



## Educational Program Overview

Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools (NLPS) has 29 elementary schools, seven secondary schools, and one Distributed Learning Centre. French Immersion programs are offered at four elementary schools and two secondary schools. In addition to the provincial government curriculum, the district has a number of special programs, including fine arts, environmental and sports programs, academies, work experience and career preparation.

The school district is one of the largest employers in the region, employing over 2,000 staff with an annual operating budget of approximately \$157 million.

### Programs of Choice

NLPS offers a rich diversity of programs that are designed to meet the specific needs and interests of students. Programs of choice fall into two main categories: District Programs and School-based Programs, which include: Early Years, International Education, Learning Alternatives, Secondary Academies; Island ConnectED; Career Technical Centre and French Immersion.

### Early Years

Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools' Early Years Program works with community partners to enhance programs and provide services and support for families and young learners, in order to meet the developmental needs of children prior to entering school. Programs include Ready, Set, Learn; Parent Child Mother Goose, StrongStart Centres, and Welcome to Kindergarten. StrongStart Centres provide a drop-in program for children under the age of 5 and their parents or caregivers. NLPS also partners with various community partners and associations e.g. Qeq College – a pre-kindergarten readiness program for Indigenous learners in partnership with Tillicum Lelum Friendship Centre.

### International Education

The International Student Education Program, which has 287 students from across the globe, gives foreign students the opportunity to:

- study with Canadian students
- learn English and standard academic subjects in a supportive environment
- experience Canadian culture

All schools are accredited by the Ministry of Education and offer government curriculum. Students may attend for a semester, an academic year, or to graduate with a British Columbia diploma. The International Student Education program accepts both elementary (K to Grade 7) and secondary students. NLPS International students enrich a culture of diversity in schools.

*The International Student program brings additional revenue to the district, which can be used to meet the district's strategic priorities, including enhancing classroom instruction. The number of spaces available is not keeping up with the demand in the program.*

### Learning Alternatives

Learning Alternatives offers a number of district programs providing options for students who desire flexible, innovative and individualized learning.

The program is primarily offered at two locations, Barsby Secondary and Woodlands and provides learners with a dynamic blend of forward thinking education and personalized programming. The Learning Alternatives Team provides students with individualized academic plans and use innovative strategies that focus on learner strengths. The Team is comprised of creative teachers, supportive education assistants, caring child youth and family support workers, and a very upbeat administration.

The goal is to guide learners to discover personal success through programming that suits their lifestyle and needs. Programming is offered through authentic and meaningful experiences that connect learners to the natural world and inspires sustainable values and behaviours.

The Circle of Courage is woven throughout all of the Learning Alternative programs. This model of youth development is based on the principles of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity.

Learning Alternatives offers a number of programs:

- Family Learning Outreach and Wellness (FLOW)
- Junior and Senior Learning Alternatives
- Take A Hike – Land based learning
- Ravens Lelum – Teen Parent Learning Centre
- Alternative Based Opportunities United by Teamwork (ABOUT)
- Intro to Trades (ITT)
- House of Learning
- Nanaimo Correctional Centre

*A need to serve vulnerable youth, sees NLPS exploring the need for a purpose built building for Learning Alternatives Programs.*

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### Secondary Academies

There are a number of academies in NLPS including:

