

**Baltimore County Public Schools  
Magnet Program Recommendations  
Executive Summary**

**INTRODUCTION**

In November 2013, Metis & Associates reported the results of a six-month evaluation of the magnet programs in Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS). This thorough report presented findings and made recommendations on ways in which the district is utilizing magnets, their effectiveness, and overall ability to promote equity and diversity within its schools.

The first key finding of the report states, “The vision for how the magnet program is aligned with the district’s instructional agenda, as outlined in the BCPS’s *Blueprint 2.0*, is not uniformly known or understood by stakeholders.”

In order to address this finding, Metis recommended the following:

“Create a Magnet Task Force with representation from district and school leaders, teachers, and community members to initiate a strategic planning process. The task force should be charged with developing a five-year plan for the BCPS magnet program that is aligned with the district’s five-year strategic plan articulated in *Blueprint 2.0* and that addresses:

- defining a clear vision for the role, definition, and value of magnet programs at the elementary, middle, and high school levels in BCPS; and
- identifying those best practices for magnet programs (e.g., marketing, staffing, capacity building, sustainability) that might help to inform the design of the plan.”

Under the leadership of Superintendent S. Dallas Dance, a magnet task force was convened on December 19, 2013.

**Charge, Membership, and Timeline**

The Magnet Task Force comprised a representative and diverse group of stakeholders, charged with clearly defining the vision, purpose and goals of magnet programs within BCPS and with developing a five-year strategic plan that addresses the findings and recommendations in the Metis report. The work of the Magnet Task Force was to be presented to the Board of Education in June of 2015. To accomplish this task the Magnet Task Force met once a month following the schedule outlined below.

Thursday, December 19, 2013  
Thursday, January 23, 2014  
Thursday, February 20, 2014  
Thursday, March 27, 2014  
Thursday, April 24, 2014  
Thursday, May 22, 2014  
Thursday, September 11, 2014  
Thursday, October 9, 2014  
Thursday, November 20, 2014  
Thursday, December 11, 2014  
Thursday, January 8, 2015  
Thursday, March 26, 2015

Superintendent S. Dallas Dance opened the first meeting of the Magnet Task Force by welcoming the members and providing the foundation and expectations for the work to be accomplished. An overview of Metis’ findings and recommendations followed along with a review of BCPS *Blueprint 2.0*. Magnet

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Schools of America (MSA) Executive Director and consultant, Scott Thomas, gave an overview of the national landscape of magnet schools and provided best practices, exemplar schools and districts, and answered numerous questions related to the state and development of magnet schools nationally. Mr. Thomas shared the *Five Pillars of Magnet Schools*, used by MSA to create national standards that promote best practices in magnet schools and programs. The Five Pillars include Diversity; Innovative Curriculum and Professional Development; Academic Excellence; High Quality Instructional Systems; and Family and Community Partnerships.

**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.

**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.

**Academic Excellence** is demonstrated through a commitment to multi-dimensional instruction focused on learner needs. Multiple assessment strategies are employed to monitor student learning, progress, and success. High expectations are clearly articulated and personalized supports are in place to address the interests and aspirations of all students.

**High Quality Instructional Systems** are rooted in well-prepared, well-educated professional educator. Teachers and administrators who are student-centered, collaborative, and inquisitive prepare learners to be world ready, workforce ready, and higher education ready.

**Family and Community Partnerships** are mutually beneficial, offer a system of support, shared ownership, and a caring spirit and are designed to enhance a theme integrated educational environment. Partnerships with parents are essential for a rich educational experience for students. Community partnerships include a diverse array of stakeholders including business, health and human services, and policy makers to support the education of all students.

These essentials, as identified by MSA, guided the work of the Magnet Task Force members as they reviewed, analyzed, and created the final vision, purpose and goals of magnet programs within BCPS.

Magnet Task Force members were assigned to smaller work groups that focused on the essential areas identified in the magnet evaluation report, which included:

- Administration, Oversight, and Monitoring
- Outreach, Marketing and Recruitment
- Equitable Access (Location and Transportation)
- Curriculum and Instructional Standards
- Administration, Oversight, and Monitoring

Each work group was directed to design essential questions, identify key informational needs, and determine formal recommendations that were specific to Metis' findings. The work groups met in between the monthly Magnet Task Force meetings, reporting and receiving feedback on their progress at the meetings of the larger group. In March 2015, BCPS conducted six Magnet Community Forums to seek input from external stakeholders. A web based survey was made available to the public seeking

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feedback on BCPS magnet programs. Approximately 177 participants attended the six forums and 953 online survey responses were received. The feedback from both the forums and the online survey were then reviewed by task force members in order to develop final recommendations to the Superintendent.

