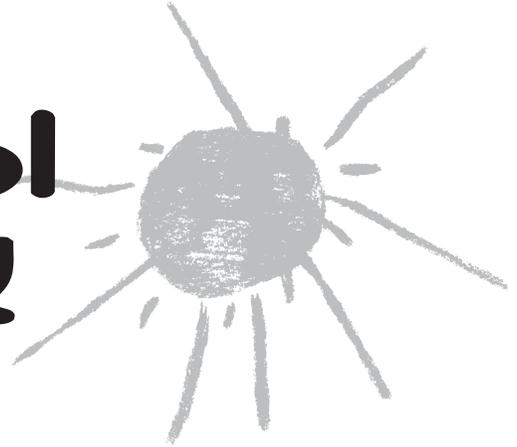


Welcome to School in Burnaby

a parent's handbook



– Alexi, Age 5

*Good Places
to Learn*

Welcome to School in Burnaby

a parent handbook

This is a



publication

in cooperation with the

British Columbia
Ministry of Children
& Family Development

and the support of the

- Burnaby parents
- Fraser Health Region
– Burnaby Preventative
Services
- Burnaby Multicultural Society

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Table of Contents

- I. Introduction 1**

- II. The Public School System 2**
 - A. British Columbia School System 3**
 - B. School Year 4**
 - C. School Hours 4**

- III. Burnaby School District 6**
 - A. Registration (for parents of students who are
new to this school district) 7**
 - B. School Staff 8**
 - C. Services Available in the School 11**
 - D. School Program 12**
 - E. Graduation Requirements 14**
 - F. Post-Secondary Opportunities 16**
 - G. Optional Programs 17**
 - H. Program Services For English as a
Second Language (E.S.L.) Students 18**

- IV. Responsibilities of Students and Parents . . . 21**
 - A. Students (Helping Themselves) 21**
 - B. Parents (Helping Your Child) 23**

- V. Definitions 25**

- VI. Often-asked Questions 31**

- VII. Acknowledgments 36**

I. Introduction

Welcome to the Burnaby school system. You and your child are now entering a system of education that may be new to you. Although languages, cultures and values may differ, we all want to provide the best education possible for your child. In order for a child to be successful and well prepared for the future, teachers, parents and children need to work together as a team – each playing an important role.

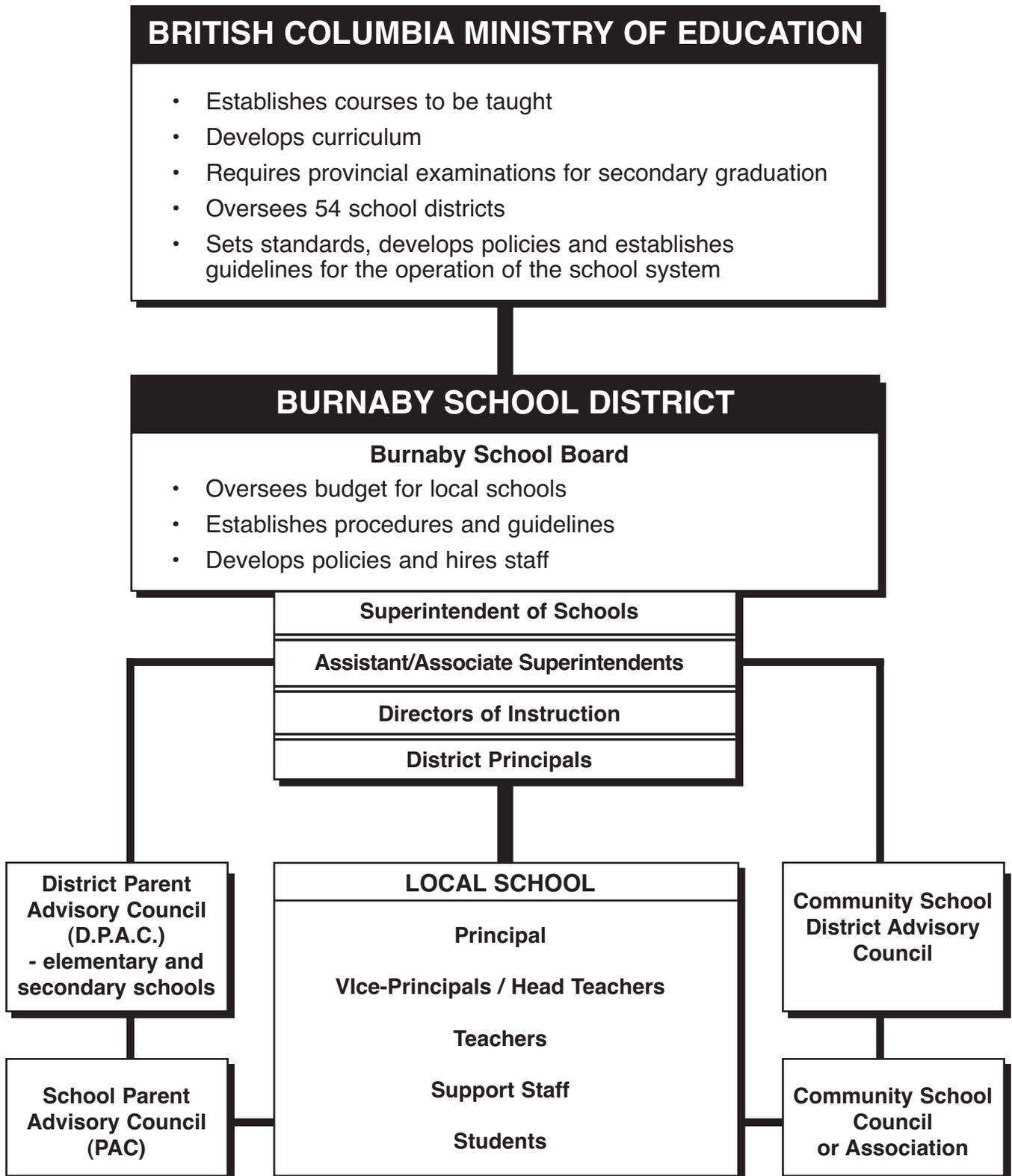
Communication between home and school is normal and encouraged at every opportunity. You will often receive notices about what’s happening in classrooms and around the school. You will receive information about special events, field trips, and your child’s academic progress. It’s also reasonable to expect that you may receive a phone call from a teacher or a principal. People at the school may have some questions or they might have some information that they need to tell you. People at the school also look forward to answering any parent questions. Parents are encouraged to talk to their child’s teacher, the school secretary, and/or the Principal.

