

Frequently Asked Questions about MACC

- 1. Do I need to apply for a cross-boundary transfer when my child gets accepted into MACC?**
Answer: No, MACC are district classes and no cross-boundary form is needed. Once acceptance has been confirmed, your child will be automatically transferred to the MACC school where they have been placed.
- 2. Can Out of District or International students apply for this district program?**
Answer: Yes, Out of District or International students who apply would be considered if space is available. Preference will be given to school district residents (proof of residency will be required by the school upon registration).
- 3. How many students get accepted into MACC each year?**
Answer: Only 26 grade 6 students for each of the three locations, Citadel, Hillcrest and Kwayhquitlum get accepted. Grade 7 and 8 student placements would vary with space availability.
- 4. How do I get my child to and from Citadel, Hillcrest or Kwayhquitlum Middle School?**
Answer: You are responsible for getting your child to and from their MACC Middle School as MACC is a program of choice. Schools are usually opened to students before classes start and finish. There are places in the school for your child to study and stay while waiting to be picked up. Please check for exact times from your MACC School.
- 5. When considering whether or not to apply to MACC, may a family tour their catchment middle and/or the MACC middle schools before the catchment school invites incoming grade 5 students for a tour?**
Answer: Yes, if you contact any of the middle schools, they will arrange a tour of the school to see firsthand what is available to students. Please note: It may not always be possible to actually visit each MAC Class at each site if it is disruptive to the learning environment at that time.
- 6. If a student decides not to apply for MACC, will gifted programming still be available?**
Answer: Yes, students who choose to attend their catchment school will have access to the gifted programming that is available at the district level (District Middle Magnet workshops) and at their catchment middle school (please discuss what programming and resources are available to gifted students with catchment school personnel).
- 7. My child has not attended any gifted programming in elementary school. Is that a concern?**
Answer: No. However, students **must** be a Ministry identified Category P student (gifted) to be eligible to apply for this district gifted programming option. Furthermore, your child does need to have an up to date IEP for their current grade, including standardized test results.
- 8. My child is currently an Early French Immersion student. Will they be able to continue in the French Immersion program in secondary school once they have completed middle school in MACC?**
Answer: No. MACC students will only receive instruction in French as often as any other middle school student in French as a Second Language (FSL) program (usually one to two blocks per week)
- 9. If a sibling of a child who is currently in MACC wants to apply to MACC too, is there anything to consider?**
Answer: Yes. If you have a second child wanting to apply to MACC, please arrange to meet with your current MACC teacher/staff to discuss the social and emotional ramifications of this placement. Even though the two siblings might be in different classes, the MACC classes in each of the schools all collaborate and work together for large blocks of time each day so siblings should be able to work together and thrive in the same learning environment.
- 10. If I have a sibling of a child who is currently in MACC and this sibling child wants to attend the same middle school from outside its catchment area but is not in MACC, do I need to complete a cross-boundary transfer?**
Answer: No. Please visit the office of the middle school to register your child and indicate that you have a child in MACC at the school.
- 11. I did not receive an application form or invitation letter?**
Answer: Check with your current school to make sure your child is identified as category P. If so, please check with the school's gifted contact teacher about when the applications will be available or contact Louise Malfesi lmalfesi@sd43.bc.ca District Coordinator of Gifted Education, for more information.

12. If my child, who came from outside our MACC middle school's catchment area, decides to attend the neighbourhood secondary school for grade 9 after completing grade 8 in MACC, do we need to apply for a cross-boundary transfer?

Answer: Yes, you would need a cross-boundary transfer. Secondary school placement is a separate process and will be articulated by middle school staff.

13. Do any other districts in this area offer similar programs? Have they been successful?

Answer: Yes; both Vancouver and Surrey have gifted cluster classrooms. Vancouver's program has been operating for over 20 years.

14. What if my child's catchment middle school is Citadel, Hillcrest or Kwayhquitlum where MACC is located or already attends one of these schools?

Answer: All interested students, regardless of home school, must apply to be placed in MACC. There will be no advantage given to the MACC schools' catchment applicant students as each of the MACC schools is open to the whole district.

15. If a student applies for the program but is not accepted is there a chance the student will have lost his/her space at his/her catchment school?

Answer: A MACC applicant would not lose his/her space at the catchment school, as every grade 5 student is automatically enrolled in his/her catchment middle school.

