



DELTA

SCHOOL DISTRICT INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

Elementary Student Handbook



ENGLISH

...so much more!

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International Programs Staff Contact Information continued

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Welcome!

Welcome to Delta School District! Thank you for choosing our school district and community as the starting point for your new adventure. We're very excited that you're joining us and want to help you on your learning journey. It is very courageous to take the step to travel across the globe to live and study in a foreign environment. Students and parents will undoubtedly face the challenges of culture shock, jet lag and homesickness but our International Programs staff members are here to provide help and guidance along the way.



Many of us have had experiences travelling and living in other countries and as well, have been supporting international families from around the world in Delta for many years. We take the time to get to know our students and their families and pride ourselves in the individual care and attention we provide. We know our schools and community very well and want to share our knowledge and resources with you.

In this guide you will find important information about school, Canadian culture, medical, and community information, among other things. If you have questions about these or other things please reach out to our staff members any time. We hope you take advantage of the many opportunities our schools and community offer, and additionally, make lifelong connections with other students and families. We'll do our best to help make sure our elementary international students are successful in their study term in Delta and have an experience they'll remember for many years to come!



Getting Started

Registration

As soon as possible after arrival, parents should bring new students to register.

Where: The School Board Office, 4585 Harvest Drive in Ladner

What to Bring: The student(s) passport, study permit & custodianship documents

What will Happen: Medical insurance cards, specific school information & supply lists will be issued

We will need your local address, email and phone number for our files

Orientation

If elementary students arrive at the beginning of the school year, they will be invited to participate in a district wide welcome event for elementary international students. Date, time and location will be shared at registration. For students arriving at other times during the school year, orientation will be done at individual schools both by school staff and International Programs staff.

* Please note that under some circumstances it may be necessary to do registration and orientation for new elementary international students virtually, rather than in person. In this case invitations and details will be sent to parents in advance.

General Information - The Canadian School System



The Canadian education system has an outstanding world-wide reputation. Canada consistently places among the top 5 countries in the world rankings and British Columbia is consistently among the top provinces in Canada for educational results. That said, many aspects of Canadian education may seem confusing and strange to you as they are likely different from those in your home countries. Below is a basic explanation of the education system, so that you have a simple understanding of what you may see at your child's school in Delta:

Independence / Personal Responsibility

Canadians value independence and all schools focus on developing personal responsibility in each child as young as possible. Every teacher's goal will be for the students to look after their own learning as much as possible. Teachers expect that students will do many things for themselves without direction or extensive guidance. Students will all have to be responsible for:

- Personal planners (agenda) where they will write down all homework, tests and basic reminders for themselves
- Doing all homework on time and preparing for tests, without reminders or constant notification
- Being organized - Having all papers in the proper section of their school binders or duotangs (not stuffed in their desks or backpacks). Students' organizational skills are assessed and teachers will make notes and comments on the report card.
- Bringing proper materials to class as directed, including gym clothes. Teachers will tell students what is expected for class and students must make a note of this in their agendas to help them remember.
- Keeping their desk clean and organized as well as cleaning up after themselves after eating by using recycle bins and garbage cans. Helping to keep the classroom neat and tidy.
- Knowing all school rules and complying with them immediately, without constant reminders.

Delta School District's code of conduct for all students is posted on its website (www.deltasd.bc.ca) As well, individual teachers will communicate to their students and parents information on classroom expectations.

Showing the proper behaviour at school and apologizing for misbehaviour if it occurs. Taking responsibility for mistakes is very important to Canadian teachers and principals. Students should not deny or come up with a variety of excuses for poor behavior as this shows a lack of responsibility. An apology or fixing whatever was wrong is required.

Hallways are quiet areas with absolutely no running or loud voices permitted. All indoor areas of the school should be treated like classrooms, with quiet talking and walking.

Elementary students go outside to play at recess and lunch times (after a fairly short eating time), regardless of the weather. Students are expected to dress appropriately in rain gear (raincoat and boots) or winter gear (a winter jacket, boots, hat and gloves) and are not permitted to stay inside the school during these times. Adult supervisors are on the playground with students during recess and lunch breaks.

