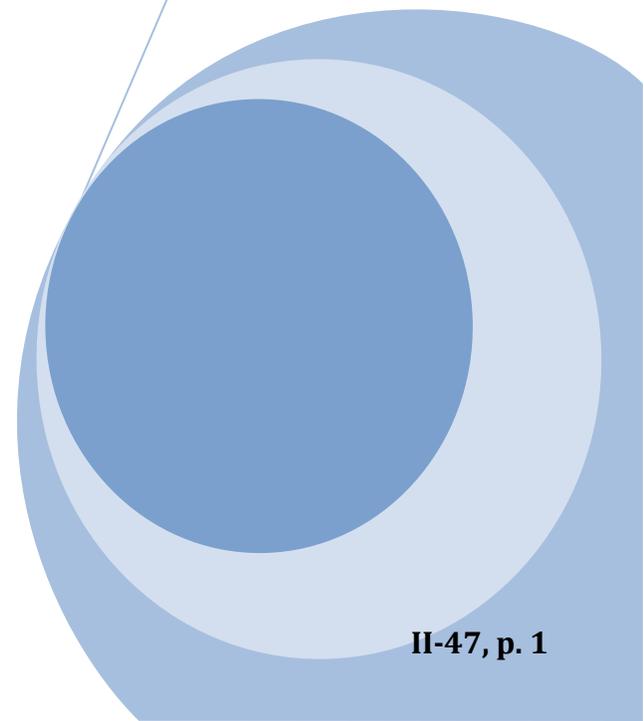


**Tucson Unified School District**  
**Comprehensive Magnet Program Review**

**Education Consulting Services**  
**December, 2011**



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## I. INTRODUCTION

For over thirty three years, Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) has supported magnet schools. They have served as the cornerstone of the District's integration plan. During that time, there has never been a review of TUSD's magnet program. The Post Unitary Status Plan (2009) called for a comprehensive magnet review to be completed. In January, 2011, Dr. John Pedicone was appointed Superintendent. In February 2011, he appointed an Interim Internal Compliance Officer to move forward with the Post Unitary Status Plan, including the completion of a comprehensive magnet review.

The contract to prepare a Comprehensive Magnet Review for TUSD was awarded to Education Consulting Services on July 7, 2011. Discussions were held with the district's Interim Internal Compliance Officer regarding the request for a comprehensive magnet review. A subsequent phone conversation was held with the superintendent.

The superintendent supported the need for a comprehensive magnet review which would take a close look at all of the district's magnet schools and determine if each school's program(s) support student integration and positively affect student achievement. The district also wanted to know what is happening at each magnet school in relation to its magnet curriculum. In discussions prior to the magnet review, the superintendent and the consultant agreed that Education Consulting Services:

- would bring forward an abundance of information about what is happening at each magnet in addition to recommendations focused on how to strengthen the district's overall magnet program and the programs at each school.
- would not make recommendations on closing, opening or changing a magnet school. All such decisions should be made by TUSD administration and the Governing Board. District administration would look at the information and data contained in the comprehensive magnet report and it would then make recommendations to the Governing Board regarding any program changes.
- would establish a professional team of program experts to visit each magnet school and observe the school's magnet program. As part of the visit principals, teachers, parents, and secondary students would be interviewed. Data regarding enrollment of magnet students (neighborhood and non-neighborhood), demographics, relevant school information, and achievement would be provided by the district.

Education Consulting Services, led by Patricia Trandal, put together a plan for the comprehensive review of TUSD's magnet schools. A team of six experts was assembled. These experts included educational professionals with experiences in a number of areas including human resources, evaluation and accountability, educational law, equity assistance, school desegregation and student integration, magnet program development, curricular expertise and professional development. Each member of the team was a credentialed teacher with experience teaching in public schools. Team members were also credentialed as school administrators and have had experience as principals, vice principals, central office administrators and/or college professors. Team members were prepared for the school visits with significant information regarding each of the district's 22 magnet schools including district policies and history as related to desegregation and magnet programs in TUSD.

## **II. ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL MAGNET SCHOOLS**

### **A. What is a Magnet School?**

A magnet school is a public elementary or secondary school that provides unique or specialized curriculum or pedagogy in such a way as to attract a racially diversified student body. Traditionally, magnet schools are distinct from other public schools because they offer a specialized academic focus, theme, or pedagogy known as the magnet program. The term “magnet” refers to how the program is supposed to attract students from across the school boundaries of the district to attend the magnet school in addition to providing enriched programs for neighborhood students. Magnet schools were first developed in large urban school districts seeking to reduce racial isolation at certain schools in their districts through a voluntary means rather than with mandatory student assignments. Magnet school enrollment was designed to be driven by student choice based on interest rather than on selection by testing, grades or citizenship.

The theory behind the use of magnet schools as a desegregation tool is simple: Create a school so distinctive and appealing – so magnetic - that it will draw a diverse range of families from throughout the community eager to enroll their children, even if it means having them bused to a different, and perhaps, distant neighborhood. To do so, the magnet schools must offer educational programs of high caliber that are not available in other area schools.

### **B. Magnet Schools Goals Correlated to Effective Schools Research**

A theme -based magnet approach promotes many of the factors associated with effective schools research including:

- a diverse population closely reflecting a district’s demographics,
- innovation in program practices,
- improved teaching and learning,
- staff and curricular coherence,
- greater student engagement, and
- increased parent and community involvement.

In the best of magnet schools, these components add up to higher student achievement.

## **C. What are the Characteristics of an Effective Magnet School?**

Literature related to magnet schools, including U.S. Department of Education publications, identifies the following six characteristics as essential for strong magnet schools:

### **1. School Diversity**

While diversity is still desirable and sought in school districts today, most districts report that having a quality program that engages both neighborhood and non-neighborhood students in the learning process is the primary concern. However, an effective magnet that has a strong academic program with student achievement is able to attract students from around the community and should be reflective of the overall community population. The U. S. Department of Education's Magnet Schools Assistance Program requires that a recipient of their grant funding set goals to achieve greater diversity. A strong marketing and recruitment program is important for magnet schools, even those with more applicants than it can enroll, to promote opportunity for all students. The U. S. Department of Education also requires that there be equity of access to magnet programs/schools, including the use of a randomized process when the number of applicants exceeds seats available.

### **2. Innovative and Well Implemented Magnet**

Some magnet schools concentrate on a particular discipline or area of study, while others use a more general focus or instructional pedagogy. Early magnet school themes included the fine, applied or performing arts, the sciences, social studies occupations, general academics and traditional and fundamental schools. But a look across the nation's magnet programs today reveals a much wider variety of curricular specialties and educational approaches reflecting the idiosyncratic interests and approaches of their communities. Among the curricular themes and approaches currently found at magnet schools are aerospace education, communications, culinary arts, environmental science, international studies, International Baccalaureate, language immersion, law enforcement, marine science, military science, STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), and Montessori.

### **3. Professional Development That Supports the Magnet Theme**

High quality professional development is a key component of a successful magnet program. Given the specialized curriculum of magnet themes, teachers need to be engaged in continuous learning to meet the needs of their students and remain on the cutting edge of the content area. Professional development also requires training in the development and implementation of new instructional strategies including how to effectively integrate the magnet theme with core curriculum.

It is important that professional development for magnet teachers be driven by student performance data. When data guides professional development, it will be about what students need to know and not what teachers do. Professional development should be aligned with state standards and follow the scope and sequence of instruction in literacy and mathematics. This will provide for a comprehensive coverage of all standards that are evaluated by district and state assessment programs.

Professional development plans should be built upon understanding the strengths, as well as the needs, of students. There should be discussions and activities for teachers working with students who are culturally different. Magnet teachers should be provided with professional development related to the latest best practices including strategies and activities that improve minority group achievement.

#### **4. Specialized Teaching Staff**

To create and sustain a specialized program, effective magnet schools are staffed with experienced specialty teachers in the magnet program emphasis. Magnet teachers are expected to teach and be experts in special programs, i.e. experienced artists, highly trained scientists and technology experts, etc. All teachers at a magnet school should be committed to the theme and the goal of attracting a diverse population to the school. There are times that magnet schools may need district exceptions in order to hire the best person for the specialized magnet position.

Additionally, principals and classroom teachers selected for a magnet school must also understand and be supportive of the magnet program the school has in place. Too often, principals or teachers are moved to a magnet school without consideration of the magnet theme and their lack of buy-in and leadership in that theme sets the magnet school on a downward spiral.

#### **5. Parent and Community Involvement**

More than any other kind of school, magnet schools depend upon community participation or partnerships for thematic expertise. This expertise can come from college or university experts, museums, private industry and community organizations. Partnerships can also bring scholarships for students, student internships, and funding for teacher or school projects related to the theme.

Parents are also vital to magnet schools as they can provide expertise to class or school projects, volunteer for a variety of classroom activities including reading to students and tutoring, and for providing funding for student entrance fees and awards through donations for raffles and special events. Parent support for the magnet theme, and the diversity of students can, and will, contribute to the success of the magnet school. Additionally, support of neighborhood, as well as non-neighborhood, parents is also important for marketing and recruitment.

## **6. Improved Academic Achievement**

A high level of implementation (dosage) of a well designed magnet program is essential for academic improvements to occur. When there is a high level of implementation across all components of the magnet plan there will be significant improvements in achievement especially reading and mathematics. When there is no improvement in reading and mathematics, generally the plan was not well designed and research-based or the dosage was not sufficient. David Kikoler, an expert in magnet program implementation and the principal officer of American Solutions for Education (AES), describes in his publications and workshops the importance of fidelity to the plan of implementation and the need for high dosages of magnet instruction as key in achieving academic improvement.

