

# Macfarlane Park Elementary Magnet Admission/Marketing Policy

## Introduction:

Admission to Hillsborough County Schools' magnet programs is based on a race-neutral, weighted lottery system open to all interested K-5 students in the district. The district lottery process includes an application window of approximately 2 months in the fall and a secondary window of approximately 2 weeks (for schools with seats remaining) in the spring. Macfarlane Park participates in all available marketing events organized by the district prior to the application window(s), as well as planning and utilizing specific school-based marketing strategies throughout the school year. As a magnet program of Hillsborough County Public Schools, Macfarlane Park's marketing plan is aligned to the marketing plan of the district.

## Philosophy and Beliefs:

The Macfarlane Park Elementary marketing philosophy is based on the concept that word of mouth is the most effective form of marketing. As our current students and potential new families have positive experiences at Macfarlane Park, demand for the program by new students from various backgrounds will naturally grow. The resulting philosophy is created as a collaborative effort of the stakeholders involved and is based on the following:

### Core Beliefs:

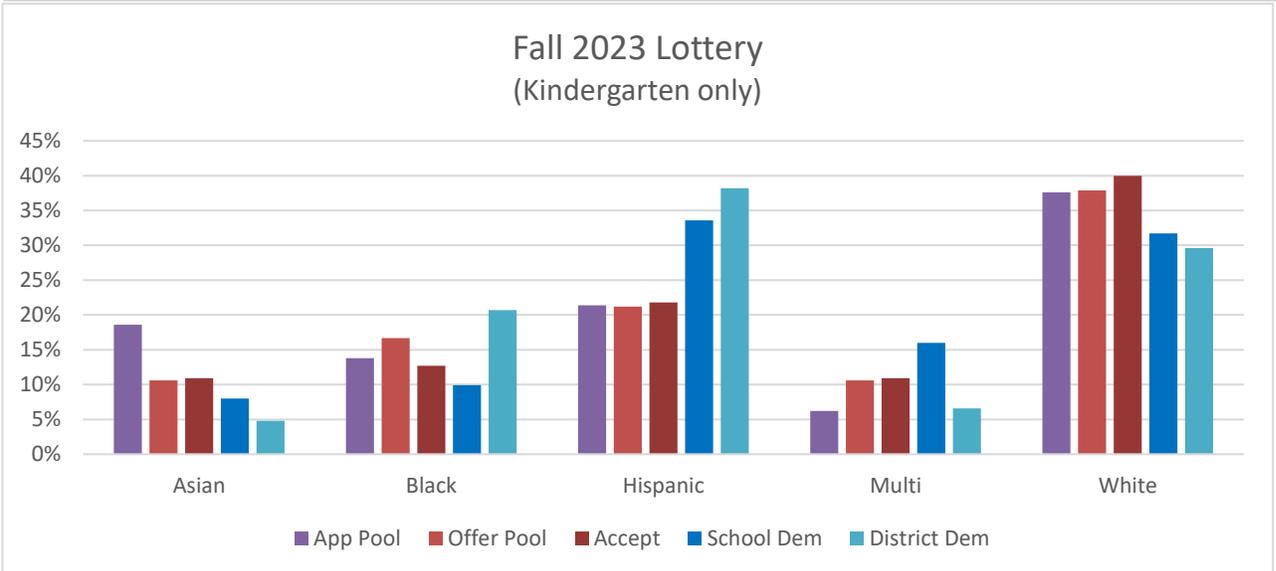
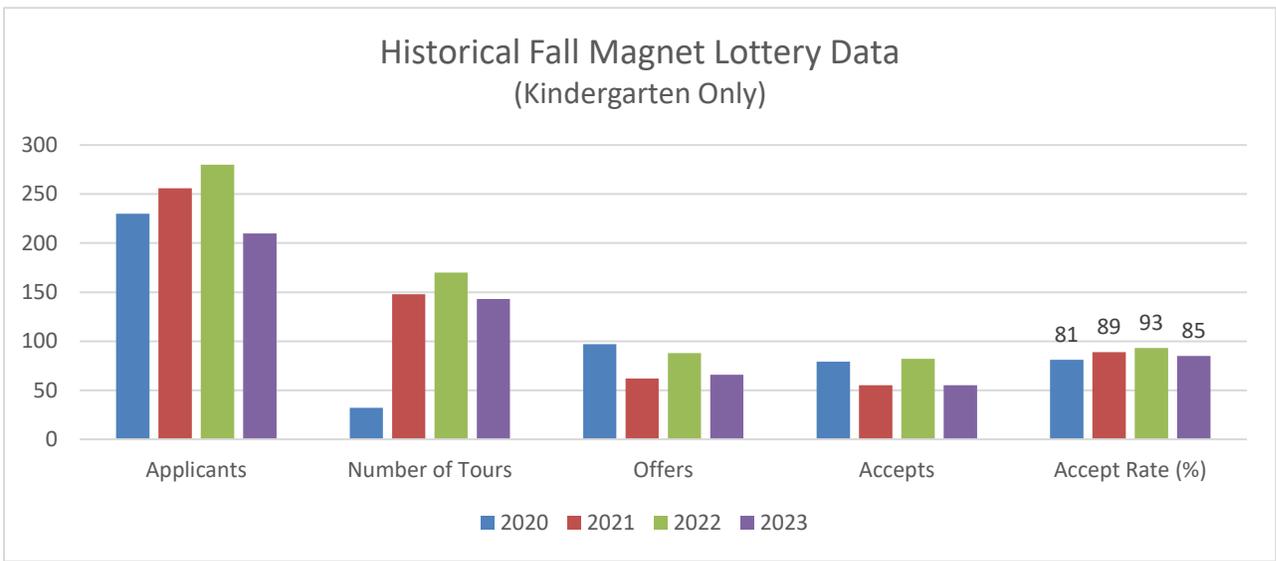
- A strong marketing plan relies on solid branding of our program.
- Solid branding is best built by having a quality program.
- The label of "IB" is not a marketing plan and does not automatically guarantee successful recruitment of new families.
- School-specific marketing strategies must be aligned with district marketing efforts.
- Marketing should reach all families in our district, with a focus on underrepresented groups within our population.
- It is important that the school marketing plan be reviewed each year to identify strengths, areas for improvement and target goals for the upcoming year.
- Positive marketing for one magnet program is beneficial to all magnet programs.

