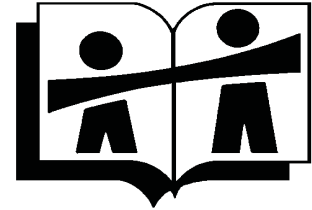

Together We Learn



"Together We Learn"

**SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 23
(CENTRAL OKANAGAN)**

*a guide to School District No. 23
(Central Okanagan)*



**Together We Learn:
A Guide to School District No. 23
(Central Okanagan)**

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INTRODUCTION

Educating a child is a big challenge. Nowhere is this challenge more evident than to the parent of a school-aged child. To help parents face the many issues of raising and educating children, we have produced this handbook, Together We Learn.

Research shows us that a well-rounded education is not only an intellectual process but also includes the child's physical, emotional and social development. As a result, the roles of parents and educators overlap. Our district views public education as a shared commitment between home and school, with parents and the home environment playing a crucial role in a child's learning.

Together We Learn is based on the following assumption:

When parents and educators assume responsibility to actively support your child's learning, everyone benefits — especially the learner!

We hope this handbook will:

- invite you into our district as a partner in your child's education.
- offer specific suggestions for supporting your child's learning.
- direct you to sources where you can get the information and support that you need.
- help you address your concerns about your child's education.
- identify who to contact if you have a concern.
- support you in resolving any problems that might arise.
- explain how decisions are made in our district.
- help to make your experience in Central Okanagan schools enjoyable.

HOW THIS GUIDE IS ORGANIZED

SECTION ONE, OUR FOCUS IS ON THE LEARNER

- discusses what we know about children's learning and how we can support it.

SECTION TWO, THE PARENT'S ROLE

- addresses the learner's relationship with his first teachers – his parents. This section explores your essential role in your child's learning and how to fulfill that role most effectively.

SECTION THREE, THE PARTNERSHIP AMONG LEARNER, PARENT AND TEACHER

- explains the Central Okanagan Board of Education's commitment to clarity, consistency and communication in the learner-parent-teacher partnership. Additional topics include the teacher's role, curriculum, homework and tips for approaching teachers with questions and concerns.

SECTION FOUR, SPOTLIGHT ON SCHOOL AND DISTRICT

- clarifies how our schools and district are organized, and discusses how you can become involved at the school and/or district level.

SECTION FIVE, PUBLIC EDUCATION IN BC

- explains the role of the School Board and the Ministry of Education's role as the ultimate policy-maker. It also explains the role of Parent Advisory Councils, School Planning Councils and District Parent Advisory Councils.

QUICK REFERENCE

- answers Frequently Asked Questions about our schools and programs, and includes a phone list of our district. It also decodes acronyms like PAC, IRP and CAPP.



Learning is finding out what you already know. Doing is demonstrating that you know it. Teaching is reminding others that they know it as well as you do. We are all learners, doers, and teachers.

Richard David Bach

OUR FOCUS IS ON THE LEARNER

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 23
STATEMENT OF MISSION,
VISION AND CULTURAL VALUES



Our mission is “to educate students in a safe, inspirational learning environment where every student develops the knowledge and skills to be a lifelong learner and a healthy, productive member of our global society”.

Our vision: “We are a progressive leader in education, which sets the standard for educational excellence and ensures that every student has opportunities to succeed”.

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 23 CULTURAL VALUES

Respect,
Responsibility,
Honesty,
Empathy, and
Fairness

WHAT IS BEST FOR ANY LEARNER?

Our district's motto is “Together We Learn.”

Wherever possible, our decisions and actions as a district have the learner in mind.

- What program or classroom do we place a child in?
- Which building project do we take on first?
- How do we best support a special needs child?
- How and where do we assign our teacher support services?
- What kinds of extracurricular activities do we offer?



When we consider these decisions, we ask ourselves – What is best for the learner? Some decisions affect the learner directly, others not so directly. But all the decisions we make have some impact on the learner's experience in school.

Focusing on the learner helps us to remain clear about our priorities, and to make choices that are in a child's best interests. We try to adapt to the child, providing the challenge and support that he needs, rather than forcing a student to conform to a “system.”

This is our commitment as a district.

HOW DO CHILDREN LEARN?

To understand what is best for the learner, we need to understand how learning takes place.

In their early years, children form neural connections, or synapses, very quickly. These synapses, or learning pathways, define the brain's organization and functioning throughout life.

What causes brain cells to form learning pathways? Genes control some of the process, but experience plays a big role. Every time a parent or caregiver interacts with an infant or toddler, neurological connections are formed. Positive interactions with nurturing caregivers profoundly stimulate young brains. This stimulation causes new learning pathways to form, and strengthens existing ones.

In the first years of life, children form extra learning pathways. A three-year-old has twice as many synapses as an adult, which means that his/her brain is twice as active.

After age 10, as children move toward adulthood, trillions of extra connections are eliminated. Those synapses that have been used repeatedly in the early years have become stronger and tend to remain. Those that have not been used often enough are shed.

In adolescence, young people are losing connections or synapses at a rapid rate. This is a natural process, beneficial for the human brain. It can be compared to pruning plants in a crowded garden. The ones that remain can grow larger and stronger. The result is a brain that is better organized and better suited for learning the more difficult concepts and skills that a young adult needs to master. Children whose neural pathways have been reinforced by positive early experiences will be better off when the brain's pruning process begins.

HOW TO STIMULATE CHILDREN'S LEARNING

University of British Columbia professor Clyde Hertzman, MD, says the period from pre-conception to age five is the "investment phase" of a child's life. Failure to provide the right conditions for a child's development during this time makes the brain physically different from the brain of a child who has been well cared for.

If the environment in which the child lives is safe, stimulating and nurturing, his/her brain development will be strong. If the environment is unsafe, under-stimulating or non-nurturing, brain development will be weakened. These differences can have lifelong consequences. New brain research confirms that reading to a child, talking to them, telling stories, singing to them, and other kinds of language activities encourage early development. Language activities not only support intellectual growth, but promote healthy emotional and social development as well.

CHILDREN ARE ACTIVE LEARNERS

Not only are children physically active, but they are active in seeking out new experiences. They learn from hands-on experience that involves all of their senses. They learn best in an environment where they can make decisions and choices appropriate to their age and level of development.

CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH PHYSICAL EXPERIENCE

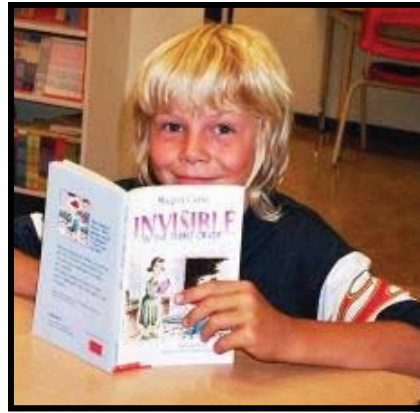
Through looking, listening, smelling, tasting, and touching, children find out what things are like, how they work, and how they relate to one another. They combine these observations with more complex thinking like identifying patterns, interpreting, and drawing conclusions about what happens. These conclusions either add to children's existing ideas or cause them to adjust their thinking.

CHILDREN'S LEARNING IS AFFECTED BY THEIR SURROUNDINGS

Children learn best when they are safe and secure. You create this feeling when you treat them with warmth, respect and caring. A stimulating environment is also important. This is created when children are expected to learn, when they feel challenged to a level they are mature enough to handle, and when they have a variety of opportunities and experiences.

CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH SOCIAL INTERACTION

Children are influenced by the people in their lives, especially the adults who are important to them, such as parents, other relatives, and teachers. They also learn through interaction with their peers. As children relate to others, they make decisions about themselves and their actions based on the reactions they receive. They decide if their thinking and actions are "right" or "wrong" and adjust them accordingly.



CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH REFLECTION

Children need to reflect on what they know. Caregivers can guide children to make connections between what they know now and what they want to know. This helps them to make connections between ideas and gives them clues for doing similar things in the future.

CHILDREN HAVE DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES

Each child is unique with his own personality, likes, dislikes, and styles of learning. Some children watch for a long time before trying something new. Others jump right in. If you observe how your child likes to learn, you can give him chances to learn in those ways. Approximately 20 to 30 percent of school children remember what they hear, 40 percent remember what they see or read, and almost all children remember what they experience directly through touching, feeling and doing.

INCLUDING ALL LEARNERS

Learners differ not only in their intellectual skills but in personality, culture, family background, and many other ways. In Central Okanagan schools, we have a policy of inclusion, which is our commitment to giving ALL learners an opportunity to fulfill their potential and reach their greatest successes.

This means that we adapt our curriculum, programs, and services so that our learners, regardless of language, gender, learning style, culture, personality, intellectual ability, physical capability, fine arts ability, etc., have equal access to learning, achievement and pursuit of excellence.

THE PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING

Given everything that we know about how young people learn, Central Okanagan schools are guided by three basic principles of learning, established by our provincial system of public education:

1. Learning requires the active participation of the student.
2. People learn in a variety of ways and at different rates.
3. Learning is both an individual and a group process.

These principles are also important for parents to keep in mind in supporting children's learning.



No matter how calmly you try to referee, parenting will eventually produce bizarre behavior, and I'm not talking about the kids. Their behavior is always normal.

Bill Cosby

CREATING A SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AT HOME

From birth to age 18, children will have spent only about 13 percent of their waking hours at school. This means that most of the remaining 87 percent is spent under the educational guidance of their parents.

There are many things that parents can do to create the safe, secure, and stimulating environment children need in order to learn. Here are some guidelines:

- Set high but reasonable expectations for your children and support them in meeting those expectations.
- Support and encourage your children's curiosity and desire to explore.
- Assist your children's efforts to master new skills.
- Acknowledge all of their efforts. Share the excitement of your child's projects and accomplishments in learning new skills. Remember to praise more than criticize.

THE PARENT'S ROLE

As parents, we are our children's first teachers and our home is their first classroom. Children first learn language, not by watching television, but by listening to us when we talk to them while cuddling or playing. As they get older, if we encourage them to speak and listen, and if we respond to what they have to say, their ability to use language expands.

BENEFITS OF SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING

Studies show that when parents actively support their children's learning, their children:

- get better grades.
- improve in their language achievement.
- are more likely to graduate from high school and to go on to higher education.
- are better behaved and have a more positive attitude.
- are more likely to expand in their intellectual development.
- have better relationships with their parents.



- Be specific in what you admire about their accomplishments. (Say, "You kicked that ball really far!" or "Your essay is very well organized" rather than "You did great!")
- Provide a stimulating physical environment that includes music, books, games, crafts, and inspiration for creative play.
- Encourage visits from other adults who enjoy children and encourage their learning.
- Play games such as cards and board games with your children that promote a wide range of number and language skills.
- Supervise the amount of television and the kinds of television programs your child watches. Watch shows with your child and discuss what ideas and values are being portrayed.
- Help your children extend their general knowledge by visiting the outdoors and interesting places or events in the community, reading books, and watching and discussing educational television programs.
- Promote your children's language skills by talking with them and listening to them. Tell them stories and encourage them to tell you stories. Encourage them to discuss a movie or story.
- Encourage reading as a hobby.
- Use a bulletin board for family messages, interesting articles or pictures.
- Try the "Word-A-Day" game. Select a word appropriate to the child's age. See how many times a day the family can use the word correctly.
- Encourage fun activities such as sports, performing arts, and scouting.
- Select one meal a few times a week when your family has the opportunity to eat and talk together.
- Provide quiet time spent together as a family, without outside distractions.

