

EDUCATION WEEK 2008

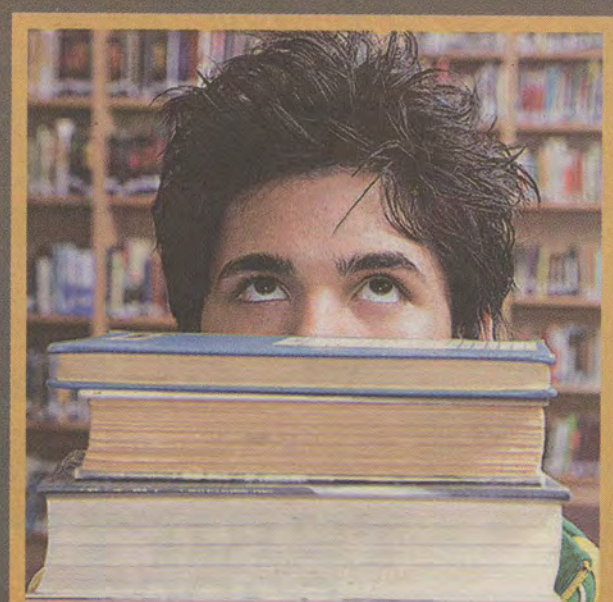
AN UPDATE FROM SCHOOL DISTRICT 64

Inside this special Issue:
News and Information on these schools

- Salt Spring Island
- Pender Islands
- Saturna Island
- Mayne Island
- Galiano Island



 **Driftwood**
GULF ISLANDS
 YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SINCE 1960





GISS PHOTOS BY JOHN CAMERON

Students in Gulf Islands Secondary School's Respectful Relationships program run by SWOVA.

Fact File GISS

- Facility built in 1994
- 600 students
- Grades 9 to 12
- International students from everywhere
- Active PAC and School Planning Council
- Full complement of academic programs
- Extensive fine arts programs, including GISPA
- Strong applied skills programs
- All major athletic programs
- Student leadership courses & opportunities
- Many extra-curricular functions and events
- French and Spanish, including French Immersion
- Distributed Learning for independent learners
- Phoenix Program for a different way and place to learn
- Excellent adult education program
- Strong sense of environmental and human sustainability
- 11 provincial scholarships in 2006-07 (among the highest rates in B.C.)

Program focus at island high school

Gulf Islands Secondary provides a strong academic program where our students achieve in the top 20 per cent of all high schools in British Columbia.

You may also be familiar with our high performing Fine Arts programs, including the Gulf Islands School of Performing Arts. In addition, Gulf Islands Secondary School offers many more opportunities for students to excel.

• The Distributed Learning Program provides students with a chance to take independent courses under teacher supervision.

It's a chance for students



Student works at Gulf Islands Secondary School.

through an Advanced Placement Art program.

• Our French Immersion program features a six-month reciprocal exchange between Quebec and British Columbia for interested French Immersion students.

• GISS is home to a large International Education program, hosting over 70 students from countries such as Mexico, Japan, Taiwan, Korea, Hong Kong, Germany and Brazil.

• The new tutorial program sees students able to choose their activity for the last hour of each day. Students demonstrate their responsibility by obtaining extra help from teachers, completing assignments, holding club meetings and rehearsals or taking additional courses through Distributed Learning.

• The SEEC program (Saturna Ecological Education Centre) provides our students with experiential, place-based Environmental Studies programs on Saturna Island.

We are proud of the diverse options we offer our students and our students recognize the opportunities they have.

Student choice and responsibility are a cornerstone of the way we do business at Gulf Islands Secondary School.

to learn at their own pace or to take courses not offered in our classrooms.

• In the Phoenix Program students are offered a self-directed, personalized learning experience in an alternate setting.

• For learners who are 19 years or older, the Adult Graduation Program is an opportunity to complete their graduation requirements by attending classes in the evening.

• Through our ACE-IT Trades programs students can receive high school credit and first-year college credits toward Cook Training or Carpentry from Camosun College.

• GISS athletic programs provide the opportunity for students to participate in a variety of sports, including rowing, golf, tennis and gymnastics.

• In the past few years our Yearbook program has been rewarded by having the Scorpion yearbook place in the top 10 of all Canadian yearbooks.

• The GIFTS (Gulf Islands Families Together Society) Transition Program provides support for students with disabilities as they transition from high school to the community.

• Our art department offers students the opportunity to build professional portfolios

Relationships make the difference

BY JUDY RADDYSH
GISS CO VICE-PRINCIPAL

Many of us would be hard pressed to keep up with the pace GISS students set — often logging 12-hour days as they meet their commitments.

And they do an admirable job of "doing it all."

They play, they coach, they organize and they lead.

We could tell you all about sports, Global Awareness, the Sustainability Board, the Yearbook crew, the Aboriginal Student Council, Student Government, Peer Tutoring and Peer Counselling, Big Buddies, the Gay-Straight Alliance and our Leadership class, but we think you get the idea.

If there's something that needs doing, there's always a student interested in getting it done.

But then, once in a while, things slow down enough for us to see what really makes this school great.

We got a nice phone call a few days ago from the grandfather of one of our new students who simply had to call because he was touched deeply by the kindness and caring our students showed his grandson in his difficult first days. He felt we should know that our students make a difference.

A recent guest at our school took the time to drop into our office and tell us about our students. "It's pretty clear by the way your students treat visitors and each other that you've got something pretty special going on here."

And we know it. We're the lucky ones who get to spend the day with these kids.

Last week a bus load of our students travelled off-island to cheer on one of their sports teams.

These students were loud and proud to be Scorpions, were respectful to the other team and their fans, and even cleaned up all the garbage when they left the gym.

We're still hearing from others about how impressed they were with our students.

So in the end, it's not the busy days, the amazing fine arts and applied skills, the excellent sports teams, the top-notch academics, or the many clubs and leadership opportunities that make this a special place.

In the end it's the relationships — kind, caring, respectful students who are proud to be part of the "best little high school in B.C."

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A school for the whole community



PHOTOS BY JOHN CAMERON

From top to bottom, high school students participate in sports, and the arts, and learn other skills as well as their academics.



BY MARTIN BLAKESLEY
PENDER PRINCIPAL

Pender Island School offers students in Kindergarten through Grade 12 diverse learning opportunities in rich learning environments.

Our school improvement goals focus on improving student learning outcomes in math; sustaining and further developing our positive school culture, and increasing students' and staff's levels of media literacy.