This handbook was developed to help you understand the public school system in Burnaby. We hope it will:

- provide information that will help you in a new school system, community and culture;
- increase communication between your home and your school; and
- encourage you to become involved in your child’s learning and activities.

To help you understand some of the terminology we have provided definitions on page 25.

II. The Public School System



A. British Columbia School System

British Columbia is divided into 54 school districts. The residents of each district elect their own Board of School Trustees for a three-year term. The provincial government, through the Ministry of Education, and the school boards manages the school system. The School Act is legislation that sets out the terms and conditions under which schools must operate.

The Ministry of Education develops resource packages for each subject taught in public schools. The school board establishes the budget, guidelines and procedures for the public schools. The school board also hires a Superintendent of Schools who oversees all staff and education services in the school district.

Every child between the ages of 5 and 19 and legally residing in British Columbia has the right to a public education. All children between the ages of 6 and 16 must be registered in a school program.

Boys and girls attend public schools together and children with disabilities are integrated into their local schools as much as possible. Children do not wear uniforms to public school.

Parents are encouraged to enroll their children in community pre-school programs before they start kindergarten or Grade 1. Pre-school programs help young children to develop English language and social skills (for example, getting along with others, making friends, sharing), as well as providing the opportunity to become more comfortable in an English-speaking environment. The cost of pre-school programs varies.

B. School Year

The school year is 10 months long. It begins in early September and ends in late June. Students do not attend school on the following statutory holidays:

- Labour Day (September)
- Thanksgiving (October)
- Remembrance Day (November)
- Good Friday (March or April)
- Easter Monday (March or April)
- Victoria Day (May)

Students also do not attend during winter break (end of December), spring break (third week of March) or the summer holidays (July and August). Each school provides information about holidays, as well as other days when the school will be closed.

There are six days in the school year when the school is closed so that teachers can attend additional professional development and training. These days are called Professional Days or “Pro-D” Days.

C. School Hours

Students in Grades 1-12 attend school from Monday to Friday for approximately six hours per day. Kindergarten students attend for only half a day (either mornings or afternoons depending on the school). Parents are responsible for their children getting to and from school on time and are requested to contact the school by 9:00 A.M. if their child(ren) will not be attending.

All students have a lunch break and another short break, called recess or nutrition break, in the morning or afternoon. Unless they have their parents’ permission to leave the grounds (to attend a doctor’s appointment, for example), students are expected to stay on the school

grounds. They may go home for lunch if there is an adult at home at that time. Please notify your child's teacher of these arrangements.

Some schools provide a hot lunch program at minimal cost. For more information, please speak with the school secretary in the office.

