



Frequently Asked Questions

For students New to Riverside STEM Academy

- 1. What does the acronym STEM stand for?** *Science, Technology, Engineering, Math*
- 2. How is Riverside STEM Academy different from my student's current school?** *Riverside STEM Academy follows a Middle school model. Students attend 85 minute instructional periods for math, science and humanities (English Language Arts and History), and all students attend a middle school P.E. class in lieu of recess. Students have 3 academic teachers and a P.E. instructor instead of one teacher. The accelerated curriculum includes students completing their first high school math class in 8th grade and are exposed to high school biology and chemistry in 7th and 8th grade. These are a few of the adjustments a child attending this program would need to be aware of.*
- 3. What is the application process to attend The Riverside STEM Academy?** *Our application process opens once a year for the upcoming school year. Applications for the 2022-23 school year will be accepted online from November 1, 2021 through January 7, 2022 4:00 PM.*
- 4. How is the lottery managed?** *The lottery is managed by Cooperative Strategies, a local demography company.*
- 5. How is the lottery for RSA unique?** *Beginning in the 18-19 school year the lottery for the 105 available spots in 5th grade will be filled based on census blocks from the 5 High School attendance boundaries to better reflect the characteristics of the greater Riverside Community. There will be a separate lottery for students of UCR Senate Faculty (see question #10), and families that live in the Riverside STEM Academy neighborhood. Effective for the 2022-23 school year 5th grade cohort, only in-district applicants (where the student resides) will be accepted for the lottery.*
- 6. How do I find my student's lottery number on the waitlist?** *Your student is placed on a waitlist based on the address where the student resides. You can locate your student's lottery number on our website under the High School cluster the residence is assigned to. If you are unsure which High School your residence address is assigned, please click here <https://remote.rusd.k12.ca.us/SchoolLocator/> and it will direct you to the Riverside Unified School District School Locator.*
- 7. If my student's lottery number is not selected how does the waitlist work?** *If an accepted student declines enrollment or later withdraws, available spots are filled to maintain the intention and integrity of the demographic lottery. Each of the 5 high school clusters will be represented with an appropriate number of spots in each grade.*
- 8. How is the waitlist managed?** *Parents are notified when a spot becomes available. Parents have 48 hours to accept or decline their student's space in our program. Once a spot has been declined, the student's name is removed from the waitlist. In order to be re-added a new application for the next school year must be submitted. New applicants are added to the existing waitlist. Students in the 7th and 8th grade must be enrolled in the correct math program (Accelerated Math 7 for 7th grade, and Math 1 Accelerated for 8th grade) in order to join the program after the first day of school or after the 6th grade.*
- 9. I am on UCR Senate faculty AND my student resides in the newly designated Riverside STEM Academy neighborhood. Which lottery will my student be in?** *At this time, the student would take part in the UCR faculty lottery first. If the student was not selected in that lottery, they would be eligible for the neighborhood lottery. And if they were not selected in the neighborhood lottery, they could be eligible for the general lottery if they are an RUSD student.*

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- 10. Per the MOU agreement between UCR and RUSD, a designated number of slots are reserved in the 5th grade enrollment lottery for UCR Senate Faculty members. I teach at UCR, how do I find out if my student qualifies for the UCR faculty preference lottery?** *As defined by the University of California, Riverside, "Faculty" member is "membership in the UCR Division of the Academic Senate". UCR has provided the registration office with a UCR Senate Faculty list. Please consult administration at UCR for confirmation of your faculty status.*
- 11. How can I find out how my student's application is weighted?** *Weighting is based on the census block the child resides in and is managed by Cooperative Strategies, a local demography company.*
- 12. How is a student's application affected if they reside in the dual boundary?** *The student will be in the lottery for the high school indicated on the dual boundary transfer completed during the open enrollment Inter and Intra transfer period.*
- 13. How will bussing work? Who will get to ride the bus?** *We anticipate the busing program will be available for 5th through 8th grade for the 2022-23 school year. The Transportation department handles communication regarding bus schedules, routes and bus passes.*
- 14. How old must my child be to apply for Riverside STEM Academy?** *An application can be completed during the application window (which is set by the District) as early as your student's 4th grade year.*
- 15. We did not complete an application when my student was in 4th grade, is it too late to apply?** *It is not too late to apply. However, students applying for 6th, 7th or 8th grade will be added to the existing waitlist. Please note that due to the high interest in our program a spot may not become available for the upcoming school year.*
- 16. My student applied to Riverside STEM Academy last year and is currently on the waiting list. Does another application need to be submitted this year?** *If you have a current 5th, 6th or 7th grader on the waitlist and have moved to a different High School attendance area, you will need to reapply with your new address. – Students in the 8th grade must apply for the high school program and complete an admission packet. The online application for STEM High School will be on the high school website beginning November 1st.*
- 17. Will Riverside STEM Academy offer an after-school program like HEARTS?** *There are currently no plans for Riverside STEM Academy to offer HEARTS or PRIMETIME.*
- 18. If my student attended school on a transfer in fourth grade and accepts the transfer to go to Riverside STEM Academy, but we change our minds, can they go back to their previous transfer school?** *Once the transfer to Riverside STEM Academy is accepted, the transfer to your previous school is voided. If you change your mind after accepting the transfer to Riverside STEM Academy, then the student would return to their school of residence.*
- 19. I would like to apply for Riverside STEM Academy, but if my student is waitlisted, I would like to apply for a transfer to another school. What do I do?** *You may request a transfer to another school and still place an online application to our program. If your student's lottery number is selected, you will sign a transfer form for our program and that will cancel any other requests.*
- 20. What are the chances my student will be accepted at Riverside STEM Academy for 2021-22 school year?** *There are 105 slots open in 5th grade for 2021-2022. The chances are determined by a number of factors including the quantity of applications received from your high school attendance boundary. Currently there are no openings for grades 6-8, but, if you would like to get your student's name on the waiting list, this is the only opportunity to apply and be added to this list.*

