

2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT: KOOTENAY LAKE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM



School District 8 | International
Kootenay Lake | Education

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge, honour and respect the First Nations on whose traditional territories the Kootenay Lake School District operates, and all Aboriginal people residing within the boundaries of School District No.8.





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Program Message

As we move through the 2024-2025 school year, the School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) (SD8) International Program is delighted to highlight accomplishments and growth over the past year. The program has made significant strides in creating a culturally rich environment that benefits both international and local students, fostering not only educational success but also cultural exchange that resonates throughout the school district. Students from across the globe enhance schools and deepen the community's connection to global perspectives. This year, we celebrated impressive achievements in student integration, academic success, and intercultural understanding, all of which strengthened the educational environment for everyone in SD8.

A focus area moving forward will be sustaining enrolment numbers and securing sufficient homestay placements, both crucial for program continuity. Addressing these areas will be essential as the program continues to refine the strategic approach in response to global trends in student mobility, strengthening partnerships with international agents, and further supporting student achievement. Additionally, the program will continue to align marketing and recruitment efforts with the unique opportunities the Kootenay Lake region offers, such as immersion in outdoor activities, and the friendly community environment of the area.

Thank you to students, staff, homestay families, and the community for their continued support and dedication to making the International Education program a success. Together, we will build on these achievements, address challenges, and set a course for a dynamic future.





The SD8 International Program enriches the district, and the community, fostering social, cultural, and economic benefits. The program immerses international students in the academic and social life at schools, promoting awareness, and appreciation for diversity. Deepening intercultural connections, creating a shared sense of global citizenship occurs through student, staff, administrator, homestay family and community member participation.

The program enhances the district's demographics, and brings intercultural perspectives to schools, benefiting all students with a broader understanding of diverse cultures and lifestyles. Students join for varied reasons, including learning English, experiencing Canadian life, or working toward a B.C. Dogwood diploma. The program continues to strengthen schools, attract global interest, and deliver high-quality education for both international and local students.

District Mission

Our mission is to inspire and support each learner to thrive in a caring learning environment.

Alignment to Strategic Priorities

The International Program aims to enrich student experiences and build a globally connected community.

1. Culture and Identity Development: Promote interculturalism in schools.
2. Lifelong Learners: Enhance educational experiences for international and local students.
3. Connected Learners: Support social and economic growth through global connections.





Enrolment

The district’s International Program began in 1999 with a small group of students. Over time, the program grew steadily, welcoming students from Asia, Europe, and Central and South America. The program’s aim is to achieve a sustainable 50 (full-time equivalent or FTE) student population by the 2025-2026 school year.

International students follow one of three academic paths:

1. **Graduating:** Students complete all required courses to earn a B.C. Certificate of Graduation (Dogwood Diploma).
2. **Co-Validating:** Students meet at least 50% of course outcomes to earn credit in their home country, without receiving B.C. credits.
3. **Cultural Experience:** Students focus on cultural immersion and language, completing coursework, and maintaining good attendance but do not receive B.C. or home country credits.

Academic Program (2023-2024)		
Path	Headcount	FTE
Graduating	5	5
Co-Validating	5	4.5
Culture and Language	36	26.7
Total	46	36.2

