

Guidance to Schools on Magnet Program Standards and Processes



Magnets in Jefferson County Public Schools

This document describes the function and expectations of magnet programs within the Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) system and provides guidance to schools on the processes involved in developing, sustaining, or opting out of a 'magnet'.

Magnet Mission

JCPS offers various magnet programs at each school level. The Mission of JCPS magnet programs and schools is as follows:

The mission is to provide specialized educational options that attract a diverse population of students to cohesive, theme-based learning environments that promote excellence in student learning.

The Magnet Mission supports the JCPS *Vision* for all of our students as well as the Board's *Guiding Principles* focused on diversity, equity, quality, and choice in educational opportunities.

Magnet Program Standards

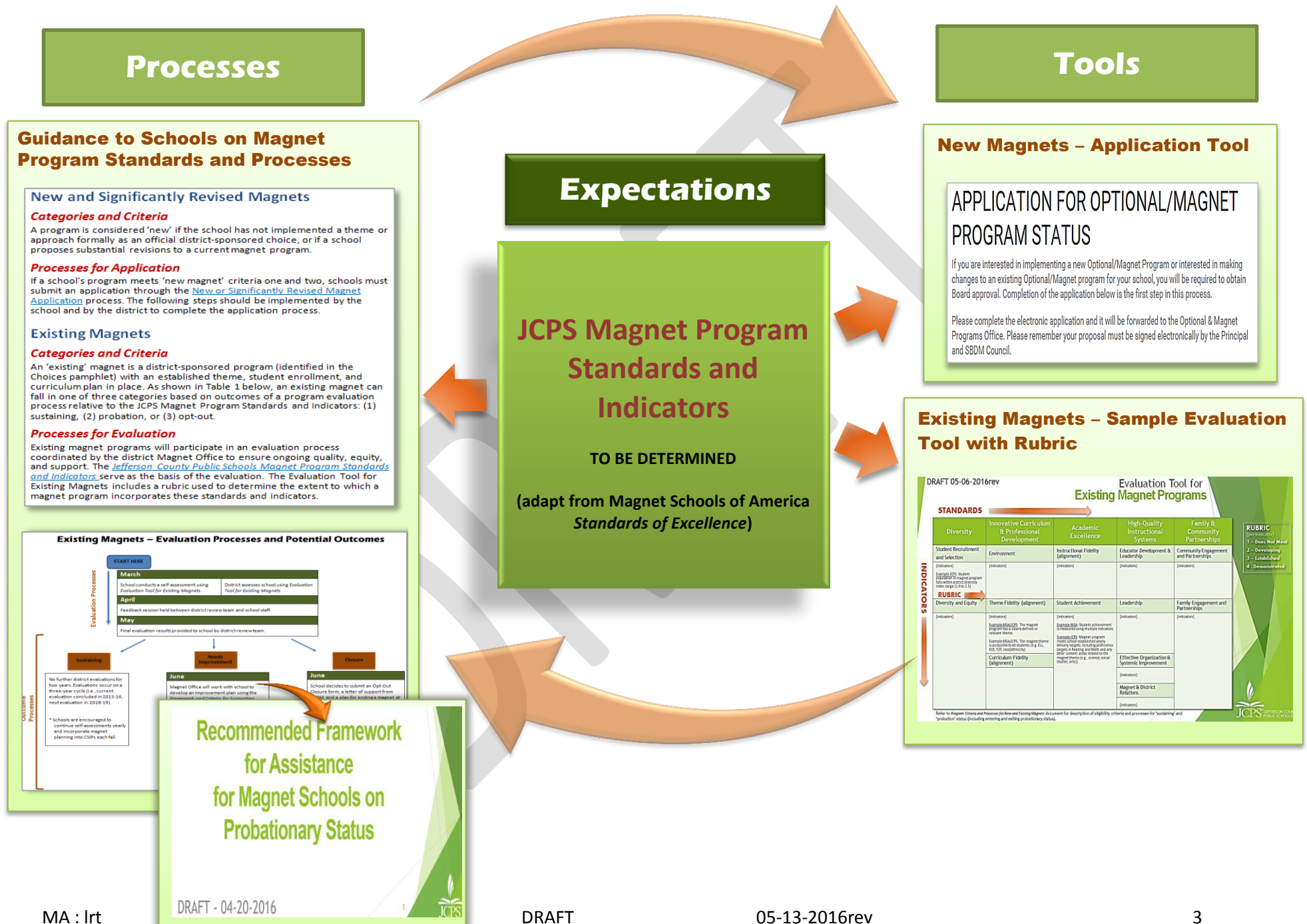
A 'magnet' program within JCPS strives to meet standards outlined in the [Jefferson County Public Schools Magnet Program Standards and Indicators](#) [TO BE DETERMINED]. The criteria and processes are intended to assist schools and stakeholders with meeting these standards. The standards align with the JCPS strategic priorities (Vision 2020) and the Magnet Schools of America (MSA) Standards of Excellence. In addition, they link well with the AdvanceED Standards for Quality, which form the basis of the Consolidated School Improvement Planning (CSIP) process required yearly by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE).