Canadian children also have many responsibilities at home as they learn to do more things for themselves. Even young children will:

- Make their own breakfast and lunch
- Get dressed by themselves
- Wake up by themselves with their own alarm clock
- Make their beds
- Clean their rooms
- Help in the kitchen and home with a variety of chores

In Canada, most children leave home after high school, so the intent is to have them learn all the life skills and independent living tasks at early ages so that they are prepared when it comes time to live on their own.

Unconsciously, Canadians view individuals who can't take care of themselves as immature. Teachers may be shocked if elementary students can't tie their own shoes or if high school students demonstrate an inability to get to school on time or hand in assignments as scheduled.



Social Skills

As adults, no matter what we do, we need to have strong social skills to be successful. Social skills are extremely important to Canadian teachers and educators. In some cases, these skills are even more important than academic learning. Some assignments have no other purpose than to teach cooperation, team building, respect for differences and personal opinions, and empathy. Even very young children will be expected to:

- Listen to others' opinions with acceptance
- Ask questions and share their own ideas
- Work cooperatively in groups
- Speak kindly without ridicule
- Not fight, push or hurt others
- Share materials

- Learn and practice leadership skills
- Encourage others with praise and provide help when needed
- Accept students with differences as equals

Canadian teachers and principals have no tolerance for any form of touching (hitting, pushing, fighting) and students who do this in even a minor way may be sent home or suspended from school. Bullying or taunting is unacceptable.

Canadians need a lot of personal space and do not like people to be too close to them. It may make Canadians uncomfortable for someone to press up against them in a line or touch shoulders.

Instructional Styles

Teaching style in Canada may be very different from your country. Canada does not place much emphasis on lectures, memorization, examinations and teacher-driven assignments (when a teacher presents information to students.) Canadians feel this type of style does not teach independent thought. Instead, expect to see group projects, individual projects, and student-driven lessons (when student curiosity is channeled into tasks and teachers provide guidance.) There will be time spent on classroom discussions to develop as many viewpoints as possible. Canadian teachers value unique perspectives and student input. Students will get higher marks if they make contributions in class, ask questions and give opinions. Canadian teachers don't necessarily care about the "right" answer . . . they watch the process of how the student comes up with an answer and watch how the child's thinking is progressing. In every lesson Canadian teachers will be watching for:

- Unique ideas and creativity
- Inquiry (students asking questions and pushing the class to further viewpoints)
- Problem solving
- Independent study (not just copying someone else's answer or from a book or the Internet)
- Unique interests (where students pursue their own related assignment that may not be what everyone else is doing)
- Student-led projects and ideas
- Active participation

Canadian teachers will not "push" students in a top-down style. They prefer a "bottom-up" approach where the teacher is the catalyst and stimulates/excites students to push themselves and reach for their own learning. Canadian teachers try to make lessons fun to capture students' interests. Then they wait and see how much self-motivations students have to do more on their own.



Parents shouldn't expect to see many homework drills such as vocabulary and grammar drills or pages of rote math questions. Teachers think these kinds of assignments aren't important, with no independent thinking required. While there is value in developing memorization skills, Canadians don't emphasize these skills a lot. Although facts are important, in today's world it is more important that students can find facts and evaluate the validity of sources of information than remember everything. Teachers care more about the process than the content. That means they care more about how you learn and about your thought process than the final product.

Canadian teachers have a lot of autonomy and flexibility in how they deliver the curriculum. They typically send previews home to parents each term to highlight what students will be doing in class. Information on BC's curriculum can be found at <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/>.

Combined Grade Classes

Combined grade classes in elementary grades are very common in Canadian schools. When you accept the idea that Canadian schools are not teaching facts and certain specialized content at each grade level, but are working on the thought process, on asking questions and on individualized learning, it doesn't matter as much what grade the child is in. In Canada there are no strict rules about what is taught in each grade level. Teachers are free to choose different themes or topics as long as certain skills are being focused on. The actual topic is not important as the teacher will be focusing on developing thinking skills, inquiry (asking questions), etc. So, in a combined Grade 4/5 class, the students could all be learning about electricity, but some students will go deeper into the subject than others, depending on their individual skills and interests/abilities. A younger student may show greater depth on a topic than an older one. A Grade 5 student in a Grade 4/5 class is under no disadvantage. The teacher is not teaching to a grade level but to a whole room of individuals, all with their own unique interests and abilities. Each student is encouraged to move along to a greater individual level.