Students are supervised during both school hours (regular school hours are usually 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.) and organized school activities (for example, sports, art or choir) occurring before and after regular school hours. Students who are not involved in organized school activities should come to school no earlier than 15 minutes before school begins and leave no later than 15 minutes after school has ended for the day.

III. Burnaby School District

The Burnaby School District offers students a supportive group of professionals dedicated to providing a valuable education in a positive, safe school environment. The district creates and maintains an overall environment that promotes learning, builds friendships and provides positive experiences.

The Burnaby School District:

- expects all students to treat others with respect and courtesy;
- expects all students to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of respect of others;
- expects all students to respect the property of others;
- does not allow weapons, violence, intimidation, drugs or alcohol;
- expects students to attend classes every day the school is in session;
- provides a supportive group of people, and a centre for friendships, positive experiences and a valuable education; and
- creates and maintains an overall environment that is conducive to learning.

Each school has a code of conduct. Please ask for a copy. All student conflicts are handled kindly and with discretion. If you have concerns, please talk with you child’s teacher.

A. Registration (for parents of students who are new to this school district)

International students follow a different process for registration than the one outlined below. Parents of international students are asked to contact the district’s International Education office for more specific information.

A parent or legal guardian must accompany the student at the time of registration at one of the District’s schools. Please bring the following documents:

1. Proof of British Columbia residency - one of the following:

- A.) mortgage document;
- B.) rental agreement;
- C.) tax notice; or
- D.) legally binding purchase / sales agreement.

2. Proof of citizenship - one of the following:

- A.) birth certificate;
- B.) valid Canada Immigration study permit for non-residents; or
- C.) Permanent Residency Card.

3. School records

- A.) last report card or student record (if available)
- B.) notice of school transfer (if available)

4. Health Information

- immunization records and other important health/medical information

5. Emergency Contact

- name and telephone number of the person the school can contact in case of emergency. Whenever possible, this person should be someone who lives nearby the school and who speaks English.

B. School Staff

Each school has a number of staff members who play different roles and have different responsibilities:

1. Principal

The principal is in charge of programs at the school and works closely with staff, students and parents. The principal is assisted by a head teacher and/or by a vice-principal.

2. Classroom Teacher

In elementary school, students will have the same teacher for most subjects. In secondary school, students will have different teachers for different subjects.

3. English as a Second Language (E.S.L.) Teacher

E.S.L. teachers help students learn English and prepare them to take regular courses.

4. Teacher-Librarian

Teacher-Librarians not only help students to learn about books, tapes, videos and magazines, but also to make use of all of the other learning resources in the school.

5. Learning Resource Teacher

Learning Resource Teachers help students who require additional assistance to learn and succeed in school.

6. Counsellor

Counsellors help children adapt to a new school and assist in planning their education program. If your child is having personal problems, a counsellor may be able to help.

Counsellors can also tell you about other services and programs provided by the school district and by your community.

7. Community School Coordinator

In designated community schools, a Community School Coordinator, in cooperation with the Community School Council, assists in the development, coordination and supervision of community programs and services, for all age groups. The services provided reflect community needs and interests around educational, recreational, cultural, health and social concerns.

8. Office Secretary

Office secretaries assist in registering students, do the school's office work, answer phone calls and may provide first aid to students in some circumstances.

9. Educational Assistant

Educational Assistants work with a teacher to support students who have a special need and/or require additional support with their schoolwork.

10. Community Health Nurse

Nurses help students with health concerns and make sure that they have been vaccinated against infectious diseases. The nurses also work in the community and may visit your home.

11. Youth Services Worker

Youth Services Workers serve secondary schools and assist administrators, staff, students and parents to develop positive and proactive approaches that enhance the safety and well being of everyone in the school and its community.

12. Youth and Child Care Worker

Youth and Child Care Workers, when necessary, are assigned to a school to support with the management and assessment of students' behaviours. In some schools, youth and child care workers organize and coordinate afterschool activities for students.

13. Noon Hour Supervisor

Noon Hour Supervisors work with the school's administration to supervise the safety of students inside and outside of the school during the lunch hour.

14. Police Liaison Officer

Police Liaison Officers are regular R.C.M.P. officers who are stationed in each secondary school. Police Liaison Officers assist administrators, staff, students, parents, and members of the community to enhance the safety, security and well being of everyone in the school and their surrounding community.

15. Custodian

Custodians keep schools clean and make sure buildings are operating safely and properly.

C. Services Available in the School

Support services are available to students who require assistance. Most services and programs are provided within each school's regular program. There are also many district programs designed to assist students with specific needs. Speak with your child's teacher if you think your child needs additional assistance.

