

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 51 (BOUNDARY)

P O L I C Y

SECTION	TITLE	NO. 3063
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS/ SERVICES	<u>StrongStart Early Learning Centres</u>	

DATE ADOPTED: June 12, 2007

DATE AMENDED: December 14, 2021

The purpose of StrongStart Centres is to provide school-based, high quality early learning programs for children younger than school age accompanied by a parent or caregiver, designed to support the success of students when they enter Kindergarten.

The years between birth and school-age are a critical time in a child's life. The experiences that children have in the early years influence their future health, well-being, and life-long learning. By investing in children's early years, we can positively affect the future lives of British Columbians. Children who have had exposure to language-rich environments and play-based early learning experiences are more likely to develop the skills, knowledge and dispositions to support their success in school.

R E G U L A T I O N S

The District must:

- Ensure each child who attends each Centre is assigned a Personal Education Number (PEN), using the PEN request process the District currently uses or the automated process built into MyEducation BC.
- Collect enrolment and attendance information about each child (by age) who attends each Centre including the child's name and age and his or her family's contact information
- Ensure positive attendance for each child attending is reported by entering that information into MyEducation BC
- Facilitators running the program are certified Early Childhood Educators
- StrongStart Early Learning Centres are situated in appropriate, available school space, preferably schools offering Kindergarten
- Designated space is or will be surplus to school district need and will be dedicated to the Centre
- A parent, family member, or caregiver accompanies the child in the StrongStart Centre at all times – the Service in the Strong Start Centre is not designated child care

The Ministry extracts attendance reports once a year on July 10 (attendance for September through June).

The District will submit to the Ministry an account of quality assurance measures practiced in the School Year using the Early Years Summary Report by the end of September.

Appendix 1

“StrongStart Early Learning Centres” - A free early learning program located in schools, for preschool children accompanied by parent, other adult family member or caregiver, created through an agreement between school districts and the Ministry of Education.

“StrongStart BC Early Learning Outreach Programs” – provide quality early learning experiences for children in rural and remote communities. Outreach programs operate on a reduced schedule to accommodate the many remote locations they serve.

“Early learning” – the knowledge, skills and dispositions that preschool children acquire in the years before school entry in key developmental domains: cognitive, physical, language and communication, social and emotional.

StrongStart BC facilitators provide a positive early learning experience for children (aged birth to five) and their families. Their goal is to create an interactive, play-based environment that supports caregivers and children to enjoy learning together, develop essential skills and prepare for a transition to school.

Facilitators influence, nurture and support our next generation reach its fullest potential by:

- Planning and leading early learning activities and curriculum based on the B.C. Early Learning Framework
- Offering thoughtful and creative play experiences
- Exploring language through story, music and word-play
- Fostering discovery through books, art and manipulatives
- Modelling healthy exercise and food choices
- Encouraging parents and caregivers to participate in activities
- Supporting and facilitating parent/caregiver and child relationships
- Referring and connecting families to community resources

General information on StrongStart Centres may be found at:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/early-learning/teach/strongstart-bc>

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