Our multi-age/multi-grade classrooms allow students to learn at their own grade levels, to review concepts and skills at lower levels and to be introduced to those at higher grade levels. As well, they promote healthy relationships between older and younger students, which we value and encourage. In this vein, we continue to pursue "restorative approaches," in which the emphasis is placed upon "putting things right" between and amongst all affected parties, rather than by simply identifying and punishing "wrong-doers."

Our home-based students — Spring Leaves — pursue individualized programs developed cooperatively by their parents and teacher, who assists students with their learning through tutoring, helps families access school-based and other programs and resources, and works collaboratively with parents to assess student progress.

Our Student Learning Centre (SLC) is dedicated to providing secondary students with effective and engaging individualized programs, involving different combinations of direct instruction and distance learning. Computer-based technologies figure prominently. Here, students



"... we continue to pursue 'restorative approaches,' in which the emphasis is placed upon 'putting things right'"

explore video production and digital editing using state-of-the-art computers.

Our SLC offers evening tutorial sessions to Pender's high school students on Tuesday evenings.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED
Pender Island School students in nature and on the school bus.

Fact File Pender Island School

- Located on rural North Pender Island, our K-12 school is proud to offer caring and supportive learning environments to 126 students.
- Innovative programming, focused on the individual learner's needs and complemented by excellent student support services and counselling programs, helps promote students' self-esteem and success.
- A well-equipped facility, a supportive staff and community, a great setting and wonderful young people

- make this a great place to learn and work.
- 126 enthusiastic students
- 14 committed staff members
- 1 supportive school community, involving:
 - 1 Parents' Advisory Council
 - 1 School Planning Council
 - A student Leadership Club
 - Dedicated volunteers

eyeGO.org

If you're a high school student you'll want to know that ArtSpring has joined eyeGo to the Arts, a national programme to help you attend live arts performances cheap — either at ArtSpring or at any other participating theatre anywhere in Canada.

Here's how it works:

Show up at the Box Office at any time, show your high school ID, and book a seat for any ArtSpring presented event (they'll be identified with the eyeGO logo).

You pay only \$5.

These are not lousy seats but the best available at the time you book. You don't need any special membership card, and you can get the same deal at any participating theatre anywhere in Canada. Check out the eyeGO website (www.eyeGO.org) for news and reviews and other cool stuff.

This great offer is available only to high-school students, and we're able to offer it courtesy of sponsorship from Ganges Village Market.

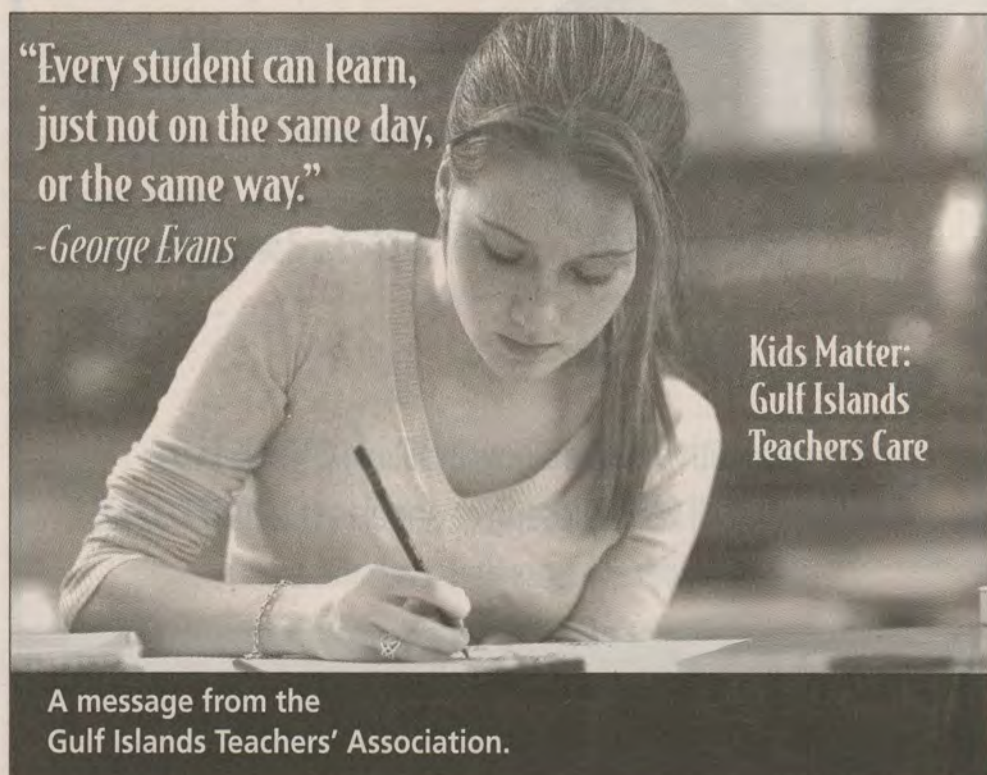
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"Every student can learn, just not on the same day, or the same way."