**MAGNET PROGRAM TASK FORCE PARTICIPANTS**

The BCPS Administration and School Board wish to thank the many people who served on this important Task Force. Their time, focus, and commitment to the greater purpose and mission of BCPS is appreciated and admired.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Office/Organization</b>
Pelumi Ajayi	Student	Magnet Student
Natalie Allen	Specialist	Communications Office
Don Arnold	Former BCPS Board President	Lincoln Financial Advisors
Kelsey Bialozynski	Student	Magnet Student
Rene Baker	Supervisor	Secondary Science
Tiara Booker-Dwyer	Program Director	MD. Business Round Table
Gary Brager	Supervisor	Research, Accountability & Assessment
Valerie Brennan	Teacher	CTE
Chris Brocato	Planning Analyst	Strategic Planning & Program Evaluation
Timothy Brown	Student	Magnet Student
Billy Burke	Chief of Organizational Effectiveness	Organizational Development
Emilie Cherry	Director High School Collaboration	Comm. Coll. Balto. County-Catonsville
Marla Dean	Principal	Randallstown High School
Dana Demby	Coordinator	Special Education
Charlene DiMino	Principal	Towson High School
Tracey Durant	Project Manager	Equity & Cultural Proficiency
James Dyson	Magnet Lead/Guidance Counselor	Randallstown High School
Craig Ebersole	Special Assistant	Facilities
Alicia Fales	Supervisor	Career & Technology Education
August Galluzzo	Specialist	Magnet Programs
Mark Gingerich	Team Leader - IT Project Management	Student Data
Ben Glaser	Student	Magnet Student
Joan Glaser	Parent	Magnet Parent
Liberty Grayek	Magnet Lead/Teacher	Patapsco High School
Douglas Handy	Coordinator	Career & Technology Education
Roderick Harden	Principal	Milford Mill Academy
Joe Harsel	Financial Advisor	Valic
Karen Harris	Principal	Fort Garrison Elementary

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<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Office/Organization</b>
Elisa Hartman	Parent	Special Education Advisory Council
Robin Hawley-Brillante	Resource Teacher	Special Programs
Tim Hayden	Coordinator	School Counseling
Ryan Imbriale	Executive Director Innovative Learning	Innovative Instruction
Maria Lowry	Assistant Superintendent	High Schools
Penelope Martin-Knox	Assistant Superintendent	Middle Schools
Julie Miller-Breetz	Parent	Gifted & Talented Advisory Council
Jim Mitcherling	Director	Transportation
Kathleen Mooney	Project Manager	Magnet Programs
Lisa Murphy	Fiscal Analyst, Budget	Budget and Reporting
Angelia Nicholas	Personnel Officer	Human Resources
Judy Opfer	Coordinator	ESOL/World Languages
Erin O'Toole-Trivas	Principal	Parkville Middle School
Mivida Parham	Supervisor	CTE
Buddy Parker	Principal	Western Tech High School
Susie Peeling	Magnet Lead/Teacher	Halstead Academy
Seth Rich	Board Member/Teacher	Milford Mill Academy
Denise Saulsbury	Supervisor	Home and Hospital Teaching Program
Leeann Schubert	Director	Alternative Education
Joyce Serio	Transition Facilitator	Special Education
MaryJo Slowey	Homeless Liaison	Homeless
Donna Sochurek	Specialist	Home Schooling
Diana Spencer	Communications Officer	Communications
Bryan Stoll	Supervisor	Magnet Programs
Lauren Taylor	Director of Communications	Baltimore County Chamber of Commerce
Delores Tedeschi-Butler	Principal	Deer Park Middle School
Scott Thomsen	Student	Magnet Student
Valerie Thompson	Assoc. General Counsel	Law Office
Stu Tobin	Logistics Baltimore County Chamber of Commerce	Thunderbolt Global
Sara Trenery	Business Development Representative	Baltimore County Department of Economic Development
Deeksha Walia	Student	Magnet Student
Mike Weglein	Principal	Sollers Point Technical High School
Verletta White	Chief Academic Officer	Curriculum & Instruction
Lynette Woodley	Coordinator	Organizational Development

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Name	Title	Office/Organization
Emory Young	Board Member	PTA Council

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Magnet Task Force final recommendations reflect the research, data collection, and analysis of local, state and national magnet practices. Each workgroup conducted an internal needs analysis of current BCPS magnet processes related to the area of focus, reviewed best practices within and outside of BCPS, and considered the community feedback collected in March 2015. The recommendations that follow include a summary of the community feedback as well as the final task force recommendations.

