

Friday, February 10th, 2023

Mission Statement: Sands is an inclusive and nurturing community which challenges individuals to strive for educational excellence, as well as personal responsibility, integrity and growth.

School Inquiry Question: Will a school wide focus on fostering staff and student health and wellness have a positive effect on well-being, engagement, and achievement?

Acknowledging the traditional territory of the Tsawwassen First Nation and Musqueam Indian Band and all of the Hun'qumi'num speaking peoples who have been stewards of this land since time immemorial on whose land we live, learn and play. We would also like to offer our respect to all the elders who have gone before us, to the elders and First Nation people who are with us today and to all Canadians who are on the journey of Reconciliation.

Dear Sands Secondary students and families,

On Monday and Tuesday of this past week, our students experienced an Anti-Racism Symposium facilitated by Angela Ma Brown, an Anti-Racism Educator. The symposium was organized by our student-led Anti-Racism Committee and was open to all Sands Secondary students. Ms. Ma Brown led the group of approximately 60 students through a virtual presentation on the first day to identify racism, overt or subtle, in our society and the idea of micro-aggressions where individuals can make subtle or indirect comments that have a major impact on an individual over time.

On the second day, Ms. Ma Brown facilitated the conversation in person where the focus was on how everyone can take action to make others accountable for their comments and behaviour. Students felt enlightened and empowered to help everyone feel safe and valued in the Sands Secondary school community and in the greater community. The symposium was a powerful reminder of how we all need to do our part to make our community inclusive and nurturing for everyone.





Please see the important information items below:

Important Dates:

- February 17th Pro D Day
- February 20th Family Day
- February 21st PAC Meeting In person Sands Secondary Library 7:00pm
- March 7th & 8th Emma the Musical – Matinee Show 12:30pm
- March 7th-10th Emma the Musical – Evening Show 7:00pm
- March 9th Interims Published (students achieving 60% or less in a given class)
- March 10th Last Day Before Spring Break
- March 12th-24th Spring Break

School Schedule Decision-Making Process

Since returning from Winter Break, all seven secondary schools in Delta are reviewing their schedules for next year to decide on a long-term schedule. When the pandemic started in March of 2020, schools changed to different schedules to be able to pivot based on the COVID situation. Now, we are at a place with the pandemic that will allow us to review whether we wish to maintain our current semester schedule or investigate other schedules.

Prior to the pandemic, Sands Secondary followed a linear schedule where students were responsible for 8 classes over a period of 10 months. Students would experience their 8 classes on a Day 1 (4 classes) and a Day 2 (4 classes) schedule rotation throughout the school year. As one can imagine, there are many different schedules with their benefits and their drawbacks.

The decision for next year's schedule will be based on feedback from the student, family and staff surveys that were conducted last Spring and discussions with staff. The district has set out a timeline for secondary schools to inform them of their decision:

February 28 – secondary schools notify the district

March 7 – all 7 schedule decisions presented to the Trustees

March 9 – families will be notified of the schedule decision for September 2023

If families wish to provide further feedback on next year's schedule, we encourage you to email us at sands@deltaschools.ca

Supporting Families in Financial Need

We realize that sometimes families struggle financially. The BC Government has created a Student and Family Affordability Fund and will be providing schools funds for this school year only to help students and families with school fees, school supplies, food security, and other supports. Please contact your child's counsellor or administrator if your family requires financial support. Discretion is paramount.

Indigenous Focuses Graduation Requirement

As part of the Province of British Columbia's commitments to truth, reconciliation and anti-racism, the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC), announced that it is implementing a new Indigenous-focused graduation requirement. Expected to take effect in the 2023-24 school year, this requirement will ensure all secondary students complete Indigenous-focused coursework before they graduate from B.C.'s K-12 education system. This means that students must complete a 4 credit Indigenous-focused course as part of their 80 credits required for graduation.

As a result of this announcement by the Ministry of Education, students will have an opportunity to select from the following list of courses to satisfy the Indigenous-focused requirement and either their English or Social Studies requirement:

B.C. First Peoples 12

English First Peoples – Literary Studies + New Media 11

For more information regarding the Indigenous-focused graduation requirement, please visit the Ministry website. <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2022EDUC0007-000297>

Family February "In the Know" Virtual Events

All of the information to register is found in the attached poster, or you can click on the link below. These events are free to attend.

