



# RSCO Placement Process Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Families in the Greater Hartford Region have a host of school choice options available to them on top of school programming in their own home district. It is awesome to have these choices, but more choices mean more decisions and it can get complicated and confusing for families to figure out what is available to them and how likely it is they will receive an offer in a school choice option. Our job at the Regional School Choice Office (RSCO) is to help you access the information you need to make informed choices about your options.

This FAQ seeks to identify and answer commonly asked questions to help you make informed decisions during the placement process. This FAQ may not answer all your questions. We are here to help you if you have additional questions that are not answered here.

## The Placement Process

- 1. How does RSCO assign seats to applicants?** The process that RSCO uses to place applicants in available seats is based on a complex protocol that considers a variety of factors that can vary by school, program and operator. Key factors in assigning placements are the number of seats available, the grade level, and the applicants' choices. There are more seats available at the entry grade in a school.

The placement process is complex but, essentially, it takes into account socioeconomic factors (SES), along with student preferences, priorities (like sibling, staff and neighborhood, for example), pathways and other factors as described in the RSCO School Choice materials to assign students to available seats by school and grade.

- 2. When did RSCO announce placements and waitlist notifications?** RSCO sent out the first round of placement and waitlist notifications on April 21, 2020. Second and third rounds were announced in June 2020. RSCO will announce additional rounds in July and throughout the summer. RSCO will continue to place students as seats become available through October 1, 2020. Families who receive a placement offer must Accept the offers by the date indicated in the placement letter in order to keep their placement.

Please continue to check the RSCO website at [www.choiceeducation.org](http://www.choiceeducation.org) for updates on announcements.

- 3. What if I did not receive a placement offer? Will there be additional rounds of placements?** Yes! RSCO will continue to place students throughout the spring and summer as seats become available through October 1, 2020.

## Placement Offers

- 1. What happens if a family receives a placement offer?** RSCO sent out notices of placements on April 21, 2020 and will send out another round of announcements during the week of June 1, 2020 by email, telephone, and text (if you provided a mobile phone and opted-in to text messaging). RSCO also mails out the letters with placement information during the first two rounds of announcements.

**If a family receives a placement offer, they must Respond to the placement by the deadline date listed in their notification by either choosing to Accept or Decline the placement. If a family does not respond by the deadline date, the placement is automatically treated as a decline.**

Families may Accept or Decline the placement by logging into the RSCO [Response page](#) found at [www.choiceeducation.org](http://www.choiceeducation.org) using the e-mail address and password used to submit the application.

If you receive a placement, you are not eligible for another placement offer for the 2020-21 school year regardless if you accept or decline the offer. In order to give an opportunity to as many families as possible, **an applicant may receive only one offer in an application year.**



## RSCO Placement Process Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

*Refer to question 3 in this section for the limited exception to the one placement*

*offer limit.*

### Placement Offers (continued)

- 2. What if my placement offer is not to my first choice school or program? Am I eligible for other placements after receiving the first placement offer?** If you received a placement offer, that is great news! Now, your options are to either accept or decline the placement offer. Regardless if you accept or decline, you will not receive another offer for a magnet or Open Choice placement for the 2020-21 school year.

We do our best to follow families' choices, but given seat availability relative to demand, we can't guarantee that families get their first choice or get a placement at all. We hope that by listing multiple choices on the application, families are excited to attend any school on their list. With such high demand, **families receive only one placement offer in an application year**. Once a placement offer is made, the application is not included on waitlists for other schools.

*Refer to question 3 in this section for the limited exception to the one placement offer limit.*

- 3. Are there any exceptions to the limit on one placement offer in an application year?** Yes, there are limited exceptions as indicated below:
- a) Applicants who received a placement offer through RSCO at one of the three technical schools in February and chose to HOLD the offer. The "Hold" is a unique option that RSCO made available to applicants who applied to the technical schools through the RSCO application by December 20, 2019. The Hold and the Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS) placement offer expired on May 10, 2020.
  - b) Applicants who receive an Open Choice placement offer and choose to decline offer, will have their application placed at the bottom of the waitlist for the Open Choice districts selected on their application. **Applicants may receive a 2<sup>nd</sup> and final placement offer** to another Open Choice district listed on their application. If the family chooses to decline the 2<sup>nd</sup> placement offer, their application will be removed from the waitlist of the districts listed on their application for the 2020-21 school year.

Note: Applicants who receive an Open Choice placement offer, who also applied to magnet schools, will have their applications removed from the magnet school waitlists for the 2020-21 school year upon receipt of their first placement.

- c) Applicants who selected either "All Districts" for Open Choice and "All Magnet" for Magnet schools may receive an offer for an Open Choice placement or a magnet school placement in a district or a school that the applicant did not specifically include as one of his or her 5 choices but has available seats.

