

Hands-On Home-Learning (HOHL) Parent Manual

K-9 DL Program Information for Families

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Introduction

Hands-On Home-Learning (HOHL) is a BC Certified Distributed Learning (DL) program of Oak and Orca Bioregional School provided by the Bioregional Education Association. HOHL includes K-9 and High School DL programs as well as blended learning opportunities both in our School House and in the Forest at Mount Doug Park and on PKOLS Mountain.

This Parent Manual is for families in our K-9 Distributed Learning Program and aims to answer many frequently asked questions about how our program works.

If you have any other questions you can contact us by e-mail at hands-on@orcapod.ca or the “oak-“ e-mail address provided to you by your teacher.

Errors and Omissions

This manual is currently (and likely will always be!) under revision. Please forgive any errors and omissions within it. Feel free to e-mail your corrections, comments and ideas to hands-on@orcapod.ca. Your questions are a valuable resource and assistance will speed up the process of producing a more useful document for our families.

Background and History

HOHL is brought to you by a partnership between the Bioregional Education Association and the Victoria International Development Education Association. It is run from Oak and Orca Bioregional School in Victoria at 2738 Higgins Street.

Oak and Orca Bioregional School

Oak and Orca Bioregional School was developed to meet the needs of families, students, and staff and to provide wholesome, child-led, and unique learning opportunities. Ideas flow freely among community members and the learning environment continues to develop, shift, and improve through active contribution. Diverse learning and teaching techniques are employed and explored depending on the needs of individual learners.

We believe that we cannot force students to learn. What we can do is offer them engaging opportunities to be interested in learning and encourage ongoing development of skills. To this end, we provide an open learning environment and diverse learning experiences.

Our vision is to empower students to create fundamental social change towards more fulfilling and ecologically sustainable communities. We are working towards this now by helping students and their families to live more bioregional lifestyles

Victoria International Development Education Association (VIDEA)

VIDEA has been promoting and facilitating education on global issues for over 25 years. VIDEA actively engages teachers, students, youth and the general public in learning about and becoming involved in international issues. They focus particularly on socially just and environmentally sustainable global practice.

VIDEA joined this partnership in order to make a connection with families who wish to explore global issues with their children. Their involvement ensures that sustainability, social justice, diversity, and other global issues have been fully integrated into our school.

Bioregional Education Association

The Bioregional Education Association is a provincial Society and federal Charity. The Association has a Board of Directors which meets on a regular basis to make higher level decisions regarding the operation of our programs. The following graphic outlines the Bioregional Education Association's philosophies

The **BIOREGIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION** strives to empower families to create fundamental social change towards more fulfilling and ecologically sustainable communities. We are working towards this now by helping children and families to live more bioregionally and teaching children to be individuals while working together as a community.

Our Vision
We envision a world in which:


- communities are fulfilling, richly diverse & ecologically sustainable
- all people are connected to and feel part of the natural environment
- children are connected to a diversity of people in their community
- children and adults act to maintain and create their communities
- diversity is tolerated, supported and celebrated

Our Mission
We will work towards achieving our vision by establishing educational programs. In our ideal educational culture:

- physical, intellectual, emotional & spiritual growth are fostered
- we learn about our local bioregion, its natural & cultural elements
- education is based on the interests of the children
- children's intrinsic ability to learn is recognized and fostered
- individual expression is tolerated and fostered
- children, parents, teachers and mentors learn together
- the learning environment is safe and inclusive
- children and adults participate equally in age-appropriate decisions
- choices acknowledge responsibility toward the greater environment

Our Goals
Our goals are to create programs where children will:

- be offered activities which address their intellectual, physical, emotional and spiritual growth
- personally control as much of their individual educational process as is possible (a child-directed educational framework)
- learn local history, ecology and geography
- study local ecosystems and their connection to and reliance upon these
- discover diverse world views
- be challenged to act in environmentally responsible and sustainable ways



Donations can be made to the Association towards our programs, for which we can provide a charitable tax receipt.

