**Nittany Valley Charter School**

**Enrollment Policy**

**Approved on: 10/16/2012, Updated 11/12/18**

Applicants will be considered for qualification on their acceptance of the Nittany Valley Charter School mission and their parent’s willingness to participate in the required volunteer time. If both of these qualifications are met in the student’s application, the student will be considered a qualified applicant for enrollment. Students may be enrolled if they are residents of Pennsylvania. (Transportation may only be provided within 10 miles of the school.)

Admission may not be contingent on a child’s immigration status. Students in Foster Care or experiencing Homelessness should be enrolled immediately, if there are openings, even if the family is unable to produce normally required records. A child may be enrolled by a parent, foster parent, caseworker, caregiver with whom a child resides, or any other person with “charge or control” of the child. Admission may not be discriminated against based on a child’s intellectual ability, disability or the need for special education services. Additionally, admission may not include measures of achievement or aptitude.

Students applying for Kindergarten must be age five by September 1st and students applying for 1st grade must be six years of age by September 1st or have completed an accredited kindergarten program.

Recruitment will begin in January for enrollment for the following Fall. The open enrollment period will be advertised on our website. We may decide to advertise elsewhere, but word of mouth is our best advertisement. The school will give tours of any family that contacts us with interest in learning more about NVCS. Applications for enrollment will be available in person and on our website. Applications for the next school year will be accepted at any time.

All students currently enrolled in NVCS, whether in-district or out-of-district, are exempt from the lottery process. Siblings of current students who qualify for enrollment are exempt from the lottery but must fill out an application due by **March 30**. If there are more eligible siblings than openings for a given grade level, these students will enter a separate lottery, held before the primary lottery, to assign the available positions. The siblings who do not gain entry will be placed at the top of the waiting list in the order produced by the sibling lottery.

By **March 15**, the NVCS staff will begin to determine class placement for the upcoming school year. They will then determine how many openings are available for each class, as approved by the School Board. However, this may change slightly as needed based on the number of returning students and those student’s optimum class placement.

All completed new student applications received by March 30 will be processed through a lottery system. The Admissions Committee will hold the lottery by April 5. Applications received from families within the State College School District will be in a lottery separate from those outside the district. If there are class openings that cannot be filled with the applications received from in-district families, then those openings will be filled with out-of-district applications in order of their lottery number. If a student and his/her family move out of district after being accepted for enrollment, the enrollment status for that student does not change.

Lottery Process

As in-district applications are received, each will be given a number. These numbers are then their identification during the lottery process. The actual lottery process will be conducted by a Member of the Board of Trustees and the CEO. As each number is drawn, it is placed in order by grade on the Lottery Chart. Out of district applications are similarly drawn with separate identifiers and are then placed by grade on the chart behind the in-district applicants.

The CEO compares the already determined class openings with the Lottery Chart results and identifies those applicants who will be offered a space in NVCS. These applicants will be contacted by phone or email by **April 8** to inform them that the applicant is eligible for enrollment. NVCS must receive acceptance of the offer for enrollment with four weeks. If the available class spaces are not filled after those weeks, the next applicant on the Lottery Chart for that grade will be offered enrollment. This process continues as needed until all class spaces are full.

Sibling Preference

Sibling preference is given to current students only. If the lottery results in one sibling (A) being offered a place in NVCS and the other (B) on the waiting list, sibling (B) may be given preference during the school year for which Sibling (A) is in attendance. In order for a sibling (B) to be given preference, a signed contract for the new NVCS student (A) must have been received.

Waiting List

The waiting list is valid and used until the last school day of the year for which the applicant applied for admission. To be considered for enrollment for the following year, an applicant would have to re-apply.

Applicants who miss the March 30 deadline for the lottery will be placed at the bottom of the waiting list.

Mid-Year Openings

Any openings that become available mid-year will be filled using the following guidelines:

First, the opening can be filled with a child of the founding coalition or a sibling (of a current student) in the same grade as the opening.

Second, the opening can be filled with a student from the same grade waiting list.

Third, if appropriate to maintain balance in the classroom, the opening can be filled with a student from a different grade but same class as the opening.

Fourth, if there are no students on the waiting list for the determined best placement, the committee and staff may advertise the opening in appropriate media accepting applications during the time specified in the advertisement. A lottery will then be held as specified in the Lottery Process.

Any new student offered a position mid-year will have 7 days to submit a signed enrollment form. If after 7 days an enrollment form is not submitted, the next applicant would be contacted with the same procedure.

\*\* Please note that if a date noted above falls on a weekend or holiday, the next business day will be used.

Enrolled Students – Procedures upon Enrollment

Parents/Guardians will be required to fill out the following forms: 1. Home language survey, 2. Low income verification form, 3. Proof of residency.

Parents/Guardians will be required to provide the following: proof of age (as expressed through a legal document), and immunization records.

Special Education Requirements

Students transferring from in-state who have a current IEP in effect will be provided with comparable services to those described from the previous public agency. Students transferring from out-of-state with a current will also be provided with comparable services to those described from the previous public agency, until Nittany Valley Charter School conducts an evaluation and develops or adopts a new IEP which meets the applicable requirements.