

FIND YOURSELF IN COWICHAN



COWICHAN VALLEY
School District

International Student Program

WELCOME TO THE WARMLAND



COWICHAN VALLEY INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAM

The Cowichan Valley International Student Program is located on scenic Vancouver Island just north of our capital city, Victoria. It is considered one of the most beautiful areas of British Columbia with spectacular ocean beaches, majestic rain forests, and soaring mountain ranges. Cowichan means “warm land” in our local indigenous language.

The temperate climate and natural beauty of the Cowichan Valley attracts visitors from all over the world. The mild winters and long dry summers provide an ideal lifestyle choice for Canadian families and a popular year-round destination for tourists.

The Cowichan Valley is one of the fastest growing communities in B.C. and we offer our international students a warm and welcoming family-oriented environment with all the amenities larger cities have. We also have immediate access to the incredible outdoor opportunities that make our area famous.

Cowichan at a Glance



84,000 People



98 % English as first language



Industry: Tourism, Wineries, Forestry, Fishing



Temperature: Summer average 22 C. Winter average 6 C.

OUR DISTRICT

All our schools are accredited by the British Columbia Ministry of Education and offer B.C. government curriculum. All courses are taught by university-trained teachers certified by the provincial government. Teachers are dedicated to preparing students for entry into post-secondary universities. Schools feature state of the art science labs, computer labs, language studies, art studios, drama theatres, media and editing rooms, music rooms, dance studios, cooking labs, and well-equipped gymnasiums.



8100 students



4 High Schools
1 Middle School
17 Elementary Schools



We have hosted
International
students from over
25 countries

Our secondary schools offer a full range of academic courses and international students can also choose to participate in advanced programs, fine arts, and individual or team athletic programs. Each school also offers specialized elective courses that are unique to the school or the region such as forensic science, environmental science, outdoor education, and rock climbing. Specialized sports academies including rugby, ice hockey, and soccer are also available for students who wish to have additional coaching.

Our elementary schools offer mathematics, English, social studies, the sciences, computer studies, fine arts, physical education, and French Immersion.

English Language Learner support is available for students who require it.





COWICHAN SECONDARY SCHOOL

Located in Duncan, the central community of the Cowichan Valley, this school has a long history of accomplishments in sciences, humanities, fine arts and sports. The school has a population of 800 students in grades 10 to 12.

The school offers a full range of academics including advanced math and science courses, and opportunities to compete in national math competitions.

Cowichan Secondary has the enviable reputation for competing in sports at the highest level and has won a number of provincial championships. Teams include basketball, rugby, ice hockey, field hockey, soccer, volleyball, wrestling, and golf.

Fine arts programs include drawing, painting, ceramics, concert band, dance, theatre, film making, and photography.

There are numerous electives available and some notable courses include computer programming, fashion design, robotics, metal work, digital media, social justice, furniture making, rugby, basketball, and ice hockey.



800 Students



Grades 10-12



High caliber sports teams

FRANCES KELSEY SECONDARY SCHOOL

FRANCES KELSEY SECONDARY



900 Students



Grades 8 - 12



Technology courses with
a focus on architecture
and engineering

Located in the seaside community of Mill Bay, Frances Kelsey is a new and modern school with an innovative educational program. Students progress through the curriculum with traditional classroom instruction and also with the guidance of a teacher advisor. The school has 900 students from grades 8 to 12.

The school offers a full range of courses in humanities, sciences, mathematics, and language courses including French and Spanish.

Fine arts programs include a full suite of visual art courses, a dance studio, a state-of-the-art theatre, and a recording studio. Music includes band, jazz band, guitar, and choir.

Frances Kelsey offers technology courses with a focus on architecture, engineering, and product technology along with media, graphic and industrial design. They also have a full commercial kitchen and offer chef training. Other electives include urban studies, horticulture, and philosophy. The school also has a sought-after outdoor education program.





CHEMAINUS SECONDARY SCHOOL

Chemainus is a picturesque town internationally recognized as an artisan community. The town is famous for outdoor murals painted on buildings depicting the history of the local area. It also boasts a vibrant theatre company, trendy boutiques and art galleries. The school population is 350 in grades 7 to 12.

The school offers a full range of academics, and some specialized electives including digital media, computer graphic design, robotics, and sustainable resources.

The music program is very active with both concert and jazz bands. The band has performed all over Canada and has also travelled to California. Applied Programs include an electronics program focusing on robotics.

