



Genesee Community Charter School
at the Rochester Museum & Science Center

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www.GCCSchool.org

GCCS 2020-2021 Lottery Transcription

April 15, 2020 – 9:00 a.m.

Speakers: Shannon Hillman, School Leader & Theron McGee, RMSC Security Officer

Shannon Hillman:

Okay. Hello, everyone. It's good to see some of you on my thumbnails above. And it's good to see names on here. I'm glad that we have some participants joining us for our public lottery today. I am actually inside our office, but you get a nice spring view of our school in the background here. But in a moment, I'm going to share my screen so that I can give you some information about our school. Normally for the lottery we just jump right in and start pulling names, but because we missed our normal information sessions and tours, I wanted to just give everyone a brief overview because it's very important that you make sure that this is a school that you would like to choose for your child. So just give me a moment as I share my screen.

Shannon:

Okay, so here we go. So thanks again for joining. We are the Genesee Community Charter School, and our lottery is today. We always start with our mission because that's the heart of what we do. We are a school, and I'll go into this a little bit, that really focuses on the idea of community responsibility. And we believe in diversity of our community and making sure that all voices are at the table and in our school. And we want to nurture every child's ability to be, at the end here it says, reflective questioners, articulate communicators, critical thinkers and skilled problem solvers, enabling them to reach exemplary standards.

Shannon:

Our school opened in 2001, so next year is our 20th year as a charter school in the area. We are kindergarten through sixth grade. As you can see, we serve quite a diverse population. And so we have all different races, and we also have about 34% free and reduced price lunches for our full school, although that percentage a little bit higher in the kindergarten and first grade levels. And then we have inclusive classrooms. So we have about 16% of students with special needs, both IEPs and 504s. And each classroom, we have one class per grade level, and each classroom has 30 to 32 students in it with two certified teachers and a teaching assistant. So again, it's one class per grade level. So in total we have about 220 students.

Shannon:

Our school focuses on expeditions, and we follow the EL education model we have since the very beginning. So we work in trimesters where we focus on a three month course of study. And all of the disciplines fall into that expedition for three times during the year. Over the course of two years, students focus on six time periods running from prehistory all the way to present day. The whole school

is studying the same topic at the same time, but it gets more complex to as you move up in the grade levels. And as I said, all the subjects are integrated, including the arts. Our arts program is second to none here, and it's also part of what we do. And then we're project-based, so everything that we do in that three months is working towards a final product. And we have a celebration of learning at the end.

Shannon:

So our curriculum also has been the curriculum we've focused on since the beginning. It's all focused on local history. Again, it's those six historical time periods over a two year loop. And students do loop with their teachers. So what the child, when they come in in kindergarten, they'll have the same teachers for first grade. Second and third grade will have the same teachers over for those two years. Fourth and fifth grade is a loop, and then sixth grade is a standalone year. And I said those other two bullets, the whole school studies the same time period at the same time. And topics increase in complexity and sophistication.

Shannon:

The other really important part that you should know about our school is that we have, culture is very important here. And it's very much what everyone seems to notice when they come and visit our school. These are our seven character traits that we follow. And we also follow 10 design principles through EL education. And if you want to know more about our culture or our character or any part of what I'm sharing, you can certainly visit our website and do some searching around in there.

Shannon:

Through our culture, we have always followed responsive classroom as a model. It's very similar to restorative practices. Every day we have morning meetings just like you're seeing with children around the carpet gathered together and meeting and greeting. And they do an activity. We are outdoors all the time, both for fieldwork purposes to learn as part of our expedition, but we are also outdoors doing lots of team building things. And we eat in our classrooms. So that's something that you need to know that we don't have a cafeteria so teachers eat with students. Sometimes we mix up those students among the classrooms so that they're eating with different age groups, and that's what you're seeing in the bottom right hand corner of your screen.

Shannon:

So now the lottery, I wanted to explain a little bit more about that so that you are aware of how this is going to work. I'm going to tell you a little bit about our expected student openings for this year, our preferences that we have as part of our charter, how we will run the lottery and then how you will know if your child has been accepted.