The Magnet Steering Committee recommended that the district adopt a common set of standards to ensure that all JCPS magnet programs are, in fact, "magnetic". These standards do not prescribe specific themes or curriculum; rather, they highlight "best practices" for successful magnets based on national models. Putting standards in place offers schools the opportunity for self-reflection as well as district support.

A Systems Approach

The [Jefferson County Public Schools Magnet Program Standards and Indicators](#) [TO BE DETERMINED] for magnet programs help guide schools interested in developing magnet programs as well as those with existing magnet programs. Figure 2 depicts the relationship between these core programmatic expectations, processes for evaluating new and existing magnets, and the tools used for these evaluations. These processes and tools align directly with the program expectations. For example, the [Evaluation Tool for Existing Magnets](#) includes all program standards and indicators along with a common rubric to evaluate how well schools exhibit each of these magnet characteristics.

Figure 1: Systems Approach to Magnet Programs



Program Criteria and Processes for New and Existing Magnets

This section describes the processes involved in (1) becoming a new magnet, or (2) reviewing existing magnets. As described under Magnet Program Expectations, a magnet school or program should align its practices with the [Jefferson County Public Schools Magnet Program Standards and Indicators](#). These processes describe how the standards and indicators should be used to define a new magnet or demonstrate sustainability in existing magnets.

New and Significantly Revised Magnets

Categories and Criteria

A program is considered ‘new’ if the school has not implemented a theme or approach formally as an official district-sponsored choice, or if a school proposes substantial revisions to a current magnet program.

Criteria 1	AND	Criteria 2
New or revised theme is not currently approved by the district.		Proposal submitted by school and supported by current principal, SBDM, and appropriate district staff (e.g., Assistant Superintendent).

Processes for Application

If a school’s program meets ‘new magnet’ criteria one and two, schools must submit an application through the [New or Significantly Revised Magnet Application](#) process. The following steps should be implemented by the school and by the district to complete the application process.

- September 1**
Schools submit a proposal to the JCPS Magnet Office using the [New or Significantly Revised Magnet Application](#). Application proposals should be clearly aligned with the district magnet standards and indicators.
- September 30**
The Magnet Office will distribute new proposals to the district Magnet Review Committee ¹. The committee will respond to proposals: (1) accept, (2) revise and resubmit, or (3) reject with clear rationale. Accepted proposals will be submitted to the Superintendent’s Cabinet for feedback.
- October 30**
Proposals accepted and sponsored by Cabinet are presented to the Jefferson County Board of Education for final approval.

Procedures and checklists to complete proposals are included in the Application. It is recommended that the planning process and strategies for developing and sustaining a magnet should be embedded within the school’s yearly CSIP.

NOTE: Accepted new magnets will begin an evaluation cycle at the end of Year 1 to monitor progress and the need for additional support. The evaluation process is described in this document under Existing Magnets.

¹ Magnet Review Committee is composed of JCPS staff from various district offices (e.g., Magnet Office, Curriculum & Instruction, Student Assignment, Diversity & Equity) and schools.

Existing Magnets

Categories and Criteria

An 'existing' magnet is a district-sponsored program (identified in the *Choices* pamphlet) with an established theme, student enrollment, and curriculum plan in place. As shown in Table 1 below, an existing magnet can fall in one of three categories based on outcomes of a program evaluation process relative to the *JCPS Magnet Program Standards and Indicators*: (1) sustaining, (2) probation, or (3) opt-out.

Table 1.

EXISTING Magnet Categories	Criteria 1	OR	Criteria 2
Sustaining			
	Program rated as 'Established' or 'Demonstrated' on indicators (TBD) under at least four (of five) Pillars in a single year.		
Probation			
Onset	Program rated as 'Does not Meet' on indicators (TBD) under more than one Pillar in a single year.		Program rated as 'Developing' on indicators (TBD) under more than one Pillar across three consecutive years with little evidence of improvement plan.
Exit	Growth in program ratings on indicators that led to probation (e.g., from Does not Meet to Developing in a single year).		Growth in program ratings on indicators that led to probation (e.g., from Developing to Established in one to two years).
Program Exit			
School opt-out	School must submit a request for program termination with clear rationale (e.g., persistent probation; persistent enrollment problems; SBDM support letter) and an exit plan.		
District determined	Program rated as 'Does not Meet' on indicators (TBD) under more than one Pillar across three consecutive years; fiscal analysis confirms lack of viability; and, district cannot provide resources needed to move the program forward.		Program rated as 'Developing' on indicators (TBD) under more than one Pillar across five consecutive years with little evidence of improvement plan; fiscal analysis confirms lack of viability; and, the district cannot provide additional resources to move the program forward.

Processes for Evaluation

Existing magnet programs will participate in an evaluation process coordinated by the district Magnet Office to ensure ongoing quality, equity, and support. The [Jefferson County Public Schools Magnet Program Standards and Indicators](#) serve as the basis of the evaluation. The [Evaluation Tool for Existing Magnets](#) includes a rubric used to determine the extent to which a magnet program incorporates these standards and indicators.

The frequency of the evaluation will depend on the current status of the magnet program (sustaining, probation, or opt-out) as shown in Figure 1.

NOTE: Accepted new magnets will begin an evaluation cycle at the end of Year 1 to monitor progress and the need for additional support.

Figure 2: Existing Magnets – Evaluation Processes and Potential Outcomes

