

Helix 2024-25 Enrollment

Frequently Asked Questions

If you still have questions, feel free to email Lauren Knuth, Community Relations, at enrollment@helixcharter.net.

LOTTERY/ENROLLMENT

What is the enrollment process?

1. Starting January 8, 2024, watch the Enrollment Informational video on helixcharter.com/enroll to see if Helix is the right school for you. This is a requirement. You will learn about what is required to be a student here and about the lottery process.
2. Submit application through SchoolMint (done online at <https://helixcharter.schoolmint.net/signup>) anytime between January 8, 2024 & March 1, 2024 to be included in the lottery for the 2024-25 school year.
3. The lottery will be held and results will be announced via email by Friday, March 8, 2024

When does the application period for the lottery start and end?

The lottery opens January 8, 2024 and closes March 1, 2024. The lottery will be completed and the results announced via email on March 8, 2024. It does not matter when you submit the application as long as it is within the allotted time frame (Jan. 8 - Mar. 1).

Can I start the application in SchoolMint, save it, and finish at a different time?

Yes.

What is the total enrollment at Helix?

There are approximately 2,500 students attending Helix.

What are Helix's lottery priorities?

Enrollment at Helix Charter High School is open to any student in grades 9-12. Only new students need to participate in the lottery. Lottery priorities for admission are as follows:

1. Siblings of returning students
2. Residents in the attendance boundary of Helix High School (see **SEARCHABLE BOUNDARY MAP**). The current boundaries set by the Grossmont Union High School District do not apply to Helix, as we have our own attendance area, which may overlap some GUHSD schools' attendance areas. Regardless of which school is your "neighborhood school" as determined by the local school districts, families may choose to apply to attend Helix.
3. Children of current employees
4. Students who make a two-year commitment to be in the Bagpipe program. They must be fully committed and watch an informational video with the band director to determine if they are a good fit. [Click here for more information](#).

5. Students who reside in the **GROSSMONT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT ATTENDANCE BOUNDARIES** will be provided a 60% weighted preference and all other student applicants will be provided a 40% weighted preference.

How many people apply to the lottery for 9th grade, and how many are accepted?

Historically, about 1,000 students apply to the 9th grade lottery. There are 650 spots available for 9th grade.

What is the acceptance rate for grades 10-12?

There is not a set rate for acceptance - there are many factors to consider, such as how many students apply, how many current students leave the school, etc.

Are students residing within the Helix attendance area guaranteed a spot?

Historically, all students residing within the Helix attendance area who have met the deadlines for application are offered enrollment. It is essential that, even if you live within the attendance area, you complete the required application process prior to the deadline.

What are the chances of being offered enrollment if you live outside of the Helix attendance area?

As a lottery there is no way to quantify this. It all depends upon the number of students in the different priority levels. All of the students from the first priority level are on the top of the list. Then students from the second priority level are next on the list. Then students from the third priority level are next on the list. This continues through the priority lists until all 650 spots are filled. After that, students are placed on a waiting list with a number (randomly assigned, each priority group considered). As spots become available, students are taken from the waiting list based on their waiting list number.

If my child attends a La Mesa-Spring Valley District school, are they within the Helix attendance area?

Enrollment priority is based on place of residence, rather than the school they attend. Use the searchable map on the Helix website to determine if your residence is within the Helix attendance area.

More information on the Bagpipe Program and Lottery Priority?

Students selecting the bagpipes on their application must be fully committed and attend an informational meeting with the band directors to determine if they are a good fit. This is a serious commitment, and we want to make sure anyone applying for the program understands the level of responsibility. **The Info Meetings will be held on Tuesday, January 30 at 6pm and Tuesday, February 27 at 6pm in the Helix library.** You only need to attend 1 meeting. Please bring your student if possible. [CLICK HERE TO RSVP.](#)

**If you already have any of the priorities listed above bagpipes (siblings, in Helix attendance boundary or children of employees), you do not need to select bagpipes as a way of improving your chances of being enrolled.*

Can applying seniors select the bagpipe priority on their lottery application?

No, since there is a required 2-year commitment to the program. Only incoming freshman, sophomore and juniors may apply for this program.

My child's older sibling graduated already. Does the sibling priority still apply?

No. Only the siblings of previously admitted students who will attend Helix in the next year are able to apply under the sibling priority level.

Is priority more heavily weighted if you fall into more than one priority category? For example, is there higher priority if you live in the attendance area AND commit to the bagpipe program?

No. Only the highest priority level is considered.

If two siblings apply, do both get in if one is offered enrollment?

In almost all circumstances, yes.

If I was on the waiting list previously, do I need to reapply this year?

Yes.

If my child declined the offer for enrollment in a previous year, are they able to reapply?

Yes.

Do we need to submit a transfer form to our district / area school?

No. Attending a charter school does not require a district transfer.

Is academic performance or history considered in lottery priority?

No. Priority levels are as noted in the presentation. Academic performance, behavior and attendance are considered before placement in grades 10-12.

Is there a higher priority for family members of former/retired Helix staff members or LMSV District employees?

Unfortunately, there is not.

ADDRESS VERIFICATION AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

What is required to verify residence?

Residence verification requires two forms of proof. Each must contain the parent/guardian name and address, and must be dated within 45 days of the SchoolMint application submission. This must be the name and address of an adult who has legal custody/guardianship of the student applying.

What are acceptable documents for residence verification?

- Deed, escrow papers, or rental/lease agreement

- Current bills from a local utility company, i.e., power, water, cable or internet provider, etc. (cell phone and credit card statements are not accepted)
- Property tax statement
- Official driver's license or CA ID with current address
- Other government or business documents which establishes current residence, as determined by HCHS

Does a cell phone bill meet the requirements for residence verification?

