

# **SUZUKI CHARTER SCHOOL SOCIETY**

**Edmonton, Alberta**

## **Charter School Evaluation Report**

Evaluation conducted November 1 & 5, 2024  
Presented to the charter board March 19, 2025

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### Background

Suzuki Charter School Society, located in Edmonton, Alberta, operates as a public charter school and is recognized for its unique integration of music education into a traditional academic curriculum. Established in 1985 as a private kindergarten program, the school initially focused on violin instruction. By 1995, it transitioned into a charter school under Alberta's framework for supporting educational innovation with a focus on Kindergarten to Grade 6. Today, the Suzuki Charter School Society serves students from Kindergarten to Grade 9, offering instruction in multiple instruments, including: piano, cello, guitar, trumpet, viola, bass, flute, recorder, percussion, and music composition for junior high, alongside core academic subjects.

Suzuki Charter School Society's music teaching approach is guided by the Suzuki Method, developed by Dr. Shinichi Suzuki, which emphasizes nurturing talent through early exposure, consistent practice, parental involvement, and fostering a positive learning environment. The Suzuki philosophy prioritizes the development of the whole child, emphasizing personal growth, discipline, and collaboration alongside academic and musical achievement.

Today, the school serves 420 students, drawing families who value a music-focused educational experience. It operates within Alberta's charter school system, adhering to public education requirements while exploring methods to integrate music and academics in a way that supports student engagement and achievement.

Enrolment in the past 12 years since their last charter renewal, as of November 21, 2024, was as follows:

	ECS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
2013/ 2014	43	44	42	41	34	48	43				295
2014/ 2015	46	45	45	43	46	41	45				311
2015/ 2016	46	46	46	45	45	47	43				318
2016/ 2017	46	46	46	46	44	45	44				317
2017/ 2018	46	46	46	44	48	45	48				323
2018/ 2019	46	48	46	47	46	47	44				324
2019/ 2020	48	48	48	48	49	47	46				334
2020/ 2021	50	49	50	48	48	47	50	15			357

2021/ 2022	50	50	50	50	50	49	48	28	8		383
2022/ 2023	50	50	50	50	50	49	50	23	12	7	391
2023/ 2024	50	50	50	50	50	49	50	15	17	12	393
2024/ 2025	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	34	17	19	420

## Facilities

Suzuki Charter School Society has been operating in its current location at the former Capilano School since 2010. This facility, previously managed by Edmonton Public Schools (EPSB), was leased to Suzuki Charter School Society through an agreement signed in July 2010, which originally spanned from September 1, 2010, to August 31, 2013, with renewal options. Since the agreement's expiration, the school has continued to occupy the building under a lease overhold arrangement. Negotiations to update the lease are ongoing.

In January 2025, Suzuki Charter School Society completed their value scoping and updated their 3- and 10-year capital plan to explore modernizing/expansion of their facility; and communicated with the Department expressing interest in the School Construction Accelerator Program. They report that they have a wait list for Kindergarten that is determined by a lottery system.

## Staff

Suzuki Charter School Society employs 45 staff, with a total Full Time Equivalent (F.T.E.) of 34.4. Current F.T.E. as of October 29, 2024, (provided by Suzuki Charter School Society) is:

- Superintendent 0.6 F.T.E.
- Secretary-Treasurer 1.0 F.T.E.
- Principal 1.0 F.T.E.
- Vice Principal 0.4 F.T.E.
- Financial Clerk 1.0 F.T.E.
- Teaching Staff 18 F.T.E.
- Educational Assistants 8.6 F.T.E.
- Music Instructors 2.8 F.T.E.
- Student Learning Support Coordinator 0.6 F.T.E.
- Custodian services are staffed through contracted services.
- Technology services are provided through contracted services.
- Landscaping and snow removal are provided by contracted services.

Suzuki Charter School Society also employs 14 part-time staff members for their Before and After School Care Program.

## **Foundational Statements**

The essential elements of education as articulated in the Suzuki Charter School Society's charter are:

### Vision

Every child achieving individual academic, personal, and musical excellence.

### Mission

Based on the philosophy of Dr. Shinichi Suzuki, students, staff, parents, and partners work together to create a nurturing learning environment to support student mastery

### Key Messages and Values

- The belief that every child can learn.
- A safe, caring, and welcoming environment.
- Academic, musical, and personal progress for each child.
- Staff working together to optimize quality education for each child.
- Working collaboratively with parents to inform teaching strategies that accelerate student learning.
- Empathy, equity, and fairness.
- Staff sharing responsibility to ensure positive learning experiences for all students.
- Evolving and refining practices to align with current educational context.
- Innovation and research to support new approaches to teaching and learning.

## **Charter Goals and Outcomes**

### Charter Goal One: Students demonstrate musical excellence

To enrich and integrate the approved Alberta Programs of Study with the Suzuki Method of music learning, the Suzuki Charter School Society unites a community of musicians with the common goal of developing a love of music, performance, and discipline, and mastery of skill and ability. Charter goals include students developing strong cognitive music skills, instrument playing skills, ensemble skills, and personal excellence skills that support music studies.

*Outcome 1: Students develop strong cognitive music skills.*

Performance Measures:

- Percentage of students who achieved excellent standards in cognitive music skills.
- Percentage of students who achieved acceptable standards in cognitive music skills.

*Outcome 2: Students develop strong instrument playing skills.*

Performance Measures:

- Percentage of students who achieved excellent standards in instrument-playing skills.
- Percentage of students who achieved acceptable standards in instrument-playing skills.

*Outcome 3: Students develop strong ensemble skills.*

Performance Measures:

- Percentage of students who achieved excellent standards in ensemble skills.
- Percentage of students who achieved acceptable standards in ensemble skills.

*Outcome 4: Students develop strong personal excellence.*

Performance Measures:

- Percentage of students who achieved excellent standards in personal excellence.
- Percentage of students who achieved acceptable standards in personal excellence.

### Charter Goal Two: Participate in authentic research and innovation

Suzuki Charter School Society is to engage in authentic research-practice partnerships with university researchers to support teaching and learning innovation, including providing basic education in a different or enhanced way. Based on the Suzuki Charter School Society's support of Alberta Education's vision for charter schools to improve the education system as a whole and enhance education research and innovation, the Suzuki Charter School Society is to share research with diverse audiences and share effective practices to support student learning.

### **Term of Charter**

Suzuki Charter School Society is currently in its 12<sup>th</sup> year of operations of a 15-year term. The term of the current charter is from September 1, 2013, to August 31, 2028.

### **Terms of Reference**

The *Charter Schools Regulation* requires that all charter schools in the province be evaluated at least once in the term of their charter. There are a number of purposes for the evaluation of a charter school:

- To provide evidence to the Minister and the board that the charter school is in compliance with provincial requirements and the requirements of the charter, inclusive of charter amendments, approved by the Minister.
- To report to staff, parents, and the community on the success of the charter school and to identify areas of strength and areas that may require additional attention.

- To focus the attention of the board and staff on the goals and objectives of the charter and the need to establish and confirm measurable outcomes and measures.
- To facilitate continuous improvement in the charter school consistent with the assurance requirements of the Ministry and with the local direction established by the charter school community and authorized by the board of directors.