There are a few areas where students will be learning different subject matter and have different textbooks depending on the grade level. Teachers teach different curriculum at these times - Math and French are two examples. For these subjects, teachers will divide the students and teach one group at a time. All other subjects are process-based and can be easily adapted to suit all learning styles and ages at the same time.

Report Cards

Report cards may look a little different from those in your country. Canadians do not believe in ranking students (believing that to do this actually depresses them and stops students from trying). Canadians believe that learning is a life-long process and everyone has a personal learning style and way of thinking that is not all the same. Some students take longer to understand certain ideas or generate opinions. The end result may be the same, but the path is different for everyone. Here is what you will see on elementary report cards:

SUBJECT AREAS:

- Literacy (Reading and Writing)
- Numeracy (Math)
- Health & Well-Being (Career & Physical Education)
- Investigate & Explore (Science & Social Studies)
- Design & Create (Art, Applied Design, Skills & Technologies)

ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS

- **(E)** Excelling - Evidence of learning demonstrates excellence in relation to grade level expectations
- **(M)** Meeting - Evidence of learning demonstrates that the student is meeting grade-level expectations
- **(PM)** Partially Meeting - Evidence of learning demonstrates that the student is meeting some of the grade-level expectations but requires support in some areas.
- **(NY)** Not Yet Meeting - Evidence of learning is not meeting grade-level expectations and the student requires ongoing support.



There is also a Student Reflection section where students comment on their learning. Delta teachers believe it's important for students to think about and articulate what they believe their strengths are and what skills they need to develop. Educators know this helps students take ownership of their learning. In the Teacher Perspective section, as well as throughout the report, teachers will write suggestions on how students can improve and will also make comments about areas where students are doing well. Please make special note of comments about behaviour in class and other anecdotal information.

Please remember that learning additional languages is a process that takes time - it is normal for international students not to be meeting grade-level expectations in some areas as they learn and develop their English skills.

School Supplies

Upon registration at the School Board Office you'll receive the supply list for your child's class.

In general, school supply lists are divided into two types - those for primary students (Kindergarten to Grade 3) and

Example for Primary Students (Kindergarten to Grade 3)

2 notebooks (lined, 72 pages)	1 pencil box
1 notebook (half plain / half lined, 72 pages)	1 bottle of white glue
2 notebooks (plain, 72 pages)	2 glue sticks (large)
3 duotangs	2 erasers
1 pack of pencils (12)	1 pair of scissors
1 fine marker (black)	1 pair of headphones
2 whiteboard markers	4 plastic bags (resealable)
2 packs of wax crayons (24 colours)	1 box of tissue
1 watercolour paint cakes (12 colours)	

intermediate students (Grades 4-7). Individual teachers may have specific supply requests but typically lists will resemble the following examples:



Example for Intermediate Students (Grades 4-7)

1 sheet of 30 blank labels	1 yellow highlighter pen
1 notebook (lined, 72 pages)	1 pink highlighter pen
2 notebooks (plain, 72 pages)	1 pack of pencil crayons (24 colours)
3 packs of dividers (5 tabs)	2 fine markers (black)
2 binders (2 inch)	2 ultra-fine markers (black)
2 packs of lined paper	4 whiteboard markers
10 duotangs	12 fine markers (12 colours, washable)
1 sketch book (100 pages)	1 pencil pouch with 2 zippers
2 packs of pencils (12)	2 glue sticks (large)
2 blue pens	2 erasers (large)
2 red pens	1 pencil sharpener (with container)
2 black pens	Gym clothes in a cloth bag (shorts or sweatpants, t-shirt & running shoes)

Below is a list of local retailers where school supplies can be purchased:

* Staples (staples.ca)	London Drugs (londondrugs.com)
Pharmasave (pharmasave.com)	Shoppers Drug Mart (shoppersdrugmart.ca)
Walmart (walmart.ca)	

*Supplies available year-round and staff can usually assist with lists.



