

In secondary schools:

- it is common to have a two day rotation (4 courses per day).
- letter grades are given and if students fail individual subjects they still move on to the next grade level in subjects they pass.
- some courses are required in order to graduate. For more information, please see brochure entitled **Graduation Requirements in BC.**
- provincial exams are required in some courses for graduation.

Every aspect of the curriculum has learning standards that are mandated by the Ministry of Education. The key principles include:

- *learning involves the active participation of the student.*
- *learning takes place in a variety of ways and at different rates.*
- *learning is both an individual and a group process.*



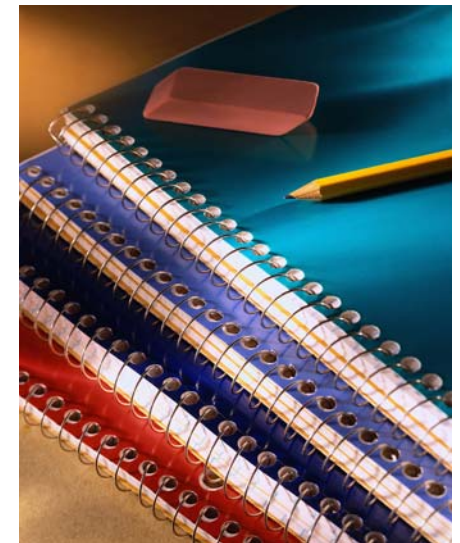
“The Mandate of the British Columbia School System”

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The Mandate of the British Columbia School System



The purpose of the BC school system is to enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy.

School Act, Section 169 (3)

The BC School System is based on the following values and beliefs.

- Learning takes place in different ways and at different rates.
- Learning is both an individual and a social process.
- Everyone can learn – and learn together.
- Play is an important way to learn.
- Group work is an integral part of school work.
- The amount of homework learners are given depends on their ages.
- Oral language development is an important part of learning.

- Students usually move through elementary school with children who are the same age.
- Learning how to learn and how to access information are considered critical skills.
- Letter grades are based on much more than test results. For more information, see brochure entitled **Letter Grades**.

Some important things to know for different age groups

In Kindergarten:

- no letter grades are given;
- learning is play based; and
- the focus is on developing social skills and basic concepts.

In Grades 1 to 3:

- no letter grades are given;
- learning is theme based;
- literacy skills are developed using many books rather than specific textbooks;
- the focus is on building oral language, vocabulary and on developing reading and writing skills;
- there is usually only one teacher for all subject areas; and
- development is focused on five areas: intellectual, physical, social, artistic, and emotional.

In Grades 4 to 7:

- letter grades are usually given;
- there is often more than one teacher;
- students begin to use textbooks, but not as the sole source of information;
- there is more of a focus on reading and writing skills;
- oral language and group work are still very important; and
- students are expected to take more responsibility for their own learning and conduct.

In Grades 8 to 12:

- students may have 8 subjects and 8 teachers; and
- there is a greater expectation for self-sufficiency and responsibility.