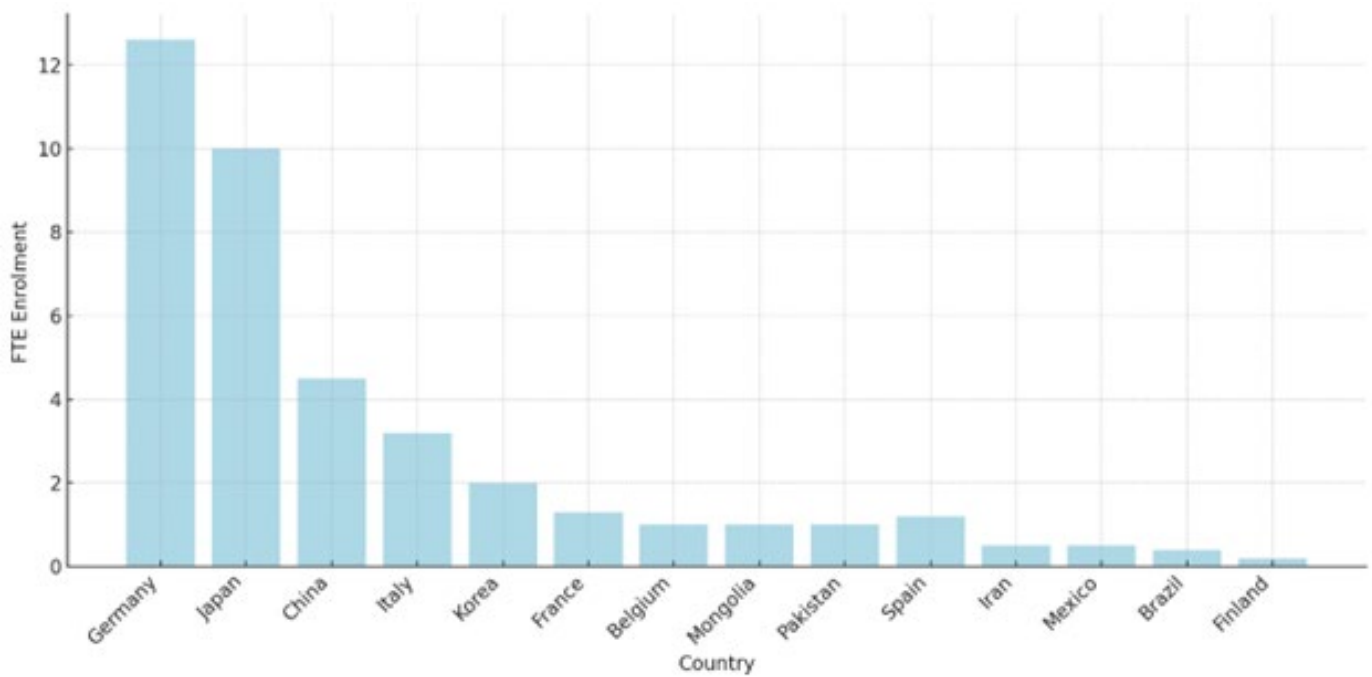
Enrolment (2015-2016) - (2023-2024)		
School Year	Headcount	FTE
2015-2016	61	51.6
2016-2017	99	66.5
2017-2018	148	85.6
2018-2019	167	89.4
2019-2020	120	63.9
2020-2021	34	19.6
2021-2022	86	56.9
2022-2023	89	61.1
2023-2024	66	39.4
2024-2025	46	36.2



Enrolment by Country

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a shift toward fewer Asian students, and stable numbers of European students enrolling in the district’s International Program. Europe is now the primary source region, led by Germany. Asia and Central and South America continue to provide a smaller, steady enrolment, creating a rich, multicultural environment that highlights the district’s appeal to international families.

The chart illustrates the distribution of the program’s international students by country.



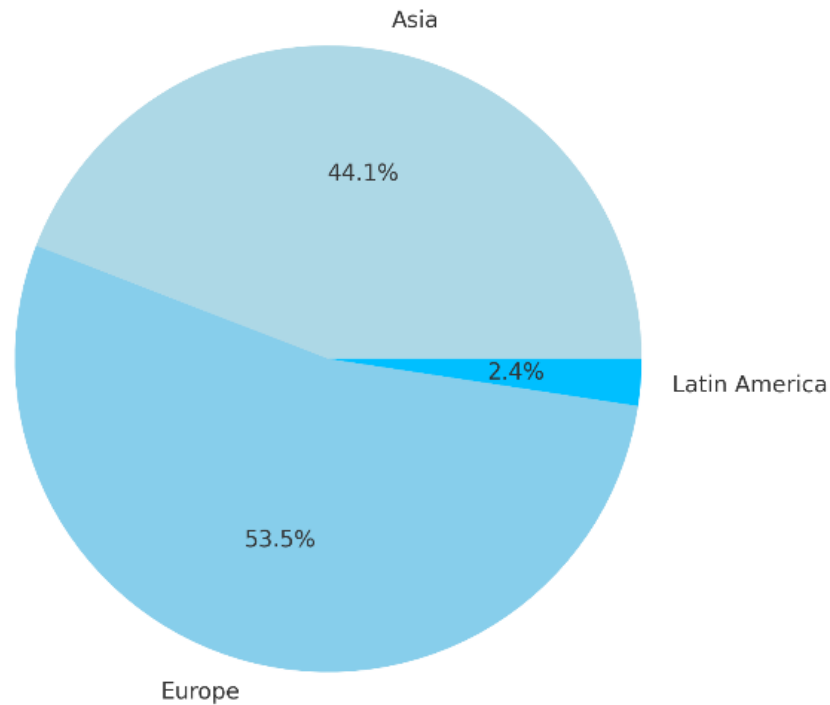
The 2023-2024 chart shows Germany and Japan leading in international student enrolment, like the previous year. China remains strong, with 4.5 FTE students, contributing significantly to the program. Italy and Korea maintain stable numbers, while countries with lower enrolments, like Brazil and Finland, continue to represent a small fraction of enrolments. Overall enrolment remains consistent year-over-year at nearly 40 FTE, reflecting stable interest across diverse regions. Overall, the data suggests steady demand from core countries with slight fluctuations in smaller markets.



