



School District 84 - School Growth Plan

School Context:

Captain Meares Elementary Secondary School is situated on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation. We are grateful to live, learn, and work on these lands and acknowledge the ongoing stewardship of the Mowachaht/Muchalaht peoples. CMES is a K–12 school in the remote coastal community of Tahsis, BC, serving approximately 35 students from Kindergarten through Grade 12 across three multi-grade classroom divisions, as part of School District 84 — Vancouver Island West. Our school is a place where every student is known, where learning is relational and inclusive by design, and where our community is an active partner in the education of our children. The 2025–2026 school year saw our school community deepen its commitment to belonging, identity, and student voice — a strong foundation we are proud to build on as we look ahead to 2026–2027.

What is happening for our learners? |

CMES students are making measurable progress across literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional learning. This year's evidence reflects growth in reading, writing, and numeracy across the school, with particular highlights in reading benchmark assessments completed in Spring 2026. As a small school, student learning results are shared through our district reporting process. Our secondary students demonstrate strong numeracy outcomes, and our intermediate students showed meaningful growth trajectories across the year. Our evidence, combined with the voices of students, families, community members, and staff, has identified clear priorities for 2026–2027 — building learner independence, strengthening belonging and inclusion, and deepening connections to the land and to local Indigenous rights-holders.

Through a deliberate process of examining our data and listening carefully to the voices of students, families, community members, and staff, we have identified priority areas to focus our energy in the year ahead: deepening authentic, hands-on learning experiences that build learner independence; strengthening our inclusive, anti-racist school community; and connecting our learning more intentionally to the land and to local Indigenous rights-holders. Our school-wide Belonging Inquiry produced meaningful outcomes in student connection, confidence, and engagement this year — students are naming their strengths, using their voices, and engaging actively in school planning. This relational foundation is the basis for the goals we are setting for 2026–2027.

Annual Goal Summary

School Goals	SD84 Strategic Priority	Relevant SD84 Strategic Plan Goal
By June 2027, students at CMESS will demonstrate growth in learner competencies — including self-regulation, critical thinking, and collaborative engagement — through authentic, hands-on learning experiences aligned with BC's Core Competencies framework.	Learning	Every student achieves proficiency in literacy and numeracy.
By June 2027, students will strengthen their ability to care for their social, emotional, and mental well-being by embedding social-emotional learning (SEL) into classroom practice.	Relationships	Students, staff, and parents feel safe, cared for, and connected to their schools.
By June 2027, students at CMESS will develop a meaningful connection to the local land and to Mowachaht/Muchalaht and Ehattesaht rights-holders through regular, Elder-guided, land-based learning experiences embedded across the school.	Indigenous Ways of Knowing	Developing strong connections between schools and local communities.

Learning Goal

Goal Statement:

By June 2027, students at CMESS will demonstrate growth in learner competencies — including self-regulation, critical thinking, and collaborative engagement — through authentic, hands-on learning experiences aligned with BC's Core Competencies framework.

Priority Alignment**Supporting Strategic Plan Goal:****Learning**

Every student achieves proficiency in literacy and numeracy.

Why was this goal chosen?

- CMESS's 2026 Community Goal Planning Survey found that hands-on, real-world learning was the strongest priority across all respondent groups, with graduation preparation also named as a significant concern by parents. Staff collaborative goal-setting identified the development of independent learners — with a specific focus on executive functioning, growth mindset, and learning to become a learner — as the school's primary learning priority.
- Our assessment evidence reflects meaningful growth in reading, writing, and numeracy across the school in 2025–2026, with particular highlights in Spring 2026 reading benchmark results. Reading comprehension and extended written expression remain identified priority areas for continued, targeted support across all divisions in the year ahead.
- Building learner competencies — self-regulation, persistence, and collaborative engagement — supports and strengthens literacy and numeracy development. Students who can plan and monitor their own learning, engage with feedback, and persist through challenge are better positioned to access intervention, practise foundational skills, and grow. BC's Core Competencies framework, the NOIE Spiral of Inquiry, and Ron Berger's Ethic of Excellence provide the pedagogical framework for this goal.