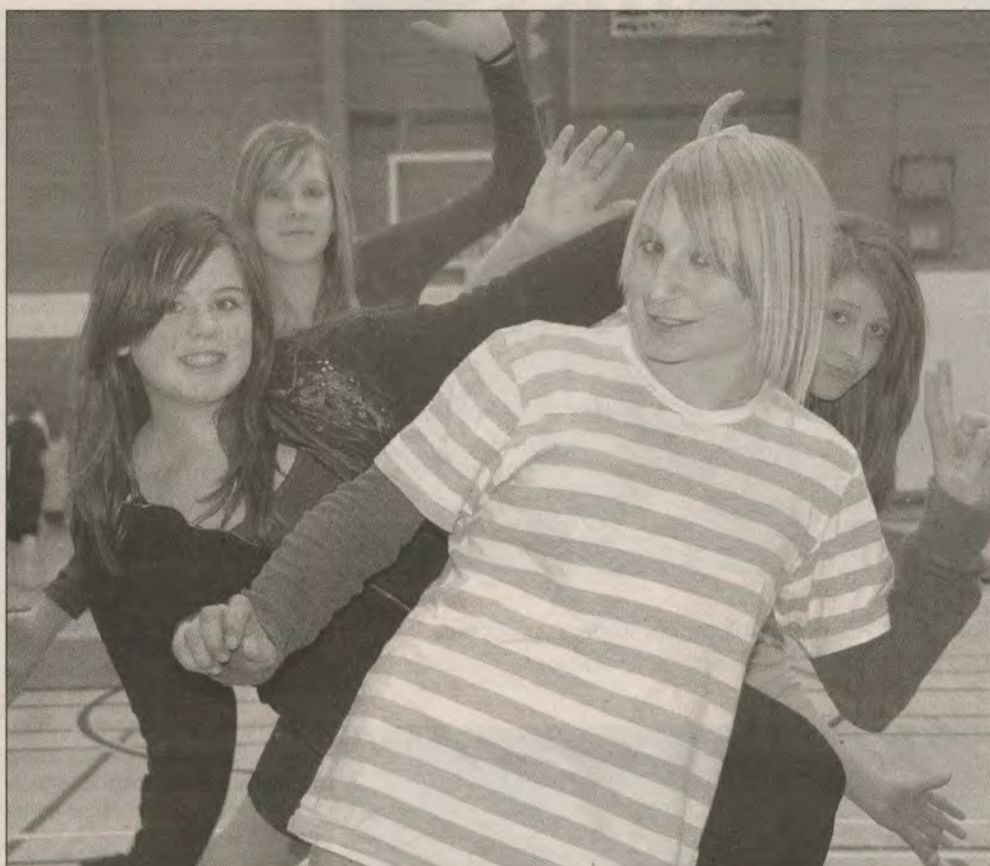
-George Evans



Kids Matter:
Gulf Islands
Teachers Care

A message from the
Gulf Islands Teachers' Association.

Happy exuberance at Saltspring Island Middle School



Students above, and above right, learn and have fun at SIMS.

PHOTOS BY DERRICK LUNDY

BY KEVIN VINE
SIMS PRINCIPAL

Saltspring Island Middle School: a school dedicated to middle years students, where life-long learning is a passion and active community participation is valued.

Our school community's mission is to provide a safe and inclusive learning environment which fosters academic and artistic achievement, physical fitness, emotional well-being, social responsibility and global awareness.

Saltspring Island Middle School serves all students in Grades 6 through 8 from Salt Spring Island as well as any students who choose to make the journey across the water from the other islands in our district: Mayne, Galiano, Saturna and the Penders.

Our staff is committed to working with children at this transformational phase of their development. Our school's curriculum and programming are based on how learning works best for adolescents. These are formative years for our students: we acknowledge that the learning interests, skills, self concept and values they will

hold as adults will largely be formed during their journey through adolescence.

As young teens, our students are approaching a time in their lives when they are going to have to make choices in the pathways they take with their learning. It is important they experience as many alternatives as possible so when it is time for them to commit to their choices, they are able to do so from more informed and experienced perspectives.

To this end, we offer an extensive array of Exploratories: short mini-courses that provide students with introductory exposure to a variety of topics. These include a variety of practical/applied skills and fine arts courses, including band (see the Fact File). Our bands are exceptional and do extremely well in regional festivals.

The social and emotional challenges faced by our students are supported in a variety of ways. Our school counsellor — with support from our local community services counsellors and public health nurse — provides counselling services and educational programs,

which address topics such as maturation, drugs and alcohol, nutrition and sexuality.

The goal of our physical education program is to engage our students in physical activity that will become part of a life-long lifestyle. Offerings include: volleyball, basketball, track and field, gymnastics, personal fitness, and more. A unique feature of our school is the "Tsunami Basketball League" — coached, refereed, and supported by our parents. This is a learning league for Grades 6 and 7, and involved more than 70 students this year. Our Grade 8 teams are, by design, more competitive and typically place at the top of their leagues in play with other central Vancouver Island middle schools.

Our school hosts a Late French Immersion program, with three classes of students in Grades 6, 7, and 8. The process for entry into the program begins in the spring of the preceding year.

Visit our school to see the happy exuberance of our kids. Catch the wave! Go Tsunami!



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Fact File Saltspring Middle School

School Goals:

1. Academic
To recognize the differences in the ways we learn as individuals
 - a. to become better readers, writers and speakers
 - b. to improve our achievement in mathematics
2. Community
To continue to improve connections between the school and the community — "It takes a village to raise a child"
 - 285 students (2007-08) in grades 6 to 8. Approximately 90 of these students are currently in our Late French Immersion program.
 - Practical Arts Exploratories: woodworking, food preparation, textiles, forensic science, leadership, woodworking, environmental sciences, orienteering, first aid and technology.
 - Fine Arts Exploratories: graphic arts, dance, and theatre; band instruction at all levels (beginner, concert, jazz, and ensemble performance).
 - Our "Literature Circles" program enjoys continuing success; new book sets

- of quality literature and new teaching strategies are leading to a new enthusiasm for literacy for both students and teachers!
- Student Support Services team provides comprehensive support for all students, and provides modified or adapted programming for those with special needs.
 - Parents can track their child's achievement on the school's website, where teachers post student marks on a regular basis.
 - The school is a leader in Information Technology, with two full labs of computers and computers in each classroom.
 - Weekly newsletters are available in paper and electronic format.
 - School website: sims.school.sd64.bc.ca/
 - Parents are involved as coaches, mentors, tutors, guest speakers, workshop facilitators, gardeners, carpenters, drivers, fundraisers, "Safe Arrival" phoners, Parent Advisory Council and more.
 - Our strong and active PAC is filled with newly involved parents who are dedicated to including our students in making the SIMS community the best it can be!



Above left, muddy football players from Salt Spring Island Middle School. Above right, Saturna Ecological Education Centre high school students pull together as they explore their own Independent Directed Studies.

Saturna Ecological Education Centre welcomes high school learners

BY STEVE DUNSMUIR
SATURNA PRINCIPAL

The Saturna Ecological Education Centre (SEEC) lies nestled in the beautiful Lyall Creek Valley on Saturna Island, yet it is becoming very much a part of the Salt Spring Island educational landscape.

In partnership with Gulf Islands Secondary School, SEEC offers an exciting and unique experiential education program for Grade 11-12 GISS students who are looking for a new adventure that allows them to explore their personal interests, take increased responsibility for their own learning, and become part of a very small and supportive community.

Each and every one of our students from kindergarten to Grade 12 is actively involved in designing his or her own Independent Directed Studies course in an area of passion or curiosity.

Provided with their very own community mentor, planning assistance and a wealth of Saturna resources, our high school students have explored a wide range of topics, while earning valuable credits towards graduation.

During our first semester of the year, our eight GISS students were responsible for publishing a field guide for Winter Cove, producing a documentary film, designing and building a storage shed, planning and



SEEC students are proud of their new bus and the opportunity for even more explorations on Saturna Island and beyond.

"... our high school students have explored a wide range of topics, while earning credits towards graduation."

hosting a Multi-Cultural Night at the Community Hall, teaching self-defence

classes, developing a day of engaging experiences at a sheep farm and learning how to command and sail a traditional Spanish long-boat!