The criteria by which the charter school is evaluated are:

1. The school meets the terms and conditions of its charter and has performance measures that show clear evidence of success.
2. The school operates in a manner consistent with all applicable provincial requirements.
3. The charter school is governed effectively.
4. The school is administered effectively.
5. The school is fiscally viable and responsible.
6. The students, parents, staff, school council, and community members consider the school program to be successful.
7. Student success is determined in accordance with Ministerial Order (#005/2024)
8. The charter school shares its innovative practices and learning outcomes with the education community.
9. Student achievement at the charter school is consistently strong or improving.
10. The charter school exhibits in multiple ways an ongoing commitment to engaging students, teachers, parents, and community members in a model of continuous improvement.
11. The charter school works collaboratively with stakeholders and demonstrates broad and sustained levels of community engagement.
12. The charter school uses research-informed practices to create innovative learning environments and improve student learning.

### **Prior Charter Evaluation**

The most recent charter evaluation of the Suzuki Charter School Society was completed in 2011. The evaluation found that the Suzuki Charter School Society was meeting all requirements with one exception:

- The charter board had not developed appropriate bylaws and policies regarding board governance, the roles/responsibilities of the superintendent, the charter board, the principal, the teachers, and the school council.

The requirement for policy development was addressed in the report to ensure the identification, development, and approval of all policies necessary to ensure effective board governance and sound monitoring of school operations.

Since then, the Suzuki Charter School Society has worked to establish and update their policies. A Policy Manual was approved in 2018 and amended in 2024. The board has established policies outlining the roles and responsibilities



of key positions, such as the Role of the Charter Board (Policy 2), Role of the Director (Policy 3), Role of the Board Chair (Policy 5), Role of the Vice Chair (Policy 6), Role of the Superintendent (Policy 10), and Role of the Secretary-Treasurer (Policy 11). Policies are now reviewed annually and updated as needed to reflect legislative changes, with support from a Policy Sub-Committee. Additionally, the bylaws were reviewed in 2023 and presented for approval at the May 2024 Annual General Meeting.

## **2024 Evaluation Processes**

The findings of the evaluation were established using the following processes and activities:

1. The charter school authority was asked to develop and submit to Alberta Education a self-evaluation report based on the 12 criteria named above. (See Part III of this report)
2. Alberta Education established a team of five staff members from Field Services, as well as one staff member from Business Operations and Stakeholder Support, to review the self-evaluation report submitted by the charter school authority and to determine appropriate school site evaluation processes.
3. Focus group sessions were established to provide opportunities for the board, superintendent, principal, teachers, support staff, students, and parents to share insights about the school's successes and ideas about how the charter school authority might become more effective. On November 1, 2024, and November 5, 2024, the following processes were conducted:
  - Focus group interviews were conducted with the superintendent, principal, board chair, secretary-treasurer, and teachers.
  - One focus group was held with eight school support staff.
  - Two focus groups were held with ten parents.
  - Two focus groups were held with students from Kindergarten to Grade 9.
4. Evaluation team members participated in classroom observations throughout Grades Kindergarten to Grade 9 to observe instruction, the design of student learning activities, and student engagement.

## **Executive Summary**

Suzuki Charter School Society's evaluation in November 2024 found that the Suzuki Charter School Society has provided evidence of meeting the twelve criteria reviewed. The report includes one requirement. Specifically, Suzuki Charter School Society is required to update their charter to ensure alignment with the 2022 Charter Schools Regulation as well as to ensure that charter goals are aligned and reflective of the current direction of the Board and students who are registered at the school. This report supports the charter amendment process and a future charter renewal application in 2027.

## II. EVALUATION CONCLUSIONS, COMMENDATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & REQUIRED CHANGES

### 1. The school meets the terms and conditions of its charter and has performance measures that show clear evidence of success.

Suzuki Charter School Society strives to achieve the overarching goal of fostering improved learning outcomes with a focus on achieving individual academic, personal, and musical excellence through the nurturing learning environment based on Dr. Shinichi Suzuki's philosophy. The collaborative approach between students, staff, parents, and community members aligns with the school's mission and values.

Students, staff, parents, and the board can articulate the mission and vision of the charter and can readily describe the direct instruction approach. There is a shared understanding and appreciation of the charter and its goals and outcomes by stakeholders.

The school's unique integration of music and academic success continues to be monitored through performance measures reviewed annually by all staff, ensuring alignment with both the Alberta Programs of Study and the school's commitment to fostering well-rounded student development in academic achievement, character building, and artistic growth.

#### **Required change:**

- Charter Update: That the Suzuki Charter School Society engages with stakeholders in accordance with the school's charter amendment process to review the school's charter and create a stand-alone charter document to confirm alignment with the 2022 Charter Schools Regulation prior to requesting a charter renewal in the 2027/2028 school year. The charter amendment process may be an exercise on its own or may accompany the charter renewal request to be submitted prior to December 1, 2027. This charter document should be posted on the charter authority's website.

The charter amendment process typically includes a review of the following:

- The vision, purpose, charter goals, and foundational statements to ensure alignment throughout;
- The way measurable outcomes are expressed for each charter goal; and
- All other elements of the charter, ensuring that all requirements in Section 4 of the regulation are addressed and align with the school's vision and purpose.

#### **Commendations:**

- Suzuki Charter School Society is commended for its transparency and openness, demonstrated by holding public board meetings and consistently posting meeting agendas and minutes on its website.

## **2. The school operates in a manner consistent with all applicable provincial requirements.**

Suzuki Charter School Society operates in accordance with Alberta's provincial requirements. The school follows the Alberta Programs of Study, providing access to the required instructional hours. Reporting obligations are met through timely submission of required documents, such as the education plan and annual education results report. The administration actively supports compliance with the Teacher Quality Standard (TQS) through regular classroom observations, professional growth plans aligned with TQS, and targeted professional development to strengthen teacher competencies.

The school integrates First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives into its educational practices, utilizing elders, community members, and culturally relevant activities, such as teepee teachings and Indigenous celebrations. Communication between the school's board, administration, staff, and parent community is well-structured, facilitated by regular meetings, newsletters, and parent engagement opportunities. These practices ensure the school operates in alignment with Alberta Education's standards and legislative requirements.

### **Commendations:**

- The school demonstrates a strong commitment to integrating First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives through meaningful activities such as teepee teachings, Indigenous art and music showcases, and collaboration with elders.
- Professional growth plans and development opportunities align effectively with the TQS, ensuring high instructional standards and proactive administrative support.

## **3. The charter school is governed effectively.**

The board has a 5-year strategic plan and maintains a work plan that is monitored and updated monthly, conducts annual self-evaluations, and engages in annual professional development. The board has implemented mandatory governance training for new members before attending board meetings to ensure members understand their governance role. Processes are also in place to maintain institutional knowledge as board members shift.

The board recognizes the importance of engaging with stakeholders to gain an understanding of their insights and concerns, and they have established processes to communicate how they respond to parents' feedback. Parents stated that the board is accessible to parents and that parents know they can attend the board's monthly meetings and Annual General Meeting to share their perspectives. They highlighted the fact that the board is made up of parents, which means they may have similar perspectives.

The board referenced that they review policies regularly to ensure that they are meeting legislative requirements and are responsive to updating policies to

align with new legislation. Also, Board Policy 9: Policy Development and Review specifies that policies should be reviewed at least every five years. All governance documents, including society bylaws, board policy, and charter, are accessible to parents and stakeholders on the Suzuki Charter School Society website.

**Commendations:**

- Prior to starting a term on the board, Directors are provided with governance training.

**4. The school is administered effectively.**

The administration demonstrates a strong commitment to ensuring effective operational procedures and practices are followed to meet their charter commitments. A collaborative approach to decision-making is used to ensure staff have opportunities to inform operational decisions.