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- 21. What is the acceptance criteria to Riverside STEM Academy?** *The entry requirement for students applying for the 2022-23 school year is based on a student's Performance Level Marks in Trimester 1 of the 4th grade in both ELA and Math on their RUSD report card. Students must have performance marks of two or higher in ELA or Math.*
- 22. Do we need to provide the school with my student's report card?** *Yes, please scan and email your student's RUSD's 4th grade Report card to the Registrar at: nunrath@riversideunified.org.*
- 23. My student has an IEP, can they attend Riverside STEM Academy?** *All IEPs must be approved by the Special Education department to ensure all aspects can be accommodated within this program. Please speak to your IEP coordinator with any questions you may have.*
- 24. Does Riverside STEM Academy follow the California State Standards and will the school implement the Common Core Standards?** *Yes, the school incorporates the California Standards in all content areas including the Language Arts and Math Common Core Standards. We offer an engaging, challenging, content-rich curriculum that builds a solid foundation and grows from year to year. The curriculum is designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and career.*
- 25. Do siblings of current students have preference in the Lottery?** *No, Riverside STEM Academy does not give sibling preference. Each student is treated individually with their own lottery number.*
- 26. How many students are in a classroom?** *A maximum of 35 students are in each classroom.*
- 27. Is there a STEM High School?** *Yes, the Riverside STEM Academy enrolls grades 5 through 8 in our middle school program and 9 through 12 for our high school. Being accepted to the Middle School program does NOT guarantee acceptance to the High School program, however preference for high school spots is given to current RSA 8th graders.*
- 28. Does my student have to be GATE Identified?** *Students do not need to be GATE identified to apply and be accepted in the school. The majority of our teachers are certified to teach students identified as GATE.*
- 29. How can I help my incoming 5th grade student be successful in your program?** *Students entering 5th grade are expected to attend a 1-week bridge program during the summer.*
- 30. What kind of assistance do you offer parents for tech support?** *During the year if questions or problems arise, you may schedule an appointment with our Technology Specialist.*
- 31. Are there opportunities for parents to volunteer on campus?** *Yes! We have a very active PTSA who need volunteers for a variety of activities. You may also contact your student's teachers via email to inquire about opportunities to volunteer. Please note any volunteer working 4 or more hours per week must obtain fingerprint clearance and have a current negative TB test on file. **(Please note, due to the current health mandates, some volunteer activities are suspended. If you wish to become involved with the school, please email the PtSA at: rsapsacares@gmail.com).***
- 32. Is Riverside STEM Academy campus a CLOSED Campus?** *Yes, parents and visitors who wish to come onto campus at any time during school hours must first sign in with the campus supervisor at the Kiosk, provide identification, obtain a visitor pass, and have an approved reason for visiting. If you wish to visit a classroom, you must arrange this in advance with the teacher. All health mandates are in effect for all staff and visitors.*
- 33. Is there a cafeteria at the Riverside STEM Academy?** *Yes, breakfast and lunch are offered to students along with food at a Nutrition Break. Students in the RUSD Free & Reduced Lunch program can continue on this program at RSA. Parents can also apply if they believe they may qualify for the program.*

34. My student forgot their lunch at home and does not have any money to buy lunch. What should they do?

During the 2022-23 school year lunch is being provided for those who need one free of charge. Students may use the cafeteria to obtain a lunch.

35. My student forgot an item; may I take it to their classroom? *Because we are a closed campus and do not want to disturb instruction time, we ask that all items for students are brought to the front office. Items should have the student's name and grade clearly marked. Please note we do not have items delivered to the classrooms. Students are expected to check the front office at nutrition break or lunch for any anticipated deliveries.*