School Schedules

A typical school day for elementary students begins around 9 am and ends around 3 pm, Monday to Friday. Some schools have slightly different start and end times so please check the district's website for the yearly calendar and daily schedule at your child's school:



www.deltasd.bc.ca/schools/elementary

Typically, elementary students have a 15-minute break each day in the morning around 10:30 am (recess) for a snack and some outdoor play, and then a break around noon for eating lunch (about 15 minutes) followed by approximately 40-45 minutes of playtime. In general, Canadian teachers have a lot of autonomy and flexibility in determining which subject areas to teach and for how long on any given day. Rather than blocks of time devoted to specific subjects throughout the day it's not uncommon for students to work on projects for extended period of time (such as whole mornings or afternoons) which intersect multiple curricular subjects and skill areas. Elementary teachers are also responsible for ensuring their students engage in daily physical activity (DPA) so short exercise breaks or activities will be a part of each school day as well. Please contact your child's teacher for a weekly class schedule.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up

On the first day of school international students should report to the school office but on subsequent days they will line up outside their classroom or nearest hallway door. Parents should not enter the school with their children. Schools are busy places before and after school, with many cars and people. As such, parking spaces are generally reserved for school staff. If you plan on taking your children to school by car it's best to park several blocks away and walk. Alternatively, public transit, biking or walking are options.

Please note that there is no supervision at elementary schools until 20 minutes before school starts so students shouldn't arrive any earlier.

Recess Snacks & Lunches

Students should bring snacks and lunches to school to eat in their classrooms. Because elementary schools don't have cafeterias or microwaves where students can buy or heat food, most Canadian kids take sandwiches, drinks, fruit, yogurt or other foods which don't require refrigeration or heating. A thermos that can keep food warm is also an option. Schools generally promote healthy eating and discourage junk food. As well, containers that can be reused or recycled, minimizing garbage, are ideal.

Individual students at school may have life-threatening allergies to some foods such as eggs or peanuts - It's best to check with your child's teacher before sending these foods to school.

Some schools have an optional hot lunch program, often organized as a fund-raising activity by the Parent Advisory Council. Students can order lunches from a variety of inexpensive local take-out options (eg. pizza, sushi, Subway

sandwiches, etc.) to be delivered to the school for students at lunchtime, usually once or twice a month. Schools will provide parents information on how to see menus and order online via credit card.

Early Dismissal / Professional Days / School Closure / Student Illness

In the event of early dismissal, teacher professional days, school closure (due to inclement weather, union job action, power outage or other incidents causing facility damage or disruption) students will remain at home. If your child is ill, please call your child's school office to report an absence from school.

Getting Involved at School – Students & Parents

Students – At School

There will be many opportunities for students to become involved in activities at school, especially for students in the intermediate grades, such as music, sports, clubs, volunteer opportunities, outdoor educational experiences like camp or skiing, and more. Teachers will share information with students and parents. Becoming involved in these activities are great ways for students to not only improve their English but perhaps try things they haven't tried before and make new friends as well. Often elementary students who have completed their programs and returned to their home countries say their fondest memories in Delta came from various activities they participated in at school.



Students – Outside of School Hours

Canadian children don't study a lot after school or during school holidays but instead join sports, cultural lessons (martial arts, music, drama) and other activities. They may also attend birthday parties or sleepovers with friends. Playing outside, riding bicycles and playing in parks are all common for Canadian children who don't spend a lot of time indoors. Participating in these activities is a good way for international students to make friends and improve their English skills. Local community centres have a variety of inexpensive programs open to everyone. Parents can take their children (with proof of birthdate & address) to any recreation centre to register for a youth admission pass. The pass will allow them to attend public skating, gym, or swimming sessions.