High school students who join us for the semester live on Saturna for three days each week, staying in local cabins and cottages, and getting involved in the natural and human communities of the island.

Besides designing and exploring their own courses, the small class of eight also experiences ecologically-focused courses such as

Geography 12, Biology 11, Teaching and Learning 11, Tourism 11, Community Recreation and an environmentally themed English 11 or 12.

SEEC is currently accepting registration for the fall and spring semesters of next school year, and is on the lookout for current Grade 10-11 students who could benefit from a semester of powerful small group experiential living and learning in a very unique setting. Check us out at www.seec64.ca or call 250-539-3532 for more information.

Fact File Saturna School

Principal educator: Steve Dunsmuir

K-6 teacher: Jessica Reveley

Secretary/custodian: Laura Dunsmuir

- Saturna Island School is a two-room school located in the Lyall Creek valley on Saturna Island, just a short walk from the beach.

- Features a multi-age classroom of local elementary children in kindergarten to Grade 6 as well as a high school class of Grade 10-12 students who travel to our island each week from Salt Spring, Pender, Galiano and beyond!

- Very small class sizes mean that students receive considerable individual attention and flexible programs that are relevant to their own needs, interests and talents.

- Most classroom themes and activities involve all students in a cooperative effort that blends the skills of each child to create a vibrant learning community.

- In October, hosted over 150 visiting learners of all ages from Salt Spring Island, offering overnight Eco-Adventure programs involving a diverse array of outdoor games and experiences.

- Monthly publication of a school report in the Saturna Sunset Scribbler as well as regular coverage in the Island Tides newspaper.

- Very active and supportive Parent Advisory Committee, Saturna Ecological Education Society, and island community.

- Visits to other district schools for cultural events and connections.

- Annual Christmas Concert is an important seasonal tradition for the island.

- Salmon enhancement project. This year raising over 150 chum salmon to release into Lyall Creek.

- Active participation in the Pennies for Patients Program in support of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

School goals:

maintaining strengths in student writing, numeracy, and social responsibility, while continuing to evolve into an ecological learning centre.

"If you can imagine it, you can achieve it;
if you can dream it, you can become it."

William Arthur Ward



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Embracing change and family involvement

BY OSCAR HANSON
PHOENIX ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL

Phoenix is a small, holistic school inspired by its natural setting on Drake Road, with a deep sense of family, community and society.

Our pedagogy is rooted in a belief that organic, dynamic change is to be embraced. We welcome the resulting evolution that comes from the input and actions of family and staff.

The Phoenix community celebrates diverse paths of learning. Our ultimate goal is to develop and inspire individuals with healthy attitudes, quality skills and a commitment to lifelong learning.

Phoenix School follows a multi-age teaching philosophy in its two multi-age classrooms: kindergarten to Grade 3, and Grades 4-8. A multi-age philosophy includes a focus on students' individual progress through a developmentally appropriate curriculum.

Our classrooms are diverse learning communities that provide an environment where each student's academic, social and emotional needs are met. Instruction includes whole class and cross-grade groupings where students have the opportunity to interact and learn from each other, and benefit from the various ages, abilities and interests

"It is a place where students, parents and staff have a voice and are extensively involved in the decision-making and educational process."

in the class.

Phoenix School offers a cooperative, family-centred approach to learning. It is a place where students, parents and staff have a voice and are extensively involved in the decision-making and educational processes.

At Phoenix, programs are enhanced, enriched and supported through strong parental involvement. Our community of learners works together to develop a comprehensive educational experience. While teachers have the responsibility for the education of the students in their classrooms, the opinions, involvement and support of parents in this school are expected and welcomed.

Phoenix's school goals for 2007-08 are:

- To enhance the development of social responsibility among students.
- To improve each student's comprehension of and response to written materials.

The Explorations Program is one of the cornerstones of Phoenix School. It is founded on the belief that we want our students to have the opportunity to learn new skills and develop new areas of interest from a mentor who is passionate about the subject.

Explorations are offered throughout the year in five-week cycles one afternoon per week.

Explorations cover a wide range of topics that include all the creative arts, mathematics, sciences, language arts, social studies, sports, practical arts and more. Students choose their Exploration and work in small multi-age groups. Exploration leaders are parents, community members, staff or students who have a passion for the subject and can communicate in a positive way to the students.

Examples of Explorations are origami, willow weaving, cooking, clay work, cob creations, lantern making, sports, woodwork, computers and knitting.



PHOTOS BY AMY GEDDES AND CONTRIBUTED

Phoenix Elementary School students have fun while they learn.



It takes many hands and many hearts to keep our schools working for our kids and our communities.

We're the bus drivers, special needs assistants, clerical staff, custodians, maintenance and computer support staff who work with students on a daily basis.

Getting students to school and keeping their schools clean, safe and ship shape is what we are here to do and we're proud to do it. But we also get involved with extra curricular activities from sports teams and drama to dry grad.

And of course, many of us are proud parents of students who attend school on the Gulf Islands.



CUPE Local 788 Gulf Island Schools Support public education.

Fact File Phoenix Elementary Fact File

- A small, family-oriented school
- Located on a beautifully treed acreage near Ganges
- Maximum enrolment of 42 students in Kindergarten to Grade 8
- Two teachers, education assistant and part-time librarian
- Safe, nurturing and open learning environment
- Multi-age classes
- Unique weekly Explorations program
- Salmon Enhancement Project
- Student Leadership Club
- Literacy Groups
- Allows for flexible attendance to accommodate home schooling needs
- Welcomes and encourages family involvement
- Strong fine and performing arts programs
- Encourages exploration of and respect for nature
- Character building through Virtues program
- Whole school meetings
- Has an active and supportive parents' group
- Annual Medieval Faire (June 6, 2008 - community welcome to attend)



PHOTO BY JOHN CAMERON

High school students attend Environmental Action day at GISS.

Fact File Mayne Elementary and Junior Secondary

Mayne Fact File

- A small rural school with a current enrollment of 34 students in K-8.
- We offer a varied curriculum that includes traditional subjects plus quilting, acrobatics, woodworking, band and after-school soccer.

- Our experienced staff facilitate learning that is inquiry-based and student-centred.
- Mayne School relies heavily upon the active participation of parents and volunteer community members.

Individualized instruction as well as after-school programs enrich learners

BY TY BINFET
MAYNE PRINCIPAL

Mayne Elementary and Junior Secondary is a dynamic school currently serving 34 students in grades K-8.