The Magnet Task Force recommends that the following be adopted by the Board of Education:

**Recommendation 1 – Magnet Definition:**

*Adopt the following definition for BCPS magnet schools and programs.*

BCPS Magnet programs are theme-related curricula and instructional programs that

- are not available as comprehensive school program options;
- serve as incubators for innovative instructional practices;
- draw students across school attendance boundaries, be in accordance with state rated capacity; and
- are accessed through a centralized application and admissions process.

**Recommendation 2 – Magnet Purpose Statement:**

*Adopt the following purpose statement for BCPS magnet programs.*

The purpose of magnet programs is to

- provide parents and students with viable public school choice options at elementary, middle, and high school;
- provide unique educational environments, innovative instructional programs, and specialized programs of study and/or experiences that address students’ interests, talents, and abilities; that extend and enrich the existing BCPS curricula; and that are not available in comprehensive school programs;
- promote student diversity\* by providing equitable access and opportunities across magnet programs and schools; and
- provide relevant programs aligned with evolving community and industry/business needs.

\*As defined by the Board of Education, diversity includes racial, ethnic, economic, gender, and special needs populations.

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**Recommendation 3 – Administration, Oversight, and Monitoring:**

**Introduction**

The Administration, Monitoring, and Oversight Workgroup of the Magnet Task Force has reviewed and recommended revisions to Board of Education Policy/Rule 6400, suggested changes to current roles and responsibilities of the Office of Magnet Programs (OMP), analyzed current budget and resources available to OMP, and provided a statistical comparison of magnet and non-magnet students. The recommendations are in response to the Five-Year Strategic Plan, FY2015 Goal 4 Strategic Initiatives.

In order to accomplish these tasks, Workgroup members interviewed staff of the offices of Magnet Programs, Student Behavior, Human Resources, Transportation, and Law. Workgroup members reviewed the BOE Policy/Rule 6400 and other pertinent policies to cross-reference several issues related to student discipline, transportation, admission, placement, and dismissal revolving around magnet programs. The Five-year Strategic Plan initiatives were referenced during this fact-finding phase as the basis for Workgroup deliberations. The Workgroup requested statistical comparisons of magnet and non-magnet students from the Office of Research to gain a better understanding about the overall systemic demographic achievement trends. The results from the community input sessions and the community online surveys provided useful information to supplement the other data used by the Workgroup.

Based on the analysis of the data, the Workgroup is recommending several modifications to Policy/Rule 6400 that governs magnet programs. In addition, recommendations reflect changes in the roles and responsibilities of OMP, especially related to oversight of school-based magnet programs.

**Recommendations:**

Link to the current Policy/Rules 6400 for reference:

[http://www.bcps.org/system/policies\\_rules/policies/6000Series/POL6400.pdf](http://www.bcps.org/system/policies_rules/policies/6000Series/POL6400.pdf)

