

Executive Council recommends that magnet programs/busing be maintained

Rainbow District School Board's Executive Council is recommending that the magnet programs in Rainbow secondary schools be maintained with busing. Magnet programs include the Arts Education Program at Sudbury Secondary School, the Science Technology Education Program at Lockerby Composite School, the International Baccalaureate Program at Lo-Ellen Park Secondary School and the Integrated Technology Program at Lively District Secondary School.

The recommendations, presented at the Strategic Planning Committee meeting on Tuesday, February 10, 2015, follow the findings of an in-depth review. The review, carried out through the lens of student achievement and well-being, included a third party analysis of student achievement data and transportation costs as well as information gathered from principals, School Council Chairs, students and teachers.

Rationale for the recommendations indicated that the four magnet programs offer students choice through specialized programs that are distinct, respect student voice, provide more options and pathways for students, ensure program viability across the District, attract students from out of District and increase funding to the system as a whole. Transportation to magnet programs ensures student choice, provides equity of access to specialized programs, attracts students out of District and results in additional funding that offsets the cost.

Executive Council also recommended that community schools continue to receive additional supports and that all schools with magnet programs review their mandates in keeping with their mission statement, set of core beliefs, student learning outcomes and admission requirements.

Additional supports recognizes the importance of community schools, ensures program viability and provides resources in response to needs. A review of mandates focuses on student learning outcomes, provides clarity and consistency, maintains program expectations, responds to evolving learning and teaching practices and focuses on continuous improvement through the lens of student achievement and well-being.

The report on magnet programs in the Rainbow District School Board and Executive Council's recommendations can be accessed online at rainbowschools.ca.

The public will have an opportunity to make presentations at the regular meeting of the Board on Tuesday, February 24, 2015 as well as the Strategic Planning Committee meeting on Tuesday, March 10, 2015.

At this meeting, the Strategic Planning Committee may forward motions regarding the magnet programs to the Board for consideration. The motions will be considered at the Board meeting on Tuesday, March 24, 2015.

In order to facilitate anyone wishing to make a presentation on Tuesday, February 24, 2015, the timeline requirements are being waived to allow applications in writing to the Secretary of the Board at least six calendar days prior to the meeting (by February 18, 2015). A copy of the presentation is required by Friday, February 20, 2015.

Anyone wishing to make a presentation on Tuesday, March 10, 2015 shall apply in writing to the Secretary of the Board at least 16 calendar days prior to the meeting (by February 23, 2015). A copy of the presentation is required no later than Thursday, February 26, 2015.

Background:

The Arts Education Program at Sudbury Secondary School was established in 1985. Students earn eight credits in the Arts Education program. Students graduate with a locally developed Arts Education Certificate.

The Science and Technology Education Program (STEP) at Lockerby Composite School was established in 1991. Students earn 13 designated credits in the area of science and technology. Students graduate with a locally developed STEP Certificate.

The International Baccalaureate Program (I.B.) at Lo-Ellen Park Secondary School was established in 1999/2001. Students earn credits in designated I.B. courses, write six exams, and complete the Creativity, Action, Service (CAS) requirement. Students graduate with an I.B. Diploma.

The Integrated Technology Program (IT) at Lively District Secondary School was established in 2002. Students earn six technology credits. Students graduate with a locally developed Integrated Technology Certificate.