



PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Gator families,

I hope you and your family had a wonderful summer and that the first week of school has been a positive experience for your child. It has been fantastic to welcome our students back to WGSS, and the energy throughout the building this week has been incredible.

On Tuesday, we were excited to welcome our Grade 8 students and all new-to-WGSS students into the school. Our Gator Quality Ambassadors did an outstanding job helping our newest Gators find their way, make connections, and feel at home in our community from day one. Their leadership and kindness reflected the very best of what it means to be a Gator.

One of the things I enjoy most about September is seeing our school come back to life. The enthusiasm, laughter, and positive energy that students bring to our hallways and classrooms make this an especially rewarding time of year. It has been a wonderful start, and I want to thank our students and families for helping make the first week so successful.

I would also like to recognize the incredible staff at WGSS. So much preparation and care goes into ensuring that students feel welcomed, supported, and ready for learning. I am grateful for the commitment our staff continue to demonstrate each day as they help students settle into a new school year.

As part of our return to school, we hosted our grade assemblies on Friday and shared information about the upcoming school year and reminded students of the fabulous opportunities that are available to them here at WGSS. We know that students who are engaged and find connections beyond the classroom tend to be more successful. As one of the largest secondary schools in the province, we offer a plethora of opportunities for students to participate in and I encourage them to find their areas of passion to “plug into.”

We also reviewed expectations, shared upcoming dates and information and we also shared some thoughts to help students frame their mindset as they start another school year. Our expectations focused on the importance of Respect: Respect for Yourself, Respect for Others and Respect for the Community. As part of the assembly, we wanted to help students frame their mindset around working towards growth in their learning. We shared a video from Kara Lawson that focused around a message of being consistent in areas like work ethic, determination, discipline and focus to guarantee you the growth you are looking for. Her message around Consistency and Focus can be found [here](#).

I also wanted to remind families of some guidelines around student pick up and drop off. You can find the full list later on, but I do want to highlight that the front parking lot is one way, moving



North (tennis courts) to South (community centre) and please do not stop on Walnut Grove Drive at the bus stop to drop students off. I also want to thank everyone for their support around the District change in policy about e-Scoters and e-dirt bikes. We appreciate the community's willingness to follow these new guidelines. All of these guidelines are in place to ensure student safety.

I wanted to make sure that families are aware of an amazing community event happening this weekend at the Langley Events Centre. The stəłəw Arts & Cultural Society is hosting the 5th Annual stəłəw Pow Wow on September 11th-13th at the Langley Events Centre. Single Day Tickets are \$10 per person, with Weekend Passes available for \$20. Doors open at 6:00pm on Friday, 12:00pm on Saturday and 11:00am on Sunday. This event is open to everyone and is an opportunity to become immersed in the culture. There is also a full Indigenous vendors market that everyone is welcome to shop at as well! For more information about the event, including a schedule and how to purchase tickets, check out the website here: <https://www.stalewpowwow.ca/>.

Thank you to everyone for such a positive start to the year. I am looking forward to all that we will accomplish together in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

Mr Mike Pue

Proud Principal



IMPORTANT DATES

Sept 18 Photo Day for Grades 9-12
Sept 25 School Improvement Day – Students not in session
Sept 30 Truth & Reconciliation Day – School closed

MEDICAL ALERTS

We want to ensure the school is aware of any student life-threatening conditions. If your child has a new or updated life-threatening condition, please contact Ms. Lee at dlee@sd35.bc.ca to have a Medical Alert Form emailed to you for completion.

SELF-IDENTIFICATION OF ABORIGINAL ANCESTRY

(First Nations, Métis Or Inuit)

Aboriginal Ancestry is determined on a voluntary basis through self-identification. This includes First Nations (Status or Non-Status), Métis, or Inuit Ancestry. If you have filled out the form in previous years, you do not need to send in a new one.

****Please fill out this [form](#) if student has Aboriginal ancestry (one form per child).****

STUDENT FEES – SCHOOL CASH ONLINE

Thanks to all our families who have already paid their student fees using our School Cash Online system. If you have not yet paid the \$30 student fee and \$70 grad fee (if applicable), please make sure this is done before the end of September.

WGSS has an online payment system that allows parents to pay for most school related items online. We encourage all WGSS families to pay their school fees using our online payment system. If you haven't already created an account, you can do so now. It only takes a few minutes to set up and add your child(ren). Once this is completed, you will see available activities or fees that can be processed online. You will require the following three pieces of information to attach your child to your account: Student ID (found on your child's timetable or MyEd account), child's legal last name and child's date of birth.



You will also find instructions and information on our [WGSS website](https://sd35.schoolcashonline.com/) or by visiting <https://sd35.schoolcashonline.com/> to get started.

Print or screenshot your online receipt: Your child will be REQUIRED to present their receipt to pick their purchased items such as locks, PHE strip, yearbook, etc. Your receipt can always be accessed and reprinted as needed from your account.

SCHOOLMESSENGER

The Langley School District uses a notification system called SchoolMessenger to communicate information to families. As we welcome our new families to our schools, some parents/guardians may receive a text message notifying them about SchoolMessenger. For more information about the system and how to opt-in to receive text messages, visit the District webpage [here](#).

