

Suzuki Charter School



“Academics enriched with music”

Information Sheet

- ✚ Suzuki Charter School in Edmonton is the first charter school of its kind in the world. This educational choice is possible due to Alberta’s commitment to charter school opportunities. Parents have had the Suzuki option since its inception in 1995 when the Alberta Government committed itself to offering greater choice in education.
- ✚ Suzuki Charter School is dedicated to providing academics enriched with music based upon the Suzuki Approach.
- ✚ The Suzuki Approach is based upon the teachings of Dr. Shinichi Suzuki. The following points outline the Suzuki Approach:
 - The education process involves three equally important participants: student, teacher and parent – **The Suzuki Triangle**. Parents are actively involved in their child’s educational process.
 - The Suzuki Approach is to provide a nurturing environment, supported by dedicated and talented teachers. Teachers are important role models and facilitators of learning.
 - Learning is based on the mastery approach, which has three important parts:
 - ✓ Does the student understand what is being taught?
 - ✓ A cycle of practice and immediate feedback is repeated until the desired level of mastery has been achieved.
 - ✓ Continuous review results in the automatic carrying out of a skill.
 - We believe every student has the potential and capacity to learn; with the Suzuki approach awakening each student’s desire to learn.
 - The Suzuki approach creates positive, high expectations for the student.

- We believe that children learn at different rates, and with different learning styles.
- Encouragement, praise and cooperation are key motivators for each student.
- We believe that cognitive learning is enhanced by a strong auditory foundation.
- Music instruction is based on group lessons, which encourages motivation and commitment.
- Students are required to take individual music lessons outside of the school. Group classes within the school day provide students with experience playing with ensembles using a variety of musical genres for example classical, jazz, or 20th century music. Individual music instruction outside the program is the foundation for individual skill development.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What benefit do children receive by engaging in academics enriched with music utilizing the Suzuki Approach?

A: The Suzuki approach is based on the belief that every individual has innate ability and talent, with the capacity to learn within a nurturing environment, supported by dedicated teachers and supportive staff. The approach used to develop a child's musical talents and the teaching/learning process in the academic program complement and strengthen each other.

Q. What instrument choices are offered at the school?

A. The choice of musical instruments includes the following: piano, violin, viola, cello, double bass, guitar, and flute.

Q. Are parents and children able to choose which instrument to learn to play?

A. Choice is sometimes limited by the capacity of the group lessons offered at the school. Therefore, a student's first choice of instruments may not be available.

Q. Does my child need to go through testing or an audition to be in Suzuki Charter School?

A. No. We believe that every child can learn using the Suzuki Approach.

Q. How much are instrument lessons?

A. The price depends on the instrument and the length and type of lesson. Further information can be obtained from the School Office.

Q. Does the school rent instruments?

A. No, the school does not rent instruments. Your individual music lesson teacher will discuss this with you.

Q. Are Suzuki Charter School teachers certificated?

A. Academic classroom teachers must be certificated teachers. Music teachers are members of the Suzuki Association of the Americas and have training or are taking training in the Suzuki method.

Q. Do I have to pay extra fees to attend Suzuki Charter School?

A. There are fees to help cover costs for such things as replacement textbooks, a school t-shirt and agenda, a kinder-cooking fee (if in kindergarten) and lunch supervision fees (if staying for lunch). Field trip fees are charged on a cost-recovery basis.

Q. Is Suzuki Charter School a private school?

A. No, Suzuki Charter School is a publicly funded school as is Edmonton Public or Edmonton Catholic. We also are responsible to provide the same program of studies but can deliver it specific to our charter mandate.

Q. Why is Suzuki Charter School rated so high in the Fraser report and Alberta accountability pillar results?

A. Suzuki students have performed well on the provincial achievement tests which forms the primary basis of comparison for the Fraser report. We believe that the student success at school is a result of the Suzuki Approach to academics.

Q. Since we have significant issues with our current facility and our ability to accommodate our current student population, what do we need to do to acquire a facility that accommodates our current and future academic needs?