BUILDING CHILDREN'S SELF-ESTEEM

Self-esteem is an important factor in your child's success at school and in life. As parents, we have a key role in building and sustaining our children's self-esteem. Here are some suggestions:

- Establish a Sense of Security. Let your child know what kind of behavior you expect. Enforce your rules consistently in ways that build a sense of responsibility.
- Build feelings of trust. Help your child feel safe.
- Build a Positive Self-Concept. Treat your child as an important person.
- Provide love and acceptance. Increase your child's awareness of his strengths. Spend quality time with him.
- Create a Sense of Belonging. Build close family relationships. Teach your child to be a group member. Encourage service to others.
- Develop a Sense of Purpose. Have expectations for your child. Help your child set realistic goals. Demonstrate faith and confidence in your child.
- Expand your child's interests and talents. Set up reward systems when he needs incentives.
- Achieve a Sense of Personal Competence. Help your child develop a plan of action for his goals. Provide encouragement and support for his efforts. Listen and give him feedback about the progress he is making. Teach your child that when he is unsuccessful, he can learn from his mistakes. Take pride in and support him for trying new and challenging tasks. Provide him with chores at an early age. Chores help children accept responsibility and feel confident.



BUILDING CHILDREN'S COMMUNICATION SKILLS

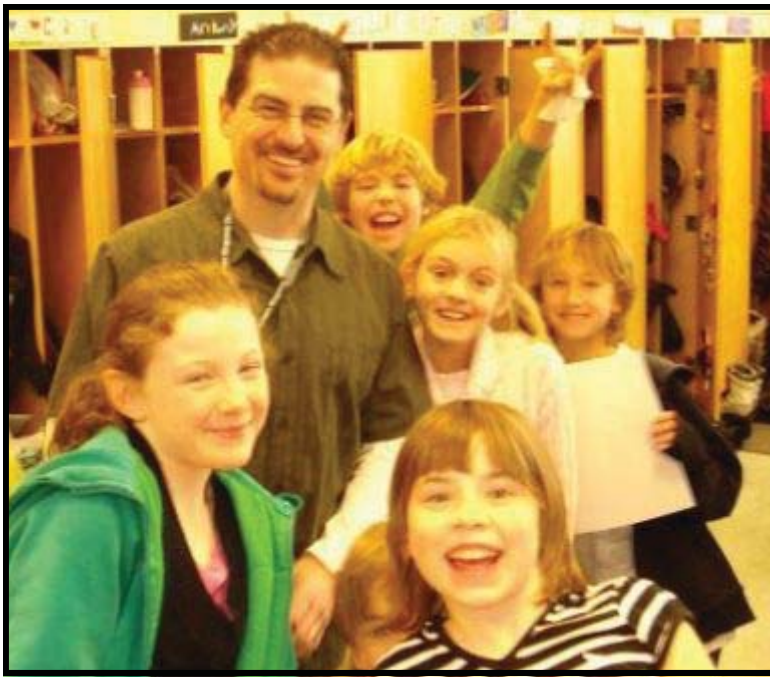
The latest studies tell us that listening is a very large part of school learning. Between 50 and 75 percent of students' classroom time is spent listening to the teacher, to other students, or to audio media. Because children have a deeper involvement with their parents than with any other adult, parents are the best people to build their communication skills. Here are some suggestions for improving communication with children:

- Be interested. If you show that you are really interested in what they think and how they feel, your children will become comfortable expressing their thoughts with you.
- Avoid dead-end questions that call for a yes, no, or one-word answer. Ask open-ended questions that will extend conversation and that will invite children to describe, explain or share ideas. For example, ask "What did you like about the movie?" rather than "Did you like the movie?"
- Reflect your child's words and ideas. Respond to her statements by asking a question that uses some of the words she used. When you use her own phrasing, you strengthen her confidence in her conversational skills and reassure her that her ideas are being listened to and valued.
- Ask for your child's opinion. For example, if you are puzzling over what to wear or where to place a new bookcase or what to make for dinner, ask her what she thinks.
- Reflect feelings. Try to mirror your child's feelings by repeating them – for example, "It sounds as if you're frustrated with your Math assignment". Paying attention to your child's feelings is useful when she is experiencing strong emotions that she may not be fully aware of.
- Help clarify and relate experiences. Using some of your child's words is important and so is stating your child's ideas and feelings in your own words. Your wider vocabulary can help her express herself more accurately and clearly, and can give her a deeper understanding of words and inner thoughts.

Parents play a vital role in their children's learning. The home is where students' beliefs and habits originate, and the home provides the environment that either enhances or hinders students' growth and development.

HOW PARENTS CAN SUPPORT LEARNING

- When your child is in the early years, read to him every day.
- Ask your child each day about specific subjects and activities at school.
- When possible help out at school.
- Get to know your child's teacher.
- If you have concerns ask the teacher or principal for support and suggestions to help your child.



THE LEARNER, PARENT & TEACHER PARTNERSHIP

CLARITY, CONSISTENCY AND COMMUNICATION

The most important partnership in the district is the one among learners, parents, and teachers. This partnership supports the qualities of clarity, consistency, and communication in the student-parent-teacher relationship, and in parents' and teachers' shared desire to provide the learner with the best possible education.

Here is what we mean by clarity:

- The learner is clear about what he is learning and why, what is expected of him, and how he is progressing.
- The teacher is clear about how the child learns best; what his needs, interests and abilities are; how he is feeling about his learning; and how the home environment can support his learning.
- The parent is clear about what the child is being taught, how and why it is being taught, what is expected of the child, and how he is progressing as a learner.
- The school district is clear in its expectations of the school and community, and in its support of these expectations.



Here is what we mean by consistency:

- The learner is consistent in developing strong work habits, producing quality work, and having positive attitudes toward herself and others.
- The teacher's knowledge and organization of the curriculum is consistent with provincial and district guidelines. Instruction, assessment and evaluation are consistent with sound professional practice.
- Expectations or the learner's behavior are consistent with the school code of conduct.
- Parents are consistent in supporting and preparing their child for school. Their support of her learning is consistent with the expectations and processes of the teacher and the school.

- The school and district are consistent in their organization and delivery of curriculum and in their expectations of the student.

Here is what we mean by communication:

- The learner lets his teacher and parents know whenever he has a question, interest, or concern about his school or classroom experience.
- The teacher lets the learner and his parents know what is being taught and why; what is expected of the learner in his work and behavior; how his performance will be evaluated; and if there are any questions, concerns, or significant observations about his progress, conduct or experience in the classroom or school.
- The parents let the learner and/or teacher know their observations about the learner's needs, interests and abilities. They remain in touch with the teacher about their child's schooling, informing the teacher whenever they have a question, concern, or significant observation about the learner's progress, conduct or experience in the classroom or school.
- The school and district provide effective support to promote and guide communication among learners, teachers and parents.

In order for the partnership to work, everyone needs to be committed, to take responsibility, and to be involved. It is a challenge upheld by a shared sense of caring for the student's overall well-being and promise for the future.

THE TEACHER'S ROLE

According to the BC School Act, teachers are responsible for:

- Using Ministry of Education guidelines in designing, supervising, and assessing educational programs to promote students' intellectual development, human and social development, and career development.
- Providing instruction and advice to individual students and groups.
- Monitoring the behavior and progress of each learner, in keeping with provincial and local policies.
- Communicating with students and parents through reports, newsletters, and/or personal contact.
- Reporting to parents on student progress.

Every child is unique and our classrooms consist of students of different characteristics and ability levels. Because students' needs are so diverse, teachers make the decisions about content, resources, instructional design and assessment practices, within the framework of Ministry of Education guidelines.

Teachers also collaborate with other teachers, support staff and administrators to shape a student's educational program. It is becoming more and more important to create a close working relationship with parents and guardians as well. Every September, teachers provide parents with an overview of what they will be teaching in the upcoming school year and what their expectations are. Regular conversations can also enhance the parent-teacher relationship.



CURRICULUM

In our schools, curriculum is designed and constructed by the teacher to meet learning outcomes prescribed by the BC Ministry of Education. Curriculum is written in a standard format from Kindergarten to Grade 12, and guidelines are provided regarding what students are expected to know and do in each subject area, and at each grade level. Suggestions are also provided on teaching strategies, assessment techniques, and recommended learning resources.

TEACHERS INTERPRET THE CURRICULUM

All teachers are pursuing the same educational goals set out in the curriculum, but the methods they use and some of the content they choose will vary, depending on the needs, interests, and abilities of their students. The learning activities the teacher presents to students will also depend on factors such as current events, available resources, classroom dynamics, student interest, and the teacher's experience and interests. There are many different ways that learning can take place, and there are many different styles of learning. There is also a wide range of developmental levels at any given age. There is no such thing, for example, as "Grade Two work" because children in Grade 2 have a range of abilities. Instruction and the choice of learning activities take into account these varied abilities. It is the teacher's goal to adapt, develop, and design what she is doing to suit each learner's always-changing needs. For this reason, a teacher will use a number of different resources with students. For example, in a reading program there may be several different books on a theme, as well as CD-ROMs and internet sources.



When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years.

Mark Twain

INSTRUCTION TAKES DIFFERENT FORMS

Classroom instruction can take different forms, depending on the subject matter and the needs of the learner:

- Full group instruction is used to present and discuss information that is relevant to the whole class.
- Individualized instruction, in which students work on lessons, exercises or projects on their own with teacher support, gives them an opportunity to pace their own learning.
- Small group instruction allows students to witness many different perspectives and viewpoints. Since language and mental development are enhanced through speaking, teachers encourage students to speak with their peers. This isn't random chatter, but structured exercises that support learning outcomes.

Research tells us that students have to be actively engaged in their learning. For example, teachers may provide them with a choice of three activities to reinforce the learning of a skill, or they may choose one of three tasks that they have to complete by recess. The teacher still structures the framework within which students are choosing but students are given responsibility to the extent that they are capable. While writing used to be taught after students had learned to read, it is now encouraged right from the pre-school level, with children scribbling and drawing their ideas. We now understand that writing is a foundation for reading and that reading and writing are not separate. Students are also encouraged to talk out their ideas before writing, because speech is a foundation for writing skills, and talking enables them to compose their thoughts.



What I hear, I forget,
What I see, I remember,
What I do, I understand.

Confucius



COMBINED CLASSES

Many of the elementary classes in the Central Okanagan are combined classes (two and occasionally three grades in one class), and they are common throughout BC. Combined classes are necessary because they allow the greatest number of students to be educated in the smallest number of classrooms.

Research indicates that students from combined (or multi-age) classes perform as well or better academically than students in single-age classes. There is also evidence that students in combined classes often perform better in the areas of independence, responsibility, study habits, and attitude toward school. Teachers of combined classes follow the curriculum guidelines. Age-appropriate curriculum is taught, but with different expectations of the students, depending on their ability. Many teachers do this by taking a theme or topic such as "Exploring the Universe" and designing learning activities that address a range of content areas (Science, Math, Language Arts, etc.), and a range of learning styles and developmental levels.

These classrooms offer benefits to students that aren't as available in single-grade classes.

Younger students benefit by:

- being welcomed into a community of learners.
- observing older children and modeling their behavior.
- having supportive older friends on the playground.

Older students benefit by:

- taking leadership roles and demonstrating mature behavior.
- developing self-esteem, confidence, and responsibility.
- consolidating and extending what they have learned.

Education is not the filling of a pail,
but the lighting of a fire.

William Butler Yeats



CREATING CLASS GROUPINGS

In composing classes, school staff consider a wide range of characteristics:

- abilities
- independence
- needs
- friendships
- learning styles
- cultures
- personalities
- gender
- social development

The intention is to create a balanced group that will work as a unit. Students with special needs, learning disabilities, or behavioral difficulties are distributed among the different classes. Factors, such as which teaching style works with which child, are also taken into consideration.

Parents are often consulted to determine a child's likes, learning style, friendships, and so on, and this information is taken into consideration.

EDUCATION PLANS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIFIC NEEDS

Students who require adaptations or modifications to their program in order to meet the standard learning outcomes prescribed by the Ministry of Education, or who cannot meet these objectives even with support, will receive an Individual Education Plan, or "IEP." According to the Ministry, "adapted" means using other modalities such as video, or special education equipment to meet the same intended learning outcomes. "Modified" means reducing the scope or breadth of the intended learning outcomes. IEPs are used with students with special needs, students receiving more than 25 hours of learning assistance support per year, and gifted students.

