

Students

Application, Enrollment, and Placement to Magnet Schools

Introduction

A magnet school will be defined as one drawing students from its own district and from other designated districts. A magnet school may choose a theme or specialty as a means of enhancing student achievement and of attracting other students to attend. The New London Magnet Program was developed to offer greater educational opportunities for students to advance in a competitive, modern, technologically advanced world. Parents and their children now have the opportunity to apply for a theme-based course of study for their child, to make sure that they are fully prepared to meet the demands of an advanced society. As New London Public Schools continues to evolve into a magnet district, policies and procedures will continue to be updated to reflect the district's shifting landscape.

A. Definitions

1. A **magnet school** will be defined as one drawing students from its own attendance district and from other designated districts. A Magnet School is a public school that has a centralized theme or pedagogical focus.
2. **Inter-district magnet schools** are open to resident students and students residing anywhere in Connecticut.
 - a. Out of District students are students who reside outside of New London and in any Connecticut town.
3. **Intra-district magnet schools** are only open to students who reside within the City of New London.

B. Principles

1. The main purpose of magnet schools is:
 - a) to stabilize racial integration; and
 - b) to provide educational choice and offer innovative programming.
2. **Diversity** is a cornerstone to offering students a global educational experience. Schools, through recruitment and lotteries, strive to have student populations that are reflective of the community. Culturally competent educational environments model empathy, respect, and working collaboratively with a variety of persons.
3. **Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development** is developed to assure theme-based relevant instruction to students. Effective teaching strategies, emulating from best practices, are implemented through the inclusion of the school's theme. Curriculum is based on high quality rigorous standards that prepare students for higher education and career success.

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C. Application and Enrollment

1. The application and admission procedures for magnet schools shall be centralized, shall be determined by guidelines issued by the Superintendent, and shall be managed by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee so that all magnet schools and programs are consistent in these procedures.
2. Information will be distributed through a variety of multimedia outlets so that students and families may learn of magnet opportunities in their native language, of how application is made, and of deadlines related to the process.
3. The recruitment period for high school level shall be October through January of each school year. The recruitment period for elementary and middle school levels shall be January through April of each school year.
4. Families can submit online applications, as contracted through a third party software management company, or paper applications. All paper applications will be uploaded into the online application system by a centralized department as determined and authorized by the Superintendent of Schools or the Superintendent's designee.
5. Magnet schools will not screen applicants or determine admissions by the use of special admissions tests, auditions, or requirements to submit portfolios or collections of past work; or by reference to test scores, academic records, attendance or discipline records, or by use of teacher recommendations, parent letters, or interviews of applicants.
6. Application to magnet schools is open to special education students on the same basis as other students in the mainstream,
7. Application to magnet schools is open to English Language Learners on the same basis as other students in the mainstream. All schools are required to provide services to English Language Learners.
8. Admissions to magnet schools shall be monitored to ensure that magnets are racially integrated and also contribute positively to the integration of the public schools from which their students are drawn.
9. New London students who enroll following the application deadline are still required to submit applications, however they will be enrolled in a magnet school based upon space availability.
10. Out of District students may apply and must be enrolled in a New London magnet school by September 30th of each school year.
11. For the purpose of managing enrollments in school's system-wide, keeping integration stable system-wide, and assuring a pool of applicants for all magnets, recruiting and marketing will be utilized to generate applications from selected attendance areas.

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C. Application and Enrollment (continued)

12. All applications received following the closing date of the application period will be added to a current wait list. Resident applicants will be assigned to a magnet school based on available space at the time of application. Out of District applicants will be notified if a space becomes available at the wait listed magnet school.
13. Not later than two weeks following an enrollment lottery for an inter-district magnet school conducted by the District, the District will notify the parent or guardian of their student's acceptance or wait list placement. Following this notification, the parent or guardian then must reply in writing of their desire to accept the student's placement or wait list spot.
14. Resident and Out of District students who apply to New London Public Schools pursuant to the regulations approved by the Board may enroll in the district's magnet schools on a space available basis, as determined by lottery placement. Once students are enrolled the sending district is responsible for payment of tuition. In addition, sending districts are responsible for payment of any related services provided to accepted students. Families accepted from sending districts are not responsible for payment of magnet school tuition or related services.

D. Sending District Notifications

1. The Board recognizes that annually, the District shall provide notification to the school district that is otherwise responsible for educating a student who resides in such school district and will be enrolled in an inter-district magnet school under the District for the following school year. Such notification will be issued prior to the close of the current school year, prior to the start of the new school year, and as of October 1st of each school year. This notification shall include the number of such students, by grade, who will be enrolled in an inter-district magnet school under the District, the name of the school in which such student has been placed and the amount of tuition to be charged to the local board of education for such student. Such notification shall represent an estimate of the number of students expected to attend such inter-district magnet schools in the following school year, but shall not be deemed to limit the number of students who may enroll in such inter-district magnet schools for such year.

E. Enrollment Balance

1. As required by P.L. 10-264 in order to receive magnet funding the New London Board of Education must ensure that at least 25% of the students enrolled in the magnet schools are identified as white and 25% from the total school enrollment must come from another district.

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F. Priority Admission and Preference

1. For the purpose of family convenience, siblings of enrolled magnet school students will be granted priority admission status to the magnets attended by their siblings.
 - a. Such status requires that the magnet school applicant (a) have a sibling who is enrolled in the magnet school to which the applicant seeks admission, and (b) who will continue to be enrolled in the magnet school in the school year when the applicant will be enrolled, and (c) the sibling has a completed application on file prior to the close of the lottery period. If the sibling wishes to attend another school a lottery application must be completed.
 - b. For this purpose, “siblings” are defined as children who live in the same household with a common parent or legal guardian.
 - c. Siblings may be admitted to the magnet school provided that the admission does not result in a violation of contract limits on class size or the stated purposes for magnet schools, or exceeds the ratio limitations for New London and Out of District attendees.
 - d. In cases of shared custody or court appointed guardianship, court documentation must be provided to verify custodial relationship and residency. Temporary guardianship must extend three months into the school year. Documentation is due at the time of the application.
 - e. Sibling priority admissions will take precedence over staff priority admissions.
2. For the purpose of staff relations, children of board hired employees will be granted priority admission status to the magnet pathways that employ their parents.
 - a. The children of Central Office and Adult Education employees will be granted priority admission to their first ranked school choice only.
 - b. The children of school-based employees will receive priority admission to the school where the parents are employed.
3. Students currently enrolled in a magnet pathway will receive priority admission to all magnet schools within the enrolled magnet pathway.
 - a. Pathway students are placed ahead of all priority admitted students.
 - b. Pathway students do not have to re-enroll in the same pathway each school year.
 - c. Pathway students are not required to submit applications.
 - d. Pathway students may submit an application to enter a different pathway.

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- G.** All students attending magnet schools are required to adhere to all policies and procedures established by New London Public Schools.
- H.** Magnet school students shall be eligible to participate in all extracurricular activities offered by the school they attend without special wait periods or requirements.
- I.** Transportation of magnet school students will be provided under the same rules that apply to students in other schools.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-55 Pupils to attend regional school
10-226a Pupils or racial minorities
10-226b Existence or racial intolerance
10-226c Plan to correct imbalance
10-226d Approval of Plan by State Board of Education
PA 96-213 An Act Concerning School Readiness and Intradistrict Choice

Content Reference: Magnet Schools of America
<http://www.magnet.edu/about/our-mission-and-beliefs> [02-02-16]