To keep magnet schools both effective and academically relevant, it is essential that magnet schools use achievement data to guide improvements in teaching and learning. Most importantly, student achievement data must be disaggregated and analyzed carefully. Schools must then revisit their magnet curriculum and make adjustments to improve student learning. This process should be done annually by each school. Every three to five years, the district should look at additional data including surveys of parents, students and teachers, as well as results of discussions with all stakeholders of each school's program strengths and weaknesses.

As part of the evaluation process, districts must sometimes make changes to magnet themes to ensure that themes remain relevant and appealing to the community-at-large, as well as the neighborhood school community.

The attraction of a technology magnet 30 years ago, when it was rare for teachers and students to use technology in classrooms has diminished as technology is found in most schools now. It may be time to expand the magnet curriculum with the addition of specialized classes such as computer animation, computer-assisted drafting, graphic arts, web page design, etc.

### **III. BACKGROUND OF DESEGREGATION IN TUCSON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

#### **A. History of Desegregation in Tucson Unified School District**

For over a century, students attended neighborhood schools in Tucson. Minority groups were clustered in the west. As the population grew in Tucson, schools with the latest in educational designs were built to address the eastward growth of the city. While growth was occurring to the east, older schools in west side minority neighborhoods began to decline in achievement and aging schools were not updated.

In 1973, the Federal Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, through its San Francisco Office for Civil Rights demanded that the district desegregate its schools to achieve specific racial guidelines. At the time, there were 28 racially identifiable schools.

In May 1974, a Federal District Court case was filed on behalf of African-American students against the Tucson Unified School District (Fisher Plaintiffs). Several months later, a similar suit was filed on behalf of Mexican-American students (Mendoza Plaintiffs). The cases were consolidated into one court case in 1975. The United States of America intervened. The plaintiffs cited a number of factors within the suit to support their claim that African-American and Mexican-American students were subjected to inferior, segregated schools.

The district responded that housing patterns were to blame for racial imbalance and that they would oppose forced busing. On January 12, 1977, a trial began, with testimony ending on January 22, 1977. The case was taken under submission.

On June 5, 1978, the District Court found that TUSD had acted with segregative intent in the past and failed in its obligations to rectify the effects of its past actions. The Court approved the Consent Decree, agreed upon by all parties, which included the district's proposed desegregation plan. The plan provided for the desegregation of nine schools on the northwest fringe of the district in a three-phase program. Borton, Holladay and Utterback would be desegregated by 1979, with minority enrollments below 50%. Cavett and Pueblo Gardens would be reassigned to new junior high schools that would have minority enrollments below 50%. A study was to be made to consider closing, consolidating, or maintaining Carrillo, Davis, and Drachman. In the fall of 1978, an intensive phonics program would be implemented for a class of Mexican-American first grade students. University Heights, Roosevelt and Spring schools would be closed. Sabino Junior High would eventually close and merge with Sabino High School. Teachers and counselors in affected schools would receive cultural sensitivity training, especially addressing low expectations for minority students. Uniform district standards for student suspension and expulsion would be developed.

In September 1978, school began with few incidents. The district empaneled a 47 member citizens' committee to study school circumstances and make recommendations to the Governing Board for implementation of the court order. The judge was willing to allow the committee time to develop a plan for the second phase of desegregation which would meet committee needs. However, the District Court judge died in February and a new judge assumed responsibilities for the TUSD desegregation case.

In May, 1979 the District Court approved a magnet school plan to bus approximately 1,000 students in the 1979-80 school year. The magnet school plan would be implemented at Borton and Holladay. Seven magnet schools were created in the original three phases (21 schools) to achieve voluntary student movement for desegregation purposes.

For Borton and Holladay magnets, there were extra funds, class size limits of 25:1, and teacher aides were provided for each class. There was an hour of after school child care provided to attract working parents, in addition to door-to-door transportation. The schools were refurbished and provided with new instructional equipment. These incentives attracted Anglo parents, but those who lived in the community had no options to leave the neighborhood school. They were required to attend the schools with the promise that they would receive improved educational opportunities.

With a grant from the federal government, the district created three new magnets as part of phase three of the desegregation plan. Davis became a bilingual magnet, while Drachman and Carrillo were paired to become primary and intermediate magnet programs. The three schools filled their Anglo quotas. An Arizona Daily Star editorial praised TUSD in 1980 “...*The plan means the district will not raze any of the old neighborhood schools and will renovate them to meet current safety standards. It is a triumph for Tucson's aging barrios and their strong tradition of neighborhood closeness. Best of all, the plan offers the hope that minority children with alarmingly low performance records will improve.*”

The district created a Department of Black Studies to provide courses in black history and culture for the 3,000 African-American students in the district. In 1982, Safford was approved as a math and engineering magnet which included computer education as an attraction. In 1983, Tucson High was designated as a magnet high school in basic skills with specialties in computer science, math and science. In 1985, performing arts, industrial arts and cooperative education magnet programs were added to Tucson High.

In the ensuing years, TUSD added more schools to its magnet program. Currently, there are 22 schools in TUSD with magnet programs. There are fifteen total school magnets (10 elementary, 5 middle schools, and 2 high schools) and five high schools with program-within-the-school magnets.

Despite the successes of magnet schools in TUSD, critics point out that there are still issues with desegregation in TUSD. At first there were complaints that only Anglos could choose to attend the first magnets. These complaints were alleviated when Booth-Fickett and Bonillas were opened as magnet programs giving minority students magnet options.

## **B. Recent Litigation Regarding the Desegregation of Tucson Unified School District**

For over 30 years, TUSD has been under court supervision with regard to desegregation. However, there continues to be a number of schools on the west side of the city that are 98-100% Hispanic. It is also important to note that the majority of schools in the district are located on the west side. These schools struggle with student achievement. There is also a significant gap in achievement between the minority and non-minority student groups.

In 2004, TUSD moved for termination of the Fisher/Mendoza Consent Decree asserting that the district had eliminated the vestiges of past discrimination to the extent possible. The plaintiffs opposed the motion. After extensive amounts of submissions by the parties in 2007, the District Court declared the district “unitary” and returned school supervision to state and local control. The Court concluded that the district had not acted in good faith, and it also found that it could not make the requisite findings as to whether the TUSD had eliminated the vestiges of discrimination to the extent possible. The plaintiffs appealed to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. The superintendent at the time put together a committee to develop a Post Unitary Status Plan for the district. The final version of the Plan was adopted by the Governing Board on July 30, 2009. In the Post Unitary Status Plan, a proposal for race-neutral student assignment was outlined and put into practice as a pilot for the 2009 and 2010 school years. A permanent plan for student assignment would then be developed for Board approval.

On July 19, 2011, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco held that the decision in the Federal District Court in Tucson was incorrect in 2007 when it granted the school district “unitary” or non-segregated status and, in doing so, ending the 33 year court oversight of the case. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals remanded the case back to the District Court to maintain jurisdiction until it is satisfied that the school district has met its burden by demonstrating, not just promising, good faith compliance with the 1978 Desegregation Consent Decree.

On September 19, 2011, the District Court in Arizona ordered that a Special Master be appointed in the case. The Court further ordered that the parties agree on certain parameters regarding the appointment. The Court also set forth an outline regarding the Special Master's initial report to the Court. After considering the positions of all parties, the report should include, in part, the following: the Post Unitary Status Plan with programs to be implemented, a timeline for implementation, review and evaluation criteria for each program, and a financial plan with transparency. In addition, supplemental reports will be provided to the Court as to whether the Plan is on schedule and the reason for any delays that might have occurred. The Special Master will be paid for by TUSD based upon an amount agreed to by the parties.

The current superintendent, Dr. John Pedicone, has stated that TUSD wants to do the right thing and "we are in the process of meeting our obligations and what we need to do to move forward."

### **C. Rationale for the Magnet Review**

The review of TUSD's magnet schools was first called for in the Post Unitary Status Plan (PUSP) as necessary to develop a new permanent student assignment plan. As part of the process for developing a new Post Unitary Status Plan, a new student selection plan is to be developed for TUSD which will address district desegregation and provide choice options for families.

Magnet schools have been in operation in TUSD for over 33 years and have not been reviewed or analyzed since their inception. In order to determine which magnet schools are successful and which may need modification, the district needs data and a review of its magnet schools. In preparing its new Post Unitary Status Plan, the district will need data to convince the Court that it has acted in good faith in eliminating the vestiges of segregation. In order to do so, the district needs to provide the Court with facts about its desegregation programs, including magnet schools. This Comprehensive Magnet Review will provide the district with a means for improving its magnet schools and demonstrating its good faith in implementing a sound desegregation program. A sound magnet plan will consider at least the following: magnet schools that offer attractive programs that are over and above what other schools offer in the district, drawing students from their neighborhood schools, the costs of implementing strong magnet schools as well as any new magnet school, and the increased costs of transportation for existing magnet schools.