<b>Community Feedback</b>	<b>Final Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>
<p><b>Policy/Rule 6400</b> No specific community recommendations correspond to these changes.</p>	<p><b>Policy/Rule 6400</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change Policy/Rule 6400 to include the new proposed definition and purpose of magnet programs, align Rule 6400 with existing BCPS policy and rules, and clarify processes and procedures including program withdrawals, student suspension, return from expulsion, student removal. (Amendment A – Policy and Rule 6400)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Programmatic Budget Oversight</b> No specific community recommendations correspond to these changes.</p>	<p><b>Programmatic Budget Oversight</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Align budget allocations with specific program costs along with a baseline per pupil allocation rather than just by per pupil allocation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Budget Monitoring</b> No specific community recommendations correspond to these changes.</p>	<p><b>Budget Monitoring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor expenditures tied to magnet programs by OMP. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This will likely require expansion of OMP staff and/or funds for oversight along with coordination with BCPS offices needed (e.g., budget office).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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<b>Community Feedback</b>	<b>Final Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>
<p><b>Enrollment Monitoring</b> No specific community recommendations correspond to these changes.</p> <p>Note: The community respondents were nearly split over whether magnet enrollment should mirror the demographics of the system’s students.</p>	<p><b>Enrollment Monitoring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build data acquisition process using Data Warehouse to monitor subgroup participation in all BCPS magnet programs.</li> <li>• Use data to revise marketing and outreach strategies.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Magnet Staffing Allocations</b> No specific community recommendations correspond to these changes.</p>	<p><b>Magnet Staffing Allocations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocate existing magnet FTEs according to program goals and need.</li> <li>• Identify a magnet resource teacher (.5 FTE) at each magnet site to support professional development, student recruitment and community outreach.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recruitment and Admissions</b> No specific community recommendations correspond to these changes.</p> <p>Note: “It is important that BCPS ensures that all parents and students are provided the opportunity to apply to a magnet program” had 96% community agreement.</p>	<p><b>Recruitment and Admissions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convert magnet application to a fully online model accessed through BCPS One.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Magnet Program Implementation Oversight</b> No specific community recommendations correspond to these changes.</p> <p>Note: “It is important that instructional standards be similar between schools with and without magnet programs” had 78% community agreement.</p>	<p><b>Magnet Program Implementation Oversight</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Align, monitor, and revise magnet curricula through a collaborative work effort with OMP and the Curriculum and Instruction Academic Offices.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Magnet Program Evaluation</b> No specific community recommendations correspond to these changes.</p> <p>Note: 80% of community respondents selected magnet theme or school as the most important factor affecting magnet enrollment.</p> <p>Note: “It is important that all magnet programs be routinely evaluated for relevance” and other factors had 90% community agreement.</p>	<p><b>Magnet Program Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish magnet program evaluation model to review program effectiveness, including academic impact as well as vertical alignment supporting college and career readiness.</li> <li>• Define formalized process for proposing new magnet programs and for the phasing out of magnet programs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ OMP recommendation to Chief Academic Officer.</li> <li>○ Chief Academic Officer recommendation to Superintendent.</li> <li>○ Superintendent recommendation to the BOE.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Develop and implement periodic revaluations of magnet programs in association with DRAA and other BCPS offices.</li> </ul>

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**Recommendation 4 – Outreach, Marketing and Recruitment:**

**Introduction**

The Outreach, Marketing and Recruitment workgroup has analyzed information regarding the practices currently in place with magnet marketing, outreach, and recruitment for BCPS magnet programs. The recommendations are in response to the Five-Year Strategic Plan, FY2015 Goal 2 which seeks to ensure greater access to magnet program information for all segments of the BCPS community.

The work group began its analysis in September 2014, by obtaining magnet applicant data for middle and high school programs for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, and 2014-2015 school years from the OMP. Requests for data were submitted to the Office of Student Data and the OMP. The work group reviewed the Office of Special Education audit recommendations as they pertained to magnet programs, specifically, that students with IEPs are under-represented in magnet programs. Data regarding race/ethnicity, special education designations, and gender was charted by geographic location for students currently attending Baltimore County Public Schools. Data for the same years, subgroups, and geographic locations, as well as Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS) data for Baltimore County Public Schools were obtained and charted.

An initial review of the available data revealed that while data fluctuates in various geographic areas of the county, students with IEP, 504, and ELL education plans are generally under-represented in the applicant pools for middle and high school magnet programs. Data regarding minority male applicants to high school programs indicates a trend of under-representation in the Northeast, and Southeast areas of the County, while minority females have not been significantly under-represented in any area of the county. White male applicants have been under-represented in the Central, Northwest, and Southwest, while white female applicants have been under-represented in the Southwest, Northwest, Northeast, and Central areas. An initial review of Grade 6 data indicates a trend of under-representation of white applicants in the Northwest, Central, and Northeast areas. The work group identified that some measures were already in place (i.e., Special Education table at Magnet EXPO; explanations of accommodations provided to students with IEPs at EXPO, Showcase events, magnet information meetings, print information available on OMP Web site and in brochures). The results from the community input sessions and the community online surveys provided useful information to supplement the other data used by the Workgroup.