Strategies to implement

- CMESS's 2026 Community Goal Planning Survey found that hands-on, real-world learning was the strongest priority across all respondent groups, with graduation preparation also named as a significant concern by parents. Staff collaborative goal-setting identified the development of independent learners — with a specific focus on executive functioning, growth mindset, and learning to become a learner — as the school's primary learning priority.
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Measures of Success

We will know we are making a difference when:

- Students across K–12 can describe their learning goals and what they are working on in their own words (Core Competency self-assessments each term).
- Work samples demonstrate evidence of drafting, revision, and growth consistent with the Ethic of Excellence framework.
- Teacher observation data shows increasing independent engagement and decreasing need for redirection during learning tasks (tracked Term 1 → Term 3).
- Student self-assessment data (BC Core Competency profiles) shows growth in Thinking and Personal and Social competencies.
- NOIE Spiral of Inquiry check-in at end of each term documents what changed for learners and informs next steps.

Resources Required

Key Frameworks

- BC Core Competencies (Thinking; Communication; Personal and Social) — bccurriculum.ca
- Ron Berger, Ethic of Excellence — EL Education (eleducation.org)
- NOIE Spirals of Inquiry: For Equity and Quality (Halbert & Kaser) — noiie.ca
- High Tech High model: authentic learning, collaborative culture — hightechhigh.org
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL) — udlguidelines.cast.org
- BC Inclusive Education Framework — gov.bc.ca/inclusive-education

Resources and Professional Learning

- Professional learning time: one cross-divisional collaborative planning session per term (leadership-led), focused on hands-on learning design and Core Competency assessment.
- Introduction to the Ethic of Excellence framework: Austin's Butterfly video and critique protocol (free); Ethic of Excellence book (recommended purchase).
- • NOIE Spirals of Inquiry handbook and Spiral Playbook — noiie.ca.
- • Coaching support for classroom educators: regular check-in and classroom visits to support implementation of EF scaffolding and inquiry cycles.
- • BC Core Competency profiles and self-assessment tools — bccurriculum.ca (free)

Relationship Goal

Goal Statement:

By June 2027, students will strengthen their ability to care for their social, emotional, and mental well-being by embedding social-emotional learning (SEL) into classroom practice.

Priority Alignment**Supporting Strategic Plan Goal:****Relationships**

Students, staff, and parents feel safe, cared for, and connected to their schools.

Why was this goal chosen?

The 2026 CMESS Community Goal Planning Survey identified belonging as the top relationship priority for adults (57%) and clubs/activities/leadership as the top priority for secondary students (78%). Bullying was the single most common concern across all groups in open-response feedback. Survey responses also surfaced community attitudes indicating a need for explicit, ongoing work in anti-racism and inclusive education.

The 2025–2026 Belonging Inquiry established a strong foundation — primary students reported strong feelings of safety, belonging, and connection, and the secondary cohort is a more connected school community with all students experiencing academic success. This goal builds on that foundation by making the anti-racism and inclusion work more explicit.

BC's K–12 Anti-Racism Action Plan (2023, Racial Equity Together) identifies school-level workforce development and student awareness as core obligations. The BC Human Rights Code and SD84's Inclusive Education framework require that all students — regardless of background, identity, or ability — experience a safe, equitable, and welcoming school. This goal is grounded in and aligned with these provincial and district obligations.

