



## **Nechako Electronic Busing Program**

Bag 8000,  
187 East Victoria Street  
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Phone: 800-567-1236 Fax 250-567-3943

Dear Families,

Thank you for your interest in enrolling students in the Nechako Electronic Busing Program for the 2004-2005 school year.

With more than ten years of experience in supporting students at a distance, EBUS currently registers over 1000 students in kindergarten to grade 12. The Nechako Electronic Busing Program offers families a high degree of flexibility in tailoring educational programs and selecting resources to meet the needs and interests of individual learners. EBUS families are not constrained by time, place or rigid schedules. The program provides a variety of offerings that families may select from in determining how they will meet prescribed learning outcomes.

Certified teachers work in partnership with parents to:

- develop student learning plans,
- select appropriate resources given the needs and interests of individual students,
- identify strategies and activities that will engage and motivate students, and
- help students select pieces of work to be included in their portfolio that clearly demonstrate their progress and growth.

EBUS Online teachers have developed a high degree of expertise in helping families integrate outcomes from a variety of subject areas and grade levels so that students can thrive and grow in a multi-grade setting.

Many other programs are attempting to emulate our model; these districts and schools have a long and difficult task ahead of them in trying to match our experience with home learners and our unique blend of quality resources, staff of outstanding online teachers who understand the unique needs of families in a home based learning setting, and our record of excellence.

This package includes the following information:

- general information on the EBUS program and how it operates,
- a registration form, and
- two brochures, one providing general information, the second outlining the courses available for high school students.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions about the contents of this information package or our program in general.

Sincerely,  
Ray LeMoigne, Principal  
Dave Gregg and Marg Fryatt, Vice Principals



**Introducing  
the**



**Nechako Electronic  
Busing Program**

**2004-2005**



## What is the Nechako Electronic Busing Program?

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Nechako Electronic Busing Program (commonly known as E-Bus) began in 1993 to offer support for home learners. After more than 10 years, we now enroll over 1000 students distributed across the province of British Columbia and we continue to grow.

The Nechako Electronic Busing Program offers an individualized learning program that is supported electronically. We provide a variety of technologies, resources and educational services to families with students from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

E-Bus recognizes parents as the primary supporters of their children's learning and strongly endorses the parent's role in all areas related to a child's development. In partnership with parents, the online teachers support, enhance and assess the learning of the student.

## Mission Statement

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“The Nechako Electronic Busing Program utilizes technology to support learners in alternative and innovative ways. This program facilitates individualized learning, fosters personal growth and recognizes the variety of ways learning occurs and can be demonstrated.”

## What are the benefits of joining the Nechako Electronic Busing community?

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- Flexibility in achieving goals and meeting learning outcomes
- Programs individualized to meet unique needs and interests of students
- Distinctive blend of high quality resources that include software, printed materials, online subscriptions
- Over 12 years of experience in developing programs to meet the needs of learners in a home based setting
- Communication and collaboration with BC certified teachers
- Parent involvement in the E-Bus Parent Advisory and School Planning Councils
- Loan of a fully loaded multimedia computer plus technical support by trained E-Bus staff
- A reimbursement of \$1,000 per full time student for receipted educational services and products that directly support goals laid out in the student's learning plan.

## What services does E-Bus provide?

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### ON-LINE TEACHER

Your online teacher is your most important E-Bus resource. Following registration, an online teacher will contact you by e-mail or telephone to begin planning your child's learning. Your online teacher is available to assist with planning, selecting resources and answering your questions.

### WORKSHOPS

In the fall, the E-Bus staff hold community workshops in several locations around the province. Workshop topics vary, based on suggestions from parents. This is also an opportune time for families to meet with online teachers 'face to face'.

### TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Families using an E-Bus computer receive ongoing technical assistance. Families choosing to use their own computer are responsible for their own computer maintenance and repairs. All families are responsible for their own Internet Service provision. This may be included as part of the technology portion of the Reimbursement claim subject to the current guidelines.

## What resources does E-Bus provide?

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### CURRICULUM

E-Bus provides online access to the Ministry of Education curriculum documents that describe the actual content and learning outcomes to be covered. Curriculum resources are provided in a variety of formats - software, print, text and online.

### SOFTWARE

#### *Lending Library*

Nechako Electronic Busing Program maintains a library of educational software classified by subject and grade. Items can be ordered directly from our online catalogue or through your online teacher.

