



2026 – 2027
Chemainus Secondary School



Chemainus Secondary: Our Story

Our Community

Chemainus Secondary School is located on the unceded traditional territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, Chemainus Secondary School sits closest to the historic village of Shts'enmines—now known as Chemainus—near Kulleet Bay, a site central to Stz'uminus life and culture. We honour our connections to the Stz'uminus, Penelakut, Halalt, Lyackson, Malahat, Cowichan (Quw'utsun), and Métis Nations, whose students and families are integral to our school community. With humility and gratitude, we walk alongside our Indigenous partners, guiding our xe'xe' smun'eem—our sacred children—toward a future rooted in respect, understanding and shared purpose.

Chemainus itself is a small, coastal town on Vancouver Island, internationally known for its murals that celebrate local history, culture and resilience. Once a mill town, Chemainus has grown into a vibrant arts community with deep ties to the land and sea. Its location on Stz'uminus, Penelakut, Halalt, Lyackson Nations reflects the enduring connection to the surrounding Indigenous communities. In Chemainus, stories are remembered, relationships run deep, and the school remains a central part of community life.

Our School Community

For the 2026-2027 school year Chemainus Secondary will return to a Grade 8-12 school, and we expect a student population of approximately 345 students, 41 staff, and three community liaisons for the 2026-2027 school year. This year, all our students will follow a semester timetable as we transition back to grades 8 to 12 school, allowing them to meet graduation requirements while exploring diverse electives aligned with their interests and goals.

Most of our students come from Chemainus, Crofton, Saltair, Thetis Island, Westholme, and Penelakut Island, with many commuting by bus, water taxi or BC Ferries. Approximately 23% of our students self-identify as Indigenous. Our school reflects a wide range of family structures, socio-economic backgrounds, and cultural identities. Generations of families have graduated from Chemainus Secondary, and alumni frequently return to reconnect, reminisce, and celebrate their roots. We are proud of our strong community partnerships, including over \$70,000 in annual Scholarships and Bursaries supporting our graduates. Visitors often comment on the warmth and kindness of our students. Our small size allows staff to build lasting relationships with students, fostering a deep sense of belonging. Through academics, clubs, athletics, Peer Tutoring, and Leadership, students contribute to a vibrant and inclusive school culture.

What Our School Is Telling Us

School Strengths Identified Through Student, Parent, and Staff Surveys

- Strong relationships between students and caring, supportive adults.
- A safe, welcoming, and inclusive learning environment.
- Positive school culture that values belonging, diversity, and respect for others.
- Strong commitment to Indigenous education and learning about local First Nations.
- Students have access to academic support, feedback, and help when needed.
- Students are developing critical thinking, communication, reasoning, and collaboration skills.
- Staff are committed to student success and maintaining high expectations for learners.
- School programs support respectful relationships, inclusion, and understanding diversity and human rights.
- Students demonstrate strong citizenship, responsibility, and respect for people who are different from themselves.
- Families view the school as welcoming and report positive relationships with staff.
- Staff report a strong sense of inclusion and a positive school climate.
- Students are beginning to think about and plan their futures through career and post-secondary pathways.

School Stretches Identified Through Student, Parent, and Staff Surveys

- Strengthen student mental health, resilience, and coping strategies.
- Improve students' sense of belonging, connection, and engagement in school.
- Increase student voice, choice, ownership, and agency in learning.
- Enhance preparation for life beyond graduation, including career planning, financial literacy, and life skills.
- Strengthen student engagement through meaningful, relevant, and personalized learning opportunities.
- Increase participation in extracurricular activities, leadership opportunities, and school life.
- Continue addressing student stress and anxiety related to school.
- Improve consistency of behaviour expectations and follow-through across the school.
- Strengthen family engagement, communication, and opportunities for parent voice.
- Increase awareness of existing student supports, programs, and opportunities.
- Expand opportunities for experiential, land-based, and Indigenous learning experiences.
- Continue improving student achievement through focused literacy, numeracy, attendance, and engagement strategies.

Reflection on 2025–2026

Literacy & Numeracy

This year, targeted literacy and numeracy interventions supported many students in building foundational skills. Initiatives included the Bridge Program (was called Soft Landing program), REWARDS intervention groups, peer reading opportunities, numeracy intervention blocks, IXL access, and collaborative support between classroom teachers and the Inclusive Learning Team.

Assessment data indicates that many students made gains in literacy, particularly in reading fluency and comprehension. At the same time, school and provincial data continue to show that a significant number of students require additional support in literacy and numeracy. Grade 7 FSA results indicate particular concern in numeracy, where over half of students were identified as emerging.