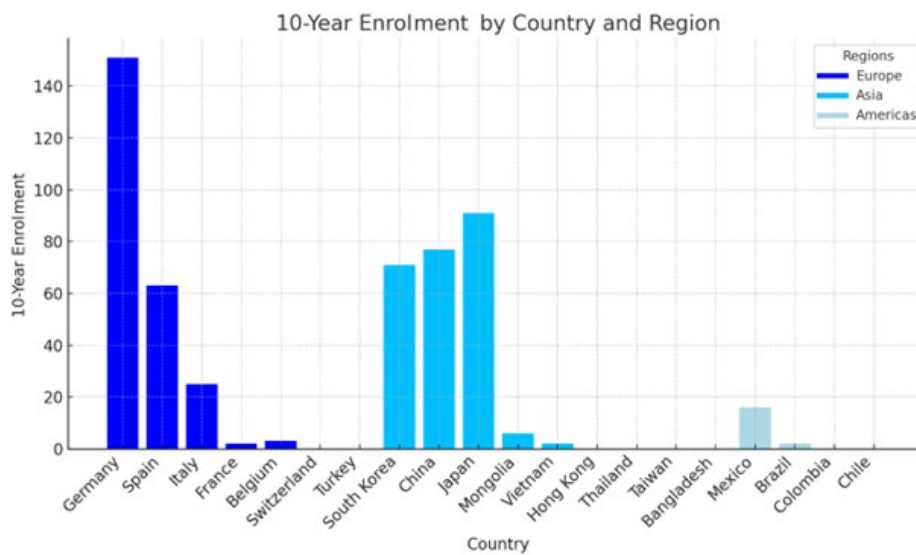
Program Profile

Enrolment by Region

The pie chart below shows the distribution of international student enrolment for 2023-2024 by region (Asia, Europe, and Latin America). This chart highlights Europe as a leading contributor, followed by Asia, with South and Central America representing a small portion of enrolment.



Enrolment by Country and Region (2015-2024)





Program Highlights - Achievements

Cultural Integration

The program fostered a welcoming environment, allowing international students to integrate well in local schools. This strengthens intercultural understanding and builds supportive bonds among all students.

Monthly Adventures

The International Education Program offers a range of monthly activities, enabling students to connect with peers from other schools while exploring cultural experiences within Kootenay Lake communities and beyond. These activities are popular, often attracting large groups of enthusiastic participants.



September



October



November



December



January



February



March



April



May



June





Program Highlights - Achievements

Homestay Program

The homestay program supports international students in language and cultural immersion. Canadian families welcome students into their homes, share daily life, and create a rich learning experience. The homestay team carefully matches students with families of similar interests, enhancing each student's comfort level.

The district's two homestay contractors work closely with the international education team to ensure quality placements, and a positive experience for each student. Students are placed in homestay homes as close to their schools as possible, often within walking distance or accessible by public transit.

A well-run homestay program is vital to the success of International Education. The district-managed model allows homestay contractors and program staff to stay in close contact, addressing issues quickly. The two homestay managers support around 30 families, many of whom host multiple students.