Program Structure

Hands-On Home-Learning (HOHL) is an ungraded Distributed Learning (DL) program for K-9 students. Being ungraded means that students in our program are not enrolled in a grade level and are not restricted to curriculum within their traditional grade grouping. Students are encouraged to study topics of interest to them at an age- and ability-appropriate level. As a student progresses, topics may be studied again, often achieving different learning objectives and gaining different skills as they are revisited.

Groupings (Fir, Pine, Cedar)

Broad age groupings allow us to better support students in their learning. Within the ungraded K-9 program, HOHL has 3 groupings:

- Fir (approximately ages 5 - 9)
- Pine (approximately ages 9 - 12)
- Cedar (approximately ages 12 - 15)

Because of these groupings we are able to create and/or suggest a variety of learning activities geared towards students in one of the groups. This does not limit students to activities within their age grouping; all activities are available to all students upon request. A student who is between Fir and Pine, for example, may choose activities designed for either group.

Our DL educators work primarily with students in one grouping (exceptions include families with multiple learners in different age groupings or families who work with the same teacher over a number of years). In this way we are able to focus our skills and resources and utilize the strengths of our staff.

These groupings were also developed to meet the standards of the BC Ministry of Education in ensuring that students are exposed to a variety of content and learning standards. As a student reaches the Ministry of Education's Checkpoint Years (grade 3, 6, 9) students also approach the transition from one group to the next (or to high school in the case of Pine students). Extra consideration and suggestions/activities can be offered to ensure the students cover the curriculum for their current group.

Responsibilities

All parents have the same responsibilities, but the way they are carried out can look very different for different families.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents are responsible for:

- **Facilitating activities with their student (Required):** Even if a student can read an activity, parents will need to be accessible to help with explanations or guidance when needed.
- **Regular communication and conferencing with a teacher (Required):** This can be achieved by phone, video conferencing, or e-mail. Regular communication gives the teacher and family an opportunity to discuss the learning, which in turn informs the development of the learning plan throughout the year. It also helps us in creating/suggesting relevant learning activities. Phone or Video Conferencing is expected to happen about once a month.
- **Facilitate regular communication between student and teacher (Required):** Students conference directly with a teacher by phone or video conferencing as soon as they feel comfortable. Other communication between the student and teacher could be in the form of short emails, post, videos of the student sharing what they are proud of, photographs of the student learning or of samples of products of learning activities. A teacher will discuss ways to facilitate direct communication between them and the student(s) in the best way(s) for your family.
- **Submitting weekly learning samples (Required):** Learning samples in a variety of learning areas (subjects) must to be sent to your teacher on a weekly basis. In conjunction with regular communication, the collection of weekly learning samples you submit demonstrates growth over time and provides your teacher with concrete examples of the learning that has been happening. Learning samples are also used in assessment and tracking of learning.
- **Answering reflection questions (Required):** Five times per year, you and your student will be asked to complete and submit a reflection activity to explore the [BC Curriculum's Core Competencies](#). Your student's responses will form part of their learning summary (report) and will help guide future learning discussions and support.
- **Submitting a weekly learning log (Optional):** Some families prefer to submit a weekly log outlining the learning that occurred during each week. Your teacher will be happy to receive and incorporate any written communication you choose to share. Please see the "Submissions" section for more detailed information on how to submit.

Teacher Responsibilities

The Hand-On Home-Learning program is supported and maintained by the entire staff at Oak and Orca School. Teams of staff work to support every aspect of our program.

- **Creating a Learning Plan:** One of our teachers will work with you to create an initial learning plan when you are getting started.
- **Maintaining the learning plan throughout the year:** Your family will eventually be assigned a particular teacher to support your learning throughout the year. Once you are assigned a teacher, they will keep track of your student's progress, look at learning samples, link your learning to the [BC Curriculum](#) learning standards, and make suggestions of activities you might want to explore with your student(s).
- **Regular Communication and Conferencing with your family:** Your teacher will communicate with you and your student(s) on a regular basis, mostly by e-mail but also over the phone or by video conferencing to discuss your family's learning and needs.
- **Suggesting ideas and resources:** To enhance your learning and meet learning outcomes that might be missing for your family, your teacher will send suggestions of activities you and your student(s) can work on.