Shannon:

So this year we have 30 openings for kindergarten. That's a full kindergarten class. We don't have any anticipated openings right now in first through fifth grade, and we don't accept sixth grade applicants. However, there always are things that happen. Children move or families move, and so I don't want you to be discouraged. We are running the lottery for all grades, kindergarten through fifth grade today. And so if you are a higher number on the lottery list, there is a chance that you could still get in in first through fifth grade.

Shannon:

Our preferences, this is based on the charter and the law. Siblings of current GCCS students have preference first. So those names will be at the sort of top of the list that you'll see. And then staff children were allowed about 15% or under 15% of our population. So there are a few staff children. Our CSD residents have the next set of preference, and then suburban residents have preference after that. And then if you have a family with twins, I have twins in my family, multiples are entered in only once so they get the same number, and then they kind of go in together. So it's one chance instead of two chances in the lottery.

Shannon:

So the lottery is open to the public. Glad that you could be here. Normally we would be in a room together, but due to COVID-19, we're doing it this way. I'm the person running the lottery cannot be a GCCS employee or board member. They can't be related to a member of the GCCS community or related to anyone who is applying to the school. So I'm going to introduce you to Theron who is going to be running the lottery in just a moment. And then we are recording this lottery, and we will transcribe it and then post it back onto the website so that you can view it at a later date as well.

Shannon:

So how will you know if you get in? After we run the lottery, you're going to go into GoodSchoolsROC.org for the status for each of the schools that you might have entered. Watch your email and text messages because they will be automatically sent out with if you are receiving an offer. If you're offered a seat, for us you'll be given approximately three to five days to accept. And we will name that date right in the email for you or in the text. And then after you confirm that you would like that seat, then we will send enrollment and registration information and that will be mailed to you. So we are not, each school is doing this differently, but we are sending things out via mail. Other schools are doing all the registration online. And we're not doing that quite yet.

Shannon:

And then finally, this decision is important, so please reach out if you have questions or you want to know more information. I did see that someone had a, looked like maybe a question. So I'm going to exit out of here. And we're going to get ourselves into the lottery mode, and I'll quick try to take a look at what that question was before we move on.

Shannon:

Okay, so someone asked about the number of applicants that we have at each grade level, I'd be happy to share that. I don't think I know all the numbers off the top of my head, although we might be able to figure that out. In total, we had 540 applicants in grades kindergarten through fifth grade. I don't recall grade by grade how many applied, but I know there's always more kindergarten applicants than there are others. I wish we had a bigger school. That's all I can say, so that we could have more people come in, but unfortunately we don't.

Shannon:

So I'm going to introduce you to Theron who is going to run the lottery for us. And I'm going to ask Theron some questions so that you are aware that he follows those directives that I had said earlier. So come on over, Theron, and then I'm going to move myself out of the way. See if we can get you to come down here. There he is. Okay. So, Theron, hi. Let's see. Let me just try to get this a little closer here.

There we go. All right, so Theron, this is Theron McGee. And he works at the RMSC campus. He's a security officer there. So Theron, are you an employee of Genesee Community Charter School?

Theron McGee:

No, I am not. I'm an employee of the Rochester Museum of Science Center.

Shannon:

Okay. And are you related to anyone... I'm sorry, are you a board member?

Theron:

No, I'm not.

Shannon:

Okay, so you're not a board member. Are you related to anyone in the school at all?

Theron:

No, I'm not.

Shannon:

And are you related to anyone who's applied for the lottery today?

Theron:

Not at all.

Shannon:

Okay, great. So Theron is going to run, he's wearing a mask because we're trying to be as safe as we can be. And so he's going to come and sit where I'm sitting so that you can see him, and I'm going to step away. But I will be in the background just with my voice if need be. So what you can see right now is the number of seats available. And Theron is going to press the run lottery button for each grade level. So he's going to start with kindergarten. We're already set with Genesee. and here we go.