**Recommendations:**

<b>Community Feedback</b>	<b>Final Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>
<p><b>Subgroup Enrollment</b> The community indicated through forum and survey feedback that they wanted to ensure information regarding magnet programs reaches all stakeholder audiences and that BCPS establishes means to communicate magnet program offerings to stakeholders not currently engaged with the public school system.</p>	<p><b>Subgroup Enrollment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement strategies to ensure that information regarding magnet programs reaches English Language Learner (ELL) audiences (OMP and the Office of World Languages).</li> <li>• Develop and implement strategies to support homeless and home schooled students to ensure that outreach strategies support these student populations (OMP and the Offices of Homeless Education and Home Schooling).</li> </ul>

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<b>Community Feedback</b>	<b>Final Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>
<p><b>Special Education Subgroup Enrollment</b> The community indicated through forum and survey feedback that they wanted to ensure that information regarding magnet programs reaches all stakeholder audiences including families of students with IEPs.</p>	<p><b>Special Education Subgroup Enrollment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement strategies to ensure that information regarding magnet programs reaches audiences with IEP and 504 plans (OMP and the Offices of Special Education, and Student Support Services).</li> <li>• Include representation of the Office of Special Education at Magnet Showcase events, information meetings, and other magnet events.</li> <li>• Identify opportunities to speak with IEP chairs and school counselors regarding magnet program options and processes (Offices of Special Education and School Counseling).</li> <li>• Establish additional opportunities to reach parents of students with IEPs (i.e., Child Find, Infants and Toddlers, SECAC, Parentmobile, Parent University, use of social media, etc.).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Marketing Strategies</b> The community indicated through forum and survey feedback that they wish to expand the magnet expo to include multiple offerings in multiple locations and information sharing in the following formats including current and graduated magnet students, magnet parents and Q&amp;A sessions. In addition, the community wanted to improve magnet communication indicating that there is a lack of awareness about elementary programs. It was suggested that BCPS use e-mails, texts, BCPS ONE, etc. to reach parents and that BCPS provide magnet information earlier to parents (early childhood for elementary, grades 4/5 for middle school and grades 7/8 for high school). Community feedback wanted to ensure that PTA/PTSA are informed about magnet programs and that magnet information is provided in multiple languages. The community suggested that BCPS promote magnet programs, at all levels, on the BCPS Web-site to increase early awareness for parents and students (i.e. as a part of the school locator process).</p>	<p><b>Marketing Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include a survey in the magnet decision letters eliciting feedback on current marketing practices.</li> <li>• Include the Offices of Communication, Special Education, School Counseling, Student Support Services, World Languages, Homeless Education, Home Schooling, and Early Childhood in ongoing analysis of marketing, outreach, and recruitment for magnet programs.</li> <li>• Establish alternative methods of obtaining input from parents in future application cycles (i.e., social media, ConnectEd calls, surveys at magnet events).</li> <li>• Use social media (Twitter, YouTube, Facebook) to communicate information on magnet programs.</li> <li>• Use BCPS TV (interviews/ advertisements/ promotional spots) to communicate information on magnet programs.</li> </ul>

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<b>Community Feedback</b>	<b>Final Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>
<p>Note: According to the March 2015 magnet survey, the most important sources for obtaining BCPS magnet programs include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Internet (29.9%)</li> <li>○ Magnet events (25.4%)</li> <li>○ Printed materials (22.3%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use BCPS' Web site, calendars, and automated phone systems to reach out to identified magnet audiences.</li> </ul>

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**Recommendation 5 – Equitable Access:**

**Introduction**

The Equitable Access Workgroup of the Magnet Task Force has analyzed and evaluated current magnet program options and the availability of transportation. The recommendations are in response to the Five-Year Strategic Plan, FY2015 Goal 1 which seeks to establish a system wide portfolio of magnet program offerings that ensures equity of physical access.

A needs analysis of current BCPS offerings was conducted along with an analysis of 5 school systems of comparable size outside of the state of Maryland. These school systems include Duval County Public Schools, San Diego Unified School District, Cobb County School District, Northside Independent School District, and Charlotte Mecklenburg School District. In addition, the workgroup obtained information regarding industry demands for magnet programming, including US Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Occupational Outlook Handbook, the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) Job Outlook 2008-2018 for the Baltimore county Workforce Area, and the Maryland DLLR Occupational Projections 2012-2022. The Office of Career and Technology Education (CTE) provided resources for identifying industry demand for magnet programming. The results from the community input sessions and the community online surveys provided useful information to supplement the other data used by the Workgroup.