Your teacher is available as a resource! Please feel free to ask questions and let them know what you are needing to support your learning throughout the year.

Submissions

Submissions to HOHL include:

- Weekly Learning Samples,
- Bi-Monthly Reflection Activities (5 per year),
- other files

and can be submitted to HOHL using:

- Google Drive Shared Folders (Oak and Orca must share the folder with you - please let your teacher know what Google Account to use)
- E-mail (to hands-on@orcapod.ca or the “oak-“ e-mail address provided to you by your teacher)
- Post (2738 Higgins Street / Victoria BC / V8T 3N1)
- Fax (250-383-6619)

Weekly Learning Samples

Learning samples allow your HOHL teacher to get a sense of your student’s learning, interests, and progress. Further, they provide an opportunity for your student to share what they are excited about and/or proud of with their teacher. It is important to submit learning samples to demonstrate all areas of learning, and to represent your student’s learning process as well as the final products that you and your student want to share.

You can submit a variety of files, including photos, scans, videos, and audio files, all representing your student’s learning process and finished products.

If you aren’t sure what to submit, try taking a few photos of different things your student is working on during the week and then discussing them with your teacher. They can help support you to submit meaningful samples that can be used to enhance your student’s learning plan, create learning summaries, and spark suggestions of future learning activities you might try.

Bi-Monthly Reflection Activities

Five times per year, you and your student(s) will be asked to complete and submit a reflection activity to explore the [BC Curriculum’s Core Competencies](#). Your student’s responses will form part of their learning summary (report) and will help guide future learning discussions and support.

The reflection activities will be sent out with requests to complete them by the end of each term. The approximate due dates will be October 20, December 20, February 20, April 20, June 20 (subject to change). While these are subject to change, the reflection activities are currently available online for all 5 terms: [Term 1](#), [Term 2](#), [Term 3](#), [Term 4](#), [Term 5](#)

Preparing Learning Samples for Submission

We want learning samples to be efficient and easeful both for our families to submit and for our teachers to view. Please consider the following when submitting samples:

- **File Format:**

Submitting image files as .png or .jpg is preferred.

Submitting text files as .pdf or .txt is preferred.

- **File Size:**

With cameras having higher and higher resolution these days, image and video files in particular are getting larger and larger in size. You can help by shrinking photos prior to sending them to HOHL and by taking video at a lower resolution. There is lots of information on the Internet about how to shrink photos. Here is one website (not endorsed by HOHL) that might help: <https://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/how-to-resize-an-image/>

- **Image Clarity:**

Remember that your teacher probably doesn't need a lot of detail, but that there is a balance especially if you are photographing text! Some things that can help photos to be more clear are increasing the lighting on the object you are photographing and holding the camera more still.

How to Submit Learning Samples and Other Digital Files

- Asking your teacher to set up a shared Google Drive (see below)
- E-mail to hands-on@orcapod.ca or the "oak-" e-mail address provided to you by your teacher
- Using Canada Post mail or by Fax

A note about Google Drive:

Google Drive is a safe and easeful way to share your files with your teacher. Your teacher will create a folder in our School's Google Drive and share the folder with your Google Account so it will be accessible by you as well as your teacher. You can upload files from handheld devices as well (mobile phones, tablets, etc) If you are interested in using this system, please ask your teacher for a shared folder.

We would like to note that the servers for Google Drive may be located in the US or in other countries which means that the data uploaded there will be subject to the laws of those countries. In particular due to the Patriot Act the United States government may, by court order, request personal information from Google. Google is noted for it's online presence and security and will not share your information unless required to by the court. Even so, we recommend not to store sensitive documents and information in any online system. Most learning samples do not contain identifying information and as such we believe Google is a safe place for most information you would submit to us. If you feel concerned about online security and safety, you can choose another method to submit learning samples. We make every effort not to use cloud storage for your information without your consent.