Economic and Social Impact

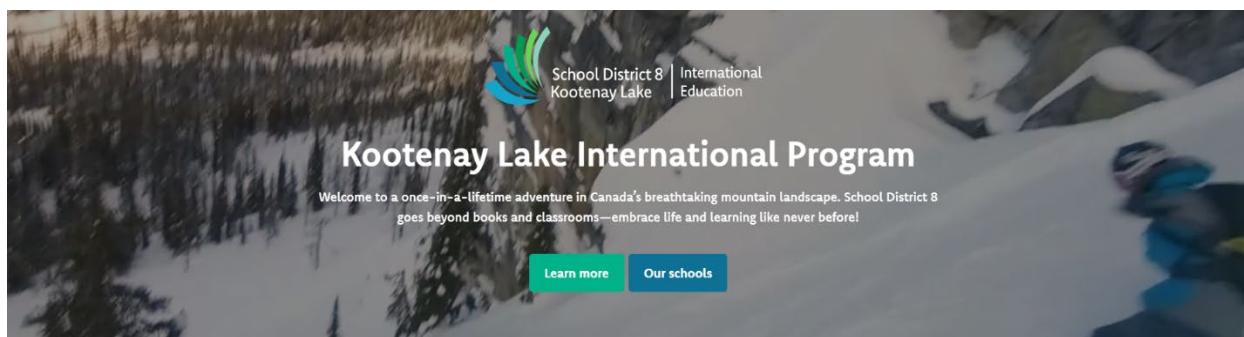
The International Program contributed a net profit to the district for the 2024-2025 school year, and enriched the Kootenay Lake region's economy and culture, as students are active in their local communities.



Program Highlights - New Projects

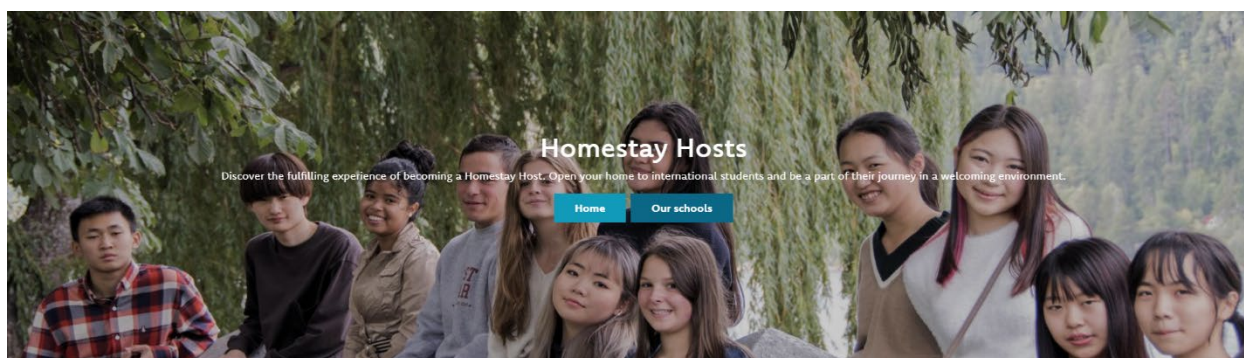
New Website

The new website provides clear, easy access to program details, the applications portal, and resources for students, agents, and homestay families. The website highlights the distinct opportunities within the Kootenay Lake region and emphasizes the appeal of international education in SD8.



Homestay Recruitment

The new homestay recruitment campaign seeks local families eager to share in a rewarding cultural exchange. The program campaign appeals to the parents of elementary age children by offering free face painting services at special school events.





Monthly Adventures

The new monthly adventure program focuses on seasonal outdoor experiences. Activities include high-energy activities like zip-lining, skiing, and snowshoeing with lower-energy activities such as canoeing, hot springs, and beach barbecues. Each activity offers international students the chance to connect with each other and with community members to form strong social connections.





Tuition Fees

International students pay tuition to attend the district, financially supporting programs that benefit all students. The two following tables show 2023-2024 and historical financial results.