School-based Services:

- Counselling
- Learning Assistance
- Advanced Learning Programs
- English as a Second Language
- Speech Services
- Learning Support
- Career Programs and Work Experience (secondary schools only)

District Services:

- Hearing and Vision
- Hospital/Homebound
- Aboriginal Education
- Alternate Learning Programs
- Educational Evaluation
- Cultural Transition Services

Cultural Transition Services:

Cultural transition services exist within the District to provide language, cultural, and settlement support for schools, immigrant students, and their families. Cultural interpretation services are available to every school in Burnaby. Also, in conjunction with community agencies, the District offers settlement programs for immigrants. Parents can access any of these services by contacting their child's school.

D. School Program

A child usually attends public school for a total of 13 years. In Burnaby this is divided into elementary and secondary programs.

The elementary program is organized into primary grades (kindergarten to Grade 3) and intermediate grades (Grades 4 - 7). Combined classes are common in elementary schools. The secondary program begins at Grade 8 with the junior secondary grades (Grades 8 - 10), followed by the senior secondary grades (Grades 11 & 12).

1. Elementary School

In the elementary program, students learn to:

- communicate effectively through writing, speaking and visual arts.
- make connections between areas of study and life outside the classroom.
- be creative and reflective learners.
- define personal and education goals and establish plans to meet those goals.
- develop positive attitudes toward themselves and others.
- be responsible citizens.

In elementary school, students study:

- Language Arts
- Social Studies
- Sciences
- Mathematics
- Technology
- Fine Arts (Art, Music, Drama)
- Physical Education

2. Secondary School

In Grade 8, students study:

- English Language Arts 8
- Social Studies 8
- Science 8
- Mathematics 8
- Physical Education 8
- Fine Arts 8 (visual arts, music, drama)
- Applied Skills 8 (Business Education, Home Economics, Technology Education)
- French 8

In Grade 9, students are involved in courses that are similar to those outlined for Grade 8.

E. Graduation Requirements

Eighty credits in Grade 10-12 (48 required credits, 28 elective credits, four graduation portfolio credits) are needed for graduation.

Required credits:

To graduate, students need at least 48 credits from the following list:

English 10	4 credits
English 11	4 credits
English 12	4 credits
Social Studies 10	4 credits
Social Studies 11, Canadian Civics 11 or B.C. First Nations Studies 12	4 credits
Science 10	4 credits
Science 11 or 12	4 credits
Mathematics 10	4 credits
Mathematics 11 or 12	4 credits
Physical Education 10	4 credits
Fine Arts or Applied Skills 10, 11, or 12	4 credits
Planning 10	4 credits

Elective Courses:

To graduate, students will also need at least 28 credits from a list of elective courses. The selection of elective courses may vary between secondary schools.

Graduation Portfolio:

To graduate, students will need to complete a Graduation Portfolio worth four credits.

Grade 12 Credits:

To graduate, students will need to take English 12 and a minimum of 12 additional credits in Grade 12-level courses.

Graduation Examinations:

The Graduation Program requires all students to write five examinations:

1. English 10
2. Science 10
3. Mathematics 10
4. Social Studies 10 or 11
5. English 12 or Communications 12

Except for English 12, these examinations are worth 20% of the student's final mark. The graduation exam for English 12 is worth 40% of the student's final mark.

About one month after writing the examinations, the Ministry of Education will mail the student's examination results (called a transcript). Students may be required to take an English Language Proficiency Test to enroll in a post-secondary institution.

F. Post-secondary Opportunities

After graduating from high school, students might consider a variety of options for post-secondary education, including college and college transfer programs, university, technical institutions and trade schools (such as B.C.I.T., V.C.C. and I.T.T.) and/or employment options.

General post-secondary information and career counselling is offered to senior students through post-secondary evenings and through various career conferences/events organized at schools. More specific guidance, or an individualized plan can be prepared with the graduation counsellor of each secondary school.

Information about scholarship opportunities, bursaries and awards is circulated during the year through the school library, Student Services office, bulletins and newsletters. Students are encouraged to consult university and college calendars for specific information. Additional guidance may be obtained from individual school scholarship committees and/or counselling staff.

G. Optional Programs

International Student Program:

An “international student” is defined as a student from outside of Canada who is in British Columbia for the purpose of obtaining an educational program, and is not ordinarily a resident in British Columbia or eligible for provincial or federal funding. Students must hold a Study Permit issued by Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

The District’s International Student Program gives international students the opportunity to study in a Burnaby school. Students are required to submit an application for entry to the program and must meet certain requirements. The program provides international students with added support to ensure their success in Burnaby.

French Immersion:

The French Immersion Program, offered in a number of Burnaby schools, is an opportunity for students to complete their studies in the French language. Students in the French Immersion Program will learn the regular British Columbia Curriculum, in a fully bilingual program. Students can begin the French Immersion Program at Kindergarten, Grade 1 or Grade 6.