Expectations

While HOHL aims to be a very flexible program supporting families with a variety of learning styles and goals and meeting students where they are at, there are some rules that we are required to follow in order to continue to be a DL school in BC. To meet our requirements, we must ensure families meet certain expectations in order to remain in our DL program.

Remaining Active in HOHL

Being *Active* in Hands-On Home-Learning means that you are following through on the responsibilities listed in the “Responsibilities” section. In other words, it means a learning plan has been co-created with a teacher, regular communication is maintained, weekly learning samples are being submitted in a variety of learning areas, and reflection activities are being attempted whenever possible.

- According to the Ministry of Education Active Policy, for HOHL to enrol a student they must be active in our program before and continue to be active throughout the year.
 - Families are expected to submit learning samples weekly beginning with their first week of school and to stay actively engaged with the program throughout the school year. If a student is not active in our program, we cannot offer DL services for that student.
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Quantity of Learning Samples and Staying On Track

You must provide at least 34 weeks of learning samples (submitted weekly). To enable your teacher to assess the learning, you need to submit a diverse collection of weekly learning samples covering all learning areas of the BC curriculum.

If you start submitting the 34 weeks of learning samples at the beginning of September, there can be up to 4 weeks of holiday taken during the school year taken at your family's convenience. Please communicate any intended holidays to your teacher prior to taking those holidays.

A Special Circumstance request can be made for any week missed due to illness, moving, or unforeseen circumstance that will make submitting learning samples a burden. The special circumstances form is available at <https://orcapod.ca>.

If you have fallen behind with learning sample submission, please discuss this with your teacher as we can support you to get back on track with work samples. We want to help and have ways to quickly get things back on track. Please know that we understand when things arise that get in the way of remaining active with HOHL and do not pass judgements about your family's circumstances. We are here to support you whenever we can.

Assessment/Evaluation of Learning

HOHL teachers continuously assess what students are doing and how it connects to the BC Curriculum. Throughout the year they review the learning standards and notice areas that are covered in depth and areas that may be missing from the learning. Teachers use this information to provide learning suggestions that families can use to enhance their learning.

We provide anecdotal summaries five times per year which are based entirely on what the student has done and achieved. Students are not graded, judged, or compared to others. Our summaries focus on individualized assessment in a natural context as we feel this can provide more authentic evidence of the learning that has taken place than traditional testing strategies.

Individualized Assessment

Assessment is based on the learning goals of the student. Our goal is for each student to progress along a unique learning path at a rate that is right for them. Based on their individualized learning experiences, we continuously and holistically evaluate the depth to which the BC Curriculum Learning Standards have been addressed. We encourage students to see the value of the skills they are working on and to use them in natural contexts.

Suggestions

Throughout the year teachers review the learning samples sent in for a student and conversations between teachers, parents, and students. Using information from these sources and their broader understanding of the student's development and interests, the teacher can create suggestions of activities that will support the exploration of a variety of learning standards while encouraging the interests of the student and family. Suggestions may also be used to offer ideas to cover areas of learning that might fill gaps in the types of learning experiences a student has been exposed to over time.

Summaries

Anecdotal and non-judgemental summaries describe what a student has done. Reports on how a student is doing can be a sensitive issue. We refer to our reports as "summaries" because they are focused on observation-based summarizing of the learning experiences we see taking place in the home-learning context.

Whenever possible, we refrain from using judgment, either positive or negative, in our summaries. The level of observation we use reflects our connection and appreciation for each student, and we do not use the summary as a vehicle for praise, criticism, favouritism, or future expectations.

Supplies, Resources, Classes

While our philosophy encourages learning using resources that are readily available to most families at no extra cost, some students learning at home may have need of resources, supplies, or access to classes to support the learning experiences they choose to do to cover the BC Curriculum. HOHL is able to support families who have need of resources, supplies, or classes by request.