Our students are divided into two distinct classrooms (K-3 and 4-8). Given our small size, we are able to offer individualized instruction to meet the needs of our varied student learners. Additionally, we have several adult learners enrolled in independent learning programs aimed at meeting high school graduation requirements.

While we are a small school, we have an active and varied curriculum. In addition to the standard subjects of Math, Science, Social Studies and Language Arts, our teaching is enhanced by programs that include quilting, woodworking, music, band, information technology and French as a Second Language.

Our school mandated goals are: (1) to increase students' proficiency in mathematics and (2) to continue strengthening students' reading and writing abilities.

The philosophy that guides our teaching reflects constructivist learning principles — notably that students learn best when engaged in meaningful, hands-on academic challenges that are undertaken both independently and



Students take part in a learning-related activity at Mayne Elementary and Junior Secondary School.

"Given our small size, we are able to offer individualized instruction to meet the needs of our varied student learners."

within purposeful social interactions.

Serving our student body is an experienced staff of six full and part-time teachers. In addition to classroom

teachers at the primary and intermediate levels, we have a special education teacher and a district counsellor as part of our staff.

As we are a community school, where the talents and contributions of community members are welcomed and encouraged, our school is an active and bustling place. We frequently have guest authors and speakers presenting to students, have parents collaborating with teachers on various projects, and after-school programs to enrich students' learning. For example, students are able to participate in after-school soccer, acrobatics, and music programs.

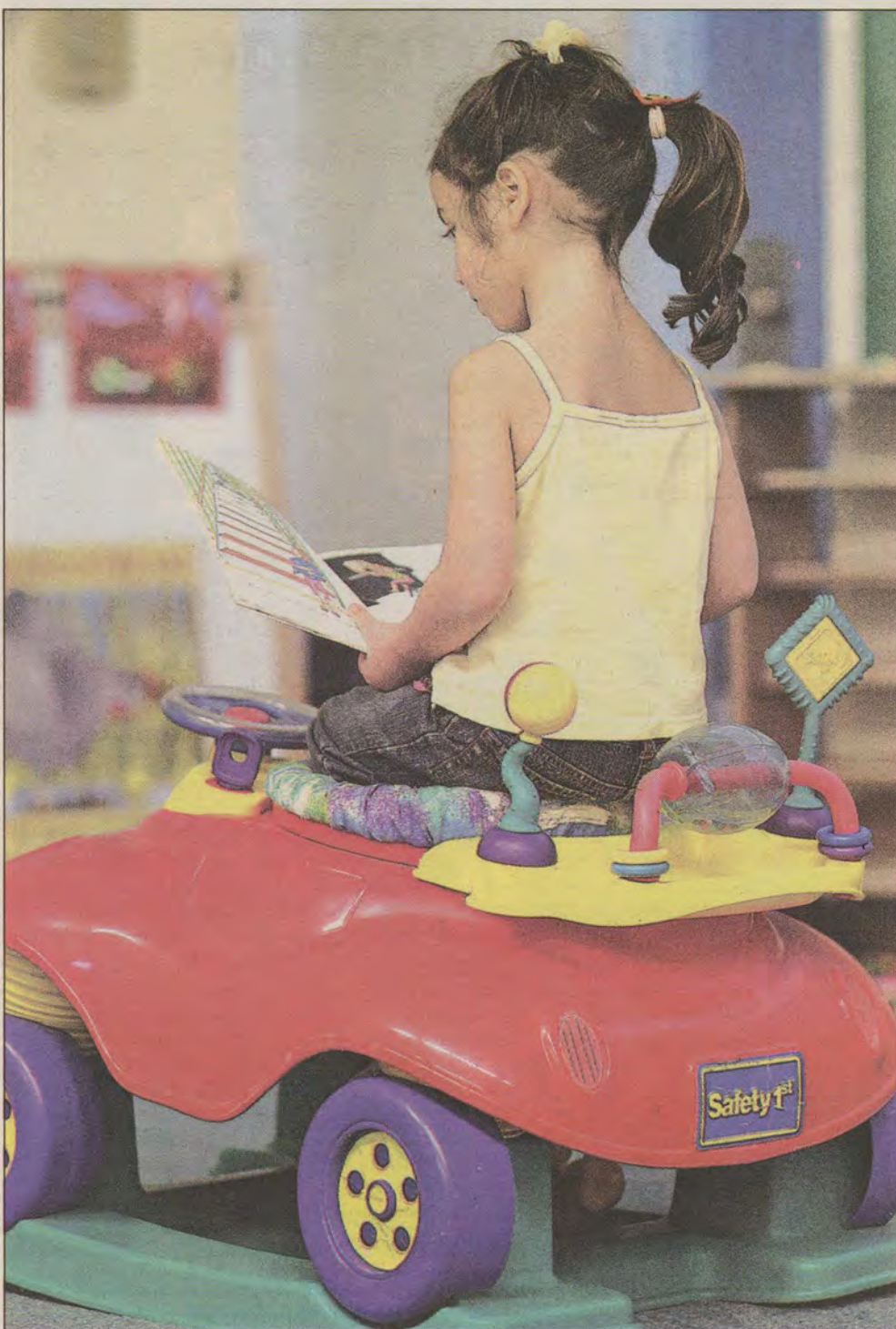


PHOTO BY JOHN CAMERON

Youngster engrossed in a book at Salt Spring Elementary School.

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The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you.
~B.B. King

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PHOTOS BY DERRICK LUNDY

Fulford School students enjoy time outdoors, playing soccer and just hanging out with friends.

Fulford: place of joy



BY SHELLY JOHNSON
FULFORD PRINCIPAL

Fulford School is located at the south end of Salt Spring Island near Fulford Harbour. Our school is a beautiful, modern building set in acres of woods and within easy walking distance of the ocean, lakes and streams.

Murals and art projects adorn the walls inside and out, a legacy of student and community creativity. The grounds are designed for active play. There is an adventure playground, covered sandbox, a soccer field, basketball court and a covered play area. Gardening projects bloom each spring in the school greenhouse.

Fulford School has a history of teaching excellence. Students are encouraged to develop their strengths through a varied and rich learning environment.

Teachers and support staff provide a wealth of opportunities to the students, and the children bring incredible energy to learning. Once a week, our school holds a whole school meeting where student learning is celebrated and issues are discussed as a community. At our school, students come first — always.

Fulford School has a history of strong parental and community involvement. Parents are considered to be an essential part of our day-to-day program. Local artists, writers, dancers and naturalists share their expertise and passions throughout the year. Fulford School is an integral part of the community.