Attendance data also highlighted an important challenge. The number of students missing five or more days per month increased significantly throughout the school year, peaking at 111 students in April and 108 students in May. We know that attendance, achievement, belonging, and well-being are closely connected.

Indigenous Education

This year, Chemainus Secondary strengthened relationships with local Nations and expanded Indigenous learning opportunities for students and staff. Students participated in multiple land-based learning experiences, cultural teachings, traditional food gatherings, and school-wide events that deepened understanding of Indigenous histories, cultures, and ways of knowing.

These experiences strengthened student belonging, increased cultural understanding, and created meaningful connections between learning, community, and place.

Mental Health & School Culture

Survey results identified mental health, belonging, engagement, and school connection as important areas for growth. Throughout the year, students participated in athletics, clubs, leadership opportunities, experiential learning, awareness campaigns, and school-wide events that strengthened connection and engagement.

Several initiatives contributed to a more positive and safe learning environment. The hall pass system reduced hallway congestion during instructional time, while vape detectors contributed to a noticeable decrease in vaping concerns identified by students. Student voice also informed future safety improvements, including additional security cameras.

Attendance data continues to be a significant concern. Increasing attendance remains critical to improving achievement, belonging, engagement, and wellness.

School-Wide Indicators of Success

To monitor progress across all goal areas, Chemainus Secondary School will use three common indicators:

Attendance

Evidence

- Monthly attendance reports
- Number and percentage of students missing 5 or more days per month
- Attendance trends for identified students
- Attendance data for Bridge Program and Learning Alternatives students

Belonging & Engagement

Evidence

- Student Learning Survey
- Mental Health and Wellness Survey
- Student voice surveys
- Participation in athletics, clubs, leadership, and school events
- Participation in Indigenous cultural and land-based learning opportunities

Literacy & Numeracy Achievement

Evidence

- Learning Inventory data (Grades 8–9)
- Development of common literacy and numeracy assessment practices for Grades 10–12
- Graduation Assessment results
- Course completion and success rates
- Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention data

Our Focus Areas for 2026–2027

Learning

Focus: Improve literacy and numeracy achievement through strong Tier 1 instruction, targeted interventions, and improved attendance.

Key Actions

- Implement common Tier 1 literacy and numeracy strategies across subject areas.
- New this year, Literacy Foundations and Mathematics Foundations courses in semester 1 to improve outcomes in semester 2 English and Math programs. Continue to offer Learning Strategies courses each semester as a course option for those with identified learning disabilities and for students that have self-identified a need for this course and continue with tier 2 and 3 intervention supports.
- Expand the use of Learning Inventories and common assessment practices.
- Develop literacy and numeracy assessment measures for Grades 10–12.
- Strengthen attendance monitoring and intervention processes.
- Increase opportunities for authentic literacy, numeracy, financial literacy, and cross-curricular learning.
- Reawaken NumLits staff committee

Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Caring for Place

Focus: Strengthen Indigenous student success through language, land-based learning, and community partnerships.

Key Actions

- Continue land-based learning opportunities.
- Expand the use of Hul'q'umi'num language throughout school life.
- Strengthen partnerships with local Nations, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Cultural Teaching Assistants.
- Expand opportunities for students to learn through cultural and community connections.
- Increase use of outdoor learning spaces to support Indigenous ways of knowing.
- Continue planning toward a Hul'q'umi'num language course for 2027–2028.

Individual and Collective Well-Being

Focus: Strengthen student well-being, belonging, engagement, and attendance through a school-wide culture of care.

Key Actions

- Implement year-long mental health literacy learning.
- Strengthen attendance and re-engagement supports through the Bridge Program.
- Continue hall pass and vape detector systems.
- Expand opportunities for athletics, clubs, leadership, and student voice.
- Strengthen partnerships with community agencies and service providers.
- Support student transitions and engagement through Learning Alternatives and Youth Care Worker supports.
- Expand purposeful staff wellness activities throughout the year

Our Story Is Beyond...

Cheminus Secondary is deeply rooted in the values of our small-town community: resilience, hard work, and connection. Our school is more than a place of learning; it is a living story shaped daily by students, staff, alumni, families, and community members. We recognize the limited extracurricular opportunities available in our area and respond by providing meaningful opportunities beyond the classroom that help students build relationships, develop leadership, and make positive choices.

The presence of alumni and Elders who return to reconnect, support students, and share their experiences reflects the lasting impact of our school. While we have made progress in strengthening transitions between elementary and secondary school, we remain committed to reducing barriers, fostering belonging, and creating a unified and inclusive learning community. Our story continues to be shaped by strong relationships, community partnerships, and a shared commitment to ensuring every learner feels connected, supported, and empowered to succeed.