VIRTUAL EVENT: For Families: A Conversation About Eating Disorders Join us to watch a video of a young person, parent and Eating Disorder Therapist share their perspectives and knowledge as they talk about the continuum of disordered eating, what to be aware of, the importance of connection and strategies that can help support recovery. This event is offered at various dates and times so that you can make it to the one that works best for you.

Registration: FamilySmart <https://familysmart.ca/monthly-events/>

Events Dates:

Wednesday, February 15th - 6:30-8pm

Monday, February 27th - 9:30-11am

An IN-PERSON event for parents and caregivers is also being held on February 28th in Burnaby. Advance registration is required, as seating is limited.

Caregivers as Critical Agents of Change: Strategies to Keep in Mind When Your Young Person Struggles with Emotional Dysregulation

This presentation will focus on supporting parents and caregivers with information and strategies to cope with emotional dysregulation and the challenges which many young people (ages 10-18) begin to experience as they enter and move through the adolescent years. It can be overwhelming and frustrating to watch young ones struggle this way with mental health concerns, especially when they refuse to engage in accessing counseling or other support. We will be exploring the critical role which parents and caregivers play in creating the environment for positive change for their young people especially when things can be the most challenging. Speaker Nicole Allen is a Registered Clinical Counsellor working as a Group and Family Therapist at Short Term Assessment Response Treatment (START) East. She has a background working with adults as well as young people and their caregivers where elements of crisis or acute mental health issues are present.

Date: Tuesday February 28th

Time: 6:30pm - 8:30pm (Doors Open at 6pm)

Location: BCIT - Burnaby Campus

Registration: FamilySmart In Person Event

<https://familysmart.ca/event/caregivers-as-critical-agents-of-change-strategies-to-keep-in-mind-when-your-young-person-struggles-with-emotional-dysregulation/>

February and March virtual workshop dates:

"**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.

You can register here: www.familysmart.ca/workshops . Please find attached a poster with dates and information for the February and March sessions for the Fraser region.

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

Establishing Respectful Relationships and Consent in Our Communities Parent Session - 90-minute session

This session will explore the topic of consent, and the dynamics of gender-based violence. It will discuss the current state of gender relations faced by our children in both the physical and digital landscape, as well as the potential for exploitation within these relationships. Trainers will provide Parents/Caregivers tips and tools on how discuss these topics with their children to create positive family connections.

TOPICS COVERED WILL INCLUDE:

- What defines consent? A discussion
- The dynamics of gender-based violence
- An overview of worrisome content, and how to manage their child's exposure on popular social media and gaming platforms

- The different types of bullying and cyberbullying relationships
- The pathway to sextortion and human trafficking—important signs to look for
- The importance of checking in on our children’s mental health and strategies for success
- Family suggestions, as well as tips to facilitate positive conversations and outcomes

Feb 27th 6:30-8pm

<https://event-wizard.com/EstablishingRespectfulRelationshipsandConsentinOurCommunitiesStudentParentFeb272023/0/register/>

March 8th 6:30pm-8pm

<https://event-wizard.com/EstablishingRespectfulRelationshipsandConsentinOurCommunitiesStudentParentMar82023/0/register/>

February Career Newsletter - click [here](#) to access all the information!

Highlights in this issue:

1. Career Program Opportunities - Apply now!
2. Indigenous Experience UBC - Feb 24
3. BCIT Big Info Nights - Feb 15 or Feb 22
4. Mari Tech Conference - Apr 20
5. Justice Institute Info Session - Feb 16
6. Hiring & Post-Secondary Event - Mar 16
7. And More!



See your school Career Program Facilitator for more information on the high school programs.

Course Planning

The Course planning process will be starting shortly where students will be making course requests for next year. It is crucial that students and families take time in their decision making as all decisions for how many classes we offer are based on these decisions. The timeline for the Course Planning process is as follows:

- February 13th-28th Counsellors visit classes to guide students through the process to make course requests.
- March 3^d Systems close to make individual selections.

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.

Homework Club

Sands Secondary offers many opportunities to support students in getting extra help with their course work. Another student opportunity is the Homework Club that takes place every Wednesday after school in the Library from 3:00pm-4:00pm. Ms. Lee and Ms. Papakosta sponsor the Homework Club and have assembled a group of dedicated and knowledgeable Peer Mentors to help students. We encourage all students to use this school support.

Sands Secondary Yearbook

The Sands Secondary Yearbook team is developing the Yearbook for this school year for our school community to capture students in a variety of school events and to create a keepsake of memories for all students. The Yearbook team would like to encourage our community to follow their Instagram account, Instagram sandsyearbook, to view up-to-date photos of what they have captured so far.