Our staff, students and community are strongly committed to developing social responsibility in our



students. Big kids look after little kids at our school and we are proud of our safe and respectful atmosphere. Fulford students raise money each week to buy uniforms and sports equipment for Kasina School in Malawi, Africa. Global awareness and respect for others is emphasized at our school.

Above all, Fulford School is a place of joy.

Our community is committed to supporting everyone, and we work hard to maintain healthy, happy relationships. Our school is a special place, and we marvel at that every day.

"Teachers and support staff provide a wealth of opportunities to the students, and the children bring incredible energy to learning."


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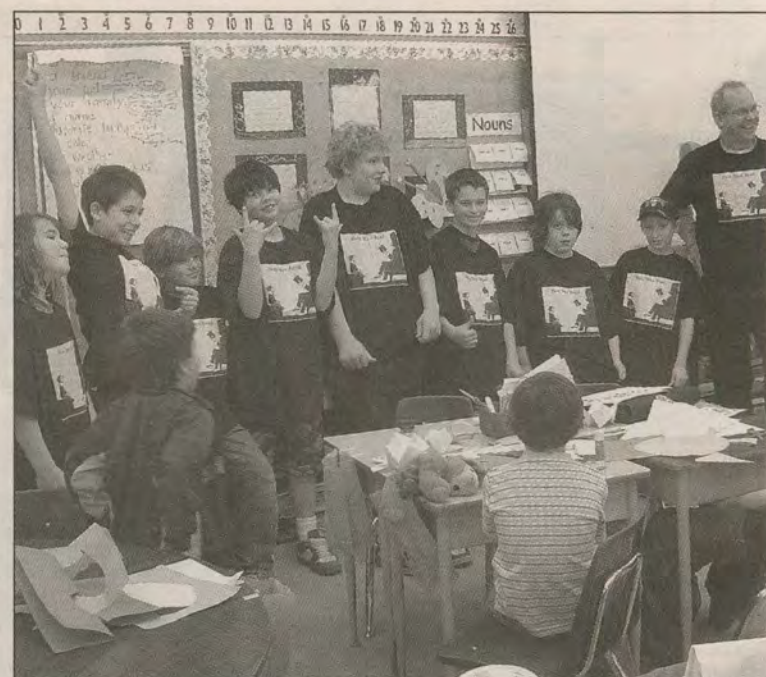
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Fact File Fulford School

- Five multi-age classes for 112 students
- Excellent student support services are provided by one teacher and four education assistants
- Well-equipped specialty classrooms for Music and Drama, Visual Arts, and Science
- All students receive music instruction three times a week from a qualified music teacher
- Active school choir open to all students
- Delightful anthology of student writing

- published each June
- Excellent, extensive library is always open
- Older classes "buddy" with younger classes
- Parents and community are an integral part of our school
- We encourage exploration and social responsibility
- Daily physical activity
- Safe, respectful atmosphere
- Excellent teaching staff and amazing students



From left to right are: SIMS students in cooking class; adult and student reading at Fulford School and "Men with Books" at Galiano School, showing off their "Real Men Read" shirts from Galiano Island Books.

Every day at Galiano school enriched by community

BY GLENN GORING
GALIANO PRINCIPAL

We're a little rural school that believes little rural schools have some big advantages.

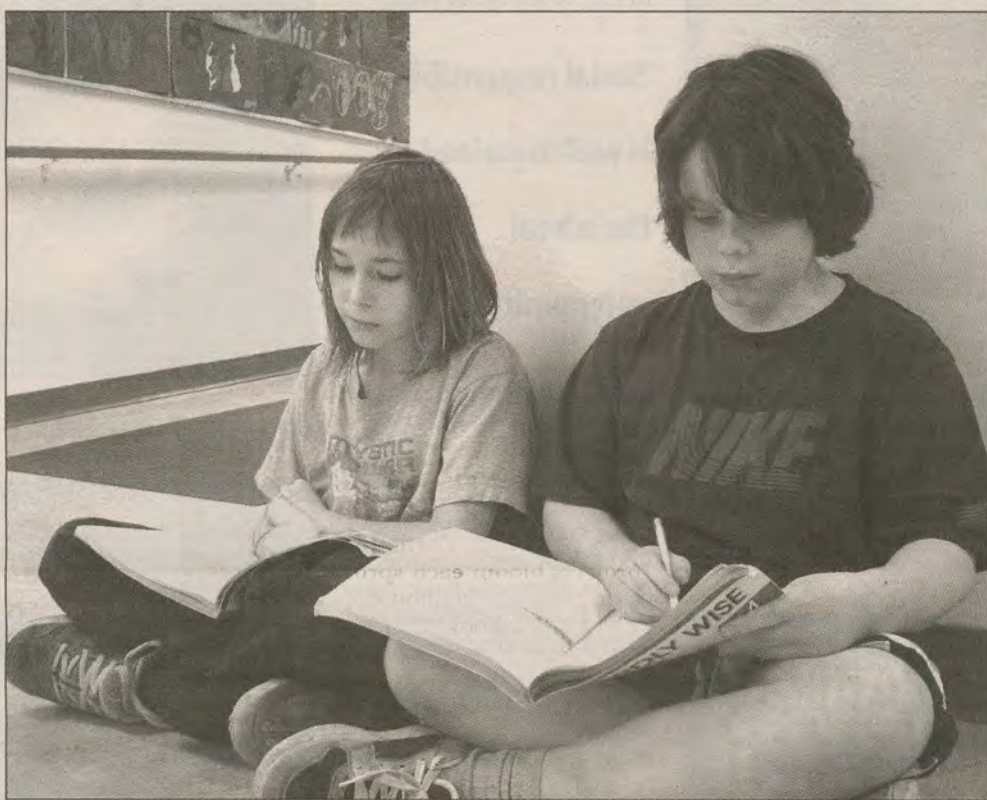
Having several grades in our classrooms makes stimulating learning environments. Having small numbers of students means lots of resource use for each one. Having small numbers also gives added reason to truly solve social problems, with family-like support.

Beyond being a rural school, we are a community school and that's huge. The involvement of parents, relatives and friends takes us to a level of richness that makes wonderful things possible.