Financial Results (2023-2024)	
Total Revenue	\$1,125,600
Direct Student Expenses	\$459,910
School Allocations	\$16,926
Direct Salaries and Benefits*	\$409,065
Operating Expenses	\$176,098
Total Expenditures	\$1,064,355
Net Income	\$61,635

Financial Results (2019-2020 to 2023-2025)					
Actuals to June 30					
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Total Revenue	\$1,514,072	\$640,339	\$1,587,238	\$1,697,715	\$1,125,598
Direct Student Expenses	\$626,678	\$302,339	\$633,632	\$711,664	\$459,910
School Allocations	\$6,915	\$5,092	\$64,321	\$139	\$16,926
Direct Salaries and Benefits	\$411,596	\$440,579	\$424,457	\$448,718	\$409,065
Operating Expenses	\$277,590	\$114,655	\$249,111	\$240,952	\$176,098
Total Expenditures	\$1,322,779	\$862,665	\$1,371,521	\$1,401,473	\$1,061,999
Net Revenue	\$191,293	-\$222,326	\$215,717	\$296,242	\$63,599



Program Fees

SD8’s International Program fees are set each year to remain competitive. Starting September 2025, homestay families will receive \$1,200 per month, matching regional rates. Rates are approved two years in advance.

General Fees (2024-2025)				
	3 month	4 month	5 month	1 year
Application	\$350	\$350	\$350	\$350
Homestay Hosting	\$3,000	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$10,000
Homestay Support	\$1,050	\$1,150	\$1,250	\$1,750
Tuition	\$6,000	\$7,000	\$8,000	\$15,000
Medical	\$450	\$600	\$750	\$1,500
Total	\$10,850	\$13,100	\$15,350	\$28,600

Potential Revenue

Potential sources of revenue for the International Education program include:

Tuition Fees: Increased enrolment or adjusted tuition fees for international students can directly boost revenue. Fees have been increased recently to align with regional competition.

Short-Term Programs: The program offers short-term programs (three months or more), to attract additional international students and revenue.

Partnerships with Agencies: Several new collaborations with recruitment agencies have been established to create a steady enrolment of students, increasing enrolment consistency and revenue.

Scholarship Programs: An updated entrance scholarship program has been developed to offer international students and entrance scholarship. The program can entice students to enrol longer term.

Enhanced Marketing Efforts: Investing in targeted overseas agent recruitment campaigns can reach untapped regions or demographics that could drive higher enrolment and increase tuition income.

Risks

Enrolment Fluctuations: Changes in international student enrolment due to global events, economic shifts, or competing programs could impact revenue.

Homestay Availability: Limited local homestay placements may restrict enrolment capacity and reduce program appeal.

Dependence on Europe: Heavy reliance on Europe makes the program vulnerable to geopolitical or economic shifts in those areas.

Operating Costs: Rising expenses, such as salaries, benefits, and operational costs, could affect net profitability if not balanced by increased tuition revenue.

Market Competition: Competing programs in other districts or countries may attract potential students, affecting the program's ability to maintain or grow enrolment.

Currency Exchange Rates: Fluctuations in exchange rates could affect affordability for students from certain countries, influencing enrolment numbers. This is playing out with Italy right now as some agents have redirected students to more affordable countries.



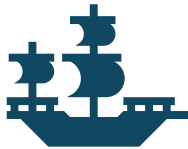
Recruitment

The annual recruitment plan focuses on Europe, Latin America, and Asia, targeting large city centers. The goal is to increase long-term enrolments and strengthen the district’s global presence while maintaining strong ties with existing markets. The plan represents the first year of a two-year plan, aimed at achieving a sustainable 50 FTE annual enrolment by the 2025-2026 school year.

Recruitment Positioning

The International Program offers a balance of outdoor activities such as skiing, ziplining, and canoeing, along with flexible academic coursework in small inclusive communities. Low international student numbers enable personalized services. With English-speaking homestays and strong support networks, students can be fully immersed in local communities. In addition, the program focuses on specific areas of interest based on region:

Europe
Outdoor adventure



Asia
Academic success



Americas
Cultural experiences



Recruitment Analysis

An in-depth marketing analysis as part of the program’s annual recruitment review, revealed the following:

