



Parent Handbook

A Guide to Understanding, Supporting, and
Navigating Your Child's School Experience

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Purpose of This Handbook

This handbook was prepared for Sooke School District families with collaboration from the Sooke Parents' Education Advisory Council. It is intended to help you navigate your child's learning journey in our district.

How the School System Is Organized

The education system in British Columbia is co-managed by the provincial government and 60 locally elected Boards of Education. Each year, the province determines the total level of grant funding for public education and distributes these funds to Boards of Education using a standardized funding formula.

Boards of Education are governed by publicly elected trustees, who are typically elected during the municipal election cycle and serve four-year terms. Boards are responsible for managing and allocating their funding based on local priorities and community needs.

In addition to operating grants, the province provides supplemental funding for capital projects and specialized programs, such as land acquisition, school construction, and major infrastructure investments.

Boards of Education must legally operate with a balanced budget, so districts must manage unavoidable costs such as utilities, insurance, transportation, and benefits within allocated funding.

Through the [School Act](#), the Ministry of Education and Child Care provides guidelines to Boards of Education on what they must do and allows them to create policies that align with provincial standards while considering local circumstances.

Getting Help & Support

We believe strong partnerships between home and school help students thrive. Parents are encouraged to reach out whenever they have questions, need support or would like to learn more about their child's learning or well-being. While social media can help families stay connected, it is not always the most reliable source for school or district information. We encourage families to contact school or district staff directly with specific questions or concerns so they can receive accurate, timely, and complete information.

Your First Point of Contact

In most situations, the best place to start is with the staff member closest to the question or issue, such as:

- Your child's classroom teacher
- School counsellor
- Vice-principal or principal
- School office staff

School staff can help with:

- Student learning and progress
- Attendance and routines
- Social-emotional well-being
- Inclusion and support services
- School activities and communication
- Connections to community supports and resources

Families are encouraged to communicate early so concerns or questions can be addressed collaboratively and positively.

Additional Supports and Resources

Families may also access support through:

- School-based teams
- District departments
- Parent Advisory Councils (PACs)
- The Sooke Parents' Education Advisory Council (SPEAC)

Information and family resources are available on the [district website](#).

Resolving Concerns

Questions, requests for support or collaborative problem-solving are different from the district's formal resolving concerns process. When a significant concern cannot be resolved informally, the process outlines the steps for addressing issues respectfully and fairly. The process generally begins with the staff member most directly involved and may move to school administration, district leadership, the Superintendent, and, in some cases, the Board of Education. Families can review the full process here: [Resolving Concerns](#)



Shaping Tomorrow Today.

At Sooke School District, our focus is on who students are today—and who they are becoming. From their first day of school to the day they graduate, we nurture a sense of curiosity, confidence, and connection that lasts a lifetime.

Academy Programs

We are pleased to offer a wide range of academy programs at the middle and secondary school levels. These choice programs are either hosted at schools during the regular school day or offered by the District Academies Team outside the regular school day. Academy registration is typically in February for the start of the following school year. Some academy programs have entrance specific requirements, or equipment requirements. For additional information, please visit [Academies](#).

Alternate Education

Alternate education programs focus on educational, social and emotional issues for students whose needs are not being met in a traditional school program at the secondary school level. An alternative education program provides its support through differentiated instruction, specialized program delivery, and enhanced counselling services based on students' needs. For more information, please speak with your child's school.

Assessment, Progress, and Reporting

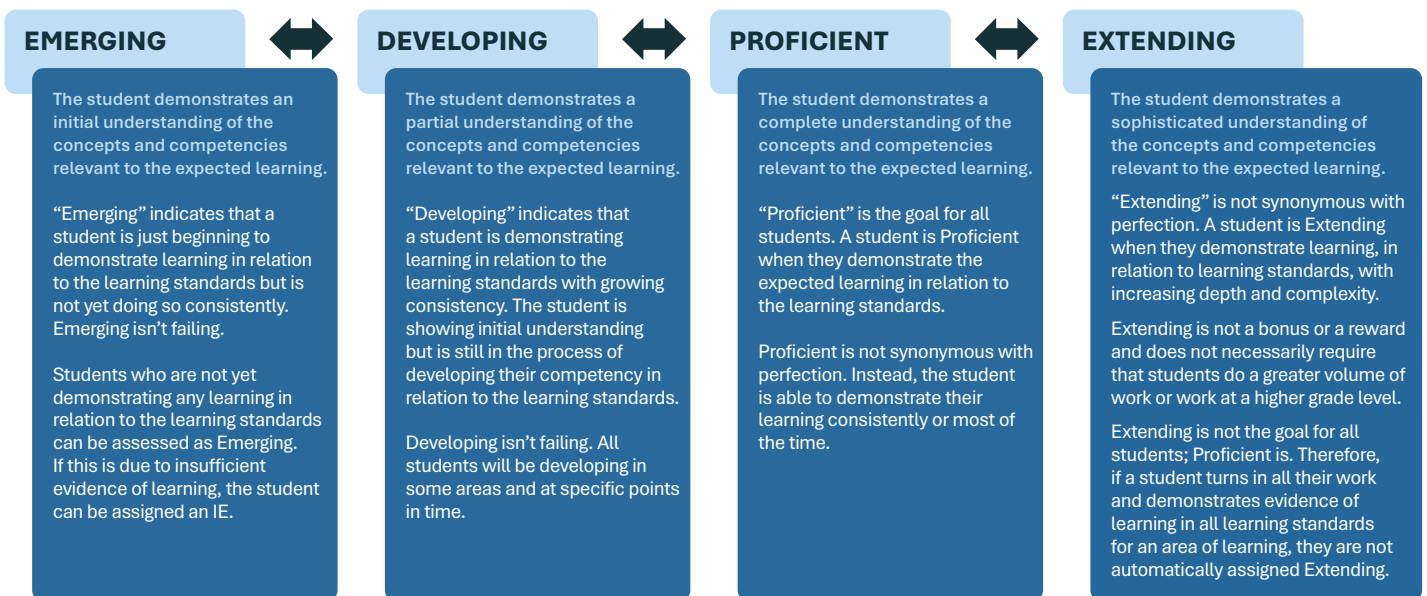
Student reporting is the way your child’s teacher shares information about their progress with you. Throughout the school year, you should expect to receive at least five updates about your child’s learning. You will receive three written Learning Updates that are like report cards, and two informal Learning Updates such as conferences, emails, or calls from the teacher.