Processes to support staff development are in place, including providing mentor teachers for new staff, regular informal observations to support development, and annual growth plans for teachers and other school staff with processes in place for administration to undertake staff evaluations. Stakeholders also indicated that the Leadership Quality Standard is evident in administrative practices.

Administrators, teachers, staff, and parents were consistent in their descriptions of what they consider to be a successful student at Suzuki Charter School. Parents expressed that the superintendent, principal, and vice-principal are approachable and accessible to the school community, and responsive in addressing issues that arise.

An Administrative Procedures Manual is in place and available to staff, parents, and stakeholders on the Suzuki Charter School Society’s website. The review cycle for administrative procedures is unclear as most administrative procedures seem to be slated for review in 2026, regardless of when they were last reviewed. A number of administrative procedures also reference the former School Act rather than the current Education Act, including instances where the procedures were amended after the proclamation of the Education Act.

**Commendations:**

- The use of staff committees to determine and prioritize school needs in specific areas to make recommendations to administrators supports the leadership development of all staff and encourages shared responsibility for the whole team.

**5. The school is fiscally viable and responsible.**

Through a review of the financial reporting and on-site meetings, Suzuki Charter School Society has demonstrated they are fiscally viable and

responsible. Their approach to strategic planning involves the expertise of their board and continual quarterly and monthly reviews of budgets, financial statements, and cash flow with the board, which is an example of their responsible approach to fiscal management and practices. The administration expressed that the strong working relationships between the board and administration staff have been vital to the success of Suzuki Charter School Society operations.

This is an established charter school with many years of operations that show a positive presence and demand in its community. However, being a smaller school in a large metropolitan area has created some fiscal pressures, as indicated by the school's secretary-treasurer. Two key pressures are the maintenance of their aging facility and increasing the capacity of the facility to accommodate their student growth goals. Suzuki Charter School Society is aware of their fiscal pressures and is planning effectively to address the costs of replacing components of their facility by budgeting their Operation and Maintenance (O&M) funding and other operational dollars accordingly.

Suzuki Charter School Society is using planned deficits to complete projects while using and sustaining a healthy reserve balance. In their current state the school should be commended for their ability to identify capital priorities and use their reserves effectively to complete projects while maintaining balanced budgets. Other financial pressures indicated by the charter are insurance, utilities, professional development, and inflationary pressures. This charter is commended for being cognizant of the different fiscal pressures affecting their finances and developing relationships with industry associations to explore best practices and find cost efficiencies in their operations.

The last three years of financial audits show that Suzuki Charter School Society is managing its finances effectively and has also shown a positive accumulated surplus from operations over the last three years. They projected a deficit in the last two school years but have been deliberate about using these funds to address their infrastructure concerns and have adequately planned this venture while taking steps to ensure they get back into a positive position. Enrolment has increased by over 6% since the 2023/24 school year, and the charter school has adjusted its certificated staffing Full Time Equivalent accordingly to keep a consistent ratio of students to certificated staff.

Suzuki Charter School Society’s Budget Surplus (Deficit) Summary for the last four years is as follows (as of December 2024):

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
<b>Actual Expenses</b>	\$3,865,574	\$4,081,002	\$4,746,721	\$4,566,017
<b>Budgeted Expenses</b>	\$3,703,859	\$3,703,104	\$4,170,135	\$4,444,957
<b>Accumulated Surplus (Deficit) From Operations</b> <small>(total unrestricted surplus + total operating reserves – the school generated funds)</small>	\$406,439	\$603,490	\$300,751	\$453,802

**Commendations:**

- The charter authority is commended for the responsible stewardship of its finances.
- On being innovative and creative in acquiring additional learning space and opportunities, along with developing relationships with local boards and other charter schools.

**Recommendations:**

- Suzuki Charter School Society to continue to work closely with Alberta Education Capital Planning and School Finance staff to address facility planning, lease costs, and desired expansion.
- Suzuki Charter School Society to consider updating bylaws to include finance related policies and dispute resolution policy (E.g., impose limitations on the Secretary-Treasurer’s purchasing abilities as well as a process to follow to ensure conflict resolution if there are conflicting interests).

**6. The students, parents, staff, school council, and community members consider the school program to be successful.**

Overall, teachers, parents, students, and staff who have chosen the Suzuki Charter School Society see it as successful and report high satisfaction. Many staff members are long term employees at Suzuki Charter School Society who choose to stay at the school for their careers.

Students often shared that they have the opportunity to show their learning in different ways and feel prepared for the transition to high school, including preparing for Provincial Achievement Tests in Grades 6 and 9. Parents shared that their children enjoy attending school and appreciate the confidence and comfort their children feel when they perform in front of an audience. They believe this is in response to the many opportunities they get to participate in musical performances, starting in Kindergarten. With the addition of junior high school students over the past few years, Suzuki Charter School participates in various extra-curricular sporting events.

**Commendations:**

- Report cards are descriptive including student reflections, as well as strengths and weaknesses. References to more than academics are included, as well as music outcomes based on their charter goals.

**7. Student Success: Student success is determined in accordance with Ministerial Order #005/2024.**

Suzuki Charter School Society demonstrates alignment with Ministerial Order #005/2024, emphasizing literacy, numeracy, and student well-being. Provincial Achievement Test results indicate high academic achievement, with students consistently performing well above provincial results in both Acceptable and Excellence standards.

In addition to academic success, the school fosters a positive and supportive learning environment, prioritizing holistic student development. Assurance measures indicate Very High levels of Quality Education, Citizenship, and Student Engagement. While slightly below the provincial average in access to supports and services, the school remains committed to addressing diverse learning needs through targeted interventions.

Suzuki Charter School Society has used their Student Learning Support (SLS) funding to hire educational assistants, who work collaboratively under the supervision of classroom teachers, to support students with assessments, differentiation, and the delivery of targeted interventions. Furthermore, contract services for speech therapy, counseling, and educational psychology assessments are provided to address diverse student needs. They prioritize literacy and numeracy early intervention with a goal of supporting all students to read at grade level by Grade 3. [OB]



**Commendations:**

- Suzuki Charter School Society demonstrates strong academic performance, achieving Very High ratings on Provincial Achievement Tests across Grades 6 and 9, significantly surpassing provincial averages in both Acceptable and Excellence standards.
- The school fosters a supportive and engaging learning environment, reflected in Excellent ratings for Education Quality, Citizenship and Student Learning Engagement, which are all above provincial averages.

**8. The charter school shares its innovative practices and learning outcomes with others in the educational community.**

Suzuki Charter School Society engages with Alberta's education community by sharing its practices and participating in professional networks, such as the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) and the Alberta Research Network. The school has contributed articles to professional publications, including CASS magazine, and has presented at events like The Association of Alberta Public Charter School (TAAPCS) conferences, sharing its experiences and practices with other educators. Additionally, Suzuki's music educators provide specialized training to peers, promoting collaboration and professional growth within the field of music education.

**Commendations:**

- Development of a network of positive collaborations and partnerships with professional organizations and post-secondary institutions, e.g., Alberta University.

**Recommendations:**

- Seek additional opportunities to engage with local public school authorities to continue to work towards enhancing educational research and innovative practices in Alberta.

**9. Student achievement at the charter school is consistently strong or improving.**

It is evident that the Suzuki Charter School Society contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment, which supports students in being engaged academically, feeling a sense of belonging, and experiencing academic success. Students, staff, and parents often spoke about the positive atmosphere and strong sense of community at Suzuki Charter School Society, which impacts achievement.

