

K-9 DL Program Specific Policies

Overview

The K-9 distributed learning provides an opportunity for home-learning families to join a community of learners with the support of certified teachers from Oak and Orca School. The program caters to a diversity of families who value child-led, emergent learning within family routines and opportunities. Learning experiences will be connected to the BC curriculum framework, and the teacher will provide a personalized program including a wide variety of learning activities, an experience-based learning plan, suggestions, encouragement and feedback.

As children inquire, learn, create and reflect, families share these experiences with their Oak and Orca teacher through conferencing and work samples. This communication provides the teacher with evidence of learning which will be recorded as connections to BC curriculum learning standards. Teachers provide summaries 4-5 times per year, which provide an overview and highlights of the most recent learning.

Blended Learning Options

Children enrolled in the distributed learning program may either learn full-time at home, or in a blended learning model which is part-time at home, part-time in a group setting. Blended opportunities include one or two days a week at the Oak and Orca Bioregional School and two day a week Bioregional Forest School (ages 6-12). The number of spaces available for blended learning will depend on the capacity of the site and the number of students enrolled in full-time programs.

Learning Groupings in the Ungraded Program

Within the ungraded program, the school has an overarching structure of Fir (grade 1-3), Pine (grade 4-6), Cedar (grade 7-9), and Arbutus (grade 10-12) groupings. These groupings support the creation of interdisciplinary, multi-age learning activities.

These groupings were also developed to meet the standards of the Ministry of Education in ensuring that students are exposed to a variety of content. As a student nears the transition towards a new group (end of grades 3, 6 and 9), additional support will be offered throughout the year. The goal is for the student to be able to achieve completion of the standards for the grouping and move successfully on to the next grouping without missing any significant learning. At the checkpoint year, students who have successfully met the standards will receive a celebration on their year end report and move to the next grouping.

Expense Budget

An expense budget is available by request for consumable supplies required for the program, lessons of relevance to the child's learning plan, and other resources/activities that are necessary to meet the learning standards. The school will pay companies/service providers directly for any authorized expense. The school follows the "GUIDELINES FOR INDEPENDENT SCHOOL AUTHORITIES OPERATING A DISTRIBUTED LEARNING SCHOOL – THIRD PARTY SERVICES AND RESOURCES" published by the Ministry.

Parents should discuss each potential expense with the teacher prior to arranging anything with a third party to ensure that the expense is approvable as part of the educational program. In order for a request to be approved and ultimately paid for, a formal request must be made by the parent in the specific format required by the school. All requests will be reviewed by the budget committee to determine whether it is approvable. A request is not a guarantee of approval. There are a variety of reasons why any given request may not be approved.

In order to receive payment for an expense, companies/service providers must submit an invoice, which clearly shows the expense to be for educational supplies or programming.

Expense budget amounts and schedules will be provided each year by the school. The amount and timing of the expense budget will depend on how much and when Ministry funding is received for that student (based on activation dates).

Students must be active by the Ministry deadlines and continue to be fully active in the program in order for any third party payments to be made. Expenses will not be authorized for a child whose file is not up-to-date with the school according to the submissions policy.

Certain equipment or books may be available on loan if they are required for the student's program. Any equipment, textbooks, or non-consumable books purchased by the school remain the property of the school and must be returned when requested.

Foundation Skills Assessment

The Ministry of Education runs a test called the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) every year for all students in BC in grades 4 and 7. The FSA consists of 6 assessments generally done over three different days. As an ungraded school, students' names come up depending on the year that they were born.

As one of the conditions of receiving funding and maintaining certification, the Ministry of Education has required that all distributed learning schools work towards 100% attendance of the FSA with our students. We encourage students to see this opportunity as a challenge - to

try all the tests and to answer all the questions they can. This can be framed as a fun learning opportunity and does not need to be stressful. Practice assessments are available online and students can try these in the months prior to the actual test date. Students who complete practice assessments seem to feel more confident on the test date because they are familiar with the types of questions and feel comfortable with the format.

We provide several options to complete the FSA, including completing them in your home or a nearby school. Local students are welcome to come to Oak and Orca School for a fun adventure with on-site students.