REPORTING AN ABSENCE

The school uses an automated absence reporting system called SafeArrival, offered through SchoolMessenger. With SafeArrival, you are asked to report your child's absence in advance using any of these three convenient methods:

1. **SchoolMessenger App** – Using your mobile device, download and install the SchoolMessenger app from the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store. The first time you use the app, select “Sign Up” to create your account. You must use the same email address and phone number that is on file at the school. Select “Attendance” then “Report an Absence”.
2. **SafeArrival Website** – Use the SafeArrival website: <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca>. The first time you use the website, select “Sign Up” to create your account. You must use the same email address and phone number that is on file at the school. Select “Attendance” then “Report an Absence”.



3. **Toll-Free Phone** – Call the toll-free number 1-833-294-4837 to report an absence using the automated phone system. If you are calling the toll-free number, you must call from the parent/guardian phone number on file with the school.

These options are available 24 hours/day, 7 days a week. We ask that daily absences are reported as soon as possible and **before 3:00pm** on the day of the absence. This includes late arrivals and early departures. Future absences can be reported at any time. If absences are not reported before the cut-off time of 3:00pm, the parent/guardian may still receive an automatic notification in the evening to inform them of an absence.

Absences are only to be reported by parents/guardians on file with the school. Students are NOT to report their own absences.

Please report absences using SafeArrival instead of sending notes, calling, or emailing the school. Please use the three options above to report absences. **The school office will no longer accept calls regarding attendance. Parents/guardians will need to report via the app, website, or toll-free number in a timely manner.**

If families have children attending other schools, please continue to report absences using the existing procedures for those schools.

STUDENT DROP OFF & PICK UP

We have a very large school population, with approximately 2200 students attending WGSS this year. The morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up are very busy and our school grounds and surrounding roadways become very congested.

We thought it would be helpful to send a few reminders:

- Please do not drop-off or pick-up students along Walnut Grove Drive. This is unsafe.



- If you can drop-off or pick-up your student in a neighbouring area that is not as busy, that would be helpful.
- Please do not park in the parking lots of our neighbouring Townhouse Complexes. This creates situations where residents are not able to park in their own homes and makes it more difficult for them to navigate their internal roadways.
- If you can stagger your drop-off times (a little earlier) or pick-up times (a little later) that would also help to alleviate congestion.
- Please be mindful of blocking lanes if you are coming through the front of the school:
 - Please make room for our buses to be able to park and maneuver in the parking lot.
 - Please do not park in the lanes in front of the parking stalls; this holds up traffic and prevents cars from leaving the parking spots.
 - Please do not park in the designated bus zones.

Parent Code of Conduct

The Langley School District is committed to fostering safe and caring schools that promote mutual respect, cooperation, and social responsibility, and support optimal learning. Trauma Informed Practices and Procedures promote the creation and maintenance of safe, inclusive, equitable, welcoming, and nurturing school environments.

Families play an important role in helping students achieve success as well as helping create a compassionate learning community. Just as students are expected to follow the District's **Student Code of Conduct**, there is an expectation for parents/guardians to uphold the District's.

Intimate Images Protection Act

The Intimate Images Protection Act makes the non-consensual sharing of intimate images illegal. Individuals who have experienced, or are threatened with, the sharing of intimate images can access free supports through the **Intimate Images Protection Service**. Additional information is available on **erase Online Safety**.



September Health Messaging – Fraser Health

As part of its health promotion for students and families, our community partner Fraser Health is sharing important information on various topics. The theme for September is Back to School Health. Please share the following information below in your next newsletter or communication to families. This information has been shared on the District's social media channels.

Back to School Health (from Fraser Health)

Health, safety, and wellness continue to be a priority in our schools. To help support our students and families, we are sharing important information from our community partner Fraser Health about back to school health. Please see below for helpful reminders to support your child.

Tips for Parents for a Healthy Back to School Season

As children head back to school, parents face the familiar challenge of managing busy schedules, school routines and inevitably, health concerns.

*Help set the stage for a healthy school year with Fraser Health's **Healthy Back to School Guide**.*

The guide provides information on a variety of ways to keep children healthy during a school year. For instance, fostering healthy routines for sleep, mealtimes and physical activity can greatly support your child's health and wellness.

Staying healthy during the school year is also about protecting children from illnesses that can spread quickly in classrooms. It is important to make sure children wash their hands properly, and to keep them home if they are feeling unwell.

Another way to protect your child's health is to ensure their immunizations are up to date. Vaccines help prevent several serious illnesses and infectious diseases, for example, measles. Please check that you (if born in or after 1970) and your children have received at least two doses of a measles-containing vaccine. Find out how to check your immunization records [here](#).



Vaccines are available at many **pharmacy locations**, physician offices, and at all **public health units**.

If you are new to B.C. or Canada, provide your immunization records to public health at **fraserhealth.ca/immunizationform**.