Suzuki Charter School Society's students continue to achieve and maintain strong academic results. 100% of the Suzuki Charter School Society students achieved Acceptable standards in Grade 9 for the year 2023/24, which



improved from 85.7% the previous year. The school has a long history of outperforming provincial averages in standardized testing.

Teachers expressed that they feel it is important to share results and assessments with students in a timely manner and on an ongoing basis to ensure they are aware of their strengths and areas of need. Parents appreciate the school's commitment to parental involvement, indicating there are opportunities for them to be involved through volunteering and participating in classroom, school and school system events and activities. Parents mentioned they are pleased with the quantity and quality of feedback they receive about their child's progress at school.

**Commendations:**

- High levels of communication are maintained to inform students and parents of the personal growth, success, and academic achievement of students.

**10. The charter school exhibits in multiple ways ongoing commitment to engaging students, teachers, parents, and community members in a model of continuous improvement.**

Suzuki Charter School Society demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement by engaging students, staff, parents, and the broader community in various initiatives. The school facilitates literacy and numeracy sessions for parents, equipping them with strategies to support their children's learning at home. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) play a central role in promoting collective responsibility and shared purpose among staff, including specialized music teachers, who contribute their expertise to enhance both music education and broader academic outcomes. Additionally, the board prioritizes effective governance through updating their strategic plan every 5 years, which informs their annual education plan.

The school also contributes to the wider educational community by presenting at conferences, such as the Greater Edmonton Teachers' Conference, and the Suzuki Association of the Americas Leadership Conference. On an annual basis, the school participates in initiatives like the CBC Music Class Challenge, which highlights its music education program. Furthermore, Suzuki Charter School Society is engaged in action research by piloting Insignia, a learner management system, in partnership with Insignia Software Corporation. This approach reflects a focus on data-driven decision-making.

**Commendations:**

- The school has cultivated a culture of continuous improvement that is embraced by students, staff, and parents alike, fostering a sense of community described by stakeholders as a "family" atmosphere.

**Recommendations:**

- Continue to formalize partnerships with post-secondary institutions to facilitate research and professional development in music education and pedagogy.

### **11. The charter school works collaboratively with stakeholders and demonstrates broad and sustained levels of community engagement.**

Staff at Suzuki Charter School Society have worked to enhance engagement with their parents and families. As the school has students who travel daily from around the city of Edmonton and beyond, they work to collaborate with families and offer opportunities for parents to be part of the school community. They offer a before and after-school care program that allows opportunities for families to connect with staff beyond the school day.

Opportunities for parent and student voices were often heard in the focus group meetings, with the school providing different opportunities for feedback on assurance documents and increasing opportunities for parents to be part of the school as much as possible. They often invite community members to their assemblies. The school also has a partnership with the Winspear Centre which provides students the opportunity to perform to the wider Edmonton community.

Since 2024, Suzuki Charter School Society is no longer part of TAAPCS, and is focusing on creating other opportunities to connect with Charter School Superintendents and staff across the province, including offering board training and professional development for other charter school leaders.

#### **Commendations:**

- Suzuki Charter School Society provides many opportunities for students to participate in academic activities not only at school but also with evening events, including Family Math and Literacy Nights, Science Fairs and Olympics.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Continue to explore opportunities to engage with a wider stakeholder community, beyond the school.

### **12. The charter school uses research-informed practices to create innovative learning environments and improve student learning.**

Suzuki Charter School Society incorporates research-informed practices to foster innovative learning environments and improve student outcomes. The school has engaged in multiple research partnerships with the University of Alberta, including studies on morphological analysis for vocabulary acquisition, and the LEAFF model for formative assessment strategies. Additionally, Suzuki collaborated with the Faculty of Engineering to assess air quality in elementary

schools. These partnerships have informed school programming, curriculum development, and instructional practices. The school also has invested in professional development, allowing teachers to align their learning with the school's goals.

While these research efforts have enriched student learning, the school could expand its impact by sharing findings with broader audiences, exploring partnerships with local school jurisdictions, and incorporating Indigenous land-based experiences into programming. Addressing junior high school programming, including access to counseling services, would further align with student needs and research-driven strategies.

### **Commendations:**

- Suzuki Charter School Society's partnerships with post-secondary institutions, such as the University of Alberta, highlight its commitment to research-driven innovation, enhancing instructional strategies, and student outcomes.

### **Conclusion**

As a result of our evaluation processes, the Alberta Education Evaluation Team is satisfied that the Suzuki Charter School Society is meeting the requirements of legislation and regulations for charter schools. In the spirit of continuous improvement, the Suzuki Charter School Society is encouraged to celebrate its successes while considering the recommendations offered by the Alberta Education Evaluation team. There is an expectation that all required changes will be addressed prior to the charter renewal request.

The Alberta Education Evaluation Team extends its sincere thanks to the board, administration, staff, students, and parents for their time, perspectives, insights, and hospitality.

# **APPENDIX**

## **Self-Evaluation Report**

# Suzuki Charter School Self-Evaluation 2024-25

## Background

Suzuki Charter School started in 1985 as a Kindergarten with eighteen young violinists and two enthusiastic teachers, Sharon Goulet and Wende Grant, working to incorporate Dr. Shinichi Suzuki's method and philosophy of teaching young children to play a musical instrument in an academic school setting. Alberta Education's visionary plan allowing for educational innovation and the drive and dedication of many parents, staff, and students helped our school to evolve into a successful charter school celebrating over 30 years of existence with an enrollment of over 400 students and the study of nine musical instruments. Suzuki Charter School became a public charter school in 1995. We receive public funding and are provided the opportunity to demonstrate innovative education in Edmonton. Our school is intended to serve parents who have a commitment to music for their children, in accordance with Suzuki philosophy, and who actively support that commitment. Suzuki Charter School also creates a warm, supportive, learning environment for children. Working closely with parents to meet the needs of each student, our accomplished teachers help Suzuki Charter School children become confident, skilled, lifelong learners with positive attitudes toward learning.

## Vision

Every child achieving individual academic, personal and musical excellence.

## Mission

Based on the philosophy of Dr. Shinichi Suzuki, students, staff, parents and partners work together to create a nurturing learning environment to support student mastery.

\* Please refer to our website [www.suzukischool.ca](http://www.suzukischool.ca) for more detailed information on Suzuki philosophy and principles.

## Key Messages

### At Suzuki Charter School WE VALUE:

- The belief that every child can learn.
- A safe, caring and welcoming environment.
- Academic, musical and personal progress for each child.
- Staff working together to optimize quality education for each child.
- Working collaboratively with parents to inform teaching strategies that accelerate student learning.
- Empathy, equity and fairness.
- Staff sharing responsibility to ensure positive learning experiences for all students.
- Evolving and refining practices to align with the current educational context.
- Innovation and research to support new approaches to teaching and learning.

At Suzuki Charter School we define student achievement and success based on our Vision and Mission. As stated in our Vision, we believe that every child can achieve individual academic, personal and musical excellence. We also believe that the most effective way to facilitate this student achievement and success is through the implementation of the Suzuki Approach, based on the philosophy of Dr. Shinichi Suzuki where students, staff, parents and partners work together to create a nurturing learning environment to support student mastery.