As referenced in Amendment B – Equitable Access, proposed magnet program options and placement are identified for the east, west, and central areas of the county at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

**Recommendations:**

<b>Community Feedback</b>	<b>Final Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>
<p><b>Transportation</b> The community indicated through forum and survey feedback that they want BCPS to establish consistent and ubiquitous transportation to and from magnet programs in each of the three areas of the county and ensure that elementary magnet students have full transportation while establishing limited transportation options for secondary magnet students. It was suggested that BCPS require a minimum of 25 riders from a community transportation hub for a magnet bus to be provided.</p>	<p><b>Transportation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide transportation to all magnet programs within a geographical region at the elementary, middle and high school levels.</li> <li>• Locate magnet transportation hubs throughout each region of the county to maximize student access to transportation.</li> <li>• Use the same BCPS guidelines for magnet transportation as is used for community schools (transportation provided beyond 1.5 miles of school).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Program Placement</b> The community indicated through forum and survey feedback that they want to ensure that established magnet programs meeting with success are maintained and can be replicated with access to all three areas of the county at the elementary, middle and high school levels and that BCPS expand high demand programs to allow greater access. The community would like BCPS to establish an animal science and</p>	<p><b>Program Placement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish east, west, and central magnet zones that offer the same magnet program options at the elementary, middle, and high school level.</li> <li>• Create vertical alignment of magnet programs by providing varying opportunities at each level: elementary magnet exposure, middle magnet exploration, and high school magnet expertise.</li> </ul>

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<b>Community Feedback</b>	<b>Final Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>
<p>agriculture magnet program at Hereford HS and an instrumental music program at Carver Center. The community would like BCPS to add additional elementary and middle school magnet programs and program seats in each area of the county.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify locations for new magnet schools/programs at under enrolled BCPS schools.</li> <li>• Increase placement opportunities in high demand magnet programs.</li> <li>• Establish and instrumental music program at the George Washington Carver Center for Arts and Technology.</li> <li>• Phase out and/or replace magnet program offerings that are:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No longer supported by MSDE.</li> <li>• Currently available at most comprehensive BCPS high schools.</li> <li>• Significantly under enrolled.</li> <li>• Underperforming as defined by state, national or industry standards.</li> <li>• Costly to develop and maintain.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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**Recommendation 6 – Admissions Process:**

The Admissions Process Workgroup of the Magnet Task Force has evaluated the BCPS magnet programs' application and assessment tools, sibling priority placement policies, and special permission placement policies. The recommendations provided are in response to the Five-Year Strategic Plan, FY2015 Goal 3, which seeks to ensure a fair and equitable admissions process for all magnet programs. The strategic initiative completed by the workgroup ensures the magnet application, assessment, and admissions policies, rules, and procedures align with BCPS's stated goals and purpose for magnet programs.

According to the Magnet Schools of America organization, in 2013, of the 4,000 U.S. magnet and theme based schools, 75% of the schools surveyed, used a lottery selection, while 17% used academic criteria. The workgroup studied school systems similar to the BCPS system in size. Admission models include an admissions process that was initiated by student interest, an application submitted by students, and selection of students using a lottery system. The workgroup determined that a lesser number of systems followed processes ranging from evaluating test scores and report card grades, to more complex tiers of assessments and auditions.

The work group also utilized results from BCPS community input sessions and the community online survey provided to supplement findings. This data was used to form the recommendations that are in response to the Five-Year Strategic Plan, FY2015 Goal 3 Strategic Initiatives.

**Recommendations:**

Community Feedback	Final Task Force Recommendation(s)
<p><b>Sibling Priority</b> The community indicated through forum and survey feedback that they want to ensure that BCPS supports the sibling priority placement policy possibly at all levels.</p>	<p><b>Sibling Priority</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase in kindergarten sibling priority placement policy within in the region in which the program is located.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Applications</b> The community indicated through forum and survey feedback that they want to ensure that BCPS allows students to select more than one program to apply to per school.</p>	<p><b>Applications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish magnet application process at the high school level allowing students to apply for up to three programs, regardless of location, with qualification occurring at each location but transportation only provided within the area of zoned attendance.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ i.e. A student living on the west side, could apply and assess for the automotive program and thus qualify for the east, west and central programs. The student would be eligible for transportation to the west side program only. The student would receive preference in the lottery for the west side programs before students residing in the east or central areas.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Convert magnet application to a fully online model accessed through BCPS One.</li> </ul>

