

Friday, January 31<sup>st</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,

The start of semester 2 is a new beginning for our students and staff in the middle of the school year. I encourage our students to learn from their first semester experience and adjust their planning and learning approaches to build on their successes. The greatest piece of advice for all students in their pursuit of being successful is to ask for help immediately when they are experiencing a struggle. This will help set them up to navigate through the struggle in a productive way. We encourage students to connect with a teacher, counsellor or administrator for help. Another support available for academic struggles is to attend FLEX classes or the Homework Club that takes place every Wednesday at 3:00pm in the library.

We are starting the course planning process where students select classes for next year. This process is extremely important in determining which classes will run and which classes will not run. We have started the process with having a Parent/Guardian Night in late January. For those who could not attend, we have posted the slide presentation on our website. We will be meeting with students to discuss the process and encourage them to make mindful selections in MyEd. If you and your child have questions or require clarification about graduation credits, we encourage you to connect with our counselling team (see contact information below).

This past week, our community celebrated the Chinese New Year, or the Spring Festival. This event is a festival that celebrates the beginning of a new year on the traditional lunisolar Chinese calendar. Marking the end of winter and the beginning of spring, this festival takes place from Chinese New Year's Eve to the Lantern Festival, held on the 15th day of the year. The first day of Chinese New Year begins on the new moon that appears between 21 January and 20 February. This year is the Year of the Snake which symbolizes the shedding of bad energy. This year is expected to be one of positive transformation as people slither into new beginnings — if they're willing to move on. “Gong hei fat choy” and “Xīnnián hǎo”.

Please see the important information items below:

## Important Dates:

- February Black History Month
- February 3<sup>rd</sup> Guns & Gangs Presentation (Grades 8 & 9) See Below
- February 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Heavy Duty Machinery Simulator
- February 5<sup>th</sup> Career Fair Afternoon Classes (Day 2)
  - Block C Grade 12
  - Block D Grade 11
- February 7<sup>th</sup> Semester 1 Final Report Cards Published
- February 13<sup>th</sup> Course Planning Student Assemblies (Day 2)
  - Block C – Grades 10 and 11
  - Block D – Grades 8 and 9
- February 14<sup>th</sup> Valentine's Day
- February 17<sup>th</sup> Family Day
- February 18<sup>th</sup> Grade 9 Immunization Clinic  
PAC Meeting Sands Secondary Library 7:00pm
- February 21<sup>st</sup> Professional Development Day
- February 26<sup>th</sup> Pink Shirt Day
- Feb 28<sup>th</sup> – Mar 29<sup>th</sup> Ramadan

## Senior Girls Basketball Team Wins Firefighters' Tournament

Congratulations to the Sands Senior Girls Basketball team on winning the North Delta Firefighters' Tournament last weekend by defeating Delview Secondary 61 -60. The girls played excellently as a team and represented Sands Secondary admirably. For their efforts, our Senior Girls were presented with Lululemon hoodies. Congratulations!

## Career Fair – Wednesday, February 5<sup>th</sup> (12:45-2:45pm) Day 2

Sands Secondary, in partnership with the North Delta Rotary Club, will be hosting a Career Fair for our Grade 11 and 12 students on Wednesday, February 5, 12:45pm-2:45 pm Block C Grade 12 & Block D Grade 11.

Parents are welcome to attend the Fair (no registration required), and the following careers will be represented:

Accountant  
Digital Marketing & Product Management  
Human Resources Manager  
Realtor  
Entrepreneur (Environmental)  
Police Officer  
Firefighter  
Lawyer  
Plumber & HVAC  
Electrician  
Electrician (Oil & Gas Industry)  
Software Engineer  
Cybersecurity Specialist  
IT Systems Specialist  
Geospatial Technician  
Civil Engineer

Family Physician  
Medical Sonographer  
Dental Hygienist  
Paramedic

Please encourage your daughter/son to speak with as many of these professionals as possible as each will provide valuable insight into choosing a career or pathway of study.

### **Gangs & Guns Presentation (Grades 8 & 9)**

**Monday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> FLEX**

Doug Spencer, retired VPD Gang and Youth Squad member, will be providing a presentation on the Lower Mainland gang issues and how this impacts students with regards to recruitment and consequences from living the lifestyle. Below is a synopsis of his presentation:

My name is Doug Spencer, and I am a member of Odd Squad Productions Society. Odd Squad is a charitable organization comprised of serving and retired police officers and is recognized as an international leader in the field of drug and gang education for youth. Odd Squad ascribes to the notion that ‘an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure’, and that drug prevention and education programs are much more effective and healthy investments for our youth than treatment.

