



Cooperative Enrollment and Expectations Policy

Policy:

Once a student enrolls in Forest Charter School ("FCS"), the school strives to create a personalized learning program for each student.

One such option is the FCS cooperatives (co-ops). Student participation in a co-op is optional. FCS shall not discriminate on any protected classification of student, as described in Education Code Section 220, in determining enrollment in co-ops.

As part of FCS' unique approach to education, FCS has developed small programs (co-ops) within the larger FCS program, in which students may participate. Due to the limited space and unique nature of each of these co-ops, participation in a co-op is subject to capacity limitations and to students meeting the minimum expectations of the co-op. To the extent there are more applicants for a co-op than spaces available, participation in a selected co-op will be determined by a random public drawing ("lottery"), with preferences as described below.

Enrollment Period for Fall applicants to Co-op and lottery process

- FCS will hold an open enrollment period that will run from the beginning of the second semester until 5:00 pm the Thursday before the lottery.
- Any subsequent open enrollment periods will run from the end of the previous open enrollment period until 5:00 pm each Thursday.
- The lottery will be held on a Friday in March. FCS will announce the exact date/time approximately two months before the March lottery, and will post the lottery date/time on its website.
- If new applications for admission are received following the end of the open enrollment period, subsequent lotteries, if needed to determine admission to a co-op, will be held on a weekly basis on each Friday that school is in session.
- Students wishing to join an FCS co-op must begin by filling out the online interest form on the FCS website during the open enrollment period. If a family is unable to fill out the online form, they may contact FCS by telephone for assistance.
- Students/families must fill out the online interest form during any FCS open enrollment period (please see the FCS Enrollment Policy for details). In the case that there are more students who wish to enroll in a co-op than there is capacity, enrollment will be determined by a lottery.
- If a student is not admitted into a co-op, the student may choose to be placed on the waitlist for a

space in the co-op even if they do not choose to otherwise be enrolled in FCS, absent participation in a co-op.

- Students advancing a grade level within the same co-op (e.g. PACE or Tree Top) even if they are moving to a new Supervising Teacher are guaranteed a spot in the co-op as long as they can meet the basic language arts requirement for the grade level to which they are advancing (see below for details). This guaranteed spot includes eighth grade students moving from PACE to ninth grade Global Studies.

Students wishing to participate in a co-op program will be given priority in the lottery in the following order:

1. Current students of FCS who have been enrolled for at least one half of one semester.
2. Children or grandchildren of administrators, office staff, special ed staff, supervising teachers and any other learning center employees currently working at FCS
3. Sibling of a student already enrolled in any co-op
4. All other applicants
5. Once capacity has been reached in the lottery, the remaining applications will be drawn and students will be placed on a waitlist based on the order of the lottery draw.

Other Considerations

- Students must be able to regularly attend the co-op during its meeting days.
- In order to maintain balance in a multi-grade co-op, capacity may be based on space being available at a specific grade level. If a co-op receives more applications than capacity, participation will be determined by the process described above.
- Twins will be placed in the co-op lottery as one student and will receive the same lottery position. If there is only one spot available, the family will be offered co-op placement for one twin. If the family declines the offer of placement in the co-op, the twins will remain on the co-op waitlist in the same position and the next applicant on the list will be offered the placement. Twins will not be dropped from the list or dropped to the bottom of the list if they decline a spot unless there are two participation spots available at the time of declining.

Acceptance of Admission to a Co-op

- After a student has been admitted through the co-op lottery, FCS will contact the family via email. Once contacted by the school, the family has two school days to contact Forest Charter School and accept the spot in the co-op. If FCS does not hear from the family within these two school days, the spot in the co-op will be given to the next student on the waitlist, and the student who was originally contacted will be removed from the waitlist.
- If a family declines a spot in the co-op, the student will be removed from the co-op waitlist.
- Following the acceptance of a spot in a co-op, the family will have three school days to turn in all the required registration documentation/forms. If all of the documentation/forms are not turned in within three school days, FCS will rescind the offer of admission, remove the student from the waitlist, and contact the next student on the waitlist.
- FCS will make every effort to assist and accommodate parents in compiling registration documentation. FCS complies with all laws regarding homeless and foster youth and will not delay registration in the case of a homeless or foster youth without required registration documentation.

Waitlist

- Co-op waitlists are created based on the specific co-op and grade level.
- In order to maintain their spot on the co-op waitlist from year to year, families must register with FCS indicating their continued interest in remaining on the co-op waitlist for the next school year. FCS will send out a form to all families on the co-op waitlist at the beginning of the calendar year and families will have until the last school day in February to return the form. If this form is not returned on time, students will be removed from the co-op waitlist.
- The waitlist may be adjusted if a new applicant meets one of the enumerated lottery preferences (e.g., the child of a staff member) that an applicant on the waitlist does not.

Co-op Participation Requirements

In order to participate in a FCS co-op program, students/families must meet the following expectations. These co-op expectations are meant to ensure that students participate in FCS program options where they may receive an educational benefit. Due to the unique, multi-grade, learning structure of the FCS co-op, trying to support a student whose academic skills are too far below grade level does not foster student success. Therefore, FCS has determined that there are minimum academic skills that a student must possess in order to succeed in any of the co-ops. With these considerations in mind, FCS has developed the following expectation to qualify for a co-op:

Family

- Prior to participating in a co-op, the co-op Supervising Teacher, an administrator, or their designee will meet with the family to review the co-op program and homeschooling expectations.

Student

- FCS seeks to ensure that each student who chooses to participate in a co-op is enabled to receive an educational benefit. Each co-op involves a great deal of written assignments and pacing that requires academic skills that are no more than one grade level below the student's assigned grade level. As such, students seeking to participate in a co-op must independently demonstrate that their English Language Arts proficiency is equivalent to scoring 80% or higher on a basic language arts assessment that is no lower than one grade level below their enrolled grade level. This skill level can be demonstrated in a number of ways including, but not necessarily limited to, the following:
 1. Scoring 80% or higher on a basic language arts assessment that is no lower than one grade level below their enrolled grade level
 2. Independently writing a letter/paragraph in front of the teacher that demonstrates the required language arts ability
 3. A recommendation from the student's current FCS supervising teacher ensuring that the student meets the language arts requirement articulated above
- If there is any uncertainty as to whether or not the student has met the minimum co-op language arts expectations, FCS reserves the right to defer to an objective language arts assessment. FCS shall also ensure that when considering the participation of any student with a disability under Section 504 or under the IDEA or who is identified as an English Learner, the student's participation is considered with appropriate accommodations/services to ensure equal access to co-op participation for all students. If a student is not recommended to participate in a co-op, FCS shall offer interventions designed to assist the student to qualify for co-op participation in the future.

- This minimum language arts requirement can also be used to evaluate whether it is appropriate for a student currently enrolled in a co-op to continue with the co-op the following year.
- Exceptions to this language arts requirement can be made by the FCS administration on a case-by-case basis if there is evidence that the student can receive an educational benefit in the co-op program.