

Los Angeles Unified School District

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News Release

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PARENTS/GUARDIANS TO RECEIVE 2009-2010 MAGNET/PERMITS WITH TRANSPORTATION/PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE BROCHURES BY MAIL

Los Angeles - The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) today announced that the annual application period to enroll students in traveling programs in the LAUSD for the 2009-2010 school year will begin Nov. 10 and will continue through **Friday, Jan. 9, 2009**.

Since 1977, the Magnet Program and Permits With Transportation (PWT) have been the District's two main options for students seeking integrated educational experiences. The programs grew out of a California Supreme Court order in 1976, which required the LAUSD to take steps to "alleviate the harms of racial isolation."

With the addition of 11 new Magnet Programs for the 2009-2010 school year, there are now 173 LAUSD Magnet schools and centers. Magnet school specialties range from math/science/technology and architecture/digital arts to the performing arts, humanities, medical/biological or environmental sciences, music, law/police studies and others, including programs for gifted/high ability and highly gifted students.

PWT, which provides school bus transportation, offers another opportunity for voluntary integration. Students applying from a specific "sending" school area in the LAUSD may be assigned by the District for integration purposes to a specific "receiving" school with available classroom space. School assignments are determined by using the criteria of classroom space, integration requirements and transportation patterns.

The federal legislation in the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* requires all school districts in the nation to provide Public School Choice (PSC) as one of the educational options for parents of students attending program improvement schools. PSC offers students enrolled in a school identified as At-Risk for Program Improvement (PI) or a PI school listed in the CHOICES brochure an opportunity to attend a non-PI school. District-paid transportation is provided for students participating in the PSC program.

District officials acknowledge that because of the excellent reputation earned by the Magnet Program over the past 31 years, as many as 65,000 applications are received each year for an estimated 16,000 openings. The LAUSD court-ordered voluntary integration program is the largest such effort in the nation, with more than 53,700 students currently enrolled in Magnet programs and another 2,400 in PWT.

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Full information about the District's court-ordered voluntary integration programs, Magnet and PWT, and the federally mandated PSC Program, can be found in the CHOICES 2009-2010 Brochure. The booklet also contains an application for these programs and a postage-paid return envelope. The personalized brochures are scheduled to be mailed to parents or guardians of all kindergarten through 11th grade students enrolled in LAUSD schools during the second week in November.

The CHOICES brochure is mailed directly to parents/guardians at home to help assure receipt. The application on page 21 in each brochure is pre-printed with personalized information for each student (name, address, birth date, etc.). To be considered "on time," the CHOICES application must be returned postmarked on or before **Friday, Jan. 9, 2009** to the Student Integration Services office.

Separate CHOICES booklets are printed in English and Spanish ("Opciones"). The home language survey identified in the local school's computer determines whether the English or Spanish version is mailed. As in the past, translations also will be available in several other languages: Armenian, Chinese, Korean, Russian, Farsi, Tagalog and Vietnamese. Parents/guardians who speak any of these languages will receive English language brochures in the mail, but they may also request a copy of the translation in their home language from their local school.

Blank application brochures will be available at local schools and offices by the third week of November for parents/guardians who did not receive the CHOICES brochure in the mail or who live within District boundaries but whose children are not enrolled in LAUSD schools.

The mid-January deadline gives parents/guardians and students time to review available options while enabling the District to notify parents/guardians by mid-May about their child's acceptance or waiting list status.

Application procedures for Magnets, the PWT program and the PSC program are fully explained in the new brochure. Students presently enrolled in Magnets do not need to reapply unless they want to change to a different program or wish to request a Magnet at the next school level. Current PWT participants do not need to reapply and may continue from elementary to middle to senior high provided that space continues to be available. Participating PSC students need not reapply. PSC matriculants will be given two non-PI options for the next school level. These processes and procedures are different from the "open enrollment" process, which has its own application period in the month of May.

Based upon information listed below, a computer process determines the appropriate number of "priority points" for Magnet applicants who/whose:

- Have completed the last grade level (5th/6th or 8th) in Magnet programs that end at those levels and who apply for 6th/7th or 9th grade admission into another Magnet program. These students receive matriculation points.
- Resident school is designated as "PHBAO" – Predominantly Hispanic, Black, Asian or Other Non-Anglo school by the District.
- Resident school is designated by the District as "overcrowded."

- Are/were on an official waiting list for 2008-2009, 2007-2008, and 2006-2007, and
- Has a sibling continuing in the same Magnet school that the applicant wishes to attend.

Students whose names have been on an on-time waiting list still must reapply each year.

Appropriate priority points will be assigned.

At full Magnet schools, all students at the site are enrolled in the Magnet program. However, Magnet centers are located on the campuses of regular schools. Magnet center students may take some classes in the host school and Magnet students can participate in all school activities.

In addition to emphasizing a particular subject area specialty or a teaching approach such as the alternative and gifted/high ability programs, all Magnet programs provide students with basic academic skills. The brochure lists the Magnets by specialty and grade level, making it easy to identify similar programs.

The only programs where applicants must meet specific criteria for selection are those Magnets designated for gifted/high ability and highly gifted students.

Magnet programs are usually designed for elementary, middle and high school students, but some serve a combination of elementary and secondary grades on the same campus, such as the Los Angeles and Sherman Oaks Centers for Enriched Studies, Valley Alternative and 32nd Street/USC Magnet's K-8 program.

The District's Transportation Branch develops school bus routes for the Magnet, PWT and PSC programs so that students do not ride more than 75 minutes one-way, although due to traffic, some rides may exceed 75 minutes. Transportation is provided for students if they reside outside a two-mile radius or outside the school attendance boundary, whichever is further.

Transportation mailers containing school bus pick-up and drop-off information will be mailed to students who participate in traveling programs in late August 2009 for schools beginning in September or late June for any year-round school tracks that start in July.

A 30-minute television program "Choices 2009," featuring the District's 11 new Magnet schools and centers, and information about PWT and PSC, will be broadcast numerous times in English and Spanish between Nov. 16, 2008 and Jan. 9, 2009 on the District's television station, KLCS-TV/DT. The schedule is listed on the back cover of the "Choices" brochure. Parents should also watch for information in local newspapers including: the Los Angeles Times, the Daily News, La Opinion, the Los Angeles Sentinel, The Wave, and the Watts Times during the week of Nov. 9-13, 2008.

Parents can also visit the CHOICES website for further information. The goal of this website: <http://eChoices.lausd.net> is to better familiarize parents with the three

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program options available through the CHOICES brochure (Magnet, PWT and PSC). In addition to all of the information contained in the brochure, eChoices includes access to transportation information, maps, a school selection tool, and a step-by-step tutorial on how to fill out the CHOICES application. Again, the site can be found by visiting <http://eChoices.lausd.net>.

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Special reminder for parents/guardians: Applications must be received or postmarked by the deadline date, Jan. 9, 2009. During February, parents can expect to receive a letter from the Student Integration Services, and Federal and State Education Programs Branch to confirm receipt of the application. The letters will also indicate the number of priority points assigned to the application. In addition, the letters will notify parents of any information that is missing or incorrect on the application and ask parents to submit the correct information by the date requested. This letter will not indicate the student's acceptance into a program; Magnet and PSC notification letters will be sent in mid-May and PWT letters will be sent by the end of May 2009.

Please refer questions regarding:

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| Magnet Program | - (213) 241-4177 |
| PWT Program | - (213) 241-6572 |
| PSC Program | - (213) 241-6990 |