It was the decision of Superintendent Pedicone and Education Consulting Services that the purpose of the comprehensive magnet program review was to gather facts and information in order for the TUSD Governing Board and district administration to make decisions concerning magnet schools. It was the job of the review teams to provide the district with compelling evidence so it could make such decisions. The district needs to know what is or is not happening

## **IV. DESIGN AND PROCESS FOR THE MAGNET REVIEW**

### **A. Process and Tools Used**

Education Consulting Services selected highly qualified professionals to serve as members of the team to review TUSD's magnet schools. They have years of experience in a wide variety of fields in public education including: district magnet program administration, school magnet program administration, assessment and accountability, educational law, urban school administration, human resources, equity and diversity, school accreditations, teacher training and professional development, research and evaluation, college-level instruction and second language programs.

A team of two or three members visited two schools each day of the review, spending about 3 ½ - 4 hours or more at each school. TUSD Assistant Superintendents had agreed to prepare each school by providing them with the date and time of the visit and a list of items to gather and have ready for the team to review. These included copies of written magnet curriculum, scope and sequence units or classes that are in the magnet program, examples of student work, magnet handbooks, and anything else the school felt was important to their magnet program. Principals were to be informed that the team would be walking through classrooms looking for evidence of magnet theme instruction and student work. Additionally, interviews with magnet coordinators and teachers, parents of neighborhood and non-neighborhood magnet students and secondary students (grade 8 at middle schools and 9-12 at high schools) were to be arranged.

The review professionals were trained to use the protocols and documents developed for the Tucson Unified School District, including: Protocol for "Meet and Greet," Interview Questionnaires for principals, magnet coordinators, teachers, students, and parents, the Walk-Through Observation form, and the Magnet School Project Rubric. It should be noted that student interviews took place only with a small group of students in grades 8-12. Each evening, team members met to debrief the schools visited and prepare for the next day's visits.

It was the decision of Superintendent Pedicone and Education Consulting Services that major recommendations concerning magnet schools would be made to district administration and the TUSD Governing Board. It is the job of the review team to provide the district with compelling evidence in order to make decisions.

## **B. Scope of the Work**

The Comprehensive Magnet Program Review conducted by Education Consulting Services was to include:

Reviewing TUSD's magnet school enrollment policies and procedures and their effect on student integration at magnet schools. Determining if the policies and procedures are promoting diversity. Developing recommendations for the district and its magnet schools to improve school diversity.

Reviewing policies as they relate to identification and operation of a magnet school.

Reviewing the development of the TUSD magnet school program including the purposes and goals for the magnet program and the ability of each school to house and sustain a viable magnet program.

Conducting a comprehensive review and evaluation of the district's 22 magnet schools as compared to nationally recognized successful magnet criteria including:

- equity of access
- diversity
- unique theme or pedagogy
- dosage of instruction
- professional development
- specialized staff
- academic excellence
- parent involvement
- business/community partnerships

Reviewing the district's magnet theme continuity plan to determine if a K-12 (elementary to middle to high school) continuum exists. Determining the effectiveness of each magnet school's efforts to sustain a viable portion of a K through 12 magnet program. Where no formal continuity has been established, determining if there is a strong curricular link to an already existing magnet theme at the next level.

Determining support from central office staff in the areas of student recruitment and meeting school integration goals, thematic and curricular leadership, opportunities for magnet program professional development, uniform compliance with magnet policy and procedures, and parent and community outreach to answer the question: "Is support provided to guide the schools in making decisions or changes to their magnet program?"

## V. SUMMARY OF COMMON TRENDS

### Common Trends in TUSD Magnet Schools

As a result of visiting each magnet school, the visiting consultants noticed a number of emerging themes and issues across the majority of TUSD's magnet schools/programs. The following is a summary of the issues noted:

- There is a belief that there is a lack of district- level understanding regarding magnet schools and their programs. This belief is rooted in the fact that some decisions made at central office negatively impact a magnet school and its desegregation efforts.
- There is a general lack of consideration and support from the central office for magnet schools.
- There is no one at the central office that schools can call to answer questions related to their magnet program concerns or issues.
- There is a lack of marketing and recruitment for magnet programs supported by the district to help schools with diversity issues.
- The schools are unaware of enrollment/diversity goals and diversity is not reflected in many school enrollments.
- There is no policy or process for creating new magnet schools or significantly revising an existing magnet program.
- There is no district- level process for monitoring magnet enrollment or documenting magnet student drops from a magnet school/program.
- Because neighborhood students are not required to submit a magnet application for program-within-a-school magnets, it is impossible to ascertain magnet program diversity, to monitor magnet student achievement, and to determine per student costs for those programs.
- There is a lack of understanding that magnet schools benefit, and should be attractive to, both neighborhood and non-neighborhood students and their parents.
- There is no district- level process for monitoring student achievement at a magnet school/program.
- Issues with transportation this year have been especially difficult for many schools, taking hours of staff time and resulting in students dropping from programs they had been attending for several weeks.
- Schools did not seem to understand the enrollment process in the PUSP, especially the school groupings by areas (Group A, B, C) and how that effects transportation and recruitment.

- Little attention has been paid to magnet pipeline schools (K-12 Magnet Continuity) when creating new magnet schools/programs.
- All magnet schools have poor outside school signage. In some cases, there is no sign to inform a visitor or the community what magnet theme is located at the school. A few high schools have a marquee generically stating “A Magnet School” indicating to parents that the whole school is a magnet when it is really a small program within-the- school.
- Very few schools are providing professional development that is directly related to its magnet theme.
- There has been no professional development in recent years related to cultural literacy for magnet schools.
- Magnet funding allocations (Desegregation Funds) vary significantly and in many cases were difficult to determine; desegregation funds were used by schools in a variety of ways.

#### Parent Trends and Issues

- The community at large is unaware of the high quality and variety of the magnet programs offered in TUSD.
- There is a need for more clarity about the magnet enrollment process. The open enrollment and magnet enrollment processes are confusing to parents.
- The magnet application is confusing to parents.
- Most parents do not know what magnet schools are. They tended to equate them to a GATE program, or a school for smarter students.
- The district “Catalog of Schools” does not feature the magnet schools as a group. Parents have to hunt for the magnet school or program they are interested in. The catalog makes magnet schools sound like any other district school.
- The magnet application process has rules that make it difficult for some parents to file their application. Some parents expressed the desire to turn the application in to a school instead of mailing or driving it to the School Community Services Office.
- The parents who were available for interviews (at some schools) appeared to be committed to the magnet program at the school.

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENDATIONS

It is essential that TUSD recognize that school choice and improved student achievement are important to the Tucson community. These points were made by parents the review teams met with across all schools. The community wants neighborhood schools and understands that they are a family's first choice; families also want options in their decision of which school their child should attend. If a child has a special interest or talent there should be choices such as magnet schools, career and technical schools, and schools with GATE or special education programs on the campus. Whenever possible, magnet schools should offer a schoolwide theme. However, at the high school level, there is sometimes a need for a magnet to be a program-within-the-school. Whether the magnet is a total school program or a program-within-the-school, it is important that magnets offer high quality, rigorous curriculum that integrates students from diverse communities in meaningful learning activities.

### A. District Governance of Magnet Schools

It is critical that the district create a central office or department for magnet school coordination and support. The Magnet Office should serve as an advocate for magnet schools as decisions are made by various central office departments. The Magnet Office would support the final decisions of central offices, but would make sure that they are aware of how decisions will affect a magnet school and its program goals. Not only would the Magnet Office serve as a liaison between central offices and the schools, it would coordinate a district program for marketing and recruitment for magnet schools, develop enrollment goals, collect data for periodic magnet program evaluations, monitor the quality of the magnet program at each school, provide magnet related professional development, and work with the transportation department.

One of the first responsibilities for the Magnet Office should be to develop a magnet policy that will address how schools are designated to become a magnet program as well as a policy for an existing magnet school to make significant changes to their magnet theme and program.

#### **Communications with the School Assistant Superintendents and the Magnet Office**

Magnet programs are across all school levels – elementary, middle and high school. Assistant superintendents have a large number of schools to support, both magnet and non-magnet. A magnet office would support and assist the assistant superintendents with issues related to their magnet schools. However, there should be regular communication between the magnet office and the assistant superintendents which would include email and phone calls for immediate issues, in addition to regular meetings, perhaps monthly, to share information, discuss concerns and coordinate events.

## **Magnet Marketing and Recruitment**

Few magnet schools are targeting their magnet marketing and recruitment into the areas in the community (Areas A, B, and C as outlined in the Post Unitary Status Plan). Targeted marketing and recruitment would bring to magnet schools the students needed to help them reduce racial isolation. Schools are reticent to reach out to communities that are not close due to transportation issues, including the longer ride students would have. Currently many magnet schools recruit in neighborhoods adjacent to their boundaries and at their feeder schools. Some schools are not marketing and recruiting at all.

While Robison, Ochoa, Safford, Utterback, Palo Verde, and Tucson High have full or part time magnet resource teachers, most magnet schools no longer have a magnet coordinator to organize and carry out recruitment activities. Any marketing and recruitment that is done is carried out by the principal and a few teachers who market and recruit on a weekend or after school.

The Magnet Office and the School Community Services Office must study the recruitment needs of each magnet school and design an aggressive marketing and recruitment plan for the district and each school. Schools need to target their recruitment efforts into communities that bring students who will reduce racial isolation. Implementation of these recruitment efforts would occur mainly at the school level, but some would be coordinated and supported through the Magnet Office.

The Magnet Office should work with the School Community Services Office to make the application process more parent friendly. Parents complain that the application is confusing. The magnet application is a separate process from the open enrollment process. There should be separate applications for each program. Parents and schools also complained that having to mail or take the application to the School Community Services Office was an obstacle to applying for a magnet school. Requiring the extra steps to mail the application or to obtain transportation to the district office prevented parents from applying.

