

Layers of School Choice in Hartford

Hartford families have access to multiple school choice systems. This gives them an opportunity to look for schools that appeal to their children’s interests or have programs that are well suited for their needs. All the choice systems require an application, most set an application deadline in the spring, and each choice system allocates seats using specified criteria.

The Hartford Public Schools [School Selection Guide](#) has all the details and is a great overview.

Default School Placement within the Hartford Public Schools District

Students in Connecticut are assigned to a public school based on their address. This is true in Hartford too, though the Hartford Public School District also considers available seats. Students are placed in the nearest school within their “Zone” that has a seat available. The “Zones” are effectively quadrants of the City, and one of the dividing lines is Farmington Avenue. Therefore, West End students will be placed in the following schools based on their grade and home address.

Grade	South of Farmington	North of Farmington
PreK4 – 5 th Grade	Parkville Community School Kennelly School	West Middle School Rawson School
6 th Grade – 8 th Grade	McDonough Middle School	MLK Middle School
High School	Hartford Public High School	Weaver High School

Choice within the Hartford Public Schools District (“District Choice”)

The Hartford Public Schools District operates dozens of individual schools, some of which have specializations. [The full list of HPS District schools can be found here.](#)

Seats are only made available to Hartford students, and applications are submitted through the [HPChoice.com](#) website. Applications are being accepted through March 14, 2022.

Choice within the Regional Magnet Schools System (“Magnet Lottery”)

Separately, there is a regional agreement that allows Hartford students to apply for seats in Magnet schools throughout the region. Some of the schools are operated by Hartford Public Schools, others are operated by the [Capitol Region Education Council \(CREC\)](#).

Seats for Magnet schools are allocated via a lottery process with Placement Priorities ([see page 12 of the RSCO Family Guide](#)). The system is set up to allocate 50% of the magnet seats to Hartford residents and 50% of the seats to non-Hartford residents. Applications are submitted through the [Regional School Choice Office](#) at the State, and due by February 28, 2022.

Choice within Nearby Public Schools Districts (“Open Choice”)

Nearby towns make a few seats in their public school district available to Hartford students. The towns to which West End residents may apply varies based on the “zone” in which they live.

- **South of Farmington:** Belin, Farmington, Newington, Plainville, Southington
- **North of Farmington:** Avon, Canton, East Granby, Granby, Simsbury, Suffield, West Hartford

Seats for Open Choice schools are allocated via a lottery process with Placement Priorities ([see page 12 of the RSCO Family Guide](#)). Applications are submitted through the [Regional School Choice Office](#) at the State, and due by February 28, 2022.

Direct Application to a Hartford Public Schools Gifted and Talented Program

The Hartford Public Schools operate one school that any City resident can apply for a seat in without going through a lottery process. The [Renzulli Academy](#) is a gifted and talented program for students in grades 4 – 8 and is in the same facility as Classical Magnet. Those interested in the program should contact the school directly for application information.

CT Technical Education and Career Systems High Schools

The region has three technical high schools that combine core academics with technical training. Their goal is to prepare students for employment, apprenticeships, and/or college. Seats for Technical High Schools are allocated via a lottery process with Placement Priorities ([see page 12 of the RSCO Family Guide](#)). Applications are submitted through the [Regional School Choice Office](#) at the State, and due by February 28, 2022.

Agricultural Sciences and Technology Education High Schools

The region has three agricultural sciences high schools that work to prepare students for college and careers in various environmental and agricultural fields. Applications for seats in these programs are submitted to the [State of Connecticut Department of Education](#). It is unclear if there is a deadline or if they accept applications on a rolling basis.

Things to Consider

- Your best chance of getting a seat is if you apply for the youngest class that a school offers. All the seats are available for that class, versus only seats of students who left in older classes.
- Pay attention to the “Placement Priorities” that the Regional School Choice Office includes in their overview to make sure you are optimizing your application.
- You realistically only have a shot at getting a seat in the school you list as your top choice.
- You are allowed to apply to multiple lotteries (for example, Magnet and Open Choice), but the Placement Priorities indicate that may be a negative factor in some situations.
- The Regional School Choice Office is holding a Virtual Fair on Saturday, 1/22 from 10a until 2p. [Visit their site for more information.](#)
- The Hartford Public Schools are running a variety of virtual and in-person open houses. [Visit their site for more information.](#)



West End Civic Association

<http://wecahartford.org>