

Friday, September 16th

Dear Sands Secondary students and families,

It was tremendous to welcome students back to school last week for their Homeroom classes, Photo Day and the start of their semester 1 classes. Our staff are quickly establishing routines in their classes so students can focus on progressing through the curriculum of each of their classes. Prior to the start of school, we hosted our new grade 8 students and their families for a community barbecue to help ease some anxiety and stress about the first day of high school. Our students were able to tour the building, find their lockers and practice opening their locks. We had many senior mentors present to help assist students and their families through the evening and we were appreciative for their presence to welcome our new families to the Sands Secondary community. This event was a great way for our grade 8 students to start their high school experience.

Earlier this week, the federal and provincial governments announced a Day of Mourning to honour Queen Elizabeth II's life. As a result, all public schools will be closed on Monday, September 19th and will reopen on Tuesday, September 20th (Day 2). This closure of schools will only be for this school year.

Although COVID-19 is not as concerning as it has been in the past, we still need to recognize that the virus is still in our communities and can be impactful on some people. The safety guidelines are like the guidelines from last June that include:

- Getting vaccinated
- Daily health checks
 - <https://www.deltasd.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/09/Sept-2022-Daily-Health-Check.pdf>
- Washing your hands regularly
- Sneezing and coughing in the crease of your elbow
- Staying home if you are sick and follow the BCCDC Guidelines
 - <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/if-you-have-covid-19>
- Wearing a mask is a personal choice

If we can follow these guidelines regularly, then we will keep our school community safe from spreading COVID-19.

We encourage all Sands Secondary students to take advantage of everything our school community offers, which includes extra-curricular activities. Many extra-curricular activities are starting up and we highly encourage all Sands Secondary students to get involved, in some way, in activities outside of class time. Some activities include Athletics, Clubs, Student Council and Grad Committee. Information on these activities will be shared through our communication streams that include the Sands Secondary App, the Sands Secondary website and through the daily announcements.

We hope all of our students have a satisfying and successful school year.

Please see the important information items below:

Important Dates:

- September 19th Day of Mourning (classes not in session)
- September 20th PAC Meeting 7:00pm Zoom
Join Zoom Meeting
<https://ca01web.zoom.us/j/62428504680?pwd=WnBMQU5Hd1ZCR1dQQlpINDVla0w2dz09>
Meeting ID: 624 2850 4680
Passcode: d69e5p
- September 22nd Grade 11 & 12 Assembly (Flex Time 9:50AM) Gym
- September 23rd Non-Instructional Day (Pro-D)
- September 29th Grade 8 Retreat – Deas Island Park
(Students arrive at school by 8:00am; Busses leave at 8:30am)

Grade Boat Cruise – Coal Harbour Marina
(Students arrive to school by 4:15pm; Busses leave at 4:30pm)
- September 30th Non-Instructional Day: BC – Day of Truth & Reconciliation

Grade 8 Transition to High School Activities

In addition to the Grade 8 Barbecue, Sands Secondary staff have developed a year long program to help our grade 8 students feel comfortable in their new environment. These activities include:

- Games Day: typically, after school on Friday's, grade 8 students are invited to participate in a variety of activities that run from 3:00pm to 4:15pm. These activities are led by senior mentors (schedule will be published at a later date and the first session will be Friday, September 16th at 3:00pm in the Canteen).
- Mentorship Meeting will take place regularly where grade 8 students will meet with their mentors to discuss various school-related topics. These meetings will take place once a month.
- The Grade 8 Retreat will take place on Thursday, September 29th at Deas Island Park where Pinnacle Pursuits will provide a team building and leadership program over the course of the day. Students will be back at Sands by the end of the school day.

These ongoing activities will help our grade 8 students with their transition to Sands Secondary.

Grad Boat Cruise – Thursday, September 29th

The Grad Boat Cruise is quickly approaching. Ticket sales will take place next week starting on Tuesday, September 20th at lunch. Tickets will be \$115.00 which includes transportation to and from Coal Harbour, a buffet dinner, a 3-hour boat tour and a DJ for dancing. Payment can be made in cash, by cheque (made payable to Sands Secondary School) or by debit/credit. Grade 12 students will be required to have submitted their Field Trip Consent form and their Code of Conduct Agreement prior to purchasing a ticket.