## **Establish Recruitment Goals**

Tucson magnet schools no longer are given recruitment goals or percentages to achieve or guide them in the marketing process. Establishing enrollment goals or percentage goals for each magnet school can guide them in targeting their marketing and recruitment efforts. The enrollment goal can be as simple as subtracting the school's current racial/ethnic percentages and then enroll students that more closely reflect district demographics. A Magnet Office would assist in establishing these goals in conjunction with the Legal Services Department..

### **Implement Periodic Evaluations of Magnet Programs**

Ideally, magnet schools should be evaluated every three years. This can be completed with a third of the schools being reviewed annually. The Magnet Office should develop a report for the Governing Board, Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, and the school community to review. This report should focus on student achievement, attracting and maintaining students, and magnet school effectiveness. Magnet school effectiveness should be based on the characteristics of an effective magnet school as described on pages 3-6 of this report.

The Magnet Office should maintain important data related to all school wide magnet schools and high school programs-within-the-school magnets including: school demographics, applicant numbers, neighborhood and non-neighborhood enrollment numbers, students who drop from the program and student achievement. The report should also incorporate information related to desegregation funding, changes to magnet feeder patterns, and school capacity.

### **Issues Related to Magnet Funding**

Suggestions related to magnet funding are not being addressed in this document as there is another district group working on desegregation budget issues. While almost every school visited complained of the reductions in funding and how it has affected their program, perhaps the issue most strongly voiced was the loss of their site magnet resource teacher. The loss of this position has affected magnet instruction, professional development, marketing and recruitment, scheduling and counseling.

### **Issues Related to Transportation**

Transportation was not designed to be part of the magnet review process; however, it often came up during interviews. Transportation issues for some schools this year was often likened to “a nightmare.” The transportation changes made after school started resulted in many schools losing students they had recruited who would have assisted them in reducing racial isolation. When the bus rides were combined and went to over an hour, many families could not accept it. If the district is committed to integration, most magnet schools will have to reach out to communities that are further distances from the magnet school. Transportation should not be the deal breaker for students who have an interest in a particular program. The district needs to fund transportation to support the students who are coming from longer distances, rather than discourage them.

## **B. Magnet Theme K-12 Continuity (Pipeline Schools)**

Quality magnet programs have K-12 continuity wherever possible in order for students to experience the magnet program throughout their education. For example, a student in the performing arts should not have to stop their performing arts education at grade 8. The district should look at its feeder pattern for magnet school themes and seek to provide K-12 continuity. A suggested feeder pattern or continuity has been developed by the magnet review team for district consideration. The review team recognizes that in some cases the elementary magnet curriculum may need to be strengthened to better prepare students for the middle level program that is recommended in the suggested feeder pattern. An example of this is the Science, Technology, Arts and Music (STAM) Magnet at Carrillo. Carrillo will need to strengthen its visual art and music programs to better prepare students for the magnet program at Utterback. It also needs to strengthen its science and technology curriculum to better prepare students for continuity to a strong middle level math/science program. Where there is no magnet feeder continuity, the district should consider creating new magnet schools or programs as funding becomes available to fill in the gaps.

MAGNET PROGRAM REVIEW - TUCSON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT - FALL 2011

**MAGNET SCHOOL CONTINUITY (PIPELINE) PATTERNS**

No identified school/program	Suggested possible school/program
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PROGRAM	PRIMARY/ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE LEVEL	HIGH SCHOOL
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**ARTS/PERFORMING ARTS MAGNET CONTINUITY (PIPELINE) PATTERNS**

<b>OMA Gold (Opening Minds through the Arts)</b>	<b>Tully (K-5)</b> <i>One of 12 other OMA Gold programs, 8 other schools offer OMA Bronze/Silver program</i>	<b>Utterback (6-8)</b> <i>Visual &amp; Performing Arts</i>	<b>Tucson High (9-12)</b> <i>Fine Arts</i>
<b>Performing/Fine Arts</b>	<b>Holladay (K-5)</b> <i>Fine &amp; Performing Arts Would like to add Gr. 6</i>	<b>Utterback (6-8)</b> <i>Visual &amp; Performing Arts</i>	<b>Tucson High (9-12)</b> <i>Fine Arts</i>
<b>STAM (Science/Technology/Arts/Music)</b>	<b>Carrillo (K-5)</b>	<b>Utterback (6-8)</b> <i>Visual &amp; Performing Arts</i>	<b>Tucson High (9-12)</b> <i>Fine Arts</i>

**CHILD-CENTERED LEARNING MAGNET CONTINUITY (PIPELINE) PATTERN**

<b>Montessori</b>	<b>Drachman (K-5)</b>		
<b>Reggio Emilia-Inspired</b>	<b>Ochoa (K - 5)</b>		
<b>Systems Thinking</b>	<b>Borton (K-5)</b>		

**COLLEGE PREP MAGNET CONTINUITY (PIPELINE) PATTERNS**

<b>College Prep</b>	<b>Safford (K-5) &amp; Robison (K-5)</b> <i>International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (PYP) Candidacy pending</i>	<b>Safford (6-8)</b> <i>International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (MYP) Candidacy Pending</i>	<b>Pueblo (9-12)</b> <i>Honors &amp; AP</i>
			<b>University (9-12)</b> <i>Honors &amp; AP (Entrance test; Student-Centered)</i>
	<b>Bonillas (K-5)</b> <i>Back to Basics/Traditional</i>	<b>Dodge (6-8)</b> <i>Traditional</i>	<b>Catalina (9-12)</b> <i>Terra Firma Honors &amp; AP (Traditional; Teacher-Centered)</i>

PROGRAM	PRIMARY/ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE LEVEL	HIGH SCHOOL
<b>FOREIGN LANGUAGE MAGNET CONTINUITY (PIPELINE) PATTERNS</b>			
Bilingual/Spanish Immersion	Roskrige (K-5) <i>Not part of magnet but all K-5 students participate in dual language learning. School wants to become a total school Bilingual Magnet.</i>	Roskrige (6-8) <i>Bilingual</i> <i>In 2010 catalog, not listed as a magnet school</i>	Cholla (9-12) <i>International Baccalaureate</i> <i>Gr. 11-12 IB Certified;</i> <i>Gr. 9-10 Pre-IB only (need funding to being MYP Gr. 9-10 candidacy to complete Gr. 9-12 IB certification)</i>
	Davis (K-5) <i>Spanish Immersion</i>	Safford (6-8) <i>International Baccalaureate</i> <i>MYP, Candidacy pending</i>	

<b>INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE MAGNET CONTINUITY (PIPELINE) PATTERNS</b>			
International Baccalaureate	Safford (K-5) <i>PYP (Primary Years Program) Candidacy pending</i>	Safford (6-8) <i>MYP Candidacy pending</i>	Cholla (9-10) <i>Pre-IB only; funds needed for MYP Gr. 9-10 candidacy to complete Gr. 9-12 IB certification</i>
	Robison (K-5) <i>PYP Candidacy pending</i>		Cholla (11-12) IB Certified <i>Renewal required every 7 yrs.</i>
Law & Public Safety			Cholla (9-12) <i>Need funding to seek IB Career Certification &amp; include this program as part of the overall IB program</i>

<b>SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING/SCIENCE (STEM) MAGNET CONTINUITY (PIPELINE) PATTERNS</b>			
Aviation/Aerospace	Booth-Fickett (6-8) <i>Math/Science</i>	Booth-Fickett (6-8) <i>Math/Science</i>	Catalina (9-12) <i>Wants to add Air Traffic Controller program</i>
Communication Arts & Technology			Pueblo (9-12)
Engineering & Technology			Palo Verde (9-12)
Health Care			Catalina (9-12) <i>Wants to add EMT program</i>
Math/Science	Booth-Fickett (K-5)	Booth-Fickett (6-8)	Tucson High (9-12)
STAM (Science/Technology/Arts/Music)	Carrillo (K-5)	Booth-Fickett (6-8) <i>Math/Science</i>	Tucson High (9-12) <i>Math/Science</i>

<b>SERVICE LEARNING MAGNET CONTINUITY (PIPELINE) PATTERN</b>			
Service Learning			Howenstine (9-12)

<b>TRADITIONAL/BACK TO BASICS MAGNET CONTINUITY (PIPELINE) PATTERN</b>			
Traditional/Back to Basics	Bonillas (K-5)	Dodge (6-8)	Catalina (9-12) <i>Terra Firma</i> <i>(Teacher-centered; Honors/AP program)</i>

## VII. INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL MAGNET REVIEW PROCESS

As part of the comprehensive magnet review process, all of TUSD's 22 magnet schools and program-within-schools magnets were visited. Each visit lasted approximately 4 hours. These visits provided a snapshot of each magnet program. While most schools were eager to share information about their magnet, and much was learned about each program, it was not possible for the visiting team to learn everything about the school and its program during the visit. The magnet review consisted of a "meet and greet" with leadership, a few teachers, and in some cases, parents. Separate interviews were conducted with the principal, magnet coordinator (at schools where the position existed), teacher representatives, parents, and a small group of students at the middle schools (grade 8 only) and high schools. There was a walk-through of the classrooms and the campus. Materials and documents provided by the school (which sometimes included written curricula, scope and sequences of classes, professional development plans and samples of student work from their magnet courses) were reviewed. The review teams found many schools very well prepared for the visit including having documents and parents available. Some schools, however, were unprepared for the visit, had no knowledge of what to prepare for the visit or showed little interest in having the team there. This was especially the case with middle school visits. Some of the middle schools were unprepared for the review due to a failure to read a newsletter from middle school leadership outlining information provided by Education Consulting Services. Several of the middle schools complained no one from central office responded to their phone messages. In spite of these challenges, the team would like to recognize the efforts of the middle school principals in doing everything in their power to make the team feel welcome and assembling people and materials needed for the review.

