



## Frequently Asked Questions: Q & A for Policy 5084 Choice Programs

Frequently Asked Questions: Here are some questions that may arise if policy 5084 were to be passed by the Board of Education.

Under the revised Policy 5084, the following answers would apply...

### Q & A Information for Parents

1. Why is the policy changing? The policy has not been updated since 2001 and the District feels there is a need to update the procedures to make them more current and to clarify the process to be more equitable for families and efficient for both families and staff.
2. Who made the decision to change the policy? The policy hasn't been changed yet. The Board of Education has put it out for a Notice of Motion for consideration. The public is welcome to provide comments. The Board plans to bring the policy back to a Board vote later in the year.
3. Where and how can I submit my comments? You are welcome to send comments / opinions in writing to the Secretary Treasurer's office at the email address of: [lmason@sd35.bc.ca](mailto:lmason@sd35.bc.ca)
4. Why didn't I hear about this? The Board passed the Notice of Motion at the Regular Meeting of the Board of Education on June 16, 2015.
5. When do I get to register my child? Registration is different than "Application". You only "register" your child once you have received confirmation from the choice program that there is a seat available in the program for your child. "Applications" are accepted 11 months prior to the entry year of the program. "Applications" for Langley Fine Arts are accepted 23 months prior to the first entry point in grade 1.
6. I have already applied and am on a waitlist now. Will I lose my spot in line with the new process? If the policy passes, No you will not lose your spot. The District is grandfathering the current waitlist so that people who have already been waiting will keep their place in line.
7. Should I register at my catchment school in case I don't get in? Yes, parents should always be registering their child at their catchment school regardless of any pending applications.
8. If I get accepted into a choice program but change my mind and decide I don't want it, can I still get into my catchment school? Choice Program applications and registrations occur prior to the catchment school registration process. Therefore, you should go and register at your catchment school. If you do this before March 31 of the entry year, you will be guaranteed a seat at your catchment school. After that date, the District will do its utmost to accommodate your child at the catchment school, but there are no guarantees. For general information regarding registration, catchment registration, please refer to Policy 7008 on the District website.

9. Can I change my mind about my preference of choice program? Yes you can change your mind within the time frame of the application process, however if you change your mind after that, you may not be granted special accommodation in the process.
10. Once I'm in a given choice program, can I switch to another choice program? No. The programs are distinct and you cannot transfer between programs.
11. Are my future siblings guaranteed a spot in the same choice program as my current child? Siblings are never guaranteed a spot. However if you are a Langley resident, Langley siblings receive first priority if there are seats available in the program.
12. I have one child in a District choice program. Will my other child receive sibling priority status for a different choice program within the District? No. The sibling priority status only applies to siblings applying to the same district program.
13. I am not a Langley resident (or no longer a Langley resident) but I currently have a child in a choice program. Will my child's sibling be able to attend the same choice program? Your child's sibling may possibly be able to attend but will be subject to the revised priority criteria which accommodates Langley resident students before out of district students.
14. Is my waitlist position for one choice program transferable to a different choice program? No – waitlists are maintained per program so that if you are in the number 10 position on the waitlist for Montessori, but number 30 on the waitlist for Fine Arts, you do not move to the number 10 position for Fine Arts.
15. My Daycare is at the choice program site. Do I receive priority entry into the choice program? No. Daycares operate independently of the District choice programs and are not affiliated with the application process.
16. I live right across the street from the choice program school I desire. Am I given priority because I live in the catchment area? No. The choice programs are District programs and therefore the catchment area is the entire Langley School District. Proximity to the site is irrelevant.
17. What about international students? The District reserves a limited number of seats for International Students at the secondary level in the choice programs. This would not affect the first point of entry into the program for other students wanting to attend at the first entry point. Typically there are more spaces available into the secondary school level of the program.
18. Will my child be able to stay in the school if they pull out of the program? i.e.: French Immersion. If there is room in the neighbourhood program in the same school site, your child will be able to stay.
19. We've moved into the District in January and so I have missed the deadline for applications for choice programs (October). How do I go about getting my name added to a waitlist for September? You would contact the School Board Office directly and your child's name would be added to the end of the current waitlist. In the mean time, you should apply to your catchment school.

20. Does my waitlist position carry forward to the following year if my child did not get into the choice program on the first year entry point? NO. Your waitlist position does NOT carry forward, however the registration priority criteria will be applied for the following year.
21. If the choice program I am interested in is offered in more than one site (ie: Early Immersion at Belmont and Early Immersion at James Kennedy), do I get a choice of which site I would prefer? If a choice program is offered in more than one site, most parents are usually only interested in being in the program if it is in their site of choice. Yes, parents should indicate their preference for site locations if there is more than one.
22. Once I receive an offer of a seat in a choice program how long do I have to decide? Forty-eight hours. If the school does not hear back from you, they will move to the next name on the list and your child's name goes to the bottom of the list. Therefore it is important that you provide up to date and alternate options for contact information of where you can be reached when the schools begin the process of offering seats in the late fall.
23. What if space becomes available in the program after Sept. 30 of the child's entry year? Do I get in to the program? Schools will maintain a one -year waitlist that expires on September 30 of the child's first entry point into the program. After September 30, you are welcome to keep your child on the waitlist, however your child would then be subject to the criteria for priority registration and should there be a need for a random draw process, your child's waitlist position may change.
24. My child was not accepted into the Kindergarten year of the choice program. Can my child be considered for grade 1 and do they keep their place on the waitlist? You are welcome to keep your child on the cohort waitlist for as long as is appropriate for the program (*it becomes harder for some programs like French Immersion as the educational gap increases greatly*) however they will be subject to the registration priority criteria each year and therefore their waitlist number will change each year.
25. If my child gets accepted into the second choice program, can I remain on the waitlist for my first preferred choice program should space become available? Can I change over if a space becomes available? NO. This holds up the process for other families and creates disruption and a sense of inequity.
26. What if I don't have access to a computer or an electronic device to complete the online application process? The District will accommodate any families who do not have Internet access at the School Board Office for two weeks beginning at 12:00 pm noon on the first Monday in October of the year prior to the September start in the program.
27. I have a child with Special Needs. Is my child welcome in any choice program? The District currently enrolls children with Special Needs in all choice programs. The District encourages parents to meet with the school administration of a specific program to determine if the program is a good fit for the needs of the child.
28. How do I find out if a choice program is right for my child? Choice Program schools hold information sessions for parents in order to share the educational philosophy of the school. All parents are encouraged to attend these sessions and to find out more about each program via the school website.

29. How do I find out my status as to whether or not I am accepted into a program? You will be contacted by the School Principal if you are offered a seat in a choice program. You will be contacted by a district staff employee at the School Board Office as to the status of your application if you are not offered a seat and will be given the option of being on a waitlist.
30. What happens to new families who move into Langley who are interested in these programs? Families moving into the District are encouraged to contact the School Board Office directly for information about how to apply.
31. Is there an appeal process? Yes. If a parent has a concern regarding a placement or lack thereof in any choice program, parents / legal guardians can make an appeal via the District's Policy No. 1205 – Bylaws of the Board – Student / Parent Appeals.