#### *CCC (Successmaker)*

The Successmaker software curriculum includes courses in mathematics and reading/language arts for students in grades K-8. A feature of this program is the management system that allows customizing and tracking of student progress.

#### *The Learning Equation (TLE)*

A mathematics course for Grades 7 to 10. Each course, delivered by CD with an accompanying student workbook, keeps track of student achievement.

#### *SMILE - Smartbridge Multimedia Interactive Learning Experiences*

Courseware for selected academic courses in grades 8-12. Available to E-Bus through a special partnership with Smartbridge Communications.

#### *Academy of Reading*

Developed for students with reading problems such as dyslexia, this program teaches and reinforces important reading skills and sub-skills as well as monitoring and tracking student progress.

### INTERNET RESOURCES

#### *E-Bus Website*

The E-Bus website (<http://www.e-bus.com>) contains information about all aspects of the E-Bus program including numerous curriculum resources and ideas. Some areas of the website are accessible only by password.

#### *E-Bus Resource Database*

Accessed through our website, this database contains a wide variety of resources to assist families. The Database is for the exclusive use of families in Nechako E-Bus as it is password protected.

#### *Online Subscriptions*

Nechako E-Bus has purchased online subscriptions to educational sites for students and parents.

#### *Minibus*

This online newsletter is created and edited by students under the supervision of an online teacher.

#### *BigBus*

Bigbus is a weekly online E-Bus newsletter listing upcoming events, valuable websites, and general items of interest.

### E-BUS STUDENT ORGANIZER

A family organizer containing E-Bus contact names and numbers, important dates, and calendar pages helps families keep track of appointments and course work.

### REIMBURSEMENT FUNDS

Reimbursement dollars (\$1,000 per FTE- full time equivalent) are provided to families for the purchase of approved resources to support the student learning plan. Families need to follow approved resource guidelines, provide original receipts and complete a Reimbursement Claim form.

### LOAN OF A MULTIMEDIA COMPUTER

Families have the option of using a fully loaded computer from E-Bus. This computer includes Microsoft Office for word processing, presentations and spreadsheets, as well as communication software, an Internet browser, and other applications. \$350 will be deducted from the reimbursement total for use, maintenance and technical support of an E-Bus computer.

## How are students assigned to an on-line teacher?

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Elementary students (K-7) are assigned as a family to one on-line teacher. This grouping arrangement makes it possible for families to more easily integrate curriculum into themes for multi-age students. Communication is simplified through contact with only one teacher.

Junior Secondary students are assigned to a homeroom online teacher who will help them plan their programs. As academic courses become more content specific, students work more directly with a small group of subject specialists.

Senior Secondary students will plan their programs with the assistance of a counselor. Students will work directly with subject specialists as academic courses at the secondary level are more demanding and students require more support to prepare for provincial exams.

## How are Student Learning Plans developed?

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Parents and students collaborate with online teachers to create a learning plan for each student. These learning plans may not look the same, but they all serve the same purpose. Each plan outlines the topics the student will study over the year, identifies key resources, and possible samples of student work that will go into the student's portfolio to demonstrate progress. Timelines are also included. Student Learning Plans may change over the course of the year as new interests or student needs are identified. It is the responsibility of the OLT to ensure that the plan meets the provincial learning outcomes, and to suggest strategies that will help students and parents achieve the goals that they have established.

Senior Secondary students and parents will work with a counselor to develop a Student Learning Plan that meets the requirements for graduation and helps the student meet future career goals. Students can timetable courses in a variety of ways. Timelines are important for secondary students who may need to prepare for provincial exams or meet application deadlines for post secondary.

## How are students assessed and evaluated?

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The online teacher is ultimately responsible for the assessment of student progress in relation to BC learning outcomes. Parents and students help online teachers determine which samples of student work best illustrate student achievement and growth. Portfolios containing a variety of samples and assessments allow students to demonstrate their growth over time. A variety of assessment tools (checklists, project criteria, tests, etc.) and strategies (self assessments, observations, etc.) help to ensure that individual learning styles and learning rates are considered in describing student learning. We encourage families to involve students in assessing their own growth and progress and in selecting samples of their work to be included in their portfolios.

Families are required to provide sufficient samples of student work for online teachers to make a reasonable, professional judgments about the progress of the student throughout the year. Samples can be shared in a variety of ways and forms (eg. print, video, audio tape, online). The Ministry of Education requires that three formal written reports and two informal reports be provided to parents each year.

