Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ’s)
Merger of La Familia and Chandler Magnet Schools
Updated April 19, 2023

School Hours and Location

- Currently, the school hours for Chandler Magnet are 8:25 AM-2:30 PM.
- Chandler Magnet is located at 525 Chandler Street, across the road from Worcester State University.

Uniforms

- Do Chandler Magnet students wear uniforms?

Yes, students at Chandler Magnet wear uniforms. The principal will communicate with incoming families about back-to-school items such as uniforms. Guidance will be forthcoming this spring.

Leadership and Staffing

- Who is going to be the principal?

Ms. Suzanna Resendes, the current principal for La Familia, will be the principal of the Chandler Magnet Elementary School for next year.

Ms. Noeliz Irizarry, the current principal of Chandler Magnet, will become the principal of the Burncoat Middle School to succeed the current principal, Mary Scully, who is retiring.

Both Ms. Resendes and Ms. Irizarry have done excellent work in leading their school communities. We congratulate and support them as they continue doing this important work.
• Will there be more opportunities to meet with the new administration before school ends this year?

Yes, Principal Resendes will hold a meet-and-greet event and spend time at the school speaking with staff, students, and families in the weeks to come. Be on the lookout for messages from the school about upcoming events.

• Will all teachers and staff remain at the merged school when it opens?

All of the teaching and staff positions at La Familia and Chandler Magnet will remain the same at Chandler Magnet.

Facility

• What does the Chandler Magnet facility offer that is not currently available at La Familia School?

The Chandler Magnet School site has some spacious classrooms, two playgrounds, a fenced-in school yard, a full-sized gymnasium, an athletic field, an auditorium with a stage and seating for 800, and a large cafeteria with a fully operational kitchen. Chandler Magnet is afforded access and learning opportunities by Worcester State University through their garden project just outside the school building, and science program interns that volunteer in classrooms.

• When can we tour the school?

The district will work with the school to plan a day for La Familia parents to tour Chandler Magnet.

• How many classrooms are at Chandler Magnet?

36

• What class size can we expect?

We anticipate class sizes of approximately 19-25 students

• Does Chandler Magnet have the space to accommodate students from both schools? Parents noticed the library was being used for instructional purposes.

The Chandler Magnet School has capacity for 800 students. Currently, 398 are enrolled at Chandler Magnet and 187 are at La Familia for a total of 585. (These figures are as of this week; not the Oct. 1 numbers). The library is being used as a break-out space for small group instruction.
There are conversations about rumored asbestos and mold in certain spaces making them unusable. What is the truth? If true, what is the timeline about remediation?

There are no spaces that are unusable because of asbestos or mold. Two classrooms need the floors replaced and that will be completed over the summer. The district did not incur expenses for these floors until now because the rooms were not being used.

What types of safety drills are practiced by the school and how often? Prefer for parents to have a schedule in advance for full transparency.

- Required monthly exit/fire drill
- Two drills for “hold” and/or “secure mode” annually
- Emergency medical response drill

Enrollment

Will all La Familia students go to Chandler Magnet? Are any Chandler Magnet students being asked to leave?

- All current La Familia students are guaranteed admission to Chandler Magnet.
- All current Chandler Magnet students will remain at the school; no one is being asked to leave.
- All current La Familia students will continue to learn in dual-language classes.
- All current Chandler Magnet students will stay in the multilingual programs they are already in: Sheltered English Immersion (SEI), Dual Language, or Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE).

When will I hear about the Pre-K and Kindergarten Lottery?

The lottery for preschool (Pre-K) and kindergarten school assignments is scheduled for May 3, 2023. If students were in the lottery for a seat at the La Familia School, those students will now be in the lottery for the Chandler Magnet School. The Office of Multilingual Learners has issued a letter to these families with more information.

What happens if I entered the SEI Pre-K lottery? Where will my child be attending school?
The district is adding these classrooms to another school in the district. More information is forthcoming regarding the location. Families will be notified of lottery results in early May.

- **Will sibling preference continue to be recognized in the enrollment process?**
  
  Yes, we will continue to honor sibling preference while balancing enrollment capacity.

- **Will the current cohorts of students from La Familia and Chandler Magnet remain separate, or will they be blended together?**
  
  When the schools merge, we will create one school family. Current La Familia students will be fully blended into classes with current Chandler Magnet students.

- **Is there enough room at Chandler Magnet to accommodate students from both schools?**
  
  Yes, there is ample space at Chandler Magnet to accommodate students and staff from both schools. Chandler Magnet has a maximum capacity of 800 students. There are currently 398 students at Chandler Magnet and 187 students at La Familia, for a total of 585 students, according to recent enrollment data.

