Applications from incoming 1st and 2nd grade applicants who apply to schools that require testing will take additional time to process. Admittance testing begins in March.

What happens if I submit my child’s Application for Optional Schools with the proper documents but my child does not meet the school’s minimum requirements?

- If, at the time of application, the student does not meet the school’s entrance requirements, he/she will not be approved to attend the school requested.
- If, at a later date, the student’s attendance, skills and behaviors, conduct, and/or academic performance improve and he/she meets the entrance requirements of the school requested, he/she may re-apply.
- If, at a later date, the FastBridge Spring 2020 or the TNReady Spring 2019 test scores become available and meet the test score requirements, the student may re-apply.
- If, at a later date, the student’s family chooses to have the applicant evaluated by a licensed psychological examiner using an appropriate assessment, and the student meets the test requirements, then he/she may re-apply.
- The student’s new application will receive a new electronic date and time.

What if I live in an SCS zone when my child is accepted but we move to an area not zoned to SCS when school begins?

No. If an Optional transfer is approved, transportation must be provided by the parent/legal guardian.

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Parents/legal guardians of non-SCS students must submit the following documents within 10 business days AFTER submitting the online application:

1. Nationally normed achievement test scores
   - Test results in the FastBridge aReading and aMath assessments; the TCAP TNReady English Language Arts and the TCAP TNReady Mathematics assessments; the NWEA MAP Growth Reading and NWEA MAP Growth Mathematics assessments; Total Reading/Reading Composite and Total Mathematics/Mathematics Composite of another acceptable nationally normed achievement test. Acceptable tests must be dated Spring 2019 or later.
   - Other acceptable tests for high schools include the FastBridge aReading and aMath assessments; the spring NWEA MAP Growth Reading and NWEA MAP Growth Mathematics assessments (including MAP Growth Math 6+, Algebra I, Algebra II or Geometry), a TCAP English or Mathematics End of Course test or another acceptable nationally normed assessment, including the ACT (Reading and Math, PSAT or SAT (Evidenced-Based Reading and Writing and Mathematics), with the assessment being administered no more than one year prior to the date of application for Optional Schools.
   - The only acceptable achievement tests from licensed psychological examiners are the Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement, 2nd and/or 3rd Edition (KTEA-II or III), or the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test, 2nd or 3rd Edition (WJ-III), with composite scores in Reading and Mathematics on grade-level norms. Entrance requirements vary by school. See 2020-21 Optional Handbook.

2. A copy of a current comprehensive report card including grades, skills and behaviors, conduct and attendance is required.

3. An original copy of the birth certificate is required for all kindergarten applicants.

All documents are required from non-SCS applicants as part of the application process. Documents must be submitted within 10 business days of the online application submission to:

Division of Optional Schools & Advanced Academics
160 S. Hollywood, Cr 106
Memphis, TN 38112
(901) 416-5338

You may also scan and email your documents to scsop@scsk12.org.

If my child is already attending a school on an Optional transfer, do I have to apply again?

Applications for Optional Schools must be renewed annually.

- Students are eligible for renewal transfers to the same school if they remain in that specific school’s Optional program all year and maintain the Optional school’s renewal requirements. Renewal transfer applications will be sent home with the first semester report card. The renewal form should be returned to the school where the student is currently enrolled.
- If a student wishes to attend a different Optional school, a new Application for Optional Schools must be submitted online for the new school.

What is the order in which new applications are processed?

Applications are processed on a first-come, first-served basis, within priority categories, unless there are more applications than spaces available. If applications exceed spaces, the first 80 percent are processed on a first-come, first-served basis, and 20 percent are chosen by lottery.

For all Optional schools, final acceptance is contingent upon review of the student’s second semester final report card.

When applications do not exceed available spaces, we use the following procedures to process applications on a first-come, first-served basis:

- Sibling preference is available for qualified students who are residents zoned to SCS with a sibling who is in the Optional program at the same school and maintaining the Optional requirements. A sibling is a brother or sister who lives at the same address. Slots for qualified siblings are held for 10 business days. February 10, 2020 is the last day for sibling preference.
- Qualified students who are residents of SCS
- Qualified siblings who are non-residents of SCS with a sibling who is in the Optional program at the same school and maintaining the Optional requirements
- Non-SCS residents (families that live within Shelby County but reside in a municipal school district)
- Non-Shelby County residents (families that reside in another county in TN)
- Out-of-state residents

*There are two exceptions: Maxine Smith STEAM Academy and East High School T-STEM reserve half of their available spaces for qualified students who live within their designated zone through February 10, 2020.

When there are more applications than available spaces, we use the following procedures to process applications according to guidelines for 80-percent first-come, first-served selection and 20-percent lottery selection:

If any Optional program has more applications than available space on January 31, 2020, a lottery is implemented. Eighty (80) percent of the space available in the oversubscribed programs will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis (subject to sibling and proximity preference) by students zoned to SCS. The names of all remaining SCS-zoned applicants will be placed in a random, computer-generated lottery. The remaining 20 percent of the spaces will be filled by applicants selected from the computer-generated lottery (within priority categories). Please note that only students zoned to SCS will be included in the lottery.

The lottery will be held February 26, 2020 in the SCS Board of Education Auditorium and is open to the public. This lottery will apply only to those schools with more applicants on January 31, 2020 (by 11:59 p.m.) than available space. Applicants who are not selected by the lottery will be assigned to a waiting list according to the date and time of the online application submission.

May I apply for more than one Optional School per child?

Yes, parents/legal guardians may apply for two Optional schools. The online application process offers opportunities for a parent/legal guardian to list a first choice and a second choice for each child. If you choose to apply for two schools, please note the following:

- Parents/legal guardians are not required to select two schools.
- If the student qualifies for the first choice and space is available, the student will be approved for his/her first choice school. The second choice school will no longer be valid.
- If the student does not qualify for his/her first choice but does qualify for his/her second choice and space is available, then the student will be approved for his/her second choice. The student will not be placed on a waiting list for the first choice.
- If the student qualifies for both schools but neither school has space, he/she will automatically be placed on the waiting list for his/her first preference only. Parents/legal guardians will be notified that their child has been placed on a waiting list, which will be maintained until 20 days after the first day of the 2020-21 school year. Parents/legal guardians will have the option either to keep their child on the waiting list or to apply for another school that has space. If the student applies for another school, his/her name will be removed from the waiting list.
- If the student does not qualify for his/her first or second choice, the student will not be approved for either school and may restart the application process for a new school. The new application will receive a new electronic date and time once the new application is submitted.