

Magnet Schools

The Fresno Unified School District (FUSD) Governing Board has established a number of innovative programs throughout the FUSD to provide parents and students the opportunity to choose from among a range of programs that meet the varied interests and needs of the students in FUSD and promote diverse school enrollments at FUSD schools. A magnet school or program is one type of innovative program established by the FUSD Board designed to meet the needs and interests of students, and to provide the educational benefits of diverse racial and ethnic enrollments.

Types of Magnet Schools and Programs

FUSD magnet schools may offer school-wide and school-within-a-school magnet programs.

1. A school-wide magnet is one in which all students enrolled in the school participate in the magnet program. All elementary school magnet programs in FUSD are school-wide programs. FUSD shall not use admission criteria to determine whether students are qualified to participate in an elementary magnet program.
2. A school-within-a-school magnet is one in which only those students enrolled in the magnet program participate directly in the program. School-within-a-school students should have as much interaction as possible with other students in the school, consistent with the curricular requirements of the magnet program. Middle school and high school magnet programs in FUSD include school-wide and school-within-a-school programs.

Process for Developing Magnet Schools or Programs

The Superintendent shall recommend to the Board the type of magnet schools or programs to be offered in FUSD and the schools at which these programs shall be offered. This may include any existing magnet schools or programs that should be substantially improved, expanded, replicated or eliminated. The Superintendent shall base recommendations on the following:

1. Interests and needs of students enrolled in FUSD,
2. District Goals and Priorities, and
3. Success of the programs in FUSD, or in other school districts, in improving academic achievement and in attracting students from diverse backgrounds.

Process for Recruiting and Selecting Students for Magnet Schools and Programs

Annually, the Superintendent or his designee shall develop and implement a plan for the recruitment and selection of students that includes:

1. Recruitment: The purpose of the recruitment plan is to provide equitable access for FUSD students to FUSD magnet schools and programs and to recruit students from diverse backgrounds

to each magnet school and program offered in FUSD. The recruitment plan shall consist of a variety of strategies at the district level and at school sites. Magnet applications shall be available at all schools and at central locations throughout FUSD.

2. Application Process: The FUSD shall establish annually an application period for parents to submit applications for magnet programs. To apply for a magnet program, parents must submit applications by mail or in person by the established deadline to the designated FUSD Office.

3. Selection Process for Magnet Schools and Programs with No Admission Criteria: The designated FUSD Office shall process the applications for each magnet school or program that does not have admission criteria. When there are more applications than space available for such programs or schools, FUSD shall conduct a computerized random lottery to select students from among applications submitted by the established deadline.

When there are more applicants than seats in a magnet school or program, the FUSD will prioritize applicants on the basis of the following eligibility groups:

1. Resident FUSD students living within the attendance boundaries, and non-resident FUSD students currently attending an FUSD school with a valid interdistrict placement;
2. Non-resident students with no intradistrict transfer to attend FUSD schools.

The lottery will assign students by eligibility group priority order until all spaces have been awarded. As part of the lottery process, FUSD may use the socio-economic status of students, as determined by a student's eligibility for Free and Reduced priced meals, as one of the factors in the lottery process. FUSD may also consider other criteria, such as parental employment location for specific magnet programs. Students not selected through a random lottery are placed in an applicant pool within their respective eligibility groups.

Admission Criteria Selection Process

Magnet schools or programs that have admission criteria, which currently includes Computech Middle and High School and the Sunnyside Doctors Academy, shall have an Applications Screening Committee that reviews the applicants. The Admission Screening Committee shall be representative of the diversity within the community and shall review all applications, including applications for students with disabilities under section 504 or the

IDEA. Information regarding the student's disability and/or accommodations shall not be accessed or considered by the Applications Screening Committee during this screening process. All applicants, including students with disabilities, will receive full consideration and those who meet the program criteria will be admitted.

