



Framework for Enhancing Student Learning School Plan



Lake Cowichan School
2025-2026



Our Story

What are the unique, positive, characteristics of the school?

Lake Cowichan School (LCS) is located on the traditional, unceded lands of the Ts'uubaa-asatx people (People of the Lake) and we are grateful to work, learn, and play on this beautiful land. Cowichan Lake also known as *Kaatza*, meaning "The Lake" is a small community on the west coast of Vancouver Island. The community of Lake Cowichan is home to the Ts'uubaa-asatx Nation (with roots to the Dididaht group of tribes).

Our school is situated in a small multi-generational lakeside community. This idyllic community is in the town of Lake Cowichan, surrounded by the beautiful heritage of the Cowichan River flowing through the center of town. We have many students that come to us from other communities that comprise the Cowichan Lake community. These communities include Youbou, Honeymoon Bay, Mesachie Lake, and Caycuse.

In a smaller school community, students have more opportunities to receive personalized attention from their teachers and other school staff. This environment fosters stronger relationships and more individualized support for academic and personal needs. We are a diverse and inclusive school community that welcomes all, promoting positive behaviour, academic achievement, and a culture of respect and responsibility. We are committed to creating a nurturing and inclusive environment where every student feels supported, safe, and connected.

Although we have a small population of students in the grade 10-12 graduation program, we are still able to offer a vast array of electives and academic courses. We have students graduate from Lake Cowichan School each year, prepared for further learning in Academics, Trades, Arts, Athletics, and much more.



2025 Theatre Production of Little Shop Horrors

Active involvement with the community: We are actively involved with the local community. Staff provide students with opportunities to develop civic responsibility and leadership skills, as well as create partnerships that benefit both the school and the community. Throughout the year, students engage in community partnerships with local businesses and community organizations. We work closely with our community partners to create positive relationships and a safe culture.

Supportive resources/dedicated and knowledgeable staff: Our school provides resources such as counseling services, peer tutoring, and academic support which can help students overcome challenges and achieve success. Our staff is comprised of Educators, Educational Assistants, and Support Workers who are passionate about education and develop strong connections to inspire students to learn and achieve their goals.

Overall, a small community feel in a school can offer many benefits that can contribute to a positive and supportive learning environment for students. Local community teams support our students by coming into our school to promote literacy through reading, as well as hockey skill development and mentorship.

Community members provide students opportunities to work at local businesses, Cowichan Community Services supports students and families in the school, scholarships and grants are provided year after year from small town businesses, and small community organizations and community members readily contribute funds towards school fundraisers. As such, there is a greater sense of accountability among students, faculty, and staff. This helps to promote positive behavior, academic achievement, and a culture of respect and responsibility.

Our school is a hub for students to dive deeper into a variety of learning in exploratory electives such as: cooking/baking, gardening, guitar, rock climbing, theatre, volleyball skills PHE classes, art, pottery, woodwork, hockey, curling, skating, bowling as well as outdoor learning in the nearby trails and parks. We truly do live in paradise; surrounded by both water and wilderness. The staff at Lake Cowichan School embrace their passions which positively impact so many of our children. As learners themselves, our staff model and create inclusive learning environments that encompass the whole child. It is evident through inquiry-based learning that students are gaining a deeper understanding of the core and curricular competencies which peaks their learning interests thus creating lifelong learners.



LCS Senior Boys Volleyball Team

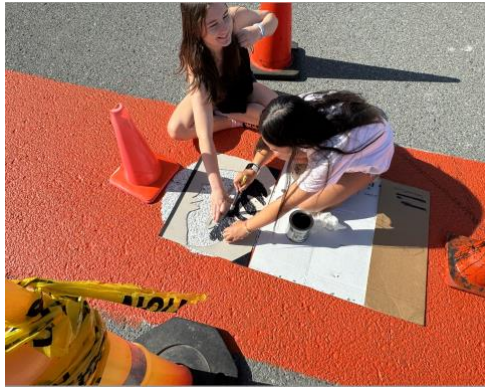


LCS Grade 4/5's Gardening Exploratory

What are the important demographics of our school and community?

Lake Cowichan School is home to approximately 400 students in grades 4-12. We have a unique school campus which will consist of 8 elementary divisions from grades 4-7 upstairs for the 2025-2026 school year. Downstairs is home to our grade 8-12 secondary students. Our school site also houses a satellite campus for students enrolled at Cowichan Valley Open Learning.

Students primarily arrive to school by bus, some students are dropped off by vehicle, and others walk as many families live near the school area. Our population is diverse, with 13% of our learners comprising a Ministry of Education designation, and 23% of our learners self-identify as Indigenous. Many of our Indigenous students are of Metis heritage.



Social Justice Class painting our new “Every Child Matters” sidewalk

What do we celebrate?

We celebrate student learning and embrace a culture of collective and individual well-being. Our learners are provided with a variety of opportunities to celebrate their learning ranging from the Young Entrepreneur program, Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) challenges to the salmon enhancement program. Students also participate in the following activities and teams: track and field, cross country, chess club, volleyball, hockey, basketball, badminton, soccer, rugby, and climbing. Lake Cowichan School students run both a leadership class and a SOGI Rainbow Tea Club for students. In December, the school provides a winter luncheon, which is not possible without the monetary support and volunteers from the community. The school also supports many of the local community ambassador programs, such as Cowichan Lake Ambassador Program, Stream and Forest keepers, Trail Blazers, and other water basin initiatives. At the end of every year, our grade 12 graduating students are celebrated for all their achievements in a school graduation ceremony, district scholarship ceremony, community scholarship night, capstone projects, health fair presentations and the Indigenous ceremony. Each year, our social justice class provides students with an opportunity to engage in local projects that help support members in the community and contribute towards creating a safe and positive learning environment within the school. A project that is still very alive in our school is the yearbook. Students work diligently throughout the year capturing all the events and faces of the students in our school. We celebrate the success of the school year with the memories created for the annual yearbook. In September and June, we celebrate all Indigenous Peoples, and we participate in activities to deepen our understanding of the local and national Indigenous cultures in our country.



