

## **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

The following information is intended to assist counsellors and school administrators with challenge procedures.

### **1. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN “PLACEMENT”, “EQUIVALENCY” AND “CHALLENGE”? (See Appendix C for more information)**

**“Placement”** refers to the internal process of assessing students for the purpose of placing them at a higher level. It does not give credit for the lower level. Students could be placed into grade 12 without challenging grade 11, if schools wish. But in this instance, the students cannot receive credit for the grade 11 level on their transcript.

**“Equivalency”** is used when students have earned credentials from outside the BC school system and these are deemed by the Ministry (or the District) to be the equivalent of course credentials offered through the school.

**“Challenge”** refers to the process of participating in a formal evaluation of grade 11 and 12 courses in order to receive credit with a percentage mark on the transcript.

For grade 12 provincially examinable courses, the challenge process will provide the school mark. Students successful in the challenge process have the option of writing the Provincial examination. Those students opting to write the Provincial exam must do so through their home school.

# C OAST-METRO CHALLENGE CONSORTIUM

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## 2. IS THIS PARTICULAR CHALLENGE PROCESS MANDATORY?

For students who do not have proper documentation allowing them to receive credit through Equivalency, Challenge is an approved way to receive credit with a percentage mark for grade 11 and 12 Language courses. The other option is for the student to take the course.

## 3. CAN STUDENTS BE COUNSELLED TO NOT ATTEMPT THE CHALLENGE?

Students need the opportunity to discuss the merits, the process of challenge and its place in the student's academic goals, with counsellors and other appropriate staff. Where a counsellor and/or teacher believe a student has insufficient background to successfully challenge a course, the student should be counselled to not proceed. However, students should not be denied their choice to undertake a course challenge. Furthermore, students need to know that the course challenge is rigorous, and processing the student's application to participate in the challenge process does not guarantee high or even passing results.

## 4. CAN STUDENTS CHALLENGE AGAIN IF THEY ARE NOT HAPPY WITH THE MARK?

No, students can challenge a given course only once. They are eligible to take the course later if the challenge was unsuccessful. The higher mark of the two will appear on the transcript

Students who have successfully completed a course may not write a challenge exam in the same subject at a later date for the purpose of improving their mark.

If a student is found to have submitted a duplicate application to write a challenge examination, a \$25.00 administrative processing fee will apply and the student's application will be returned to their home school.

## 5. CAN STUDENTS CHALLENGE A COURSE THEY HAVE PREVIOUSLY FAILED?

Students who have previously failed a course may write the challenge exam at a later date, provided they show solid evidence that they have worked on that course in the interim and that the learning outcomes have since been met.

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## **6. CAN STUDENTS CHALLENGE A COURSE IN WHICH THEY ARE REGISTERED?**

No. Students can either register in a course or challenge the course.

## **7. CAN A STUDENT WRITE A CHALLENGE FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF A COURSE IF THEY HAVE ALREADY PASSED THE COURSE?**

Students may not challenge a course once they have already completed that course.

## **8. WHAT SUPPORT OTHER THAN INFORMING STUDENTS ABOUT THE CHALLENGE PROCESS AND ITS REQUIREMENTS CAN STUDENTS EXPECT FROM THEIR SCHOOL IN ORDER TO PREPARE FOR THE CHALLENGE PROCESS?**

Students are required to review the IRP (Learning Outcomes) and the Challenge Exam Specifications in order to apply for the course challenge. Students may request IRPs and textbooks for the course or be referred to the BC government website for the IRP ([www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp)). The language challenge exam specifications can be found at <http://web.deltasd.bc.ca/schools/secondary/challenge-exams>. Schools are not expected to “coach” or “instruct” students in any other way. The idea is that students are already very familiar with the subject matter for that level.

## **9. AT WHAT GRADE LEVEL SHOULD A STUDENT CHALLENGE A GRADE 11 OR 12 COURSE?**

It is a strong recommendation, given the mature level of understanding required in the challenge activities, that students challenge the grade 11 course while they are in grade 10 and not before. Grade 8 or 9 students will probably fare better if they wait until at least grade 10 if they are concerned about marks. Another reason for recommending grade 10 is to leave open the option of taking the course in grade 11 if the challenge is not successful. Students would ordinarily be in grade 11 before they apply to challenge a grade 12 course.

## **10. DO THE UNIVERSITIES REQUIRE A GRADE 11 LANGUAGE IF THE STUDENT HAS A GRADE 12 LEVEL LANGUAGE?**

According to the registrar’s office at UBC and SFU there is no need to have a grade 11 level language on the transcript if there is a grade 12 level language to fulfill the language requirement.

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## 11. IS THERE PROVISION FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS?

Students requiring special adjudication procedures must attach appropriate documentation to the application form and request this provision as per the *Provincial Examination Guidelines for Students with Special Needs*.

