

# Best Practices for Applying Families

OneApp was designed to be a risk-free process that gives families options and treats them fairly. There are some simple things all applying families can do to make sure they are able to use the application process to the best of their advantage.

## Do research

An important factor in school choice is understanding your options. There are a number of publicly available resources that publish detailed information about New Orleans' schools, based on things parents have expressed are important to them when selecting a school. Some of these resources include:

- The New Orleans Parents' Guide to Public Schools (available at Public Libraries and Schools; [www.nopg.org](http://www.nopg.org)),
- LA School Finder ([www.laschoolfinder.com](http://www.laschoolfinder.com)),
- Urban League of Greater New Orleans' Guide to High Schools ([www.ulgno.org](http://www.ulgno.org)),
- and the OneApp application materials (available at Family Resource Centers; [www.EnrollNOLA.org](http://www.EnrollNOLA.org))

Families are encouraged to reach out to schools directly to speak with their staff, schedule a meeting, or attend an open house.

## Don't submit an application if you want your student to stay at their current school

By submitting an application, two things happen: 1) EnrollNOLA interprets that you would prefer to go to the schools listed on your application, and makes every effort to place you at one of those schools, 2) You forfeit your guarantee to return. If you are assigned to a school on your application, you will lose your seat at your current school, and there's no guarantee you can go back.

This applies for each application Round. For example, if you receive a Main Round placement you're happy with, and then submit a Round 2 application, if you are assigned to one of your Round 2 selections, you will lose your seat at your Main Round school, even if you claimed the seat. Only submit an application if you are sure you would like to transfer schools, and only apply to schools you truly prefer more than your current placement.

## Apply in the Main Round

Whenever possible, families should apply during the Main Round of OneApp. During Round 2 and Late Enrollment, many schools' open seats will have filled from the first application cycle. For that reason, families who are interested in attending a new school have the greatest chance of being assigned to one of their choices if they apply during the Main Round. During the 2015-2016 Main Round, 80% of applicants grades pre-kindergarten-12th were matched to one of their school choices.

## List your choices in true order of preference:

OneApp seeks to place every applicant in their highest ranked school, not to fill available seats at each school with applicants that rank it number one. This allows families to list their true preferences, in rank order, because you don't have to factor in your likelihood of being assigned to a school.

## The only strategy you need in this process is to determine which schools you want your child to attend, and to list your choices in the order you want them.

This is true even if you are applying to very high-demand schools. Only apply to schools you want your student to go to. If your top choice is very high-demand, that will not hurt your chance of getting assigned to your second choice school, and so on.

## Why you should apply online:

Over 50% of applications were submitted online during the 2015-2016 Main Round. Applying online is easy and can be beneficial for families.

Families who apply online:

- Receive a **receipt** for their records when an application is submitted,
- Can easily update application choices or contact information, if they choose to,
- Are notified of the placement results more quickly,
- If applying for pre-kindergarten, are able to view their positions on waitlists.

Additionally, the OneApp process for students ages 0-4, launching for the 2016-2017 application cycle, will be online only.

## Applying online is recommended for all families. Families can apply online at EnrollNOLA.org.

Every parent is encouraged to provide an email address on their application. Families who do so will receive quicker notification of their students' placement results.

