



Kamloops School of the Arts

Frequently Asked Questions!

What is an Arts School?

A Fine Arts school provides students with a well-balanced education by integrating the Academics with the Fine Arts strands: Dance, Drama, Music and the Visual Arts. We learn the Arts.....we learn through the Arts.

How can the Arts be integrated into Academics?

The Arts can be a powerful tool for teaching concepts in Academic subjects. Teachers who have developed ways of integrating the Arts into the curriculum can employ the Arts to increase understanding in Reading, Math, Social Studies and the Sciences.

Do children have to be artistically gifted to benefit?

No. Students of various abilities, whether artistically gifted or not, benefit but they do have to work hard to succeed in our program. It is all about an integrated approach to learning. The Arts can improve a student's ability to learn because the Arts draw on a range of intelligences and approaches. However, students who are particularly interested in the Arts will find this program very appealing. We offer some extra-curricular performance opportunities for these students such as participating in the Kamloops Festival of the Performing Arts, Musical-Theatre & Drama Productions, Coffee Houses, etc.

Will this school cover the whole curriculum?

Yes. The school must adhere to the requirements of the BC Ministry of Education. The Ministry curriculum for the Fine Arts acknowledges this.

Will my child learn special skills in the Arts?

Yes. With qualified specialists in each of the Arts and more time to spend on the Arts, students are taught specific skills. However, the intent of the school is not to provide preparation for a career as a professional artist; it is to give every child a well-rounded education with a special focus on the Arts.

Does this mean the kids do art subjects all day?

No. The classroom teachers teach the basic subjects such as Reading and Math in a formal sense. Students are required to do written work at their desks, and do homework, just as at any other school. However, the curriculum requirements for some of the concepts and other subjects will come alive for students by integrating them into Fine Arts wherever it is appropriate.

My child takes Dance (Music, Theatre) lessons privately. Will this program replace that?

No. Our program is an excellent addition to private lessons in the Performing Arts.

Is there an audition for students to be accepted?

No. There is an admission process. Please refer to it.

Are there some students that are not suited for this program?

Our program requires students to have a strong work ethic, commitment to learning and passion for the Arts. Students who need a lot of structure and routine, who have difficulty being self-motivated learners, who do not have strong work ethic or who do not have a passion for the Arts may have a harder time being successful.

Are the Teachers qualified?

Yes. The classes are taught by fully qualified, certified teachers who also have a Fine Arts specialty.

Will my child have his own teacher?

Elementary classes are arranged into pods of 3 – 4 classes, with each class being taught by a teacher who has a specialty in one of the four Fine Arts areas (Music, Drama, Visual Arts or Dance). The teachers in each pod are qualified in a different strand of the Arts. Classes are taught by homeroom teachers. The students will spend about one hour per week being instructed in each of the four specialty areas by each of the specialty teachers in their pod. In effect, they will have one main teacher and three other teachers. Early primary students (K and 1) have fewer “rotations” and, therefore, fewer teachers to provide more continuity at this early age. High school students are on a semester timetable and rotate through four courses each semester.

Are classes smaller?

All classes in the school adhere to the required district average just like all classes in the district.

My child loves Physical Education. Are there P.E. and School Teams?

The P.E. curriculum is taught as required by the BC Curriculum. We have some teams as well. While we offer a great deal of physical activity and movement, our focus is primarily on the Fine Arts.

What about younger students? Is the program confusing to them?

We recognize Kindergarten students are just beginning school. The Kindergarten/Grade One POD is different in that these grades are exposed to each of the Art strands by only two or three teachers. There are no allotted amounts of time as there are with the older grades. Teachers in the POD are specialists in one or more of the Fine Arts. They collaborate on units and themes and share teaching dependent on their own skills and interest. There is, however, a strong emphasis on the Arts.

Is transportation provided?

No. Because we are a School of Choice, transportation is the responsibility of parents, just as it is for other district programs such as French Immersion.

Are there extra fees for my child to attend Kamloops School of the Arts?

Although this school is funded as all other schools in our District, in May 2009 the School Board approved the proposal that KSA (formerly Beattie) become a “Specialty Academy” because it met the following criteria set out by the Ministry of Education:

1. The specialty academy must meet learning outcomes that:
 - a. are in addition to the learning outcomes that a standard educational program must meet and
 - b. reflect an emphasis on a particular sport, activity or subject area.

2. In respect of the particular sport, activity or subject area being emphasised in the specialty academy:
 - a. a one-year specialty academy must include:
 - i. a minimum of 240 hours of instructions, or
 - ii. sufficient hours of instruction to enable a student to earn 8 credits in the school year.
 - b. a multi-year specialty academy must include:
 - i. a minimum of 120 hours of instruction, or
 - ii. sufficient hours of instructions to enable a student to earn four credits in each school year.

3. If the specialty academy emphasises a particular subject area, the subject area must be:
 - a. One or more of the following areas: Applied Skills, Fine Arts, Language Arts, Mathematics, Physical Education, Science or Social Studies.

The Specialty Academy fee is for students in grades 8 to 12 and ranges from \$90 to \$150 per year. Elementary students are not charged this fee; however, there are some costs that are common to all elementary schools which are for non-mandatory activities such as the Arts Starts series. As well, there is also a school supply fee that includes art supplies.

Is there more homework?

As with other schools, this varies from grade to grade and teacher to teacher. However, as the school day is very full, there can be extra expectations, and we need extra parental support in ensuring that student agendas are signed and homework is completed as assigned. High school students will find that the combination of Academic and Arts courses as well as Rehearsal and Performance commitments make for a busy year. Students must be prepared to work hard and attend all of the school commitments. ***We also expect all students to be available to participate in Fine Arts Sharing Nights that happen once or twice a year in the evening.***