We encourage all students to purchase one of these long-lasting memory keepsakes of your time at Sands Secondary. The team is excited about how the Yearbook is progressing so far and are confident that this year's Yearbook will meet and exceed the standards set by previous award-winning Sands Yearbooks. The price for the Yearbook is currently \$60.00. Students and families can purchase a Yearbook through Parent Connect or at the Main Office.

COVID-19 Safety Guidelines

With the risk of COVID-19 infection remaining high in B.C., it is critical that we each do our part to help reduce transmission by continuing to follow the latest health and safety protocols for K-12 schools: Provincial Communicable Disease Guidelines for K-12 School Settings and BC Centre for Disease Control's Public Health Communicable Disease Guidance for K-12 Schools.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/safe-caring-orderly/k-12-covid-19-health-safety-guidelines.pdf>

The best way to keep COVID out of our schools is to stay home if you are showing signs of illness. We strongly encourage everyone to complete a daily health check prior to attending school.

We also encourage everyone to:

- Get vaccinated. Vaccination protects from serious illness due to COVID-19 and is the most effective way to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on our communities.
- Wash and sanitize your hands often.
- Practice good respiratory etiquette.
- Respect the personal space of others.
- Respect the choice of staff and students who wear a non-medical mask or face covering throughout the day or for certain activities.

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

Counselling and Youth Care Worker:

There are many supports we have for students at Sands Secondary and at times students may need social/emotional support, help with scheduling, career planning and other counselling services. The Sands Secondary Student Services team is always ready and willing to help. We encourage our families to connect with our Counselling Team on any issues related to their child(ren). Our Counselling team is an excellent resource to help make your child's experience at Sands Secondary positive. Please connect with the Counsellor by calling the school at 604-594-3474 or emailing them (see below).

Counsellors (students can choose to see either counsellor)

Mr. A. Randhawa arandhawa@deltaschools.ca
Ms. K. McPhedran kmcphebran@deltaschools.ca

Youth Worker

Ms. K. Watters kwatters@deltaschools.ca

Mental Wellness Resources

As we move through our school year, many students may be struggling with social and emotional issues. As a school, we are investigating how a coordinated approach on mental health can have a positive impact on the student's experience at Sands Secondary. As a staff, we will be learning about the Teen Mental Health Curriculum created by Dr. Stan Kucher, Professor at Dalhousie University. Some of our staff are already trained in this curriculum and will be offering training to our entire staff.

Part of Dr. Kucher's curriculum includes a Parent Guide. Please see the link below to access the resource, "How to Parent My Teen".

<http://teenmentalhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/How-do-I-parent-my-teen.pdf>

The complete parent resource section of the curriculum can be accessed in the link below.
<https://teenmentalhealth.org/parents/>

The entire Mental Health Curriculum can be accessed in the link below.
<https://teenmentalhealth.org/>

Other helpful community resources for students and families are listed below.

Crisis Hotlines

- [BC CRISIS CENTRE](#) – 1-800-784-2433 or 310-6789 no area code needed
- CRISIS SERVICES CANADA – 1-833-456-4566 or text 45645
- [First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line](#) – 1-855-242-3310
- [Canada Drug Rehab Addiction Services Directory](#) – 1-877-746-1963
- [National Eating Disorder Information Centre](#) – 1-866-633-4220

Resources

- [Bell Let's Talk](#)
- [Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention](#) – 613-702-4446 (not a crisis line)
- [Canadian Mental Health Association](#) – 416-646-5557
- [Canadian Psychological Association](#) – 613-237-2144 or 1-888-472-0657
- [Mood Disorders Society of Canada](#) – 613-921-5565
- [Schizophrenia Society of Canada](#) – 1-204-320-3188
- [Mental Health Commission](#) – 613-683-3755

Reporting Student Absences

Please phone the school at **604-594-3474** or email **sands@deltaschools.ca** to report a student absence. Students who need to go home due to illness or for other reasons should come to the office to contact a parent/guardian. Office staff will speak with a parent/guardian before students are given permission to go home. If appointments are scheduled during school hours, please send a note with your student. Parents should regularly monitor their student's attendance using Parent Connect.

If you require support or are seeking answers, please contact teachers, counsellors, administrators, or the Main Office. We are here to help families and students.

Have a wonderful weekend.

Rick Mesich
Principal

Joanna Macintosh
Vice Principal