

Shawnigan Lake School

Shawnigan Lake, Canada



On a 270-acre Vancouver Island campus, ten boarding houses hold Canada's largest full-time boarding community, a tradition since 1916.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	62/100
Academic outcomes	68/100
University placement	66/100
Prestige & heritage	71/100
Alumni network	24/100
Facilities	73/100
Transparency	59/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

A ****270-acre**** Vancouver Island campus and ten boarding houses give Shawnigan Lake School a scale that few Canadian boarding schools match. This is a ***full-immersion boarding culture***, not a day school with dormitories attached. The school has run as a boarding institution since 1916, serves ages 3 to 18, and enrolls about 500 students from more than 30 nations. That combination matters: the setting is expansive, the community is small enough to know, and the social life is structured around houses rather than around dispersal at 3.30 pm. Parents looking for a school with real residential heft, rather than a token boarding offer, should take Shawnigan seriously.

Academically, the offer is broader than a single-label school. Shawnigan declares Canadian, IB and American pathways, and it holds IBO and CIS accreditation. The **8:1** student-teacher ratio points to close supervision and strong access to staff, which matters in a school where adolescents live as well as study. The school also pushes a conspicuously broad co-curricular line: arts, athletics, applied arts, experiential learning, global exchange, French immersion and English language support all sit in the core structure rather than at the fringe. That makes Shawnigan attractive for students who want a *properly rounded* education and for families who do not want to choose between university preparation and a busy boarding-school life.

It is not cheap. The average annual fee across all year groups is **CAD 43,810** for day pupils and **CAD 75,320** for boarders, which puts Shawnigan in the *premium* bracket. The question, then, is whether the school delivers something distinct. It does: a large, established boarding community in a dramatic natural setting, co-education done at full scale, and a house-based experience that will suit students who are independent, energetic and happy to commit to communal life. This is *not for timid children* who need a loose, anonymous environment. It suits the student who wants structure, belonging and breadth; the sporty pupil who will use the campus and house system fully; the internationally minded boarder who wants Canada without giving up a globally legible school profile; and the teenager who thrives when adults know them well and expect them to join in.

STRENGTHS

- Co-educational boarding school since 1916
- Offers Canadian, IB and AP curricula
- English-language teaching throughout
- Student-teacher ratio of 10:1

TRADE-OFFS

- Annual boarding fee: 78,000 CAD
- Annual day fee: 38,000 CAD
- Average class size is 18

ADMISSIONS

Shawnigan Lake School is a co-educational independent day and boarding school in British Columbia, founded in 1916. With stated age coverage from 3 to 18, admissions are likely to divide between junior, middle and senior entry rather than a single intake, but the school context provided here does not specify exact main entry points or which years are hardest to access. As a school offering Canadian, IB and AP pathways, it is reasonable to expect placement to depend partly on age and previous schooling, especially in the upper years.

The school does not publish, in the material provided here, any specific admissions deadlines, assessment format or distinctive selection stages. Nor does it state bursary or financial-aid arrangements in these sources, so families should not assume fee assistance without confirmation. What can be said is that this is a substantial-fee school, with annual fees listed at CAD 78,000 for boarders and CAD 38,000 for day pupils. In practical terms, applicants should expect a conventional independent-school process and check directly for current timelines and any testing or interview requirements.

NOTABLE ALUMNI (7)

SPORT: Matt Evans, Djustice Sears-Duru, Gunnar Platt

VISUAL_ARTS: Ian McAllister

LETTERS: Ian McAllister

SCIENCE: Barry Cooper, Graham Anderson

BUSINESS: Ian McAllister

WTS RATING 

This profile summarises editorial research by World's Top Schools. Verify all admissions dates directly with the school before submitting. Sources are cited in the full online profile at WorldsTopSchools.com/schools/sch_b7a452f414.