

You have Choice in SD61

By John Gajptman, Superintendent

As parents, the most important responsibility we have is helping our children grow into responsible adults who will be able to lead productive and fulfilling lives. A daunting task, but you are not alone! As parents, we need to realize that there are others who can assist us. In fact, considerable help is available from your school. Staff, teachers, and administrators can all provide support. Every child is unique and past experience is not always an infallible guide about how to deal with an existing situation. Educators have experience in nurturing and working with a wide variety of children. Schools also have counselors and other specialists who can help us understand what programs would best suit our child. The Greater Victoria School District has many programs that can help our students reach their full potential.

Greater Victoria schools offer much more than English, mathematics, science, social studies and physical education!

Early French Immersion is offered in eight of our elementary schools. We also offer late French Immersion for students who want to start the program at the grade 6 level in three of our middle schools.

Beginners Band programs begin in Grade 6 and continue to Grade 12. Each of our middle and secondary schools offer excellent band programs. We also offer a complete Strings Program beginning at the Grade 5 level. The Strings Program is currently available at thirteen of our elementary schools as well as at each of our middle schools and at most of our secondary schools. Music in the Greater Victoria School District also encompasses strong choral, vocal jazz, computer music, musical theatre and jazz band programs. Other fine arts options at many of our schools include visual arts, dance, drama, theatre production, acting, stagecraft, directing and script writing.

Greater Victoria truly has programs to meet the needs of each of our students!

You may not be aware that across this District programs are offered in applied engineering, autobody, baseball academy, carpentry, computer-assisted drafting, gifted education, graphics, health sciences, hospitality, mechanics, soccer academy, special education, tourism and wood-products manufacturing to name but a few. Please feel free to contact your neighbourhood school to find out which program might best suit your son or daughter.

When a person starts kindergarten, he or she is still a young child. Over the next thirteen years, the child grows into a young adult. Through the cooperation of parents and educators, school has become the place where many of our children can make the best of the challenges and opportunities of growing from childhood to adulthood. At school, children learn to relate to and cooperate with other children. They learn to work with adults to form relationships and to resolve conflicts. Students in our schools learn to work as members of groups and teams. Many of our students also have an opportunity to experience leadership roles. Our students gain experience in self-governing activities and democratic behaviors. There are many other learning experiences that children encounter at school that are not part of the formal curriculum but prepare them to become self-sufficient and successful adults. Perhaps the most

important experience that our children have in school is that of sharing common learning experiences.

Though we place a heavy emphasis on literacy, numeracy and social responsibility, schools in the Greater Victoria School District offer much more!

We provide experiences that are nearly impossible to have anywhere else. We believe that these experiences are necessary if young people are to meet their greater challenges. We promise never to overlook this reality as we strive continuously to improve our schools by providing an exemplary educational experience and numerous choices for our children.

Visit the Greater Victoria School District website at <http://www.sd61.bc.ca>