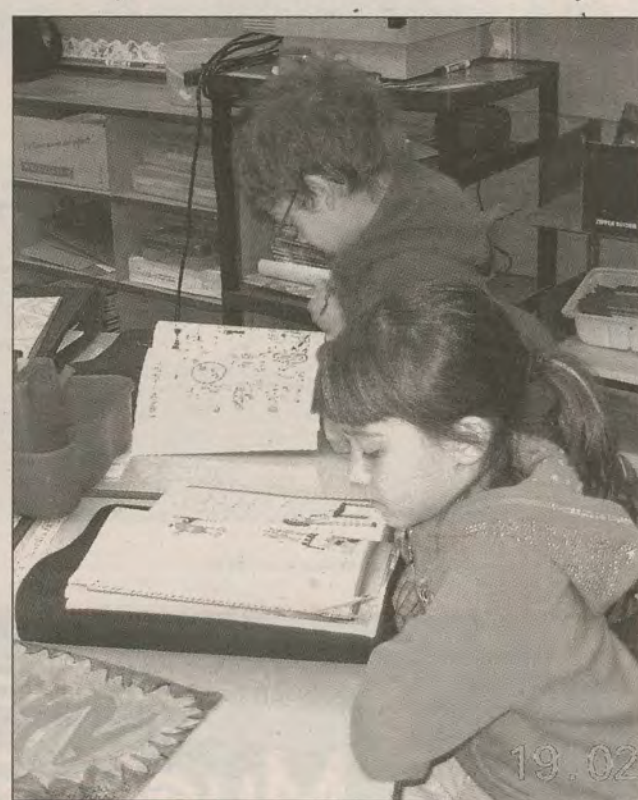
Parents put serious time into our garden, where students plant, tend, harvest and reap the culinary rewards. Our recycling is a passion of our custodian who gives extra time to teach us about "less garbage, more recycling, better recycling." The Men's Soccer Association works with our maintenance department to give us an unbelievably fine soccer field.

We have a family trust fund called the Maberley Trust that allows us to have special annual projects in the arts and PE. This year we had a week-long rollerblading course and an eight-week drama production.

We have the Galiano Activity Centre Society that fills



Above left is a quiet hallway at Galiano School for some serious vocabulary work, while above right, students are learning the skills that make great writers.



our week with after-school activities, from basketball to Spanish lessons.

Galiano Island is home to Gulf Islands Film and Television School, and we're the public school that benefits. GIFTS has gifted us with week-long adventures in writing, shooting and editing video stories. Urban Ink, a Vancouver multi-cultural theatre arts company with strong ties to Galiano, has given us a couple of incredible programs. The one we

are now involved in includes two week-long writing intensives, a three-day ancestor study called "Personal Legacy" and weekly workshops with noted aboriginal artists and story-tellers.

Many years ago, the pioneer Robson family deeded 15 acres to the children of Galiano. We're surrounded by a gift and every day is enriched by gifts. We are a little school in the heart of a rural community that cares. We celebrate that.

Fact File Galiano School

- About 70 students in 3 classrooms
- Kindergarten to Grade 12 and adult programs
- Active Parent Advisory Council
- Enhanced reading and writing programs
- Learning assistance in all classes
- Computers in all classrooms
- Exceptional visual arts program
- After-school sports for all students
- Conservation and recycling programs
- Community library with internet access
- Many evening and weekend community programs
- Frequent community presenters in the classroom

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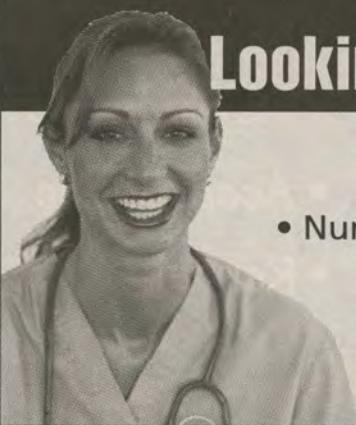
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Respectful, responsible and reaching out to others

BY RICHARD BENNETT
FERNWOOD PRINCIPAL

Fernwood School promotes a safe and caring environment for students by following its own three Rs: being Respectful, Responsible and by Reaching out to Others both in the school and more globally.

Social responsibility is well ingrained in the school community. In October we focus our energy on supporting UNICEF.

Ms. Andison and the Grade 5 class coordinate the Foster Child program and raise money to support a child in Togo, Africa. In the past two years students have raised money to build eight wells in India by taking part in the "Great Water Walk."

"Social responsibility is well ingrained in the school community."

Every student in the Grade 5 class is also a Firebird. Firebirds are student peer leaders who run the school office at lunchtime, help other students at recess and lunchtime, organize special theme days, make the daily school announcements and help fundraising for special causes.

Two long-running activities at the school are the choir and the Let's Grow for It Program.

The Fernwood Choir has been running for a number of years under the guidance of Mrs. Freeman. Every year the choir delights audiences, on and off the island, with wonderful performances.

The choir practices during the first half of the school year. They sing at the peace day event on Salt Spring and end the season with a performance at the school Christmas concert.

The Let's Grow for It program is coordinated by Ms. Lee and the Grade 4 class with help from community volunteers.

A number of parent volunteers have stepped up this year, but there is always room for more willing hands in the garden and in the greenhouse.

Other teachers from



PHOTO BY JOHN CAMERON

Music is just part of the fun at Fernwood Elementary School.



PHOTO BY JOHN CAMERON

Fernwood school student works intently at a table.

across B.C. have come to see how to integrate their garden programs into the daily life of the school.

Students raise plants from seeds and sell them to raise money.

Students learn graphing, math and science concepts from hands-on working in the garden and the greenhouse.

Technology use at the school is slowly becoming more integrated with regular daily activities. Students have access to a computer lab and computers in the classroom

to learn how to keyboard, produce final written copies of work and to use the Internet to research for projects.

The salmon enhancement program, our weather station and garden program provide data that is used in math and science classes. Older students can access their work at school from home computers.

We would like to thank all the parent volunteers, the community agencies and the IODE for the support they have given the school this year.



PHOTO BY JOHN CAMERON

Fernwood students arrive at school via bus.



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Fact File Fernwood Elementary School

- On the north end of Salt Spring
- 140 students
- 6 classroom teachers
- 2 support teachers
- 5 other staff
- Numerous volunteers

- School Goals
1. To increase the numbers of students meeting expectations in numeracy
 2. To improve students use of computers to enhance learning

School Focus
Student social responsibility and independence.

- We're proud of:
- Volunteers
 - Choir
 - Let's Grow For It
 - Support for Diverse Learners
 - Sports Programs
 - Firebirds
 - Global Education
 - Great Kids
 - Caring Staff



Students at Fernwood Elementary School (above, left) and Salt Spring Elementary School (above, right, and below) take time out for reading.