Advanced Placement:

Advanced Placement is a program of university-level courses and examinations for secondary students. Successful students, upon admission to university, are granted credit for some first-year courses.

Summer Session:

Various classes and other learning opportunities – for example, English Language Development classes – are available for elementary and secondary students in July and August at designated schools. The costs of summer programs vary. Please contact your child’s school for further information.

H. Program Services For English as a Second Language (E.S.L.) Students

Definition

“English as a Second Language students are those whose primary language(s) of the home is/are other than English and who may therefore require additional services in order to develop their individual potential within British Columbia’s school system. Some students speak variations of English that differ significantly from the English used in the broader Canadian society and in the school; they may require E.S.L. support.”

– *English as a Second Language Policy Framework*
 Ministry of Education, 1998

Program Goals

The purpose of the E.S.L. program is to assist students to develop the language skills and knowledge necessary for success in Canadian schools and society. E.S.L. services are designed to strengthen the intellectual, social and career development of E.S.L. students by helping them to:

- improve their ability to communicate fluently in English at school and in the wider community.
- acquire the English needed to make academic progress within the B.C. school system and realize their potential.
- develop their other skills (e.g., numeracy, scientific understanding, group participation).
- develop an understanding of the similarities and differences between their home culture and the Canadian culture.

Assessment and Placement

E.S.L. students new to the district will be assessed by an E.S.L. specialist and placed in an appropriate level of E.S.L. to meet the students’ needs. Individual programs and teachers will also adapt their service to meet the needs of the E.S.L. students in regular classes.

E.S.L. students already in the district will be assessed by an E.S.L. specialist at various times throughout the year, and their E.S.L. program will be modified and updated as the student progresses in their English language development.

Program Delivery

Schools provide various levels of E.S.L. instruction to meet the developing needs of E.S.L. students. The E.S.L. programs in the district are designed to address both the communication and academic needs of E.S.L. students from beginner levels to advanced levels. Teachers, as they help students to move through the levels, ensure that students will be able to cope with the demands of the next level. Students can participate in school activities, clubs and sports teams which greatly enhance their English language skills and build connections with Canadian culture.

Elementary Schools

E.S.L. students:

- are enrolled in regular classes in their age group for most of the day.
- are taught in small groups in an E.S.L. class or in a regular classroom for part of the day.
- participate in subjects which do not require a high level of language.
- talk, interact, and play with their English-speaking peers to develop their English skills.

Secondary Schools

E.S.L. students in the beginning stages:

- are placed in multi-grade E.S.L. classes until they are ready to move to regular classes.
- may be able to move from one E.S.L. level to another during the school year.
- take regular classes that do not require full fluency in English, such as Math, Business Education, Physical Education, Music and Art.

Students with more advanced English language abilities may be placed in Adapted Language Social Studies and English classes. These are full-year credit courses. To successfully complete these courses, students must demonstrate proficiency in both content knowledge and language skills.

E.S.L. Teaching Strategies and Structures

The E.S.L. teacher:

- teaches language and course content.
- uses images, diagrams, charts and tables to help students understand the content of the subjects.
- develops students' listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.
- uses games, dialogues, stories, music and poems to allow students to experience and enjoy language.
- uses experiments and activities to teach new concepts in the language of Science, Social Studies and Mathematics.

Learning a New Language

Research shows that it takes most E.S.L. students four to seven years to develop academic language skills equal to successful Canadian students. Learning a new language is a complex and gradual process. Unreasonable expectations of progress by parents, teachers or students themselves sometimes can interfere with language development. Progress rates can vary a great deal for two apparently similar students. Although many E.S.L. students may develop a high degree of English communication skills within about two years through exposure to English speaking peers, television and school, this does not usually reflect their overall academic proficiency in English. E.S.L. students learn English better when there is a meaningful and purposeful connection with their everyday lives and when they receive specific language instruction.

IV. Responsibilities of Students and Parents

Students, teachers and parents must work together. Each has responsibilities and a role to play.

A. Students (Helping Themselves)

Students will be more successful with their learning by being responsible, participating, and having a positive attitude.

Responsibilities:

- attending classes on time and regularly.
- being prepared for classes with all necessary supplies.
- taking good care of school property.
- completing all homework assignments.
- organizing their time well.
- respecting themselves and others.
- reading on a regular basis.
- doing their best.

Participation:

- participating in classroom activities.
- contributing to discussions and group activities.
- asking questions when they don't understand.
- participating in school activities and having fun.
- participating in community and recreation programs.