Need fast access to health advice? Call Fraser Health Virtual Care

Our Fraser Health Virtual Care registered nurses and dietitians can provide convenient, fast health advice and information for busy families. With options for phone or web chat consultations, families receive medical advice from nurses with emergency experience. It can save you time and may help you avoid having to visit a clinic or emergency department. Nurses can also connect you with an Urgent and Primary Care Centre, if needed.

How to reach Fraser Health Virtual Care

- 1. **Dial 1-800-314-0999.** For an interpreter, say your language in English.*
- 2. For web chat, go to **fraserhealth.ca/virtualcare** and click the blue chat bubble in the right corner to start.*

Available 10am to 10pm every day, including statutory holidays. After hours, call 8-1-1.

*Learn more about Fraser Health Virtual Care, other care options and more at: **Fraserhealth.ca/VirtualCare***



Gator News

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Parent Refresher for Cell Phone/Personal Digital Device Policy



At WGSS, we are committed to creating a learning environment where all students can focus, connect, and thrive. Our policy on cell phones and personal digital devices plays an important role in supporting student success and well-being.

- 1. We ask for your support.** Please encourage your child to follow the school's expectations for keeping personal digital devices (including cell phones) out of sight during instructional time.
- 2. Help set your child up for success.** Talk with your child about the importance of staying present and focused during class. Remind them that using devices inappropriately can lead to consequences.
- 3. Communication is key.** Open conversations about responsible device use help students make positive choices.
- 4. If you need to contact your child during the school day, please contact the office.**
- 5. Consequences matter.** If a student's device is brought to administration on multiple occasions, you will be contacted and asked to pick up the device. We appreciate your partnership in reinforcing this.

TOGETHER, RESTRICTING THE USE OF PERSONAL DIGITAL DEVICES HELPS STUDENTS:



Improve Focus & Learning — Fewer digital distractions allow students to be more present, engaged, and successful in their learning.



Build Stronger Connections — Device-free time encourages face-to-face conversations and stronger relationships with classmates and staff.



Support Mental Well-Being — Regular breaks from notifications, social media, and constant connectivity give students space to reset and recharge.



Develop Communication Skills — Students have more opportunities to practise collaboration, conversation, problem-solving, and conflict resolution.



Build Healthy Digital Habits — Learning when to put a device away helps students develop self-regulation and responsible technology use.



Strengthen Belonging — When students are looking up rather than down at a screen, they are more likely to participate, connect, and feel part of the WGSS community.



Make the Most of Instructional Time — More attention to teachers, classmates, and learning means more opportunities for students to get the support they need.



THANK YOU for your continued partnership in helping our Gators learn, grow, and succeed together.



E-scooters/E-bikes Guidelines in Langley Schools: Reminder Newsletter Message

The Langley School District has new guidelines around the use and storage of e-scooters and e-bikes at our schools. **E-scooters and e-dirt bikes are prohibited on all school sites. This ban applies for elementary, middle, and secondary schools.** Legally, e-pedal bikes are permissible at secondary schools; light e-bikes for students aged 14 and 15, and standard e-bikes for students aged 16 and older. E-pedal bikes are permissible at all schools for adults. Health and safety are a priority. Please have conversations with your child about these guidelines and help us maintain a healthy, safe, and positive learning environment. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to your school administrator. For more information, visit the district website [here](#).





Gator News

#1



FLAG

CANADA

MORE THAN A GAME.
IT'S YOUR GAME.

GET IN THE GAME!

NFL FLAG FOOTBALL GRADES 6 - 11

INFORMATION SESSION
FOR NEW PROGRAM

 **SEPT 14**

 **PETER EWART
MIDDLE SCHOOL
GYMNASIUM**

 **5PM**



LOW OR NO COST,
NO BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATING.



WORK WITH
A REAL COACH



LEARN A NEW
SPORT OR SKILLS



PLAY ON
A TEAM

PRACTICES

POTENTIALLY
MONDAYS / WEDNESDAYS
AFTER SCHOOL
@ PETER EWART
MIDDLE SCHOOL
3:30PM - 5PM

GAME NIGHTS!

CHANCE TO PLAY GAMES
ON **FRIDAY NIGHTS**
@ NOEL BOOTH
ATHLETIC PARK

NEW FRIENDS. NEW SKILLS. BIG PLAYS.

ARE YOU IN?

VISIT **LANGLEYFLAG.CA**
TO LEARN MORE

COME TO THE INFO SESSION
AND BE PART OF SOMETHING
AWESOME!



Student Travel Opportunity: Explore Italy & Greece

A once-in-a-lifetime adventure awaits! Students are invited to join an unforgettable 10-day journey through Italy and Greece, exploring iconic destinations such as Rome, the southern Italian coast, Athens, and Delphi, where history and mythology come to life. From the ancient ruins of Pompeii to the legendary Acropolis, this immersive educational experience brings classroom learning into the real world while creating memories that will last a lifetime.

Families who enrol by September 30th will receive a \$200 Early Enrolment Discount. Pricing, trip details, itinerary information, and enrolment instructions can be found on the tour website:

<https://www.eftours.ca/tour-website/2986951MR>

Don't miss your chance to be part of this incredible adventure and secure your spot before the early enrolment discount expires!

Contact Ms. Neuscheler for more: UNeuscheler@sd35.bc.ca