



550-7<sup>th</sup> Street – Room 130  
Nanaimo, BC V9R 3Z2

# Newsletter

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Brett Hancock,  
District Principal of  
Learning Alternatives

January 2019

## LEARNING ALTERNATIVES

The School Newsletter will also be available to students and parents on-line on the Learning Alternatives website.  
If you do not have access to a computer, there will be paper copies available at either school sites for you or your child to pick up.

### PRINCIPAL COMMENTS:

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope that the winter break provided an opportunity for our students, staff and families to spend time together. The break gave me the opportunity to reflect on 2018 and set some goals for the 2019 year. I give each of you my promise that Learning Alternatives will always be committed to improving the life chances of students each day they enter our buildings. Our mission is to help every student cross the graduation stage with dignity, purpose and options. We want all students, staff and families to feel that they belong and know that they are all part of the Learning Alternatives team.

During the break, we relocated our Introduction to Trades (ITT) Program. It moved from our John Barsby site to the Woodlands site. For those that are not familiar with the ITT Program, it is an innovative grade 11 and 12 program that allows 18 full-time students the opportunity to work alongside one teacher and one education assistant for all their learning. In the morning, they focus on academics and then spend their afternoons working in the shop, outside in the yard or in the community. Upcoming projects will give students the opportunity to not just focus on carpentry and framing, but also learn about electrical, plumbing, welding and much more. Please contact me for more information about this program.

I want to welcome back our Learning Alternatives

students, staff and families and hope everyone is as excited as I am for the year ahead. I am confident that 2019 will be the best year in the school's history. Please know that I can always be reached by email at [bhancock@sd68.bc.ca](mailto:bhancock@sd68.bc.ca)

Kind Regards,  
Brett Hancock

### CIRCLE OF COURAGE

The Circle of Courage model is woven through all of our programs. This model of youth development is based on fostering the principles of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity. It guides us to support the building of student's capacity in each of these areas and helps lead them to resiliency in learning and in life.



### IMPORTANT DATES

January 7 First Day Back  
January 9 Staff Meeting: @ 3:00pm @ Barsby  
PAC Meeting: @ 4:30pm @ Barsby

January 11	Colliery Dam Hike
January 16	Grad 2019 Meeting @ 11:30am @ John Barsby site
January 18	Woodlands Games Day
January 21-25	Numeracy Assessment
January 24	English 12 Provincial Exam
January 25	Communications 12 Provincial Exam
January 25	Abyss Hike
January 30	Georgia Avenue Peer Helpers

## PAC

Our Parent Advisory Council (PAC) support a wide range of educational opportunities for Learning Alternatives students. All parents and guardians are welcome to attend meetings. Please know that no commitment is required. Hope to see you on Wednesday, January 9 at 4:30pm in room 124 at John Barsby Secondary School. Snacks will be provided.

## LEARNING ALTERNATIVES PROGRAMS VIDEO

Here's a link to the December 5, 2018 Learning Alternatives presentation to the Board of Education:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=arXRIZOtGBA&feature=youtu.be&t=3448>

## PLC INFORMATION

The ultimate goal of a Professional Learning Community (PLC) is to improve student achievement. Over 40 years of effective schools' research demonstrates that one of the most effective ways to improve student learning is through the systematic and innovative work of PLC. Our district's PLC model is a collaborative process that is important for Response to Intervention (RTI) and needed to establish our collective vision related to responding to the needs of our learners.

More specifically, our district's PLC model facilitates an open system of communication and foster a collaborative learning culture focused on four areas of our Learning Framework: Curriculum & Instruction, Assessment & Reporting, Collaborative Culture, and Safe, Caring & Inclusive Schools. What we learn through collaborative

inquiry will help us identify our needs and next steps, and lead to innovations and areas of celebration. Educational experts recognize that the collaborative, focused work of PLCs contributes to higher levels of student learning.

Here are some of the inquiry questions our incredible staff are working on:

*-How do we create belonging for our students and families?*

*-How do we implement the effective use of Google classroom with all Learning Alternatives classes?*

*-Will focusing on essential learning outcomes with a specific group of math students help improve their results on the VIU Trades Math Assessment?*

*-Reconciliation in Action [honouring the past by moving forward to the future] – what does reconciliation mean to an individual? What does reconciliation look like to self, in school, in community, and in corporations? How can one contribute to reconciliation as a student that impacts identified areas above?*

*-How do we improve the literacy skills for students who attend inconsistently?*

*-How to develop the link between Math knowledge and applied trades skills?*

## STUDENT VOICE

Our students are regularly asked to reflect and share what is working and what we need to improve. Here is the voice from two of our senior students about why Learning Alternatives has allowed them to have success:

*"I am grateful for Learning Alternatives because they have helped me progress not only as a student but as a person. LA is not like any other school, they do things differently and it makes me want to succeed. I have been more productive in the year and a half I have been here than in all of my time in high school. My favorite part is that the teachers aren't separate from students, we are all one family."*

*"I am grateful for Learning Alternatives because each and every staff member have helped me reach my goal of feeling successful and graduating. Every day they pushed me and made me, believe in myself. I am planning to pursue culinary arts at VIU starting*

January 2019. I am very thankful for everyone at LA who helped me get to this point.”

### Vancouver Island University Planning

<https://connect.viu.ca/future-students/webinars>

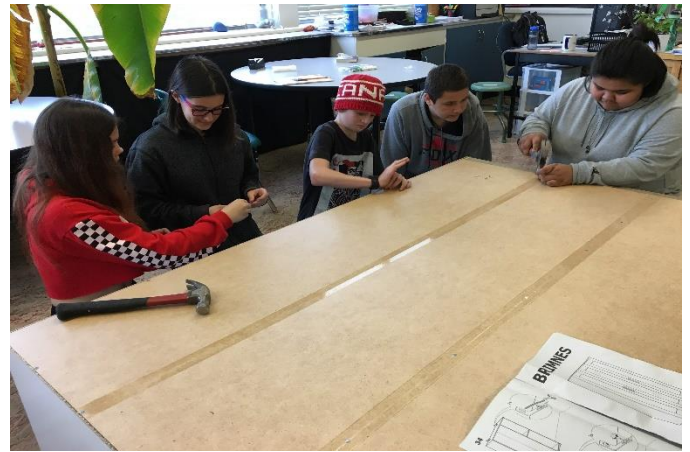
#### How to connect with VIU:

- General inquiries connect with a Recruitment Officer at 250.740-6672 or [viuconnect@viu.ca](mailto:viuconnect@viu.ca)
- Visit our campus and take a tour to get a current student prospective on why VIU is for you. For registration and options: [viu.ca/visit](http://viu.ca/visit)
- Students ready to plan for September 2019 connect with Advising at 250-740-6410 or [advising@viu.ca](mailto:advising@viu.ca)
- Application status and documentation questions connect with the Registration Centre at 250.740.6400 or [registration@viu.ca](mailto:registration@viu.ca)

### STUDENT LEARNING IN ACTION



ABOUT challenged our superintendent and district leadership team to a game of LA volleyball.



JLA students deeply engaged and working together on building a new closet for the Free Store.



Julie and Carson learning about Kimonos from our visiting Furukawa High School students from Japan.



Students and staff sharing baked goods and singing songs with the elders at Eden Gardens for their last day of school in 2018.