

Friday, January 19th, 2024

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,

We hope your family had a restful holiday season where you were able to connect with family and friends. The end of semester 1 is quickly ending on January 29th. We encourage all students to continue with their positive work habits that have brought them success so far and to make up any missing assessments prior to the end of the semester. If students require support, we encourage them to reach out to their subject teacher, use their Flex Time opportunities, connect with their Counsellor or attend Homework Club that takes place every Wednesday in the Library from 3:00pm-4:00pm. Sands Secondary provides many opportunities for supporting students with their academic needs.

The Sands Secondary staff have been reviewing the effectiveness of the Hybrid schedule we adopted this school year where most of our classes are in a semester schedule and a few classes run all year to help support our students with a Ministry designation. Our conversations started in November and will continue until the end of January when a final decision will be made whether to continue with the hybrid schedule or move back to a full semester schedule. It was clear that from past surveys, families and students prefer a semester schedule. We will let our community know of our final decision in early February.

Please see the important information items below:

Important Dates:

- January 22nd Fine Arts Evening
- January 23rd Long Block Schedule (see below)
- January 24th Long Block Schedule (see below)
Grade 8-11 Course Planning Parent Night 6:00pm Library
- January 25th Long Block Schedule (see below)
- January 26th Professional Development Day (no classes in session)
- January 29th Long Block Schedule (see below)
Last day of Semester 1 classes

- January 30th Course Completion Day (see below)
Grade 7 Parent Night 6:00pm Library
- January 31st Course Completion Day (see below)
- February 1st Start of Semester 2 (Day 2)
- February 1st -7th Grad Photos (see below)
- February 5th Grade 9 Immunization Clinic
- February 8th Semester 1 Final Report Cards Published

Black Excellence Day Virtual Event – January 15th

Classrooms were invited to join the Ninandotoo Society and the Burnaby School District in celebrating Black Excellence Day on January 15th through a webcast event. Black Excellence Day was a day to stand in solidarity with Black Canadians and honour the rich history, contributions, achievements, resilience and joy of Black people. The live event featured an address by the Ministry of Education and Child Care, Rachna Singh.

Grade 8-11 Course Planning Parent Presentation – Wednesday, January 24th 6:00pm Library

We are inviting all families who have children in grades 8 to 11 to attend a Course Planning Presentation on Wednesday, January 24th at 6:00pm in the library.

We will be discussing the process for selecting classes for the 2024-25 school year, the importance of graduation credits as related to meeting the graduation requirement, and for post-secondary institution requirements.

We look forward to meeting with many of our families that evening.

Extended Family Trips During the School Year

As we moved out of the pandemic environment, traveling abroad has picked up substantially. We have been getting requests from families for their child(ren) to miss long periods of time for a family trip. As a school, it is not reasonable for our teachers to support students on trips of more than 2 weeks in length during the school year. If a family wishes to have their children miss more than 2 weeks for a family trip during the school year, then families will need to enroll their child(ren) in an online program like [Delta Access](#). We encourage families to reach out to a Counsellor or Administrator if there may be plans for an extended trip in the future that will impact their child's ability to attend classes daily.

Course Completion Days – January 30th & 31st

It is expected that students have completed all assessments prior to January 29th, 2024. Many teachers will have individualized marks cut-off dates so that students can organize themselves to have assessments completed for the end of the semester and to prepare for final assessments that may occur during the long block days.

The purpose of Course Completion Days is:

- to support students who need to complete unfinished work and/or demonstrate their learning so teachers have sufficient evidence to provide the student a final grade or level of proficiency for the course.
- as an opportunity for students to demonstrate understanding of key concepts that may have been delayed or missed earlier in the course.
- as opportunities for students to schedule individual time with teachers, counsellors and other staff to support their course planning and any other aspect of their educational program.
- as an opportunity for students to be involved in reviewing and updating their Individual Education Plan

goals and strategies as necessary.

- as time for all students to ensure that course requirements are complete.

Course Completion Days are not:

- a time for students to submit substantial amounts of incomplete assignments and projects, or write multiple unit tests, without prior coordination with the classroom teacher.

