

September 11, 2020

It was great seeing your student(s) at school for orientation. We have missed them.

Grade 8's got to meet their learning cohorts and their block A and B teachers. The mentors that helped out did an amazing job. Grade 8 teachers went over all the safety information for the Grade 8's. Also, Grade 8's got an opportunity for a tour of the school. No virtual for them this time.

Grade 9-12's showed up for their orientation with me and Ms. Macintosh in the gym and boy were they excited to be back at school, well, at least some of them. It was a good start and we had a great opportunity to go over safety protocols and how school will run this year. Lots of good questions. Students also got their quarter 1 schedule.

If your student did not make it to orientation, please come by the main office on Monday morning to get the schedule.

Ms. Macintosh had a tough task of building a quarter block schedule in 2.5 weeks. She worked really hard and had to make some tough decisions and tried to get students all the courses they wanted or requested. She focused on the academics, languages and graduation requirements first. Some students did not get all of the electives they wanted but they got most. In COVID times, that is pretty good. While some students may not have got all the electives they wanted, I would encourage them to be flexible and use this as an opportunity to experience things that they might not normally try.

We are ready to go for Monday, September 14. Staff is ready, the school is ready, and now the students are ready. It is going to be great, but different, but still great. We will be working with families to make this a rewarding school year. If you have any questions please contact me, Ms. Macintosh, the counsellors, or call the office. We are here to help. We are working as fast as we can.

We will not be accepting students until 8:20am each morning. If students arrive before then, they will have to wait outside. Students must wear their mask upon entering the school and until they enter their first block class. They must also hand sanitize upon entering the school and then again when they arrive at the classrooms they are going to. All of these measures will help to prevent the spread of COVID. I would also encourage students to wear masks for all their classes and remain as socially distanced as possible.

If you have not gone on to Parent Connect and looked at all the permission forms, please do so this weekend. It is very important that you read and agree to these, especially the Daily Health Checklist agreement. It is also very important that students come to school wearing a mask. Please make sure your student packs one with them. As per the government's guidelines, schools will have two reusable masks per student available also.

If your child is sick or not feeling well, please make sure they stay at home. Please refer to the attached Daily Health Checklist. You can also find it online [here](#).

Below is a reminder of some of the information that I have sent out previously.

Course Change Requests

For Quarter 1, we will not be making changes unless there are obvious problems, ie student is in the wrong course level, student has completed the course already, etc. We are going to be very limited in the number of changes that we can make to students' schedules due to learning group restrictions and timetable limitations. Also, once a quarter starts and you have attended a learning group we cannot make a change in that quarter. Students cannot swap a learning group within a quarter. So if you REALLY need a change please contact the counsellor you work with via email. If it is a quarter 1 change you should not attend classes until we can determine if we can make a change – this might not happen. Changes to Quarter 2-4 classes can be dealt with later in the month of September.

Daily Health Checks

All families are required to complete the form on Parent Connect called a "Daily Health Check". It is required that you acknowledge you have read this form before sending your child back to school. Most importantly, it is imperative that families monitor their child's health daily and keep students at home if they exhibit symptoms that are cold or flu-like that can include coughing, sneezing, a sore throat, fever or any other cold or flu-like symptoms. If your child is experiencing these symptoms, please have them see a doctor.

School Schedule – See the attached Schedule for specific details and times

The year will be broken into 4 quarters of about 9 weeks in length. Each day will have 3 blocks – Blocks A, B and C. We are working to create schedules for students that maximize face-to-face learning in quarter classes. The quarter classes will be 120 minutes in length Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. On Wednesdays the classes will be 85 minutes. For students in Grades 11-12 there is a strong likelihood that they will have one face-to-face class and one hybrid class in each quarter. Hybrid classes will combine face-to-face learning and remote learning. Students will be distanced as much as possible and face masks are recommended for students. In a Hybrid class face to face will occur 1-2 times a week. The reason we might offer hybrid classes is because we cannot adequately distance students from multiple learning groups.

For students in Grade 8-10 they will mostly have classes in Block A and B and are face to face – there might be a few exceptions but not very many. During Block C there is a degree of flexibility for students. It will consist of time for student support for the quarter classes they are taking or a full 120-minute quarter class. For most students, Block C will be like flex time from last year where students can seek out their teachers for help in the courses they are currently taking. If they do not need help, then they will be dismissed. Students in Grade 11-12 will have classes either in A-B or B-C.

For students who are enrolled in LA/LD/Grad Quest/Supportive learning we are going to provide you support in Block C and directly in the classes that the students are taking or even some pull outs. Each student will have a non-enrolling block in their schedule that will help the school track who is getting support in these areas. The needs of each student is different and the support teachers will create a plan to support the students.

[Please note: Students will receive their timetable at the orientation meeting.](#)

Nutrition Breaks

Between Blocks A - B there will be a 20-minute nutrition break and 30 minutes lunch between B - C. If students are not staying for learning support and Block C then they can be dismissed. For safety reasons we cannot allow students to be in the hallways or canteen during this time.

