



Specialty Programs and Schools



As a parent, you want the best education for your child - one that meets individual needs and interests - whether your child plans to be an artist, an athlete, a scientist or a computer whiz.

You'll be happy to know that in British Columbia, you and your child now have more educational choices than ever before. In fact, B.C. is now leading the nation when it comes to specialty programs and schools.

It means your child has an opportunity to get a head start on a career before graduating high school.

It's about giving the student in your family a chance to pursue his or her dreams.

Just take a look at what's happening at schools around the province. In the Sooke school district, Edward Milne community school will offer girls' hockey in September. The program is winning rave reviews from parents and students, and it hasn't even started yet.

"I think it's cool and I think it's about time they got it in the schools," says Grade 9 student Lindsay Braman. In her case, the hockey program is a win, win situation - it combines athletic and academic achievement.

"It's really fun and playing has improved my academic performance. I used to be lazy," the 15-year-old remarked. "Now I feel a lot happier."

Like many other choice programs now available to students in B.C., the Sooke hockey program came about because parents saw the need, and approached their local school board. That's how it started.

As a parent, you can do the same thing in your school district. Visit the Achieve BC Web site and click on [Developing More Choices Within the K-12 Education System](#) to see how.

If you want your child to get a head start on a career in computers, check out the Information Technology Support Associate Program for Grade 11 and 12 students at Riverside secondary school in the Coquitlam school district.

Known as a school-to-work program, it gives students access to the latest computer technology, and teaches them valuable employability and entrepreneurial skills they can use on the job.

All of these schools and programs are open to your child. That's because students can now attend any school they want, space permitting. Visit [Achieve BC](#) to learn more about [Open Boundaries](#).

Choose the [Getting Involved in Your School](#) button and you'll find everything you need to know about choosing the right school, and the best program for the student in your family.

If you want to check out schools anywhere in B.C., use the [School Profile Tool](#). You'll find all the information there with a click of the button.

To find out more about the wide array of choices now available in B.C. schools - everything from rowing and field hockey to courses geared to high-achieving students - visit the [Achieve BC](#) Web site.

Help Wanted – Over a Million Positions Available!

The most recent projections estimate there will be just over a million job openings in B.C. between 2003 and 2015. In the next decade, businesses will be competing for skilled people like they never have before. Employers will have to look at new ways of recruiting, better ways to train and keep existing employees and innovative ways to get work done.

At the same time, the level of education and skill required to compete in the labour market is increasing. Almost three quarters of those jobs will require more than just high school (like a diploma, university degree or trade certificate).

B.C. is going to be facing some serious labour market challenges, but the bottom line is that this means **more opportunities for you!**

Employers, individuals, governments, training organizations, schools and governments will all play important roles as we work together to:

- Increase our workforce so we have enough people to do the jobs.
- Fuel skills development so we have people with the right skills to do the jobs.
- Match skills to needs so that employers can find people with the right skills and job seekers can find the right employer.
- Plan for the long-term so businesses' human resource needs are met two years, five years and ten years down the road.

Find out more about what is already being done to make these things happen and the opportunities to come in the province's new [Human Resource Strategy for British Columbia](#). The strategy outlines some of the work undertaken by the provincial government and highlights key labour market facts that will help B.C. businesses plan to meet their human resource needs. It also highlights recommended best practices and some of the innovative solutions being applied today in B.C. workplaces.

The strategy will evolve over the coming years as the public and private sectors continue the work of delivering a skilled workforce for our growing economy.

Achieving Success Through Employment

Want to get the job you want and put income assistance behind you? B.C.'s income assistance system has been redesigned to focus on achievement through employment for clients who are able to work.

Here's how Surrey's Parvinder Suri changed her life forever, and you can too.

Parvinder was a single mom who moved from assistance to income. Her income assistance worker referred her to one of our employment programs called Destinations. Parvinder re-worked her resume, polished up her interview skills and got her first job.

While employed, Destinations paid for her computer training and necessary certificates, and provided her with regular encouragement.

Through the support of the program, Parvinder's salary and experience climbed steadily and she's now qualified to compete for an \$18-an-hour position with the school board. She's full of optimism — for her, the future is now bright and full of promise.

To provide clients like Parvinder with the skills and supports they need to enter the workforce, the government has invested more than \$300 million on a full suite of employment programs.

And it's working!

Our four job placement programs have placed more than 30,600 income assistance clients into good jobs — jobs like painters, cashiers, retail clerks and security guards.

There are currently almost 10,000 jobs available to clients in communities throughout the province.

To reach your full potential through employment, check out the latest in Job Search Materials, Job Site Links and Career Tips in Achieve BC's Jobs & Opportunities section and the [resources section](#) of the [Industry Training Authority's](#) web site.

5 Tips to Get Your Resume Noticed

Getting a great job starts with having a great resume. Try these tips to transform your resume from standard to standout.

