

CALGARY ISLAMIC SCHOOL

ADMISSIONS APPEAL PROCESS

Introduction

The following document provides guidance to parents/guardians who have submitted an application for admission to a Calgary Islamic School (CIS), whose application has been rejected and may be considering an appeal of the decision.

It provides information about:

- what to consider before making the decision to appeal
- how to exercise your right of appeal
- what can be expected in the appeals process

This document sets out the requirements which admission authorities, appeal panels and clerks must follow.

Your right of appeal

If parents have submitted an application to a CIS school and the application is not accepted, parents have the right to appeal the decision.

Parents may submit only one appeal for a decision made in the same academic year and must be submitted no later than ten calendar days after receiving the decision letter.

Things to consider before you appeal

There are things you need to consider before you make an admissions appeal. You will have to set your appeal out in writing and you might be requested to attend an appeal hearing.

You should be aware that an appeal can prolong the period of uncertainty for parents and children, so it's important to be realistic about your reasons for appealing and the chances of being successful.

This is particularly the case if you're appealing a decision refusing your child a place in a class that the school has identified as full. If the class is full there are no seats available and a spot on the waiting list is all the school is able to offer you.

How Accepted Students are Placed

Parents and guardians are able to make choices as to which school they would like their child to attend.

Where possible, parents will be offered a place at their preferred campus. However, this may not always be possible because the Calgary Islamic School often receives far more applications than the places we have available. Places will be offered to those who most closely meet the school's admissions standards.

When a CIS school receives more applications from parents than it has places available, not every child can be successful in securing a school place. In all cases, the admission committee uses the admissions standards to determine which students will be successfully admitted and allocated a place.

In the interest of fairness and transparency, CIS reviews all prospective and current student applications according to the published admissions standards.

Information about the CIS admission procedures can be found on the schools websites.

Reasons for refusing admission

The appeals process can be burdensome for all involved, so admission authorities do not take lightly the decision to refuse a child a school place. Contact details of the school's admission authority should be on your admission decision letter.

In most cases your child will not have been offered a place because there were other children who more closely met the school's standards.

Your case for appeal

It is important that you clearly set out the reasons why your child should have a place in your written appeal. The stronger your reasons for appealing the admissions decision, the better chance you have of your appeal being successful.

You can appeal if you believe that the CIS admissions committee did not apply their admission standards properly and had they applied them properly, they would have offered your child a place at the school.

The appeals process

You will need to submit your appeal in writing to cis.admissions@pallisersd.ab.ca

If you have trouble completing this form due to a disability or a need for translation services, contact the school office for advice. If you believe there has been a mistake (for example, the admissions standards have not been applied correctly) you should set out why the admission authority should have offered your child a place. Whether or not you believe there has been a mistake, you should explain why you believe the school should admit your child anyway.

You will appeal to the Principal of the school. This letter needs to be addressed to the Principal and submitted no later than ten calendar days after receiving the admissions decision. Any letters that are submitted after the deadline will not be reviewed nor will they be considered to have met the requirements of the appeals process.

Your appeal will be reviewed by the Principal, who will then conclude to either uphold the decision of the Admissions Committee or invite you to a hearing. All decisions after the appeal has been submitted and reviewed are final and no further appeals will be accepted.

Appeal hearings

Should you be invited to a hearing to present your appeal, the Principal will decide the format of the appeal hearing. Your appeal may take place in person or remotely by video conference, or a hybrid of the two - where one or more participants attend in person and one or more participants attend remotely. In some cases Stage One and Stage Two of an appeal may be held in different formats. Appeal hearings can only be held entirely by telephone where video conferencing cannot be used for reasons relating to connectivity or accessibility and if the appellant and the Principal both agree.

Principals must make sure that all appeal hearings are conducted in a fair and transparent manner whatever the format, and that parties can present their cases fully and engage in the hearing at all times.

The Principal will inform you of the time, date, format and, either the location of your appeal hearing (if the hearing is in-person) or the joining instructions (if the hearing is by video conference). You will be given at least 7 working days' notice, unless you have indicated that you do not require this much notice.

Who takes part in the appeal hearing?

The following people will usually attend the appeal hearing:

Principal

Makes the final decision on whether to uphold or dismiss the appeal. There are usually 3 people on the panel, which will include a chair and at least 2 other panel members.

If the panel upholds your appeal the admission authority must offer your child a place at the school. If the panel does not uphold your appeal, then the admission authority will not offer your child a place at the school.

Executive Director

Represents the Calgary Islamic School Society and will ensure that a fair process is followed and allows the appellant to be heard by a member of the society.

Vice Principal

They are a representative of the admission committee, usually referred to as the presenting officer.

They will be there to present the school's case for why they refused your child a place at the school. There can be more than one (1) representative at the hearing.

Appellant

This is you, the parent or guardian that submitted the appeal in writing. You must present the reasons why you believe the school should admit your child. You can be represented by a family member, friend or someone else of your choosing as a support at the hearing. If you require an interpreter, you can request one.

If the Appellant is unable to attend the appeal hearing, the Principal may make a decision based on the written evidence submitted.

What happens at an appeal hearing?

It is important that you understand what will happen at an appeal hearing so that you can be prepared.

First, the Principal will introduce everyone to the hearing. They will explain what will happen during and after the hearing.

If you or any other participants are joining the meeting remotely, they may explain the ground rules and etiquette for the hearing, for example:

- the policy regarding recording the hearing
- joining with video switched on
- how to indicate that you want to speak
- use of the chat or notes function

For a telephone hearing, the chair may explain how the hearing will run and how you will be invited to take turns to present your case and to ask and respond to questions. They may also explain how they will make sure that no party is left alone with the panel.

The panel will then usually hear the appeal in 2 stages:

Stage One

The panel will ask the Vice Principal to present the admission committee's reasons for refusing to admit your child at the school.

Stage Two

The panel will ask you, the appellant, to present your reasons as to why you believe the school should admit your child.

After you've presented your case and the Principal believes there is enough information to make a decision, the hearing will end. The Principal will then discuss and make a decision to either uphold or dismiss your appeal in private. The Principal will consider your case for wanting your child to attend the school against the arguments for not admitting your child.

You'll receive notice of the outcome of your appeal in writing within five (5) working days of the hearing.

All decisions after the appeal hearing has concluded are final and no further appeals will be accepted.