Students should bring their lunch, snacks and other required items with them when they arrive at school. Food should be in their own containers and they should take those containers home with them at the end of the day. To maintain physical distancing and minimize contact with others, parents are asked to not drop off student lunches/supplies during the school day. Food drink items, dishes, and cutlery are not to be shared. The only exception is manufacturer-wrapped food products.

During the school year vending machines will not be in operation and will be empty. The Canteen restaurant will not likely be open. Students need to bring any food they wish to consume with them to school.

Learning Groups

Students will be placed in learning groups when they are attending their classes. This will mean that the same group of students will take the same 2 face to face classes each day over a quarter (9-10 weeks). The learning groups may be adjusted after each quarter. We have been able to keep most learning groups to 30 students or less.

Within the learning groups, masks are not required, but masks and the practice of physical distancing are required when students are in common areas like hallways, washrooms, Library, Cafeteria and whenever students are in contact with students outside of their learning group. Students in Hybrid classes will also be encouraged to wear a mask. Staff will also practice these safety measures if they need to enter a learning group to support students.

Procedures for Entering and Exiting Sands

Entrance Points

- Main office – door unlocked from 8am – 3pm
- By Back Parking Lot – door unlocked from 8am – 3 pm
- By the Library – door unlocked from 8:20 – 8:40 am
- By basketball court – door unlocked from 8:20 – 8:40 am

Each entrance will have a hand sanitization station.

Students will need to put on a mask as they enter the school and wear a mask when they are in common areas of the school. They will also be required to use hand sanitizer upon entering the building.

The hallways at Sands will be one way.

Students should enter the building via the door that is closest to their first class. When students enter the school they should go directly to their class and where possible distance themselves from others. Do not touch any surfaces, i.e. lockers, walls, windows, etc. We will allow students to use the courtyard by the main entrance for bike storage.

Exiting Sands

Students should exit using the doors closest to the classroom they are learning in.

Safety Considerations

It is very important that you read and completed the Daily Health Check Form on Parent Connect before sending your child back to school.

Students are expected to wear a non-medical masks when they enter Sands and are in common areas of the school. Also they need to wear a mask when they are outside their learning group and cannot remain at least 2 metres from others. While in classrooms and with their learning groups, masks are optional. However, students in Hybrid classes we are recommending students wear a mask and maintain 2m physical distance from others that are outside of their learning group. Sanitizing hands and not handling other student's property is an important safety measure.

Any student or other person entering Sands must stay home and self-isolate if they:

- are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 OR
- have travelled outside of Canada within the last 14 days OR
- have been identified by public health as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak must stay home and self-isolate, including children of essential service workers.

Any students, staff, or other person within the school who has cold, influenza, or COVID-like symptoms should not return to school until an assessment by a health-care provider and their symptoms have resolved.

Students may still attend school if a member of their household has cold, influenza or COVID-19-like symptoms, provided the student/staff is not actively experiencing symptoms. It is expected that the symptomatic household member is seeking assessment by a health-care provider.

Students and staff who experience seasonal allergies or other COVID-like symptoms, which are related to an existing condition can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal. If they experience any change in symptoms, they should seek assessment by a health-care provider.

If parents or caregivers need to contact the school principal or their student's teachers, they should be directed to do so by phone or email. In-person visits should be for specific purposes and arranged in advance by appointment. Visitors must be aware of and follow safety protocols and be limited in their access to necessary spaces only.

In line with the Public Health Officer's guidance, within a learning group, minimized physical contact will be strongly encouraged, however physical distancing does not need to be maintained, if not practical. Outside of a learning group, physical distancing of 2 metres remains the expectation for secondary students and for all staff.

Those that choose to wear non-medical masks, face coverings or face shields must still seek to maintain physical distance from people outside of their learning group. There must be no crowding,

gathering or congregating of people from different learning groups, even if non-medical masks are worn.

For more specific details on safety plans please see the District Safety Plan.

<https://www.deltasd.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/08/District-37-COVID-19-SAFETY-PLAN-August-20-2020.pdf>

Scent Free Sands

Sands is a Scent-Free school. We ask that students, staff and families please refrain from wearing scents while at Sands, even if you are just popping in. If students are wearing scents they may be asked to change their clothes. We have a number of staff and students who are sensitive to certain scents. Please help us in creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all.

Locks and Lockers

For safety reasons students will not be assigned a locker. It is expected that students will bring with them all they need for the day in a bag or backpack.

Collaboration Days

Each Wednesday, Sands has embedded regular Collaboration Time into the school calendar so staff can engage in collaborative professional learning about effective practice. Students begin the day at 9:40am – please arrive no sooner than 9:30, doors will not open until then.

