procedure:

Lottery Drawing:

- All candidates who submitted completed Enrollment Lottery Forms will be given a random number using a random number generator.
- Applicants will be placed in available spaces by grade level based on the following, in order:
 1. Their priority status.
 2. Their random lottery number, in ascending order (the smallest number is placed first).
- When the available spaces in a grade level have been filled, the remaining applicants will be placed on a waiting list according to their priority status and random lottery number.

Completed Enrollment Lottery Forms received after 5pm, Feb. 29, 2024 will not be included in the lottery. Applications will be marked with the date of receipt and added sequentially to the end of the waiting list that was created by that year's lottery.

Legal References:

RSA 193:1, Duty of Parent, Compulsory Attendance by Pupil & RSA 193:12, II, Legal Residence Required
RSA 194:B Pupil Selection; Enrollment; Separation