1.	<b>The authority meets the terms and conditions of its charter and has performance measures that show clear evidence of success. (7(3)(a))</b>
	<p><b>Successes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Vision and Mission Alignment: Suzuki Charter School’s focus on achieving individual academic, personal, and musical excellence is consistently implemented through the nurturing learning environment based on Dr. Shinichi Suzuki’s philosophy. The collaborative approach between students, staff, parents, and community members aligns with the school’s mission and key values.</li> <li>● Consistent Accountability Pillar Results: The October 2023 Accountability Pillar Overall Summary shows sustained positive results across key metrics, including safe and caring schools, K-9 student learning achievement, parental involvement, and continuous improvement.</li> <li>● Music and Academic Integration: The school's unique integration of music and academic success continues to be monitored through performance measures reviewed annually by all staff, ensuring alignment with both the Alberta Programs of Study and the charter’s focus on music learning.</li> <li>● Parent and Student Engagement: High levels of parent involvement and satisfaction, demonstrated through regular communication, student-led conferences, and interviews, contribute to strong academic progress and overall satisfaction with the school’s performance.</li> </ul> <p><b>Achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Student Achievement and Support: Data-driven approaches such as literacy and numeracy interventions in grades K-3 help bridge early learning gaps, allowing students to meet grade-appropriate expectations. Additional educational assistants support this individualized approach.</li> <li>● Music Education Success: Music instruction is delivered by professional musicians, ensuring high-quality instruction in choir, ensemble, and private music lessons. The success of this program is evidenced by regular music assessments using Suzuki Association standards and Grade 6 music theory exams.</li> <li>● Holistic Progress Monitoring: The school’s online report card system, built on clear standards and “I can” statements, enhances transparency for parents and students regarding academic progress and areas for growth, making expectations consistent across all grades.</li> </ul>

- Extracurricular Enrichment: Programs like musical theatre and Artist-in-Residence initiatives provide diverse music learning experiences, further enriching the school’s curriculum.

**Areas of Growth:**

- Funding Challenges: Limited funding has made it challenging to maintain educational assistants and provide necessary specialty interventions (e.g., counseling, psychological assessments). Increasing operational costs add strain to the school’s budget, limiting services.
- Space Constraints: The current facility struggles to accommodate the growing needs of both music and academic instruction. Lack of soundproofed rooms and shared spaces creates logistical challenges. Expansion of classrooms and music-friendly environments is urgently needed.
- Community Engagement in Music Performance: The rising costs of transportation limit opportunities for students to share their musical performances with the broader community. This challenge has increased the need for additional fundraising to support core programs.

**By addressing these growth areas while building on its established strengths, Suzuki Charter School maintains alignment with its charter's terms and performance goals.**

Performance Measures 2023	Results
Overall percentage of students in Grades 6 who achieved the acceptable standard on PATs (overall cohort results).	90
Overall percentage of students in Grades 6 who achieved the standard of excellence on PATs (overall cohort results).	50
Percentage of students achieving the acceptable standard on locally developed standards for French Language Learning.	90
Percentage of teachers, parents and students who are satisfied that students model the characteristics of active citizenship.	90
Survey measures of academic engagement.	89

Performance Measures 2023	Results
Percentage of students who achieved excellent standards in cognitive music skills.	94
Percentage of students who achieved acceptable standards in cognitive music	100

skills.	
Percentage of students who achieved excellent standards in instrument-playing skills.	92
Percentage of students who achieved acceptable standards in instrument-playing skills.	99
Percentage of students who achieved excellent standards in ensemble skills.	93
Percentage of students who achieved acceptable standards in ensemble skills.	100
Percentage of students who achieved excellent standards in personal excellence.	95
Percentage of students who achieved acceptable standards in personal excellence.	100

Performance Measures 2023	Results
Percentage of teachers, parents and students satisfied with the overall quality of basic education.	93
Percentage of teacher, parent and student agreement that students are safe at school, are learning the importance of caring for others, are learning respect for others and are treated fairly in school.	92
Percentage of teachers and parents satisfied with parental involvement in decisions about their child's education.	89.5

**2. The authority operates in a manner consistent with all applicable provincial requirements. (7(3)(b))**

- Successes:**
- Compliance with Legislation and Regulations:
    - The Board and Administration comply with the Education Act, Charter School Regulations, Funding Manual, Charter School Bylaws, and the Societies Act.
  - Review System:



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A system exists to consistently review board policies and administrative procedures.</li> </ul> <p><b>Achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Effective Governance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The board has established a Governance Committee that attends to policy changes and updates annually, ensuring alignment with current public policy.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Areas of Growth:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Updating Policies and Procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Adapting school policies and administrative procedures to keep up with frequent changes in public policy remains a challenge. Continued effort is needed to ensure all documents are up-to-date and reflect current requirements.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>3.</b>	<b>The charter authority is governed effectively. (7(3)(a) and (c))</b>
	<p><b>Successes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Effective Governance Training: All board directors must complete an Effective Educational Governance training session before voting on board issues, which is reinforced throughout board meetings to ensure compliance.</li> <li>● Effective Governance Monitoring: The Board reviews Policies on a regular basis to ensure alignment with current legislation. The Policies are available on the website.</li> <li>● Parent Board Composition: The parent board consists of nine directors who must have children in the school, adding valuable insights into school direction.</li> <li>● Active Superintendent Engagement: The Superintendent is an active member of CASS and involved in partnerships with the University of Alberta, contributing to informed administration.</li> <li>● Code of Conduct: A code of conduct is in place and annually reviewed, supporting effective board governing strategies.</li> <li>● Strategic Plan Development: The Board, along with staff and parents, collaborates to create a five-year Strategic Plan that includes goals for permanence, excellence, student environment, continuous improvement, lifelong learning, educational institutions, leadership, and community recognition.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Stakeholder Communication Plan: Implementation of a Communication Plan that engages and informs stakeholders through various mediums and feedback channels, including surveys and meetings.</li> </ul> <p><b>Achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Board Accountability: The Board of Directors is accountable to the Minister of Education, parents, and students, and it meets monthly to set priorities and policies, ensuring that the goals of Suzuki Charter School are met.</li> <li>● Annual Reports: The Board annually approves the Combined Annual Education Results Report and Education Plan for submission to Alberta Education, reflecting transparency and adherence to requirements.</li> <li>● Performance Monitoring: The Board monitors progress toward achieving student outcomes and desired results, aligning with the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan.</li> <li>● Continuous Improvement: The Board’s role in setting the vision for continuous improvement is supported by collaborative feedback from board members, staff, and parents.</li> </ul> <p><b>Areas of Growth:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ongoing Training and Compliance: While board directors receive governance training, there may be a need for periodic refresher courses or additional training to keep up with evolving governance practices.</li> <li>● Resource Allocation for Strategic Initiatives: Ensuring that the Strategic Plan's goals are fully supported with adequate resources and funding can be an area of focus.</li> <li>● Enhanced Stakeholder Feedback Mechanisms: Continuously improving the methods for collecting and utilizing stakeholder feedback could further enhance the effectiveness of governance and communication strategies.</li> <li>● Website and Communication Tools: Continue to work with INSIGNIA to create a system that can provide tailored communication regarding student assessments. This helps to strengthen engagement and information sharing with stakeholders.</li> </ul>
4.	<p><b>The charter authority is administered effectively. (7(3)(a) and (c))</b></p>
	<p><b>Successes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Compliance with Standards: The Superintendent and Alberta Leadership standards are complied with in operations and assessment.</li> </ul>

- Charter Schools Leadership Pool: The school has numerous teachers involved in the Charter Schools Leadership Pool, providing strong teachers and aspiring leaders with leadership opportunities.
- Professional Development Program: A school-wide program prioritizing educators' personal professional development has been in place for 8 years, ensuring ongoing funding for specialty training and graduate studies.
- Senior Admin Team: The presence of a senior admin team, including a superintendent and CFO, and a dedicated school admin team (principal, assistant principal, music director, school secretary), supports effective administration.
- Supervision Schedule: A structured supervision schedule is in place for classroom observations and feedback, implemented post-2011 Charter Evaluation.

