

## **Holding a Lottery: Best Practices**

### **Questions**

- What are your goals for your Lottery Day? (E.g. large turnout, attendees students vs. adults, etc.)
- Do you plan to have an electronic or manual lottery?
- How will you manage preferences?
- How do you define 'sibling'? And how have you communicated that to applicants/staff?
- Where and when will you hold your lottery?
- Who will be your officials? (often Board member and 1 unaffiliated with school; need to get on calendars)

### **Best Practices**

#### **Before Lottery Day**

- Be organized
- Talk to other schools about how they conducted their lotteries – lessons learned, both good and bad
- Observe other school lotteries. Note: Consider volunteering to assist
- Create a detailed event plan for the day – Activities, Timing, Resources (equipment, forms, people), Ownership, Forms, Dependencies, Plan B
- Create a script for the day
- Create a 'Lottery and Admissions' binder – SOP for future years
- Be ready to send out results that day (email, letter)
- Consider putting lottery details on your school answering machine message. Definitely have them on your website.
- Practice all aspects several times, including a literal run through

#### **On Lottery Day**

- Be organized
- Print copies of all documents before, during and after your Lottery
- Maintain 'golden copies'
- Be transparent, and sensitive to all attendees
- Be prepared for the press, and a range of emotions from families

#### **After your Lottery**

- Conduct a post mortem right away. What worked well, what did not, what would you change and how? Keep notes and update your 'Lottery & Admissions' binder

## Student Enrollment: Best Practices

### Questions

- How many students do you plan to admit in your first round of admissions?
- Will you have an Admitted Students event?
- How will you help families decide whether to accept your offer vs. others?
- How do you define your programs for special needs students?
- How will you organize your files to manage the admissions process and required paper trail?

### Best Practices

- Ask existing nearby charter schools what their rejection rate has been (with addition of Common App)
- Treat Admitted Students event as a recruiting event. Include teachers if possible.
- Create an Admissions Calendar with 'Send Acceptances' and 'Acceptance Deadline' dates as well as the estimated number of acceptance to send in each tranche.
- If you are a middle or high school, you need to be aware of/plan to accommodate the DOE middle and high school announcement dates
- Expect to make 1-1 follow up phone calls in the final rounds. Consider making them early on. (Personal attention is a powerful thing, and speaks to your culture)
- Plan to fill your class by June 15
- Ensure all staff answering family questions are very clear about acceptance dates. Do **NOT** give false hope.
- Consider leaving an updated deadline message on your answering machine.
- Have your Enrollment packet ready to send as soon as a student accepts. (Note – have them at your Accepted Student event)
- Be organized. Be organized. Be organized. There is a lot of moving data and accuracy is critical.
- Consider color coding your spreadsheet and student files by grade and by accepted/ open offer / declined
- Make backup copies of your Admissions spreadsheet at least daily.