Each student's IEP is developed in consultation with his or her parents, teachers, and other staff on the school-based team.

HOMEWORK

Homework is a bridge between home and school and is most effective when student, teacher, and parents work together. Students in the earlier grades need your support with their homework. As students mature, they become more independent and assume greater personal responsibility. However, even graduating students benefit from their parents' interest and encouragement.

Each school in our district develops its own statement about homework purposes and practices, based on district homework guidelines. The statement will also outline school-wide procedures for communicating with the home and for addressing student, parent, or teacher concerns about homework. Staff and parents are involved in developing each school's homework statement, and, at the secondary level, students are also included.



HOW STUDENTS ARE EVALUATED

To understand how students are evaluated, we need to distinguish between “assessment” and “evaluation.”

Assessment is an ongoing and regular part of the teaching and learning process. Its purpose is to acquire information to make every child a successful learner. Teachers observe students carefully, listening to their use of language, and examining their daily work and larger projects. Teachers may also use homework assignments, learning logs, questions, tests, quizzes, and portfolios of students’ work to find out what students have learned.

Students often learn the criteria for successful completion of the task beforehand, as opposed to after they’ve received their mark. Frequently they have a say as to what these criteria will be and are asked, “How do you know if you’ve done a good job?” This motivates students and involves them in their schoolwork in a meaningful way. Students’ written work is one way of assessing their learning. Depending on their abilities and interests, they may also be encouraged to draw a diagram, build a model, make up a song, make up a dramatic play, and/or write a poem to show what they have learned.

Evaluation refers to the more formal assessment required under the School Act. The School Act requires three formal reporting periods in the year – in the fall, spring and at year end. There are also two informal reports, or parent-teacher conferences, one in the fall and the other in the spring.

All progress reports from Kindergarten to Grade 3 describe:

- what the student is able to do
- what areas need further attention or development
- ways of supporting the student in his learning

Students from Grade 4 to Grade 12 are assigned letter grades which are explained in each child’s report card.

In Central Okanagan schools, reporting means much more than report cards. It means a continuous flow of communication between home and school. Feedback on homework and other assignments; class newsletters or “Agenda books” that discuss assignments and class activities; open-house events; and regular informal communication with the teacher can often convey more than report cards about how your child is doing.

More detailed information on progress reports is available on the school or district website at www.sd23.bc.ca, under Progress Reporting in this handbook or at your child’s school. Please contact the classroom teacher any time you have any questions or concerns about your child’s progress.



When you aim for perfection, you discover it’s a moving target.

George Fisher

BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR CHILD’S TEACHER

As a parent, creating a positive relationship with your child’s teacher is one of the best things you can do for his education. It is best to develop this relationship at the beginning of the year. Then, if questions or problems arise later on, it is much easier to resolve them.

Here are some ways you can build trust and understanding with your child’s teacher:

- Respect a teacher’s uniqueness by not expecting all teachers to have the same teaching style and approach. One of the strengths of our public school system is the different experiences your child will have each year.
- Maintain an open line of communication with teachers. If you have a concern or a question, let your child’s teacher know about it before it becomes a real problem. Let him know if there is an important change in your family. A death, an illness, extended absence of a parent, the death of a pet, a move, home renovations, or even a vacation to Disneyland, can all have an impact on a child’s schoolwork. It’s very helpful to teachers to know these things.
- Don’t be too influenced by your secondary level son or daughter’s message to not get involved at the school. Although adolescence is the age at which children begin to separate from their parents, they still need your interest in and support for their education.
- Always speak respectfully about teachers to your children and to other adults. Your child needs to respect her teacher as well as you, and she should not feel torn between the two.
- Support your child, and know when to encourage independence. Sometimes you need to speak with the teacher on your child’s behalf. Other times it will be better to help her speak to the teacher herself.
- Take the time to respond to letters, questionnaires, etc., from school. Some teachers send home a description of what the class did for the week. If you sign it and write a response back, teachers will know that you are interested in what your child is learning.
- Take an active role by attending parent-teacher interviews and other school functions.



PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences occur during the year. For some parents they can be a cause for concern especially if a child isn't doing well.

Here are some things you can do to support your child:

- Get to know your child's teacher right at the beginning of the year. Tell her how and when she can reach you and, if possible, make yourself available to help out in classroom and school activities. Having a relationship beforehand makes a parent-teacher conference much easier.
- Come to the meeting prepared with any questions or concerns you may have. If your child is experiencing learning or behavior problems, the questions on page 28 may help guide the discussion.

If there are no outstanding concerns, here are some questions you can ask that could make for a productive discussion:

- What does my child do that surprises you? This will tell you what expectations the teacher has of your child and may reveal some surprises for you as well, since children sometimes behave differently at school than at home.
- What is my child reluctant to do? You might find out more about your child's interests and dislikes than you would ordinarily know.
- What goal would you like to see my child achieve? Even "good students" may benefit from setting goals in areas that need improvement or in which they might excel.
- What can I do at home to support what is being done at school? This question is always appreciated and helps create a team feeling. Children are far more likely to succeed in school if they see their parents and teachers working together cooperatively. The partnership among parent, teacher and student takes effort and commitment, but if we are willing, the learner benefits immensely and so does everyone else.



Peachland Elementary School

SPOTLIGHT ON SCHOOL AND DISTRICT

FOCUSING ON THE SCHOOL

Schooling in the Central Okanagan is organized around three educational programs:

- The Primary Program: from Kindergarten to Grade 3
- The Intermediate Program: from Grade 4 to Grade 6
- The Middle Years Program: from Grade 7 to Grade 9
- The Graduation Program: from Grade 10 to Grade 12

These programs are generally in 3 school configurations, elementary (K-6), Middle (7-9) and Secondary (10 – 12). For details about what is being taught and how you can best support your child's learning, be sure to contact your child's teacher.

THE ROLE OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND VICE-PRINCIPALS

Principals and Vice-Principals are responsible for:

- Supervising teaching and learning activities in the school.
- Supervising student evaluation, assessment, and reporting to parents.
- Ensuring the maintenance of school records.
- Supervising the general conduct of students.
- Performing the supervisory, management, and other duties required or assigned by the Board, including reporting on the work of a teacher and the classroom learning situation.
- Performing teaching duties assigned by the Board.
- Administering and supervising placement and programming of students in the school.

Because our society has become more complex, much more is required of a Principal than in the past. In addition to keeping up with administrative tasks, serving as a curriculum leader, and dealing with disciplinary issues and other daily emergencies, a Principal must also be versed in mental health issues, public relations, team-building, conflict resolution, multiculturalism, communication skills, and creating an inclusive school climate.



School leadership now involves sharing decision-making and sustaining a common vision amongst a diverse community of students, parents, and staff.

THE ROLE OF TEACHERS

Teachers are responsible for:

- Supporting student learning;
- Developing broad-based strategies which promote student success and support students who may be experiencing difficulties;
- Following Ministry and district intended learning outcomes and course and grade requirements;
- Providing a nurturing interactive learning environment;
- Liaising with other teachers, the principal and vice-principal and support staff to provide a well rounded student educational program;
- Assessing and reporting on student progress.





THE ROLE OF SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

Non-teaching employees perform many different roles in support of school programs and services. These include:

- Certified Education Assistants to help teachers support special needs, ESL, and behaviorally-challenged students.
- Certified Education Assistants, who provide academic assistance to Aboriginal students.
- Aboriginal Student Advocates, who work with Aboriginal students to foster school success.
- Noon Hour Student Supervisors.
- Career Centre Support Staff, who provide secondary students with information on post-secondary programs, and administer interest assessment programs to help students find out what their skills are.
- Library Assistants, who assist in managing school libraries.
- Information Services Technicians, who maintain the district computer systems.
- Clerical Staff, who ensure the smooth daily functioning of Schools, Operations Department, Student Support Services, The Learning Centre, Hollywood Rd. Education Services and the School Board Office.
- Transportation Staff, including bus drivers, dispatchers and mechanics.
- Operations Staff, who ensure all buildings and grounds are maintained and kept clean and safe for students and staff.
- Administration Office staff, who assist in the smooth running of the District as a whole.



THE ROLE OF THE PAC

Parent Advisory Councils may be formed at each school. They have a constitution which governs their activities. Every parent is a member of the PAC; however, an elected executive provides overall guidance and direction.

PACs work with all school staff to:

- Support all staff in educating students;
- Provide assistance with curricular and extra-curricular activities;
- Work with staff on supporting financial initiatives;
- Conduct parent education evenings; and
- Help plan school events such as dances and graduation ceremonies.



THE ROLE OF THE SPC

The School Planning Council structure was established at a Provincial level to include three parents (elected by the school PAC), the principal, one teacher and one student (at the secondary level). Their role is to examine how well the school is performing and develop an annual growth plan that includes goals and outcomes for improvement which link to District goals and objectives.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

All of our schools offer extracurricular programs to enhance students' learning and to provide opportunities for enjoyment. There are clubs to support a range of interests – fine arts, hobbies, academics, and athletics – as well as social activities to give students opportunities to make friends and to interact with their schoolmates outside of the classroom.

To find out what programs are available for your son or daughter, contact your child's neighborhood school. If you want to know about athletic programs being offered at the secondary level, contact the school principal.



STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

In our district, discipline encompasses self-discipline, empathy, and citizenship. We try to create a culture in our schools that supports respect, responsibility, and safety. The Board believes that a policy of effective discipline will:

- create an atmosphere in which the school is able to fulfill its duty to provide educational services of benefit to students;
- create an atmosphere in which each student may take advantage of those educational services and carry out such learning activities as may be required;
- foster, in each student, the development of a sense of responsibility for actions;
- create an atmosphere of trust and security in which students may grow in confidence as a result of their achievements;
- create a racism-free learning environment where cultural diversity is respected and celebrated; and
- create an environment for all students which is safe, both physically and emotionally.

In accordance with these district policies, all schools establish their own codes of conduct with corresponding rules and expectations for student behavior. These are developed in cooperation with parents and students.

STUDENT HANDBOOKS

Many of the schools in our district provide a student handbook that outlines the activities, events and practices particular to that school community. The handbook also offers suggestions for how parents can get involved in the school.

HOW TO BECOME INVOLVED IN AND BUILD A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SCHOOL

Although your relationship with your child’s teacher is of central importance in your child’s education, getting involved at a school level not only helps your child, it also benefits you and your family. Feeling a part of the school community makes school much more enjoyable for your child and for you.

Here are some steps you can take to build a good relationship with the school:

- Get to know the school’s Principal and other staff, along with your child’s teacher.
- Attend PAC meetings or serve on school committees or become an elected PAC or School Planning Council member.
- Offer assistance in the classroom – driving students to sites for field trips, counting money, cutting and pasting, etc.
- Offer assistance in the school – helping at book fairs, sharing special talents and skills as a guest speaker, translating materials for the school, acting as an interpreter for parents with less English fluency, helping with Food Days, driving teams to sports games, etc.
- Help to organize school carnivals, dances, and other events that build school spirit.
- Offer assistance at the district level – helping with interpretation and translation of non-confidential materials, serving on district committees.
- Attend fine arts nights, Remembrance Day ceremonies, science fairs, awards nights, etc. These kinds of events give you a bigger picture of the school than that seen through your son’s or daughter’s eyes.
- A working parent can serve on the phoning committee, do translations or help out at evening and/or weekend events.



FOCUSING ON THE DISTRICT

Educating our young people is a collaborative effort among many partner groups in our district. All partners provide input prior to any major decisions that our Board make. Partners are invited to serve on most of the district committees. The partner groups in our district include:

- Parents – represented by the Central Okanagan Parent Advisory Council (COPAC).
- Teachers – represented by the Central Okanagan Teachers' Association (COTA).
- Principals and Vice-Principals – represented by the Central Okanagan Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association (COPVPA).
- Support Staff – represented by the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 3523 (CUPE).
- Students - represented by the District Student Council (DSC) which consists of representatives from each of the secondary schools in our district.

