

2026-27 SCHOOL FRAMEWORK FOR ENHANCING STUDENT LEARNING

School: Learning Alternatives

Principal: Shawn Shahi

Our Story/Our Learners

Learning Alternatives is located in Nanaimo, on the traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation, on beautiful Vancouver Island. We serve approximately 300 learners across secondary grades, with more than half of our students identifying as Indigenous. Our community is diverse in culture, identity, and lived experience, and we are proud to honour Indigenous ways of knowing as central to who we are. Our learners are resilient and capable. Many have simply needed a different path to find their footing. Belonging and relationships are at the heart of everything we do. We take a hands-on, experiential approach: from land-based learning to trades pathways, and from project-based learning to strong mental health and well-being supports. We work closely with community agencies and local support organizations to ensure our students have access to the wraparound care they need to thrive. Our families are genuine partners in their children's education, and together we build a school where every learner feels safe, seen, and valued. As we look ahead, we are deepening our commitment to foundational literacy and numeracy so every student leaves with the skills and confidence to pursue the life they imagine.

Goal 1: Student Success-Data Evidence:

Throughout the 2025-2026 school year, Learning Alternatives collected and reviewed evidence from multiple sources, including attendance and assessment records in MyEdBC, student intake documentation, staff observations, identification of students and youth in care receiving formal supports, and referral data from community agencies and school-based support teams.

Literacy assessment data for students in Grades 8-12, including literacy screeners and school-based reading intervention results, identified reading achievement as a significant area of need. Most assessed students were reading two or more grade levels below age-based expectations, with Indigenous learners disproportionately represented among those experiencing the greatest challenges. The data also showed persistent difficulties with decoding, reading fluency, and comprehension, with many students demonstrating gaps that have continued across several years of schooling.

These literacy challenges affect students both academically and personally. Staff observations and student feedback indicate that many learners experience frustration, low confidence, and avoidance of reading tasks. Limited literacy skills also reduce students' ability to access grade-level content, work independently, and

demonstrate their learning across subject areas. As a result, reading barriers can impact students' progress toward graduation, post-secondary pathways, employment opportunities, and full participation in their daily lives and communities.

Goal 2- Student and Employee Wellness- Data Evidence:

Throughout the 2025-2026 school year, Learning Alternatives reviewed information from student learning plans, student voice, school records, staff observations, and collaboration with community agencies and support teams. This evidence identified a high proportion of students and youth in care, including some who receive limited or transitional supports and others whose care status may not be formally identified within school processes. Many students reported limited access to stable adult relationships, cultural connections, and opportunities to develop employability and life skills. Attendance and engagement data further highlighted the complex barriers many of these students' experience.

The data shows that students and youth in care face significant challenges related to belonging, connection, and future pathways. Student learning plans and staff observations identified gaps in consistent adult support, cultural identity, and opportunities to build practical skills for independence. Indigenous students are disproportionately represented within this group, underscoring the need for culturally responsive and relationship-based approaches that strengthen identity, connection, and well-being.

These challenges can have a significant impact on educational and life outcomes. Without intentional identification and targeted support, students and youth in care are at increased risk of disengagement from school, lower attendance, and reduced success in achieving graduation and post-secondary goals. A lack of stable relationships, cultural connection, and opportunities to develop life and employability skills can further limit students' confidence, independence, and ability to navigate future transitions successfully.

In response, Learning Alternatives will work with students, families, Indigenous partners, community agencies, and school staff to strengthen supports for students and youth in care. Key actions will include identifying and connecting all students in care with appropriate school and community supports; fostering cultural identity and belonging through land-based learning, Elder involvement, and relationship-building opportunities; and expanding employability and life skills programming through workshops, field experiences, demonstrations, and hands-on learning opportunities in partnership with NYSA, HomeGrown, and the Career and Technical Centre (CTC). These efforts are intended to strengthen student engagement, increase connection and belonging, and support successful transitions to adulthood.

Goal 3: Truth and Reconciliation- Data evidence:

In 2025-2026, Indigenous students represented 53% of the school population. Learning Alternatives reviewed evidence from cultural participation data, family engagement records, student voice, purposeful conversations with families, and school records related to cultural programming and supports to determine both strengths and opportunities for growth.

