

## **Policy 7:400 – New School or Program Development (Magnet, Thematic, or Specialized Programs)**

### **Purpose**

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of developing innovative educational programs to meet the evolving needs of students and the broader community. This policy establishes a procedure for initiating, developing, and implementing new school programs, including magnet, theme-based, or specialized instructional models, consistent with the District's strategic goals and in compliance with State regulations.

### **Policy**

The Board authorizes the Superintendent or designee to lead a structured process for the development of new educational programs or schools. This process shall include the following components:

#### **1. Preliminary Alignment Review**

Prior to formal Board consideration, the Superintendent shall:

- Review relevant Board policies to determine permissibility.
- Assess the proposed program's alignment with the District's mission, equity goals, and strategic priorities.
- Present findings to the Board for informal discussion or guidance.

#### **2. Proposal Development**

A comprehensive written proposal shall be developed. This proposal may be developed by a working group designated by the Superintendent. The group may include administrators, educators, staff, parents, students, and community stakeholders. The proposal must include:

- A clearly defined vision and purpose.
- Thematic focus (e.g., STEM, Fine Arts, Language Immersion) and expected impact on student outcomes.
- Curriculum framework and instructional design.
- Staffing and professional development requirements.
- Facility needs and classroom configurations.
- Budget estimates and funding sources.
- Timeline for implementation.

### **3. Board Consideration and Approval**

The Superintendent shall present the finalized proposal to the Board of Education at a regular meeting for discussion and action. The presentation must:

- Address implications for equity, access, and sustainability.
  - Include a plan for ongoing evaluation and community engagement.
- Board approval is required prior to implementation, including any reconfiguration of schools, redistricting, or staffing changes.

### **4. Application for Recognition of Schools (ARS)**

Following Board approval:

- The Superintendent or designee shall submit an Application for Recognition of Schools (ARS) through the Illinois State Board of Education's IWAS system.
- The application must comply with ISBE standards related to curriculum, facilities, and staffing.
- The application should be submitted by September 30 of the school year prior to the anticipated launch.

### **5. Regional Office of Education (ROE) Review**

- The ROE will review the ARS application for compliance and may conduct an on-site visit.
- The ROE will submit its findings and recommendations to ISBE.

### **6. Final ISBE Review**

- The Illinois State Board of Education will conduct a final review of the application and ROE recommendation.
- If approved, ISBE will grant recognition status to the school or program.

Note: ISBE recognition confirms compliance with legal standards but does not imply approval of the program model.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Once implemented, the Superintendent shall annually report to the Board on program outcomes, enrollment, staffing, and financial sustainability.
- The Board reserves the right to modify, suspend, or terminate any program that does not meet established benchmarks or legal requirements.

### **Legal References**

- 105 ILCS 5/10-20.5 (Board Duties)
- 23 Ill. Admin. Code § 1.10 et seq. (School Recognition Requirements)

- ISBE School Recognition and ARS Guidance
- Board Policies 2:10, 2:130, 6:40, 6:180

**Adopted / Reviewed / Revised**

Adopted: [Insert Date]

Reviewed: [Insert Date]

Revised: [Insert Date]