THE CENTRAL OKANAGAN PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Central Okanagan Parent Advisory Council (COPAC) is a non-profit organization which consists of representatives from each of the school PACs and an executive committee. Some of the purposes of the COPAC are to:

- encourage parental involvement in the education and safety of students; for example, as an elected PAC member, on the School Planning Council or in volunteer activities.
- be effective advocates for parents, children and youth within the school community.
- advise the School Board about parents' views concerning school district programs and policies.
- advise the Board on issues under discussion by trustees.

The COPAC provides information to school PACs for their newsletters for parents of all Central Okanagan students, sends representatives to district committees, holds parent education sessions on educational or parenting topics, and hosts meetings to bring together parents and other partners to discuss current issues in the district. See the Parent section on the district web page at www.sd23.bc.ca for more information.



A sense of curiosity is nature's original school of education.

Smiley Blanton

THE CENTRAL OKANAGAN TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

The Central Okanagan Teachers' Association (COTA) is the governing body that serves as an advocate for the teachers in our district. Under the Labour Relations Code, the COTA's role is to represent teachers, ensuring due process in any disputes that might emerge. Some of its activities include providing professional support for classroom teachers, mentoring beginning teachers, and working with post secondary institutions to support pre-service teachers.

THE CENTRAL OKANAGAN PRINCIPALS' AND VICE-PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION

The Central Okanagan Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association (COPVPA) is the professional body that represents principals and vice-principals in our district. Some of its activities include initiating and supporting administrative study groups focusing on school culture and curricular leadership, and conducting in-service sessions with other partner groups on effective working relationships.

THE CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Local 3523, is the collective bargaining unit for our district's support staff. Its role is to serve as an advocate for these employees, and to ensure that they receive due process in the event of any dispute.

In addition to the school-based support staff, clerical staff at the Administrative Office handle finances, purchasing, payroll, record-keeping, continuing education, printing, and provide secretarial support.

Maintenance staff assist in the renovation and construction of new schools, repair and maintain heating, electricity and plumbing in over 50 buildings, build and repair furniture, and look after the school grounds and playgrounds. The building service workers, and custodians who make up our Operations staff, keep the buildings clean and safe.

THE ROLE OF SENIOR DISTRICT LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS

Administrators at a district level include:

- The Superintendent, who serves as the district's Chief Executive Officer, is responsible for the overall operation of the district. He also oversees the general organization, administration, delivery, supervision, and evaluation of all educational programs.
- The Assistant Superintendent, who acts in the Superintendent's absence and assumes specific roles as assigned by the Superintendent.
- The Secretary-Treasurer, who is responsible for corporate/business services and operations.

HOW TO BECOME MORE INFORMED ABOUT OUR DISTRICT

An informed parent is more effective in supporting a child's learning, and more able to obtain the resources needed to be an effective advocate for the child.

There are many ways to become more informed about our district. This list offers a number of suggestions. You are invited to choose those that suit your needs and your schedule:

- Talk to the school principal. Ask a lot of questions.
- Attend Board meetings.
- Get to know one of the trustees so you can call and ask questions.
- Visit our website at www.sd23.bc.ca
- Attend our district information meetings.
- Read newsletters – from the school, the Central Okanagan Parent Advisory Council (COPAC), etc.
- With the fall and spring report cards, you might receive inserts, which include an update on school district news, programs, and activities.
- Talk to your Parent Advisory Council (PAC) chairperson. Your school can provide the name and phone number.
- Review the school growth plan established by the School Planning Council (SPC).
- Read letters, notices and memos that come home from the school.
- Check the PAC bulletin board at your child's school.
- Talk to your child's teacher.
- Talk to a member of the Central Okanagan Parent Advisory Council (COPAC) executive or attend a COPAC meeting.
- Check our website at www.sd23.bc.ca for copies of all District reports on a great variety of topics.
- If you are a member of a community group, ask your group to contact the District office at 860-8888. We can provide speakers for your meetings to exchange ideas about education.
- Be an active member of the PAC.
- Attend regular PAC meetings.
- Read your school handbook.
- Read this handbook!



THE ROLE OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Our Board of Education consists of seven elected officials. Every three years, eligible citizens in the Central Okanagan vote for the trustees of their choice. The key work of school boards is to improve student achievement. They accomplish this work, as outlined in the School Act, by:

- preparing and approving the school district's operating budgets, capital plans and accountability contracts.
- setting local policy for the effective and efficient operation of schools.
- employing the staff necessary for school district operations, such as teachers, administrative officers, clerical and administrative personnel, custodians, building maintenance staff, bus drivers, etc.
- establishing the conditions of employment.
- hearing appeals from parents and students where a staff decision significantly affects a student.
- approving local courses and resource materials for use in the school district.
- approving annual school plans.

The work of trusteeship includes:

- understanding student achievement — what it looks like and how it can be improved.
- engaging the community and leading from a position of understanding.
- connecting with schools, parents, employees and others interested in and affected by local education issues.
- contributing to provincial level debate on education issues through the BCSTA.





ACHIEVEMENT CONTRACT

The District's 2009/2010 Achievement Contract is available on our website at www.sd23.bc.

This document outlines a district improvement plan with regard to:

- Primary Benchmarks
- Foundation Skills Assessment Results
- Provincial Exam Results
- Grade to Grade Transitions
- Group Equity Improvement

While the data is intended to provide baseline information, the contract specifies future goals for public education in our community.



HOW PARENTS CAN AFFECT BOARD POLICIES

Here are some ways that you and other members of the community can influence policies that affect how our schools operate:

- Attend Board meetings and ask questions or comment on topics on the agenda. You can also make a short statement or present a brief to the Board about any initiatives, issues, or concerns that you think the Board should be considering.
- Participate in Ad Hoc Committee meetings or attend Board Committee discussions on Education, Building, Transportation and Finance which are open to the public.
- Write to the Board chairperson or to chairpersons of the Standing Committees.
- Respond to drafts of district policies, regulations, proposals, and position statements. These are available at your local school, from the PAC president, the board office or on-line at www.sd23.bc.ca.



THE BIG PICTURE – PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN BC

The British Columbia public education system exists in order to “enable all learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy, democratic and pluralistic society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.”

THE IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

Public Education is not something any of us can take for granted. Having a role in shaping provincial education and society is a great privilege. Appreciating the broader public interest, rather than just our own concerns, makes us better citizens and better role models for our children.

THE ROLE OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

The Ministry of Education is responsible for setting the overall funding and general policy directions for education in British Columbia for students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12).

The Ministry establishes curriculum for the K-12 education system, and provides IRPs that define the expected learning outcomes for each subject or course.

The Ministry is accountable to the people of British Columbia for the content and quality of education in our province. It is ultimately responsible for keeping parents and the public informed about what BC children are learning and how resources are being used.

You can contact the Ministry of Education by calling 1-888-879-1166 or by accessing their website at www.bced.gov.bc.ca



Ready or Not, Here We Come!

Childhood Game

HOW PARENTS CAN HAVE AN INFLUENCE AT THE PROVINCIAL LEVEL

The British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC) is the provincial organization that acts on behalf of parents.

Some of BCCPAC's more important roles include:

- Advocating for excellence and equal opportunity in public school education.
- Advocating for children and parents regarding provincial education issues. BCCPAC's advocacy service gives advice to parents about the best way to resolve disputes about schooling.
- Consulting with and advising the Ministry of Education on policies and programs.
- Supporting school and school district Parent Advisory Councils.
- A District PAC member provides representation to BCCPAC.

APPEAL OF DECISIONS

The School District has a specific policy governing the right of parents to appeal decisions and the processes that must be followed. In general, parents should contact the person immediately responsible for any situation involving their child (i.e. the classroom teacher or principal). Where parents are not satisfied with the end decision, they may appeal through to the Board of Education, and ultimately to a Ministry of Education representative in some cases.

CONCLUSION

Our district is not a fixed structure, but a partnership; a dynamic creation of many different groups and individuals, including you. Belonging to a partnership encourages each of us to step out and ask questions, seek help, offer support, and build relationships with others – a child's classroom teacher, the school secretary, a trustee, a parent whose child attends the same school, and so on.

It also asks for your participation, whether it's helping a child with her homework, attending a lunch day at your son's school, hosting a “dry grad,” serving on a district committee, going to a Board meeting, attending an information session, watching a school play, or helping with fund-raising. We are proud of the high level of parent involvement in our district and we are glad that you have joined us.



QUICK REFERENCE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. GENERAL

HOW BIG IS THE CENTRAL OKANAGAN SCHOOL DISTRICT?

School District No. 23 (Central Okanagan) is British Columbia's sixth largest school district, with a student body of approximately 22,000.

HOW DO I KNOW WHICH SCHOOL TO SEND MY CHILD TO?

Boundaries have been established for each school. Parental choice is also possible at any district school providing space is available. If you are uncertain about which is your child's school, call the Board Office. All schools, with their addresses, phone numbers, and names of the Principal are listed on the website at www.sd23.bc.ca or call 860-8888 (School Board Office).

AT WHAT AGE CAN MY CHILD ENTER SCHOOL?

To qualify for entry in September, a child must be 5 years of age by December 31 of the same year.

WHAT ARE THE SCHOOL-DAY START AND FINISH TIMES FOR SCHOOLS?

Information concerning school start and finish times, as well as recess and lunch-break times, is provided to parents by schools or is available by calling the school.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MY CHILD DURING THE NOON BREAK?

Elementary and Middle Schools are "closed campuses". Your child is able to go home for lunch with your permission. Students who stay at school are supervised. Noon-hour supervisors, under the direction of the School Principal are on duty to monitor students. Staying at school during the lunch break is a privilege. Students who lose this privilege through poor behavior may be suspended from the right to remain on the premises during the break.

DO ALL MIDDLE AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS HAVE THE SAME COURSE TIMETABLES?

No, with input from staff and parents, to better meet the needs of the students, timetables and semester systems vary from school to school. Contact the schools for this information.

DO I HAVE TO PAY ANY SCHOOL FEES?

In keeping with the provisions of the School Act, the Board of Education authorizes the charging of deposits for educational resource materials and optional fees. While individual school courses are provided free of charge, there may be costs attached to optional projects, field trips and extra-curricular activities. This now includes all student busing as well. In School District No. 23 the ability to pay is not a prerequisite to taking a course or participating in any school-sponsored activity.

HOW DO I FIND OUT WHAT THE COST OF SCHOOL SUPPLIES AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS WILL BE?

Elementary

Parents have the option to purchase school supplies from the school by paying a charge. The schools will provide this information to parents. Schools may also provide an optional Planner or Agenda book for a fee.

Middle and Secondary

Students are responsible for purchasing their own school supplies. More information is available at schools.

HOW ARE SCHOOL GRADES ORGANIZED?

Elementary schools typically include students from Kindergarten to Grade 6. Kindergarten to Grade 3 are the primary grades, and Grades 4 to 6 are the intermediate grades. Middle school includes Grades 7 to 9 and Secondary Schools include Grades 10 to 12. Grade level is based primarily on the student's age.

Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young.

Henry Ford



AT WHAT AGE ARE CHILDREN REQUIRED TO BE REGISTERED AT A SCHOOL?

All children between ages 6 and 16 must be registered at a school. A child who turns 5 before December 31 of that year is eligible to attend Kindergarten. Parents may choose to delay entry for one year.

For Kindergarten, birth certificates and immunization records are required at the time of registration.

HOW DO I REGISTER MY CHILD AT SCHOOL?

You are entitled to register your child at your school of choice, space permitting.

New registrations should bring with them a copy of their birth certificate and a copy of their most recent report card or transcript from their previous educational jurisdiction. This information is critical for appropriate placement.

WHEN DOES REGISTRATION FOR GRADES K-12 USUALLY TAKE PLACE?

