High School Admissions Decision Detail
for Applicant Families
Updated 2/26/2026

How Did Ingenuity Determine Which Applicants Received High School Placement Offers?

The Ingenuity Project received 315 applications and produced 89 initial offers for the incoming 9th-grade class of 2026-27. This document describes in detail how those 89 applicants receiving initial offers were selected from the applicant pool.

1. **Applicants who did not take Ingenuity's MAP Algebra I test and those who are not currently or previously enrolled in Algebra I are removed from the applicant pool.**

   6 applicants did not previously or currently enroll in Algebra I or equivalent and were removed. An additional 47 applicants did not complete required MAP Algebra testing.

2. **Ingenuity Admission Scores are Calculated.**

   The Ingenuity admission score is a measurement of how well an applicant did *relative to all of the other applicants to Ingenuity this year* on required testing[1] and on their recent report cards[2]. A complete mathematical description of how admission scores are calculated can be found at the end of this document. *The Ingenuity admission score is different from the City Schools composite score*.

3. **ZIP Quartiles are Determined.**

   All the ZIP codes in Baltimore City were divided into 4 categories based on their median household income (MHI) as determined in the 2020 census. For 2026-27 admissions, the ACS MHI 5-year estimate (S1909) for the most recent year available (2024) was used. A table showing which ZIP codes are in each quartile can be found here. Based on the ZIP code they reside in, each applicant was assigned to ZIP quartile 1 (lowest MHI), 2, 3, or 4 (highest MHI).

4. **School Groups are Determined.**

   Each applicant was placed in a school group depending on which school they are currently attending. The six school groups were Roland Park Ingenuity, Mount Royal

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[1] For 2026-27 admissions, these were the MCAP Math and Reading assessments administered by City Schools in the spring of 2025 and the Ingenuity-administered NWEA MAP Algebra 1 testing that occurred during the winter.

[2] An unweighted average of 7th grade final grades and 8th grade first term grades in math, ELA, social studies, and science. A minimum of 6 non-zero reported grades was required, and zeros were not included in the average.

Ingenuity, Hamilton Ingenuity, James McHenry Ingenuity, Other City Schools, and non-City Schools.

5. **Applicants are Ranked by Admission Score Within their School Groups and ZIP Quartiles.**

   Each applicant was ranked by admission score separately within their ZIP code quartile group and within their school group.

6. **Applicants not achieving minimum math scores are identified.**

   For 2026-27, applicants needed to score a minimum of 750 on the MCAP Math assessment and 248 on the NWEA MAP Algebra I test administered by Ingenuity (no change from 2025-26). Applicants scoring below these minimums did not receive offers (or join the waitlist) even if they scored highly enough in their ZIP quartile or school group to qualify.

7. **Applicants Near the Top of Their ZIP Quartile AND/OR School Group are Assigned Offers.**

   Applicants who ranked "near the top" in EITHER their ZIP quartile group OR their school group (or both) AND achieved at least the minimum assessment scores described in step 4 above, received placement offers to Poly. For 2026-27 applicants, "near the top" included the highest-scoring 60% in each Ingenuity school group, 18% in each non-Ingenuity school group, and 24% in each ZIP quartile. These numbers were adjusted to produce an incoming 9th-grade class of approximately 80 students.

8. **Waitlist Management.**

   Applicants not scoring highly enough within their school group or ZIP quartile group to be given an offer of placement initially are maintained on a waitlist. The waitlist is used to fill placements that may become available. The minimum math assessment scores required to receive an offer to Ingenuity at Poly described above were also required to join the waitlist. Applicants who did not complete the required testing and/or failed to gain admission to Poly (a separate process conducted by City Schools' Office of School Choice) were removed from the waitlist.

High School Application Outcome Examples from 2024-25

The illustration below demonstrates how this process played out for four actual applicants to Ingenuity's 9th grade cohort of 2024-25. Only their identities have been changed. Other than the new adjustment for MCAP algebra 1 test takers and regular updates to ZIP quartile groups based on yearly census estimates, the process has not changed from 2024-25 admissions through 2026-27 admissions.

	Minie	Mickey	Donald	Daisy
Ingenuity Admission Score	69.95	47.24	52.78	47.56
School Group	City Schools	City Schools	Roland Park	Roland Park
ZIP Quartile	4	3	4	1
Top X% of School Group?	Yes	Yes	Yes	RP
Top X% of ZIP Quartile Group?	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
MCAP Math >= 750 and NWEA MAP Algebra 1 >=248?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Initial Offer	Ingenuity @ Poly	Decline	Ingenuity @ Poly	Ingenuity @ Poly

Minie is an example of a student for whom the admission decision was an easy "accept." Minie's admission score was within the top 30% in both her school group and her ZIP code quartile. She is one of the top 47 applicants by admission score, all of whom earned placement offers. For the highest scoring applicants (75.3% of initial offers in 2025-26), school group and ZIP quartile group didn't have any impact on admission decisions.

