



## Middle School Admissions Decision Detail for Applicant Families

Updated 2/26/2026

### **Background**

This document describes Ingenuity's selection process and provides examples of how the process worked for a few representative applicants for 2025-26. Ingenuity's citywide admissions process seeks to ensure equity and access to our rigorous and effective STEM curriculum for the brightest young people from all communities across Baltimore City. There have not been any significant changes to Ingenuity's admissions decision process between 2025-26 and 2026-27.

**The Ingenuity Admissions Score:** The Ingenuity Admission Score calculated by Ingenuity is different from the Composite Score calculated by City Schools, though both calculations use the same raw data. A complete mathematical description can be found at the end of this document. The Ingenuity Admission Score describes how well an applicant scored on required testing and how good their grades were *compared to all the other applicants in a given admissions year.*

- In other words, an applicant with the highest scores on every assessment and the best report card average among all applicants would receive a score of 100.
- Conversely, an applicant with the lowest scores on each of the assessments and the lowest report card average among all applicants would receive a score of 0.
- For 2026-27 MS applicants, actual scores ranged from 10.62 to 92.98, with a median score of 42.89.

**Ensuring Geographic and Economic Diversity:** Every applicant is assigned to a ZIP code quartile, based on the median household income of the ZIP code in which they live. For more detail you can view a [chart showing which Baltimore City ZIP codes are in each quartile](#), or review the supporting [Census data](#) (ACS S1909 MHI data for ZTCA). This method essentially splits our applicant pool into four economic groups. Applicants are then ranked by admission score *within their ZIP quartile group* to determine their ZIP quartile rank. An applicant's ZIP quartile rank, Ingenuity admission score, and the school preferences they choose are what directly determines placement offers.

**Minimum Math Proficiency:** Additionally, to ensure only students with a demonstrated ability to be successful in our program were selected to receive offers, a minimum scaled score of 738 (up from 735 in 2024-25) on the MCAP Math assessment was required to receive any placement offer or be added to the waitlist.

**Distribution of Offers:** Although ZIP quartiles matter a lot in our model, it is important to note that admission scores determine ZIP quartile ranks, and high scores go a long way. For example, among 2026-27 applicants, the 90 applicants with the highest Ingenuity Admission Scores all received



placement offers to their first-choice schools, regardless of their ZIP quartiles. Additionally, among applicants who listed at least two schools as choices, the 187 applicants with the highest Ingenuity Admission Scores received offers to their 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> choice schools. In total, 354 initial offers were made for a maximum of 214 placements to a pool of 702 applicants. 45% of the offers made were to applicants' first-choice schools.

Maximum Ingenuity Placements Available at Each Ingenuity Middle School, 2026-27

Ingenuity Middle School	Hamilton	James McHenry	Mount Royal	Roland Park
Maximum Number of 6th Grade Placements	30	60	60	64

**(See table on next page)**



**Application Outcome Examples from 2025-26**

The illustration below demonstrates how this process played out for six actual applicants to Ingenuity’s 6<sup>th</sup> grade cohort for school year 2025-26. Their identities have been changed, but the data is from actual applicants.

						
	Clarabelle	Daisy	Minnie	Mickey	Donald	Goofy
Ingenuity Admission Score	60.1	50.2	51.1	51.7	40.8	35.1
ZIP Quartile	1	1	4	4	2	1
ZIP Quartile Rank	<b>2</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>92</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Choice School	Mount Royal	Roland Park	Roland Park	Roland Park	James McHenry	Hamilton
2 <sup>nd</sup> Choice School	Roland Park	-	Mount Royal	-	Roland Park	James McHenry
3 <sup>rd</sup> Choice School	-	-	Hamilton	-	Mount Royal	-
4 <sup>th</sup> Choice School	-	-	James McHenry	-	-	-
Initial Placement Offer	MOUNT ROYAL	ROLAND PARK	MOUNT ROYAL	WAITLIST	JAMES MCHENRY	NONE



**The descriptions below explain why each applicant received the initial offer they did. They are listed in the order in which they were assigned placement offers.**

**Clarabelle:** Clarabelle has the highest admission score and the highest ZIP quartile rank among the examples shown, and easily earned an offer to their first choice school, Hamilton. They were one of the top 74 applicants for 2025-26 that would have received placement offers to their first-choice schools no matter what ZIP quartile they were from or which school was their first choice. This group of high-flying students is represented the top 11% of all applicants (who receive about 27% of initial offers) for middle school for 2025-26.