Parents are requested to register their children for the September entry period according to the schedule established by the Board of Education. Advertisements appear in local newspapers prior to the commencement of the registration period. Please contact the school district office or your school of choice to obtain further information.

A registration period for all students also takes place at the end of August. Notices will appear in local newspapers. Parents of Kindergarten students are encouraged to register early in the New Year during the advertised registration period. Those who have not previously registered may register within the August registration session, at your school of choice, space permitting.

WHEN DOES THE SCHOOL YEAR BEGIN AND END?

The school year starts in September, the day after Labour Day, and ends on the last Friday in June. (Secondary students do not attend regular classes during the last two weeks of June but might be writing exams.)



WHAT HAPPENS IF MY NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL IS FULL WHEN I REGISTER MY CHILD FOR THE FIRST TIME?

When there is no room in a school, program or class, the process of "capping" occurs. New students wishing to register in a capped school will be directed to another school. When space becomes available during the year, these students will have priority (based on criteria established by the Board) to return to their school of choice. Provided that space in the grade level is available, these students will, in all likelihood, be accommodated in their school of choice the next September.

CAN I REGISTER MY CHILD IN ANOTHER SCHOOL IN THE DISTRICT?

Students who live within a school's catchment area have priority access to the space offered by that school. However, parents may register their students in any school providing there is space. In this case, transportation will be the responsibility of the student/parents.

HOW DO I REGISTER MY CHILD FOR FRENCH LANGUAGE PROGRAMS?

Kindergarten registration takes place early in the calendar year. By January, the District will advertise about the Kindergarten registration in local newspapers.

Important Transportation Note:

If your catchment school offers the French Immersion program, transportation may be provided for eligible riders. If another school is selected, parents must provide transportation.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR REGISTERING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS?

Please contact your catchment area school as soon as possible in order that appropriate arrangements can be made for your child. Even though schools are closed during the summer vacation period, parents of students with special needs are encouraged to contact the Department of Student Support Services at any time to arrange registration by phoning (250) 860-8888. Please have available at that time any information you wish to release to this school district. This might include medical reports, medical assessments, psychologists' reports and reports from your previous school district. (See Page 30 for a list of services provided by Student Support Services.)

WHEN SHOULD STUDENTS REGISTER FOR ALTERNATE EDUCATION PROGRAMS (LOCATED AT CENTRAL SCHOOL OR STOREFRONT SCHOOL)?

Students are encouraged to register during the last week in August. However, students may also register for Alternate Education Programs at any time during the school year.

MUST HOME SCHOOL LEARNERS BE REGISTERED?

Parents must register home school learners on or before September 30 every year. The district also offers a program designed to assist and support home learners.

The "Distributed Learning Program" offers a number of innovative services to parents/guardians who choose to home school their children. For information, please contact Central School: 1825 Richter Street, Kelowna, phone (250) 868-1135.

WHAT IS THE BEST TIME TO SCHEDULE DISCUSSIONS WITH A SCHOOL PRINCIPAL OR TEACHER?

Registration days are particularly busy and unscheduled appointments are often difficult to arrange to everyone's satisfaction. However, when you are registering your child, we suggest you take this opportunity to book an appointment, which is mutually convenient for you, the School Principal or the teacher.

WHAT ARE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD) DAYS, WHEN ARE THEY, AND WHAT PURPOSE DO THEY SERVE?

Each school in the district has a prescribed number of Professional Development (PD) days, or non-instructional days, set aside each year. On these days students do not attend school.

The purpose of PD days is to provide in-service to teachers in curriculum and instruction, and to support the implementation of new programs.

WHAT DO I DO IF MY CHILD IS TO BE ABSENT FROM SCHOOL?

Phone and advise the school before classes start in the morning. Many schools have an Early Warning System to identify children who should be at school but aren't. Some schools require a note from home explaining the reason for a child's absence. If your child needs to leave the school during the day, check with your school or refer to the school handbook to find out the proper procedure.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY CHILD IS SERIOUSLY ILL, INCAPACITATED, AND UNABLE TO ATTEND SCHOOL FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD?

Our Hospital/Homebound Program serves elementary, middle and secondary students who are away from school due to hospitalization and/or illness for periods of two weeks or longer. If you require this program, contact your child's school. Requests for this district-level service are made by the school-based team.

WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE IF MY CHILD NEEDS TO HAVE MEDICINE ADMINISTERED AT SCHOOL?

Advise the school Principal at time of registration. Each school has a pamphlet "For Parents/Guardians of Students with Medical Alert Conditions" that provides important information.



A Medical Alert Planning Form (Available at schools) is to be completed by parents:

- If medical intervention may be required during school hours,
AND
- medication is prescribed by a physician,
AND
- students require assistance or supervision from school staff to take their medication,
OR
- students who require emergency medication for an allergic reaction, which produces an anaphylactic reaction.

A "Request for Administration of Medication at School" form is given to the parent or guardian upon registration or when the parent indicates that the medication is required to be administered in school. The five parts of this form are to be completed as follows:

SECTION A

The parent or guardian completes the identifying information.

SECTION B

Their physician provides information, dates and signs the form,
OR

A duplicate pharmacy label of prescribed medication must be provided.

SECTION C

The parent completes, giving the school permission to give the medication and ensuring their parental responsibility to promptly notify the school of any medication changes. The parent provides the medication to the school with clear instructions for administering.

SECTION D

The school staff member who is responsible for the administration of medication or supervision of medication will complete this section after he/she has reviewed the information.

The above form is to be completed on an annual basis. Any questions should be addressed to the school principal.

MEDICAL ALERT – FILE SYSTEM

The purpose of the Medical Alert system is to have quick access to information on any student who might require emergency care while at school. Each school develops a system that will best meet the needs of its students.

Students with life threatening medical conditions will be accommodated in accordance with Board Policy 436 and 436 Regulations.



HOW DO I KNOW IF MY CHILD IS ELIGIBLE TO RIDE A SCHOOL BUS?

The Board of Education has established eligibility for school bus ridership, based on the following:

- Students from kindergarten to grade 3 who live 4 km. or further from their catchment area school
- Students in grades 4 to 12 who live 4.8 km. or further from their catchment area school

The Board recognizes that many students may not qualify for bus transportation as outlined above, and therefore authorizes the transportation of such students on existing bus routes, provided space is available. Where feasible, the priority for these non-eligible courtesy riders will be as follows:

- Special Education students capable of riding a regular bus
- Furthest distance from the school (Youngest student takes precedence in the event of a tie for distance)
- Siblings of eligible riders registered to the bus

In some situations it may be necessary and desirable to relocate students from one school to another. Students are eligible for school district transportation or payment of transportation assistance to the parents if they are directed to a school out of their home area and live beyond the transportation eligibility line to that school.

Starting in September 2009, payment of a Student Transportation Charge will be required before a School District No. 23 School Bus Pass will be issued. The cost is \$200.00 per student for the entire school year. Detailed information about rider eligibility, how to request transportation and make payment, is available on the school district website: www.sd23.bc.ca. On the bottom of the home page, select the "SD23 Busing and School Locator" icon. Further information about a Family Plan and what to do in the event of financial hardship, is also available on this site.

If you have questions regarding the above, please contact Transportation Services (250) 491-4040.



WHO DECIDES WHAT CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT?

The curriculum and learning outcomes taught in BC are prescribed by the Ministry of Education for all grade levels – primary, intermediate and graduate. A School Board may also authorize courses that meet a need at the local level.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT WHAT AND HOW MY CHILDREN ARE BEING TAUGHT?

Questions about the curriculum should be addressed to your child's classroom teacher or the Principal.

WHERE CAN I FIND COURSE LISTINGS FOR MIDDLE AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS?

Each middle school and secondary school produces information regarding the courses that are proposed for the coming year. In some cases, availability will be subject to registration and other factors. Contact the schools for details.

WHAT ABOUT SCHOOL HOLIDAYS?

Students do not attend school on statutory holidays, winter and spring breaks, and summer holidays. They also don't attend on days set aside for teacher professional development. Each school sends home information about holidays and other days that the school is closed for instruction.

Central Okanagan schools respect cultural and religious holidays. Parents are requested to advise their child's teacher if their child will be away from school to observe special holidays.

2. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

What You Need to Graduate:

Eighty credits in Grades 10 - 12 are required for graduation.

REQUIRED COURSES	
SUBJECT AREA	MINIMUM CREDITS
English Language Arts 10	4
a Language Arts 11	4
a Language Arts 12	4
Social Studies 10	4
Social Studies 11, or BC First Nations Studies or Civic Studies 11	4
Science 10	4
a Science 11 or 12	4
a Mathematics 10	4
a Mathematics 11 or 12	4
Physical Education 10	4
Planning 10	4
a Fine Arts and/or Applied Skills 10, 11 or 12	4
Total:	48 credits
ELECTIVE COURSES	
Students must earn at least 28 elective credits for Grade 10-12 courses.	28 credits
GRADUATION TRANSITIONS	
Students must meet all of the learning outcomes of the Graduation Transitions Program.	4 credits
OVERALL TOTAL	80 credits
Of the 80 credits for graduation, at least 16 must be at the Grade 12 level, including a Grade 12 Language Arts course. Others may be required or elective courses. (all ministry-authorized and board/authority-approved courses count).	

All students must write five Graduation Program exams.

Don't forget that post-secondary institutions often require specific courses be completed in order to get into certain programs. Careful planning in Grades 10, 11 and 12 will ensure your child will have all the courses and credits needed.

ADDITIONAL GRADUATION PROGRAM INFORMATION

IT IS GENERALLY RECOMMENDED that students complete more than the minimum number of courses required for graduation.

EARNING CREDITS TOWARDS GRADUATION

In addition to earning credits by successfully completing a course, your child may also be awarded Grade 10, 11 or 12 course credits using the following policies:

Equivalency Policy (Documented Prior Learning)

If your child has completed a course outside the B.C. school system, there may be an equivalent course in the B.C. school system for which they can get credit.

Challenge Policy

If your child can show that they have already achieved the outcomes of a course that is offered in your school district, they may receive credit for that course by working through a challenge process.

External Credentials (courses)

Your child can receive credit towards graduation for some of the extra-curricular activities or community learning they participate in outside of school. Some examples include computer certification courses and ICBC-approved driver's education courses, as well as some music, dance and athletic involvement.

Post-Secondary Courses

Students can earn graduation credits for any course completed at a B.C. publicly funded post-secondary institution.

Independent Directed Study

If your child has a particular interest in a specific subject area, IDS allows them to chart their own course of learning, under the supervision of a teacher, and earn up to four credits for completing the learning in each course.

For more information on these policies, see a school counselor or check the Ministry's Handbook of Procedures at: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/exams/handbook.



3. WHAT IS THE ABORIGINAL EDUCATION PROGRAM?

We acknowledge that S.D. No. 23 operates within the traditional territory of the Okanagan. Our Aboriginal Education Program provides services to students of Aboriginal heritage (K-12) to enhance their school experience.

Who is an Aboriginal Student?

The Ministry of Education defines an Aboriginal Student as: "A person who is identified by their family as having First Nations, Inuit or Métis ancestry." Within the territory of the Okanagan, the District's 1800 Aboriginal students represent over 61 Bands and Nations across Canada.

What are the Program's Guiding Principles?

As a School District, we believe that it is important to:

- Honour and acknowledge the people, traditional territory and the history of the Okanagan people;
- Acknowledge the traditional teachings of the Elders and the wisdom of the Aboriginal culture;
- Promote a learning environment where Aboriginal students feel confident and proud of their ancestry;
- Provide educational opportunities that enhance academic success; and,
- Develop shared responsibility and mutual respect through ongoing dialogue and strong relationships that recognize the cultural differences and diverse needs of Aboriginal students.