Mickey has the unfortunate distinction of being the highest-scoring applicant who was declined for placement. Although Mickey ranked highly enough in his school group (City Schools) to receive an initial offer, his NWEA MAP score was below the minimum of 248.

Donald did not qualify for an offer in his ZIP quartile group (4), but he did qualify for one from within his school group – Roland Park. Therefore, Donald is an example of how the "either/or" method of offer distribution helps to ensure that a geographically and economically diverse set of applicants are given placement offers. If offers were given only by ZIP quartile rank, Donald would not be with Ingenuity for 2025-26, but instead, he can be!

Daisy is the opposite of Donald, in that she received an offer because she scored highly enough among her ZIP quartile peers to earn an offer, even though she did not qualify for one within her school group. Daisy is an example of how this admissions model allows for highly qualified students applying from very competitive school groups to earn a placement offer at Poly, even if they are not among the top applicants from their school group.

CALCULATION OF ADMISSION SCORE

1. **Components**: For applications to 2026-27, Ingenuity HS admission scores used four major components: MCAP math, MCAP reading, a report card grade average, and the Ingenuity-administered NWEA MAP Algebra 1 assessment. The report card grade average is a simple average of an applicant's 7th grade final grades and 8th grade 1st marking period grades in math, ELA, social studies, and science. At least 6 of these grades were required for the calculation, and zeros were not included.

2. **Conversion to Percent of Range**: Each of the components was converted into a percentage of the range of the distribution of scores in the applicant pool. These calculations use the upper bound (highest) and lower bound (lowest) score in the set of all applicants to determine the range of scores. Each applicant's score is then converted into a percentage of that range. The formula for this process is the same for all four components of the admission score. This conversion is applied to ensure that sets of score components with relatively larger standard deviations do not have an inappropriately larger effect on admission score as compared to those components with less variation.

$$S_\% = [(S - S_{LB})/(S_{UB} - S_{LB})]*100\%$$

Where S = applicant's score, $S_\%$ = score percent of range, S_{LB} = applicant pool lower bound, and S_{UB} = applicant pool upper bound

HS Applicant Pool Data for 2026-27 Placement:

Ingenuity Admission Score Component	Lower Bound (Lowest Score in Pool)	Upper Bound (Highest Score in Pool)	Average Score of Students Who Received Initial Offers
MAP Algebra 1	209	298	268 (>95th percentile - US)
MCAP ELA	734	808	785 (98th percentile - BCPS)
MCAP Math*	715	810	775 (99th percentile - BCPS)
Report Card Average	71.63	99.86	95.57

* MCAP Math scores were adjusted +6 for MCAP Algebra 1 test takers. Learn why [here](#).

3. **Component Weights**: Each of the score component percent of ranges are then multiplied by a cofactor ("weight") to produce a weighted percent of range. For

2026-27, these cofactors were 0.2 for MCAP math, 0.3 for MCAP reading, 0.4 for NWEA MAP Algebra 1, and 0.1 for report card grade average. (No change from 2025-26)

4. **Combined Formula**: To produce a combined formula, each of the score component percent of ranges is multiplied by its cofactor and then summed:

Admission Score = $[0.2(\text{mMCAP} - \text{mMCAP}_{LB})/(\text{mMCAP}_{UB} - \text{mMCAP}_{LB}) + 0.3(\text{rMCAP} - \text{rMCAP}_{LB})/(\text{rMCAP}_{UB} - \text{rMCAP}_{LB}) + 0.4(\text{mMAP} - \text{mMAP}_{LB})/(\text{mMAP}_{UB} - \text{mMAP}_{LB}) + 0.1(\text{RCA} - \text{RCA}_{LB})/(\text{RCA}_{UB} - \text{RCA}_{LB})]*100$

Where mMCAP = subject adjusted MCAP math scaled score, rMCAP = MCAP ELA scaled score, mMAP = NWEA MAP Algebra I scaled score, and RCA = report card grade average.

5. **Example Calculation**

Example: MCAP math = 793, MCAP reading = 793, MAP Algebra I = 274, RCA = 99.5

$$\text{Admission Score} = [0.2(793-710)/(850-710) + 0.3(793-726)/(807-726) + 0.4(274-214)/(319-214) + 0.1(99.5-65)/(100-65)]*100$$

$$= (0.1186 + 0.2481 + 0.229 + 0.0986)*100$$

$$= 69.43$$