LCS' Leadership 11/12 Class leading Compassion Week to our Elementary students

We have a weekly Laker Card draw on Fridays to win donuts. This has been an ongoing tradition for years. Students actively seek opportunities to demonstrate leadership, responsibility, kindness, safety, showing pride in their school, determination, cooperation with others, and overall making our school a better place to be. This positive reinforcement helps to build empathy within a community of young learners.

Our Learners

Who are our learners? What are the strengths and stretches we see in our learners?
What evidence do we have of these strengths and stretches?

Strengths – independent learning and self-managers of time, good self-advocacy, strong relationships with the adults in the building and strong connections to the community. The grade configuration allows staff and students to spend nine years learning and growing together. In this time, the sense of community and “family” is fostered like no other school in the district. We foster the growth of our students by assisting them with basic literacy and numeracy skills as well as developing resiliency and fortitude. This provides students with the ability to maintain a strong network of support and connection to the staff in the school that can exist over the years.

Stretches – Socio-economic disparities, transportation limitations due to geographical isolation, and limited access to essential municipal services—including health care, mental health supports, and economic assistance—are key challenges faced by our community. Over the past few years, these issues have become more pronounced as families continue to

struggle with rising living costs and economic uncertainty. As a result, Lake Cowichan School has grown into a vital hub for addressing student and family needs. Our staff often provide support that extends beyond academics, helping connect learners with services, ensuring access to food and emotional care, and creating stability through trusted relationships. In doing so, the school plays an essential role in promoting equity and well-being across our community.



Science 8 class doing a dissection of a cow's eye

Our Goals

Goal #1: Create Meaningful Student-Centered Learning Opportunities to Increase Student Engagement (Individual and Collective Well-Being, Indigenous Ways of Knowing)

Key Actions:

- Provide diverse ways for students to demonstrate learning
- Ensure curriculum reflects student identity, culture, and lived experience
- Integrate Indigenous knowledge through authentic experiences with Knowledge Keepers
- Expand project-based and performance-based assessments
- Prioritize land-based, inquiry-driven, and hands-on learning
- Enhance collaboration via Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

Evidence of Growth:

- Student reflection samples
- Student Learning Survey data
- Feedback from Indigenous partners and Knowledge Keepers
- Participation in experiential learning opportunities
- PLC meeting minutes and initiatives



Grade 4 students working with Root of Empathy Program

Goal #2: Target Resources to Students Needing Academic Intervention and Supports, especially priority learners (Literacy, Numeracy, Inclusive Education)

Key Actions:

- Identify and monitor priority learners (i.e., Indigenous, students with diverse abilities, ELL, low-SES, and children in care) through ongoing data collection and personalized learning plans

- Implement evidence-based Tier 1, 2, and 3 literacy and numeracy interventions
- Administer formative assessments (e.g., San Diego Quick Assessment, DART, Right Track Reading)
- Provide a combination of push-in and pull-out support for all learners
- Use Lexia, Heggerty, and Words Their Way strategies to support foundational skills
- Offer training for support staff in trauma-informed and literacy practices
- Support interdisciplinary staff teams exploring inclusive strategies

Evidence of Growth:

- Reporting data on student achievement
- Student narratives and educator reflections
- Increased student success in Tier 2/3 interventions
- SBT/LART/counselling referral tracking
- Rubric and formative assessment analysis

Goal #3: Continue Building Caring Adult Mentorships and Strong Relationships- (Trauma-Informed Practice, Mental Health Literacy, SOGI)

Key Actions:

- Strengthen the Power of 3 initiative (trusted adult support system)
- Co-develop culturally responsive strategies with Indigenous Support Workers and community partners
- Coordinate with district and community services to support children in care and families with complex needs
- Document supports for children in care, including ISP goals, check-ins, and wraparound planning
- Expand mental health literacy programs (e.g., Peer Counselling, CLE delivery)
- Promote inclusive, safe spaces and support-led clubs (e.g., Rainbow Tea Cub, SOGI club, Leadership, Indigenous Student Council)
- Celebrate student identity and achievement through authentic storytelling, recognition, and leadership opportunities
- Engage students in equity-focused learning and advocacy
- Provide mentorship and identity-affirming relationships

Evidence of Growth:

- Student survey data on safety, belonging, and well-being
- Feedback from families, Indigenous Elders, and support staff
- Implementation of wellness and mentorship programs

- Increased student participation in inclusive activities
- Feedback from student focus groups and clubs



Grade 6 PHE class: Curling and utilizing our community resources

Looking Ahead: Our story and beyond . . .

Lake Cowichan School remains committed to fostering Laker Pride through inclusive, forward-thinking, and compassionate learning environments. By supporting all learners—especially those facing systemic barriers—we ensure a future where every student is seen, heard, and valued. The power of small-town connection, Indigenous worldview, and unwavering staff dedication drives our mission to provide meaningful learning for all.

Together, we move forward with pride, purpose, and the belief that every student has the potential to thrive. LCS is committed to fostering a nurturing and empowering environment for all students, embracing Laker Pride and Honour. By taking these steps, LCS can create a more dynamic and supportive learning environment that helps all students thrive.



LCS Elementary Track Meet with High school students supporting