### A. The Comprehensive Magnet Review Rubric

Several tools were developed for the magnet review including a Comprehensive Magnet Review Rubric. The rubric rated six characteristics of a strong magnet school including: school diversity, innovative and well-implemented magnet theme, professional development that supports the magnet theme(s), specialized teaching staff that support the magnet theme, parent and community involvement and academic excellence. These magnet school characteristics are discussed in Section II. c of this document. Each magnet characteristic on the rubric has between two and seven criteria supporting that characteristic. Following each school visit, the criteria under each characteristic were rated between 0 and 3 by each member of the team. The team then met and determined a final aggregate team score for each school visited.

It is important to note that a higher score or percentage does not necessarily mean the school has better diversity or a better magnet theme, etc. It does mean a school is addressing the criteria that support those characteristics and has the potential to be successful as a magnet school. The Comprehensive Magnet School Rubric measured the following six characteristics of a magnet school/program.

### **1. School Diversity**

School diversity included criteria about a school knowing its desegregation goal as well as how close the school was to reflecting the district's minority/non-minority demographics. The school's marketing and recruitment plan was reviewed. School diversity is also about student integration which includes how well the school is implementing cultural/ethnic programs, including strategies that promote a positive school climate between racial groups and the school's efforts to reach out and promote underrepresented groups to participate in activities.

### **2. Innovative and Well Implemented Magnet Theme**

To ensure rigor and consistency in implementation of a magnet curriculum, a written magnet curriculum, including a scope and sequence, is imperative for all magnet programs. The magnet curriculum must be linked to standards and support a variety of instructional practices. To maintain a quality program, the magnet curriculum must be reviewed and updated regularly. There should be supplies and equipment to support instruction. Administration and teachers must be committed to the magnet theme and all students must receive sufficient dosage of the curriculum. Sufficient dosage means that the theme should be integrated into the core curriculum as well as be taught as a “stand alone” curriculum. The magnet theme should be visible inside classrooms and outside of the school.

### **3. Professional Development that Supports the Magnet Theme**

Magnet schools should be on the cutting edge of teaching and learning related to their magnet theme(s). Professional development related to the magnet theme is important to keep the theme relevant and up to date. Additionally, professional development related to cultural proficiency and instructional practices must also be a part of the magnet. Teachers must be able to link these practices to their magnet instruction. Professional development must start with student achievement data, and it must be about what is needed to improve student learning.

#### **4. Specialized Teaching Staff**

The magnet theme should be considered when assigning or selecting any teachers to a magnet school. Teachers with little interest or understanding of the magnet theme will not implement curriculum or activities with any fidelity. Additionally, magnet schools often have specialized positions such as science lab teachers, performing arts teachers and magnet resource teachers. These teachers are often the teacher leaders for the magnet program. There should be an application and interview process that allows a magnet school to select the best of the best for these specialized positions.

#### **5. Parent and Community Involvement**

Neighborhood and non-neighborhood parents should be regularly informed about what is happening in the magnet program. Parents should feel welcome at the school and be invited into classrooms to see what their student is learning. To the level possible, parents should be encouraged to volunteer at the school including in classrooms. Magnet schools need to develop partnerships with community organizations and businesses, especially with those that support their magnet theme. These partnerships often provide speakers and experiences that make learning more meaningful for students. Partnerships also often support the school with donations or providing scholarships for students.

#### **6. Improved Academic Achievement**

Linking magnet curriculum to standards is imperative if schools want to see academic improvement. There also should be a number of academic supports or programs in place to assist all students to achieve. Teachers should implement the new instructional practices they learned in professional development. Too often, professional development is not taken beyond teacher learning to teacher implementation. Magnet curriculum should integrate the use of new technologies. The work place of the future will be quite different from what it is today. Students must be prepared to use technology as a tool for further learning. Magnet curriculum must be reviewed annually and adjustments must be made to address student learning. Teachers must be committed to fidelity of the magnet plan.

**Aggregate Team Scores**  
**for the Comprehensive Magnet Review Rubric**  
**follow on the next three pages.**

ELEMENTARY MAGNET SCHOOLS COMPREHENSIVE MAGNET REVIEW RUBRIC Aggregate Team Score September 17, 2011														
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	SCHOOL DIVERSITY		INNOVATIVE & WELL IMPLEMENTED MAGNET THEME		PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THAT SUPPORTS THE MAGNET		SPECIALIZED TEACHING STAFF		PARENT & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT		IMPROVED ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT		TOTAL SCORES	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Bonillas</b>														
<i>Back to Basics</i>	10	56%	16	76%	9	75%	3	50%	9	75%	8	53%	55	65%
<b>Borton</b>														
<i>Systems Thinking</i>	13.5	75%	14	67%	11	92%	6	100%	10	83%	8	53%	59.5	74%
<b>Carrillo</b>														
<i>Science Technology Art &amp; Music (STAM)</i>	12	67%	16	76%	7	78%	5	83%	12	100%	12	80%	64	76%
<b>Davis</b>														
<i>Bilingual/Dual Language</i>	12	67%	21	100%	12	100%	6	100%	10	83%	15	100%	79	94%
<b>Drachman</b>														
<i>Montessori</i>	11	61%	18	86%	10	83%	2	33%	7	58%	9	60%	57	68%
<b>Holladay</b>														
<i>Fine &amp; Performing Arts</i>	15	83%	15	71%	7	58%	6	100%	9	75%	11	73%	63	75%
<b>Ochoa</b>														
<i>Reggio Emilia Inspired</i>	12	67%	20.5	98%	10	83%	5.5	92%	12	100%	10	67%	70	83%
<b>Robison</b>														
<i>International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program</i>	15	83%	20	95%	12	100%	5	83%	12	100%	10	67%	74	88%
<b>Tully</b>														
<i>Opening Minds Through the Arts (Gold)</i>	11	61%	12	57%	9	75%	3	50%	8	67%	11	73%	54	64%
<b>Total Possible</b>	18		21		12		6		12		15		84	

K-8 & MIDDLE MAGNET SCHOOLS COMPREHENSIVE MAGNET REVIEW RUBRIC Aggregate Team Score September 17, 2011														
K-8 & MIDDLE SCHOOLS	SCHOOL DIVERSITY		INNOVATIVE & WELL IMPLEMENTED MAGNET THEME		PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THAT SUPPORTS THE MAGNET		SPECIALIZED TEACHING STAFF		PARENT & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT		IMPROVED ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT		TOTAL SCORES	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Booth-Fickett (K-8)</b>														
<i>Math/Science (K-5)</i>	11	61%	6	29%	10	83%	2	33%	4	33%	7	47%	40	48%
<i>(6-8)</i>	11	61%	8	38%	10	83%	2	33%	4	33%	7	47%	42	50%
<b>Dodge (6-8)</b>														
<i>Traditional Education</i>	12	67%	9	43%	9	75%	4	67%	11	92%	13	87%	58	69%
<b>Safford (K-8)</b>														
<i>International Baccalaureate Primary &amp; Middle Years Program with a focus on Engineering &amp; Technology</i>	16	88%	18.5	88%	12	100%	6	100%	12	100%	15	100%	79.5	95%
<b>Roskruge (6-8)</b>														
<i>Bilingual/Dual Language</i>	10	56%	19	90%	10	83%	6	100%	10	83%	12	80%	67	80%
<b>Utterback (6-8)</b>														
<i>Visual &amp; Performing Arts</i>	9	50%	19	90%	11	92%	6	100%	10	83%	13	87%	68	81%
Total Possible	18		21		12		6		12		15		84	

HIGH SCHOOL MAGNET SCHOOLS COMPREHENSIVE MAGNET REVIEW RUBRIC Aggregate Team Score September 17, 2011														
HIGH SCHOOLS	SCHOOL DIVERSITY		INNOVATIVE & WELL IMPLEMENTED MAGNET THEME		PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THAT SUPPORTS THE MAGNET		SPECIALIZED TEACHING STAFF		PARENT & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT		IMPROVED ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT		TOTAL SCORES	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Catalina</b>														
<i>Aviation/ Aerospace</i>	11	61%	19	90%	2	17%	6	100%	12	100%	9	60%	59	70%
<i>Health Care</i>	14	78%	19	90%	5	42%	6	100%	8	67%	12	80%	64	76%
<i>Terra Firma</i>	11	61%	16	76%	9	75%	6	100%	11	92%	12	80%	65	77%
<b>Cholla</b>														
<i>International Baccalaureate</i>	13	72%	16	76%	12	100%	6	100%	10	83%	15	100%	72	86%
<i>Law &amp; Public Safety</i>	This program was not rated separately due to limited course offerings.													
<b>Howenstine</b>														
<i>Service Learning</i>	10	56%	14	67%	8	87%	6	100%	9	75%	8	53%	55	64%
<b>Palo Verde</b>														
<i>Engineering &amp; Technology</i>	18	100%	20	95%	11	92%	6	100%	12	100%	13	87%	80	95%
<b>Pueblo</b>														
<i>Communication Arts &amp; Technology</i>	9	50%	18	86%	10	83%	6	100%	9	75%	12	80%	64	76%
<i>College Prep</i>	9	50%	17	81%	10	83%	6	100%	9	75%	12	80%	63	75%
<b>Tucson</b>														
<i>Fine Arts</i>	16	89%	20	95%	10	83%	6	100%	9	75%	15	83%	76	90%
<i>Math &amp; Science</i>	16	89%	20	95%	10	83%	6	100%	9	75%	15	83%	76	90%
<b>University</b>														
<i>College Prep</i>	14	78%	19	90%	12	100%	6	100%	12	100%	13	87%	75	89%

## B. Common Trends Found at Magnet Schools

It should be noted that the visiting teams felt that many of the TUSD magnet schools and their teaching staff are well kept secrets unknown to the community at large. The quality of many of the magnet programs we visited was very high. The principals and teachers at most schools were accommodating and eager to share their work. Teachers expressed a great deal of pride in their students and what they can do. Teachers and administrators were generally dedicated and committed to the school's magnet theme as well as to the improvement of student learning. In many schools the magnet curriculum is being integrated into core instruction.