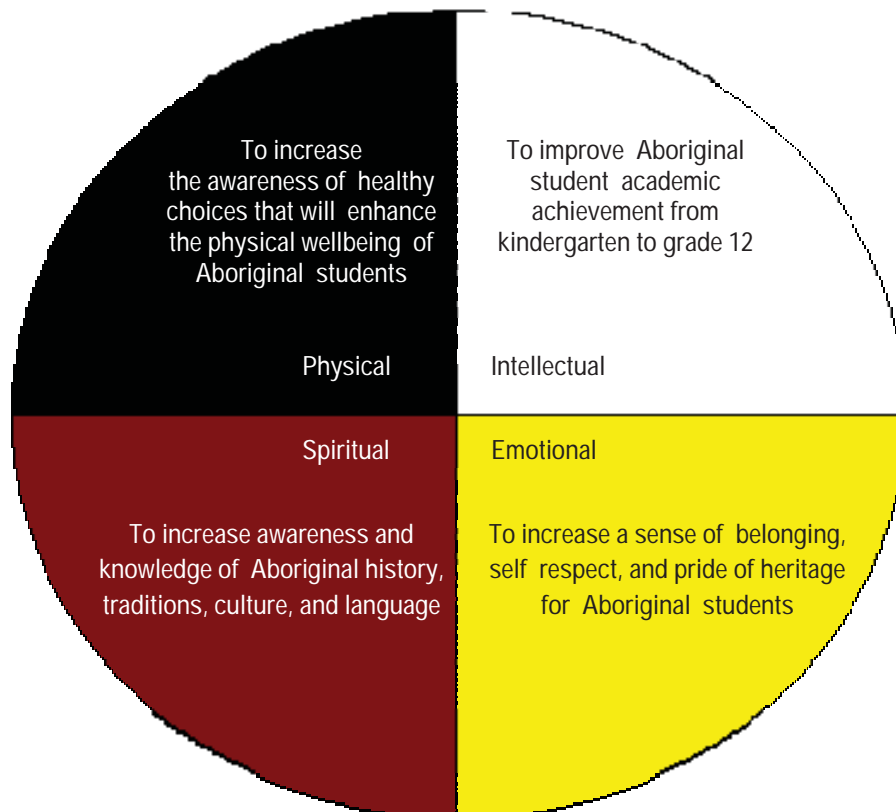


What is an Enhancement Agreement?

On December 11, 2006 the District's first Enhancement Agreement was signed. This was a historic event celebrated by representatives from all Aboriginal communities in the Central Okanagan, District staff, local politicians and Ministry representatives. In signing this agreement, all parties acknowledge the direction that the District will need to pursue in the next four years (2007-2011) to support the emotional, spiritual, physical, and intellectual development of Aboriginal students in the Central Okanagan.

A copy of the District's Enhancement Agreement is posted on the S.D. No. 23 website: www.sd23.bc.ca.

GOALS OF THE ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT



Who Is the Aboriginal Education Committee (AEC)?

The District's Aboriginal Education Committee (AEC) was formed in 2002 and meets on a regular basis to provide recommendations for program enhancements and budget expenditures.

The AEC is comprised of representatives from Westbank First Nation, Okanagan Indian Band, Okanagan Nation Alliance, Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society, Okanagan Métis Children and Family Services, Lake Country Native Association, Aboriginal Parent and Family Education Council, the Board of Education and District staff.

Who is the Aboriginal Parent and Family Education Council?

The Aboriginal Parent and Family Education Council held its first meeting in February 2007. This Council meets on a regular basis and welcomes all Aboriginal parents' input. Two parent representatives from this Council are members of the AEC. Recommendations to enhance Aboriginal student school success are forwarded to the AEC via the parent representatives.



Who is the Aboriginal Program Staff?

Principal of the Aboriginal Education Program

- The Principal's primary responsibility is to foster Aboriginal student success in each of the four directions of the Medicine Wheel (Social/Emotional, Spiritual, Physical, and Intellectual)

Aboriginal Student Advocates

- Provide emotional, social, academic and/or behavioural support
- Help students with goal setting and career planning
- Work closely with teachers and other personnel to plan effectively for students
- Provide links between home and school

Cultural Facilitator and Cultural Assistant

- Consult with elementary, middle and secondary school staff to facilitate the integration of Aboriginal cultural material and support the teaching of the Okanagan language
- Provide speakers and resources for classrooms
- Organize Aboriginal cultural events within schools and the community

Okanagan Language Instructor

- Provides Okanagan language instruction to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students throughout the District

Aboriginal Student Certified Education Assistants

- Provide academic support to Aboriginal students (from Kindergarten to grade 9) in Literacy, Numeracy and study skills

Aboriginal Student Tutors

- Provide academic support to secondary school Aboriginal students

How is the Aboriginal Education Program Funded?

The Ministry of Education provides school districts with supplemental funds to offer an Aboriginal Program. The funding amount is directly related to the number of Aboriginal students enrolled in the District.

How Can I Be Sure My Child is Included in the Program?

Contact your school principal to ensure that your child has been registered as an Aboriginal student. For further information, please contact your school's Advocate. The Principal of the Aboriginal Program and the Cultural Facilitator can be reached at Central School Programs and Services (979-2020 or 860-3931).

For further information about the AEC or the Aboriginal Parent and Family Education Council, please call: 860-8888.



Primary Winter Gathering.



Bundles Presentation.

4. HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS

On February 8, 2006, the Board of Education passed our first District Health Promoting Schools Policy. In addition, the Employee Wellness Policy was just recently passed on February 22, 2009. Through these policies, we are committed to ensuring all students and staff have the opportunity to learn and work in a 'healthy and safe' school/and or other work environment. Further, we recognize that healthy children are better able to learn and that our schools can directly influence the health of students. Promoting students' health is a responsibility shared with staff, parents, the health sector, and the community.

The District Focus for 2009 - 2010 will be:

- To continue to work toward improving student health, with emphasis on providing more daily physical activity opportunities, more healthy eating opportunities, and healthy living opportunities.
- To continue to work toward improving employee health and wellness including the reduction of overall absenteeism.

For further information, please contact the District Health Promoting Schools Coordinator at:

Hollywood Road Education Services
(250) 860-9726, Ext. #4194
www.sd23.bc.ca/healthpromotingschools



5. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

IS THERE A SPECIAL REGISTRATION PROCEDURE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS?

The British Columbia School Act governs the registration of international students: Section 82 (1) and (2), International Student Policy – Circular 01-02. In School District No. 23, School Board Policy No. 420 also applies. This policy recognizes that the quality of education for our students is enhanced by opportunities for visitations and exchange. The Board Policy on admitting international students is administered by the District Principal - International Education at:

1040 Hollywood Rd., Kelowna, B.C.
Canada V1X 4N2
Telephone: (250) 860-9729 ext. 4188
Fax: (250) 870-5188

Step 1—Application & Letter of Acknowledgement

Mail or Send Electronically:

- A completed application form
- A recent photograph
- Final report cards for the last two years (copy of original & English translation)
- \$200 application fee
- Two letters of recommendation from school personnel discussing work habits and potential
- Applicant's handwritten letter indicating why they would like to participate in the program
- Complete all custodianship forms (if applicable)
- Photocopy of first page of passport
- Photocopy of birth certificate

Application packages will not be processed without all of the above items.

You will be sent an e-mail when your application packet is complete and ready for review. A Letter of Acknowledgement will be sent to all applicants regarding application status.

Step 2—Letter of Acceptance

Upon receipt of a Letter of Acknowledgement indicating you will be accepted, please do the following:

- Pay all remaining applicable program fees (tuition, insurance and homestay)
- Complete a homestay application (if applicable)

Once all of the above fees have been paid, an official Letter of Acceptance will be issued which includes the name of the school you can attend.

Step 3—Visa Application

Upon receipt of the official Letter of Acceptance, please do the following:

- Immediately contact the nearest Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) office and request a Visa Application Form for a Study Permit. Be sure to apply as early as possible as the visa process can take over eight weeks
- Complete the form and include the Letter of Acceptance with your application package
- Wait to receive notification from CIC
- Ensure that you have an updated passport

Please note that the International Office and the employees of School District No. 23 (Central Okanagan) have no influence over the visa application process. Please direct all enquiries regarding your visa status to CIC.

Step 4—Prior to Arrival

- Fill out and return any forms requested by your new school
- Notify International Education of your flight and arrival arrangements
- Check the website for a list of items to bring with you
- Have a safe trip; we look forward to meeting you!

Note:

Please visit the International Education website www.internationaleducation.ca for more detailed information about the program.

Students must follow the School and District Code of Conduct and abide by all Canadian laws. Infractions may result in termination of the student's registration, or denial of renewal.

6. EARLY LEARNING INITIATIVES

What early learning initiatives or opportunities are available for preschool aged children? All of the following early learning initiatives within School District No. 23 adhere to the Early Learning and Development Framework For 3 – 5 Year Olds:

PRE-SCHOOL

School District No. 23 (Central Okanagan) has integrated pre-schools within their elementary school buildings. Pre-schools provide an opportunity to participate in either an English or French program. Please contact the School District No. 23 Board Office to obtain a current list of the pre-school programs. The pre-school teachers are provided an opportunity to participate in a mentorship project with district staff. This project has been recognized provincially as a unique and promising process of bridging the gap between Early Childhood Education and school-aged education, thus meeting the mandate of the Ministry of Education. The mentorship project supports the creation of meaningful educational partnerships where:

- transitions between programs within buildings are seamless,
- parents are provided with even earlier opportunities to become involved in their children's educational environments,
- the commitment of the Government's strategic plan is to ensure that more children are ready for success when they enter Kindergarten is fulfilled, and
- professional development is stimulated and promoted in keeping with our district's motto: "Together We Learn."

YOUNG PARENT PROGRAM

School District No. 23 and Kelowna Child Care Society have partnered to offer a Young Parent Program that is facilitated at Kelowna Secondary School. A secondary school-aged parent, who is registered in school, has the opportunity to register her child (aged birth to 30 months) in the Young Parent Program daycare facility while they attend school.

The parents of these children are provided instruction on early language development and age-appropriate activities through the Hanen Language program facilitated by the School District's Early Literacy Teacher and Speech Language Pathologist.



RUTLAND SENIOR SECONDARY PLAYSCHOOL

Parents of 4 year old children may register their child in the Rutland Senior Secondary 2 day a week playschool program.

Rutland Senior Secondary students who are registered in the Human Services 11 and Human Services 12 courses facilitate the activities for these students. School District Early Learning Staff support this program by providing language and literacy based, age-appropriate activities that are utilized in this program. Contact Rutland Senior Secondary for more information.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND KINDERCARE

Some elementary schools have partnered with non-school district agencies to offer before and/or after school care programs. In addition, some elementary schools provide a Kindercare program. Please contact the elementary schools to obtain this information.

STRONGSTART PROGRAM

The Ministry of Education and School Districts provide an opportunity for families/caregivers and their pre-school-aged children to participate in a free early learning program. The program promotes play-based language, physical and social/emotional development activities for young children. This 3 hour morning program operates 5 days per week.

Please contact the School District office (860-8888) to obtain information regarding the location(s) of the StrongStart program.



7. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

WHO WILL ANSWER MY QUESTIONS?

Questions regarding individual students and/or specific needs should be directed to the school Principals, or to the Director of Student Support Services, at the School District Office at (250) 860-8888.

WHAT IS OFFERED FOR GIFTED STUDENTS?

In the Elementary schools (K-6), gifted students are integrated into the regular programs along with other students of a wide range of abilities. Each school is expected to provide programs that help to meet the needs of all students in its attendance area. Therefore, if a student is identified as gifted or talented in one or more areas, the classroom teacher, along with support staff from within the school, will provide extensions to the student's program. These extensions are normally designed to meet the specific identified needs of the student. The procedures used to provide these extensions range from very specific Individual Educational programs (IEPs) to simple enhancements of the expectations set for the student in one or more subjects.

WHAT SERVICES ARE OFFERED FOR STUDENTS WHO NEED EXTRA HELP?

