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K-12 Admissions and Waiting List Policy

1. Purpose and Overview

Ponderosa Academy Inc. maintains a rigorous, mission-aligned learning environment. Due to strict maximum classroom capacity limits designed to optimize teacher-to-student ratios, qualified applicants may be placed in a waiting pool when a specific grade level reaches full enrollment. Placement on the waiting list does not guarantee eventual admission or enrollment.

2. The Waiting Pool Nature Disclosure

Our waiting list operates as a **dynamic waiting pool**, not a strict sequential or chronological line. While the date of application is a factor, Ponderosa Academy Inc. reserves the right to select candidates from the pool who best balance the classroom ecosystem, fulfill specific grade-level academic criteria, and align closely with the school's core values and mission.

3. Priority Placement Tiers

When a classroom opening occurs, candidates will be reviewed and selected from the waiting pool based on the following established hierarchical tiers:

- **Tier 1: Currently Enrolled Siblings** – Qualified brothers or sisters of students currently enrolled and in good standing at Ponderosa Academy Inc.
- **Tier 2: Faculty and Staff Children** – Dependents of contracted, full-time school employees.
- **Tier 3: Institutional Legacy & Affiliation** – Children of active alumni or families with verifiable founding/parish affiliations (if applicable).
- **Tier 4: General Public Applicants** – Candidates from the general community, reviewed by application date and evaluation results.

4. Waitlist Application Prerequisites

To be placed in the active waiting pool, families must complete the following steps:

1. Submit a completed formal Admissions Application.
2. Pay the non-refundable Waitlist/Application Fee of $50.
3. Submit a signed *Consent for Release of Records* form to retrieve previous academic transcripts, behavior reports, and standardized testing history.

5. Compliance with Montana State Law

In accordance with **Montana Code Annotated § 20-5-109**, all applicants must meet age eligibility mandates to be officially registered. Kindergarten students must turn five (5) years old, and first-grade students must turn six (6) years old on or before September 10th of the enrolling year.

Furthermore, final selection from the waitlist and official enrollment remain contingent upon the submission of a certified copy of the student's immunization records (or a legally compliant Montana state medical/religious exemption form) and full transfer of permanent records as outlined by ARM 10.55.909.

6. Seat Offers and the Response Window

When a seat becomes available in a specific grade:

- The Admissions Office will issue a formal **Seat Offer Notification** via the primary email address and phone number provided on the application.
- The family has exactly **5 business days** from the timestamp of the sent notification to respond.
- To secure the seat, the family must formally accept the offer in writing and submit the non-refundable **Enrollment Deposit** of $100.
- **Forfeiture:** If a family declines the seat, fails to respond within the designated window, or fails to pay the enrollment deposit on time, the seat will be immediately forfeited and offered to the next eligible candidate in the pool. The applicant will be removed from the waitlist.

7. Annual Tracking and Rollover Policy

Waiting lists do not automatically carry over indefinitely from one academic year to the next.

- **The Spring Confirmation:** In **April** of each year, the Admissions Office will contact all waitlisted families to request a status update. Parents must complete an online "Intent to Remain Active" form.
- **Rollover Conditions:** If a seat does not open for the current target year, and the family confirms their continued interest during the Spring Confirmation window, their application will roll over to the subsequent grade level for the next school year.
- Failure to respond to the annual Spring Confirmation will result in automatic removal from the waiting list, and any associated application fees will be forfeited.