For students in Grades K-9, the Provincial Proficiency Scale and descriptive feedback are used to explain where a child is at in their learning and how they can improve. This approach focuses on their strengths and views learning as ongoing.

For students in Grades 10-12, letter grades and percentages will be used. They will also receive descriptive feedback on their report cards to clearly explain where they are at in their learning, and how they can move forward. They will also receive a graduation status update on the last report of every school year in Grades 10, 11, 12.

The Provincial Proficiency Scale

Student reporting in Grades K–9 requires use of the Provincial Proficiency Scale to communicate students’ learning in all areas of learning.



Insufficient evidence of learning (IE)

When an IE is assigned, teachers will connect with the student, parents, and caregivers to discuss the area of learning in question, the needs of the student, and solutions and supports to help move the student forward in their learning.

Every student has a place on the scale

Each student comes into each learning situation with their own experiences and background knowledge. A student does not necessarily begin at Emerging or Developing at the beginning of the school year. Similarly, students do not reach Proficient only at the end of the school year.

Reaching Proficient is not the end of learning; if a student enters a learning experience as Proficient or achieves Proficient during the school year, the goal becomes to further enhance their learning.

Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance is fundamental to student success. Consistent attendance is a shared responsibility between students and their parents/guardians. Absences due to illness, vacations, appointments, or other extenuating circumstances must be reported and confirmed by a parent/guardian, either prior to the absence or upon the student's return, for the absence to be considered excused.

Each school has specific procedures for reporting student absences; families are expected to follow their school's established process. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to regularly monitor their child's attendance through the MyEd portal and to contact teachers with any questions or concerns. When possible, extended absences should be communicated in advance.

When a student is absent for an extended period, teachers focus on supporting the student's continued learning rather than assigning all missed work for completion. In alignment with provincial reporting guidelines, teachers use professional judgment to determine what learning opportunities or assessments are most appropriate to help the student demonstrate their current understanding. This may include targeted activities, alternative assessments, or focused feedback, rather than a requirement to complete all work missed during the absence. Families are encouraged to communicate with the teacher so that reasonable, individualized supports can be planned based on the student's needs and circumstances.

To support regular attendance and student engagement, teachers, counsellors, and school administration will communicate with parents/guardians when concerns arise regarding attendance or unexcused absences. Ongoing or excessive absences may result in a student not meeting required curricular outcomes, which could lead to course failure and the need to repeat the course for graduation purposes. Continued attendance concerns may also result in a referral to the District-Based Team to assess support and review decisions related to school placement and programming.



Bicycles, Scooters, Skateboards

Students and their parents/guardians are responsible for arranging and supervising their child's transportation to and from school, including selecting the method of travel, except when district transportation is provided. For safety reasons, students who ride bicycles, scooters, or skateboards must dismount and walk while on school grounds. Bicycles and scooters (including electric models) must be properly stored and secured in the designated bike racks. Skateboards must be checked in at the school office upon arrival. The school is not responsible for any bicycles, scooters, or skateboards (including electric models) that are lost, damaged, or stolen.

Care of School Property

Students are expected to help maintain the good condition of school property, including laptops, books, tools, and the school building and grounds. If a student is responsible for damaging school or district property, the student (and/or parent or guardian) will be required to reimburse the school district for the cost of repairs or replacement resulting from careless use or willful damage or defacement. Disciplinary consequences may also apply.

Bullying

Our schools are committed to providing safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environments for all students. Preventing and responding to bullying is a shared responsibility that requires cooperation among students, parents/guardians, and the school district.

When concerns about bullying arise, the school works closely with students and parents/guardians to investigate and respond appropriately. Active participation from both students and parents/guardians is essential to achieving safe and positive outcomes.

In alignment with [guidance from ERASE](#), it is important for families to understand that not all mean or hurtful behaviour meets the definition of bullying. Bullying typically involves:

- A power imbalance
- Repeated behaviour over time (or a serious single incident)
- Intent to harm

Conflicts, misunderstandings, or one-time incidents while still inappropriate and taken seriously may be addressed through restorative practices, problem-solving, and social-emotional supports rather than being classified as bullying.

Students and families are encouraged to report concerns and to work collaboratively with school staff. Students can also use the [ERASE reporting tool](#) to report concerns for themselves or another person.

Career Education

Career Education helps students explore their interests, develop workplace skills, and plan for life after graduation. From Kindergarten to Grade 12, students build self-awareness, connect learning to real-world experiences, and prepare for post-secondary education, training, or employment.

In high school, students complete:

- **Career-Life Education (Grade 10):**
Focuses on career planning, financial literacy, and goal setting.
- **Career-Life Connections (Grade 12):**
Includes a Capstone project and at least 30 hours of career-life exploration.

The 30-hour requirement may include volunteer work, employment, service learning, entrepreneurship, or post-secondary experiences. Students reflect on these experiences as part of their graduation requirements.

Each secondary school follows its own process for completing and evaluating the 30+ Career Exploration hours required for graduation, with guidance from the school's careers team. This team supports students throughout the process.

Details of each school's procedures are outlined in the CLE/CLC course materials, which are distributed by the classroom teacher at the start of the course and are also available on the school's website. Students and families are encouraged to review the careers section of the website to better understand course expectations and requirements.

Career Life Exploration Hours

Career-Life Exploration refers to the graduation requirement of 30+ hours of substantive experiential learning intended to expand or deepen student exposure to career-life possibilities. Experiences should connect to student interests and post-graduation plans and include ongoing reflection on learning goals.

Exploration can include:

- **Service learning**
- **Volunteerism**
- **Employment**
- **Fieldwork projects**
- **Entrepreneurship**
- **Passion projects**
- **Post-secondary courses or programs**

These hours are part of Career-Life Connections (CLC) learning standards and are evaluated by the CLC teacher and/or school Career Education team.

