

## PROGRAMS OF CHOICE

### Background

The District believes in making program choices available to students whenever possible. Some optional programs may only be viable when offered in one location in the School District but open to students throughout the District. From time to time the District will designate such optional programs as Programs of Choice.

All interested and qualified students are to have an equal opportunity to be selected for registration in Programs of Choice with limited enrolments.

### Procedures

#### 1. Types of Programs

- 1.1 Programs of Choice in the District may include (but are not limited to):
  - a. Early French Immersion
  - b. Late French Immersion
  - c. Montessori
  - d. Home Learner's Program
  - e. International Baccalaureate Program (IB)

#### 2. Programs of Choice considered will:

- 2.1 Have a clearly articulated program rationale.
- 2.2 Acknowledge parental desire for programs with a particular educational emphasis.
- 2.3 Fulfill a recognized need separate from existing programs and services.
- 2.4 Be free from any religious or ethnic affiliation.
- 2.5 Be consistent with Board policies and administrative procedures.
- 2.6 Conform with collective agreements.
- 2.7 Identify the potential impact on other schools in the District.
- 2.8 Not affect operational needs of the District.
- 2.9 Be available to all students in the District, within school space.
- 2.10 Be housed in facilities where space permits, which are suitable to the program and be subject to relocation

- 2.11 Be maintained without transportation assistance from the District.
- 2.12 Be subject to normal planning and staffing schedules established by the District.
- 2.13 Be subject to evaluation on an ongoing basis by the District.

### **3. Process for Submitting Proposals for Programs of Choice**

- 3.1 Prior to submission of a proposal to the Board, consultation with the Superintendent or designate must occur.
- 3.2 A written proposal including clear rationale for the program will be submitted to the Board. The proposal will contain:
  - a. An overview of the program accompanied by the goals and objectives and implementation timeline for the program.
  - b. A statement which outlines the educational value of the program for the District; including how the proposal is distinct from existing educational programs or fills a particular educational need not currently offered in the District.
  - c. A clear indication of the intended school population to be served including age, grade levels, learner characteristics, and the number of students to be served.
  - d. A clear description of the qualifications and nature of teaching support staff required to offer the program.
  - e. A clear description of the facilities required to offer the program both in the immediate and long-term.
  - f. Evidence of parental and community support for the program.
  - g. Student registration guidelines, including how students will be selected.
  - h. Sources and sustainability of additional funds (where necessary).
- 3.3 Upon receipt of a proposal, the Board may direct the Superintendent to conduct a feasibility study, which will set out costs and other issues that may include:
  - a. Staffing/human resource requirements.
  - b. Facilities, both interim and long-term requirements.
  - c. A proposed implementation timeline.
  - d. Effects on other schools.

### **4. French Immersion and Montessori Programs**

- 4.1 Information about Programs of Choice will be disseminated through the District website and such other means as may be determined from time to time.
- 4.2 Application procedures and registration information and deadlines, if any, will be stated on the District website and provided to parents upon request.
- 4.3 Information meetings will be held annually for parents and interested students (as appropriate) and advertised for/to all eligible students.

## 5. Application Process

- 5.1 In June of each school year, registration timelines will be established and published for the submission of applications to enroll in Programs of Choice for the following school year.
- 5.2 Students must be registered at their catchment school before completing an application for a Program of Choice.
- 5.3 Registration for Programs of Choice will commence at 9 am on the first day back from winter break in January of each school year.
- 5.4 Registrations will close on the first Friday in February at 4 pm.
- 5.5 Applications for the Early French Immersion Program are accepted for Kindergarten and Grade 1 placement. Applications for the Late French Immersion Program are accepted for Grade 6 placement.
- 5.6 Applications from students in Grade 2 and beyond wishing to register in the French Immersion program, will only be accepted from those students who are transferring from another French Immersion school or have sufficient French fluency through other means, such as living in a French-speaking province or country. Such applications will be accepted for each school site as space permits in each program. If no space is available, applications will be time and date stamped and families will be contacted by Programs of Choice if a space becomes available until the waitlist is dissolved. Should no space become available, families will have to reapply for the following school year.
- 5.7 Applications received will be grouped in the following priority order, provided application deadlines and other requirements have been met:
  - a. Students who reside within New Westminister School District and who have a sibling already in the program who will be in the same school when the younger child enters the program.
  - b. Students who are in-catchment of the Program of Choice school.
  - c. Students who reside within New Westminister School District and are out-of-catchment of the Program of Choice school.
  - d. Students who reside within New Westminister School District and applied after the Programs of Choice application deadline.
  - e. Students residing outside the District.