I have recently retired after 40 years in policing, having spent the majority of my career working as a Gang Investigator and Youth Squad Officer. I am the only recognized Gang Expert in the Supreme Court of British Columbia, and in 2018 received the Governor General’s Award for Meritorious Service for my work with Odd Squad. In my 12 years as a member of Odd Squad, I have delivered over 370 presentations to nearly 38,000 elementary and high school students across BC, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories outlining the truth about gangs, drugs, and the life-changing choices that all adolescents face. My presentations are gritty, real, and interactive.

I don’t just tell kids to say no, but educate them about the truth – about gangs, drugs, vaping, and peer pressure - so they are able to come to that conclusion on their own. The talks are appropriate for students from grades 5-12.

### **SFU Range Geography Conference**

Range Geography Conference takes place February 22, 2025 at SFU. Open to all students to learn about the rich possibilities for research and career pathways within geography.

Register: <https://events.sfu.ca/event/42761-range-2025-a-geography-conference>

### **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](#).

## Dream It, Be It Conference

The Dream It, Be It, Career Support for Girls Conference is back! This free event takes place on February 8, 2025 at the KPU campus in Surrey. Activities, speakers, door prizes and a free lunch is part of the day. Open to anyone identifying as a woman, transgender or non-binary and who is between the ages of 13-18. See the poster on the Career Centre Bulletin board for details.

## Rethinking Social Media for a Better Understanding of Our Children & Youth

Madison Cameron from the Center for Trauma Informed Practices will be speaking on the topic of social media use among children and youth. The presentation will be online on Tuesday, February 25<sup>th</sup> from 6:30pm-8:00pm. Registration is required. Please see the registration link in the poster below.

**PARENT PRESENTATION**

*Rethinking Social Media for a Better Understanding of our Children and Youth*

- ✓ Learn about popular apps and platforms youth are using.
- ✓ Understand how social media impacts self-image and relationships
- ✓ Discover strategies to foster stronger connections with your child.

**SPEAKER: MADISON CAMERON**  
CENTER FOR TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICES

**TUES, FEB. 25, 2025**  
6:30PM - 8:00 PST

**ONLINE (ZOOM)**

**PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED:**  
[HTTPS://BIT.LY/DELTAPARENTPRESENTATION](https://bit.ly/deltaparentpresentation)

## 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, email, or by making an appointment to meet in person with the teacher. 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 come directly to the administrator of your child's grade. If there is still an outstanding concern, contact the Principal. We are always willing to speak with parents/guardians 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 alongside you to solve problems.

We want Sands Secondary 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 above when difficulties arise. Sharing difficulties in more roundabout way (e.g. classroom e-mail lists, social media sites that are public forums or have open pages, or playground discussions, etc.) in isolation of school staff does

not support a positive school community and in fact leads to misinformation and hard feelings. 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.

### **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**

When our teens are showing up in explosive ways, we sometimes blame ourselves. Discover with us as a therapist explains some causes of explosive behaviour and strategies that support parents and teens.

Join Victoria Keddiss as she hosts a conversation with Kirk Shields-Priddy, MSW/RSW Group and Family Therapist with Fraser Health START Program.

Come together and watch a video presentation and stay for a facilitator conversation by Family Peer Support Workers.

Cost: free of Charge

Date(s):        Tuesday, March 4th at 6:30pm (Most of BC)  
                      Wednesday, March 5th at 6:30pm (Most of BC)  
                      Thursday, March 6th at 6:30pm (Most of BC)  
                      Tuesday, March 11th at 6:30pm (Most of BC)  
                      Wednesday, March 12th at 12:00pm (Most of BC)

Registration required: [www.familysmart.ca/events](http://www.familysmart.ca/events)

#### **ADHD - The Real Deal**

ADHD doesn't just affect the person living with ADHD, it also affects those around them. As parents of kids living with ADHD, we can benefit from learning what ADHD is and how to support our kids. Dr. Duncan dispels some myths about ADHD and explains how and why the ADHD brain works as it does.

Come together and watch a video presentation and stay for a facilitated conversation by Family Peer Support Workers.

Cost: Free of Charge

Dates:            Thursday, February 6th at 6:30pm (Most of BC)  
                      Wednesday, February 19th 12:00pm (Most of BC)  
                      Tuesday, February 25th at 6:30pm (Most of BC)

Registration required: [www.familysmart.ca/events](http://www.familysmart.ca/events)

#### **A Conversation About Eating Disorders**

Knowing how to help our kids who are experiencing an eating disorder can be a terrifying, isolating and overwhelming experience. Learn about disordered eating, what to be aware of, the importance of connection and strategies that help support recovery.

Join us as Victoria Keddis hosts a conversation with Eating Disorders Therapist & Educator Carman Kauffman, and Rylen McKinlay and Terri McKinlay, a young person and parent with lived experience.