Work Experience 12

(Work Experience Program Guide)

Work Experience 12A and B (WEX) are Ministry-authorized elective courses that provide students with authentic workplace learning opportunities. Each course is worth four elective-credits toward graduation and includes both in-school instruction and time spent in a real work environment. In-school components cover workplace orientation, safety training, and curriculum requirements.

Dual Credit Programs

Dual credit courses and programs allow high school students to earn post-secondary credits while still completing their high school education. In SD62, dual credit courses and programs are offered in-person at the partnering post-secondary campus, online (synchronous or asynchronous) and in high school timetabled cohorts.

These courses offer dual benefits:

- **Post-secondary credit toward a college or university program.**
- **Grade 12 elective credit that counts toward high school graduation requirements.**

Dual credit courses and programs are offered with partner post-secondary institutions and are governed by the following ministerial documents:

- **Earning Credit through Equivalency, Challenge, External Credentials, Post-Secondary Credit and Independent Directed Studies** (enables schools to recognize post-secondary learning with credit at the high school level).
- **Recognition of Post-Secondary Transition Programs for Funding Purposes** (enables schools to access regular per-course funding to better support dual credit students).

For more information, please speak with the careers team at your school.

Trades Awareness, Skills & Knowledge (TASK)

Youth Explore Trades Sampler

The Trades Awareness, Skills & Knowledge (TASK) program is a one semester trade sampler designed to provide students with hands-on experience across multiple trade areas. TASK is delivered at three SD62 secondary sites—Construction (Royal Bay), Metal Fabrication (EMCS), and Automotive (Belmont) in partnership with Camosun College through the South Island Partnership. Students earn high school credits and post-secondary credits from Camosun College and complete approximately 100 hours of industry-related work experience.

Key Features:

- **Hands-on training in multiple trades including mechanical, carpentry, metal, electrical, and pipe.**
- **Delivered at SD62 secondary schools in partnership with Camosun College.**
- **Students earn high school credits and post-secondary credits.**
- **Includes industry-related work experience, supporting employability and potential apprenticeship entry.**
- **Provides multiple industry certifications to ensure worksite readiness.**
- **Completes CLC 12 requirements.**

Youth Train in Trades

(Youth Train in Trades Program Guide)

Youth Train in Trades (YTT) allows students to begin their technical training for a skilled trade while still in high school. Students can earn up to 48 credits toward graduation and complete the first level of their trade certification through partnerships with post-secondary institutions and SkilledTradesBC-approved training providers.

Key Features:

- **Hands-on technical training in high-demand trades.**
- **Delivered at partner post-secondary institutions or district facilities.**
- **Students gain both secondary school credits and industry-recognized credentials.**

Youth Work in Trades

(Youth Work in Trades Program Guide)

Youth Work in Trades (WRK 11A/B and 12A/B) is a Ministry authorized program that allows secondary students to begin a formal apprenticeship while earning high school credits. Students gain paid work-based training under the supervision of a qualified tradesperson, while accumulating hours toward their provincially recognized trade certification. The program combines on-the-job training with curriculum focused on workplace skills, safety, employability, and industry expectations.

Program Overview

Youth Work in Trades consists of four courses—WRK 11A, WRK 11B, WRK 12A, and WRK 12B—each worth 4 credits for a total of 16 credits. Students earn credit by completing 120 hours of documented work-based training per course, supervised by a tradesperson. The program blends apprenticeship training, reflective learning, and trade-specific competencies aligned with SkilledTradesBC requirements.

Purpose and Benefits

Youth Work in Trades helps students:

- **Begin apprenticeship training while still in high school.**
- **Earn graduation credits while working in a paid trade position.**
- **Build job readiness skills and competencies required in the trades.**
- **Accumulate industry recognized training hours toward Level 1 technical training and Red Seal pathway.**
- **Students gain a meaningful start on their postsecondary trades training while connecting classroom learning to authentic trade work.**

| Catchment

A catchment area is the geographic zone around a school that determines which students are eligible to attend that school based on their home address. Your in-catchment school is the “neighbourhood school” assigned to you, and children living in that area are given priority for enrolment and programs. Families who wish to attend a school outside their designated catchment area can sometimes apply for an out-of-catchment placement through a [school change request](#), but these requests are subject to space availability and district policies; out-of-catchment students may be ineligible for certain services like district transportation. Our [School Locator tool](#) allows families to input their home address to see which catchment schools apply to them.

| Critical Incidents

The safety of students and staff is our first priority. To support this, the school uses clear emergency response procedures that may be activated in different situations. These include Drop, Cover and Hold, Hold & Secure, and Lockdown. Each response is designed to manage specific types of risks and to reduce harm by providing clear, practiced actions for students and staff to follow. These procedures may be used during drills or real incidents. Families are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these responses, so they understand how the school acts to keep everyone safe. Please visit [Critical Incidents](#) to learn more.

| Child Care

The District offers a variety of [child care](#) options to support families, including both district-operated programs and third-party providers. Before- and after-school care opportunities are available at select schools. For more information, please visit our website.

| Class Placement/ Teacher Requests

Requests for specific teachers are not accepted. Class placements are determined by school staff to balance student needs and to create positive, effective learning environments. If there are significant concerns regarding a class or teacher placement, families are encouraged to discuss them directly with the school principal.

We recognize the importance of friendships; however, school is also a time for growth, new experiences, and developing social skills. Class placements are designed to support balanced learning communities and are not based on specific teacher or friendship requests, providing students with opportunities to build new relationships as they grow.

Communication

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to update any changes to contact information for their student with their school as soon as possible.

Communication Timeline

A reasonable response time from school staff is 2–3 business days, excluding scheduled school breaks. If your matter is urgent, please call the school rather than emailing your child’s teacher (for example, to report a same-day change in pickup arrangements).

When emailing administrators such as district vice-principals, principals, associate superintendents, or the superintendent, please anticipate a longer response time. These individuals may receive hundreds of emails daily and must address them based on priority.

School Communications

Each school has its own timeline and preferred method for sharing school news, including communication from teachers. Some teachers send weekly classroom updates, others communicate monthly or quarterly, and some may not send regular updates at all (though they are still required to meet the five update requirements outlined in the Assessment, Progress, and Reporting section).

All schools maintain public websites where families can typically find school calendars, upcoming events, bell schedules, and other relevant school information.

