

2010-2011 Enrollment Information Letter



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ABOUT THE ATLANTA CHARTER MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Atlanta Charter Middle School (ACMS) is a free public school of choice, open by lottery admissions to all students zoned for an Atlanta Public School in grades six through eight. Opened in the fall of 2005 by a group of area parents and educators, ACMS is committed to student-centered and project-based learning. ACMS is a member of the Coalition of Essential Schools (www.essentialschools.org) and follows the organization's principles of helping students to use their minds well, personalized instruction, and a democratic community. ACMS has recently purchased its building from the Atlanta Public Schools, establishing itself as a long-term resident of the Ormewood Park neighborhood in southeast Atlanta.

As a charter school, ACMS receives the autonomy to design its own academic program while being directly accountable to both the Georgia Department of Education and to its own independent Governing Board. In each year of its existence, ACMS has met the goals in its charter, and the school has been named a "Distinguished School" by the Georgia Department of Education based on students' academic achievement. The majority of the faculty at ACMS holds advanced degrees, and each teacher is highly qualified. As a reflection of the school's belief that a diverse student body improves student learning and gives students the skills to be citizens in a democratic society, ACMS promotes itself around the entire city of Atlanta.

ACMS was started by a group of parents, teachers, and students, and its success continues to depend on the involvement of its entire community. Parents and families play a key role by contributing time and effort as part of their volunteer commitment to the school by collaborating in governance and academic offerings, coaching sports, and joining in dozens of other school-based efforts. Such participation is key to ACMS's educational vision.

ENROLLMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

As public schools, charter schools comply with state and federal regulations, and their admissions are open to all. The school's size is limited by its charter. Presently, ACMS serves 160 students. For the 2010-2011 school year, ACMS will enroll a new class of entering sixth grade students, as well as to fill whatever openings may arise in the seventh and eighth grades.

Following a "pre-enrollment period" for returning students and their siblings, there will be **two** registration periods. The **first** registration period will only be open to students who reside in ACMS's primary attendance zone: Neighborhood Planning Unit W (NPU-W). NPU-W includes the neighborhoods of Benteen, Boulevard Heights, Custer/McDonough/Guice, East Atlanta, Grant Park, Ormewood Park, North Ormewood Park and Woodland Hills (if you have questions about whether your residence is within the boundaries of NPU-W, please visit the City of Atlanta website at www.atlantaga.gov). Completed applications for the first registration period are due to the school by Monday, February 22, 2010 at 3:00 PM.

All complete applications for students residing in the primary attendance zone that are received during the first registration period will be admitted unless there are more applications than spaces available for one or more grades. In that case, spaces remaining in each such class after the students who were registered during pre-enrollment will be awarded on the basis of a lottery. All complete applications for those grades from students residing in the primary attendance zone will be placed into the lottery. If necessary, a public lottery for first registration period applicants will be held in the ACMS media center on Thursday, February 25, 2010 at 6:00 PM. On Friday, February 26, 2010 letters will be mailed to all first registration period applicants notifying them of their enrollment status. Applicants who have been offered admission to ACMS during the first registration period must notify the school of their acceptance of the admission offer by Friday, March 19, 2010 to guarantee their enrollment for the 2010-2011 school year.

The **second** registration period is open to all students who reside in the city of Atlanta and are zoned for an Atlanta public school. Completed applications for the second registration period are due to the school by Monday, March 22, 2010 at 3:00 PM. (Please note: residents of NPU-W who missed the deadline for the first registration period may still submit an application.)

All complete applications for students residing in the city of Atlanta that are received during the second registration period will be admitted unless there are more applications than spaces available for one or more grades. In that case, spaces remaining in each such class after the students who were registered during pre-enrollment and the first registration period will be awarded on the basis of a lottery. All complete applications for those grades from students residing in the city of Atlanta will be placed into the lottery. If necessary, a public lottery for second registration period applicants will be held in the ACMS media center on Thursday, March 25, 2010 at 6:00 PM. On Friday, March 26, 2010 letters will be mailed to all second registration period applicants notifying them of their enrollment status. Applicants who have been offered admission to ACMS during the first registration period must notify the school of their acceptance of the admission offer by Friday, April 30, 2010 to guarantee their enrollment for the 2010-2011 school year.

If any spaces remain after the second registration period, those spaces will be filled on a first come, first served basis.

Applications for the 2010-2011 school year will be available at the school and on the school's website beginning in January 2010 and must be completed and returned to the school by the deadlines specified above. Applications *must* include all supporting documentation to be considered complete. Incomplete applications will be returned to the adult who filed the application, along with an explanation for the return. In order to insure that students and families clearly understand the ACMS philosophy and program, as part of the application process, parents/guardians and students *must* attend an Information Session. **Information Sessions are currently scheduled at the school on the following dates and times (RSVP to Maria Larson, Operations Manager, at mlarson@atlantachartermiddle.com or 678-904-0051):**

- ◆ **Thursday, February 4, 2010 from 7:00 to 8:30 PM**
- ◆ **Saturday, February 20, 2010 from 10:00 to 11:30 AM**
- ◆ **Saturday, March 6, 2010 from 10:00 to 11:30 AM**

If you are unable to attend one of the information sessions but are still interested in applying, please contact Maria Larson, Operations Manager, at mlarson@atlantachartermiddle.com or 678-904-0051.

Three waiting lists will be formed if the number of applicants in the application and enrollment process exceeds the number of available spaces—one for siblings of current ACMS students, one for residents of NPU-W, and one for non-NPU-W residents zoned for an Atlanta public school. Students who decline an offer of admission may remain on the waiting list in their present position for a period of 12 months from the date of the original offer of admission. They will be listed as “inactive” on the waiting list and it will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian of that student to inform the school, in writing, of their desire to be returned to “active” status on the waiting list. As additional openings arise, enrollment will continue from the active waiting list in the order of applicants' lottery numbers.

At the beginning of the next year's application and enrollment process a letter will be sent to all applicants who are still on the waiting list to see if they would like to remain on the waiting list. All applicants who respond affirmatively to this request will retain their place on the waiting list ahead of any new applicants. New applicants who are siblings of current students will maintain their sibling preference.

If at any point in the year the waiting list is depleted and the school determines that it has enrollment openings, then a new application and enrollment period will be declared. This will be announced throughout the city of Atlanta and families will have a one-month period of time in which to complete the requirements for application to the school. In this case, a new lottery would be conducted one week after the close of the application period.

If you are interested in being added to the ACMS enrollment email list for updates about the enrollment process, please send an email to info@atlantachartermiddle.com with your name, email address, and your student's name.

SCHOOL VISITS

After receiving an offer of admission, students will have the opportunity to spend a day at the school “shadowing” a current student to gain a better sense of the school. These school visit days will be held in March and April. More information about school visit days will be mailed with the offer of admission.

The Atlanta Charter Middle School does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, or veteran status in its education programs or in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its programs or activities.