Come together and watch a video presentation and stay for a facilitated conversation by Family Peer Support Workers.

Cost: Free of Charge

Wednesday, February 5th at 6:30pm (Most of BC)

Thursday, February 20th at 6:30pm (Most of BC)

Registration required: [www.familysmart.ca/events](http://www.familysmart.ca/events)

### **Junior Firefighting Academy**

The Delta School District is now accepting applications for The Junior Firefighting Program. This Program will give the applicants a true understanding of the basic components, both physical and educational, of Delta Fire/Rescue's basic training for new recruits. Applicants must be 16 years old by December 31, 2025 and applications must be submitted before February 28, 2025. For complete details, go to:

<https://deltalearns.ca/careers/firefighting-camp/> and see Mr. Campbell or Ms. Sansregret if you have any questions.

### **BCIT Big Info is Back!**

BCIT Big Info Expo is back and takes place on February 19, 4-7 pm in Burnaby. BCIT offers hands on learning in Business, Applied & Natural Sciences, Computing & IT, Engineering, Health Sciences and Trades & Technologies. Grade 12s, if you haven't decided on a post-secondary plan, check out what BCIT has to offer as many programs are still accepting applications for the Fall '25. Grade 10 and 11 students are also welcome to attend this event! More information is available at: <https://www.bcit.ca/about/visit/big-info/>

### **BC School Sports Scholarship**

It's scholarship season Grads! Plan an hour or two on the weekend to complete a few applications, starting with the BC School Sports Scholarships. They are offering 20 scholarships with values between \$750-\$1,000. If you have participated on a school sports team, have minimum grades of 75%, and demonstrated teamwork, sportsmanship and community engagement, there is a scholarship for you! For details on how to apply, go to: <https://www.bcschoolsports.ca/member-services/scholarships> Application deadline is April 25, 2025 at 4 PM.

### **Royal Canadian Legion Bursary**

The Royal Canadian Legion Bursary is now accepting applications from students who have financial need. Four \$1,500 bursaries will be awarded. Applications available in the Sands Career Centre. The application deadline is April 15, 2025.

### **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.

## Career Education

### Highlights:

Click [here](https://deltalearns.ca/careers/newslett) for a link to the career newsletter page on the district website. <https://deltalearns.ca/careers/newslett>

1. [High School Career Program Opportunities](#): Apply before Feb 28, 2025
2. [New Dual Credit Program](#): KPU- Biomedical and Health Science! Starting Feb 2026
- 3.



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

## UBC Forestry Program

The UBC Forestry Program has an upcoming undergraduate information session for any students interested in more information about.

The next online info session will be Thursday, February 13. Students can [register here](#).

These sessions are tailored for high school students who are passionate about the environment, sustainability, and managing our forests. Too, our Wood Science program, is a good option for students interested in engineering and building with wood. Teachers, counsellors, and parents are also welcome to join!

In these online sessions, students can learn about:

- Exploring major environmental challenges in their first year and using this knowledge to select a major later
- Our undergraduate programs, including Natural Resources, Urban Forestry, and Indigenous Land Stewardship
- Meeting our advisors and getting questions answered
- Exciting career paths in forestry and co-op opportunities
- Life at UBC and our vibrant campus
- Financial aid and scholarship options
- Clubs and extracurricular activities

## 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. Smyth 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>

### **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.

### **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.



## 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 enrol 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	<a href="mailto:cabernethy@deltaschools.ca">cabernethy@deltaschools.ca</a>	(Grades 11 & 12) Monday-Friday
Ms. A. Janda	<a href="mailto:ajanda@deltaschools.ca">ajanda@deltaschools.ca</a>	(Grades 8-10) Tuesday- Thursday
Mr. Randhawa	<a href="mailto:arandhawa@deltaschools.ca">arandhawa@deltaschools.ca</a>	(Grades 8-10) Monday & Friday

### Youth Workers

Ms. K. Watters	<a href="mailto:kwatters@deltaschools.ca">kwatters@deltaschools.ca</a>
Ms. S. Sidhu	<a href="mailto:susidhu@deltaschools.ca">susidhu@deltaschools.ca</a>

## 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://sandscarecentre.weebly.com/>.

Unfortunately, the Sands Career Centre website is experiencing technical difficulties and is unavailable currently. Please contact Ms. Sansregret, Sands Career & Post-Secondary Advisor ([jsansregret@deltaschools.ca](mailto:jsansregret@deltaschools.ca)) with questions relating to Career Exploration and Post-Secondary Planning and Admissions assistance.

We encourage grade 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, comments or concerns. We are here to help.

Have a wonderful weekend.

Rick Mesich  
Principal

Tom Inkster  
Vice Principal