**Achievements:**

- Graduate Training and Credentials: Many teachers have completed graduate training and credentials, optimizing the quality of educational knowledge on staff.
- Implementation of Action Plan: The updated action plan from the 2011 Charter School Evaluation includes improved instructional leadership, teacher supervision, and alignment with TQS and Suzuki Integration principles.
- Development of Templates and Procedures: Principal and Assistant Principal developed supervision and evaluation templates reflecting TQS and Suzuki principles.
- Professional Learning Community (PLC) Meetings: PLC meetings provide opportunities to develop and share exemplary teaching practices reflecting the Suzuki Approach through various mediums, including workshops and presentations.

**Areas of Growth:**

- Increased Professional Dialogue: More professional dialogue about the art and craft of teaching, including sharing effective practices and discussions related to classroom events.
- Sharing Expertise: There is room for increased sharing of instructional expertise among staff members.
- Orientation and Handbook Updates: Administration will continue to revise orientation and staff handbook information to reflect current exemplary teaching practices aligned with the Suzuki Approach.
- Teacher Observations and PLC Sharing: Continued scheduling of teacher observations and PLC sharing time for best practices is necessary to further enhance instructional quality.

5.	<b>The charter authority is fiscally viable and responsible. (7(3)(c))</b>
	<p><b>Successes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Effective Financial Management: Historically, school audits reflect effective financial management (available on file).</li> <li>● Revenue-Generating Initiatives: To augment government funding, the school operates revenue-generating initiatives, including two day care programs and a bi-annual casino. Additional small fundraisers, such as pizza lunches, help offset operational costs.</li> <li>● Active Secretary Treasurer Engagement: The Secretary Treasurer is an active member of ASBOA (Association of School Business Officials of Alberta) and involved in ongoing training to inform operational best practices.</li> <li>● Strong Financial Operations: Revenues and expenses are closely managed and monitored with the maximum operation limit being maintained. Although 2020-2021 and 2022-2023 recorded deficits, these were intentional to fund expansion of Junior High.</li> </ul> <p><b>Achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Budget Management: Budgeting is taken seriously, with ongoing cost-cutting measures and efforts to manage finances effectively. The Board and Administration work collaboratively in budget development.</li> <li>● Financial Monitoring: Monthly financial statements, actual compared to budget, are reviewed monthly with the Board. Variances are highlighted and explained.</li> <li>● Diverse Fundraising: Successful implementation of diverse fundraising activities helps to support the school's budget and operational needs.</li> <li>● Expansion of Junior High: The expansion was funded through operational reserves.</li> </ul> <p><b>Areas of Growth:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Capital Reserves and Capital Funding Shortfalls: There are significant shortfalls in capital reserves and capital funding. Dependency on Edmonton Public resources and lack of annual IMR funding for facility improvements pose ongoing concerns.</li> <li>● Facility Improvement Needs: The age of the school (66 years) presents challenges, with ongoing needs for facility improvements (e.g., plumbing, leakages, aging flooring, outside surfaces, gym floor heaving) which press the budget.</li> <li>● Capital Planning: We are currently in the process of conducting a value scope to provide evidence for an updated 3 and 10 –year expansion plan to meet growth goals based on</li> </ul>

	<p>the recommendation of Alberta Education Capital Planning. We are also working with EPSD to determine if the latest Facility Audit requires updating and if so, will undertake that process in order to provide evidence for a modernization plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Shortfalls in Operational Funding: Shortfalls exist due to the relatively small size of the school, making it necessary to augment finances through revenue-generating initiatives. Financial and inflationary pressures in areas of insurance, group benefits, repairs, utilities also contribute to the shortfall.</li> <li>● Financial Management Expertise: Replacing a long term Secretary Treasurer, with considerable history, took some time as well as additional consulting costs to fill in during that gap.</li> </ul>
6.	<p><b>The students, parents, staff, school council(s) and community members consider the school program to be successful. (7(3)(d))</b></p>
	<p><b>Successes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>High Demand &amp; Reputation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The school is consistently at capacity with a waiting list, largely due to word of mouth and a strong reputation. Families move to the area to increase their chances of enrollment, which has revitalized the neighbourhood and created strong partnerships with local businesses.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Low Turnover</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Both staff and family turnover rates are low, reflecting a positive environment where staff often remain for their full careers. Families also tend to stay long-term.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Community Engagement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The school enjoys high levels of parent engagement at large events such as the Winspear performance and Meet the Teacher night, as well as through smaller initiatives like classroom volunteering.</li> <li>○ The school maintains a strong sense of community, with many alumni returning to work as Educational Assistants (EAs), music teachers, or certified teachers.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Junior High Program Growth</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Junior High program is continuously expanding, with strong turnout for open houses and a high number of lottery entries for enrollment spots.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- **Music Program Success**

- The music program has been successful in inspiring students to continue their musical pursuits after leaving the school, further adding to the school's reputation.

- **Student Support & Achievement**

- Parents appreciate the thoroughness of Individual Program Plans (IPPs).
- Educational Assistants (EAs) have received improved training and are more accessible to students.
- High levels of student confidence and strong teacher-student relationships contribute to a positive learning environment.

- **Accountability & Strategic Planning**

- Accountability pillars over the past ten years demonstrate consistently high satisfaction levels. The Strategic Plan for 2023-2029, developed with generous stakeholder input, guides annual reviews and educational planning.
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**Achievements:**

- **Academic Success**

- The school consistently achieves high Provincial Achievement Test (PAT) scores and STAR 360 results.
- Students demonstrate academic mastery, particularly through focused efforts to foster connections between grades 7, 8, and 9.

- **Positive Student Culture**

- The school has cultivated a culture of hope, confidence, and optimism among students, reinforcing strong academic and personal growth.

- **Retention & Growth**

- The school retains the majority of its students and continues to attract new families, maintaining a waiting list of those eager to join.
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**Areas for Growth:**

- **Space & Facilities**
  - The school is in need of more space to accommodate its growing population, particularly for gyms, science labs, option rooms, and staffing. As class sizes increase, maintaining the small, tight-knit community atmosphere becomes a challenge.
- **Staffing & Support Needs**
  - There is a growing need for more junior high supports, including additional staff and clear long-term planning to address the growing student body.
  - An in-house professional counselor is needed to address students' mental health and social regulation needs.
- **Addressing Public Perception**
  - The school faces challenges in addressing the public misconception of charter schools as private schools. There is a need to continue advocating for the school's mission and values to counter this perception.
- **Increased Student Needs**
  - Teachers are facing higher levels of student needs, particularly in terms of mental health, requiring more support services.
- **Teacher Self-Care**
  - As demands on staff increase, there is a need to prioritize teacher self-care to ensure their well-being and retention.

**Challenges:**

- **Parent Pressure**
  - The school experiences parental pressures similar to other schools. However, the board and administration are committed to maintaining fair and equitable treatment of all families, even when addressing concerns and dissatisfaction.

