

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 enrollments.

Procedures

1. Types of Programs

1.1 Programs of Choice in the District may include (but are not limited to):

1.1.1 Early French Immersion

1.1.2 Late French Immersion

1.1.3 Montessori

1.1.4 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 Be funded at the same levels with respect to resources and staff as those established for elementary, middle and secondary schools/grades/programs. Any additional costs for establishing or maintaining the program will be the responsibility of the school.

2.7 Conform with collective agreements.

2.8 Identify the potential impact on other schools in the District.

2.9 Not affect operational needs of the District.

2.10 Be available to all students in the District, within school space.

- 2.11 Be housed in facilities where space permits and which are suitable to the Program.
 - 2.12 Be maintained without transportation assistance from the District.
 - 2.13 Be subject to normal planning and staffing schedules established by the District.
 - 2.14 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:
 - 3.2.1 An overview of the program accompanied by the goals and objectives and implementation timeline for the program.
 - 3.2.2 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.
 - 3.2.3 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.
 - 3.2.4 A clear description of the qualifications and nature of teaching support staff required to offer the program.
 - 3.2.5 A clear description of the facilities required to offer the program both in the immediate and long-term.
 - 3.2.6 Evidence of parental and community support for the program.
 - 3.2.7 Student registration guidelines, including how students will be selected.
 - 3.2.8 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:
 - 3.3.1 Staffing/human resource requirements.
 - 3.3.2 Facilities, both interim and long-term requirements.
 - 3.3.3 A proposed implementation timeline.
 - 3.3.4 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 Parents register at the child's regular catchment school for Kindergarten for three weeks starting the second Monday of January.
 - 5.2 Parents complete a District Application for Programs of Choice available on-line starting the third Monday of January (9 am). It is the parents' responsibility to keep contact information current and to indicate that the younger child has a sibling already in the program.
6. Submit the on-line Application for Programs of Choice by the second Friday in February. An e-mail will be sent to all applicants confirming their application has been received by the third Friday of February. Parents are to email programsofchoice@sd40.bc.ca if they have not received notification by the last Friday of February. Applications received will be grouped by priority order as outlined below:
 - 6.1 Students who reside within New Westminister School District and who have a sibling already in the program in the same school when the younger child enters the program;
 - 6.2 Students who are in-catchment of the Program of Choice school;
 - 6.3 Students who reside within New Westminister School District and are out-of-catchment of the Program of Choice school;
 - 6.4 Students who reside within New Westminister School District and applied after the Programs of Choice application date;
 - 6.5 Students whose residence falls outside the District.
7. A randomized, supervised draw process will be used to determine student placements conducted the first Monday after the last Friday of February. All other applicants would be placed on a waitlist.
8. Students who submitted an application before June 30, 2015 and/or have a child born in the year 2015 will be accepted according to their application date.

9. Notification of Placement

- 9.1 An e-mail communication to all applicants - whether or not the result of the lottery is successful for their child – will be sent out by the end of the first week of March. Parents are responsible for keeping their contact information up to date.
- 9.2 Parents are to email programsofchoice@sd40.bc.ca if they have not received notification by the second Wednesday of March. Parents are asked not to call – results will not be given over the phone.

10. Confirmation of Acceptance

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

11. Twins

- 11.1 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.

12. Wait Lists

- 12.1 Wait lists for Early French Immersion, Late French Immersion and Montessori will be dissolved on the last Friday of September at 4:00pm.
- 12.2 Seats in Programs of Choice are conditional upon the student attending on the first day of their school program. Students not in attendance on the first day of school lose their seat in the program, and this seat is offered to the next child on the waitlist.
- 12.3 Parents requesting a spot in a Program of Choice other than Kindergarten and the beginning of grade 1 for Early French Immersion and Grade 6 for Late French Immersion must contact programsofchoice@sd40.bc.ca for an application form. Students registering for French Immersion programs are only eligible to enter the program if they are transferring from another Immersion school or have sufficient French fluency through other means, such as living in a French-speaking province or country. Applications will be accepted by the Principal of each school site depending on availability of spaces in the program.
- 12.4 If no space is available, applications will be time and date stamped and parents will be contacted by Programs of Choice if a space becomes available. Parents will have to reapply each school year as wait lists will be dissolved on the last Friday of September at 4:00 pm.

13. Application Process for Challenge Programs

13.1 In challenge programs, selection criteria and deadlines will be determined and clearly indicated to students in the application process. In the interests of ensuring student success in the program, multiple sources of information are considered and candidates are rank ordered. If the number of candidates exceeds the number of available seats, candidates are selected according to their ranking until the program is full.

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

14.1 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.

*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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Modification to this document is not permitted without prior written consent from SD No. 40 (New Westminster)