Urgent Communications

The school district website is the primary source of information for families and should be checked regularly for updates and announcements. In urgent situations, the district will communicate directly with parents/guardians. Depending on the nature and urgency of the situation, you may receive an email and/or an automated phone call with important information.

To ensure you receive all communications in a timely manner, please keep your contact information current in MyEd. Email addresses and phone numbers are pulled directly from your student’s MyEd profile. The timing and method of communication will vary based on the circumstances.

Social Media

The District maintains an active Facebook page to share information about upcoming events, student and staff achievements, and urgent updates. To ensure the protection, privacy, and dignity of all users, commenting on District social media posts is disabled.

The District also operates an X (formerly Twitter) account, which is primarily used to amplify urgent communications. The District does not respond to comments or engage in discussions on social media platforms, including when tagged in posts. For inquiries, feedback, or concerns, please contact the District directly by emailing info@sd62.bc.ca or by calling (250) 474-9800.

Respectful Communication

All communication with school and district staff is expected to always be respectful and professional. Any form of inappropriate, aggressive, or disrespectful behaviour, whether in person, in writing, or online, will not be tolerated. If this occurs, you will be informed directly that the behaviour cannot continue. If it continues, the school may formally restrict direct communication between a family and the staff member. In such cases, all further communication will be directed through a designated staff member, typically the vice principal or principal. The District has a responsibility to ensure a safe, respectful, and healthy working environment for staff while continuing to support the students' learning and wellbeing. We also expect our staff to communicate respectfully to you. If you are concerned about this, please speak with your child's principal. Please review our [Electronic Communication Guidelines](#).

District Website

The District maintains a website to provide current information and resources for families and the public at www.sd62.bc.ca.

| Counselling

The primary purpose of counselling services is to facilitate and support the social, emotional, and educational growth and development of students in our schools. District counsellors provide individual counselling to those students who have been identified as having a specific need for counselling. Identification may be made through the student self-identification, through the parent requesting service, through the classroom teacher, or the school-based team.

Information received through the counselling relationship is confidential, and as such, the counsellor does not voluntarily share information without the student's prior consent. This applies to session notes, recordings of sessions, assessments or any other documents used to assist in the counselling process.

Limits to confidentiality:

- With the consent of the student, the counsellor may share information received through the counselling relationship.
- If there is potential harm to themselves or another person, the counsellor shall take appropriate action to protect the student and/or other person.
- A counsellor who has reason to believe that a child is, or might need protection, shall report information to the appropriate authorities in accordance with legal obligations pursuant to child protection legislation.

Curriculum

The province sets the ***curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 12***. It defines for teachers what students are expected to know and be able to do in their grade and area of learning. It provides learning standards for students in BC schools. Public schools have limited accommodation authority to allow families to “opt out” of curriculum elements. If your child is attending a public school, you cannot refuse to have your child participate in curriculum requirements.

Families wanting freedom over their child’s learning may consider homeschooling. This means that a home educator (e.g. a parent or guardian) delivers the entire educational program at home. Homeschools are not supervised by a BC-certified teacher, they do not have to meet provincial standards and are not inspected by the Ministry of Education and Child Care. By law, you must still register your child with a public school or independent school. The school has no authority to approve or supervise the educational program of a homeschooled child. Homeschoolers are not eligible to receive a British Columbia Dogwood Graduation Certificate.

What Students Learn through the BC Curriculum

Parents can expect instruction in the following core areas:



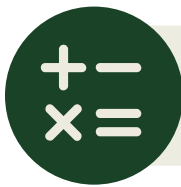
Applied Design,
Skills and
Technologies



Arts
Education



Career
Education



Mathematics



French



Science



Physical
and Health
Education



English
Language Arts



Social
Studies



Core Competencies

Core Competencies are at the center of the curriculum. They are sets of intellectual, personal, and social and emotional proficiencies that all students need to develop in order to engage in deeper learning. The Core Competencies include **thinking, communication, and social and personal competencies.**

How Instruction Takes Place

Instruction may include a variety of teaching methods to support different learning styles:

- **Whole-group instruction**
- **Small-group instruction**
- **Hands-on activities and projects**
- **Discussions and collaborative learning**
- **Independent practice and review**

Teachers regularly adjust instruction based on student performance and needs.



Curriculum Transformation Department

Our Curriculum Transformation Department responds to teachers' interest in connecting pedagogical theory to practice as well as focus on student learning needs. They coordinate and facilitate ongoing opportunities to support professional learning to support student success. If you have questions about the curriculum, the best place to start is with your child's teacher. If you have additional questions, please visit our [Curriculum Transformation](#) page, where you will find contact information for the department.

Discipline

Consequences of Code of Conduct infractions will be applied in a manner consistent with progressive discipline. If the behaviour is unlawful, school district staff may include referral of the matter to appropriate authorities in addition to disciplinary action at the school or district level.

Progressive discipline responses may include:

- Asking a student to stop the inappropriate behaviour
- Naming the behaviour and explaining why it is inappropriate and/or disrespectful
- Asking the student to correct the behaviour, engage in a restorative process or make restitution (e.g., apologizing)
- Time-outs and/or loss of privileges
- Detention
- Community service
- In-school suspension
- Short-term out-of-school suspension
- Long-term/indefinite suspension
- Expulsion (as permitted under the BC School Act)

Student Privacy and Discipline

Schools are legally required to protect student privacy. Under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA), schools cannot share personal or disciplinary information about other students.

As a result:

- Parents/guardians will not be informed of discipline outcomes for students other than their own child.
- Parents/guardians are not entitled to receive information about another student's behaviour, consequences or disciplinary history.
- School staff are legally prohibited from discussing another student's discipline, even when an incident involves or affects their child.

Right to Education

Under the *School Act*, school boards are legally required to provide an education to all students of compulsory school age. Regardless of the nature or severity of a Code of Conduct infraction, students under the age of 16 must continue to be offered access to education.

Disciplinary responses may include interventions, supports, or alternative educational arrangements, but removal from education is not permitted for students under 16.

Codes of Conduct

The Board of Education is committed to providing safe and caring environments in which all learners can achieve academic excellence, personal growth and responsible citizenship. The Board promotes clearly defined behavioural expectations that represent the highest standards of respectful and responsible citizenship. Consistent with the School Act, the district has Codes of Conduct for students.

