

Friday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025

*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,

Happy New Year!

We hope that all students and families had a wonderful relaxing Winter Holiday and students are ready for the final few weeks in semester 1. We have just over 2 weeks left in semester 1, which ends on Tuesday, January 28<sup>th</sup>. 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.

In preparation for semester 2, a separate email will be sent to students and families regarding opportunities to meet with Counsellors to discuss second semester schedules and potential adjustments to their schedules. Students will have the opportunity to submit a Course Change Request Form and to schedule an appointment with a Counsellor next week (January 13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>). Counsellors will be meeting with students the following week (January 20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>). Students will be able to make appointments through the scheduler used for Parent Teacher Conferences. This can be found in Parent Connect. More information to come.

Please see the important information items below:

## Important Dates:

- January 21<sup>st</sup> PAC Meeting 7:00pm
- January 22<sup>nd</sup> Long Block Schedule (see below)  
Grade 8-11 Course Planning Parent Night 6:00pm Library
- January 23<sup>rd</sup> Long Block Schedule (see below)  
Last day of classes in Semester 1
- January 17<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> Grad Photos (see below)
- January 24<sup>th</sup> Professional Development Day

- January 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> Course Completion Days (no classes in session)
- January 29<sup>th</sup> Start of Semester 2 classes (Day 1)  
Grade 7 Parent Night 6:00pm Library
- February 7<sup>th</sup> Semester 1 Final Report Cards Published

### **Course Completion Days – January 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>**

It is expected that students have completed all assessments prior to Thursday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>. 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 for students to work with staff to complete missing assessments due to extenuating circumstances such as a long period of absence due to illness. Students may also have an opportunity to demonstrate learning if they are failing a course and are within range of passing. Students are not expected to attend “Course Completion Days” as classes will not be in session. Students should connect with their teachers to create a plan for those days.

### **Grad Photos – January 17<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>**

Artona Studios will be offering our grade 12 students the opportunity to take Grad Photos from January 17<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>. 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://artona.com/event-type/secondary-graduation>

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

### **Accessibility Advisory Committee**

The Delta School District is looking for student, staff and community volunteers interested in serving on its Accessibility Advisory Committee. The Committee’s role is to identify barriers that prevent people from fully participating in school life and to advise on strategies to reduce them, ensuring a more inclusive and accessible environment. If you are interested in helping our school district become more accessible and welcoming to all, please complete the [online application](https://forms.gle/UnQJP7uDdLQX5AFC8) (or copy and paste this link into your browser: <https://forms.gle/UnQJP7uDdLQX5AFC8>) by February 7, 2025. For more information, please [click here](#).

### **FamilySmart Together Workshop Opportunities ( <https://familysmart.ca/> )**

The links below provide families with opportunities to attend workshops (in-person or virtually), FREE monthly sessions to "strengthen our understanding and connection with our kids." The four session topics are:

- Explosive Behaviour in Teens: Strategies to Empower Families.
  - <https://familysmart.ca/event/explosive-behaviour-in-teens-strategies-to-empower-families/>
- ADHD: The Real Deal
  - <https://familysmart.ca/event/adhd-the-real-deal-13/>

- A Conversation About Eating Disorders
  - <https://familysmart.ca/event/for-families-a-conversation-about-eating-disorders-11/>
- Understanding, Supporting and Connecting with Teens with Depression
  - <https://familysmart.ca/event/understanding-supporting-and-connecting-with-teens-with-depression-14/>

## Career Education

### Highlights:

- [Parents & Guardians as a Career Coach: Online Seminar](#): January 22, 2025 (registration required)
- [High School Career Program Opportunities](#): Apply before Feb 28, 2025
- [New Dual Credit Program](#): KPU- Biomedical and Health Science! Starting Feb 2026. Apply now.



See your school Career Program Facilitator, Mr. Campbell, for more information on the high school programs!

### ERASE ANONYMOUS REPORTING TOOL LINK:

<https://erasereportit.gov.bc.ca/add/report-it>

Have you seen or heard something that concerns you? Is someone or something bothering you or your friends at school?

The Erase Report It tool lets you send a secure, anonymous and confidential message to your school or school district's safe school coordinator, who will follow up on it right away. You do not have to provide your name unless you want to.

## Winter Basketball Camps at North Delta Secondary

Here is an opportunity for students who want to improve their basketball skills. The camps will run from January to Spring Break.

Fridays Winter Camp starts January 17 at Gray Elementary Grades 1-7:

<https://ndbasketball.ca/winter2025fridays>

Sundays Winter Camp starts January 19th at NDSS Grades 4- 9:

<https://ndbasketball.ca/winter2025sundays>

Please see the poster below with a QR code for more information.



## Breakfast Program

Our Breakfast Program will continue this year for all our students who may have missed breakfast at home. This initiative is being supported by the Feeding Futures Grant that was provided to each school district to help support students and their families with food security. Students have always had access to snacks every day and all day if they were feeling hungry at school. Our team had a vision to expand our food program to include a hearty breakfast every morning. Our Child and Youth Care Workers, Kristie, Subreena, and Carol, Education Assistant, developed this program last year by acquiring furniture and breakfast equipment to bring this idea to life. Breakfast will occur every morning until 8:15am (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday) and 9:15am on Wednesdays.

## 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.

## 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.

## **Stigma Free Society - Student Mental Health Toolkit**

The Student Mental Health Toolkit is a helpful platform for school staff and parents/guardians to educate and support young people with their mental wellness. This Toolkit provides a wide variety of resources for individuals to enhance their mental health journeys and better understand the realm of wellbeing. The Toolkit and Lesson Plans align with BC school curriculum guidelines. The lesson plans cover topics about mental health, stigma and inclusion. They also have a section that provides fun student activities, such as conversation cards for Real Talk about mental health, stigma-free tool and a mental health true or false quiz. The downloadable resources and lesson plans are designed for grades 4 through 7 and 8 through 12. To find out more information, please visit the website <https://studentmentalhealthtoolkit.com>

## **Flex Time**

Every week students can make decisions about their learning, and 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 to support the learning they experience in their classes.

## **Student Recognition Award**

To recognize the positive contributions our students make on a daily basis to their own learning, to the learning of others and to our school community, we are going to be recognizing students with a weekly award. Staff will nominate students and describe the students' positive contribution. Nominated students will be called to the office to learn about their nomination and the staff member who nominated them. The student will receive a gift certificate to the Canteen for lunch.

We believe our students do not get enough recognition for their positive contributions to our school community and their learning. We hope this endeavour will provide an opportunity to demonstrate our appreciation of our students.

## **Reporting Student Absences**

Please phone the school at 604-594-3474 or email [sands.sec@deltaschools.ca](mailto: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 child. Parents should regularly monitor their student's attendance using Parent Connect.

## **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. We encourage families to schedule their family vacations during the Winter Break, Spring Break or Summer Break.

## Permission Forms

There are several 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 to by each student's family. 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.

## 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	(Grades 11 & 12) Monday-Friday
Ms. A. Janda	ajanda@deltaschools.ca	(Grades 8-10) Tuesday- Thursday
Mr. Randhawa	arandhawa@deltaschools.ca	(Grades 8-10) Monday & Friday

### Youth Workers

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

## 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@deltaschools.ca](mailto:jsansregret@deltaschools.ca) to answer questions or book an appointment. Students can drop-in, but an appointment is recommended.

Please reach out to us if you have any questions about the upcoming events listed above.

Have a wonderful weekend.

Rick Mesich	Tom Inkster
Principal	Vice Principal