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March 9, 2021

TO: Families of Issaquah School District 3<sup>rd</sup> Graders

FROM: Page Perey, Director of Elementary Special Programs  
Susan Mundell, Executive Director of Elementary Education

RE: Science Technology Magnet Program for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students

This letter is to inform families of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students about the Issaquah School District Science Technology Magnet Program choice options for grades 4 and 5. This letter contains information about the programs, the enrollment lottery application timeline and process, the required online informational module and attestation, and how lottery results will be communicated to families.

The Science Technology Magnet Programs are located at Briarwood, Cascade Ridge and Clark Elementary Schools and provide the standard district curriculum for those grades with a stronger emphasis on science and technology. The mission of the program is to engage students through collaborative innovative problem solving that applies to real world situations. The program educates students through the intentional integration of science and technology, empowers students by fostering curiosity and discovery, and supports students to persevere through challenges.

The Science Technology Magnet Programs serve approximately 25 students per grade in a multi-age classroom. Fourth grade students continue in the program the following year as 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. Both boys and girls are welcome and thrive in the classes. Typically, successful students are independent learners, enjoy inquiry learning and work well in a team situation.

Due to very high demand for these choice programs families are asked to select and apply to only one school's program. **Transportation to each program is the responsibility of the families.**

Applications for the enrollment lottery are currently being offered to district 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students for 4<sup>th</sup> grade openings next year at all three program locations. ***Enrollment lottery applications will be accepted online March 19 through April 19.*** Students will be selected through a lottery from all district elementary schools with an attempt to balance the enrollment between schools. For each program location lottery, spaces will be assigned by the neighborhood school in the attendance area your student resides. After 4<sup>th</sup> grade classroom lists are selected, a wait list will be formed, and students will be admitted as spaces occur until school starts. Occasionally there is an opening in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. When this happens, families currently on the established wait lists are contacted to fill these limited spots. All siblings, including twins, will be considered individually in the lottery.

#### **Timeline\***

March 19 - April 19	Online enrollment lottery application window open.
April 19	Enrollment lottery application window closes.
Week of April 21	Science Technology Magnet Program enrollment lottery conducted remotely.
May 1 – May 31	Placement letters sent by US Mail or email. Please do not contact the schools, teachers or the district office for lottery results. Verify that your mailing and email addresses are current in Family Access.

\* All enrollment lottery application forms submitted by Monday, April 19 will be treated equally in the lottery. Enrollment lottery applications submitted after the deadline will be dated in the order received and placed on the wait list following students placed initially from the original lottery.

### **Application Process**

1. View the Science Technology Magnet Program informational module and video, which will be available on the Issaquah School District [Science Technology Magnet Programs](#) webpage March 19 through April 19.
2. Click on the link at the end of the informational module to complete the enrollment lottery application form and attestation.
3. As part of the application process, all students are required submit a meaningful **hand-written** paragraph explaining why they would like to attend the 4/5 Science Technology Magnet Program. Mail the paragraph to:

Issaquah School District  
5150 220<sup>th</sup> Ave SE  
Issaquah, WA 98029  
Attention: Science Technology Magnet Program Enrollment Lottery

Returning families who have had a student previously enrolled in the program are not required to watch the informational module or complete the attestation. Instead returning families may email the Elementary Special Programs Office at [ScienceTech@issaquah.wednet.edu](mailto:ScienceTech@issaquah.wednet.edu) or call 425-837-7120 to request the link to the online lottery enrollment application form.

### **Program Offerings**

The Issaquah School District offers three Science and Technology Magnet Programs, serving 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in unique multi-age classrooms. Each magnet serves 50+ students in a two-year program. Each program covers all standard 4/5 district adopted curriculum, with an added emphasis on science and technology. Grade specific math instruction is provided.

Magnet programs are located at Briarwood, Cascade Ridge and Clark, Elementary schools, with each program fully integrated into the school. Each school offers expanded science and technology learning opportunities.

### **Teaching Approaches and Student Learning**

Magnet programs are housed in joined classrooms and instructed using a team teaching approach. This setting builds collaboration skills and promotes a strong sense of community. At the same time, the larger classroom setting necessitates organizational strategies that help develop student independence. Additionally, the larger class size allows for large whole group discussions offering unique opportunities to develop listening, critical thinking and oral presentation skills.

Learning stations are used to target specific curricular goals. Students often work in small groups to provide focused, individualized instruction; this practice is supported by numerous parent volunteers.

Coverage of curriculum is rigorous. Project-based learning, with a variety of product options, is a key component of the magnet philosophy. Projects are designed to incorporate many subject areas (including language arts, social studies, math and the arts) and involve the use of technology to increase student involvement and engagement. A variety of formats are used to promote literacy and writing skills across the curriculum, (such as Writer's Workshop, Reader's Workshop, and current events reporting). The district science curriculum, which includes engineering design, is expanded through the use of simulations, field trips, guest speakers and experiences focused on scientific process and investigation. All of these approaches are designed to encourage creativity and draw personal connections to real-world application of the concepts under study.