Attitude:

- understanding parents' values, expectations and culture.
- maintaining good physical health, exercising, eating right, and getting enough sleep.
- listening carefully to teachers and parents.
- developing positive attitudes; being cooperative and considerate.
- welcoming challenges.
- helping others.

B. Parents (Helping Your Child)

Parents have an important role in the child’s education. As a parent, you can help by supporting your child in their school work and homework, and by getting involved in your child’s school.

Support your child by:

- being patient and supportive of your child in learning and adjusting to a new environment (it takes time).
- being willing to learn or understand a new culture and language (if you are new to this country).
- listening carefully to understand your child’s feelings.
- accepting each child as an individual.
- being positive – praise and encourage what the child has achieved or learned.
- encouraging your child to get involved in school and community activities (for example, Parks & Recreation programs, Brownies, Guides, Cubs, Scouts).
- discussing your child’s report card with him/her. Your child will receive a report card at least three times a year. It is important for you to attend student-led conferences and parent-teacher conferences to discuss your child’s progress. (Please bring someone who can help interpret for you, if needed.)
- sharing family history and experiences. As a family you could visit the museum, library, park or explore your community. Have fun together.
- ensuring your child dresses appropriately (for school activities and weather)
- informing the school about changes in the home (i.e., illness, separations, death, etc.). This information is very beneficial for the school to better understand and support your child. This information will be kept *confidential*.
- providing an escort for young children to and from school and with supervision before and after school.

Support your child's school work by:

- working with your school and child to develop appropriate social and academic goals.
- reading together to share ideas in the language with which you feel most comfortable.
- taking your child to the public library and encouraging daily reading.
- ensuring that your child attends school regularly.
- reading all school letters and notices.
- getting ideas from the E.S.L. teacher about games, cards and other fun ways for your child to learn English.
- providing your child with a study area.
- helping to schedule a daily homework time.
- helping your child with his/her homework only after he/she has tried to do it independently.
- keeping younger children away from the study area if possible.
- providing consequences for not doing homework.

Participate at your child's school by:

- visiting the school and making an appointment to talk to your child's teachers to keep informed.
- attending parent meetings and special activities at the school.
- finding out about school programs, scholarship requirements (Passport To Education) and graduation requirements.
- volunteering in the school/classroom.
- seeking help if needed – teachers, counsellors and community agencies are there to assist.
- joining Parent Advisory Committees and/or Community Councils.

V. Definitions

Adapted Program

An adapted program is a program designed to help students who can learn course content, but require adaptations to content and language.

Annual Instruction Plan (AIP)

Each student receiving E.S.L. support must have an AIP. The information contained in an AIP includes the student’s E.S.L. level, type of service, and the instructional plan to meet his/her learning needs.

Board Authorized Courses

These are four credit “elective” courses at the secondary level that are developed by teachers and approved by the school board (see Graduation Program).

Challenge Test

A student, in secondary school, may get credit for a course or move to a higher level by writing a test that demonstrates he or she already knows the course material. This test usually requires a fee.

Combined/Split Classes

It is not unusual for there to be combined/split classes at the elementary level. For example, Grade 1 and Grade 2 students may be placed in the same class with one teacher for the entire year.

Community School

A community school is one that offers a wide range of educational, social, recreational, and cultural services, programs and activities to meet the needs of children and adults of all ages. Community involvement, lifelong learning, and community development are the benefits and outcomes from this model.

Community School Council/Association

A community school council or association is made up of a group of people who live and work within the school neighbourhood. The members work towards developing and organizing events, fundraising and planning programs to meet the needs of the community. Meetings are held once a month and open to all residents of the community.

Detentions

Detentions are a form of discipline for an individual student or a group of students. The student or students are “detained” after school for up to 30 minutes because of inappropriate behaviours or to complete schoolwork.

District Parent Advisory Council (D.P.A.C.)

D.P.A.C. is a group of parents representing individual schools. Each school P.A.C. or Community Council elects one or two parents to represent the school at D.P.A.C. This group meets once a month and works with District staff to improve school conditions. The council supports the district philosophy through various committees and projects.

E.S.L.

E.S.L. stands for English as a Second Language.

Field Trips

Field trips are valuable out-of-school educational/recreational experiences that reinforce the curriculum. The Burnaby School Board, the school and the parents pay for these trips cooperatively. Parents are asked to sign a consent form before their child is able to be part of a field trip.

Fundraising

Some schools raise money for extra supplies and activities through the sale of goods such as candies. Parents and students may be asked to participate in this activity.

Homework

Homework is school work that is done at home to reinforce lessons taught during the day and to strengthen students' skills and study habits.

Honours Courses

These are enrichment courses for secondary students working at a superior level.

