Flex Academy Education FAQ

This page contains frequently asked questions & answers regarding Hybrid Education. We will continually update this FAQ page with new questions and answers as we receive them.

What is Flex?

Flex Academy is a hybrid campus school located in Kelowna, BC, offering programming from Jr Kindergarten to Grade 12. This model is designed for families who want the best of both worlds - a connected, Christ-centered school community without sacrificing the adaptability that modern learners need. Operated under the umbrella of Kelowna Christian Center Society alongside HCOS (Heritage Christian Online School), Flex Academy shares the same foundational mission: to develop innovative Christ-centered educational opportunities for learners to explore and embrace God's unique purpose.

What is hybrid pedagogy?

A school using hybrid pedagogy combines online instruction with onsite, face-to-face interaction in a way that supports personalized, inquiry-based learning for students. Students are still learning from their onsite certified teachers in a school setting with digital tools being used to support and expand student learning opportunities. This approach allows teachers to focus on relationships with students, and encourages students to envision and pursue their interests, linking academics to careers, jobs, internships, sports, arts - or whatever captivates each student.

How would this look for the early years of a child’s education?

For K-Grade 5, students experience a predominantly teacher-led, learner-focused program. Classroom learning would be facilitated by teachers who would have close relationships with their students. Personalized inquiry-based learning allows students to focus on passion areas and be supported in foundational academics while growing their independence as learners.

How would this look in the middle years of a student’s education?

Beginning in grade 6, students will use increasing amounts of digital curriculum tools to create the chance for teachers to focus on inquiry and experience-based learning. Experiments, collaborative problem-solving, and exploration of the world around them and who they are, form the core of the student experience. Teachers and Learning Coaches support students at every step and their relationship with caring adults and a caring community of peers remains our focus.

How would this look in high school?

Freedom! Teachers and Learning Coaches work with students to design a high school program that celebrates their passions and gifts and ensures they're ready for whatever they pursue post-graduation. Programming and curriculum are made as flexible as possible to allow students to pursue their passions.

I'm concerned that using digital tools means lots of screen time?

The emergency remote learning that schools underwent during the pandemic meant a lot of "Room and Zoom" - teachers engaging with some students while others watched from home. This, by and large, has not been successful for students or for teachers. In the Flex model built with intention and students at the center, the *best* tools are used to accomplish the purpose; technology is not the "only" tool. Relationships remain the primary concern of teachers at Flex Academy and the intentional and measured use of technology actually frees up teacher time to focus on student care. Student needs and progress are carefully monitored, digital skills and effective use of technology are taught, and well-being is a priority.

What would I need to do from home to support my child in this model?

Kids will always be more successful in school when education is valued and supported at home. Reading with your child at home, discussing their learning with them, supporting them to work on homework - all of this will continue to be a part of a student's school experience in Flex Academy.

But, whether the student's learning is happening through an online course module or through their teacher, the school will continue to carry the responsibility for their school education.

How many days/week will my kid be onsite for school?

Elementary: K-5 would have a 5 days/week program. Four days would be structured classroom instruction and the 5th day would be an explorations day - field trips, mixed-grade activities, etc.

Middle School: Grades 6 and 7 would have a 4 day/week program. The 5th day would still be used for school but students wouldn't have structured classes. Grades 8 and 9 would have 3.5 days/week in structured classes and 1.5 days of unstructured school time where they could be working on their class work. Kids in middle school could still be on site, doing school, for 5 days per week. Their "unstructured" time where they aren't in a classroom, could be at school with teacher supervision and support but not direct instruction.

High School: Grades 10-12 would have as much of an on -site program as necessary for them to pursue their goals. Some kids learn better independently in some subject areas - they'd be free to do so. Other students need more direct classroom instruction - that would be available as well.

So - as of right now, our plan is that from K-12 kids could be on site 5 days per week in school. However, depending on their grade and program, they wouldn't be in full-time classes each day; instead, on some days will have the chance to learn independently in a supervised environment

that works for them.

When does the online course aspect of this model start?

In our current planning, the first time a student participates in an online course with their Flex teacher would be in the second half of grade 5. That course wouldn't be in a discipline like Math or English, but would rather be a practice course that would teach students how to navigate online curriculum. Students would learn how this "custom textbook" works and get to practice using it with the guidance of their on-site teacher.

Prior to Grade 5, student use of computers would be focused on practicing all these skills but in smaller segments - moving a cursor, typing a sentence, creating a document, saving a file, and organizing a folder are all skills that we take for granted but that students need to learn before they dive into an online course.

However, the K-4 grade range focus isn't on creating "online learners". Not at all. Rather, the focus of our Foundations program is on helping students become learners who have a strong sense of agency in their learning. Even in Elementary, we want students to practice answering the questions "What do you want to learn about?" and "How do you want to show what you've learned?" So that by the time they begin an online course in Middle School they've developed skills in self-reflection, curiosity, self-compassion, resilience, decision-making, and have kept the sparks of their wonder and excitement for learning alight.

What is mixed-grade learning and why would we explore that?

Believe it or not, just because a student is in Grade 2, that doesn't necessarily mean they are reading at a Grade 2 level.

Where this becomes concerning is if a student moves from grade-to-grade and the gap between their classroom learning and their ability widens. Imagine a student is only grasping 50% of the content in Language Arts in Grades 2, 3, and 4. Over time this gap in their learning compounds.

This results in frustration for the child. They begin to hate Language Arts as year-on-year it's become a source of frustration. They avoid reading. Come middle school, they're in a tricky spot.

This is a frequent problem in core disciplines like Math and Language Arts. The instruction speeds up and a child's gap in their learning widens. A big reason for this is the arbitrary "Grade Level" system of school.

Imagine instead a model of school where that same child had support with a tricky concept until they understood it and then they moved on. What if there were checks and balances along the way to make sure kids were getting it instead of just being scooted through to the next grade. We would create an opportunity for success and confidence. So, maybe in this model that "Grade 2 student" is doing LA with some "Grade 1 students" and maybe a "Grade 3 student" as well.

Oh dear - well, will they feel self-conscious that they aren't with their peers?

In our planning there are LOTS of times where kids are learning across grades and working to solve problems together - from exploration blocks, to chapels, to clubs, to support teacher times. The frequency of collaboration, exploration, and cross-grade relationships can make this feel less like being “pulled from my friends to learn with the Grade 1s” and more like “I learn with everyone in my school at different times.”

As is the case with many things, culture is so important. Instead of kids feeling segregated grade-to-grade, what if we welcomed kids into a learning community where they fit right in at just the right place for them.

FAQ for HCOS families with Inclusive Education Students

Revision #21
Created 6 April 2022 20:28:24 by Caitlin Village
Updated 16 November 2026 22:10:21 by Colleen McCallum