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<b>Community Feedback</b>	<b>Final Task Force Recommendation(s)</b>
<p><b>Assessments</b> The community indicated through forum and survey feedback that they want to ensure that BCPS uses the identical application criteria/standards for the same programs.</p>	<p><b>Assessments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use identical application criteria/standards for the same magnet programs.</li> <li>• Establish application standards in collaboration with the curriculum office and magnet program teacher so that they are uniform among similar programs.</li> <li>• Establish a centralized assessment program for programs that are the same (i.e. dance).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Placements</b> The community indicated through forum and survey feedback that they want to ensure that BCPS priority ranks middle school and high school placement based on assessment points earned with no use of a random lottery. The community would like BCPS to establish a quota for feeder schools identifying the number of priority placements available at a magnet school by feeder and continue BCPS employee priority placement. The community wants BCPS to ensure that if there are open seats for a program then the cutoff score should be lowered in order to fill the program and that BCPS sends acceptance letters to magnet programs in February to match the private school acceptance timeline.</p> <p>Note: When considering the use of priority placements in the admissions process, respondents indicated priority placements for high academic achievement, was 53.1%.</p> <p>Note: When considering the use of priority placements in the admissions process, respondents indicated priority placements for applicant location, was 2.7%.</p>	<p><b>Placements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that BCPS magnet placement process is aligned with the magnet definition and purpose statements thus ensuring that the programs promote student diversity by providing equitable access and opportunities across magnet programs and schools.</li> <li>• Provide priority placement for students living within the magnet school region with Second priority given to those students living outside the magnet school region.</li> <li>• Continue elementary magnet lottery process with kindergarten sibling priority and BCPS employee priority placement with no admission criteria.</li> <li>• Establish middle school magnet lottery process with no admission criteria and BCPS employee priority placement.</li> <li>• Phase out Sudbrook Magnet Middle School walker priority placement.</li> <li>• Continue high school lottery process with priority placement for 20% of seats by students who score highest on the magnet assessment only within the region of residency.</li> <li>• Admit, for unfilled high school programs, students by rank who did not meet minimum qualifying criteria (i.e. first placement option goes to students meeting the minimum qualifying score and, if space allows, seats would be offered to students based on rank order using the admission criteria.)</li> </ul>

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**Recommendation 7 – Curriculum and Instructional Standards:**

**Introduction**

The Curriculum and Instruction Work Group of the Magnet Task Force assessed curricula status and curricula implementation across magnet programs for rigor, relevance, and alignment with the Common Core State Standards. Magnet program curriculum implementation was analyzed for consistency across sites. In addition, magnet program schedules and time allocations across schools with the same programs was reviewed. The recommendations are in response to the Five Year Strategic Plan, FY2015 Goal 5.

In order to accomplish these tasks, interviews were conducted with magnet school personnel and curricular office staff. Magnet program course sequences data for each program, both required and elective courses, was collected and analyzed. Content area offices provided data regarding course alignment with instructional standards, as well as the evaluation schedule for each course. Content area offices also provided data regarding the degree to which instructional standards are being met in each program, and suggestions for teacher professional development. Data was collected regarding field experiences and the manner in which students work with experts in the field at each magnet school within each magnet program. Data was collected and analyzed regarding the frequency and length of magnet course offerings at each school, as well as adequacy of the facilities and materials used in each magnet program to prepare students for experiences in the field. Additionally, data was collected and analyzed regarding feeder patterns, the unique specialization of each magnet program and the ways in which the program prepares students to be college- and career-ready. The results from the community input sessions and the community online surveys provided useful information to supplement the other data used by the Workgroup.

Based on the data analysis, it was determined that some magnet course offerings in some schools provide rigor, relevance, and alignment to instructional standards. Some magnet program schedules provide adequate seat time thus allowing students to gain proficiency in the magnet program content. At the elementary level, a variety of magnet program offerings exist with significant variance in the delivery model and alignment with feeder patterns. At the middle school level, a variety of magnet program offerings exist with significant variance in the delivery model and alignment with feeder patterns. At the middle school level, one magnet program model is providing students with an exploratory model that allows students to experience various magnet programs before selecting a specific magnet program of study. At the high school level, a variety of magnet program offerings exist with significant variance in the delivery model and alignment with feeder patterns. At the high school level, some programs are taught by teachers who are practitioners in their respective fields, and experiences in the field are provided to students in the program with regularity.