Strategies to implement

Year 1 Objectives — Building Inclusive Community

- Implement a structured "trusted adult" check-in system for all students, with particular attention to Grades 4–9. School leadership establishes the system and assigns trusted adult pairings in September 2026. Classroom teachers conduct check-ins as part of regular classroom routines, with a whole-school review each term to confirm every student is connected.
- Establish a student advisory group that meets regularly with school leadership, providing students genuine voice in school decisions. School leadership recruits and convenes the first meeting by October 2026, with monthly meetings scheduled throughout the year. Students co-develop the terms of reference at the first meeting.
- Launch at least two new community volunteer-led after-school clubs or structured activities by October 2026, responsive to student interests in sports, arts, and outdoor activities. School leadership identifies and confirms volunteer leads by September 2026, with student interest survey completed in the first week of school to inform programming.
- Develop and communicate clear, consistent school-wide expectations around respectful behaviour, anti-bullying, and inclusive conduct, with explicit reference to BC's Human Rights Code and ERASE strategy. Classroom teachers introduce and review expectations with students in September 2026. Expectations are posted in all classrooms and shared with families at the start of the year.
- Engage in at least one staff professional learning session focused on cultural safety, anti-racism, and inclusive education, using BC's K–12 Anti-Racism Action Plan resources, ERASE strategy materials, and FNEC cultural safety resources. School leadership facilitates this session by February 2027, within an existing staff meeting or professional development day.
- Review and update the Code of Conduct to explicitly name anti-racism, inclusive education, and cultural safety as school-wide values, aligned with BC's K–12 Anti-Racism Action Plan (2023). School leadership completes the review and brings the updated Code of Conduct to PAC for input by April 2027.
- Celebrate and advocate for the food program as a belonging anchor and protective factor for student well-being and attendance. School leadership and staff actively reference the food program in community communications and include it in annual reporting as a core component of student well-being.

Measures of Success

We will know we are making a difference when:

- Student Connections Survey (or equivalent) shows maintained or improved scores on belonging, safety, and caring adult connection indicators across K–12.
- Every student can name at least one trusted adult at school (verified through check-in process and student voice data each term).
- Student voice data shows students feel their input meaningfully influences school decisions (advisory group feedback, end-of-term reflections).
- At least two new structured after-school activities running by December 2026 with documented student participation.
- Code of Conduct reviewed and updated with explicit anti-racism and inclusive education language by May 2027.
- Staff professional learning in cultural safety and anti-racism completed by February 2027.
- Attendance data shows maintenance or improvement, supported by the food program and belonging work.

Resources Required

- Ability to have district Mental Health Lead come and provide PRO-D on topic
- Production of newsletter
- Already have a lot of resources on programs (Zones of Regulations, Peers, WITS)
- Will investigate purchasing “Positive Action” or “Step by Step” program (discuss with staff) as they are programs that provide daily and weekly SEL learning and strategies for the classroom that can be used all year. Other programs we have on hand either provide short-term instruction or require someone to be trained in delivery of the program.

Indigenous Ways of Knowing Goal

Goal Statement:

By June 2027, students at CMESS will develop a meaningful connection to the local land and to Mowachaht/Muchalaht and Ehattesaht rights-holders through regular, Elder-guided, land-based learning experiences embedded across the school.

Priority Alignment

Supporting Strategic Plan Goal:

Indigenous Ways of Knowing

Developing strong connections between schools and local communities.

Why was this goal chosen?

CMESS is located on the unceded traditional territory of the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation and serves students from the Ehattesaht/Chinehkint and Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/Che:k'tles7et'h' (Kyuquot) First Nations. These Nations are rights-holders in the education of their members, and their voices must shape the direction of learning in this school. This is grounded in the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA, 2019) and its Action Plan, BC's First Peoples Principles of Learning, and SD84's Indigenous Education Enhancement Agreement (June 2024).

The 2026 Community Goal Planning Survey showed strong alignment: 76% of adults chose connecting school learning to the local land and environment; 67% chose land-based and outdoor learning; 48% chose Elder and Knowledge Keeper relationships.

Secondary students echoed this: 67% prioritized land-based learning and 44% prioritized Elder relationships.

Survey feedback also indicated that how this work is framed matters deeply. Indigenous Ways of Knowing is most effectively experienced as relevant to all students — grounded in the specific land, waters, and community of this place — rather than as a separate or mandatory curriculum unit. Land-based, Elder-led, experiential learning deepens engagement and cultural safety for all learners. Outreach to the Educational leaders in the Mowachaht/Muchalaht and Ehattesaht/Chinehkint nations in May 2026 confirmed support for CMESS's IWK direction — a meaningful first step in building an active rights-holder relationship for this school community.