A. The Suzuki Charter School Board must work with the Edmonton Public and Catholic School Boards to negotiate a lease agreement on available surplus inventory. The Suzuki Charter School Board over the past five years has reviewed all available surplus inventory of both the Edmonton Public and Catholic School Boards. As of June 2009 the board has not been able to secure a suitable facility.

Q. What is the current status of our facility acquisition process?

A. The SCSS Board continues to make finding a new facility its top priority. It will continue to work cooperatively with both of the urban boards to find a suitable facility with the assistance of personnel from both Alberta Education and Alberta Infrastructure. Edmonton Public Schools has commenced a process to review the status of its schools in the greater Hardisty area. That review will be completed by March 2010 and the SCSS board is hopeful that a surplus school in this sector will be available by September 2010.

Q. Why is Suzuki Charter School not allowed to own its own school?

A. Charter schools are not allowed to own property as they do not have permanence. Each charter is renewed in five-year increments. Charter schools are seeking permanence so that they will be able to own their buildings.

Q. Does Suzuki Charter School celebrate traditional holidays and sing O Canada?

A. Suzuki Charter School does sing O Canada at assemblies and at times during opening morning exercises. SCS also celebrates the traditional holidays however allowances are made for those who do not celebrate them. Our energies mostly go into integrating our music program with its themes rather than on holiday themes.

Q. Who approved the doubling of the academic grades from ECS – Grade 6?

A. The Suzuki Charter School Board made the decision to double classes due to the growing demand for the program and to ensure the financial viability of the school.

Q. What provisions does Suzuki Charter School provide for special needs children?

A. Charter schools cannot deny access to any students unless they do not have the resources or space to meet these special needs. In those cases where student attending Suzuki Charter School are diagnosed with special needs, some access to funding and assistance is provided through specific grants.

Q. How much homework is given in each grade?

A. It varies depending on the child, teacher, and grade. Homework is a very individual matter and the duration will depend on the level of the child's skills. Please talk to your child's teacher if you feel too much or too little home is being assigned. Staff is working on developing a standard school guideline for assigning homework.

Q. Why doesn't Suzuki Charter School have a library?

A. Although Suzuki Charter School does not have dedicated library, there are mini libraries in each room with books specific to the children's reading level and curricular subjects. Teachers also make use of the public library by bringing in books they need or visiting the nearby libraries with students. Suzuki Charter School's goal is to have a dedicated library space in its new facility.

Q. Why doesn't Suzuki Charter School have a playground?

A. Suzuki Charter School has been given notice that the Edmonton Catholic School District is going to build a replacement school on this site. Investing in a playground is not a wise decision at this time. Again, this will be a priority once SCS has found a new home.

Q. What precautions are taken with allergies?

A. Suzuki Charter School's goal is to ensure a safe learning environment for all children. Procedures are in place for working with students who have allergies. Staff each year is in-serviced by our school nurse on allergic and e-pin procedures.

Q. Does Suzuki Charter School provide bussing?

A. Bus service is not provided as our students come to the school from a wide area of the city. However, parents who qualify may receive a grant to help offset the cost of driving their children to school.

Q.How is discipline handled at Suzuki Charter School?

A. Suzuki Charter School disciplines and nurtures in a positive manner. Students are reminded to practice the correct behaviors. Students are taught to take responsibility for their actions, and depending on their severity, are given consequences in consultation with their parents.

Q. What is the Suzuki Charter School policy on bullying?

A. Staff is committed to having a safe and caring school. Procedures are reviewed every year to improve on the educating, reporting, and dealing with incidents. Parents and students are encouraged to report disrespectful behaviour so that we can act on it. Because of special grant received, the entire Suzuki staff will be in-serviced in and committed to delivering the Lion's Quest program commencing the 2009-2010 school year. The program focuses on character development.

Q. Do we have a full time custodian and if not why not?

Custodial services are provided in our lease with the Edmonton Catholic School District. Custodians come during the evening hours to clean the school. Lunch supervisors check the washrooms and disinfect them every day before they leave.

Q. Is the audited financial statement readily available?

A. The audited financial statement is presented at the annual general meeting in November and is available from the Secretary-Treasurer. This and other documents are also posted on the Suzuki Charter School website.