An environmental focus is a part of the provincial initiative and the entire school is involved in the program.

Sports include a very successful volleyball program. Other sports include basketball, ice hockey, rugby, soccer, and track and field.



350 Students



Grades 7 - 12



Known for their school
spirit

LAKE COWICHAN SECONDARY SCHOOL



300 Students



Grades 4 - 12



Lake Cowichan School is
the heart of the
community

Located in the scenic town of Lake Cowichan, this is a growing, vibrant community on the shores of beautiful Cowichan Lake. A popular tourist area, the town is also a family destination. The school has 300 students from grade 4 to 12.

The school offers a full range of academics including humanities, math, and sciences.

Courses available include active living, psychology, drama, leadership, woodwork, and genocide studies.

The school runs an excellent ice hockey program as part of the Physical Education department.





QUAMICHAN SCHOOL



600 Students



Grades 8-9



Known for student
leadership development



Quamichan School is located in Duncan, in the heart of the Cowichan Valley. Quamichan School has a population of 600 students in grades 8 and 9.

The school is known for their student leadership program, and for the caring adults committed to student development.

Quamichan runs an exploratory rotation so all grade 8 students rotate through fine arts and applied skills courses. Fine arts exploratory courses include art, dance, drama, music, and indoor rock climbing. Applied skills exploratory courses include metalwork, wood craft, home economics, information technology, and indigenous studies (language and culture). Grade 9 students can choose to take those as courses in the semester system.

Throughout the school year, students can participate in lunchtime sports activities. These include basketball, soccer, and hockey. Students can also join the school choir, jazz band, and guitar club. They can join in leadership opportunities in organizing school events, service projects, and charity fundraisers.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

We know students want to experience everything our region is famous for. We offer a variety of international activities and events throughout the year. All travel is done in a safe and secure environment, and we encourage our students to join.

POPULAR TRIPS INCLUDE

Vancouver Day Trip
Surfing in Tofino
Christmas in Victoria
Mt Washington Ski &
Snowboard
Whistler Ski and Snowboard
Rocky Mountains Excursion
Victoria sightseeing
Whale watching





OUR HOMESTAYS

Our Homestay Program is the most important part of our international student program. Our students and our homestay families have developed relationships that last a lifetime.

We have been managing our own program in our community for over 20 years. The safety and well-being of our students is always our top priority, and we ensure each of our students are matched to warm, caring, and active families.

Each homestay family is carefully selected, screened, interviewed, and all record checks have been obtained. Each home has been visited by one of our staff and each student will be supported throughout their time in the Cowichan Valley. Our homestay coordinators check in with their students on a regular basis.

Students are matched to our families based on interests.

Students are matched to families based on a careful review of their application, their school choice, their personal interests, and activities. Special requests such as dietary concerns or allergies can be accommodated. Students walk or take the school bus to school along with their new Canadian friends. Students will live about 10 minutes away from their school choice.

Our families live a healthy, active lifestyle, and really enjoy being involved and engaged in the life of their new family member. We encourage our students to take part in all the adventures available to them with their new Canadian family.

Our students and our homestay families have developed relationships that last a lifetime.

Our families live a healthy, active lifestyle and really enjoy being engaged with their students.



OUR PROGRAMS

High School Graduation Program

The Graduation Program allows students to graduate in two or three years, and either return home for university or apply for a university in Canada or abroad. Student applications are reviewed, and any possible courses are considered for transfer credits. The student's curriculum is then carefully programmed by our staff to meet our B.C. graduation requirements and ensure they meet the entrance requirements for their desired field of study. Students are followed carefully throughout their studies, and personal academic counselling is provided to assist with post-secondary opportunities.

High School Academic Year or Semester Program

The Academic Year (10 months) or Semester Program (5 Months) provides students with a full academic program at their grade level, along with English or ELL to improve their English language fluency. Students are fully immersed into Canadian classrooms and are provided ongoing additional support with personal attention provided to each student. We do our best to meet any special course request for each of our students. We also encourage our students to try out for our sports teams and join extracurricular activities.

Short Stay Program

A Short Stay Program is available for students who wish to experience a shorter 3 month immersion in a Canadian school to improve their English language fluency and cultural experience. Students are placed in schools at their grade level and course selection is provided based on the student's interests and to maximize English language learning.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?



International Student Program



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