We would love to hear that an applicant decides to take the placement but if the family elects to decline the offer, the applicant will remain on the waitlists for the schools and programs the family selected on the application. If the applicant decides to accept the offer, the applicant is ineligible for any other placements for the 2020-21 school year.



## RSCO Placement Process Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### Placement Offers (continued)

**4. I have received a placement offer, but I have questions about school re-opening plans and transportation guidelines in light of the public health crisis.** The state is working with a task force of health professionals and educators to create reopening guidance for schools throughout Connecticut for the 2020-21 school year. The state has not released that guidance to date but schools and districts will begin forming their reopen plans once that guidance is issued. We will keep families informed as we learn more.

**5. What do I do after I accept my placement offer?** We hope you accept your placement offer. The next step is to register with the school or program to maintain your placement. The school will contact you with instructions on how to register.

Remember, accepting a placement to a technical school, magnet school, or an Open Choice school, removes the application from all other programs.

**6. What if a family does not respond to a placement offer?** If a family does not respond to a placement offer within the timeframe indicated in the placement letter, the placement will be treated as a decline.

For the placements announced on April 21, 2020, families had to accept the placement by May 10, 2020. For the second round of placements during the first week of June, families must respond by the date in the placement letter.

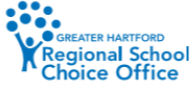
### Waitlist Process

**1. What happens if a family did not receive a placement offer?** Applicants who do not receive a placement offer will be placed on waitlists for the schools and programs selected on their application unless the applicant selects to be removed from the waitlist through RSCO's Response page. We will keep applicants on the waitlist for the schools and programs selected on the application and notify applicants if they receive a placement as we continue through the process.

**2. How many applicants are on the waitlist and what are the chances a family gets a placement offer?** The number of applicants on the waitlist for a school or program varies by school, program and grade. The number of students on a waitlist that will eventually receive a placement offer varies by school, program and grade as well.

We know it is disappointing to get the news you did not receive an offer, but the process is not over! RSCO will continue to place students throughout the spring and summer as seats become available through October 1, 2020. We will notify applicants if they receive a placement as we continue through the process.

**3. Is being placed on the waitlist the same as being denied?** No. If you receive notice that your application is on the waitlist, the process is not over! RSCO will continue to place students throughout the spring and summer as seats become available through October 1, 2020. We will notify applicants if they receive a placement as we continue through the process.



## RSCO Placement Process Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### Waitlist Process (continued)

- 4. Why are some applicants placed on a waitlist?** RSCO offers high quality school options for nearly 5,500 applicants every year and has a plan in place to increase the number of seats available for Connecticut students this year and over the next several years. We know this will mean more offers for more Connecticut students but, even with an increase in seats, RSCO receives more applications than available seats.
- 5. I was on the waitlist last year, why am I on the waitlist this year?** The waitlists do not carry over from year to year, therefore, a placement on a waitlist in one year does not impact the placement process in another year. Most of the seat availability tends to be at the entry grades with limited seats available at the non-entry grades. Even at the entry grades, though, we have limited seats to fill and, unfortunately, there are more applications than available seats at nearly all of the schools. Demand at the lower grades is especially high.
- 6. What number or ranking am I on the waitlist?** We are not able to provide waitlist numbers because we do not maintain a single waitlist for all schools and programs. While we use to release this information, the student placement process does not lend itself to issuing waitlist numbers to families since each school and program maintains different waitlists based on student preferences and priorities (like sibling and staff) for that school and maximizing socioeconomic diversity in each school.
- 7. How long does an application remain on a waitlist?** All waitlists expire on September 30, 2020.

### RSCO Late Application and Multiple Applications for One Student

- 1. When is the Late Application Period?** The **RSCO Late Application** period is February 18, 2020 to July 31, 2020 for CTECS, Magnet Schools and Open Choice.
- 2. Can a family submit both an on-time application and a late application for the same child to increase their chances of getting a placement?** No. The late application is available to applicants who did not submit an application by February 9, 2020. Applicants who submitted an application during the on-time period may not submit a late application.
- 3. Can a family submit multiple applications for one student?** This is not just a question of late applications. As indicated in the RSCO materials, a family should submit only one application per applicant. If a family submits more than one application, only the original application will be retained and the later applications, including any late applications, will be deleted.
- 4. What are my chances of receiving a placement offer if I submit a late application?** We do take late applications and we encourage families to apply even if it is during the late application period. Every year we place late applicants in available seats so it is worth applying. On-time applicants are placed (seated) before late applicants.
- 5. How will I know if I receive a placement as a late applicant?** RSCO will send you notification if you receive a placement with instructions for accepting that placement.