- [Elementary School Code of Conduct](#)
- [Middle School Code of Conduct](#)
- [Secondary School Code of Conduct](#)

| Dress

Clothing that displays vulgar or offensive language or imagery is not permitted. To ensure comfort and safety, students are expected to have appropriate outerwear for the weather conditions.

| Fair Notice and Risk Assessment Procedures

Students and parents/guardians should be aware of the district's Basic Behavioural and Digital Threat Assessment (BDTA). We take violence and threats of violence very seriously. As such, [Fair Notice](#) is posted on our district website.

Every member of the community, including students, staff and families, have a duty to report any threat-related behaviours to the school or district.

| English Language Learners

Students whose primary home language is not English may be eligible for the [English Language Learning \(ELL\) program](#). Eligibility is determined through an annual language assessment, which helps identify whether additional language support is needed. If you have questions about the assessment or the program, please contact your school directly.

| ERASE Reporting Tool

ERASE is an online, anonymous reporting tool where students can report anything they find worrisome or concerning. The report will go to the district's Safe Schools team. The reporting tool can be accessed at erase.gov.bc.ca. Using the tool is easy and can be done from a mobile device, laptop, laptop or tablet.

Reports are viewed on regular school days. If your report is urgent, please call 9-1-1.

French Language Programming

French Immersion is a popular second-language program. Students in the program follow the same provincial curriculum as those in the English program, but instruction is delivered primarily in French.

Program Pathways

There are two main entry points for students to join French Immersion:

- Early French Immersion (EFI): This pathway begins in kindergarten.
- Late French Immersion (LFI): This intensive two-year program begins in Grade 6 for students who have completed Grade 5 in the English stream. In Grade 8, LFI students join their EFI peers in the secondary program.

Where the Program is Offered

The District offers French Immersion at the following locations:

- Elementary (K–5): École Millstream (Langford), École John Stubbs Memorial (Colwood), and École Poirier (Sooke)
- Middle (6–8): École John Stubbs Memorial and École Journey
- Secondary (9–12): Royal Bay Secondary and Edward Milne Community School

What the Classroom Looks Like

The amount of French used in the classroom shifts as students grow:

- Kindergarten to Grade 3: Students receive 100% French instruction. While teachers may use some English initially for transitions or emotional support, they move quickly toward 100% French communication.
- Grades 4 to 7: English Language Arts is reintroduced, and French instruction decreases to 80%.
- Grades 8 to 12: The percentage of French instruction gradually decreases (to 50–75% in middle years and 25% in senior years) to allow for more elective course flexibility.

Upon graduation, students receive a Dual Dogwood, a bilingual British Columbia Certificate of Graduation.





Full Credit Summer Learning

Full Credit Summer Learning provides SD62 secondary school students with the opportunity to complete 1-2 Grade 10-12 courses within a 5-week summer term. Classes typically start the Monday after July 1 and run through the first week of August. Registration is free for SD62 students entering Grade 10-12 in September and for current and recent Grade 12 students who live within SD62's catchment area. For additional information, please see the [Full Credit Summer Learning webpage](#) or contact the SD62 Online School/Continuing Education office at 250-391-9002 or online@sd62.bc.ca.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

The school district is governed by the [BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(FOIPPA\)](#). The [Office of the BC Information and Privacy Commissioner](#) has resources to assist you with issues related to information and privacy. To make a FOIPPA request, [please contact us](#). Please note that FOI requests are not required to request or obtain information that is not contained in public body records. Those questions should be submitted directly to the applicable department outside of the FOI process. Please note that the school district is permitted to charge fees for certain processing services under section 75 of FOIPPA.

Grade to Grade Transitions

Once your student is enrolled, you do not need to re-register them for the next grade. Enrolment automatically carries forward each year, including transitions to middle and secondary school. Students will follow the designated feeder school pathway from their current school. If you wish for your student to attend a different school, for example, due to a move, you will need to submit a School Change Request.

Graduation Requirements

Students in Grades 10, 11, and 12 receive a graduation status update on the final report of every school year.

The BC Dogwood Graduation Certificate

The Dogwood Diploma is the standard graduation certificate for students in the B.C. Graduation Program. To earn this diploma, students must accumulate at least 80 credits from a combination of required courses and electives between Grades 10 and 12.

Key Credit Requirements:

- **Required Courses (52 credits):** These include Language Arts 10, 11, and 12; Mathematics 10 and 11 or 12; Science 10 and 11 or 12; Social Studies 10 and 11 or 12; and Physical and Health Education 10.
- **Indigenous-Focused Requirement:** Students must complete 4 credits of Indigenous-focused coursework to graduate. This requirement can be met through specific courses like English First Peoples 12 or BC First Peoples 12.
- **Career Education:** Students must complete 8 credits in Career Education, which include Career-Life Education and Career-Life Connections, the latter of which requires a Capstone project and 30 hours of work experience or career-life exploration.
- **Grade 12 Level:** At least 16 credits of the total 80 must be at the Grade 12 level, including a required Language Arts 12 course.

Provincial Graduation Assessments

Students are required to complete three provincial assessments to graduate:

1. Grade 10 Numeracy Assessment
2. Grade 10 Literacy Assessment
3. Grade 12 Literacy Assessment

French Immersion pathway note (if applicable): Some students may also complete additional French-language literacy assessments(s) depending on their program requirements.

Alternative Pathways and Credentials

French Immersion (Dual Dogwood): French Immersion students can earn both the English and French diplomas. They must earn at least 12 credits in French across Grades 10–12, including Français langue seconde – immersion 12.

BC Adult Graduation Diploma (Adult Dogwood): This credential is for learners aged 18 and older. It requires only 20 credits (5 courses) completed after the student enters the adult program, focusing on core academic subjects. Adult learners are not required to complete the provincial numeracy or literacy assessments for this diploma.



| Illness

Students, staff, and visitors must complete a daily health self-check (or parent/guardian check for children) before attending school or any site. [Anyone experiencing symptoms that limit participation in regular activities or could spread illness should stay home until symptoms improve or as advised by a healthcare provider.](#) Some illnesses (e.g., norovirus) may require a longer stay at home.