Those student applicants with disabilities or special needs who are not selected for the magnet school or program by the Application Screening Committee will be reviewed again by the Second Review Committee. The Second Review Committee will consist of a Special Education Representative, 504 Coordinator, Student Support Services liaison and school administrator. The Second Review Committee shall review the application, the applicant's current 504 Plan or Individualized Education Program (IEP), and shall consider any information voluntarily provided by the applicant regarding his/her disability and proposed accommodations.

After the second review, if the committee determines that the student does not meet the admissions criteria for reasons unrelated to his/her disability(ies) and/or special need(s), then the denial of admission will be upheld. If, however, the committee determines that the reason the student does not meet the admissions criteria is related to his/her disability(ies) and/or special need(s), then the student shall be admitted to the magnet school or program, and shall be provided with special education and related services or Section 504 accommodations and related aids and services, unless the students IEP or 504 Team determines, after reviewing the proposed magnet school or program placement, that even with all available aids, services, and accommodations, the placement would not provide a free and appropriate public education for the student, or would not be the least restrictive environment in which the student could receive an appropriate education.

If the above findings are made, the denial of admission may be upheld. Students not admitted to a program may appeal that decision to the site principal.

At the secondary level, the principal of a school offering a magnet school or program may propose, subject to review and approval of the Superintendent or designee, admission criteria to determine whether students are likely to benefit from participating in that program. When such criteria are proposed, the Superintendent or designee shall review the criteria to ensure that the criteria are educationally related to the magnet program offered and that all students will have equitable access to the magnet school or program. The purpose and effects of any admissions criteria and the results of any screening and selection process shall ensure that all students have equitable access and that no group is disadvantaged by the selection criteria or selection process.

Conditions for students to remain in magnet schools or programs

A student who is admitted to a magnet school or program may remain in the program until he/she completes the highest grade offered by the school or program, providing that decision does not adversely impact admission opportunities for resident students in the applicant pool, and that the student continues to meet any criteria approved by the Superintendent. The criteria may include the requirement that students:

1. Participate in the magnet program on a full-time basis,
2. Maintain a desired grade-point average and behavior and attendance record, and
3. Reside in the district or obtain an interdistrict transfer. If a student moves out of the FUSD while enrolled in a magnet school or program, the FUSD will permit the student to complete the magnet program to the highest grade offered at that school providing that decision does not adversely impact admission opportunities for resident students, and with approval of the new district of residence. If an interdistrict transfer is approved, the student may continue in the magnet school or program.

Resources

As part of FUSDs annual budget process, the Superintendent shall recommend to the Board the resources necessary for each magnet school or program. The Superintendent shall ensure that transportation to magnet schools and programs is provided in a fair and equitable manner to support the goals of the magnet program, and shall consider the following:

1. Some elementary school magnet programs may have no attendance zone (EAZ) and all students attending the school apply for admission. All these students, except those living within the designated walking-zone of the school, are provided transportation.
2. Elementary school magnet programs also may have an attendance zone (EAZ). Transportation for students living outside the attendance zone of the school is determined on a school-by-school basis, taking into account transportation costs in combination with the purposes for the magnet program.
3. Transportation for middle school and high school students, except for those students living within the designated walking-zone of the school, is determined on a school-by-school basis, taking into account transportation costs in combination with the purposes for the magnet program.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Annually, the Superintendent shall submit a report to the Board regarding the implementation of magnet schools and programs. This report, disaggregated as needed by race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, special education, shall include:

1. An analysis of the recruitment plan and applicant pool in providing equitable access to magnet schools and in recruiting students from diverse backgrounds and levels of achievement for each magnet program and school;
2. An analysis of any admission criteria used to select students to magnet schools and programs, including a determination of whether such criteria is providing for equitable access of all students and whether such criteria is having a negative impact on any particular group of students;
3. An analysis of students who are not allowed to remain in a magnet program, and
4. Recommendations for improving magnet schools and programs in FUSD, including whether to establish any new magnet schools or programs or to replicate, expand, modify, or discontinue any existing programs.

Policy FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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