In supporting families, we are required to follow the BC Ministry of Education guidelines which apply to all DL schools in BC. Some of the guidelines can be found in their document [“Third Party Services and Resources – Guidelines for Independent School Authorities Operating and Distributed Learning Program”](#)

If you find that you are needing supplies, resources or classes to support your student in meeting their goals to follow the BC Curriculum, please communicate these needs with your teacher. They may have suggestions of how you can accomplish your goals without making a purchase or they can assist you in making a request from HOHL.

Any resources, supplies, or classes paid for by HOHL must be directly connected to the student’s learning plan by a teacher, must be requested from and approved by HOHL staff, and must be paid directly by HOHL.

The Purpose

HOHL recognizes the need to support families learning at home in accessing resources, lessons, programs and supplies that would generally be available to a student attending a school. We also know that families have access to different resources depending on a variety of factors including location, family skills and knowledge, abilities, personality, etc.

Usually families request support in order to address elements of an educational program that are difficult to deliver at a distance (e.g. music lessons, language programs, or physical education opportunities). It is meant to support students in experiencing a well-rounded educational program. Please note that accessing funds is not an entitlement and must be planned in conjunction with a teacher and the school in order to best support your student’s learning.

Break Down

A total of \$1000 per full-time student can be available with the following subdivisions:

- Up to \$600 can be put toward consumable resources: classes and lessons, field trip admissions, specialized consumable supplies, etc.
- Loan items: equipment, text books, non-consumable books, non-consumable resources, non-consumable supplies
- Licenses

- Up to \$350 (per family) of Internet reimbursement covering up to 60% of your family's monthly Internet cost for up to 10 months (September through June)
- Preloaded Debit Card fee (see the “HOHL Preloaded Debit Card” section with the same title below)

Again, the maximum that can be made available for each student is \$1000, made up of some combination of the subdivisions above.

All expenses must be approved and paid directly to the third-party by the school. Please note that by law we cannot reimburse families for anything they have already paid for (with the exception of your internet bill).

Allocation Time Frames

Half of the amount described in the “Break Down” section can be made available in the Fall after a student becomes active in HOHL - in other words after communication is established, a learning plan has been co-created with a teacher, and some learning samples have been submitted.

Families who remain active in HOHL in the Spring can access the second half of the amount described in the “Break Down” section.

Requests are accepted at any time October through April for families who are active in HOHL. All requests for supplies, resources, and classes must be made by May 1. Some funds may be available in September for families who are already active in HOHL.

Additional notes:

- If HOHL has not begun to receive learning samples by the end of September, enrolment in HOHL is disallowed by the Ministry and no funds will be available. Similarly for students who wish to enrol in HOHL mid-year, if HOHL has not begun to receive learning samples by the beginning of February, enrolment in HOHL is disallowed by the Ministry and no funds will be available.
- Families may request a Special Circumstance (see the “Quantity of Learning Samples and Staying On Track” section under “Expectations”)
- Families are expected to submit learning samples weekly and to stay active in HOHL throughout the school year. If your DL teacher has not received learning samples, funds will not be available to accommodate requests for supplies, resources or classes. Please connect with your teacher to discuss how we can support your family to get on track with learning samples.
- Some exceptions can be made to allow for some of the Spring portion to be available in the Fall in special circumstances and for families who are active in the program.

Making Requests

All requests to HOHL for support for resources, supplies, and classes must be made using the Orcapod Request form available at <https://orcapod.ca>. Please fill out the form as thoroughly and

specifically as possible as the more information you provide, the less chance we will need to contact you to ask for clarification, and the faster we can process your request.

We do our best to accommodate all requests, however your requests must be reviewed by a teacher and the HOHL admin team to ensure that it fits within the Ministry of Education parameters on what we are allowed to purchase and that it will contribute to achieving the goals and experiences in your student's learning plan.