- **When was the last time the building had more than 500 students? What will it take to get it ready for the fall?**
  
  The school had 484 students in 2015. The school had more than 500 students in 2002.

- **Will class sizes remain small?**
  
  The principal will finalize class schedules with collaboration from staff. We anticipate there will be approximately 19-25 students per class.

- **How many kindergarten classes will there be?**
  
  There will be four kindergarten dual-language classes at Chandler Magnet.

- **If I no longer want my child to attend Chandler Magnet, what are my options?**
  
  We encourage your child/children to attend the Chandler Magnet School. However, you have the choice to enroll your child in your neighborhood school, or request a “voluntary transfer” to another magnet school, or a different option.

For more information on the enrollment process, please [visit the enrollment page on the WPS website](https://www.worcesterschools.org). Go to WorcesterSchools.org and click on “ENROLL” at the top right. The
URL is
https://worcesterschools.org/current-families/family-involvement/parent-information-welcome-center/

You can also contact the WPS James Garvey Parent Information Center by calling at 508-799-3194. The center is located at 768 Main Street and is open from 8:30 AM-4:00 PM Monday through Friday.

Multilingual Programming

- **What is the plan for the Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) classes?**
  WPS will use an outside provider to conduct a review of all the district’s multilingual programs. The goal of the review is to identify how the district can enhance multilingual program offerings.

  All of the current SEI students at the Chandler Magnet School will remain at their school through sixth grade. However, Chandler Magnet will not accept any new SEI students for preschool (PreK) for the 2023-2024 school year. Each year, one SEI grade will be eliminated.

  Again, to reiterate, all current SEI students at Chandler Magnet will remain at the school, but no new SEI PreK students will be accepted at this particular school. There are many other schools offering SEI in the district, and SEI will remain an essential part of the district’s multilingual programming.

- **Will students in the Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) program be allowed to stay at Chandler Magnet and/or will they also be allowed to transfer into the Dual Language classes?**

  The Transitional Bilingual Education classes will remain at Chandler Magnet. Students in TBE will have opportunities to transfer into the Dual Language classes.

Transportation

- **Will my child receive school bus transportation?**

  Yes.

- **When will we be told about the transportation details so we can plan family schedules?**

  The Transportation Department begins designing routes in July. The route information will be provided to families in the WooEdu portal in the first or second week of August.
Reminders will be sent during that time.

- **Where is my child's bus stop?**
  
  Because La Familia and Chandler Magnet are both magnet schools using “magnet” bus stops, most students from La Familia will have the same bus stop as before, but will likely have a different school bus number or driver. Please confirm your route information when it is provided in August.

- **How long are kids typically on the bus?**
  
  The Transportation Department tries to schedule student bus rides for less than 30 minutes, but the times can range depending on the location of the child’s home. We will not schedule students to be on the bus for longer than one hour.

- **Are there bus monitors?**
  
  Bus monitors are used specifically for buses serving students with special needs.

- **Will there be transportation for preschool students?**
  
  The only preschool students who receive school bus transportation are those on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).

**Before- and After-School Programs**

- **Please outline what programs are available before and after school hours.**
  
  ○ Chandler Magnet does not provide daily before- and after-school care. However, the school does provide after-school activities on certain days of the week.

  ○ For after-school care, there are bus stops for students to travel to the Boys and Girls Club, JCC, Hanmi Tae Kwon Do, and YMCA programs. Additionally, the Guild of St. Agnes provides transportation for Chandler Magnet students to their after-care site.

  ○ Currently, Chandler Magnet provides the following after-school activities on certain days of the week, but not every day. These programs are subject to change next year:
    - Tumbao Latin Dance (Bachata, Salsa, etc.)
    - Crocodile River Music (African drumming and dancing)
    - Literature and Art
    - Spanish Language Arts Tutoring
    - Girls on the Run (running and self-esteem club for girls)
- Dungeons and Dragons (student-requested activity)
- Robotics

**Name Change and Transition Process**

- **Will the school change its name?**

  The district believes the school community should decide if the Chandler Magnet School should be re-named. The district will support the school leadership in leading a process to change the name if that is a desire of the school community. The Worcester School Committee would have to approve a name change.

**Additional Questions**

- **What are the specials at Chandler Magnet?**

  Chandler Magnet offers physical education, music, art, and technology as weekly specials.

- **What is the plan to make sure teachers are ready for the move in terms of learning materials?**

  There are currently materials and curricula in both languages, and the district will be adopting a new series in English Language Arts for all students. Professional development sessions will be provided to assist teachers in using the new materials.

- **Will the budget of the two schools be maintained?**

  Yes, the budget of the expanded Chandler Magnet school will increase to reflect the increase of students and staff. The district will also save money by no longer leasing the building that was used for La Familia.