- **Hockey (NDSS):** The vision of the academy is a formal training program within the school day. A typical week includes one gym workout, three on-ice sessions, and one classroom session, with a commitment to excellence in student achievement.
- **Lacrosse (NDSS):** The Lacrosse Academy is an elite lacrosse program designed to develop individual and team skills. The program includes frequent travelling to tournaments within British Columbia, and International travel to the United States. Open to grades 8-12 students with previous lacrosse experience.
- **Beach Volleyball (NDSS):** The NLPS Beach Volleyball Academy focusses on both technical and tactical skill development of individual athletes in the sport of beach volleyball. It is open to students of all ability levels who wish to participate in high performance beach volleyball training. Training occurs at NDSS, Nanaimo Beach Volleyball Courts, Prime Fitness Centre and Snuneymuxw Gym.
- **Soccer (NDSS):** The NLPS Soccer Academy is a formal training program within the school day. A typical week includes one gym workout, three on-field sessions, and one classroom session, with a commitment to excellence in student achievement.
- **Performing Arts (Dover Bay):** The NLPS Performing Arts Academy offers accelerated learning for those serious about growing their performance skills and their confidence alongside like-minded students. The course is designed for aspiring actors who wish to participate in an enriched educational experience of performing arts education. The facility has state of the art lighting and sound equipment and encourages students to also learn technical theatre.
- **Jazz Academy (Wellington)** The NLPS Jazz Academy at Wellington provides the opportunity to achieve excellence in an intensive music education program in a supportive instrumental and vocal Jazz setting.

### Island ConnectED

The Island ConnectED program offers students from kindergarten to grade 12 flexible learning arrangements. The program matches the dedication of distance education families with the resources of NLPS and is a flexible way for learners of all ages to work towards their B.C. Dogwood Diploma and/or to upgrade their high school courses.

### Career Technical Centre

The Career Technical Center (CTC) offers a unique educational opportunity for students in grades 4-12. The programs include:

- Grades 4-7: Elementary Skills Exploration (Trades Trailer), Skills Canada
- Grades 8-12: Classroom or Assembly Career Pathways Presentations, Skills Canada
- Grades 10-12: Trade Sampler (VIU), Youth WORK, Skills Canada

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- Grade 12: Trade Sampler (VIU), Youth WORK, Youth TRAIN, Dual Credit Enrichment, Skills Canada

### French Immersion

There are approximately 1,500 students enrolled in the French Immersion program, kindergarten to grade 12. Students enter the Early French Immersion program in kindergarten or grade 1, or Late French Immersion in grade 6. Late French Immersion (LFI) is a two-year intensive program offered to students who have successfully completed grade 5.

French Immersion is offered at four elementary schools in NLPS:

- [École Hammond Bay School](#) – Hammond Bay is a single-track French Immersion school, meaning that the French Immersion program is the only one offered at the school.
- [École North Oyster School](#) – French Immersion was introduced at North Oyster in the fall of 2014. North Oyster is a dual-track school. With a total enrolment of 271 students in kindergarten to grade 7, North Oyster offers both early French Immersion and the regular English program.
- [École Pauline Haarer School](#) – Pauline Haarer is a single-track French Immersion school with 241 students in kindergarten to grade 7.
- [École Quarterway School](#) – Quarterway is a single-track French Immersion school. Quarterway is the only site in the district that offers both early and late French Immersion. Currently there are 325 students in kindergarten to grade 7.

Secondary students continue their French Immersion studies:

- [École Secondaire Nanaimo District](#) – Dual-track; offers both French Immersion and the regular English program.
- [Ladysmith Secondary](#) – Grade 8 French Immersion was introduced at Ladysmith Secondary in the fall of 2016. Ladysmith Secondary is a dual-track school.

French Immersion programs have increased in popularity over the years, with 1,325 students enrolled in 2012-13 to 1,578 students enrolled in 2016-17. The number of spaces available is not keeping up with the demand in the program.

### FUTURE PROGRAM NEEDS

There are a number of programs that the district will be examining over the up-coming months as part of the LRFP process, including (but not limited to):

- Additional space for childcare; before and after school care; junior Kindergarten and StrongStart
- Expansion of International Education
- Expansion of French Immersion
- Land-Based learning opportunities
- Best use of vacant properties
- Purpose built site for Learning Alternatives
- Joint use of Facilities – community uses (e.g. partnerships, regional libraries, social, mental health services)
- Indigenous partnerships
- Advanced placement programs

Due to current space constraints, the expansion of existing programs and new programs would need to be located in schools with additional capacity in the shorter term.

The LRFP, which is intended to provide a 10-15 year vision for the district, will also consider how to prioritize the various different program choices into the future, when there are opportunities to expand upon existing or establish new programs in the district.