In most cases, HOHL contacts companies directly to set up a purchasing relationship and arrange payment. Purchases may be made from the vendor you have requested, or we may use another vendor to purchase the same or an equivalent product. We retain the right to purchase from our preferred vendors for ease. We try to purchase ethically by using small local businesses, purchasing environmentally sensitive products, and so on. See our ethical purchasing guidelines for more information: [Bioregional Purchasing](#)

If you wish for us to make a purchase with a specific business in your community (i.e. teacher store, music lessons), it can speed up the process if you talk to them about HOHL making purchases from them by business cheque in advance.

Turnaround Time

We address requests as quickly as possible and can safely say that the average turnaround time is about 2 weeks for our part in accommodating a request (not including shipping time for example). Some requests are more complicated than others and some times of year tend to bring more requests to our team. In these cases, requests may take more time to process. We also find that requests are sometimes held up because the third party provider does not respond to us in a timely fashion. The Criminal Record Check process (described in the next section) also frequently takes quite a bit of time to complete depending on the response time of the third party provider.

Criminal Record Check Policy

If you request classes/lessons/services from a third party (organization or individual), we must adhere to the following statement from Theo VanderWeg, Inspector of Independent Schools, in order to pay the third party:

Authorities operating independent schools are “employers’ under the Criminal Record Review Act (CRRRA). Pursuant to the CRRRA, employers must obtain Criminal Records Checks for their employees who work with children. The CRRRA defines an employee as “an individual who is employed by an employer and includes an independent contractor who has entered into an agreement with an employer” (CRRRA, Part 1,1).

The CRRRA does not apply where the third party service provider is an organization. When contracting with organizations, Independent School Authorities need to satisfy themselves that the organization has conducted appropriate background checks on its employees.

We have a procedure for obtaining what we need from an organization or individual and this process can increase the turnaround time for requests.

HOHL Preloaded Debit Cards

Some families may choose to request a preloaded debit card to allow them to make purchases of items that have been requested and approved by the HOHL team in advance. Unfortunately, but realistically, the card requests can take as long as a month to be processed by HOHL, processed by the bank, and then delivered to a family. There is a fee for obtaining a card which is covered by HOHL and is included in the “Break Down” section above. Preloaded Debit Cards can be requested using the Request a Card form linked from <https://orcapod.ca>. If you request a card, it will display the name of one student in your family but can be used for approved requests for all students registered in HOHL. The card should work at any retailer that supports VISA payments, however we have come across some vendors who are not willing to accept Preloaded Debit cards. Cards expire in June and unfortunately cannot be re-used from year to year.

Responsibilities for families holding HOHL Preloaded Card include:

- Submitting receipts for ALL purchases immediately after the purchase is made. Electronic receipts can be forwarded directly to hands-on@orcapod.ca. For non-digital receipts, photographs can be e-mailed or original receipts can be mailed.
- Using funds on the card only for the items that were requested and approved by HOHL.
- Letting HOHL know if a purchase falls through or is no longer needed

Unlike previous years, all requests for purchases on the HOHL Preloaded Debit Cards must be made in advance. The process to make a request is the same as for purchases that will be made directly by HOHL (see the “Making Requests” section). The only difference is that you would choose the Preloaded Card option for the Payment Type. Please ensure you have requested a Preloaded Card prior to making requests for purchases to be made on the card!

Once the HOHL team has processed your request, you will be notified that funds have been loaded onto the Preloaded Card and you can then check the balance on the card to confirm the funds are available and make the purchase.

Please note:

- No funds will be loaded on a Preloaded Card until receipts are received for previously purchased items.
- If a purchase is made on the Preloaded Card which has not been requested from and approved by the HOHL team, you will be required to either return the purchase and have the funds refunded onto the Preloaded Card, or to reimburse the school by cheque for the amount of the purchase.
- HOHL reserves the right to deactivate a card and to suspend further requests if non-approvable items have been purchased and have not been returned or reimbursed promptly or if receipts for purchases are not submitted in a timely fashion.

The above points are necessary for HOHL to ensure adherence to Ministry of Education Rules and we appreciate your understanding.

