

Middle School Glossary

1. Resident Neighborhood Schools

Just as in elementary school, your address is zoned to a middle school. As a resident of the school zone, you are entitled to the general education programs at your resident school. To find your middle school, click: <http://rsi.lausd.net/ResidentSchoolIdentifier/>

Note that a neighborhood school may also house a magnet and/or a charter and/or have a learning community, academy or an SAS program on its campus. To gain entry to these types of programs within the school requires some form of application/permit (more details below). In many cases, if you are a resident of the neighborhood school, you will have priority for admission to one of these programs within the general school (not applicable to Reed IHP or magnet school located on the campus).

2. Schools Of Advanced Studies (SAS) Programs

Many neighborhood middle schools have SAS programs (honors classes) as part of their general curriculum. SAS programs created as an alternative to the Gifted/High Ability magnet programs to service such learners at non-magnet schools.

To be a part of an SAS program at a neighborhood middle school, the student must establish SAS eligibility through LAUSD (there are a number of ways to do this, *check the GATE website: <https://achieve.lausd.net/gate>*) and communicate with the school to ensure placement in the program. ***In addition to attending his/her neighborhood school SAS program, a student who is eligible for an SAS permit may in many cases attend an SAS program and/or learning community/academy at a non-resident school.***

3. Small Learning Communities/Academies

Some neighborhood middle schools have program clusters within their school to create a more personal learning environment. While these programs offer all mandated curricula, they also tend to focus on a subject area, potentially through having a class about the academy focus during the elective period, or by offering an accelerated class in the focus area. Often the teachers in the communities work together as a smaller group within the school as well, and the students usually travel with their fellow academy students to their core classes. These communities are a way of making a large school (often middle schools have 1500-2200 kids) more manageable. These programs require a separate application process, even for residents. For non-residents, note varying application requirements specific to the program, such as lottery and/or an SAS permit, in addition to the program-specific application.

4. Charter Middle Schools and Affiliated Charter Middle Schools

“Independent” charter schools are public schools created by parents, educators and communities. Charter schools tend to be freer from LAUSD bureaucratic red tape and regulation, have more discretion over budget, and in return they are held to certain standards for student achievement. If a charter school does not meet these standards, it may be shut down. Each charter has its own identity. Admission to charter schools is based on a lottery procedure (including preferences, if any) that is outlined in its charter. A charter school is often open to students without regard to where they live. Charter schools are often (but not always) co-located with an LAUSD school that has extra space or in a historically “non-school” space they have leased.

An “affiliated charter” is a hybrid between a charter and a regular school. An affiliated charter is usually an LAUSD school in an LAUSD building that has converted to affiliated charter status to gain some flexibility in its governance. Affiliated schools are still LAUSD schools and hire LAUSD teachers, and still have residential boundaries in addition to any open enrollment they may offer.

5. Magnet Schools

Magnet schools are “voluntary integration opportunities” provided by LAUSD, which means LAUSD allows attendance at magnet schools based on magnet points and not address. In some cases (e.g., gifted/highly gifted magnets, science magnet), there are additional admission criteria. Magnet points are accumulated and assessed based on several factors, including prior year(s) rejection from a magnet school application(s), “Phabao” status of the sixth grade home school, and sibling attendance at the magnet school to which a student is applying. Magnet schools offer bus transportation according to certain criteria. Middle and high school magnet schools are commonly located within a neighborhood school, though in some cases (e.g., LACES), magnet schools are standalone. Magnet schools often have a particular focus area.