Permission Forms

There are a number of forms on Parent Connect for you to review and authorize. Please login to Parent Connect, review the notices and select the appropriate response to each form. It is mandatory that all forms be reviewed and responded to by each student's parent/guardian by September 30. Forms are:

Personal Information Consent Form, Outside Media in Schools, Electronic Communications, Walking Field Trips Permission, BC Fruits and Vegetables Program Permission, Demographic Information, and Student Emergency Release.

Communication with Families

Most of our communication with families is done electronically through our website, email and Parent Connect. Please ensure you have provided us a current email address, updated contact information and you are able to log into Parent Connect.

Student Fees

Student fees are assessed during Quarter 1 once class changes have been made. Fees can be viewed on Student/Parent Connect. Fees include a basic student fee, an Emergency Preparedness fee and in some cases, students may be assessed a course fee to cover the cost of consumable materials. Students may also choose to purchase optional 'enhancements' that support a course but are not required for course completion. Yearbook fees will be assessed to all students. We are encouraging parents to pay fees on-line using Parent Connect.

Financial Need

Sands realizes that sometimes families struggle financially. Please contact the Principal, Vice Principal or one of the counsellors if you are experiencing financial difficulty. Discretion is paramount.

Reporting Student Absence

To report a student absence please:

1. Contact the school office by phone (604-594-3474) or
2. Notify the school by email sands@deltasd.bc.ca or
3. Send a message through Parent Connect.

Absences should be reported as early as possible on the day of the absence to allow a Parent Advised code to be entered into the system. Any unreported absences will result in an automated email from the student system.

Protocol for Parent Concerns at Sands Secondary

If parents have concerns about general school procedures or issues stemming from their child's classroom, there is a procedure for raising those concerns.

If the concerns originate in the classroom, the first and most important person to communicate those issues with is your child's teacher with a phone call or email. If in this discussion you continue to have unresolved concerns then it is appropriate to be in contact with your child's counsellor.

If your concern is not addressed to your satisfaction after the counsellor has intervened, then please contact either the Vice Principal or Principal.

We are always willing to speak with parents to explain how and why particular decisions have been made and to listen openly to suggestions that might make our school community a better place. We will do our best to work along with you to solve problems.

We want Sands to be a community that supports children's learning and nurtures the hearts of children and families. To maintain a positive working relationship, please follow the protocol as outlined when difficulties arise.

It is imperative that we remain respectful in our interactions and solve problems in a way that benefits everyone. Our students are watching our examples.

Ways to help set your student up for success in the school year

- Set high expectations for your student and encourage them to not accept minimum effort or indifference to quality work;
- Contact teachers directly when you have a question or concern regarding your student's progress;
- Ensure good attendance;
- Provide a quiet place in your home for study;
- Insist that your student accept responsibility for their learning and their conduct;
- Model the importance of life-long learning;
- Encourage a strong work ethic and promote good time management skills;
- Encourage your student to maintain healthy eating and sleep habits.

My School App

Students and parents are encouraged to download the MY SCHOOL DAY! The app is now available on both the iOS and Google Play App stores by searching for "MY SCHOOL DAY". The SANDS APP

that many students and families have become familiar with will be discontinued at the end of August. All students and parents are encouraged to download and use the MY SCHOOL DAY app.

School Photos

These will take place during Quarter 1. We have not set a date yet – please stay tuned for more information.:

Valuables in Gym Change rooms

Thefts happen in the school gym change rooms. Please do not leave valuables unattended. Either lock them up in their hallway locker or a locker in the change rooms. The school is not responsible for any thefts. We strive to have a safe and secure environment.

Career Life (CL) and Capstone

These courses have replaced Grad Transitions and is a requirement to complete in order to graduate. Mr. Reefschlager is in charge of this and will be providing grade 11 and 12's with more information in the second Quarter. This course will be conducted via a Google Classroom.

Provincial Assessments

We are anticipating the numeracy and literary assessments will continue but we do not have any details at this time. Once we get more information we will share this with you.

Engaging as a Parent/Guardian

We urge parents/guardians to stay engaged with their child's progress at school. Parents can use Parent Connect to monitor student attendance and view report cards. We encourage parents to contact the school and teachers when they have questions.

PAC (Parent Advisory Council)

Sands PAC meets eight times throughout the school year. Meetings take place in the evening, approximately once per month and will be conducted by a ZOOM meeting. The PAC provides feedback and input to the administration, and applies for and allocates gaming funds to support extracurricular programs throughout the school. The PAC typically does not organize fundraising events. All parents, especially new Grade 8 parents are invited to join the PAC, meet other interested parents and learn more about the school and recent changes in education in BC. Please stay tuned for the date of the first PAC Meeting of the year.

This is going to be a different year. We are working as hard as we can to get things up and running for a successful start.

If you have any questions, please call or email me.

Thanks

Mark Robinson
Principal

Joanna Macintosh
Vice Principal