If a student has an identified special need, the following are services that may be accessed by the school:

- Behaviour Intervention
- Certified Education Assistant
- Hearing Resource Teacher
- Hospital Homebound Teacher
- Learning Assistance Teacher
- Physiotherapy / Occupational Therapy
- Resource Teacher
- School Counselor
- School Psychologist
- Speech and Language Pathologist
- Vision Resource Teacher



WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR?

Counseling is a supportive service provided within the school and is intended to assist:

Students with their education, career, personal and social development; school personnel in providing the most effective education for students; schools in dealing with a student with a crisis or social/emotional issue.

School counselors assist students, teachers and parents to achieve the goals of education. For more information please contact the Principal.

WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE FOR HEARING IMPAIRED AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS?

The district has itinerant teachers who specialize in instruction for both hearing impaired and visually impaired students. These teachers are part of the school-based resource team that decides how best to meet the child's learning needs.



WHAT IS MEANT BY ADVANCED PLACEMENT?

Several Central Okanagan Secondary schools offer Advanced Placement (AP) Courses, which are university level courses offered to Grade 12 students. A student who successfully completes an AP course and scores a high mark on the AP exam may receive entry level university credit for that course at certain universities.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER ENRICHED COURSES AVAILABLE?

Yes. Many schools have an Incentive Program for classroom groupings of students in Grades 8, 9, and 10. In these classes, teachers encourage students to take initiative and responsibility for their own learning.

8. STAY-IN-SCHOOL INITIATIVES

DO ALL SCHOOLS OFFER PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO KEEP STUDENTS FROM DROPPING OUT?

Central School.

IS THERE ANY EFFORT ON THE PART OF SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 23 TO RETRIEVE EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS?

School District Staff attempt to locate every student who drops out of the system to invite that student to return. The students are provided with information about a range of program options.

WHAT ALTERNATE PROGRAMS DOES SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 23 PROVIDE FOR EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS?

The Young Parents Program, offered through Kelowna Secondary School, provides a complete academic program for the student, while providing childcare for the infant. The student also learns practical parenting skills, basic first aid, time management, budgeting, stress management and nutrition. For information please phone (250) 762-2805.

Alternate Education Services, at four locations:

- Central School Programs and Services
1825 Richter Street, Kelowna
Phone (250) 868-1135
- Storefront School
580 Doyle Avenue, Kelowna
Phone (250) 979-1850
- Westside Storefront
2466 Main Street, Westbank
Phone (250) 768-2537
- Rutland Storefront
150 Asher Road, Kelowna
Phone (250) 491-0877

Unique educational opportunities are provided for students in a flexible and caring environment. The programs are designed to meet the needs of individual learners in a manner and a rate consistent with their individual skills and abilities, which will encourage them to complete their education. The staff, in conjunction with the learners, develop individual educational plans suited to their special needs, which will enable them to make a successful transition to the regular education system, post-secondary education, and/or career opportunities.

Alternate Education Services includes:

Distributed Learning Program offering full access to distance education courses for students (K-12) and graduated adults. Students in grades 10 - 12 can be registered and taking classes in their neighbourhood school and also take courses online through eschoolbc.com. (This program operates out of the Central School Location and currently offers many courses from grades 10 - 12 and adults. The Program is continuously adding new courses.)



If you think you can, you can.
And if you think you can't, you're right.

Mary Kay Ash

For students in grades 7 - 9, Central offers a virtual middle school program that is part of the iLearn Laptop Program. For more information, check out the website at www.eschoolbc.com or please phone Central School at (250) 868-1135.

Hospital Homebound Program provides an educational program for students who are unable to attend school for long-term medical reasons. The services provided include hospital and home visits by a qualified teacher, liaison between home and school, and access to educational resources to support the student's program of study. For more information please phone Central School at (250) 868-1135.

Outreach Education Program provides teaching support for "at risk" youth who are not in attendance in the regular school system. Additionally, these youth are also involved with the Ministry of Children and Families, Probation or Health Services. The Outreach teaching staff works with these agencies to develop a comprehensive integrated service plan for each identified student. For more information please phone Central School at (250) 868-1135.

Storefront Program offers self-paced, instruction with one-on-one teacher assistance. Both regular and modified grade 7 through 10 curricula are taught. The program focuses on learners who have had a history of difficulties in the regular school program or who have been out of school for a significant period of time. The Storefront Program operates from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. For more information, phone McWilliams Centre at (250) 979-1850.

Central Continuing Education offers both direct instruction for grade 10 academic courses and self-paced instruction with one-on-one teacher assistance at Central School. Courses leading to either the Adult Dogwood Graduation Program or the Regular Dogwood Graduation Program are offered. This program is designed to meet the needs of students for whom the conventional school system is not appropriate. Classes are offered from 9:00 am to 7:00 pm to accommodate those students whose work schedules conflict with regular school hours.

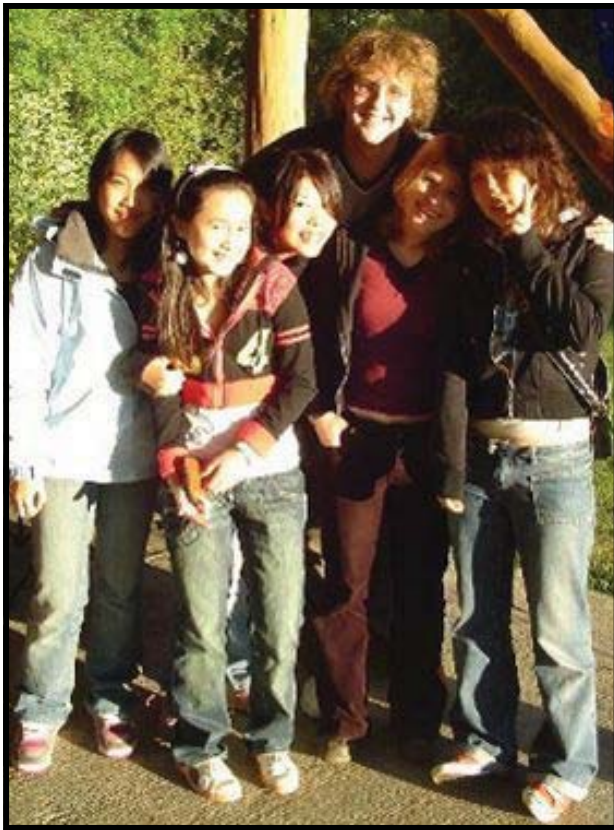
9. ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS FOR WHOM ENGLISH IS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE?

English as a Second Language (ESL) support enables students whose primary language, or languages of the home, are other than English to develop their individual potential within our school system. Additionally, some students who speak variations of English that differ significantly from the English used in the broader Canadian society may need similar services to access the curriculum.

ESL support is provided to students to help them become proficient in English, to develop both intellectually and as citizens, and to achieve the expected learning outcomes of the curriculum. Students will complete an English language assessment when they first enrol in SD#23 (Central Okanagan). The assessment results will be considered together with achievement and application information as the enrolling school develops a program designed to meet the specific needs of each student.

Students who require ESL support may receive direct support from an ESL teacher and/or support from their regular classroom teacher.



10. FRENCH IMMERSION

CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAM?

Designed for students whose first language is not French, this bilingual education program is open to all Central Okanagan students. Between Kindergarten and Grade 12, students follow the regular BC curriculum, studying approximately half of their time in English and half in French. Graduates of the program can participate easily in French conversations, take post-secondary courses with French as the language of instruction, and accept employment with French as the language of work.

The Central Okanagan School District offers an Early French Immersion program (EFI) for students who enter Kindergarten or Grade 1. For the first three years of the program, teaching is in French only. Then, from Grades 3 to 7, the English Language Arts is taught one hour per day. In Grades 8 to 10, 50% of courses are offered in English; in Grade 11, 75% of courses are offered in English; and in Grade 12, Français Langue and other options are offered in French. Students receive a Dual Dogwood Certificate upon finishing Grade 12. Contact the school principal for a detailed list of courses offered in French.

Central Okanagan French Immersion programs are provided in schools that also offer the regular English program. The resulting bilingual school environments give students many opportunities to develop an openness towards other linguistic groups.

WHAT OTHER FRENCH LANGUAGE PROGRAMS DO YOU OFFER?

French as a Second Language is offered to all students in the English program from grades 5 to 12. For more information contact the Director of Instruction – K-12 (250) 470-3227.

11. CAREER/LIFE PROGRAMS

The School District No. 23 Career/Life Programs PROMISE:

Every student will graduate with a meaningful career/life plan and the skills, credentials, and experiences to achieve that plan.

Career/Life Programs describes a range of K to 12 services and resources designed to support students in fulfilling the Career/Life Programs promise and the Ministry of Education's Goal for Career Development.¹

K – 12 Focus

Career/Life Programs staff partner with our community to create career development learning opportunities that make curriculum more relevant to students, including:

- Interactive field trips which allow students to see the application in their community of concepts they are studying in the classroom.
- Guest presenters who bring their expertise to classrooms to share with students how they use the skills and knowledge of a subject area in their work.

Services and resources support the Ministry-mandated Planning 10, Health and Career Education K – gr. 9, and Graduation Transitions 12. Completion of the MAP (My Action Plan) is required of every student as part of their Graduation Transitions program.

Grades 7 – 12

Additional career exploration activities are offered to students once they enter the middle-school years. These opportunities bring community and school together to enrich students' knowledge about a wide range of occupations and career pathways through a variety of events and activities including:

- Career Conferences
- Career Spotlights and Career Snapshots
- Job Shadowing

Grades 10 – 12

Specific Career Programs are opportunities for Graduation Program students to build experience and networks, and to transition to post-secondary programs. These programs include both school-based learning and work-based learning through such programs as:

- Secondary School Apprenticeship
- ACE IT (Accelerated Credit Enrolment in Industry Training) Program
- Dual-credit Career Programs – BCIT, Okanagan College, and Justice Institute of BC

For additional information about Career/Life Programs, please contact the department at the Hollywood Road Education Centre, 250-860-9729.

¹ 'to prepare students to attain their career and occupational objectives and to assist in the development of effective work habits and the flexibility to deal with change in the workplace'.

You have brains in your head
You have feet in your shoes
You can steer yourself
Any direction you choose.

Dr. Seuss
Oh, the Places You'll Go



12. REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

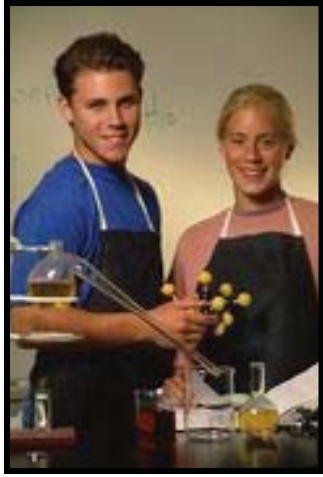
WHAT IS THE PROCESS AT SCHOOLS FOR REPORTING MY CHILD'S PROGRESS?

Student progress reporting in School District No. 23 gives the following information to parents:

- What the student is able to do in relation to the expected learning outcomes
- What areas of improvement are required
- What support is available to the student to assist him/her to achieve these goals
- Either oral or written information on how the student is doing in relation to students in his/her age group

At the Kindergarten to Grade 3 level, parents will receive structured written comments that describe the student's progress in relation to the expected learning outcomes established by the province of BC, or by the Board of Education for School District No. 23.