Hot Dog Day (Hot Lunch Day)

Volunteers provide hot lunches for students, generally on set days of the month. Food is pre-ordered and paid for in advance. Students order and pay for their lunches in advance.

Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.)

An Individual Education Plan is a written plan developed for a student who has great difficulty with school work. The I.E.P. describes the student's program modifications, and/or adaptations to the services provided. It serves as a tool for collaborative planning among the school, the parents, the student (where appropriate) and, as necessary, school district personnel, other ministries and/or community agencies.

Immunization

Immunizations are medical injections given to students to prevent disease. The community health nurse in the school is provided by the Burnaby Health Preventative Services.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten is the first year in public school. It is a half-day only (mornings or afternoons). Children entering Kindergarten must be aged five on or before December 31st.

Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education is a governmental department that sets provincial standards, develops provincial policy and establishes guidelines, courses to be taught, and provincial examinations for secondary graduation.

Modified Program

A modified program is one designed to assist a student who is having difficulty with school work to achieve some success. Modifications may include simplified work and less course content.

Parent Advisory Council (P.A.C.)

The Parent Advisory Council is made up of a volunteer group of parents of the children in a school. All parents, who have children enrolled in a school, are automatically members of the school's P.A.C. This group meets once a month and works with the school staff to improve school conditions. The council supports the school philosophy through various committees and projects. All parents are welcome to attend.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/teacher conferences are held to discuss any number of aspects of the child's life at school. These conferences may be in the form of a pre-scheduled meeting between parent and teacher, a telephone call, or an interview with parent, teacher and student.

Professional Development (Pro-D) Days

There are six days in the school year when classes are not in session so that teachers can attend additional professional training.

Public School

The provincial government funds public schools and no tuition fee is charged to attend. Every child between the ages of five and 19 years, who is legally residing in B.C., has the right to a public education. Boys and girls attend public schools together, and children who are mentally and physically challenged are integrated into their local public schools as much as possible.

Recess/Nutrition Break

All students have a short break called recess (or nutrition break) in the morning or afternoon. This short break is when students relax and eat. Fruit and vegetables make good snacks. A good, balanced diet is important for good health and good progress at school.

Resource Room

The resource room is where teachers who provide special services, such as learning assistance, enrichment, E.S.L. or behaviour management, work with students requiring this assistance. The room also has many teaching and student resources.

School Board

The school board is a group of people elected in each school district to establish the budget, guidelines and procedures for the schools. Together, the provincial government (through the Ministry of Education) and local school boards manage the school system.

School Meal Program

The School Meal Program is an optional program available at select schools that provides a nutritious lunch to students each day. Parents are asked to contribute what they can afford. This program currently operates in 12 Burnaby elementary schools.

School Planning Council (S.P.C.)

Every school has a School Planning Council, a representative group that consists of the principal, one teacher, and three parents. It is the responsibility of the S.P.C. to review the School Growth Plan, a school-produced document required by the Ministry of Education that is focused on improving student performance.

School Trustees

School trustees are community representatives elected by the residents of each district for a three-year term. Together they form the school board (see also *School Board*). In Burnaby, there are seven elected trustees.

Sports Day

Sports Day (sometimes referred to as “Fun Day” or “Activity Day”) is a school day dedicated to recreational activities.

Statutory Holidays

Statutory holidays are non-work as established by the government. Students do not attend school on statutory holidays.

Student-led Conferences

Student-led conferences are scheduled meetings where individual students share their work with their parent and a facilitating teacher.

Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent of Schools oversees all staff and education services in the school district. This person is hired by the school board.

Suspension (formal and informal)

A suspension is a form of student discipline. A formal school suspension involves a student not being allowed to attend school or be present in the school building or on the school grounds for a period of time. An informal in-school suspension means a student is allowed to attend school but not any of his/her regular classes. During an informal suspension, the student will complete his/her schoolwork at the office or in a resource room. If your child is disciplined or suspended from school, you should talk with the school principal as soon as possible.

Volunteer

A volunteer is a person who offers his or her own time to assist with a school project, activity, program or event. If you would like to volunteer, please speak to your child's teacher, school principal, or community school coordinator. Volunteering is also a good way to meet other parents in your community.