The school visits and magnet review rubric scores revealed some common trends across all of TUSD's magnet schools. These common trends or issues were not necessarily included in each of the school summaries, but are summarized as follows:

### School Diversity

- The great majority of TUSD magnet schools did not have recruitment goals.
- Most of the schools did not have a marketing and recruitment plan that addresses diversity.
- Except for the principal, many schools did not have a person to develop and carry out marketing and recruitment activities.

### Innovative and Well Implemented Magnet Theme

- The majority of TUSD's magnet schools did not have a written magnet curriculum.
- The few schools that had a written magnet curriculum did not review it on a regular basis.
- Magnets without a written curriculum lack connections to standards, consistency in implementation, and rigor in magnet learning and activities.
- Almost every school visited noted the need for someone to serve as a magnet resource person to assist with the many aspects of implementing a magnet program.

### Professional Development that Supports the Magnet Theme

- Professional development related to the magnet content was non-existent in most schools. The following schools, Davis, Drachman, Ochoa, Robinson, Safford and Roskrige were exceptions.
- There was a general lack of professional development related to cultural literacy or relevancy.
- Teacher directed instruction was generally observed in most of the magnet schools. Professional development related to instructional strategies was occurring district wide with the Essential Elements of Instruction (EEI) Training; the strategies being taught were not being implemented in classrooms.

### Specialized Teaching Staff

- District procedures often place teachers with little knowledge of the magnet theme at a magnet school.

### Parent and Community Involvement

- Accurate information related to parent perceptions of their magnet school was impossible to ascertain as many schools did not have parents available for the magnet review process.

### Improved Student Achievement

- At the majority of magnet schools, magnet curriculum was not linked to achievement data.
- There was a general lack of knowledge about magnet school research and what it takes for a magnet program to impact achievement.
- The review team noted that there was often a lack of consistency in implementation, no scope and sequence, and a general lack of rigor in magnet instruction. It is critical for every magnet school to have a written magnet curriculum or syllabi of courses that is reviewed annually and provides a rigorous level of instructional content.

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### **NOTE:**

A Magnet School Summary of Information has been developed for each school which includes:

1. important data including capacity, enrollment and achievement at each school;
2. current and suggested magnet continuity;
3. an overview of the program;
4. comments and observations of the team; and,
5. important issues brought up at each school.

Magnet School Program Summaries, for each individual school, are found as a separate document at the end of this report.

## VIII. Summary of Recommendations and Commendations For Magnet Schools

### A. Elementary Magnet Schools (K-5)

There are ten district elementary magnet schools. All elementary magnets are total school magnets with neighborhood and non-neighborhood students participating in all aspects of the magnet program and curricula. The team observed that most of the elementary school magnets were integrating the magnet theme with core curriculum. In a couple of schools, Carrillo and Tully, there was little theme integration; most of the magnet instruction was happening separately or in a lab.

There are no magnet resource teachers at elementary magnet schools except for Robison and Ochoa which are required, and paid for, as part of the federal grant the schools are receiving. When the grant ends, funding for the two positions will end unless the schools decide to fund them from their existing budgets. Site magnet resource teachers are critical for effective implementation of the program, fidelity to the magnet plan, and marketing and recruitment.

There is a need for elementary magnet schools to have marketing and recruitment goals. Even though the magnets are bringing in a significant number of magnet students, only Bonillas, Borton and Holladay are within ten percent of the District minority/non-minority demographics. With no recruitment goals, the schools often recruit in neighborhoods adjacent to their school which does not necessarily bring diversity. Marketing and recruitment is left to the principal and a few teachers who use their spare time to reach out to parents.

Six of the ten elementary magnet schools (Carrillo, Davis, Drachman, Ochoa, Robison and Tully) are racially isolated with Hispanic populations at 75% or higher when compared to the district's elementary Hispanic population of 63.5%

All but two elementary magnet schools, Bonillas and Ochoa, made their 2011 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) based on the scores from spring 2011 AIMS testing. Ochoa has been a magnet for less than a year and has just begun to implement a magnet program.

There is a need for:

- professional development related to each school's content theme. Except for Davis and Drachman and the two elementary school involved in the Magnet Schools Assistance Grant (Ochoa and Robison), elementary magnets have had little to no professional development related to their theme.

- elementary schools to have professional development related to cultural literacy. Most elementary schools reported that there has been no training related to cultural literacy for many years.
- technology training. The team heard from many schools that they had Smart Boards, but teachers were not trained to use them. Additionally, technology capabilities at the elementary magnet schools vary widely. Some schools are totally wireless, have computers in classrooms, and several carts of computers on wheels (COWs). Other schools have no capacity to use technology in their classrooms and there are few computers on the campus. The infrastructure of a few schools cannot support wireless connections.

Parents interviewed at each elementary magnet were supportive of the school's achievement and diversity goals. At some schools they were passionate about the magnet program and how important they felt the magnet instruction was for their student. However, at many of the schools, at least some parents felt that the magnet program was a program for gifted students.

The following issues are related to specific, individual elementary magnet schools:

- The Basic Curriculum Magnet at Bonillas was notable. While the reviewers believe that all schools should be about providing a strong basic curriculum and that the school's theme does not usually qualify as a magnet, the level of commitment to the program and the quality of implementation of the teacher-led curriculum resulted in the review team agreeing it is a strong magnet program.
- The Systems Thinking Program at Borton appears to be inconsistently implemented and an academically weak magnet. There is no written curriculum or Systems Thinking units of instruction that support the academic program. The school reported it is starting to develop Systems Thinking units of instruction for each grade level, but none were available for review.
- Carrillo's STAM (Science/Technology/Arts/Music) is the only elementary with a program that can prepare students for two different middle school/high school magnet focus continuities (Math/Science and Performing Arts).
  - The science curriculum taught in the science lab is not unique. FOSS is the core science program for TUSD. The magnet science lab should be providing a science curriculum over and above the district's core program. Once the science lab provides science enrichment, continuity could be established with the Math/Science middle school magnet.

- Carrillo should work with Utterback to determine how to strengthen their art and music lab curriculum to prepare their students for the Visual and Performing Arts Magnet at Utterback.
- Davis has a long history as a very successful magnet program providing students the opportunity to become fluent in Spanish speaking, reading and writing. The review team was impressed by students' Spanish capabilities even in primary grades. Although the program is a Spanish Immersion program, district materials and the school's signage all indicated it is a Dual Language/bilingual program. While the review team was told that everyone really understands it is an immersion program rather than a dual language/bilingual program, the program should be correctly identified and marketed as a "Spanish Immersion." There are important differences immersion and dual language/bilingual programs that parents should understand.
- The Montessori program is very attractive to many parents. Montessori classroom teaching equipment and supplies are very expensive. Drachman's classrooms have thousands of dollars of Montessori equipment and supplies. However, there is only one teacher (and the principal) who are certified by the American Montessori Society. The rest of the staff is struggling with how to use the equipment. It is critical that all teachers at Drachman are trained and certified by the American Montessori Society as soon as possible.
- Holladay should be commended for adding the K-2 grade levels to its program with a classroom of students for each grade level. This will make a much stronger K-5 fine and performing arts program at the school. The school would like to add grade 6 to their program.
- Robison's International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program and Ochoa's Emilia Reggio Program are two new magnets supported by grant funding in operation for less than a year when the team visited. Both schools are very involved in professional development related to their magnet and both are doing an impressive job developing and writing their curriculum. They have the potential to become very successful magnet programs. The teachers and principals are committed to the new magnet themes. A central office magnet grant coordinator is providing each school with significant guidance and support including marketing and recruitment. The review team observed teachers at each school using the strategies learned in their respective professional development in classroom instruction. The district needs to commit to the programs and begin to plan for district funding to maintain ongoing required training and subscription fees after grant funding ends.

- The Opening Minds through the Arts program (OMA) at Tully is not a unique program; at least twenty other schools in TUSD are implementing the OMA program. It should not be identified as a magnet at Tully.

## **B. K-8 and Middle Magnet Schools**

TUSD has magnet programs at three K-8 schools (Booth-Fickett, Roskruge, and Safford) and two middle schools (Dodge and Utterback). All schools, except the Roskruge Bilingual/Dual Language Magnet, are total school magnets. Although all K-8 students at Roskruge receive dual language instruction, the identified magnet program is only at grades 6-8.