Local clubs that offer activities for kids:

Delta Parks & Recreation Guide: http://www.delta.ca/parks-recreation/sport-recreation/overview		
Ladner Leisure Centre 4600 Clarence Taylor Crescent Delta, BC, V4K 3X3 (604) 946-3310	South Delta Recreation Centre 1720 56 St. Delta, BC, V4L 2B1 (604) 952-3020	Winskill Aquatic Centre 5575 9 Avenue Delta, BC, V4M 1W1 (604) 952-3005
Sungod Recreation Centre 7825 112 Street Delta, BC, V4C 4V9 (604) 952-3075	North Delta Recreation Centre 11415 84 Avenue Delta, BC, V4C 2L9 (604) 952-3045	

DANCE

Free Flight Dance – freeflightdance.com

Studio West Dance – www.studiowestdance.ca

Deas Island Dance – www.deasislanddance.com

GYMNASTICS

Delta Gymnastics – www.deltagymnastics.com

MARTIAL ARTS

Tsawwassen Shotokan Karate Club – www.jkatsa.com

Tsawwassen Martial Arts – tsawwassenmartialarts.com

Gracie Barra Delta (Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu) – gbdelta.com

World Martial Arts – worldtkd.ca

SOCCER

South Delta United Soccer Club – southdeltaunitedsoccerclub.com

North Delta Soccer Club – northdeltaafc.com

FOOTBALL

North Delta Longhorns - northdeltafootball.com

South Delta Rams – sdramsfootball.com

BASKETBALL

South Delta Basketball Association – southdeltabasketball.org

AthElite Basketball – athelitebasketball.com

COMPETITIVE SWIMMING

Delta Sungod Swim Club – teamunify.com/team/candssc/page/home

Winskill Dolphins Swim Club – teamunify.com/team/csbcwd/page/home

TENNIS

Sunshine Hills Tennis Club – sunshinehillstennisclub.com/home

Ladner Tennis Club – ladnertennisclub.com

GOLF

Tsawwassen Springs – tsawwassensprings.ca

The Links at Hampton Cove – hamptoncove.ca

Delta Golf Course – deltagolfcourse.com

HOCKEY

South Delta Minor Hockey Association – southdeltahockey.com

North Delta Minor Hockey Association – ndhockey.com

FIGURE SKATING

Delta Skating Club – deltaskatingclub.com

Sungod Skating Club – sungodskating.com

HORSEBACK RIDING

Crescent Stables – crescentstables.com

Country Lane Farms – countrylanefarms

Five Star Farms – fivestarfarms.ca

MUSIC

Delta Youth Choir – deltachoral.ca/delta-youth-choir

Delta Community Music School – dcms.ca

Richmond Delta Youth Orchestra – rdyo.ca

YOUTH GROUPS

Boys and Girls Club (Ladner) – bgcbc.ca/locations/wintemute/

Boys and Girls Club (Tsawwassen) – bgcbc.ca/locations/winskill/

Boys and Girls Club (North Delta) – bgcbc.ca/locations/hillside/

OTHER COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Local Public Libraries: www.fvrl.bc.ca (free library cards for Delta residents)

Deltakids (free & fun family activities): <https://www.deltakids>

Public transportation: translink.ca

Parents :

Canadian teachers think it is important to meet you, so please feel brave about visiting the elementary classroom and having your child show their desk and work from time to time. This shows the teacher that you are interested in what is happening in the class. Introduce yourself to the teacher and start to form a relationship. It doesn't matter if your English is low - no one will judge you about that.

Please make an appointment if you want an actual teacher meeting to discuss your child's progress because if you just drop in the teacher may already have a meeting or be busy. Our multicultural staff can help you set up an appointment. Please also note that teachers' replies to correspondence may be slower than what you are used to in your home country.

Volunteering at school is a great way to learn about the Canadian school system. Schools always need drivers for field trips or even someone to help with events or fundraising. Don't be shy about your English level . . . be brave and try it! Please talk to the school principal from time to time - keep introducing yourself until they know who you are. Attend school functions like assemblies and performances. When special events occur at the school all parents are always welcome.