Student and family feedback indicates that cultural programming and relationships with Indigenous staff and Elders contribute positively to students' sense of belonging and connection. At the same time, staff identified opportunities to deepen engagement, increase family participation in cultural events, and further embed Indigenous perspectives, cultural learning, and Truth and Reconciliation principles throughout daily school experiences. Students and families also identified a need for greater support in navigating pathways related to education, employment, community connections, and personal growth.

Strengthening cultural identity, belonging, and connection is an important factor in supporting student well-being, engagement, and success. For many Indigenous students, opportunities to connect with culture, community, language, and positive role models help foster resilience, confidence, and a stronger sense of purpose. Expanding these opportunities can support students in achieving personal goals, reconnecting with their communities, transitioning successfully to education and employment pathways, and accessing the resources and relationships needed to thrive.

Learning Alternatives will continue to work alongside students, families, Elders, Indigenous partners, community organizations, and school staff to strengthen cultural learning and pathways for all learners. Key actions will include expanding cultural programming through arts, crafts, land-based learning, food preparation, and other cultural activities; increasing opportunities for employability and work-readiness experiences through initiatives such as the Indigenous Trades Sampler, guest speakers, employment training, and partnerships with local agencies; strengthening connections to graduation, post-secondary, and career pathways; and increasing invitations to Indigenous cultural events, celebrations, and family gatherings to further strengthen family and community engagement. These efforts will build on existing strengths while creating additional opportunities for students to experience belonging, growth, healing, and success.

School Goal #1

Board Goal:

Student Success

Board Objective:

Increase literacy success rates for all.

Focused Improvement Goal:

By June 2027, we will achieve a measurable increase in reading proficiency for students at Learning Alternatives, with a target of 100% of assessed students demonstrating growth of at least one reading level on school-based literacy assessments. The priority focus will be on Indigenous learners and students performing two or more grade levels below expectation, with progress monitored at three checkpoints throughout the year.

This goal directly supports SD68's commitment to student success and equitable outcomes for all students. Improving literacy for our most vulnerable students aligns with the district's focus on foundational skills, culturally responsive practice, and the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (particularly those related to education, language, and self-determination). It also reflects the district's priority of supporting the whole child through trauma-informed, relationship-centred approaches.

Implementation Plan:	
School-based Action	Strategy Type
Universal School-based activities in each cohort that promote foundational literacy such as: • Literacy Groups • 1-1 Reading Supports and Interventions • Personalized Learning	Universal
Literacy Screener (DEIBELS) September–October 2026 (continual intake)	Targeted
IST and Cohort teachers; IST pushing into classes (embedded schedule) and supporting teachers. Cohort teachers creating a shared list with the ISTs identifying students who require targeted interventions. Improvements in comprehension based on adapted materials	Universal

Goal Tracking:	
Metric	Monitoring Checkpoints
Improvements in literacy rates for LA students	Learning Updates will outline current ability (engagement).
Literacy Screener (DEIBELS)	Sept 2026 and April 2027

Ongoing Engagement:

Teachers will continue to collaborate to identify and implement the instructional strategies, interventions, and resources that have the greatest impact on student literacy growth. Ongoing consultation with Indigenous support staff, Inclusive Education teachers, and the school-based team will help ensure supports are responsive to student strengths and needs, particularly for Indigenous learners and students requiring additional support. Student progress data, staff observations, and student feedback will be reviewed regularly to monitor growth and inform adjustments to programming. Through this collaborative approach, staff will work together to strengthen literacy outcomes, engagement, and student confidence as readers.

School Goal #2

Board Goal:

Student and Employee Wellness

Board Objective:

Increase the number of students who feel welcome, safe and have a sense of belonging in their school.

Focused Improvement Goal:

By June 2027 we will achieve measurable improvement in school connection, cultural engagement, and employability readiness for identified students in care. Targets include: 75% of identified students in care have an established connection to at least two positive school relationships; 60% participating in cultural connection activities; and a minimum of two employability or life skills pathways completed per student by year end.