## 6. Student Placement

- 6.1 A randomized, supervised draw will be conducted on the first Monday after the last Friday in February to determine student placements. All other applicants will be placed on a waitlist.
- 6.2 Students who applied before June 30, 2015, and/or have a child born in the year 2015 will be accepted according to their application date.

## 7. Notification of Placement

- 7.1 An e-mail communication to all applicants whether the result of the lottery is successful for their child will be sent via email no later than the end of the last week of February.
- 7.2 Parents are to email [programsofchoice@sd40.bc.ca](mailto:programsofchoice@sd40.bc.ca) if they have not received notification by the first Wednesday of March.

## 8. Confirmation of Acceptance

- 8.1 Parents are required to respond by email with their acceptance or refusal of Program of Choice placement or waitlist by 4 pm on the first Friday in March.
- 8.2 After this date, unclaimed spaces will be offered to those on the waitlist.

## 9. Twins

- 9.1 One ballot will be entered into a draw for a family with twins. If drawn, both children will be offered places in the program at the same school. In the event there is insufficient space for both children, the parents will be contacted.

## 10. Waitlists

- 10.1 Waitlists for kindergarten students in the Early French Immersion and Montessori Programs will be dissolved on the last day of instruction in of December at 4:00pm.
- 10.2 Waitlists for students in grades 1-5 in the Early French Immersion or Montessori Programs and for Grade 6 students in the Late French Immersion Program will be dissolved on the last day of instruction in September.

## 11. Attendance

- 11.1 Placements in Programs of Choice are conditional upon the student attending on the first day of their school program. If a student will not be in attendance on this day due to illness or extenuating circumstances, the School Principal must be contacted.
- 11.2 Students who do not establish regular attendance by the end of the second week of school will lose their placement in the program.

## 12. International Baccalaureate Programme (IB) at New Westminster Secondary School

- 12.1 In June of each school year, registration timelines for the following school year will be established and published for the following school year.
- 12.2 Given the rigour of the IB Programme, a strong academic background and a high degree of intrinsic motivation are essential. To this end, an admission process involving the review of report cards, counsellor and teacher recommendations, and entry test results is employed. The cumulative scores of candidates are rank ordered, and the available seats are awarded accordingly.

## 13. Home Learners Program **should this move to a POLS AP?**

- 13.1 In June of each school year, registration timelines for the following school year will be established and published for the following school year.
- 13.2 All applicants will be contacted by the Program staff to discuss each individual student's needs and family expectations to determine suitability for the program. Further information related to program requirements and structure can be found on the district website.
- 13.3 All suitable applicants will be grouped in the following priority order, provided application deadlines and other requirements have been met:
- a. Students who have a sibling already in the program who will be in that same program when the younger child enters.
  - b. If the number of suitable applications exceed available spaces, a randomized draw will be conducted as described above in item 6. In such circumstances, one ballot will be entered into a draw for families making applications for more than one child. If drawn, all children in the family will be offered placements within the program. In the event there is insufficient space for all of the children, the families will be contacted.
  - c. Students who applied after the Programs of Choice application deadline.

*Reference: Sections 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 8.4, 8.5, 20, 22, 23, 65, 74.1, 75, 75.1, 85 School Act Collective Agreements*

*SD No. 40 (New Westminster)*

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