Shannon:

It does take a minute for it to happen.

Shannon:

I'm sure all schools are doing this in Rochester so it could take a little. There we go. So now that piece is done. So we are going to look at the current results. And you'll see that you won't see names on here, but you're going to see that at the top of the list here it says multiple priorities or sibling attending. That's for the charter school people. I'm just going to scroll down a little bit to help Theron for a minute. So you can see that now when you get to number 12 and 13, those people we're going to be making offers to that are in Rochester City School District. This person might be... That means that they have another sibling that's applying in a different grade level, and that they're multiples. So maybe they're twins. And then we go all the way up through and district. This is number 24. So all of these children

here are the children that are getting the first offers for a kindergarten spot. And then these are also offers for kindergarten spots. And then we get to waitlist number one here. Okay.

Shannon:

So that's how it works. And then there's still more, these are all people that are in the RCSD district. All right, so we're going to go back to our lottery dashboard here.

Shannon:

Okay. And we're going to run for first grade.

Shannon:

All right. So again, we'll take a quick peek. And you can see that everyone there is on the wait list. There is the first person has multiple priorities. I believe we have one sibling that's trying to get into first grade. But then we have everybody else is RCSD and district residents. So we'll go again. Lottery dashboard. Yep.

Theron:

Second grade there?

Shannon:

Second grade. Yep.

Shannon:

Okay.

Shannon:

All right. All in district residents. Okay, there you go.

Theron:

All right. Thank you.

Shannon:

Yep.

Theron:

Third grade is up now.

Shannon:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Shannon:

Okay. First person had multiple priorities. It might be a sibling. Yep. It was probably a sibling that applied in another grade level, and that's why they have a second priority. And then in district.

Theron:

Next fourth grade is up now, I guess.

Shannon:

Fourth grade. Yep.

Shannon:

All right.

Shannon:

And last, but not least, we got fifth grade.

Shannon:

Okay. Yeah, another potential sibling. And then we have in district residents.

Shannon:

Okay. We're going to go back to the dashboard again. And we are all set. So all classes have been run. I'm going to come sit back down where Theron was. I try to get this mask on.

Shannon:

All right. So thank you very much, Theron, for your service.

Theron:

No problem.

Shannon:

And thank you all for being part of our public lottery. I'm happy to answer questions right now. I'm going to go back to... Well, I can keep sharing my screen for another minute, but I'm happy to stay on and answer any questions that people might have.

Shannon:

Okay. I'd be happy to remind how you are notified. No problem. So you will be sent an email. So right now, as soon as we are off of this recording, we will be pressing buttons to send off the make offers to all of those first children in the kindergarten list. And then there'll be about a three, well, actually it'll be Monday. That's our deadline for parents to let us know if they would like to accept that seat. If they do not accept the seat, we'll go to the next, the first person on the waiting list. And we will go from there.

Shannon:

So the way that you set up your GoodSchoolsROC application or your account says if you wanted to receive text messages, and if you do, then a text will be sent. If you don't, then check your email. So those are the ways that you'll find out. And yes, check spam just in case. Sometimes emails are going to spam email, although we tested that, and it seems to be working all right.

Shannon:

As far as knowing your waitlist spot, my understanding is that you'll know through GoodSchoolsROC. So if you go onto GoodSchoolsROC, all charter schools in Rochester are running the lottery at the same time. And so my understanding is that then you'll know the spots that you have or the numbers that you are for each of the schools that you've applied. Okay.

Shannon:

So I hope that helps. There is a helpline as well through GoodSchoolsROC. And our phone number, of course, is on our website. So you're welcome to call us too. This is first year for us using GoodSchoolsROC. So we are learning right with you. And so if there's something we don't know, we will make sure to point you in the right direction to help you as well.

Shannon:

Thank you all for coming. Really appreciate you being here. And hope and wish you the best, and I hope that you stay safe. All right. Thank you.