VI. Often-asked Questions

School & Classroom Routines

- *When is recess? How long is it?*
In elementary school, recess is a 15-minutes break period that occurs in the morning or afternoon depending on the school. During this time, children are encouraged to eat a snack brought from home.
- *When is lunch break? How long is it?*
Lunch break is usually 45 minutes or one hour, depending on the school. Most lunch breaks begin at 12:00 NOON.
- *How are teachers and principals to be addressed?*
Teachers and principals are called “Mr.,” “Mrs.” or “Ms.,” followed by their last name (e.g. Mr. Smith, Mrs. Chong, Ms. Gill).
- *Do students stand when they are called upon in class?*
Students do not generally stand when called upon in class.
- *What happens when a child does not follow the rules?*
The consequences of disobedience or inappropriate behaviour are dependent on the type of behaviour. You will need to talk with your child’s teacher and/or principal to find out the expectations and policies at your child’s school.
- *What do I do if my child is having a problem at school?*
If your child is having a problem at school, speak first with your child’s teacher. If the problem cannot be resolved, you may then wish to speak with the principal. It is recommended that you make an appointment to ensure that the teacher or principal will be available to meet with you. If the problem still cannot be solved at the school level, contact Burnaby School District Administration at (604) 664-8441.

- *What do I do when my child is sick or needs to be absent from school?*
Please contact the school on each occasion.
- *What kind of clothing is my child required to wear for classes?*
In B.C., public school students wear clothing and shoes that are comfortable, appropriate and suitable for such concerns as weather conditions or gym activities. Public schools do not require students to wear uniforms.
- *Do schools have a dress code?*
Burnaby schools have a standard for all members of the school community – including students, teachers and visitors – that requires them to wear clothing appropriate for school.
- *Does my child need to bring money to school?*
Students should not routinely be bringing money or other valuables to school. From time to time your child may be asked to bring money from home for specific, additional school projects or activities such as field trips, lunch programs, cupcake sales or ticket sales.
- *Does my child have to purchase his or her own textbooks?*
All standard school textbooks are loaned to students for the school year. Students may be required to purchase books for a special course. Students must pay for books that are lost or damaged.
- *Are notebooks, pencils and stationary supplied by the school?*
Schools do not provide school supplies such pencils, pens, notebooks or stationary. At the beginning of the school year, students are given a list of supplies that parents are expected to provide.
- *Should my child's personal belongings be labeled?*
All personal belongings – such as school supplies, gym clothes and jackets – should have your child's name on them.

- *Is child care available at school?*
Schools do not provide child care, either before or after school. However, this service may be available at a school through a local community agency or association. Age limits and costs will vary.
- *What's the difference between a semestered or non-semestered secondary school?*
All schools in Burnaby are organized over a ten-month period that begins in September and ends in June. All students in secondary school are able to enroll in eight courses during that period of time. Students in a semestered school take the same four courses each day for the first five months, then four different courses each day for the second five months. In a non-semestered school, students take all eight courses for the full ten months, alternating between taking four courses one day and four different courses the next day, and so on. Both semestered and non-semestered schools provide students with the same amount of instruction time.

School Activities

- *Why are field trips important?*
Field trips enhance what students learn in the classroom. Often these involve “hands on” activities that allow students to discover things in a way that supports their classroom learning..
- *What are the values of extracurricular activities?*
Extracurricular school activities – those that take place outside of classroom time – allow students to further develop skills, talents and interests in areas such as sport, music or visual arts. Most importantly, extracurricular activities provide an opportunity for students to socialize, develop friendships and have fun.

- *What are some activities that students can participate in at school and in the community?*

Activities for students vary greatly from school to school and community to community. Most schools offer additional activities in sport, choir and art. The City of Burnaby offers recreation and cultural programs in all communities. For more information, speak with the secretary or community school coordinator at your school.

- *What are the festivals or celebrations that involve most children?*

Halloween is an annual Canadian celebration on October 31 that blends a number of traditional festivals. Today, Halloween is seen as a fun celebration during which people dress in costumes and masks. Children go out to “trick or treat”, visiting homes door-to-door to collect treats. Valentine’s Day, held each year on February 14, is a day with the theme of friendship and love. In Canada, it is customary to send notes and gifts to friends and loved ones.

- *When will my child be immunized?*

For Children up to Age Six

Routine health immunizations are provided for children up to age six. The schedule for routine childhood immunization is as follows:

	DPT	Polio	HIB	MMR	Hep B	Pneumococcal	Meningococcal C	Varicella (if susceptible)
2 months	•	•	•		•	•	•	
4 months	•	•	•		•	•		
6 months	•	•	•		•	•		
12 months				•			•	•
18 months	•	•	•	•		•		
4-6 years	•	•						•

Please phone Burnaby Health Preventive Services at (604) 918-7605 for an appointment.

For Students in Grade 6 and Grade 9

Students in Grade 6 are given immunization against Hepatitis B, Meningococcal C and Varicella (if susceptible). These are provided through clinics held at the school. Students in Grade 9 are given immunization against Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis and Meningococcal C. These are also provided through clinics held at the school.

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