Progress reports for students in grades 4 to 12 will contain letter grades and written comments for all except those students with special needs for whom a specific individual education plan (IEP) has been prepared. The letter grades approved by the Ministry of Education are:

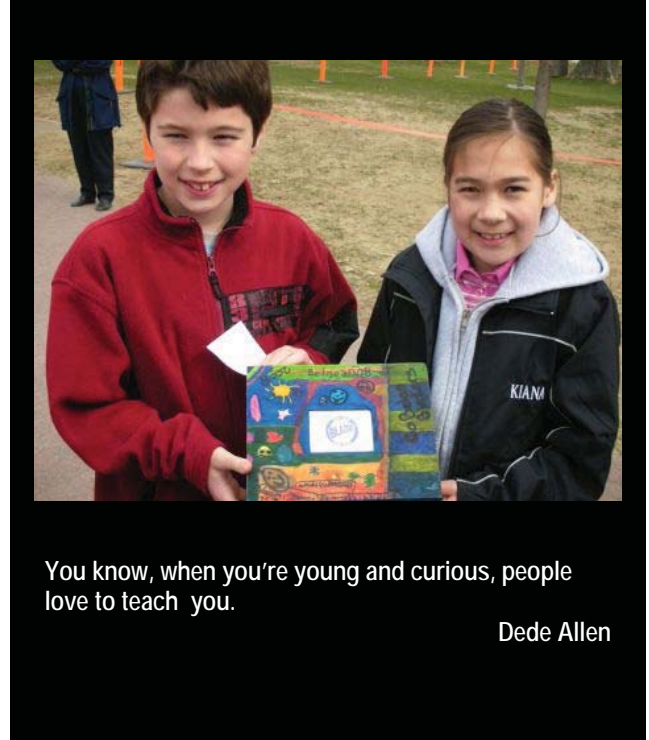
- A The student demonstrates excellent or outstanding performance in relation to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
- B The student demonstrates very good performance in relation to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
- C+ The student demonstrates good performance in relation to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
- C The student demonstrates satisfactory performance in relation to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
- C- The student demonstrates minimally acceptable performance in relation to expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade.
- I In Progress or Incomplete. The student, for a variety of reasons, is not demonstrating minimally acceptable performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes.
- F Failed or Failing. The student has not demonstrated, or is not demonstrating, the minimally acceptable performance in relation to the expected learning outcomes for the course or subject and grade. "Failed" or "Failing" may only be used if an "I" has been previously assigned.

School District No. 23 believes in partnerships between teachers and parents. Formal reporting is only one way that parents receive information. Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers.

13. PROVINCE-WIDE TESTS

WHAT PROVINCE-WIDE TESTS DO CHILDREN RECEIVE AND WHAT ARE THEY FOR?

Province-wide tests are administered at all BC schools. Students in Grades 4 and 7 receive Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) tests in Reading, Writing and Numeracy.



You know, when you're young and curious, people love to teach you.

Dede Allen

The Graduation Program requires all students to write five program exams:

- Grade 10 Language Arts
- Grade 10 Science
- Grade 10 Mathematics
- A Social Studies exam attached to the required Grade 11 or 12 course taken by the student
(These exams are worth 20 percent of the student's final mark.)
- Grade 12 Language Arts exam attached to the required course taken by the student.
(This exam is worth 40 per cent of the student's final mark.)

All other Grade 12 exams are optional. Students need to be sure of post-secondary admission requirements and meet with their Counsellor before deciding whether or not to take an exam.

14. RESOLVING CONCERNS

WHO SHOULD I CONTACT IF I HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT MY CHILD'S EDUCATION?

The first person you should speak to is your child's classroom teacher.

WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE A PROBLEM THAT CAN'T BE RESOLVED BY SPEAKING WITH THE TEACHER?

The next step is to ask for more help by involving the Principal of the school. Most issues can be resolved at the school level. If more help is needed, you can speak to the Director of Instruction for your school, then the Superintendent, and then the Board of Education. It's always best to solve the problem with the people directly involved. For more information on the district's Appeals Policy and Regulations, contact the Board Office at 860-8888.



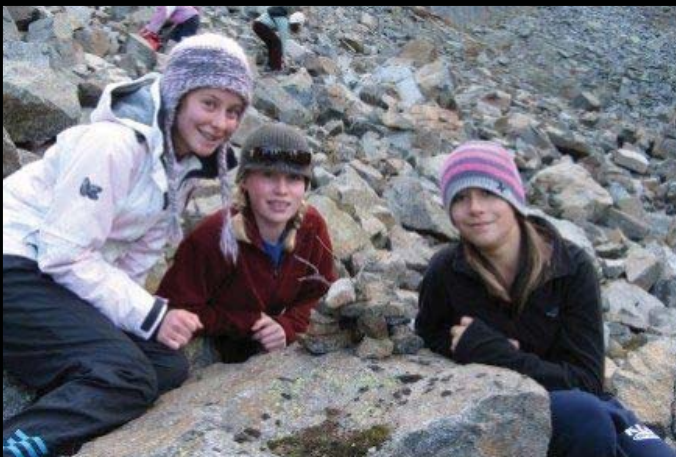
ACRONYMS

Like them or not, acronyms are everywhere, and they can be bewildering if you aren't "in the know." Below is a list of common acronyms that you may come across as you become better informed about our district.

AP	Advanced Placement
BCCPAC	British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils
BCPSEA	British Columbia Public School Employers' Association
BCPVPA	British Columbia Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association
BCSTA	British Columbia School Trustees Association
BCTF	British Columbia Teachers' Federation
CEA	Certified Education Assistant
CAPP	Career and Personal Planning
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COOL SCHOOL	Central Okanagan On-Line Learning School
COPAC	Central Okanagan Parent Advisory Council
COPVPA	Central Okanagan Principals' & Vice-Principals' Association
COTA	Central Okanagan Teachers' Association
CUPE	Canadian Union of Public Employees
DFZ	Drug Free Zone
EFI	Early French Immersion
ESL	English as a Second Language
FNCEA	First Nations Certified Education Assistant
FSA	Foundation Skills Assessment
FSL	French as a Second Language
FTE	Full-time Equivalent
HES	Hollywood Road Education Services
IEP	Individual Education Plan
I	In Progress
IRP	Integrated Resource Package
K	Kindergarten
LA	Learning Assistance
PAC	Parent Advisory Council
PIN	Pupil Identification Number
Pro. D	Professional Development
SD	School District
SLP	Student Learning Plan
SPC	School Planning Council
TLC	The Learning Centre
TOC	Teacher on Call
WESST	Westside Educational Student Support Team

I never learned anything talking,
I only learn things when I ask
questions.

Lou Holtz



MIDDLE/SECONDARY SCHOOLS

	GRADES	MAILING ADDRESS	CODE	PHONE	FAX
Const. Neil Bruce Middle	7 - 9	2010 Daimler Road, Kelowna	V1Z 3X4	769-7343	870-5077
Dr. Knox Middle	7 - 9	121 Drysdale Blvd., Kelowna	V1V 2X9	762-8177	870-5007
George Elliot	8 - 12	10241 Bottom Wood Lake Road, Winfield	V4V 1Y7	766-2734	870-5002
Glenrosa Middle	7 - 9	3565 McIver Road, Westbank	V4T 1H8	768-1889	870-5076
K.L.O. Middle	Eng. 7 - 9 Imm. 7 - 9	3130 Gordon Drive, Kelowna	V1W 3M4	762-2841	870-5006
Kelowna Secondary	Eng 10 - 12 Imm. 10 - 12	1079 Raymer Avenue, Kelowna	V1Y 4Z7	762-2805	870-5005
Mount Boucherie	10 - 12	2751 Cameron Road, Kelowna	V1Z 2T6	712-7040	870-5001
Okanagan Mission	8 - 12	4544 Gordon Drive, Kelowna	V1W 1T4	764-4185	870-5008
Rutland Middle	7 - 9	715 Rutland Road N., Kelowna	V1X 3B6	765-2988	870-5009
Rutland Senior	10 - 12	705 Rutland Road, Kelowna	V1X 3B6	765-1407	870-5010
Springvalley Middle	7 - 9	350 Ziprick Road, Kelowna	V1X 4H3	862-3274	870-5011

CENTRAL SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Storefront School		580 Doyle Ave., Kelowna	V1Y 7V1	979-1850	870-5020
Dist. Learning/Hospital Homebound/ Adult Cont. Ed./Outreach		1825 Richter Street, Kelowna	V1Y 2M8	868-1135	870-5020

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Anne McClymont	Eng. K-7	4489 Lakeshore Road, Kelowna	V1W 1W9	764-4122	870-5070
A.S. Matheson	Eng. K-6	2090 Gordon Drive, Kelowna	V1Y 3H9	860-2525	870-5012
Bankhead	Eng. K-6	1280 Wilson Ave., Kelowna	V1Y 6Y6	763-2603	870-5014
Belgo (Imm. K-6)	Eng. K-6	125 Adventure Road, Kelowna	V1X 1N3	765-8900	870-5015
Black Mountain	Eng. K-6	1650 Gallagher Road, Kelowna	V1P 1G7	765-1955	870-5035
Casorso (Imm. K-6)	Eng. K-6	3675 Casorso Road, Kelowna	V1W 3E1	763-8088	870-5019
Chief Tomat	Eng. K-6	3365 E. Boundary Rd., Westbank	V4T 2R8	768-6628	870-5071
Chute Lake	Eng. K-7	5240 Lark St., Kelowna	V1W 4K8	870-5139	870-5039
Davidson Road	Eng. K-7	2115 Davidson Road, Winfield	V4V 1R3	766-2381	870-5017
Dorothea Walker	Eng. K-7	4346 Gordon Drive, Kelowna	V1W 1S5	764-8181	870-5024
Ellison	Eng. K-6	3735 Parkdale Road, Kelowna	V1X 6K9	765-8104	870-5081
George Pringle (Imm.K-6)	Eng. K-6	3770 Elliott Rd., Westbank	V4T 1W9	768-5146	870-5003
Glenmore (Imm. K-6)	Eng. K-6	960 Glenmore Drive, Kelowna	V1Y 4P1	762-3209	870-5030
Mountainview	Eng. 1-4	960 Glenmore Drive, Kelowna	V1Y 4P1	762-3209	870-5030
Glenrosa	Eng. K-6	3430 Webber Road, Westbank	V4T 1G8	768-5181	870-5033
Helen Gorman	Eng. K-6	3230 Salmon Road, Westbank	V4T 1A7	768-7250	870-5031
Hudson Road	Eng. K-6	1221 Hudson Road, Kelowna	V1Z 1J5	769-4666	870-5037
North Glenmore	Eng. K-6	125 Glenmore Road N., Kelowna	V1V 2E3	762-3535	870-5044
Oyama Traditional	Eng. K-7	15525 Greenhow Road, Oyama	V4V 2E1	548-3783	870-5050
Peachland	Eng. K-6	5486 Clements Cres., Peachland	V0H 1X5	767-2686	870-5051
Pearson Road	Eng. K-6	700 Pearson Road, Kelowna	V1X 5H8	765-8855	870-5049
Peter Greer (Imm. K-7)	Eng. K-7	10300 Sherman Road, Winfield	V4V 1Y8	766-2104	870-5029
Quigley	Eng. K-6	705 Kitch Road, Kelowna	V1X 5V8	860-5783	870-5013
Raymer	Eng. K-6	657 Raymer Ave., Kelowna	V1Y 4Z6	762-4823	870-5054
Rose Valley	Eng. K-6	1680 Westlake Road, Kelowna	V1Z 3G6	769-5535	870-5047
Rutland	Eng. K-6	620 Webster Rd., Kelowna	V1X 4V5	765-9771	870-5055
Shannon Lake	Eng. K-6	3044 Sandstone Drive, Westbank	V4T 1T2	768-1553	870-5073
South Kelowna	Eng. K-6	4176 Spiers Road, Kelowna	V1W 4B5	861-1122	870-5058
South Rutland	Eng. K-6	200 Mallach Road, Kelowna	V1X 2W5	765-7785	870-5060
Springvalley	Eng. K-6	470 Ziprick Road, Kelowna	V1X 4H4	860-4526	870-5065
Watson Road	Eng. K-6	475 Yates Road, Kelowna	V1V 1R3	762-6633	870-5072

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

School Board Office		1940 Underhill Street, Kelowna	V1X 5X7	860-8888	860-9799
Hollywood Rd. Education Services		1040 Hollywood Rd., Kelowna	V1X 4N2	860-9729	870-5086
Transportation		685 Dease Rd., Kelowna	V1X 4A4	491-4040	870-5096