1. **Be specific.** Tailor your resume to the job you are interested in.
2. **Keep it short and simple.** Not more than one or two pages.
3. **Be honest.** Highlight your skills and accomplishments - but don't exaggerate.
4. **Check for errors.** Correct spelling and typing highlights your good communication skills.
5. **Make a good first impression.** Always include a cover letter.

Achieve BC has lots more to get you started on your job search. For everything from networking and cold calling to advice on polishing your interview skills, go to Jobs & Opportunities at Achieve BC.

Access Increased with 25,000 New Post-Secondary Spaces by 2010



Students will have more opportunities to pursue their goals at B.C.'s colleges and universities, thanks to government's commitment to add 25,000 new student spaces to post-secondary institutions by 2010. More information on the expanded educational opportunities in your region can be found on the [Achieve BC Web site](#).

"Right now, a high school graduate needs at least an 80 per cent average to get into most university programs in this province. That's closing the door on a lot of students who could be B.C.'s future innovators and leaders," said Premier Gordon Campbell. "I know that I - and many other prominent Canadians - would have had difficulty getting into university at all if we faced the current admission requirements."

The high admission requirements are caused by lack of student spaces to meet a steadily increasing demand from B.C.'s large cohort of 18 to 29-year-olds. By adding 25,000 new spaces to help meet that demand, government hopes an adjustment in admission requirements will follow, ultimately accommodating students who achieve a B average.

"We're adding those seats throughout the province as well," said Shirley Bond, Minister of Advanced Education. "We want to increase opportunities in every region, so more students can study close to home, and more choices are available no matter where you live in B.C." Bond added that families save an average \$6,000 per year if a student can live at home while in college or university versus moving to another city or town.

In addition to the new seats, government has announced the establishment of two new institutions: UBC Okanagan and Okanagan College. It has also granted university status to the University College of the Cariboo in Kamloops, which will amalgamate with the Open University and Open College to form a new, special purpose university in time for the 2005/06 school year.

Kids Engage Through Pilot Project

For the past year, groups of young people in the Tri-Cities have been planting vegetable gardens for the local food bank, painting peace walls in schools, and putting on hot dog roasts and rock concerts - all with the help of funding from the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Now Minister Christy Clark has announced more grants will help expand this pilot project and others designed to engage youth in their community, rather than waiting until problems develop.

"These projects have already shown how young people and communities can work together," said Clark. "The kids developed a sense of belonging that comes from giving to the community through work, volunteerism, entrepreneurship and helping others. And others have begun to see these young people in a more positive light."

A total of \$150,000 in grants will be used to expand and evaluate Youth Asset Development projects in the Tri-Cities and other communities.

Youth Matters!, the program in the Tri-Cities, has drawn together a large partnership group including government, police, businesses, schools, and non-profit agencies. As a result, services for youth and their families in the area have been totally redesigned, and a multi-service youth site is also now being planned.

The YouthMatters! project received \$50,000 to expand and develop their programs, and will manage another \$50,000 to support projects in Summerland, Prince Rupert and Vernon.

The University of Victoria's Centre for Community Health Promotion Research was also awarded \$50,000 to evaluate the projects, and the results of the research will be used to develop similar programs throughout B.C.

The Tri-City News, in a story about the grants published May 15, reported that groups and agencies are now making their own efforts to engage young people in the Tri-Cities. SHARE Family and Youth Services is trying to set up a youth-run thrift store, ArtsConnect is trying to establish a youth-run recycled art supplies store and SUCCESS is running a business start-up program for young people.

"It's amazing the ripple effect we're having, with people taking a positive approach rather than a negative approach," Wendy Cooper, chair of the YouthMatters! partner group, said in an interview with the News. "We're hoping that will replicate out in the broader community."

Safe and Properly Equipped Schools



It's important to know that your child is going to a school that is safe and properly equipped. That's why over the next three years the Province will be investing three-quarters of a billion dollars in new schools and facility improvements across B.C.

As part of government's continuing commitment to make B.C. a world leader in education, Premier Gordon Campbell recently announced the province will invest \$722 million in school capital improvements.

These improvements include \$315 million in new funding:

- \$96.3 million for capital projects in 2006-07.
- \$10 million in additional maintenance funding for each of the 2004-05 and 2005-06 school years, over and above the \$100 million per year previously announced.
- \$110 million in new maintenance funding for 2006-07.
- \$89 million in new seismic upgrade funding over the next three years.

A total of 39 new school projects will be undertaken in 2006/07:

- Twenty-one new, expanded, renovated or replacement schools, in districts across B.C.
- Seismic upgrades to 11 different schools in higher-risk earthquake areas.
- Seven site acquisitions for future school facilities in Surrey, Abbotsford and Sooke, and in Nanaimo and Kelowna for school district 93 (Conseil scolaire francophone).

Learn more about the [improvements to B.C.'s schools](#) by visiting [Achieve BC](#).

For more information visit www.achievebc.ca