Students will arrive to at the front of the school by 4:15pm to meet the buses. The buses will leave the school at 4:30pm to Coal Harbour. The ship will depart Coal Harbour at 5:30pm. Students will return to Sands Secondary by 9:30pm.

We are hoping for great weather so that the students will have the opportunity to enjoy the sites of Vancouver.

If families require financial help, please contact a Counsellor or Administrator.

Parent/Guardian Opportunities:

Safer Schools

Safer Schools is hosting an event for parents, school staff, etc. Please share the following information with your staff and community.

“The Modern-Day Predator” was designed to provide education to Parents/Caregivers, School Administrators and Community Partners as a means for the prevention of sexual exploitation. This session provides tools to address issues like consent, creating healthy boundaries and grooming both online and in person

This training will include:

- An overview of sexual exploitation and human trafficking
- The different types of predators and their grooming methods
- Who is most vulnerable and why?
- Online exploitation: recent trends, what makes social media apps risky, grooming tactics, avoiding sextortion
- Signs of sexually exploited individuals
- Best practices for supporting individuals and gaining disclosures
- Relevant legislation, important resources and help tactics

<https://saferschoolstogether.com/tc-events/the-modern-day-predator-sep-28-2022/>

The event takes place on September 28, 2022, from 7-9pm and is \$29 a person.

Fall Parent Workshops.

Family Smart would like to share their September and October virtual workshop dates for families - please see attached. "**Help for the Hard Times**" workshops are designed to support parents/caregivers whose child has had an inpatient stay or has had ER visits due to a mental health or substance use concern.

As parents ourselves, we know how difficult it can be to support a child after a mental health crisis and we want to help.

The workshops are FREE and registration is required: www.familysmart.ca/workshops. Please find attached a poster with dates and info for the September and October sessions for the Fraser region.

If you have any questions or would like to connect one on one, please don't hesitate to contact us at SurreyDeltaWhiteRock@familysmart.ca.

Flex Time

Every week students can make decisions about their learning where they decide which class they will attend to obtain extra support. Sands Secondary is fortunate to offer this opportunity to our students every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. We encourage students to sign up for their Flex Time periods early on Student Connect. The expectation is that all students attend Flex Time in order to support the learning they experience in their classes.

Permission Forms

There are a number of permission forms on Parent Connect for families to review and authorize. Please log in to Parent Connect, review the documents and select the appropriate response for each one. It is mandatory that all forms be reviewed and responded by each student's family by September 30th. We appreciate your attention to this process as your consent is extremely important for your child(ren) to participate in various school related activities and events.

Food Service

Sands Secondary does not have a school cafeteria to provide food service, but the district has contracted Canuel Catering to provide a variety of hot and cold food options in the school Canteen. The food options meet the Healthy Food Guidelines established by the Ministry of Education for all schools in the province. Students have the option to pay for their food choices by cash or by debit. Canuel Catering meets and exceeds all appropriate COVID protocols for their food service.

Sands Secondary Career and Post-Secondary Centre

The Sands Career and Post-Secondary Centre is available for students who have questions about post-secondary options and scholarship opportunities. Our Career and Post-Secondary Advisor, Ms. J Sansregret, has provided a great deal of information for students and families on her website at <https://sandscareercentre.weebly.com/>. We encourage grade 12 students and their families to visit the site often and subscribe to the email list for the most up to date information. Ms. Sansregret's office is located in the Counselling Suite and she can be contacted by email at jsansregret@deltalearns.ca to answer questions or book an appointment. Students can drop-in, but an appointment is recommended.

We hope that all of our students have a successful school year. Please reach out to us if you have any questions about the upcoming events listed above.

Have a wonderful weekend.

Rick Mesich
Principal

Joanna Macintosh
Vice Principal