

Suwa'lkh

Suwa'lkh is an indigenous educational program open to students in grades six to twelve. Suwa'lkh means 'New Beginnings' in the Hul'qumi'num language. Respect for Mother Earth, our environment, and one another is part of the Aboriginal teachings at Suwa'lkh. A focus on Aboriginal teachings helps to ground our students in the culture of our land, while helping them gain skills to help their emotional well-being and sense of self. We provide academic programming, outdoor education opportunities, and a self-paced learning environment.

Middle School Program

The middle school program focuses on providing students from grade six through nine with a small group supportive environment in which youth are able to gain fundamental skills that will help them later in school and in life. Through a fully supported social-emotional approach, our students gain self-regulation skills alongside the standard academic program.

High School Program

Our grade ten through twelve program provides a self-paced, continuous start academic model, which enables students to match their academic goals to their current abilities. At Suwa'lkh our high school students focus on a few academics at a time to avoid being overwhelmed and to focus on the success we know they are able to achieve. We believe that all of our students are capable learners, but that we must be patient and supportive to ensure that they are healthy and prepared for the next stage of their journey.

Indigenous Gardening Program:

Through the support of our community Suwa'lkh has been able to expand our gardening to include two greenhouses and a medicine wheel inspired garden. All of our students contribute to our garden work and are proud to enjoy the crops we grow in our daily lunch program. Our science programs are highly integrated with our greenhouse project, supporting the hands on approach that the new curriculum requires. The garden also provides a therapeutic space for students to center and ground themselves or simply to reconnect with Mother Earth.

Outdoor Education:

A partnership with Outward Bound Canada allows Suwa'lkh to provide an extensive outdoor program, including day and overnight hikes, canoeing excursions, and survival skill classes throughout our province. These adventures encourage our youth to build capacity, resilience, and leadership, all while rebuilding and strengthening their connection to Mother Earth.

Transitions Program:

The transitions program supports struggling elementary and middle school students who may be struggling with behaviours or attendance at their home school. Through once a week sessions at Suwa'lkh that teach social skills, self-regulation, and emotional regulation skills, students learn to be a successful member of a classroom community. For some students these skills are gained in only a few months with the program, while others benefit from remaining for the full year before returning to their home schools. Though these students remain enrolled at their home schools, they are a strong part of the Suwa'lkh family.

Referral Process:

To refer a student to Suwa'lkh please complete the referral package (include link please Grahame) and email it to Leah Pells (lpells@sd43.bc.ca). Once this is processed you will hear back from our counsellor as to the next steps.

The Future of Suwa'lkh:

We are excited to be working on a longhouse that will bring more cultural opportunities to Suwa'lkh and our community while providing our students with a meaningful opportunity to engage with many elements of the new curriculum.

Contact:

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