## 12. DOES THE STUDENT STILL HAVE TO TAKE A PROVINCIAL EXAM FOR A LANGUAGE CHALLENGE COURSE?

No, there are no provincial exams for language courses.

## 13. WHO QUALIFIES FOR A “FREE” CHALLENGE EXAM?

For students in the public school system the Language Challenge Exam fee is paid by their school districts (who are then reimbursed by the Ministry of Education). Adults registered in the Adult Graduation program are also paid for by their school district. These two groups pay a \$50 refundable fee which is returned to them if they show-up for the exams.

**Independent School students, International students and Adults not registered in the Adult Graduation program** pay the fee for the exams (\$155 per challenge exam). This fee is non-refundable unless the student cancels before the Dec 2, 2012 deadline (a \$25 administration fee is deducted). All cheques are payable to the Delta School District.

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## SECTION 1: SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.1 Identify one person who will take responsibility for Challenge Procedures in the school.
- 1.2 Decide upon a method to communicate Challenge Procedures with staff, students, and parents. For example:
  - Teachers:* Staff bulletins, staff meetings and Department meetings
  - Students:* Course selection booklets, Grade assemblies  
Challenge Awareness/Information Evenings  
TV monitors, website, notice boards and library displays
  - Parents:* Newsletters for home  
PAC/Challenge Awareness Evenings  
Meet the teacher nights  
Link on school website
- 1.3 Provide students with appropriate IRPs, Challenge Exam Specifications, information pamphlets – explain that students have to complete the application form online before printing it for submission to their school.
- 1.4 Determine that the student is not eligible for Equivalency before approving for Challenge. Review applications for challenge.
- 1.5 Ensure cheque is attached -- \$50.00 (per course) Refundable Exam Deposit. (Please note: students who choose not to show up for the exam forfeit the deposit). ***Independent School, International and Adults students (not registered in the Adult Grad Program) attach \$155 cheque. Make all cheques payable to the Delta School District.***
- 1.6 Endorse the student's recent photo. Someone who knows the student at the school should do this. Please ensure that the picture is a recent, clear, "passport-like" photograph.
- 1.7 Forward all completed applications to the District Challenge Contact by November 2, 2012. (Retain photocopies of all documents for school records). (*Note: District Contacts are required to forward Language Challenge applications to the Delta School District by November 9, 2012.*)

**Please note:**

*The procedures at the school are a school-based issue. Usually, the Counselling Department would promote Challenge information, collect applications, verify photo ID and sign off the Personal Qualifications and Application Forms. Counsellors might refer students to subject Department Heads and other classroom teachers at their discretion.*

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## SECTION 2: STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 Student completes **Student Application Package online (page 9) at our website before printing it for submission to their school** (discuss with parents).  
<http://web.deltasd.bc.ca/schools/secondary/challenge-exams>
- 2.2 Student discusses “Challenge” suitability with Counsellor and a relevant Subject Teacher, and reviews Challenge Exam Specifications for the specific subject(s).
- 2.3 Student, in consultation with parents, checks to ensure that the course challenge meets their academic goals. The student refers to the exam specifications, learning outcomes (IRP) and notes any requirements.
- 2.4 Student completes the Challenge Application Form on website and prints (includes supporting documentation) and returns this form to the Counsellor who reviews the student’s readiness to challenge the course with the student.
- 2.5 After review by the Counsellor, the student must submit for attachment to the Challenge Application Form:
  - \$50.00 cheque. (*Cheque must have student’s name and school clearly marked on the back – this cheque is returned on exam day – if student is unable to attend the exam they will forfeit this money*). All Independent, International and Adult Students (not registered in the Adult Grad Program) attach \$155 cheque. Make all cheques payable to Delta School District.
  - Current school year photo ID that has been endorsed (signed) by a school official.
- 2.6 Check the Language Challenge Web page for additional information:  
<http://web.deltasd.bc.ca/schools/secondary/challenge-exams>.

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## **COURSES AVAILABLE FOR CHALLENGE**

In the 2012/2013 school year, course challenges will be available in the following subject areas:

### **Language Challenge Exams:**

#### **Administered by the Delta School District**

- French 11/12
- German 11/12
- Japanese 11/12
- Korean 11/12
- Mandarin 11/12
- Punjabi 11/12
- Spanish 11/12

# **C** COAST-METRO CHALLENGE CONSORTIUM

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## **Non-Language Challenge Exams:**

Please contact your school district for information regarding non-language challenge exams.

## **Please Register At Your School**

### **REGISTRATION DEADLINE for Students**

**OCTOBER 26, 2012**

**Deadline for submission to Delta:**

**November 9, 2012**

### **CHALLENGE EXAMINATIONS DATES**

**LANGUAGE: January 19, 20, 26, 2013**

**(please see exam schedule on p. 2)**