If a student or staff member becomes ill at school, parents/guardians will be contacted for prompt pickup. The individual may wait in a designated area to reduce the spread of illness. Schools will follow appropriate supervision, hygiene, and cleaning procedures.

Communicable Illness and Privacy

Schools and the district are required to protect personal and health information under the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(FOIPPA\)](#). As a result, schools do not send notifications regarding common or non-reportable illnesses, including (but not limited to) lice, hand, foot and mouth disease, influenza, colds, or norovirus.

Communication related to illness will occur only when directed by the Medical Health Officer, in accordance with public health guidance and privacy legislation. This ensures that families receive accurate information while individual student privacy is protected. For information about reportable communicable diseases, families are encouraged to contact Island Health or consult public health resources directly.

Inclusive Education Services

All students are capable learners who deserve meaningful and engaging educational opportunities. Families play an essential role in their child's education, and inclusive education can take many different forms depending on individual needs. Our work is supported by a diverse team that includes Inclusion Support Teachers, District Inclusion Coordinators, specialty teachers for hearing, vision, and hospital homebound instruction, Speech-Language Pathologists, School Psychologists, Occupational and Physiotherapists, Education Assistants, District Education Assistants, and Communication Facilitators.

School-Based Team

Each school has a core School-Based Team that meets regularly to problem-solve, offer suggestions, and plan interventions for students experiencing challenges in any aspect of their learning. This team typically includes the Principal or Vice Principal, the Inclusion Support Teacher, a Teacher-Counsellor, and at least one classroom teacher (usually the referring teacher). Depending on the situation, the team may also involve district staff such as Inclusion Coordinators, Speech Language Pathologists or Occupational Therapists as well as additional school staff such as Education Assistants, ELL teachers, or Learning Support teachers.

Who to Talk to and When

Concerns should always be addressed as close to the source as possible, beginning with the school-based team. If additional support is needed after those conversations, families can reach our [Inclusive Education Services \(IES\)](#) team for further guidance. For issues that remain unresolved or are particularly complex, the IES team will involve the appropriate team members from the Superintendent's office.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a dynamic, collaborative document created for students with a ministry designation. It outlines individualized goals, adaptations, modifications, and the services a student will receive, along with how progress will be monitored.

Our IEP goals are competency-based and strength-focused, meaning they build on what a student can already do and target the specific skills they are developing. Instead of following a fixed timeline or grade-level expectations, students demonstrate progress by showing increasing independence, consistency, and confidence in key areas. IEPs vary widely in complexity. Some focus on classroom supports or small-group learning, while others include goals related to personal care, self-regulation, communication, or social interaction. Each objective is tailored to the student and reflects their ongoing journey toward long-term growth.

Monitoring Progress and Addressing Concerns in Student Learning

Supporting a child's learning is a shared responsibility between families and teachers, built on open, respectful, and ongoing communication. Establishing this relationship early is important, and families are encouraged to attend Meet the Teacher events and connect with their child's teacher as soon as possible. If there is information about your child that may impact their learning or wellbeing at school, sharing this early helps teachers provide the best possible support. Maintaining communication throughout the year is equally important, particularly if your child or family is experiencing change or difficulty, as this allows teachers to better understand and respond to what they may observe at school.

Parents and teachers are partners with a common goal: supporting student success. Questions or concerns should always be raised directly with the teacher through appropriate channels. Social media is not an appropriate forum for discussing concerns about your child's teacher, support staff or administrators. Online commentary undermines partnerships and damages relationships. While difficult conversations may arise, they are a normal part of the process and should be addressed constructively with the teacher, following the school's established processes if further support is needed.

MyEducation BC (MyEd BC) Portal

The MyEducationBC (MyEdBC) application is a secure portal used in most school districts in the Province of BC. Security is guided by the rules and regulations of the School Act and Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA). In the Portal, parents and guardians with an account can view attendance, learning updates (report cards), student schedules and school information.

If your child is entering Kindergarten or you are new to British Columbia, please watch for an email from sysadmin@myeducation.gov.bc.ca. It will include a temporary password that you can use to log in to MyEdBC. For assistance setting up your account, login issues or a tutorial, please visit [MyEd BC Portal](#).

NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Education

[NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Education](#) is a department dedicated to supporting students and families who have self-identified Indigenous ancestry. Our goal is to enhance educational, social, and cultural opportunities for Indigenous students while strengthening Indigenous perspectives within Kindergarten to Grade 12 learning environments.

Programs & Services

View the [NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Education programming brochure](#). All NA'TSA'MAHT programming is inclusive and integrated into regular learning. Students are not pulled out of class or singled out. Students who have self-identified as having Indigenous ancestry may access a range of supports and opportunities, including:

- Indigenous Role Model presentations
- Elders-in-Residence programs
- Cultural projects and classroom learning experiences
- Field trips, gatherings, and special events
- NA'TSA'MAHT Family Dinner Gatherings
- Academic in-class support from NA'TSA'MAHT teachers and program assistants
- Student and Family Advocate Teacher support (K–12)
- Liaison support connecting families with external services
- Grade 8 Land-based Transition Day
- Grade 12 Indigenous Graduation Recognition & Land-based Celebration
- Secondary supports such as scholarships, bursaries, post-secondary options, and Indigenous education fairs (Camosun & UVic)



Annual Consent to Receive Programs

Each school year, families are asked whether they would like their child to continue receiving NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Education programs and services via the [School District Online Consent Portal](#)

- If no contact is made, students of Indigenous ancestry will continue to receive in-class programming by default.
- Families who do not wish for their child to participate may contact their school by the annual deadline (typically late September) to decline services.
- Some activities, such as land-based gatherings, require additional parent/caregiver consent.

Self-Identification of Indigenous Ancestry

Families may choose to self-identify their child as having Indigenous ancestry (First Nations – Status or Non-Status, Métis, or Inuit).

- No proof of ancestry is required by the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care.
- Self-identification can be completed by contacting your child's school or the NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Education Office if not done at the time of School Registration.
- Schools also share posters and information to help families understand the self-identification process and where to ask questions.