PHOTOS BY JOHN CAMERON

Reading Blitz livens up the month of February at SSE

BY MARIE MULLEN
SSE PRINCIPAL

Apart from Groundhogs and Valentines, February can be a dull month, falling as it does in that long, dreary stretch between Christmas and spring.

At Salt Spring Elementary, February is anything but dull — the halls come alive with Reading Blitz! For more than 25 years, Salt Spring Elementary has hosted this annual, school-wide campaign to promote literacy. While literacy is always a focus at SSE, it is given an additional boost through our Reading Blitz. During Reading Blitz, staff and students participate in a variety of events that heighten interest in books and emphasize the enjoyment of reading.

The program offers two challenges to our students. The Reading challenge asks students to read for 20 minutes or more at home daily for the whole month. Students wanting more of a challenge choose the Cold Turkey challenge, whereby they replace watching TV or videos or playing video games with daily reading for the whole month. Students track their progress on the Reading Blitz calendar and return the calendar to the school at the end of the month to earn a recognition award.

Reading Blitz also involves

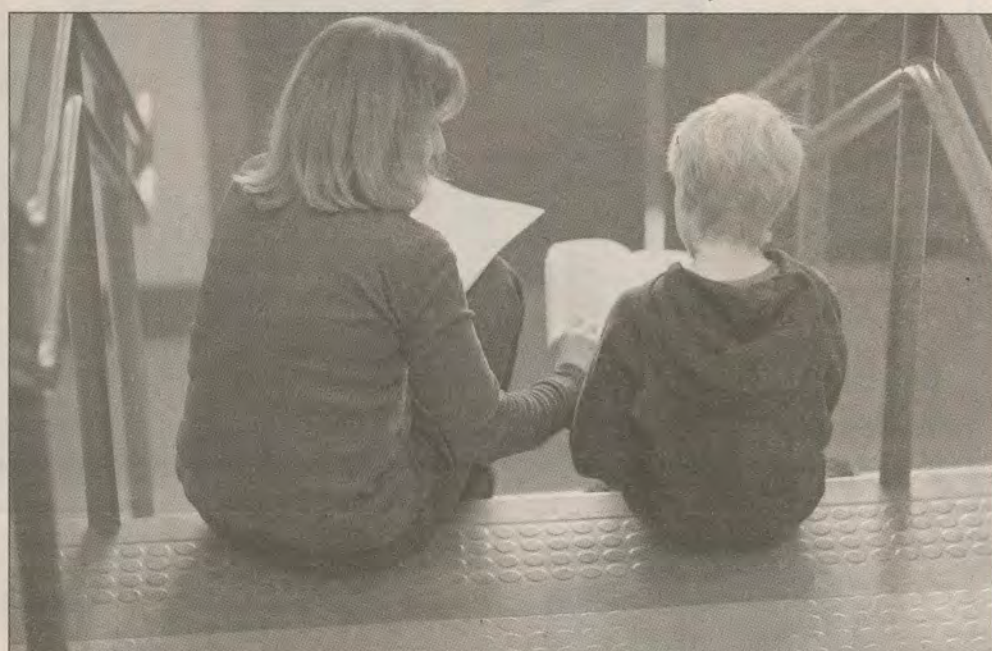


a series of fun events such as weekly Book Riddles, Read-Ins, Community Readers, a Read-a-thon, Readers' Theatre, Book Character Day, a Scholastic Book Fair and Author Visits.

Each week, two staff members sponsor a book riddle with new clues added daily. At the end of the week, the book titles are revealed and draws are made to award students who correctly guessed the riddle. There is a Fiction and a Nonfiction Read-in throughout the month where students sign up for books they want to listen to an adult read aloud. The Read-a-thon is always

a popular event at SSE. During Read-a-thon, mats are placed along the main hallway of the school to make a "reading lounge" where all staff and students spend the afternoon reading marathon-style. Reading Blitz culminates with a celebration assembly, where recognition awards are given and class literacy presentations are celebrated.

Reading Blitz brings excitement and joy to our students — an excitement that will carry through to life-long learning and joy in experiencing the wonders of the world through literacy.



Fact File Salt Spring Elementary School

Salt Spring Elementary is located in the middle of Ganges in a beautiful old historic building with high ceilings, wide hallways and bright classrooms.

- We have 160 students in Kindergarten to Grade 5.
- We have a dedicated and creative staff, including 11 teachers (some of whom are part time), four Education Assistants, a secretary, a library assistant and two custodians.
- School goals for the 2007-08 school focus on improving numeracy and

developing a Green School goal (part of our Me to We philosophy)

- A very active student leadership program (Salt Spring Spirits)
- Winner of School Improvement Excellence Award for 03/04 and 05/06 school years
- Physical Education for all students every day
- An active Parents Advisory Council
- Home of the Strong Start ELF (Early Learning for Families Centre) for children up to the age of 5 and their parents or caregivers



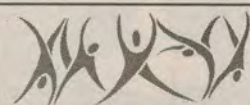
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Salt Spring Island Society for Community Education
in partnership with School District #64

Early Success Initiatives
(Kindergarten and Grade 1)

Grade 9 Project-Based Learning Initiative

Gulf Island School of Performing Arts



Student Learning Centres (9-12)
Galiano, Pender, Mayne, Saturna (SLC)

Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement Initiatives

Japanese & Spanish
(Salt Spring Island Middle School)

Spanish
(Gulf Islands Secondary School)

Late French Immersion
(Salt Spring Island Middle School 6-8)
(Gulf Islands Secondary School 9-12)

Saturna Ecological Education Centre (K to 12)

ELF Strong Start Centre

Artists in the Classroom

Peer Tutoring & Peer Counselling

Distributed Learning
(Gulf Islands Secondary School 9-12)

District Learners Partnership Program (K-8)
(DLPP)

ACE-IT Trades
(Partnership with Camosun College)
Carpentry & Cook Training (11-12)

Developing Healthy Relationships
(Gr. 7, 8, 9 & 11 in partnership with SWOVA)

Gulf Islands Centre for Ecological Learning Partnership (GICEL)

Fulford Community Nature School

Roots of Empathy Program
partnership with Pender & Mayne Schools

Gulf Islands Families Together Society (GIFTS)

Ptarmigan Music
partnership with Pender & Mayne Schools

International Education

Galiano Community School
partnership with the Activity Centre

Adult Programs
(Gulf Islands Secondary School, Galiano, Mayne, Pender, Saturna)

Youth & Family Counsellors
in partnership with Community Services

Saturna Pre-School
partnership with Saturna Elementary

Phoenix Alternative Elementary (K-8)
Phoenix Secondary Alternative Program (9-12)