

Coast Mountains School District No. 82

Educational Administration

Date Adopted: Oct. 6, 2004

2520: Schools and Programs of Choice

POLICY

The Board of School Trustees will provide educational options for parents and students to choose from within the district.

DEFINITIONS

“Choice” is the opportunity to enrol in a school or school program selected from a variety of educational options available within the school district.

“Educational options” shall include available programs within a school or entire schools based on alternative educational models (such as Language Immersion, traditional, Montessori, culturally responsive, etc.).

“Catchment school” is the elementary or secondary school that a student would normally attend in the following September.

PREAMBLE

The Board will make every effort to retain the neighbourhood school concept by maintaining attendance/catchment areas for each school in the district. However, the Board recognizes the need to provide educational options (programs and schools of “choice”) for students, parents and staff. Students learn in diverse ways. Their needs can only be met by providing a variety of approaches to teaching, learning and schooling. Parents have different preferences for the type of school or program they believe will best meet the educational needs of their children. These preferences will be addressed through the provision of a range of educational options. Educators, too, have differing views on the philosophy, focus and operational strategies of schools. Giving educators the opportunity to choose schools that best reflect their beliefs and professional goals enhances job satisfaction and recognizes professional autonomy.

Ultimately, the Board supports the provision of comprehensive educational programs at each district school. The Board intends to provide an equitable distribution of district programs to all schools in the district.

REGULATIONS

1. The Board will continue to investigate opportunities to increase educational options at both elementary and secondary schools within the district.
2. The Board will encourage community involvement in the development and

3. provision of additional educational options. Such involvement may be in conjunction with the Parent Advisory Council of a school, the District Parent Advisory Council, or with the support of parents in the broader community independent of any individual school or Parent Advisory Council.
4. Student transfers into a school or program approved under this policy may be limited by the operation and effects of Policy 2505 School Attendance Areas, which gives priority to attendance/catchment area enrolment over students applying to transfer into a school.
5. School or program proposals may be submitted by staff, parents, students, individuals or groups within the community.
6. Those making submissions must be aware of the evaluation criteria to be used by the District Choice Committee (Regulations 7.1 to 7.12) and, further, must ensure that their proposal:
 - 5.1 Meets the requirements of the *School Act*, Regulations and Minister's Orders.
 - 5.2 Meets the provincial curricula and locally approved curricula.
 - 5.3 Has a statement of philosophy and objectives.
 - 5.4 Is open to application by any student in the district.
 - 5.5 Maintains student enrolment without any transportation assistance from the district.
 - 5.6 Can be accommodated in the existing school facilities without any major renovation or modification.
 - 5.7 Can be sustained with a level of funding equal to that of other schools of comparable enrolment in the district.
 - 5.8 Contains a staffing organization plan consistent with Board policies and the collective agreements with unionized employees.
 - 5.9 Has included parents, students and staff in the planning.
 - 5.10 Contains a timeline for implementation.
6. The Board will establish a District Choice Committee to evaluate all proposals. This committee will consist of members of District Administration as required.
7. The District Choice Committee will evaluate all school and program proposals received under this policy. The committee's evaluation will be based on, but not necessarily limited to, the following criteria:
 - 7.1 The objective of the program.

- 7.2 The uniqueness of the proposal in terms of teaching and learning styles.
- 7.3 Educational research in support of the program.
- 7.4 The need for the program in terms of the intellectual, social and emotional growth of students.
- 7.5 Parental and community support and staff and student support.
- 7.6 The availability and suitability of an existing district school and the impact on that school, if a proposal originates from the community.
- 7.7 The ability to facilitate alternative school or program placements of students whose parents do not support the proposal.
- 7.8 The ability to transfer staff who do not support the proposal to another assignment as per collective agreement provisions.
- 7.9 The availability of resources within the district to facilitate the program development.
- 7.10 A detailed estimate of costs involved.
- 7.11 Conformation to the *School Act*, collective agreements and district policy.
- 7.12 All of the criteria outlined in the above Regulation 5.
8. The District Choice Committee will make recommendations to the Board with respect to all proposals that meet the evaluation criteria.
9. The final decision with respect to all proposals rests with the Board of School Trustees. With respect to proposals referred to the Board, the Board may:
 - 9.1 Grant approval.
 - 9.2 Grant approval with a probationary term.
 - 9.3 Grant conditional approval.
 - 9.4 Refer the proposal back to the applicants for further work, information or clarification.
 - 9.5 Reject the proposal.
10. In reaching a final decision with respect to any proposal the Board shall place its emphasis on the following:
 - 10.1 The level of parental and community support.

- 10.2 The ability to facilitate alternative school or program placements for students whose parents do not support the proposal.
- 10.3 The ability to facilitate transfers of staff who do not support the proposal.
11. When the Board approves a school or program under this policy arising from a proposal that did not originate within a neighbourhood school, the Board, through the District Choice Committee, shall ensure that consultation with any school or neighbourhood community affected by the proposal is part of the process of determining the final location of the program or school.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

1. The Superintendent of Schools will designate a staff person to provide assistance to those interested in making a submission.
2. The District Choice Committee will develop a template to assist all groups in the development of their proposals.
3. Following the approval of a choice proposal by the Board, the Choice Management Committee will appoint an implementation team for each approved proposal. The team will consist of:
 - 3.1 Two representatives of the Coast Mountains Teachers' Federation from the school.
 - 3.2 The principal of the school.
 - 3.3 One other administrative officer.
 - 3.4 One trustee.
 - 3.5 Two members of the school's parent advisory council.
 - 3.6 One outside representative of the proposed education program (optional).
 - 3.7 One support staff (as appropriate).
 - 3.8 Students (as appropriate).
 - 3.9 The Superintendent of Schools (or designate) to act as chairperson.

Or, if the approved proposal did not originate from a school, the Choice Management Committee shall alter the composition of the implementation team accordingly.
4. School principals, vice-principals and teaching staff will assist parents and students in selecting programs or schools.