

# BOARD OF EDUCATION

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 35 (LANGLEY)

POLICY MANUAL

Policy No. 5084

SUBJECT: ADMISSION TO CHOICE PROGRAMS

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Langley School District is required, under the *School Act* and in accordance with provincial legislation, to provide an educational program for all students of school age. The Board of Education believes that the needs of the majority of students are best served when they attend the school in their catchment area.

The Board also recognizes that students learn in a variety of different learning environments. In addition to the regular program offered at School District No. 35 catchment schools, the Board offers programs of choice at the elementary, middle and secondary school levels. These programs are designed to recognize students' diverse ways of learning and address a range of interests and abilities. Choice programs are delivered in learning environments that are designed to reflect a variety of different program delivery and philosophical models.

The Board of Education believes that access and equity are important attributes of public education that must be respected when accepting students into choice programs.

Recognizing that enrollment in choice programs is limited, a central application process supporting equity of access will be maintained. This process will allow a parent/guardian to make application into a choice program as specified in the Regulations to Policy No. 5084 – Admission to Choice Programs.

Reference: *School Act*, Section 2

These Regulations apply to entry into:

- Early French Immersion
- Late French Immersion
- Langley Fine Arts
- Langley Fundamental Elementary/Middle/Secondary
- Coghlan Fundamental Elementary
- Uplands Montessori Elementary
- U-Connect

The Board recognizes that students learn in a variety of different learning environments. Langley School District provides a number of choice programs at the elementary, middle, and secondary levels that offer students an option from regular school programming. Choice programs provide options to parents who desire a special focus for their child's learning through different program delivery models.

Each choice program is unique, with a distinct identity and approach to curriculum delivery and philosophy. Each program typically features a specialized focus, a commitment to innovative programs and significant community involvement. While the programs offer courses approved by the Ministry of Education, they are delivered in learning environments that are flexible and meet the needs of individual students.

This policy is created under the guiding principles that entry into a choice program should be based on the educational and learning needs of the student. It is the responsibility of the student's parent/legal guardian to obtain information about the program so that they are able to make an informed decision in the best interest of their child.

If parents/legal guardians are interested in a particular choice program, they are invited to contact the school where that program is offered. Information can also be obtained from the School District website.

<http://www.sd35.bc.ca/pages/default.aspx>

### **PROCEDURAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHOICE PROGRAM OPTIONS**

Langley School District allows parents/legal guardians the ability to apply to a maximum of two choice programs for their child. Entry into any choice program is through an application process. The District has established criteria for priority placement into choice programs and the details are listed below.

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Families will be invited to apply to a maximum of two choice programs beginning at noon on the **first Monday in October in the year prior** to the September start in the program. Families will be required to name their first and second choice program preference on the application. Should families have a strong preference for one particular program, they are not required to choose two.

The following points listed below outline the procedure for application.

- All applications must be completed and submitted online
- Any families who do not have Internet access will be accommodated 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
- This process would apply to all choice programs
- This process would precede the deadline for catchment area registrations that typically begin on the third Monday in January prior to the September start
- Parents would have to re-apply for a program if they were not successful in one year
- This process would apply to all choice programs

Some choice programs have more than one entry point into the program depending on the specific program and circumstances. In choice programs where there are multiple entry points, parents who are not successful in obtaining a placement in a given year are welcome to make application again in another year.

Once a parent is invited to register their child in a choice program and accepts the registration, their child's name will be removed from any other list. They will surrender the opportunity to hold an additional placement option in reserve.

Information sessions, such as 'Open House' evenings, will be offered at the various schools to communicate the unique characteristics of each choice program and to outline the application and registration processes. Links to information on the District website will provide more information to parents and students, and parents are encouraged to take advantage of the information available to learn about the programs.

### **REGISTRATION PRIORITY CRITERIA**

For seats available at choice programs, the following selection criteria will be used to place students who have completed the application process:

- (a) First priority will be given to the siblings of School District No. 35 (Langley) resident students who are enrolled at the school choice program or in the same District choice program;
- (b) Second priority will be given to School District No. 35 (Langley) resident students;
- (c) Third priority will be given to the siblings of School District No. 35 (Langley) non-resident students who are enrolled at the school choice program or in the same District choice program;

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(d) Fourth priority will be given to non-resident students in the following sequence:

- (i) Students resident in another British Columbia School District,
- (ii) Other Canadian students who are resident in British Columbia.

### INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Each year, the District reserves a limited number of seats in certain choice programs at the secondary school level for International Students.

### RANDOM DRAW PROCESS

At times, for certain programs, there may be more applications than seats available for the next year's intake. Should this be the case, the available seats will be issued to students on a random draw basis following the priority order criteria listed above. The random draw could therefore occur at any point in the priority order criteria depending on the actual choice program. In order to be considered to participate in the random draw procedure, parents/legal guardians will need to have fully completed the online application with all of their child's necessary documentation in place. The District anticipates holding the draw for each program, if necessary, in November of the year preceding the September entry point into the program. Parents/legal guardians who have successfully completed the application process will be automatically entered into the random draw process should there be one.

### ACCEPTANCE DATE

The Acceptance Date will be defined as the date that the parent is notified that a placement is available for their child and they must in turn either accept or decline the offer. Parents/legal guardians will be notified in advance of the timeline for this part of the process and **they will have a maximum timeframe of forty-eight hours in order to formally accept the placement or decline the offer.** After that time, if the parent/legal guardian has not declared his/her intent for placement, the child's application goes to the bottom of the waitlist.

### REGISTRATION DATE

The 'Registration Date' is the date established with an individual parent to formally register their child at the school site of the choice program and to provide all of the necessary registration documentation to the school. At this point, all required paperwork would be completed.

### WAITLISTS

The District recognizes that family circumstances can change throughout the course of a year and consequently, placements may become available during the year after the registration processes have been completed. Therefore, waitlists will be maintained for each choice program for the duration of the year prior to the September entry point into the program. The waitlist will be created from the priority placement and random draw process. Parents/legal guardians who were not successful in obtaining a placement in their preferred choice program each year will be able to indicate that they would like their child's name to

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remain on the one-year waitlist. The waitlist will remain in effect for one year only, until the first Monday in October of the entry year into the program, after which time it will be dissolved.

**REVIEW PROCESS**

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.