



EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Indian Residential School System

“The Indian residential school system was created by the Canadian government in the mid-1880s and ran until the last school was shut in 1996. The goal of the residential school system was to educate and assimilate Aboriginal children into Christian, Euro-Canadian cultural norms and knowledge bases. The majority of the schools were federally funded and run by various Christian churches. From 1920 to 1948, attendance was compulsory for Aboriginal children between the ages of four and 16. Most of the schools were located off of reserve land, and forced the separation of children from their families, their communities and their land over long periods of time. In the residential schools, siblings were often separated to help break traditional habits, and by extension, family ties. Under the auspices of assimilation, speaking native languages was forbidden, even outside of the classroom, as was traditional clothing, food and other culturally specific habits or traditions. The children were punished if these rules were broken. As a result of this severe restriction of culture and heritage, many language skills and traditional knowledge was lost. Systematic physical, sexual and psychological abuse was widespread within the residential school system, as the testimonies of many residential school survivors have made clear. Poor nutritional standards and medical care contributed to a high mortality rate among children at residential schools. In fact, some schools had up to a 50% mortality rate. Many died of tuberculosis, pneumonia and malnutrition. The education in the schools was considered sub-par: despite the attempt to extinguish native languages in favour of English and French, literacy was not a primary goal of education in the schools, and students often only received up to a Grade 5 level of literacy skills. Instead, labour skills training was the main focus, including sewing and laundry work for women, and farming and carpentry for men.”

British Columbia in a Global Context, Geography Open Textbook Collective

All children between the ages of six and 16 go to school or study at home. There are public schools that offer free education and private schools that charge tuition fees. Most schools offer English as a Second Language (ESL) for newcomer children. Some schools offer French Immersion programs. There is also a French school, an International school and an Indigenous Cultural School in the area.

To help prepare your child for elementary school you can access one of the free programs designed for children and parents:

- StrongStart BC is a play-based early learning program that children attend together with their parents/guardians. It includes story telling, music and art.
- Ready, Set, Learn are family events that help children with the transition into school.

To enrol your child into school you would need to visit your local School Board (please see the list below under “schools”). You will need to prove your child’s date of birth, your resident status, home address and your child’s immunization record (a list of immunizations that your child received since birth).

Did You Know?

“A study by KPMG revealed Penticton is the most cost effective place in the North American Pacific Region to carry out manufacturing”.

There are a few options for post-secondary education- a university in Kelowna and two colleges in Penticton. For certificate programs and courses for adults check out the Continuous Education departments at the colleges and distance learning/online courses. All these institutions are listed below. The South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services (www.soics.ca) also offers certificate programs to newcomers. Please ask your settlement worker about current opportunities.

To find out how you can apply for a loan, grant or scholarship for post-secondary education, please visit: <https://studentaidbc.ca>.

Preschool Programs

StrongStart BC programs

- Queens Park Elementary, 330 Power St, Penticton; 250-770-7680
- Carmi Elementary, 400 Carmi Ave, Penticton; 250-770-7697
- Columbia Elementary, 1437 Allison St Penticton; 250-770-7676
- Giant's Head Elementary, 10503 Prairie Valley Rd., Summerland; 250-770-7671

Ready, Set, Learn

Elementary schools that enroll Kindergarten classes hold Ready, Set, Learn events in their schools or communities. Please contact your local elementary school to learn about the dates and locations of these events. You can also download a Parent Booklet in different languages, including Tagalog, Punjabi and Spanish, to help prepare your child for learning:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/early-learning/support/programs/ready-set-learn>

Schools

- Penticton, Summerland, Kaleden & Naramata (including French Immersion, International Student Program and Hockey Skills Academy) - School District #67: 425 Jermyn Avenue, Penticton, 250-770-7700, www.sd67.bc.ca
- Oliver, Osoyoos, OK Falls, Keremeos - School District #53: 6161 Okanagan Street, Oliver, 250-498-3481, www.sd53.bc.ca
- Princeton - School District #58: 250-295-3180, www.sd58.bc.ca

Cultural/Language Schools

- French School: Ecole Entre-Lacs, 1077 Nelson Ave, Penticton; 250-770-7691; <https://entrelacs.csf.bc.ca>
- Indigenous Cultural School: Outma Squilx'W Cultural School, 151 Outma Sqilx'w Pl, Penticton; 250-493-2421; http://pib.ca/?page_id=635
- Unisus International School, 7808 Pierre Dr., Summerland; 250-404-3232; <https://www.unisus.ca>

Colleges, Universities, Adult Education

- University of British Columbia Okanagan (UBCO), 3333 University Way, Kelowna; 250-807-8000; <https://ok.ubc.ca/prospective-students>
- Okanagan College, 1091 Timmins, Penticton; 250-493-3019; www.okanagan.bc.ca
- Sprott Shaw College: 1(888) 996-5498, www.sprottshaw.com
- YouLearn.ca – distance learning and continuing education school (School District 53): www.youlearn.ca
- Princeton & District Community Skill Centre: 250-295-4051, www.princetoncsc.com
- HNZ Topflight – helicopter pilot training; 3130 Airport Rd, Penticton; 250-492-0637

Did You Know?

According to folklore, a one-armed gold prospector named Reid discovered gold in the area, and the Town of Fairview (located just outside what is now known as Oliver) became home to gold miners, ranchers and businessmen.