Performance Measures 2023	Results
Percentage of teachers and parents satisfied with parental involvement in decisions about their child's education.	89
Percentage of teachers, parents and students satisfied with the overall quality of basic education.	93

<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>Student success is determined in accordance with Ministerial Order (#028/2020). (7(3)(a) and (d))</b></p> <p>Education in Alberta will promote the acquisition of skills and the pursuit of knowledge with wisdom, while valuing equality of opportunity, parental responsibility, personal responsibility and excellence, and respect for difference and the inherent dignity of each individual. Students will understand the rights and benefits of democratic citizenship and their personal and community responsibilities. Students will explore life opportunities that develop their unique talents and potential, provide a sense of purpose and belonging, and affirm the dignity of work. They will become life-long learners, who will cultivate the virtues of wisdom, courage, self-control, justice, charity, and hope.</p>
	<p><b>Successes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>High Academic Achievement:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Above provincial averages in PATs at Grades 6 &amp; 9 in all core areas.</li> <li>○ High student achievement in Math and Language Arts standardized tests.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Curriculum Implementation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fully implemented Alberta Program of Studies, including the new curriculum.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Student Engagement and Support:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High proportion of students enroll in extracurricular activities.</li> <li>○ Reports of student success in transitioning to high school.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>School Environment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Safe and trusting environment promoted throughout the school.</li> <li>○ Kindness and empathy reinforced daily through classroom and music programs.</li> <li>○ Highly accepting school of all students and their individuality.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Parental Involvement:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Parents are welcome to come into the school and are involved in various capacities.</li> <li>○ Parents serve on the board and contribute to school governance.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Professional Development:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Regular professional development opportunities and staff meetings to address challenges.</li> <li>○ PD provided for new curriculum to ensure effective implementation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Student Programs and Opportunities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mentorship program between younger and older students.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



- Older students participate in work experience within the school.
- Arts, athletics, and flexible teaching support exploration of student interests.
- **Curriculum and Instruction:**
  - Literacy and Numeracy Interventions support students' foundational skills.
  - Music program supports lifelong learning and character development.
- **Adaptability and Support:**
  - Able to be nimble and change programs to suit student needs.
  - Integrated finances into various aspects of the curriculum, enhancing practical learning experiences.

**Areas of Growth:**

- **Curriculum and Resources:**
  - Need for resources for new curriculum, including texts and materials to support new learning outcomes.
  - Resources for Indigenous components of the curriculum, including certified texts/books.
  - Re-evaluate Science curriculum for the volume expected to be covered.
- **Program Expansion:**
  - Leadership and performance engagement within the community.
- **Ongoing Support:**
  - Regular staff feedback on the new curriculum to ensure ongoing improvement.

**Results 2023**

Overall percentage of students in Grades 6 and Grade 9 who achieved the acceptable standard on PATs (overall cohort results).	90
Overall percentage of students in Grades 6 and Grade 9 who achieved the standard of excellence on PATs (overall cohort results).	50
Percentage of students achieving the acceptable standard on locally developed standards for French Language Learning.	100
Percentage of teachers, parents and students who are satisfied that students model the characteristics of active citizenship.	90

8.	<b>The charter authority shares its innovative practices and learning outcomes with others in the educational community. (7(3)(a) and 13)</b>
	<p><b>Successes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Promotion on School Website: Regular updates and information about innovative practices and achievements are shared on the school’s website.</li> <li>● Publications: Research monographs and articles have been published in CASS magazine, contributing to the broader educational discourse.</li> <li>● Participation in Conferences: Presented at the TAAPCS bi-annual conference and Charter School conferences, sharing best practices and research findings.</li> <li>● Collaboration with the University of Alberta: Formal partnership led to significant research projects and evaluations of the Suzuki Approach, with findings published and utilized to improve practices.</li> <li>● Engagement with Professional Networks: Active involvement in CASS, the Alberta Research Network, and regular updates to Alberta Education field directors.</li> <li>● Science Olympics Participation: Engagement in science-related competitions and grants that support research and innovation.</li> <li>● Specialized Training Sharing: Music teachers share their specialized training with peers, enhancing professional development and practice within the field.</li> </ul> <p><b>Achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Strengthening Partnerships: Increased collaboration with the University of Alberta and other educational institutions for research and program evaluation.</li> <li>● Leadership and Professional Development: Participation in the Leadership Pool and Greater Edmonton Teachers Convention Association (GETCA) supports professional growth and knowledge sharing.</li> <li>● Effective Advocacy: Despite challenges, the school effectively advocates for and promotes its successes and research within the charter school community.</li> </ul> <p><b>Areas of Growth:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Broader Community Engagement: The school faces challenges in promoting its innovations beyond the charter school community to the larger public and educational sectors.</li> <li>● Collaboration with Post-Secondary Institutions: Greater efforts are needed to welcome post-secondary institutions to study and incorporate Suzuki’s practices, particularly with a focus on music education.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased Sharing with Other Schools: There is a need to connect and collaborate more frequently with other schools, including Edmonton Public and Catholic schools, to enhance shared learning and practices.</li> <li>● Expanding Research and Innovation: Continue to seek opportunities to share innovative practices with a wider audience, including the post-secondary community and other educational institutions.</li> <li>● Integration of Best Practices: Greater focus on integrating and sharing best practices, such as UFLI, across different educational settings and collaborating on district-wide training and implementation.</li> </ul>
9.	<b>Student achievement is consistently strong or improving. (8(1)(a))</b>
	<p><b>Successes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Above Provincial Averages: Suzuki Charter School consistently achieves above provincial averages in PATs at Grades 6 &amp; 9 across all core areas.</li> <li>● Strong Historical Performance: The school has a long history of significantly outperforming provincial averages in standardized testing.</li> <li>● High Enrollment in Extracurriculars: A high proportion of students participate in extracurricular activities, contributing to well-rounded student development.</li> <li>● Strong Performance Transitioning to High School: Reports indicate successful student transitions from Suzuki Charter School to high school.</li> </ul> <p><b>Achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Successful Implementation of Alberta Program of Studies: The school has fully implemented the Alberta Program of Studies, including the new curriculum.</li> <li>● Professional Development and Support: Ongoing professional development and support for staff, including mentorship programs and opportunities for leadership training.</li> <li>● Specialized Programs: The school offers a diverse range of arts, athletics, and individualized support, enhancing student engagement and achievement.</li> <li>● Innovative Practices: The Suzuki Triangle model and the integration of music with academic learning contribute positively to student outcomes.</li> <li>● Effective Literacy and Numeracy Interventions: Support structures and interventions are in place to address literacy and numeracy challenges for students.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Publication and Research Involvement:</b> Engaged in publishing research monographs and participating in relevant educational networks and conferences, including presenting at TAAPCS conferences.</li> </ul> <p><b>Areas of Growth:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Need for K&amp;E Program:</b> Currently lacking a Knowledge and Employability (K&amp;E) program or alternate streaming options for junior high students who may need additional support.</li> <li>● <b>Resources for New Curriculum:</b> Ongoing need for updated resources and materials to support the new curriculum, including texts and materials for Indigenous components.</li> <li>● <b>Science Curriculum:</b> Evaluate and potentially adjust how we teach science to better align with the expected volume of content.</li> <li>● <b>Community Engagement:</b> Increase efforts to engage with a broader community, including post-secondary institutions and local educational jurisdictions.</li> <li>● <b>Sharing Best Practices:</b> Continue to seek opportunities to collaborate with other schools and share best practices to enhance the overall educational experience.</li> <li>● <b>Access to Technology and Support:</b> Address needs for more technology and educational assistant support to meet student numbers and enhance learning.</li> </ul>
<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b>The charter authority is committed to engaging students, teachers, parents and community members in a model of continuous improvement. (8(1)(b))</b></p>
	<p><b>Successes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Professional Development:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Encouraged for Teachers:</b> Ongoing professional development opportunities are actively promoted, including PLC meetings, external conferences, and specialized training.</li> <li>○ <b>PD Committee:</b> Established a Professional Development committee to support and approve ongoing opportunities for staff development.</li> <li>○ <b>Music Faculty Training:</b> Music faculty members share specialized training and best practices in music education.</li> <li>○ <b>Board Members' PD:</b> Board members engage in orientation and strategic planning PD to enhance governance.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Parent and Community Engagement:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Parent and Family Sessions:</b> Offering sessions to provide strategies for literacy and numeracy.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Strong Relationships: Development of strong relationships with families and modifications to meet student needs.

