Magnet Taskforce Update

Education Committee, March 7, 2017

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Agenda

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- Background
- Stakeholder Survey Results
- Program and Operational Recommendations
- Up Next

Magnet Taskforce Purpose

An internal Magnet taskforce was initiated to review the current state of the District's magnet schools/programs with an overarching goal to:

- *Assure that the PreK-12 options afforded to our students are equitable, coherent, and high quality.*

Magnet Survey

Family, staff, and community survey of magnet offerings launched in December:

- Various methods to promote and elicit responses
  - Parent meetings, website, social media & calls
- Approximately 200 respondents
  - 91.3% had at least one PPS student
  - Of those, 83.5% attended magnet schools
- 49 neighborhoods represented from all regions
  - Majority from East End, especially Highland Park & Squirrel Hill

Survey Results

Survey Feedback	Application Data & Trends	Recommendation
- School choices based on reputation of the school & knowledge of the school	- Application trends relatively consistent across years for schools/programs - Families tend to apply to schools in their region	- Enhance promotions of all magnet offerings within an overall campaign that celebrates everything that PPS has to offer
- Families like having choices and a variety of options for their child's education	- Many applicants preference a variety of diverse programs, e.g. Obama, Sci Tech and CAPA	- Consider expanding choices, by increasing slots and/or adding themes
- Concern about the magnet theme being followed with fidelity in some programs	- Less well-defined themes tend to attract fewer applications	- Consider unique support for magnet themes, and/or revamp programs with themes that are less popular

Families expressed interest in expanding the following **existing** magnet themes, which aligns with data from program preferences on magnet applications...

Theme	% Of Respondents *Somewhat or Very Interested* in Expanding
Science & Technology	97.6%
STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Math)	97.2%
International Studies	94.9%
Pre-Engineering	92.5%
Spanish Language	91.9%
STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math)	91.5%
College Preparatory	88.5%
Creative & Performing Arts/ Arts & Humanities	86.9%

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Programs of Interest

Beyond existing programs, top requested **new or expanded** themes include:

Grade(s)	Feedback on Theme *% of respondents somewhat or very interested in adding*

Across K-12	• Environmental Science – 88% expressed interest
	• Not as popular, but still popular
	   ○ Service Learning - 72% expressed interest
	   ○ Business & Leadership - 75% expressed interest

K-5	• Dual Immersion Language - 88.3% expressed interest • International Studies/IBPYP - 86.1% expressed interest
6-8	• Pre-engineering - 88.3% expressed interest • Not as popular, but still popular ○ Teaching – 65.1% expressed interest
9-12	• Computer Science - 92.4% expressed interest • Law & Social Justice - 89% expressed interest

Other areas of expressed interest include: *Specific Career & Technical Education offerings; Construction engineering combined with green energy /environmental preservation; Robotics (STEM); Cross-curricular project based learning; Expanded general arts; Elementary Japanese (pathway to Obama); Gifted magnet school; project & problem based learning*

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- Equity and Consistency of Accessibility to Programs
  - Eligibility criteria for program entry
  - Program inconsistences for 9th grade application process

- Monitoring and Support for Program Themes
  - Coaching support for magnet programs
  - Staffing model aligned program theme
  - Process for changing an existing program theme

- Developing a Process for Becoming a Magnet
- Marketing of all schools including magnet theme options

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March - June 2017:

- Secure additional staff and community feedback
- Launch process for existing magnet schools to have the opportunity to change their magnet theme
- Incorporate recommended changes into Magnet Administrative Regulation
- Present final recommendations to the Board of Directors