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| <p><b>Students<br/>9001</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>Grade 8 Transition</b></p> | <b>Administrative Application</b>  |  |
|  | <b>Last Reviewed /Approved on:</b> | February 26, 2019  |
|  | <b>References:</b>                 | RCSD Grade 8 Transition Handbook<br><i>MyBlueprint</i><br>Policy 12 – Role of the Director |
|  | <b>Status:</b>                     | Operational  |

## Application

Student retention in the Regina Catholic School Division (RCSD) is a responsibility of all employees. This is particularly true in relation to the transition from Grade 8 to Grade 9 when some Grade 8 students and their parents may be tempted to forgo Catholic education in favour of school proximity. It is incumbent upon all of us to be inviting and welcoming so that they will continue with "value added" high school education.

The following guidelines may be of assistance in the student transition to high school and for retaining students in our school division.

### 1. General Activities

- a. Foster a continuing association with the neighbouring Catholic high school. Contact and exposure to the high school should be as early as possible with initial contact being made no later than Grade 7. Establish a bond between the elementary and secondary school. Promote the associate school concept.
- b. Plan activities among the relevant associate schools.
- c. Promote voluntary high school student and staff "visits" to elementary schools.
- d. Invite Grade 8 students to high school activities: drama, sports, and special events.
- e. Invite Grade 8 classes to participate in special presentations at the associated high school.
- f. Promote the positive reputations of our high schools and diffuse any negative comments.
- g. Share high school facilities and specialized equipment with elementary schools.
- h. Promote student preparation for transition through the use of the *RCSD Grade 8 Transition Handbook* and *MyBlueprint*.

### 2. Pre-Registration Activities – for High Schools

- a. Establish early contact with Grade 8 classrooms. Prepare students for high school.
- b. Promote Catholic education among Grade 8 students within the elementary schools.
- c. Arrange inter-school visits, tours and activities.
- d. Present information about the associated high school before the registration process.

- e. Provide an annual information session about high school education to Grade 8 teachers.
- f. Make direct contact with the associated Catholic School Community Councils (CSCC) and provide appropriate information about the high school vision and programs.
- g. Publish registration information in parish bulletins and media.

### **3. Registration Activities – for High Schools**

- a. Arrange Grade 8 registration information sessions and high school visits.
- b. Include Director's letter of invitation and welcome to Grade 8 students and their parents that includes statement about value of Catholic education.
- c. Distribute high school information packages regarding course offerings and programs for Grade 9 students and overall program.
- d. Do not rigidly enforce high school boundaries to facilitate student preference when selecting a high school.
- e. Promote information evenings and tours of the school for parents of Grade 8 students within and without the school division.

### **4. Post-Registration Activities**

- a. High school principals send letters of congratulations and welcome and information packages to students who have selected their particular school.
- b. High school principals might consider sending letters of personal invitation and information to the Grade 8 students who are considering attending high school outside the system. Such a letter to these students and their parents could encourage them to reconsider, pointing out the positive aspects of the high school in their area and of Catholic education, and inviting them to make personal contact with the principal of the elementary school or the high school to discuss the matter further.
- c. High School Principals may send personalized thank you letters to elementary school principals and grade eight teachers for their help and support in promoting and facilitating grade nine registrations in our high schools.
- d. Special Events for Grade 8 students sponsored by the associate high school.
- e. Facilitate Work Experience initiatives and community service focus to elementary schools.
- f. Special initiatives and activities should be planned in schools where a significant number of students are leaving the school division. Consideration of a more formal "twinning" with special programs and educational experiences such as in technical vocational and fine arts programs should be pursued.
- g. Special initiatives should be undertaken in elementary grade eight classrooms for aboriginal students. Involvement of the Community School Coordinators and the Aboriginal Advocates would facilitate the transition.

- h. High school administrators or guidance counsellors might visit elementary school principals and teachers to obtain information about the Grade 8 students coming to their school. Such information might include strengths, challenges, talents, needs, interests, behaviour, "what works best," support, etc.
- i. Celebrate the successes of the current grade nine students from each associate school by informing the associated elementary school about the general progress of the students and the outstanding achievements of the graduates of the particular elementary school.