**Daisy:** At first glance, you might think Mickey is more highly ranked than the other students besides Clarabelle, but that's not quite right. Although Mickey has the highest Ingenuity Admission Score among the remaining 5 examples, it is Daisy who is ranked highest *within her ZIP code quartile*. All of our applicants who score highest among their ZIP quartile peers receive offers to their first-choice schools, so Daisy got an offer to Roland Park.

**Minnie:** Minnie and Mickey both want to go to Roland Park, but offers to Roland Park had already been assigned before it was their turn to be considered. Minnie received an offer to her 2nd most preferred school, Mount Royal instead.

**Mickey:** Mickey didn't want to be considered for any schools other than his first choice, Roland Park. After placement offers were assigned to the top 25 ranked candidates in each ZIP quartile, however, Roland Park had already reached its limit for initial offers. Mickey was the 26th-highest scoring applicant from ZIP quartile 4. Therefore, Mickey was added to our waitlist. If and when a placement becomes available at his chosen school because of the refusal or non-response to an initial offer, that placement will be offered to the highest-ZIPQ-ranked applicant on the waitlist.

**Donald:** Donald was able to get a placement at his top-ranked school, James McHenry. Even though his admission score and in-ZIP quartile rank were not among the very best, offers to JM were still available at his place in the distribution order.

**Goofy:** Goofy's ZIP quartile rank of 92 is just high enough to receive one of the final initial offers to his second-choice school, James McHenry. However, Goofy's MCAP math scaled score of 737 was below the minimum required to qualify for an offer (or the waitlist). Therefore, Ingenuity declined to offer him a placement, and the initial offer he would have received went to the next highest applicant by ZIP quartile rank.

## **CALCULATION OF ADMISSION SCORE**



1. **Components:** For applications to 2026-27, Ingenuity used three data points to calculate a middle school admission score for each applicant: MCAP math scaled score<sup>1</sup>, MCAP reading scaled score, and a report card grade average. The report card grade average is a simple average of an applicant's 4<sup>th</sup> grade final grades and 5<sup>th</sup> grade 1<sup>st</sup> marking period grades in math, ELA, social studies, and science. In cases where only 6 or 7 of these 8 grades were available, an average of the grades available was used. Students without grade data for 3 or more of these classes were not considered for admission.
2. **Conversion to Percent of Range:** Each of the three components were converted into a percentage of the range of the distribution of scores in the applicant pool. These calculations used 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 was then converted into a percentage of that range. The formula for this process was the same for all three components of the Ingenuity Admission Score. This conversion was 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.

**Definitions:**

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

S = applicant's score  
S<sub>%</sub> = score percent of range  
S<sub>LB</sub> = applicant pool lower bound  
S<sub>UB</sub> = applicant pool upper bound

3. **Component Weights:** Each of the three score component percentages of ranges were then multiplied by a cofactor ("weight") to produce a weighted percent of range. For 2026-27, these cofactors were 60% for math assessment, 30% for reading assessment, and 10% for report card grade average.<sup>2</sup>
4. **Combined Formula:** To produce a combined formula, each of the three score component percent of ranges (math assessment, MA; reading assessment, RA; and report card average, RCA) were multiplied by its cofactor and then summed.

---

<sup>1</sup> For out of district students who applied, their iReady math percentile was converted to an MCAP math scaled score equivalent.

<sup>2</sup> For in-district students that did not have MCAP scores available, the iReady math percentile was converted to a MCAP math scaled score equivalent. For this small group (0.6% of applicants) without ELA scores, admission scores were weighted as 75% MCAP scaled score equivalent and 25% report card average.



**MS Applicant Pool Data for 2026-27 Placement**

Ingenuity Admission Score Component	Lower Bound (Lowest Score in Pool)	Upper Bound (Highest Score in Pool)	Median Score of Students who Received Initial Offers
Report Card Average	59.63	100	92.75
MCAP Math	709	819	762 (96 <sup>th</sup> %ile)
MCAP Reading	711	822	768 (96 <sup>th</sup> %ile)

**Ingenuity Admission Score Example Calculation**

Clarabelle: MCAP Math: 794      MCAP ELA: 766      RCA: 96.0

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Clarabelle} &= [0.6(794 - 710)/(850 - 710) + 0.3(766 - 715)/(815 - 715) + 0.1(96 - 61.5)/(100 - 61.5)] * 100 \\
 &= (0.360 + 0.153 + 0.093) * 100 \\
 &= 60.1
 \end{aligned}$$