The Roskruge Middle School should develop a proposal to become a total school K-8 Bilingual/Dual Language Magnet to take to the Governing Board for approval. This proposal should include any additional costs required to turn the elementary program into a magnet.

Except for Safford and Utterback, none of the other K-8 or middle school magnets have a magnet resource teacher or IB coordinators. All of the middle level schools stated how vital this position is to a successful magnet.

Three out of the five middle school magnets (Roskruge, Safford and Utterback) remain racially isolated with Hispanic populations at 75% or higher when compared to the district's K-8 and middle school Hispanic population of 64%.

Only one of the five middle school magnets (Dodge) did not make its AYP growth targets for 2011. Safford, Roskruge and Utterback have been identified as program improvement schools under the federal standards for AYP.

It is difficult to accurately comment on parent perceptions of their school's magnet as parents were not available for the interview process except at Safford. The schools were not aware that they were supposed to have a small group of parents available for the visiting team. Safford knew because they have a central office coordinator for their federal grant.

The following issues relate to individual middle school magnets:

- The magnet at Booth-Fickett needs to be significantly revised and updated. There was no evidence of any specialized math or science curriculum in the elementary grades. The elementary program is district math and science taught by the classroom teachers. At the middle school, the science program is lab-based and students can participate in the "Habitat" course and an "Exploring Engineering" course. However, there was no sequence of math or science classes. There were no specialized math/science teachers. The school has limited technology. TUSD should consider revising this school to a state-of-the-art Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) magnet program.

- The Traditional Magnet at Dodge deserves note. As with Bonillas, the team that visited this magnet believes that all middle schools should be offering a strong, basic core curriculum. Dodge has no magnet curriculum or curricular enhancements. It is the strict level of application of the traditional, back-to-basics approach that makes Dodge different from other district middle school offerings. As a magnet program, this school is successful.
- All Roskrige students K-8 receive dual language instruction, yet the magnet program is only at grades 6-8. The school should become a total school magnet. There is not wireless internet access at the school. District assistance is needed to rectify the situation to ensure students have a program supported by technology.
- The new International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IB MYP) at Safford is being implemented to turn the school into an academically "performing" school. The IB MYP program is an internationally recognized quality program and has the capacity to make a significant difference at Safford. The school is also implementing an IB Primary Years Program (PYP) for students in grades K-5. A federal magnet grant is funding the professional development, curriculum writing, and the annual IB MYP and PYP subscription cost for Safford. There is a central office manager for this grant who is also providing the school with significant support as they develop the program. TUSD must commit to continue to fund them after grant funding ceases.
- The Utterback Visual and Performing Arts magnet is a strong middle level magnet program that serves district students with interests or talents in the fine and performing arts. The magnet teachers have done a good job embedding academic standards into the arts curricula; however, the academic teachers are not using the arts theme to enrich their courses.
  - TUSD should reduce or eliminate the number of elementary feeder schools it has sending students to Utterback. It's Visual and Performing Arts Magnet is very specialized and not a program for everyone. Across the nation, successful Visual and Performing Arts magnets do not have a neighborhood population--all students apply including neighborhood students. Neighborhood students feeding into Utterback deserve other options if they are not interested in the Visual and Performing Arts theme.

### C. High School Magnet Programs

There are two, total school, high school magnet programs: Howenstine and University. Five high schools have one to three programs-within-the-school magnets: Catalina (three programs), Cholla (two programs), Palo Verde (one program) Pueblo (two programs) and Tucson (two programs). While any neighborhood student who wants to participate in one of the programs-within-a-school may do so, these are not total school magnet programs.

Getting accurate data for the number of students enrolled in the program-within-school high school magnets was impossible. The School Community Services Office could not determine an accurate number of non-neighborhood students enrolled in each program because of entry errors made for some students who applied. It took months for the entry errors to be corrected only to be told by the data department that some were still not fixed. This made getting accurate numbers for each school's programs-within-the-school applicants and number of students enrolled impossible to determine. Additionally, the number of neighborhood students in the programs within-the-school was impossible to determine because neighborhood students in the high school magnet programs do not apply and are not tracked in the district's system. It should be noted that the consultant tried for over two months to get accurate high school magnet enrollment data without success. Thus, it was also impossible to get magnet achievement data or determine true "per magnet student" costs.

TUSD should consider following the nationally recognized model for identifying magnet students especially if they want to determine if the magnet program is successful academically and successful in assisting the school in reducing racial isolation. Magnet programs are generally located at schools to assist the district in reducing racial isolation. The neighborhood students are as important to the magnet's success as the non-neighborhood students. High school magnet enrollment should include neighborhood and non-neighborhood students. Currently, the district does not require applications from neighborhood students and cannot keep track of the neighborhood students who enroll in magnet classes because there are no identified "sequences" of courses magnet students must take. Students who are involved in the magnet program curriculum at their neighborhood school should be coded as neighborhood magnet students and counted in the total number of students enrolled in the program. It should be noted that Cholla does require applications from neighborhood students for their International Baccalaureate program and Tucson High has requested achievement data that includes both neighborhood and non-neighborhood magnet students.

High school programs-within-the-school magnet must identify criteria that constitute a magnet student for both the neighborhood and non-neighborhood students. Saying "the magnet courses are available to neighborhood students if they want to enroll" is not equitable and does not make the school a total school magnet program. Neighborhood students should be recruited to participate in the magnet curriculum. A four year plan of courses should be developed for all magnet students when they enroll at the school. These plans should be shared with parents and reviewed annually. Counselors/teachers should monitor magnet program enrollment, progress, and grades just as they would any magnet student. Accurate information regarding neighborhood student participation in a high school's program is imperative to ensure an accurate picture of success in attracting students and increasing academic success of all students who participate.

All high schools expressed the need for a magnet resource teacher to carry out the responsibilities of recruitment and marketing for their programs, monitoring of student enrollment, thematic professional development, developing and maintaining partnerships, and the variety of other duties and responsibilities that magnet programs require. Tucson High has a full time magnet resource teacher and Palo Verde has a new magnet resource teacher this year.

Only the two total school magnets, Howenstine and University High, met their 2011 AYP targets. Because AYP is calculated only on a total school basis, scores of all students at the two schools helped with this achievement. It is impossible to determine what effect magnet student scores at the five high schools with programs-within-the-school had on the schools' failure to meet their AYP targets. This is because neighborhood magnet students are impossible to identify by program and errors in non-neighborhood student enrollment could not be rectified. Additionally, it is impossible to compare the academic achievement of all magnet students (neighborhood and non-neighborhood) with non magnet students in other areas such as grades, Advanced Placement results, etc. as well as in areas such as dropouts, suspensions, etc.

Three out of the seven high school magnets (Cholla, Pueblo and Tucson High) remain racially isolated with Hispanic populations of 70% or higher when compared to the district's high school Hispanic population of 54.8%

Only one of the seven high school magnets, University, has an Anglo enrollment of 54.5% while the district's high school Anglo enrollment is 30.5%. This is a 24.0% difference. University also has an Asian enrollment of 12.7% while the district's high school Asian population is 3.5%.

There has been no funding for magnet theme professional development at most high school magnets. Funding for the specialized programs offered by many of the schools is essential for them to maintain state-of-the-art curricula, address current issues related to the theme, meet program requirements (i.e., IB) and for health and safety of students. Some of the programs receive general district provided professional development through the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Department.

High school recommendations/commendations specific to each school are as follows:

- Catalina houses three magnet programs. The district should consider moving the JTED Certified Nursing Assistant program back to Catalina. It should also support adding the Emergency Medical Technician program to the Health Care Program and an Air Traffic Controller sequence to the Aviation/Aerospace Program. It is difficult to implement, market, and recruit for programs with only one teacher in each program. Funding is needed to ensure adequate professional development for teachers in the two career-related programs as well as for the *Terra Firma* (College Prep) program teachers. Like the traditional magnets at Bonillas and Dodge, Catalina's College Prep program is highly regarded by parents and students as a successful program. However, the team that visited this magnet believes that all high schools should be offering a college prep curriculum and support for students to be successful in higher education.
- There are two magnet programs at Cholla:
  - The school's high quality and highly successful International Baccalaureate Diploma Program at grades 11 and 12 should be expanded to include the IB grade 9-10 Middle Years Program. This would insure adequate preparation for students prior to enrolling in the rigorous Diploma Program. Funding for required IB training is necessary to ensure student success in the program and on IB exams, for increased and readily available student access to computers, and to increase the IB coordinator position to full time.
  - The Law and Public Safety Program needs strengthening. The once highly regarded program with its courtroom and law library should be revamped and updated with the intent of applying for the recently introduced IB Career/Tech Certification program. This could consolidate the programs and enhance marketing and recruitment. Currently the courtroom and law library are unused.
- Beginning with the 2011 school year, Howenstine is a turnaround school with a new principal who had been at the school for only a short time when the review team visited. The Howenstine magnet is Service Learning. The school offers opportunities for students from across the district who do not want to attend a large, comprehensive high school, but want to attend a smaller high school with a unique magnet program and personalized support. The staff has concerns about a lingering community perception that it is a school for special education students. Howenstine needs support to market its program across the TUSD community.

- Palo Verde has made a significant change to its magnet offerings. There has only been one program, Engineering and Technology, but the school has developed a performing arts program that they believe has not been recognized by the Governing Board. The school reports many students come to Palo Verde for its performing arts curriculum. The school should develop a proposal and take it to the Governing Board to be approved as a new magnet theme.
  