Strategies to implement

Year 1 Objectives — Land, Relationships, and Community

- Continue building on the established relationship with the Mowachaht/Muchalaht Education Director and Ehattesaht Education Director to co-plan Indigenous education priorities for 2026–2027, including Elder, Language, and Knowledge Keeper connections for CMESS. School leadership initiates co-planning meetings with both Education Directors by September 2026, with a shared plan documented and reviewed each term.
- Develop a regular Elder and Knowledge Keeper visit schedule, targeting a minimum of monthly whole-school visits, co-planned with MMFN and Ehattesaht education contacts. School leadership coordinates scheduling by October 2026, with visits integrated into the school calendar. Elder honoraria are budgeted and confirmed through the SD84 Enhancement Agreement process in advance of the school year.
- Design and deliver at least one land-based, outdoor learning unit per term across all divisions, connecting curriculum to the local environment — forests, inlets, and waters around Tahsis and the Tahsis Inlet. Classroom teachers plan and deliver these units as part of regular term planning, with land-based learning documented alongside BC curriculum outcomes and submitted to school leadership each term.
- Create structured opportunities for hands-on cultural activities — carving, drumming, fishing, and other land-based practices — offered to all students as enriching learning for the whole school community. School leadership coordinates with Elder and Knowledge Keeper contacts to schedule at least one hands-on cultural activity per term, with logistics confirmed a minimum of four weeks in advance.

Measures of Success

We will know we are making a difference when:

- Elder and Knowledge Keeper visits are occurring at minimum monthly frequency by Term 2 (visit log maintained by school leadership).
- At least one land-based learning unit per division per term is designed, delivered, and documented — with connections to BC curriculum outcomes and First Peoples Principles of Learning noted.
- Student reflections show growing awareness of and connection to the local land, its history, and its significance to the Mowachaht/Muchalaht and Ehattesaht peoples.
- Cultural safety indicators in student well-being data show maintenance or improvement — Indigenous students feel their identity and culture are respected and reflected in school life.
- Confirmed active relationship with MMFN and Ehattesaht education contacts by September 2026, with co-planning documentation on file.
- Hands-on cultural activities offered to students at least once per term.

Resources Required

Key Frameworks

- First Peoples Principles of Learning (FNESC) — fnesc.ca (free)
- BC Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) Action Plan — gov.bc.ca/dripa
- SD84 Indigenous Education Enhancement Agreement (June 2024)
- NOIE: Indigenous case studies and land-based inquiry resources — noie.ca
- Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council Education — ntc.bc.ca

Resources and Professional Learning

- Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation Education Director and Ehattesaht Education Director: partnership, co-planning, and Elder/Knowledge Keeper coordination.
- FNESC (First Nations Education Steering Committee) and NTC (Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council) Education: professional learning resources, cultural safety materials, and curriculum support available directly to schools — fnesc.ca, ntc.bc.ca.
- Elder and Knowledge Keeper honoraria: dedicated budget required — advocate through SD84 Enhancement Agreement funding.
- Outdoor and land-based learning materials; transportation support for off-site learning experiences.
- Leadership coordination time for community relationship-building and Elder scheduling.

Engagement

The 2026–2027 School Growth Plan was developed through broad community consultation conducted between February and April 2026. CMESs engaged parents, caregivers, community members, Elders, students from Kindergarten through Grade 12, staff, the Tahsis Village Council, the Tahsis Literacy Society, and Indigenous rights-holder Nations — the Mowachaht/Muchalaht and Ehattesaht/Chinehkint First Nations — in a four-stream survey and a series of collaborative conversations. Forty-one community members and students participated in the goal planning survey.

Across all groups, the strongest shared themes were a desire for hands-on, real-world learning connected to the local environment; a commitment to belonging, inclusion, and positive relationships; and meaningful engagement with the land and with local Indigenous communities and rights-holders. These themes shaped all three goals in this plan. CMESs is committed to sharing progress toward these goals with the community through regular updates — including PAC meetings, family communications, and year-end reporting.

Progress toward these goals will be informed by ongoing feedback from students, staff, and families throughout the year. Students will engage in regular Core Competency self-assessments and contribute to a student advisory group that meets monthly with school leadership. Staff will reflect on goal progress at each term's collaborative planning session. Families will be invited to share feedback through the annual Student Learning Survey, PAC meetings, and a mid-year community update. This feedback will be used to adjust our approach and ensure our goals continue to reflect what matters most to our school community.