### ***Kindergarten to Grade 3***

Students receive structured written comments that emphasize what the student can do.

### ***Grades 4 to 9***

Students receive letter grades as well as structured written comments.

### ***Grades 10 to 12***

Students receive percentage grades, letter grades, and written comments.

## What are the roles of ...

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### *The parents?*

- Collaborate with the online teacher in the development of a Student Learning Plan for their child
- Provide sufficient samples of student work so three formal reports can be completed as required by the Ministry of Education
- Communicate regularly with your online teacher, electronically and by phone
- Create an appropriate learning environment that includes internet access in the home
- Supervise all access and/or communication on the internet when using Nechako Electronic Busing Program equipment and accounts
- Are present and actively involved in their child's learning

### *The on-line teacher (OLT)?*

- Collaborates in the preparation of the learning plan, ensures that the Student Learning Plan addresses the prescribed learning outcomes, and provides expertise in understanding curriculum content
- Outlines/ suggests instructional strategies and suitable learning activities for students which may include opportunities for direct instruction
- Recommends resources to support the goals in the plan
- Assesses student progress and provides professional feedback
- Assists families with the use of technology

### *The student?*

- Is actively involved in planning his or her learning
- Asks questions!
- Completes learning projects to the best of her/his ability

### *The E-Bus Program?*

- Provides families with services and resources in an efficient and timely manner
- Maintains a high level of communication between parents, online teachers, office personnel, technical staff and administrators
- Ensures that all requirements of the Ministry regarding curriculum, reporting, and graduation are being adhered to

## What about reimbursements and how are they managed?

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The Nechako Electronic Busing Program provides families with a reimbursement amount that is determined annually. (For the 2003-2004 school year, this amount was \$1,000 per FTE.) These funds are intended to support the student's learning plan and help families provide a more varied and challenging program. Families have used these funds to purchase supplementary curriculum materials, support physical education or recreational activities in their communities, cover the cost of music lessons, dance lessons, art programs and field trip admissions for example. Kindergarten students are considered to attend only half time and are thus entitled to 50% of the reimbursement amount.

There are two claim periods in each school year with dates appearing in the student organizer and the school calendar. Families need to provide documentation (original receipts) and complete a "Reimbursement Claim Form" which lists amounts, vendor/supplier information and connects purchases to the student learning plan. Families may claim up to 50% of the total reimbursement in the first claim period.

Since the reimbursement dollars are intended to directly support the goals described in the student learning plan, there will be a limit of 40% on the amount that can be claimed for technology costs i.e. computers\*, ISP provision, scanners, printers, digital cameras etc. Families with only one child may be given special consideration to exceed this allotment to reflect the high cost of providing computers and ISP for a single student. E-Bus will not reimburse families for the purchase of non-secular materials.

\*Note: Families providing their own computers must ensure that these meet the minimum technical specifications established by the Nechako Electronic Busing Program.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### ***What qualifications do I need to help my child learn?***

Parents do not require a formal post secondary education but do require patience, time and commitment to their children's learning.

### ***How much does it cost?***

British Columbia families do not have to pay to join our program. We are a public school operating in British Columbia.

### ***I am not a British Columbia resident. Can I still register with E-Bus?***

Our program is available free to residents of British Columbia. Out of province families should contact E-Bus Administration regarding fees.

### ***What are the age restrictions for K-12 students?***

A student can be no younger than 5 on December 31 of the school year. A student can be no older than 19 on December 31 of the school year.

### ***What about students with special needs?***

Applications will be dealt with on a case -by -case basis as some students with special needs may require attention and services that go beyond those that are available through E-Bus.

### ***What are the minimum technical requirements if I am providing my own computer?***

Users registered with E-Bus and using their own computers will need to have systems capable of running Windows XP Home or Professional with Office 2000 or better, along with Antivirus software and a configured firewall program. All users will require an email account with 10mb of space or better. (Hotmail or Yahoo accounts have space restrictions making them insufficient for meeting program needs.)

### ***How do I register?***

Complete a separate registration form for EACH student, and forward (with a signed copy of the students' birth certificate) to the address shown below.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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**Phone (toll free in BC):** 1 800-567-1236 Ex 2221

**Fax:** (250) 567-3943

**Website:** [www.e-bus.com](http://www.e-bus.com)

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