Questions or Support

- If you have questions or would like more information:
- Contact your school-based NA'TSA'MAHT staff member, or
- Call the NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Education Office at 250-474-9833.

Personal Digital Devices at School

The provincial government requires school districts to restrict student use of personal digital devices at school. Specific expectations and exceptions are set out in school and district Codes of Conduct. In elementary and middle school, teachers may allow the personal use of mobile devices for instructional purposes, digital literacy, health or medical needs, or as assistive technology, with guidance from the Inclusive Education Department. At all other times personal digital devices must be stored away including recess and lunch. This applies to headphones as well.

At the secondary level, teachers may plan for the use of personal mobile devices in lessons for instructional purposes, digital literacy, health or medical needs, or as assistive technology, in consultation with the Inclusive Education Department. Students may use devices and headphones during class transitions and during lunch.

The school district is not responsible for any personal devices brought to school.

Police Involvement in Schools

The school district collaborates with RCMP to ensure caring, welcoming, and inclusive environments. We do not have School Liaison Officers based in our schools, rather, there are members of the RCMP's Community Policing Unit that are familiar with our schools and regularly visit and support our schools. The primary reason for their presence is to build positive relationships with students and staff. They regularly attend and support athletic events, extra-curricular activities, meal programs, and special events. They also support vulnerable students with whom they may have knowledge outside of the school's jurisdiction and be a critical support and connection for them.

Privacy

Families will be informed of any information that the school is legally permitted to share regarding matters that directly involve their child. This approach aligns with privacy and legislative requirements that govern how personal information is collected, used and disclosed.

Safe Schools

Safe Schools delivers resources and programming that offers education, prevention and intervention services for students, staff and families related to school and student safety and well-being. This department supports the work of the Safe Schools Coordinator, the Safe Schools Program Assistant, and Student Advocates.

The department is responsible for Basic Behavioural and Digital Threat Assessment, which is a trauma-informed threat assessment that aims to identify and intervene within potential pathways to violence.

Another way in which students are supported is through Student Advocates. Student Advocates are highly trained staff who support

and guide students, especially during or after a crisis, and help connect students, families, and school staff to resolve conflicts and access supports. They support students in the midst or wake of a crisis or tragedy, they facilitate communication between the student, the staff and family to help resolve conflicts. They can coordinate with mental health services to provide referrals and support for students facing emotional or psychological challenges. They will also work with students who may not be engaged with school but serving as a conduit to ensure they are still connected to people within the school system.

Safe Schools is also responsible for the preparation and procedures of Hold & Secure and Lockdown.

School Closures

While school closures are rare, there may be situations where a closure is necessary such as poor weather conditions or power outages. If this happens, families will be notified as quickly as possible through the following channels:

- Parent/Guardian email
- School District website

When possible, updates will also be shared through:

- District Facebook or X account
- Local media outlets

To ensure you receive important updates, please make sure your child's school has your current contact information on file. If your email address, phone number, or home address changes, notify the school as soon as possible so your information can be updated in MyEd.

We also recommend checking your email settings to make sure messages from the school district are not sent to your spam or junk folder.

School Change Requests

The [School Change Request](#) process opens annually and provides families with an opportunity to request a transfer to another school, including returning to an in-catchment school if you are attending an overflow school or, in limited circumstances, attending an out-of-catchment school. Requests are subject to school capacity, enrolment priorities, and approval, and are not guaranteed; families are encouraged to discuss their situation with their current school principal before applying. If a family moves within the district during the school year and wishes to change to their new in-catchment school right away, they should contact their child's current principal to initiate and authorize the request. If a family moves during the school year but plans to remain at the current school until year-end, a school change request must be submitted during the next annual application window to attend the new catchment school the following year. Proof of residency is required for all address-based changes, and transportation eligibility may be affected depending on whether the move or school choice is considered in-catchment or out-of-catchment.

School Food Program

Promoting and supporting the health and safety of students is a top priority. Central to this commitment is ensuring that all children have consistent access to nutritious food at school, along with opportunities to build food literacy skills. Across our schools, students can access food each day in ways that are equitable, accessible, and free from stigma. For more information about the specific food programs available at your school, please contact the school directly.

School Fees

School fees are charges that help cover specific costs associated with a student's education that are not fully funded by the Ministry of Education. In BC, school fees must follow the *School Act* and Ministry guidelines.

Typically, school fees may include:

- Course-specific materials or supplies (e.g., workbooks, specialty art or technology materials)
- Optional programs or activities (e.g., athletics, clubs, field trips)
- Personal items students keep (e.g., planners, agendas, spirit wear)
- Extracurricular participation fees, where applicable
- School fees do not include basic instructional materials required to meet curriculum outcomes, as these must be provided by the school. If paying school fees creates a financial hardship, families are encouraged to contact the school.

The district uses [School Cash Online](#) as a convenient option for paying school fees. Families may also refer to communications from their child's school for information about additional payment options that may be available.

School Supplies

School supply lists are determined by individual teachers based on the specific materials required for their courses. Families are encouraged to direct any questions about school supplies to the classroom teacher, as they are best able to explain how materials will be used for learning. If your family is experiencing financial hardship and requires assistance with school supplies, please contact the school.

Student Emergency Release Form for Reunification

At the beginning of the school year, every student is sent home with a paper copy of a [Student Emergency Release Form](#). New students will also receive this form when they arrive at school. It is critical that parents/guardians complete this form and ensure it is returned to your child's school. These copies are kept on hand in the event of an emergency, where we will need to safely reunite students with parents after certain emergencies. Our website has additional information about [emergency preparedness, drills and student reunification](#). Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring that the school has current contact information.

Starting the School Year Strong

Starting a new school year brings excitement, change, and sometimes a few nerves for children and parents, too. Establishing supportive routines early on helps everyone transition smoothly. Begin by reintroducing school-year sleep and wake-up times about a week before classes start. A consistent bedtime routine sets the tone for calmer mornings, giving children time to eat breakfast and prepare without rushing. Create a family routine that sets clear expectations for after-school hours as well. Designate a time and quiet space for homework, followed by time to play or relax. Having a predictable rhythm helps kids feel secure and teaches them to balance responsibilities with rest and recreation. For younger children, visual schedules or checklists can help build independence and reduce friction around daily tasks. Don't forget to keep communication open. Set aside a few minutes each day to chat about school—what went well, what was challenging, and any goals for tomorrow. Families that connect regularly help children feel supported and confident as they navigate new classrooms, friends, and routines. With consistency, encouragement, and a bit of teamwork, the whole family can start the year strong and keep that positive momentum going.