Talk to the classroom teacher from time to time and simply ask what topic or theme the students are studying. You can either email the teacher or set up a time for a casual visit. You can help your child by going to the community

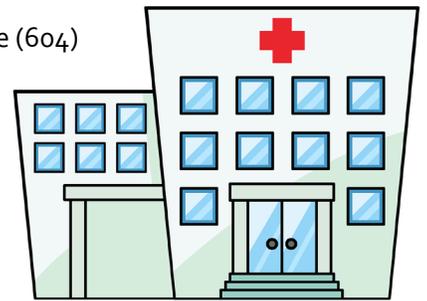
library to get more books on the topic or do some extra learning. It also shows the teacher that you are interested. Be friendly and supportive of the teacher. Canadians actually don't respond well to being pushed or if they feel criticism. If you don't understand something, just ask for an explanation, but please do so in a positive way so that teachers don't feel they are being judged or criticized. When teachers are given a chance to showcase what is happening in the classroom, they will be happy to share with you.

In terms of adult recreational opportunities local community centres (page 17) offer various registered or drop-in classes for adults. The district also has an adult English language learner program. Contact our staff for more information.

Medical Information

Medical Insurance

Upon arrival, all students are covered for illness and/or emergencies under a temporary private medical plan operated by GuardMe. When new students register at the School Board Office, they will receive the GuardMe card and information. If you or your child is seriously ill or has a medical emergency, go directly to the Delta hospital (5800 Mountain View Boulevard - phone (604) 946-1121.) **Ambulances can be called by dialing 9-1-1. There are operators in all main language groups.** If there is an up-front fee for an emergency or illness, reimbursement for payment can be applied for directly at www.guard.me. (Our multicultural staff can help). GuardMe is very prompt at reimbursing clients. Long-term students (more than 6 months) will receive an MSP (Medical Services Plan of BC) card 3 months after their arrival. They retain their GuardMe card for additional coverage (eg. prescriptions, travel insurance). If any of the cards are lost, we have the necessary numbers on file. Parents are responsible for their own medical coverage.



More details about medical insurance plans can be found at:

www.godelta.ca/content/insurance

Dental Coverage

Dental care is not covered by insurance, unless the teeth are damaged because of an accident. If unsure, contact our office at 604-952-5366.

Clinics & Wellness Resources

If your child needs non-emergency medical attention walk-in clinics can be found here:

medimap.ca

Nurses Line - call **811** (free-of-charge provincial health information and advice phone line)

Kelty Mental Health Resource Centre www.keltymentalhealth.ca (counselling and mental health support)

Deltassist: Individual & Family Counselling (Ladner & Tsawwassen - 604-946-9536 / North Delta - 604-594-3455)

Vaccinations

Students in Grade 6 are offered routine vaccines at clinics held at their school. These vaccines are provided for free by public health nurses. The vaccines offered include:

- Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine
- Chickenpox (varicella) vaccine (children who have had two doses of the chickenpox vaccine, or who have had chickenpox disease or shingles after one year of age do not need the vaccine)
- Hepatitis B vaccine (children who have had 3 doses of the hepatitis B vaccine at a younger age do not need the vaccine)

Consent forms must be signed by biological parents before vaccines can be administered. More information, including translations in various languages, can be found here:

Healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/grade-6-immunizations



Safety

Please keep in mind that you and your children are new to Canada and likely unfamiliar with many customs. Road safety, bike safety and personal safety should not be assumed as other countries may have different standards and practices in terms of helmets, traffic rules, etc.

If you or your children ride bicycles, please wear a helmet. It is the law. Children should be given instructions on the bicycle rules of the road. We recommend that parents and

children ride together, at least initially, to evaluate their children's understanding of bicycle safety. Similarly, if children walk to and/or from school, please ensure they are mindful of traffic safety rules (eg. looking both ways for cars, crossing the road only at marked crosswalks, etc.).

All children should know their full name, birthdate, address, school name, and a contact phone number in the event they get lost or injured. Keeping this information on a note in a child's backpack is probably a very good idea.

Families are encouraged to visit our local indoor and outdoor (summer only) pools for swimming lessons or public swim sessions (more info in community activities section.)

For public swims, please note that children under the age of 7 must be with adults who remain within arm's reach of their children at all times. Lifeguards may ask children to demonstrate their swimming ability before allowing them to enter deeper water.