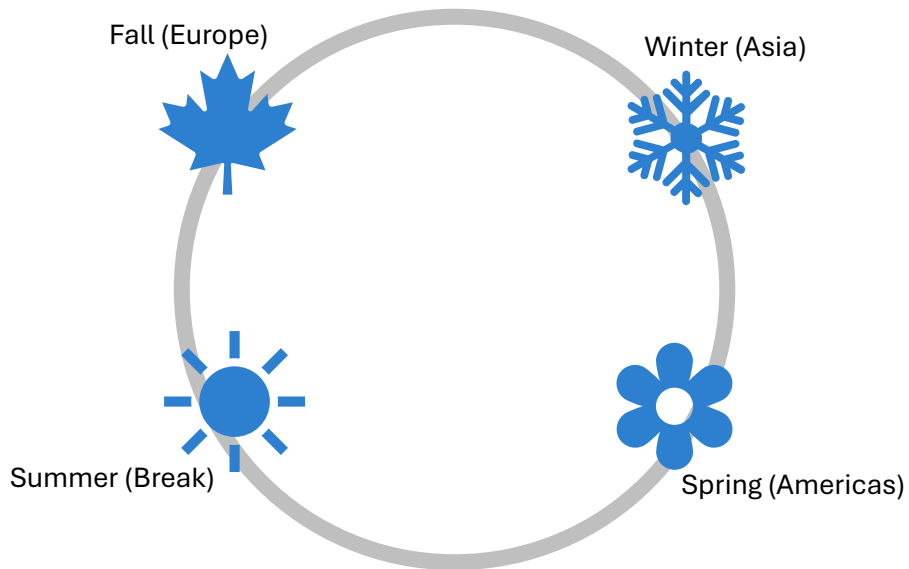
- There are three distinct regions (Europe, Asia, South/Central America)
- Target countries in Europe include Germany, Italy, Spain, France, Belgium
- Target countries in Asia include China, South Korea, Japan, Mongolia
- Target countries in South/Central America can include Brazil and Mexico
- Brazil and Japan are high priority targets since they are a growing market



Recruitment Timeline

The district’s strategy aims to solidify Kootenay Lake International Program’s presence in Europe, South/Central America, and Asia. By strengthening relationships with existing agents, targeting key growth markets, and maintaining a structured and seasonal recruitment approach, SD8 is well positioned for sustainable enrolment growth, and increased global visibility.

Recruitment efforts can follow a seasonal approach:



This structure allows for targeted engagement with agents during peak recruitment periods, fostering long-term relationships.



Strategic Direction (2025-2026)

The International Education program aims to grow its global reach, enrich student experiences, and strengthen community impact. For the 2025-2026 school year, key goals are to boost enrolment, enhance student success, and drive sustainable revenue growth.

Goals

- **Increase Enrolment:** Target enrolment is set at 50 FTE students, focusing on diversifying source countries. Efforts will maintain strong ties with Asia and Europe while exploring South/Central America.
- **Enhance Student Experience:** The program will prioritize high academic standards and cultural integration, with expanded homestay support, and intercultural experiences to deepen students' sense of community.
- **Drive Sustainable Revenue:** Planned increases in tuition, and expanded programming can improve revenue, supporting program enhancements that benefit all district students.

Projects

- **Website and Branding Update:** A new website and refreshed brand will showcase the district's unique appeal, offering clear information and an easier application process.
- **Homestay Recruitment:** A targeted homestay recruitment campaign will intensify efforts to enlist local families from Elementary Schools.
- **Monthly Adventure Program:** Thoughtful outdoor monthly adventures will allow students to explore the Kootenay Lake region and build local connections.





Market Expansion

- **Strengthen Existing Markets:** Continued outreach in Asia and Europe, through virtual and in-person events, to maintain strong enrolment.
- **New Markets:** Recruitment will focus on Europe, Asia, and South/Central America to diversify student enrolment.

Program Innovations

- **Flexible Learning Options:** New pathways will allow students to mix short-term, semester, and full-year study tailored to student needs.
- **Digital Orientation:** Online orientation sessions will prepare students for life in the district, with updated resources to ease adaptation.
- **Increased Language Support:** Expanded language support through digital technology use, can help students succeed academically, and meet BC graduation standards.

These initiatives, with clear goals and new projects, lay a foundation for sustainable growth, and a richer educational experience in 2025-2026.



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