16. May a student join the program mid-year or for grade 7 or 8? If so, how is this done?

Answer: A student may be considered for the program mid-year or for grade 7 or 8 providing there is space available and their learning profile is a good match with the MACC criteria. Please contact the student's school and/or Louise Malfesi lmalfesi@sd43.bc.ca, District Coordinator of Gifted Education, about the possibility of making the change. They will help to determine whether there is an opportunity for placement in MACC.

17. Would it be problematic if a student joined the program part way through the school year and was behind academically compared to students who had started the program in September?

Answer: It should not be problematic for a student to enter a MACC class later in the school year. MACC can accommodate the needs of a diverse group of learners who represent a variety of ability levels.

18. Once accepted into MACC will students have to reapply to remain in the program for future years?

Answer: No, once a student is accepted he or she will be guaranteed a place in the program for the full three years.

19. Why is the deadline for applications so early in the year?

Answer: Decisions about acceptance must be made early so the district is aware of the number of students in each MACC school, and therefore what staffing requirements will be necessary.

20. May I request that my child be placed in the same school as his or her friend?

Answer: The selection committee will do their best to accommodate such requests. If this is important to your child and/or if you are hoping to car pool, please include the request on your application form, marked with an asterisk for emphasis.

21. How will it be decided which applicants will be accepted into the program?

Answer: Students **must** be a Ministry identified Category P student (gifted) to be eligible to apply for the program. The most important consideration will be the applicant's fit with the program's required criteria (as stated in the application form). In addition, the factors that influence the composition of all district classrooms, will also be considerations when forming the MACC classes. All efforts will be made to place accepted students at their preferred school location but it is not always possible to accommodate of their first choice.

22. What are the important things to include in the application?

Answer: It is important to specifically address the program criteria listed on the application form. Students are encouraged to provide lots of detail and specific examples of how they meet the criteria. They should tell us about themselves and why they want to be included in this program.

23. What will learning be like for students in MACC?

Answer: Prescribed Learning Outcomes (PLOs) provide the expectations for what students should know and be able

to do for each grade. The MACC approach to learning includes integrating curricula in the four core subjects (English, Social Studies, Math and Science) allowing students to form connections in an interdisciplinary inquiry based program. Students will also be challenged to develop the depth and breadth of their critical and creative thinking abilities. MACC students will also work towards building independence and responsibility for their learning with the appropriate amount of support by the teacher (developing self-directed learners). Choice, decision making, faster pace and collaborative work are all integral parts of the MACC learning environment. Opportunities will also be provided to explore and expand on issues and actions that may benefit the greater community.

24. Can my child accelerate through other core academic subjects in MACC?

Answer: Acceleration is not the goal of the program. However, students are encouraged to work at their own pace so they may be working at a level above their age grade. Our philosophy is to compact curriculum so we can go into more depth or explore other areas of student interest.

25. How much of the students' time will be spent with their MACC peers?

Answer: Sixty to seventy-five percent of their time in school, or approximately five out of seven blocks, will be spent with program peers. Students in the program will have math, science, social studies and language arts as a peer group and depending on program location, possibly PE, French, and HACE as well. MACC students will be integrated with other students on their team for explorations and possibly subjects such as PE, French, and HACE.

26. How much homework is expected of a MACC student? Is the workload greater in this program than in the regular program?

Answer: The amount of homework is typical of middle school and depends on the nature of the school projects a student selects as well as how well a student uses time in class to complete school work. The volume of work shouldn't be greater but it will be of a different nature. There will be less repetition, a faster pace, and deeper and broader exploration of topics.

27. What if a student excels in a particular subject but is weak in other subject areas?

Answer: The MACC teachers are able to accommodate a variety of learning styles and needs. Students will be challenged in their areas of strength and may be at grade level in other subject areas. Students typically choose from a variety of assignment options and may select projects that highlight their strengths and compliment their learning styles.

28. What if a student accepts a position in a MACC class then later in the school year changes his/her mind about wanting to be in the program?

Answer: If a student decides the program is not a good fit and would like to exit from the program, please inform your MACC teacher and school principal. They will ask you to complete the **School District MACC Gifted Program Withdrawal Request Form** and arrange to meet with school personnel about this request. If a student would like to return to his/her catchment school, they may do so only if space is available for the returning student. However, they may enroll at their catchment school for the following September. If space was available, the student could also opt to remain at the MACC School and be placed in the regular middle school program.