## Indicators of Success:

- Applications that reflect the demographics of our district
- Strong attendance at district and school-based marketing events
- Increasing acceptance rate each year
- Increase in applications of targeted underrepresented groups

## Current Status:

In 2023, Macfarlane Park experienced a slight decrease in the number of applicants and in our acceptance rate compared to the 2022 lottery. We believe a factor contributing to this dip is the opening of a new IB K-8 school in our area.



## Reflections and Goals for Next Year:

Virtual tour attendance was much lower than in-person tour attendance of years past. Current application data shows an alignment with District demographics. Data should be collected on why families have declined offers.

- Continue student decline survey after lottery
- Collect data on middle school applications from our 5<sup>th</sup> grade
- Add test score data to marketing packet, including information on closing the achievement gap

## Prior to Lottery Application Period: *August - October*

- Participate in all District virtual (if available), evening and weekend marketing events
- Include student demonstrations in the ChoiceExpo at ZooTampa
- Announce district lottery deadlines and marketing event dates on school website, ParentLink notifications, and school social media accounts
- Invite media to school events such as Grandparents Day and International Day of Peace
- Establish strong business partnerships early to create word of mouth advertising
- In-Person School Tours (October – December)
- Offer 2 tours per month October – December (be sure one to follow each district event)
- Provide participants with marketing folder to include: brag sheet, PYP Program of Inquiry, IB Parent Packet Documents, District Marketing Events Handout, sample kindergarten IB unit parent letter, IB Essential Elements Graphic, Student-to-student brochure, Test Score Data
- Identify student ambassadors to help with school tours
- Tour script to include: Why Magnet?, Why IB?, Why Macfarlane?

## During Lottery Application Period: *November - December*

- Send application deadline reminders via ParentLink, website and social media
- Participate in District marketing events with school tour sign up available
- Send follow-up email to tour participants

### School Marketing Website

- Tour dates/sign up
- District marketing event info
- FAQ videos and documents
- Virtual tour of building and IB boards
- Slide show of special events
- PYP Programme of Inquiry
- Application Procedures
- What is IB?
- Total School Cluster Model
- Test Score and Closing the Achievement Gap Data

## **After Lottery Application Period: *January - May***

During acceptance period:

- Email all offer families to provide answers to any questions and remind of acceptance deadlines
- Make personal calls to families from underrepresented groups to facilitate acceptance decision

After acceptance period:

- Email accepted families to welcome and notify of registration process and New Family Orientation information
- Survey declined parents to identify reasons for decline
- Plan New Family Orientation event
- Schedule kindergarten screenings (April)
- Assign new families a current family mentor
- Review application/accept data and marketing plan for next school year

Remainder of school year:

- Encourage "Invite a friend" to schoolwide events (multicultural festival, concerts etc.)
- Wear school shirts to public events (service projects, field trips etc.)
- Continue to invite media to school events