Internet Reimbursement

Parents who pay an Internet service provider for Internet access used in part to access HOHL at their student's home can request that HOHL provide partial reimbursement of the family Internet cost.

HOHL can reimburse up to 60% of your monthly Internet bill to a maximum of \$350 per family per school year can be reimbursed. Cheques are issued twice per year, at the beginning of February and July, to the person who is named on the bill.

To request Internet Reimbursement for the Fall, you must submit the Internet Reimbursement Form and a copy (scan/photo/photocopy/fax) of your itemized September Internet bill by December 15th. To request Internet Reimbursement for the Spring, you must submit the Internet Reimbursement Form and a copy (scan/photo/photocopy/fax) of your itemized February Internet bill by May 1st.

The itemized Internet bill submitted must show the cost of Internet separated from other services (e.g. TV, Cell Phone, Landline) as well as the address where the Internet service is provided. The payee must be a parent or guardian of the student(s) and the address must be the one we have on file.

Special Education Requests

Students who qualify in a funded special needs category may qualify for special services, equipment or technology.

Special education grants are a specific type of special purpose grant. Students who qualify for these grants will be provided special services through HOHL (extra support in the home, the services of therapists, tutoring services in specific areas, etc.) To qualify for these services and have them paid by the school, please use the same procedure described in the "Making Requests" section above. All services must be approved by the school and must be outlined in the Individual Education Plan for the student. They must be shown to be of support to the student in a learning/schooling context and a need for the services must be demonstrated.

It is important to know that even though money is received based on individual student needs, the Ministry of Education is clear that these funds are to be used to develop programs and services for all students with special education needs. While we apply funding to individual student needs, we are also required to provide services to students that need support but do not have funding. Therefore, as mandated by the Ministry the funding is lumped into a whole school special education budget to support all students with special needs and should never be seen as belonging to a particular student for his or her sole use. Funding is allocated to students based on need alone, not on the special education category or funding level.

If the need is identified for special equipment or technology to support a student's learning, under certain circumstances, the special education funds may be used to purchase the specialized equipment or technology. However, the Ministry has mandated that any equipment purchased remains the property of Oak and Orca School (DL) and therefore will be on loan to families for the duration of their enrolment with HOHL. Equipment and technology requests will be subject to a rigorous approval process, and an agreement must be made to return any equipment purchased to the school (or buy it from the school) when the student leaves the HOHL program.

Language Learning

The BC Ministry of Education requires students in grades 5-8 to study a language/languages that is/are not English. Although we are an ungraded program as much as possible, we must still support students in meeting this requirement. Please note that families with students in this age group (10-13) must include language learning in their learning plan and provide evidence of language learning. Your teacher can provide suggestions of how to approach language learning and we have some supports available including:

- **Rosetta Stone** - an online immersion language learning program involving listening, speaking and reading skills in a variety of languages. This software can be requested using the Rosetta Stone Request form at <https://orcapod.ca> and the license cost of \$100 is included in the funds described in the “Break Down” section under the “Supplies, Resources, Classes” heading.
- **Classes** - language classes can be requested as described in the “Supplies, Resources, Classes” section.
- **Language Resources** - language resources can be requested as described in the “Supplies, Resources, Classes” section.

Choosing a Language

The BC Curriculum requires one of the following languages: American Sign Language (ASL), French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Punjabi, and Spanish.

Students can have many different reasons for selecting a particular language, but sometimes want to try a language and then decide to change to another. We encourage students to choose a language and stick with it by the time they are age 11/12, so their language learning can progress from one year to the next. It is helpful if students choose a language that someone close by is familiar with so they can support ongoing language learning.

Cultural Exploration

In addition to learning to speak and listen in the chosen language, students study the culture of the countries where the language is spoken. This can take the form of readings and projects on the selected countries or culture and can include traditions, food, lifestyles, etc. Please ask your HOHL teacher for more information on learning outcomes and suggested activities for any of the listed languages.