- **Student-Centric Programs:**

- Junior High Expansion: Successful adaptation of the junior high program to meet student needs and include grade 6 students.
- Extracurricular Opportunities: High participation in extracurricular activities and consistent adaptation of programs to student interests.

- **Staff Collaboration and Communication:**

- Inter-staff Collaboration: Regular staff meetings and PLC sessions for sharing best practices and consistency from grade to grade.
- Shared Learning: Teachers and staff share insights gained from professional development to enhance overall staff effectiveness.

**Achievements:**

- **Strategic Planning and Continuous Improvement:**

- Strategic Planning: Engaged stakeholders in strategic planning to continually adapt and improve the school's approach.
- Professional Learning: Teachers and staff are encouraged to seek out and participate in meaningful professional development aligned with the school's goals.

- **Community and External Engagement:**

- Collaborations and Partnerships: Strong partnerships with the University of Alberta and involvement in research projects.
- Conferences and Workshops: Presenting at various conferences, including TAAPCS bi-annual conferences, the Greater Edmonton Teachers Convention, and the Leadership Conference (in Ohio) of the Suzuki Association of the Americas.

**2. Program Development:**

- Enhanced Programs: Development of specialized programs and options based on stakeholder feedback and needs, including modifications to junior high and integrating new curriculum components.

**Areas of Growth:**

- **Community and Post-Secondary Engagement:**

- Broader Community Outreach: Improving efforts to engage with the broader community and post-secondary institutions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Post-Secondary Collaboration: Further incorporating post-secondary studies and research into school practices and encouraging post-secondary research on the Suzuki Approach.</li> <li>○ Community Events: Initiatives like the proposed “learn an instrument night” and junior high students presenting to the community would be a good way to build connections.</li> <li>● <b>Staff and Student Support:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increased EA Support: Need for more educational assistant support to meet growing student needs.</li> <li>○ Technology Integration: Further investment in technology to match increasing student numbers and educational demands.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Curriculum and Instructional Strategies:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ New Curriculum Integration: Continuing to engage students with new curriculum and explore additional ways to integrate and adapt it effectively.</li> <li>○ Learning and Instrument Exposure: More opportunities for students to engage with new instruments and learning methods, potentially through community-based events.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
11.	<p><b>The charter authority reaches out beyond its walls to demonstrate broad and sustained levels of community engagement. (8(1)(b))</b></p>
	<p><b>Successes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Musical and Musical Theatre Performances: Actively participating in and showcasing student talents in the metro Edmonton community.</li> <li>● CBC’s Canadian Music Class Challenge: Annual participation with a history of exceptional results.</li> <li>● Partnerships Development: Established collaborations with the University of Alberta and the Winspear Centre.</li> <li>● Artist-in-Residence Program: Hosting annual programs with local artists and musicians.</li> <li>● Junior High Exchanges: Conducted exchange programs with Quebec and Italy, and participated in the Edmonton Music and Speech Arts Festival, broadening musical community connections.</li> <li>● Community Performances: Performance opportunities in music, science, and sports within the community.</li> <li>● Student Initiatives: Junior high students have initiated fundraising opportunities for middle school connections.</li> <li>● Sports Competitions: Beginning to compete with other schools in Edmonton (EPSB).</li> </ul>

- Local Performance Venues: Engagement with the Winspear Centre and the Alberta Legislature for performances.
- Community Showcases: Regularly showcasing student success through concerts, musical theatre performances, Science Olympics, sports events, and community musical performances.

**Achievements:**

- Ongoing Liaison: Maintaining strong connections with all Edmonton Suzuki music teachers.
- Successful Programs: Continued participation and success in events like the CBC Canadian Music Class Challenge and various exchange programs.
- Broad Community Engagement: Demonstrated commitment to involving students in various community activities and events.

**Areas of Growth:**

- Expanding Non-Musical Engagement: Increase engagement with the community in non-musical ways, such as through other academic or extracurricular activities.
- Engaging Other Groups: Explore opportunities to involve different community groups, like senior centres, in performance opportunities.
- University Collaboration: Reach out to universities to study the impact of music on learning and cognitive development.
- Increasing Awareness: Work on raising more awareness of what a Charter School is to the broader community.
- Performance Tours: Consider organizing tours for various student groups (e.g., chamber ensembles, rock bands) to perform at different venues, including schools and community centres.
- Workshop Tours: Develop workshop tours where students teach younger students or other community members basic musical skills, enhancing community engagement.

12.	<b>The charter authority uses research-informed practices to create innovative learning environments and improve student learning. (8(1)(d))</b>
	<p><b>Successes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Research-Informed Practices: Ongoing practice of student assessment and intervention development using current evidence-based research (e.g., George Georgiou and Empower with Sick Children's Hospital).</li> <li>● Early Adoption of Curriculum: A history of early implementation of new curriculum initiatives.</li> <li>● Suzuki Approach Integration: Successful integration of the Suzuki Approach into the Alberta Program of Studies, enhancing cognitive music skills and providing a unique learning experience.</li> <li>● Professional Development: Establishment of a comprehensive professional development program that supports teachers, support staff, music instructional staff, and administrators.</li> <li>● Innovative Initiatives: Engagement in innovative and risk-taking initiatives that enhance student learning across academic, musical, and personal domains.</li> <li>● Shared Knowledge: Positive outcomes from collaborative learning among music and academic teachers, leading to enhanced student learning and application of best practices.</li> <li>● Effective Professional Learning Communities (PLCs): Development of a strong PLC that promotes shared purpose, collaborative activity, and collective responsibility, contributing to school success.</li> </ul> <p><b>Achievements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Generous Curriculum Input: Significant involvement in Alberta Education curriculum input initiatives.</li> <li>● Capacity Building: Building internal capacity through team-building, sharing of ideas, and cooperation among staff, leading to holistic student development.</li> <li>● Music Faculty Expertise: Pooling of expertise among music instructors to enhance understanding and application of the Suzuki methodology, and providing tailored sessions to improve staff efficacy.</li> <li>● Holistic Student Learning: Successful implementation of engaging learning tasks based on research and the Suzuki Approach, resulting in balanced academic and musical excellence.</li> </ul>



- Knowledge Transfer: Effective transfer of knowledge gained from interactions with quality teachers and artists to enhance student learning in various subjects.

**Areas of Growth:**

- Continued Development of Research-Informed Practices: Further development and implementation of research-informed practices to continually improve student learning environments.
- Expansion of Professional Development: Ongoing refinement and expansion of professional development programs to include emerging best practices and new educational research.
- Broader Integration of Innovative Practices: Increased integration of innovative practices across different subjects and areas of learning.
- Enhanced Collaboration: Strengthen collaboration with external educational partners and research institutions to bring new insights and methodologies into the school.
- Increased Sharing of Best Practices: Greater emphasis on sharing successful strategies and practices among staff to foster a culture of continuous improvement.