**Recommendation 7 – Curriculum, Feeder Patterns, Program Offerings**

<b>Community Feedback</b>	<b>Final Task Force Recommendations(s)</b>
<p><b>Curricular Consistency</b> No specific community recommendations correspond to these changes.</p> <p>Note: “It is important that BCS provide the same magnet programming in each region of the county” had 67% agreement.</p>	<p><b>Curricular Consistency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create consistency in the curricula and instruction provided in magnet programs across schools and regions.</li> <li>• Align, monitor and revise magnet curricula through collaborative work with the OMP and the Curriculum and Instruction Academic Offices.</li> </ul>

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<b>Community Feedback</b>	<b>Final Task Force Recommendations(s)</b>
Note: “It is important that all magnet programs be routinely evaluated for relevance alignment with BCPS educational standards, and the extent to which the program meets the needs of students” had 89.9% agreement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Align magnet courses to BCPS curriculum.</li> <li>• Evaluate magnet curriculum on a five-year cycle by Curriculum and Instruction academic office revising as necessary to align with instructional standards and university programs where appropriate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Magnet Teacher Expertise</b></p> <p>The community indicated through forum and survey feedback that BCPS should provide opportunities for magnet staff to share their expertise across magnet programs.</p>	<p><b>Magnet Teacher Expertise</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities for teachers working as practitioners in the field to share their expertise across magnet programs.</li> <li>• Recruit practitioners in the field as additional magnet programs are opened in diverse geographical areas.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Feeder Patterns</b></p> <p>The community indicated through forum and survey feedback that BCPS should analyze backward design and backward map magnet offerings from industry demands, ensure access across geographic regions of the county and ensure vertical alignment for magnet programs at the elementary to middle, middle to high and high to college and career.</p>	<p><b>Feeder Patterns</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish consistent feeder patterns, within geographic regions and across magnet program offerings, at the elementary, middle and high school levels.</li> <li>• Ensure vertical alignment for magnet programs at the elementary to middle, middle to high and high to college and career.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Program Offerings</b></p> <p>The community indicated through forum and survey feedback that BCPS should ensure consistent instructional time in magnet course offerings regardless of program locations, align elementary and middle school magnet programs with high school and industry standards, maintain current successful magnet programs and expand to areas of the county lacking similar programs, establish an exposure-based magnet program at the elementary level, establish an exploration-based magnet program at the middle school level, increase opportunities for internships and college partnerships for magnet students and increase magnet program opportunities in foreign languages (language immersion) and STEM.</p>	<p><b>Program Offerings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure consistent instructional time in magnet course offerings regardless of program locations.</li> <li>• Establish <b>exposure-based</b> magnet programs at the <b>elementary level</b> (i.e. Arts Integration or STEM) aligned with middle school magnet options that provide unique educational environments, innovative instructional programs, and specialized programs of study and/or experiences that address students’ interests, talents, and abilities; that extend and enrich the existing BCPS curricula; and that are not available in comprehensive school programs.</li> <li>• Phase out existing <b>elementary</b> magnet program offerings in order to align all programs to the <b>exposure-based</b> model.</li> <li>• Establish an <b>exploration-based magnet</b> programs at the <b>middle school</b> level (ie. Science, engineering and technology, arts, mass communications, non-traditional world languages) aligned with high school magnet options that provide unique educational environments, innovative instructional programs, and specialized programs of study</li> </ul>

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	<p>and/or experiences that address students’ interests, talents, and abilities; that extend and enrich the existing BCPS curricula; and that are not available in comprehensive school programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase out existing <b>middle school</b> magnet program offerings in order to align all programs to the <b>exploration-based</b> model.</li> <li>• Establish a wide variety of magnet program offerings at the <b>high school</b> level that align with current and future post-secondary opportunities that provide unique educational environments, innovative instructional programs, and specialized programs of study and/or experiences that address students’ interests, talents, and abilities; that extend and enrich the existing BCPS curricula; and that are not available in comprehensive school programs.</li> <li>• Phase out existing high school magnet program offerings that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No longer supported by MSDE.</li> <li>○ Currently available at most comprehensive BCPS high schools.</li> <li>○ Significantly under enrolled.</li> <li>○ Underperforming as defined by state, national or industry standards.</li> <li>○ Costly to develop and maintain.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Expand the world language programs at the secondary level, in order to offer opportunities for students to develop proficiency in nontraditional world languages (Chinese, Urdu, Arabic and Korean).</li> </ul>