Sooke Parents' Education Advisory Council (SPEAC)

DPACs are the legislated parent voice at the school district level, bringing together the collective input of school **Parents' Advisory Councils (PAC)** in a school district.

DPACs advise the Board of Education on any matter relating to education in their school district. DPACs advocate for parental involvement in the education system and give input into the development of education policy. As an official stakeholder, the DPAC is offered seat(s) on district committees such as policy, finance or budget etc.

DPACs are comprised of elected parent representatives from PACs and serve as an umbrella organization for the PACs in their school district. The DPAC is governed by its own Constitution and Bylaws.

Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

The *School Act* gives parents the right, through Parent Advisory Councils (PACs), to provide feedback in their school. PAC is the officially recognized collective voice of parents of their school. A PAC, through its elected officers, may advise the school board, the principal and staff of the school respecting any matter relating to the education of the students and the school. PACs are forums within each school community to discuss matters affecting your school and the education of your children. Parents' voices are of tremendous value to their school. They offer a wealth of ideas and support in the challenges that face all public schools. As an autonomous body, the PAC must abide by its Constitution and Bylaws and the School Act.

PACs strive to represent the diversity within their communities and contribute to the benefit of all students by:

- providing opportunities to educate and inform parents about the school.
- involving parents in volunteer activities; and
- openly discussing parents' concerns and aspirations for their schools.

Please refer to your school's website for information on the PAC including contacts.

Supporting Learning at Home

Parents and guardians play an essential role in reinforcing learning beyond the classroom. The following practices help create a strong foundation for academic success:

Establish a Positive Learning Environment

- Where possible, provide a quiet, well-lit space designated for learning activities (i.e., at the kitchen table). Ensure they have access to necessary materials and maintain a consistent daily routine that includes time for homework, reading, and review.

Promote Engagement and Communication

- Talk to your child about their day. What are they learning about? What are they enjoying? What are they not enjoying? How can I help you with ...

Encourage Reading

- Reading is a foundational skill. Support regular reading at home and foster curiosity by exploring topics that interest them.

Support Student Independence

- Guide students in organizing assignments and managing time while encouraging them to take responsibility for their work. Emphasizing effort and perseverance helps build confidence and resilience.

Use Technology Appropriately

- Monitor and support the responsible use of technology. Encourage a balanced approach that includes offline activities, physical movement and adequate rest.

Maintain School-Home Partnerships

- Stay informed through school communications. Participate in student-led conferences, or parent only conferences. Attend school events and get to know the staff that work with your children on a regular basis. Early collaboration helps address academic, behaviour or social concerns effectively.

Consistent support at home, combined with positive reinforcement, contributes significantly to student success and overall well-being.



Teacher Autonomy

In British Columbia, teachers have professional autonomy. This means they are trusted to use their professional training, experience, and judgement to support the learning needs of all students.

Teachers decide how to teach the curriculum, including the teaching methods they use, the learning resources they select, and how they assess and report on student progress. This flexibility allows teachers to respond to the diverse strengths, interests, and needs of students.

Teacher professional autonomy is not unlimited.

All decisions must follow:

- School district policies and procedures
- Local collective agreements
- The BC Teachers' Federation (BCTF) Code of Ethics
- BC Teaching Standards
- The *School Act* and Ministerial Orders
- The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA)
- The BC Human Rights Code

Within these guidelines, teachers are responsible for making instructional and assessment decisions that support student learning while meeting provincial and district requirements.

If you have concerns that a teacher has breached professional standards for educators, you can submit a complaint to the [Commissioner for Teacher Regulation](#). Before you submit a complaint, [try to resolve the issue at the school level](#).



Transportation

The District offers a [student transportation service](#) for eligible riders as a paid service that is subsidized by the Board of Education.

Transportation is available for students who meet eligibility criteria, and parents/guardians must register their child each year. Fee and registration information is communicated by the Transportation Department, and fees are typically processed through School Cash Online. If your family is experiencing financial hardship and requires assistance with transportation fees, please contact the school or the Transportation Department for information on support.

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring their child travels safely to and from designated bus stops, and all riders are expected to follow the School Bus Rules and Codes of Conduct. Failure to pay transportation fees or to follow School Bus Rules and Codes of Conduct may result in the suspension or withdrawal of bus service for the student.

Transcripts

A transcript is an official listing of your child's secondary school (Grade 10-12) marks and credits received specific to a British Columbia Graduation Program. A graduation certificate, sometimes referred to as a diploma or "Dogwood", is your official graduation document.

[Transcripts are ordered through the provincial government.](#) Schools do not issue transcripts. To order your child's transcript, you will need their PEN (Personal Education Number). Graduation certificates can also be ordered through the same process. Their PEN can be found on their MyEd profile. It is recommended that your child keep a written record of their PEN for future use after graduation.

Virtual Library Learning Commons

The school district has digital resources available to students and caregivers through its [Virtual Library Learning Commons](#). Students can filter based on grade level and subject. Parents can also sort digital resources by their child's grade level and look through ideas for engaging with literacy, numeracy and social and emotional learning.

Appendix

District Information & Program Links

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- [Attendance](#)
- [Career Education](#)
- [Catchment](#)
- [Calendar](#)
- [Child Care](#)
- [Codes of Conduct](#)
 - [Elementary](#)
 - [Middle](#)
 - [Secondary](#)
- [Counselling](#)
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D-G

- [Directory of Schools](#)
- [Dual Credit Programs](#)
- [English Language Learners](#)
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H-L

- [Illness](#)
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M-P

- [NA'TSA'MAHT Indigenous Education](#)
- [Personal Digital Devices at School \(Cellphones\)](#)

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- [Resolving Concerns](#)
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T-Y

- [Trades Awareness, Skills and Knowledge \(TASK\)](#)
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- [Virtual Library Learning Commons](#)
- [Youth Explore Trades Skills](#)
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