This goal aligns with SD68's commitment to student wellness, equity, inclusion, and the success of priority learners (particularly students in care, Indigenous students, and those with disabilities and diverse abilities). It reflects the district's priorities around supporting the whole child, fostering belonging and connection, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action on Indigenous education and self-determination. It also supports the district's goal of creating flexible, community-connected learning pathways for students who have not thrived in traditional settings.

Implementation Plan:

School-based Action	Strategy Type
Begin the implementation of universal Employability and Life Skills Programming	Targeted
Targeted Cultural connection activities (Elder visits, land-based learning, cultural workshops, relationship-building)	Targeted

Goal Tracking:

Metric	Monitoring Checkpoints
Monthly attendance review with IST and Cohort teacher's attendance and engagement rates for identified students in-care at the start of the year.	December (2026), Term 2 (March 2027), End of year (June 2027)

Ongoing Engagement:

Learning Alternatives will work collaboratively with Nanaimo Youth Services Association (NYSA), HomeGrown, the Career and Technical Centre (CTC) SD68, community agencies, and families and caregivers to support students and youth in care. Through regular case conferencing, joint planning, family outreach, and the co-development of workshops, field experiences, and skill-building opportunities, the team will help identify student needs, coordinate supports, and create meaningful pathways to engagement, employment, and independence.

Ongoing engagement with students, families, and community partners will inform both planning and evaluation of this work. Student voice surveys, attendance and participation data, feedback from families and caregivers, and partner debrief meetings will be used to monitor progress, identify emerging needs, and refine supports. Insights gathered through these processes will help ensure that programming remains responsive, relationship-based, and focused on improving outcomes for students and youth in care.

School Goal #3

Board Goal:

Truth and Reconciliation

Board Objective:

Create and share district-wide, Syeyutsus Principles of Teaching & Learning

Focused Improvement Goal:

By June 2027, we will achieve measurable growth in cultural programming and family engagement. Targets include increased family attendance at Indigenous cultural events and family nights each semester; deeper integration of Truth and Reconciliation-aligned activities across all cohorts; and continued improvement in Indigenous student graduation rates and post-secondary connections.

This aligns with the district's Truth and Reconciliation goal, particularly a commitment to Indigenous ways of knowing and being, cultural safety, and closing the graduation gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners.

Implementation Plan:

School-based Action	Strategy Type
Ensure Truth and Reconciliation and Indigenous cultural learning remain a school-wide priority through regular collaboration with learning leaders, ongoing planning, and sharing of resources, successes, and learning opportunities at staff meetings.	Targeted
Expand and deepen cultural programming across all cohorts through arts, crafts, land-based learning, cultural activities, language learning, and traditional food preparation, building on existing strengths and relationships.	Universal
Host Indigenous cultural events, celebrations, and family gatherings throughout the year to strengthen connections among students, families, community members, and the school.	Universal
Strengthen student pathways by connecting Indigenous students to career exploration, employment training, trades opportunities, and post-secondary programs, while supporting graduation planning and celebrating Indigenous student achievement.	Targeted

Goal Tracking:

Goal Tracking:	Monitoring Checkpoints
Review family attendance at Indigenous cultural events and family nights	Term 2 (March 2027) and end of year (June 2027)
Staff and learning leader check-in (breadth and depth of T&R cultural activities integrated across all cohorts)	Term 2 (March 2027) and end of year (June 2027)
Post-secondary connections documented per event	After each event

Ongoing Engagement:

We will collaborate with Indigenous families and community members, Elders, and the SD68 Indigenous Education team to inform, implement, and reflect on this goal throughout the year. Families will be invited and personally welcomed to participate in cultural events, celebrations, and family nights, while Elders will continue to provide guidance, cultural knowledge, and learning opportunities for students and staff. Indigenous staff, learning leaders, and district partners will engage in ongoing planning and collaboration to strengthen cultural programming and support Indigenous student success.

Feedback and evidence gathered through family attendance records, student voice surveys, graduation and transition data, and reflections from staff and Elders will be used to monitor progress and guide future planning. These ongoing engagement processes will help ensure that programming remains responsive to the needs, strengths, and aspirations of Indigenous students, families, and the broader community.