- Pueblo is home to two magnet programs:
  - The school's College Prep program is not a unique magnet theme. The review team believes all high schools should be offering college prep (pre AP and AP) curriculum as well as supports for students to be successful in these programs. The teachers in the College Prep program are very committed and working hard to address the social and economic needs of the Pueblo students in the program. High poverty at the school often puts roadblocks in the way for students to be academically successful and truly understanding of the benefits of a college or university education. Teachers work hard with individual students to address their needs and any difficulties they may be encountering.
  - The Communications Magnet at Pueblo is a strong magnet program that works hard to integrate core curriculum standards into the variety of communication strands including broadcast, radio, journalism, etc. Teachers were eager and enthusiastic to share what students learn in the variety of classes offered and how standards are addressed. The program needs to develop a sequence of courses that students should take for each of the strands of communication.
  
- The Tucson magnet houses two magnet programs:
  - Courses within the Fine Arts strands (dance, music, art, etc.) progress from beginning or basic to advanced and are taught by expert teachers. What it means to be a "Fine Arts magnet student" is not well defined, however, and should be addressed.
  - While there are numerous math and science classes that are unique, there is no scope and sequence in either area that can be used to define a "Math magnet student," "Science magnet student," or "Math/Science" magnet student. As with the Fine Arts program, this should be addressed.
  - Defining what a magnet student is will make it easier for the school and district to identify students to track when attempting to determine the program successes, weaknesses, and costs for each program-within-the-school.
  - Revamping and revitalizing magnet program "endorsement plans" is a site-identified task that should be addressed as soon as possible along with a plan for communicating the information to parents and students.

- The College Prep Magnet at University is also not a unique magnet theme. However, the fact that students must take all their classes at the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades at the AP level is unique and academically challenging. The school has a number of supports in place to assist students to succeed in this rigorous program, however, the school's admission requirements ensure that the school enrolls only highly gifted and academically successful students. The program is more of a seminar/GATE program, serving the needs of some highly gifted and motivated students, than a magnet program.
  - University's student body does not reflect the TUSD community. While the school is targeting its recruitment to address student diversity, the review team encourages them to adjust some of their policies. There are many students in TUSD schools who will be very successful at the college or university level who do not meet the school's current, very challenging, admissions policy.
  - University High School's College Prep Magnet has not been recognized by the Governing Board as a magnet. The school should develop a proposal and take it to the Governing Board to be approved as a magnet school.

## IX. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR K-12 MAGNET THEME CONTINUITY

It appears that no attention has been paid to the District Continuity (Pipeline) for Magnet Schools during the past several years. Some of the continuity patterns (pipelines) are outdated showing magnet continuation based on an old theme that is no longer implemented and there are no new pipelines for new magnet themes such as International Baccalaureate.

Being able to continue in a magnet program K-12 is an educational benefit for magnet schools. K-12 magnet continuity provides priority to students wanting to continue in the same theme or a closely-related theme, and be accepted ahead of applicants who do not have the need, interest or previous experience/preparation in the magnet focus. This magnet priority is often the way students get accepted into popular middle or high school programs. Magnet continuity or pipelines are also important marketing and recruitment topics for parents.

Recommendations have been made to update and add schools to the district's magnet school pipeline and the chart can be found in Section VI, of this report.

As the district looks to change existing magnet programs or add new ones, it should look at the continuity of magnet themes. Schools and programs that the consultant recommends to improve continuity include:

- The elementary school at Roskrige should be added to the magnet bilingual/dual language theme.
- An International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (grades 9 and 10) should be added to the Cholla High School 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade IB Diploma Program. This will provide stronger continuity and support students articulating from the new IB programs at Robison and Safford.
- Both Carrillo and Tully will need to strengthen their fine arts and music programs to better prepare their students for the Visual and Performing Arts theme.
- A K-6 or K-8 Music Conservatory would be a suggested addition for the Creative and Performing Arts theme.
- TUSD needs a strong K-12 math/science or STEM magnet strand. Booth-Fickett should be revitalized and strengthened.

## **X. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISTRICT GOVERNANCE OF MAGNET SCHOOLS**

It is imperative that TUSD establish a Magnet Office to support the variety of magnet school programs the district has. The office should be led by a magnet coordinator or director and optimally have two resource positions to assist in carrying out the responsibilities and duties assigned to the office. The person selected to lead the Magnet Office should have experience with a variety of magnet curricula, curriculum integration, program evaluation, marketing and recruitment, parent and community involvement and developing community and business partnerships.

This central office position is critical for magnet program integrity, fidelity and to provide TUSD students a multicultural education, where integration is the norm and racial isolation is mitigated. The Magnet Office must work in collaboration with, and as a support to, the assistant superintendents and other central office departments including the School Community Services Office. It should also be guided by the permanent student assignment plan that will be developed in the near future. It is hoped that the new student assignment plan will include funding for more reasonable transportation routes, school marketing and recruitment strategies, and will provide diversity goals for magnet schools. If TUSD wants to draw back families who have left for charter, private or home school options, there should be a focus on marketing and recruiting for the district's magnet schools. There should be personnel to plan, lead and assist schools in carrying out the marketing plans developed for the schools.

There is a lack of leadership for magnet programs/schools when decisions are made at central office without consideration as to how they affect the magnet schools' programs, achievement, and diversity goals. Situations and problems that individual schools have encountered were shared with the visiting teams by too many schools to be ignored. Additionally, the consultants experienced the miscommunications, or lack of communication, with the schools regarding their notification of the comprehensive review process. At every level (elementary, middle and high school) there was a problem with at least a few schools getting the complete or accurate information regarding the comprehensive review. When schools called the central office to clarify information, their calls were not returned. The proposed magnet office should provide schools with information and assistance with all things related to magnet programs.

Marketing and recruitment takes time and effort on the part of the schools. When parents from neighborhoods that could bring diversity to a school make the decision to send their student to a magnet school, transportation should be provided. If the district is committed to reducing racial isolation at magnet schools, it should find ways to transport students from targeted neighborhoods to the magnet school within a reasonable amount of time. Transportation can make or break the schools' recruitment efforts.

Magnet schools need to be given recruitment goals. These goals need to be reviewed periodically as applications are received in order that schools adjust their recruitment strategies. Without diversity goals, the schools see no need to reach out beyond the neighborhoods close to the school. This recruitment does not often bring students who assist the school in reducing racial isolation. Schools reported that they knew they should be recruiting in other neighborhoods, but that it didn't seem to matter to anyone, and transportation was such a nightmare.

The Magnet Office should put a system in place to monitor magnet enrollment and drops from magnet programs. There also needs to be a system to handle growth plans for magnet school programs. When programs are successful and schools reach capacity, there should be a way to grow the program at another school. When programs are not successful, a system should be put in place that allows the school to significantly revise or change its theme. TUSD magnet schools expressed many ideas to add to or change their program. These plans are being created school-by-school with no consideration to the effect it will have on other schools, cost of the plan, or the direction of the district. The Magnet Office should work with schools to guide them in making change decisions and developing programs with consistency and fidelity to the theme.

The Magnet Office should be responsible for developing and monitoring magnet policy and procedures, and ensuring that all schools are abiding by those policies. Procedures need to be developed to identify new magnet schools, and for current magnet schools needing to significantly change their magnet theme. All new magnet schools, as well as any significant changes to current magnet programs, should be presented to and approved by the Governing Board.

The magnet application form is confusing for parents and needs to be separate from the open enrollment application. At schools with programs-within-school, both the neighborhood and the non-neighborhood students should be required to submit magnet applications to ensure accurate enrollment, achievement, dropout, suspension, and other district, school, or grant required data available for each specific magnet theme/focus within a school. It is important that the data be entered correctly into the district system. Parents do not understand how the open enrollment or magnet processes work. Schools and parents do not understand the grouping of schools by areas (Group A, B, C) as contained in the PUSP. Many parents think magnet schools are GATE schools.

The District's "Catalog of Schools" needs to be redesigned to feature magnet schools as a group. The catalog available to the review team had many information errors. A magnet office will ensure that correct information is included and updated annually. Many parents complained that the catalog was confusing with all of its symbols and that the magnet schools were hard to find.

While schools complained that recent budget cuts hurt their magnet programs, funding for magnets was difficult to determine. Funding for magnet programs is sometimes part of the desegregation funds schools receive, but sometimes the majority of the magnet was funded from other budgets. Desegregation funds seem to fund a variety of programs other than magnet programs. Additionally, at the high school level, some magnet programs are funded with Career and Technical Education funds. Having a magnet budget based on a formula specific to each magnet theme and including neighborhood and non-neighborhood students in costs analyses would allow for better oversight and monitoring of magnet program funding.

The vast majority of TUSD magnet schools have poor signage on the outside of the school identifying it as a magnet school or the school's theme. Some high schools have a marquee that states it is "A Magnet School" when in fact the magnet is a small program at the school.

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**Attachment - Bound Separately:**

Individual Magnet School Summaries

**Acknowledgements**

The members of the visiting magnet review team from Education Consulting Services would like to thank all TUSD magnet schools' staff members for welcoming us and assisting us in learning about your magnet program(s). The team sincerely appreciates all the time and effort so many took in preparing for our visit. We also appreciate the efforts made to teach us about your program(s) and to candidly discuss the real issues at your school.