SCHOOL: Ladysmith Secondary

YEAR: 2024-2025

PRINCIPAL: Shelley Gvojich

OUR SCHOOL

We would like to acknowledge that Ladysmith Secondary School is located on the unceded, traditional, and ancestral territory of the Stz'minus First Nations, and we are grateful to gather here each day to learn, work, and play.

Each day, our school welcomes 684 students in grades 8-12. Of these students, 163 are of Indigenous ancestry, 27 are registered in French Immersion programming, and 35 are international students visiting from a variety of different countries. We also have 61 dedicated staff members who work to provide meaningful and equitable learning opportunities to our school community.

LSS is rich in Coast Salish art and understandings. As a school community we work each day to move closer towards Truth and Reconciliation. Within our school community, we hold the belief that each student brings with them unique gifts and knowledge. By embracing and celebrating these individual gifts, we fortify our collective strength and uplift one another.

LSS offers a strong arts program that runs "Improv" and each year we put on a Musical Theatre Program. We have a robust athletics program, supporting students to improve their skills in leadership and teamwork across a variety of different athletic pursuits. There are many sponsored clubs, including chess, craft club, weight room, Dungeons and Dragons, and Journalism. We also have several student led initiatives aimed at fostering an inclusive learning environment within our school community. These include the Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA) and Students Taking Action Against Racism (STAAR).

OUR SCHOOL GOALS

Student Success

Increase graduation rates for students: who identify as Indigenous, who have disabilities, and/or are Children and Youth in Care

Create safe, supportive spaces for students to share their experiences, challenges, and suggestions.

Student and Employee Wellness

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

Create explicit opportunities to connect, learn one another's story, and learn tangible wellness skills

Truth and Reconciliation

Increase awareness of and access to resources available to support hul'q'umi'num language learning

Incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing and being into the classroom and school community

OUR CELEBRATION STORY

At the end of last year, after much work in the school and community, Ladysmith Secondary School hosted what we believe is the first ever Elder's conference in a school on Vancouver Island. It was a dream of our Elder, yutustanaat, to have 100 elders come together in our school to share their culture, gifts, and teaching. Over the span of many months, elders came to LSS to help create a vision of the event and what it could be. Students were responsible for creating gifts and providing the nourishing meal that was shared (including fish and clams harvested by LSS students with the help of Chief John Elliot). Elders from each of the local nations were in attendance and shared their words and gifts with those present. There was also an opportunity for those who wished to speak to share their knowledge with those present. It was a beautiful cultural event that brought our school community closer to reconciliation.

The following day, LSS hosted its annual hul'q'umi'num language event where students from elementary and secondary schools across the district came to share and learn the local language. Students sang, drummed, and shared stories. All students stayed to share a meal and many elders from the previous day came back to witness the special event. We look forward to hosting both of these events again this upcoming year.