

District Update on Secondary Program Options

We understand that families have questions and concerns regarding mini school programs, enriched classes and advanced learning opportunities across the district. This document provides clear and accurate information about current programming options that support enrichment.

Mini School and Enrichment Programs

Mini school and incentive programs continue to be offered in some schools within the district. These programs are not offered at every secondary school and have always varied by school. Programs are reviewed regularly, and individual schools may adjust or discontinue offerings based on enrolment, staffing and community interest. These decisions do not represent a district-wide cancellation of enrichment opportunities.

Commitment to Enrichment and Challenge

The district remains strongly committed to providing opportunities for students to extend and deepen their learning. Students can access enrichment through:

- Advanced Placement (AP) courses.
- Enriched or honours courses, often designed to prepare students for AP courses.
- Accelerated pathways (taking higher-level courses earlier).
- District program options such as French Immersion, International Baccalaureate and the Outdoor Incentive Program.
- Online learning options.
- Summer learning opportunities.

These options allow students to challenge themselves in ways that align with their readiness, interests, and goals.

Ministry Requirements and Approved Courses

School districts must adhere to Ministry of Education and Child Care guidelines regarding approved courses.

- All courses offered must be Ministry approved or Board/Authority Authorized.
- Schools cannot offer courses that do not align with Ministry-approved curriculum structures.
- Program decisions must comply with provincial policy and graduation requirements.

AP and Enriched Courses

Most Advanced Placement (AP), honours, and enriched courses are offered within the Graduation Program (Grades 10–12). In Grades 8–9, students take Ministry-approved courses, with enrichment provided within those courses or through specialized programs such as mini schools where applicable.

Specific course offerings vary by school and run only when there is sufficient student enrolment and staffing availability.

Recent Changes

The only courses that have been discontinued district-wide are combined classes in which students complete two grade levels of a course within a single class (for example, Math 8/9 or Science 8/9). This change aligns with Ministry guidelines.

Schools will continue to support advanced learners within their courses. Students who are ready for additional academic challenge will continue to have opportunities for acceleration and enrichment through course selection. For example, some students may take a course at one grade level in Semester 1 and the subsequent grade level in semester 2. This option depends on each school's schedule. Where this is not possible, students may pursue acceleration through online or summer learning.

School-Specific Questions

Because programming differs from school to school, families seeking information about offerings at a particular school are encouraged to contact the school administration directly for the most current details.

District Program Offerings

We value parent input and are committed to ensuring students have meaningful opportunities to be challenged and supported. Information about current district program options is shared regularly through school communications, district publications and presentations to partner groups.

Families with questions are encouraged to contact their school administration directly or contact the district at questions@sd38.bc.ca.

Frequently Asked Questions

Have all mini school/incentive programs been cancelled?

No. Mini school and incentive programs have not been cancelled across the district. These programs are not offered at every secondary school and have always varied by location. Decisions about offering, adjusting, or discontinuing a program are made at the school level based on enrolment, staffing, and community interest.

Why do programs change or get discontinued at a school?

Schools regularly review programs to ensure they remain sustainable and aligned with student needs and provincial requirements. Programs may change if:

- Enrolment is too low to run the program.
- Staffing availability changes.
- Ministry guidelines require adjustments.
- Community interest changes over time.

Is the district eliminating enriched classes?

No. The district remains committed to providing enrichment and challenge for students. Opportunities for advanced learning continue to be available through multiple pathways, including acceleration, advanced courses, district program options, online learning, and summer learning.

Are Advanced Placement (AP) courses still offered?

Yes. AP courses continue to be offered across the district. However, course offerings vary across schools and run when there is sufficient enrolment and staffing availability. For questions about AP courses, please visit the district website and reach out to your school administration team.

Why must the district follow Ministry guidelines when offering courses?

All public-school districts in British Columbia must offer courses that meet the Ministry of Education and Child Care requirements. This means:

- Courses must align with the provincial curriculum.
- All courses must be Ministry approved or Board/Authority Authorized.
- Programs must support provincial graduation requirements.

These requirements ensure consistency and fairness for students across the province.

Why are Grade 8 and 9 combined courses no longer offered?

Combined academic courses are no longer offered because there are no Ministry-approved courses that combine two grade levels into a single course.

Schools continue to support advanced learners in all curricular areas and students can still access

accelerated pathways. For specific information about options for acceleration, please reach out to your school administration team.

Can students still accelerate their learning?

Yes. Students who are ready for an additional challenge can accelerate in a variety of ways, including:

- Taking higher-level courses earlier.
- Enrolling in AP courses.
- Participating in summer learning.
- Taking online courses.
- Accessing school-based enrichment opportunities.

Acceleration options vary by grade level and school schedule, and for Grades 8–9 typically occur within Ministry-approved courses or through summer or online learning. School staff work with students and families to determine appropriate pathways.

Why aren't the same programs offered at every school?

Each school community is unique. Program offerings depend on:

- Student interest and enrolment.
- Available staffing and expertise.
- School size and scheduling capacity.

Offering identical programs at every school is not always feasible or sustainable.

Where can families get information about programs at a specific school?

Families are encouraged to view the program planning guide on each school's website for the most up-to-date information. Additionally, they can contact the school administration team directly.