No.

What are some examples of acceptable documents for residence verification?

Examples include, but are not limited to, a paystub, w-2 form, utility bill, car registration, rental agreement, bank statement, driver's license, California ID, or passport.

The address on my license won't match our current address. What should I do?

There are other options for residence verification.

We do not receive mail at our residence. What should I do?

You will need to provide a mortgage statement, driver's license, or other documents that prove you live at the residence.

Do I need an original birth certificate?

You will need to upload a certified copy of your student's birth certificate to process your application. Your middle school may be able to provide a copy for you. Passports are not acceptable.

My child splits time between two households. Which address do I use?

The address of the parent/guardian with whom the child spends the most time, as ordered. If it is a 50/50 split, either address is acceptable.

Can I enroll my niece/nephew/cousin/other relative?

You must provide proof of legal guardianship in order to enroll a child for whom you do not appear on the birth certificate.

STUDENT SUPPORT

How many counselors does Helix have?

In total we have 9 counselors on site. Helix has a College Admissions Counselor and each Grade Level Team has a School Counselor and a School Social Worker. Three of our School Social Workers are Licensed Clinical Social Workers.

How do you provide Academic Support?

Helix has an incredible Academic Support program. We have a large team of academic support coaches (~40) on campus every day in 5 different environments.

COURSES AVAILABLE

What kinds of courses do you offer?

Visit helixcharter.net/courses to view a complete list of courses.

What is Dual Enrollment vs Advanced Placement?

Dual enrollment courses are actual college courses taught on the Helix campus, either by a college professor, or a qualified Helix instructor. They count both toward high school graduation requirements AND college credit. All students are required to earn at least three college credits in order to graduate.

Advanced Placement courses are advanced level courses taught by Helix instructors. At the end of the course, students can take an exam. If they perform well on that exam, a college might accept that in lieu of taking the course in college. There is wide variation in how different colleges apply AP credit.

How do you enroll in Honors courses?

In general, Honors, AP, and Dual Enrollment courses are available to all students. To help with determining the best placement for 9th graders, all students will take an assessment. Performance on this assessment will assist counselors in helping families decide on courses for students. The date for this assessment has not yet been determined.

Does Helix offer College Prep level courses?

Yes.

Is support provided for students with 504s and IEPs?

Yes. Helix offers support and implements accommodations and modification for IEP's and 504's. We have a full special education program (mild / mod and mod / severe) through the Grossmont District. [More information can be found here](#). We will hold an optional informational meeting for students who have existing IEPs on Friday, February 9 at 9am in the Helix library. In this meeting, we will cover the process and how we support you during the transition from middle school to high school. Registration is not required, anyone can attend.

Is support provided for English Learner students?

Yes. Helix welcomes our multilingual students! We offer 4 levels of Designated English Language Development and academic support, like a robust bilingual peer tutor program designed to assist students in accessing grade-level content. We pride ourselves in supporting our multilingual students schoolwide and helping them to succeed academically and meet graduation requirements while learning English. For more information, please contact Emily Burrough, Helix English Learner Coordinator at @burrough@helixcharter.net.

How many years of PE are required?

Two. This can be met by taking two terms of PE courses, or taking 9th grade PE and

participating in at least two seasons of sports at the JV or Varsity level. (In either case, 9th grade PE is required.) Participation in dance or sports can waive the 2nd year of PE in grades 10-12.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION - SECOND YEAR OF FITNESS

For the additional 2 semesters of PE students may meet the requirement in any combination of the following:

- Take classes that meet the PE requirement at Helix. All classes in the PE department plus Dance, Color Guard, and Marching PE (10th-12th grade).
 - Marching Band is 9th ONLY - does not meet PE requirement
 - Marching PE is 10th - 12th
- Participate in sports in grades 10th-12th. Each season of each sport designated on the transcript meets the requirement of ONE semester of PE. (Any level of sports activity can count including Cheer; all years do not have to be in the same sport.)

Is swimming required at Helix?

Yes. Swimming is a state requirement for 9th grade PE.

How many electives are students allowed to take?

Freshmen have a full schedule, but there is potential for elective options. This topic will be addressed during orientation in late March.

SCHEDULES

What time does school start?

The school day will be from 8:30 am - 3:35 pm.

How many classes are there a day?

There are four 80-minute class periods offered per day.

What is the average class size at Helix?

We have a class average of less than 30:1.

Is it possible to graduate early?

It is. However, if your plan is to attend college, you are encouraged to remain at Helix and take Dual Enrollment classes at no charge to help reduce the financial burden of college tuition.

STUDENT LIFE

What sports do you offer?

Visit helixathletics.net to view a complete list of sports teams offered. Freshman teams are offered for most sports. We also offer ASPIRE sports, you can view those offerings by going to helixcharter.net/aspire.

Are students required to participate in a sport?

No. Students are encouraged to get involved in something in which they are interested, whether it's a sport, a club, arts, etc.

How do students get involved in Performing Arts?

There are many ways to be involved in Performing Arts. Beginning-level courses are open enrollment. Advanced courses either require completion of a lower-level course, or may require an audition. Auditions are generally held in May or June - the process for 2024-25 is still being determined. The course catalog (helixcharter.net/courses) will indicate the requirements for enrolling in a specific course.

There are also opportunities for students to participate in theater productions that are extracurricular and are not part of a course enrollment. These productions are eligible for awards from National Youth Arts.

Is there a gaming club?

Yes. There is a strong eSports club at Helix. Students participate in competitions, and the club advisor also arranges gaming nights with other schools.

Are there school uniforms at Helix?

No but there is a dress code to follow.

Is there bus transportation offered?

We do not offer bus transportation.

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