Long Block Days Schedule – January 23rd to 29th

The long block schedule will be extended to 4 days to accommodate linear classes into the schedule and to avoid any conflicts between classes. The 4-day schedule will be:

Long Blocks:

January 23 (Tuesday)
Office Hours 8:30 – 9:15
Block A(1) 9:30 – 11:40
Lunch 11:40-12:30
Block C(1) 12:30 – 2:40

January 24 (Wednesday)
Block B(1) 9:30 – 11:40
Lunch 11:40-12:30
Block D(1) 12:30 – 2:40

January 25 (Thursday)
Office Hours 8:30 – 9:15
Block A(2) 9:30 – 11:40
Lunch 11:40-12:30
Block C(2) 12:30 – 2:40

January 29 (Monday)
Office Hours 8:30 – 9:15
Block B(2) 9:30 – 11:40
Lunch 11:40-12:30
Block D(2) 12:30 – 2:40

Grad Photos – February 1st to 7th

Artona Studios will be offering our grade 12 students the opportunity to take Grad Photos from February 1st to 7th. Artona will be placing a portable studio at Sands Secondary, so students do not need to travel to the Artona Studio in Vancouver. To take advantage of this photo opportunity, students will need to register for a date and time through the link below:

<https://www.artona.com/schools/SNDS/programs/graduation>

If students and families have questions regarding this opportunity, they can call Artona Studios at 604-872-7272.

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.

Career Education

The district January Careers Newsletter is now available online. The link below will allow you to access the newsletter.

link <https://deltalearns.ca/careers/newsletters/>

Highlights in this edition:

EducationPlannerBC – Online session Feb 7, 2024 at 6:30pm for post-secondary programs, admission requirements, and application dates.

Fraser Health Information

The Fraser Health Authority asked schools to include the following information in our newsletter. Please see the information below about supporting your child's mental health needs.

Know when and how to access mental health support for your child.

Mental illnesses are common in children and young people, they can have a significant impact on their development, relationships and their performance in school. Getting help early can prevent symptoms from becoming more severe and support a faster recovery.

Where do I start if my child or teen needs help?

A good place to start is by talking with your child/teen about how things have been going for them and what you've noticed.

Keep in mind that children and teens vary in their ability to talk about their feelings and experiences. They may not have the vocabulary to describe feelings. They also may not understand what's going on for them or make the connections between something in their life and their struggles.

How do I talk to my child or teen?

Here are some tips to help start a conversation with your child:

- Find a good time and place to talk. Driving to and from places, preparing dinner, or cleaning up after a meal are great opportunities to talk.
- Ask how they are or if they'd like to talk about anything that's going on for them.
- If they say they're fine or nothing is wrong, explain why you're concerned and offer specific examples that you've noticed.
- Acknowledge how it must be difficult for them.
- Ask about what strategies/actions they find helpful. Acknowledge their strengths.
- Discuss how mental health is part of everyone's life – and not just about severe problems.
- Talk about how sometimes it can take the assistance of others to overcome difficulties. Ask if they would they like to talk with someone.
- Ask them what they think would help or what they think they need.
- Offer to make an appointment for your child/teen to see your family doctor – physical issues can sometimes have mental health symptoms associated with them. It's important to check if there's any physical issues.
- Let them know you want to help and that they can always come to you.
- If your child doesn't want to talk, let it go and try again in a few days.
- If you have concerns that your child may be using alcohol or other drugs, get tips on how to talk to your child about drugs.

Gang Reduction Through Informed Practice (GRIP)

Current Gang Dynamics: Social Media Analysis & Trends

In this complimentary session, Safer Schools Together will discuss gang-associated behavior within the expansive landscape of social media trends. They will analyze perspectives across North America regarding a range of gang activities and the interconnections among different gangs. Attendees will gain valuable insights into the most recent trends utilized by various gangs on the most commonly used social media platforms.

Date: February 2, 2024

Location: Livestreamed to your location (via Zoom)*

Time: 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m. - Pacific Standard Time

Training topics include:

- A discussion on gang activities with a focus on their interconnected nature in the North American context
- Updates to trends on social media platforms commonly used by gangs for communication and how to identify gang-associated behaviors within these platforms
- An outline of coded language and emoticons used by gangs in their online interactions
- An overview of the various tactics and strategies utilized by gangs to recruit today's youth through social media channels.
- How to identify trends related to firearm/drug trafficking and understand how these activities evolve within the realm of social media

Register here:

https://pages.saferschoolstogether.com/grip-trends-registration-form-january-2024?utm_campaign=Lead%20Capture%202023%2F24&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=290385000&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-99sn2tG3Ai391rxU2Hvp2gehWY4AbQMc_bVpPGGc2Q3zwZUHPHTwN-K6JCr7plRd7XDM2fGxnnwtcghqYzWjI6dnpxA&utm_content=290384489&utm_source=hs_email

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

Mr. C. Abernethy cabernethy@deltaschools.ca
Youth Workers

Ms. K. Watters kwatters@deltaschools.ca
Ms. S. Sidhu ssidhu@deltaschools.ca

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.

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.sec@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

Tom Inkster
Vice Principal