



Gator News

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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

It's a hard to believe but here we are at the start of the Winter Break! Throughout the month of December, in addition to all the amazing learning opportunities that students and staff are engaged in, our school community has also taken the time to embrace the festive spirit and have some fun. On December 5, our staff came together to transform our main foyer and surprise our students in the morning with a festive atmosphere to enjoy throughout the month of December! It is one of my favourite things that we do as a staff for our students and school community. It is amazing to see all the smiles and photos as students come through the main foyer for the first time and see all the decorations, and indeed throughout December.



We kicked off the month of December with our Music Departments Christmas Concert. It is always a fabulous way to start the holiday season. In addition, our students and families have been participating in the food drive, put on by our GQ Ambassadors. Our Gators have come through and shown that they understand the spirit of giving as classes have collected many items to be donated to the local food banks for the holiday season. Well done Gators!

Last week we hosted, for the first time in a long time, the Gator "Candy Cane Classic" senior boys basketball tournament. Two of the games were hosted during the school day and we had a number of classes who had the opportunity to cheer on our senior boys basketball team as they battled some fierce competition throughout the tournament. It is always a fantastic atmosphere when our student-athletes can play in front of a packed home crowd in the gym. Huge thanks to George Kozlovic, coach of the senior boys basketball team who revitalized this annual Gator tradition.



Yesterday, we hosted the annual Grad Pancake breakfast with Santa and this afternoon finished the week with our student council hosting our annual Christmas Assemblies. Our students and staff put on a wonderful showcase of their talents, humour and good cheer throughout our assemblies! Thank you to our students and staff for putting on such a wonderful experience for our school community. The festive spirit was alive and well at WGSS!

As we enter the Winter Break, I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge a number of staff who are leaving us at the winter break to pursue other adventures:

- Ms. Jamie Quirante will be starting her maternity leave as she and her partner are set to welcome their first child into their family! Another baby Gator is on the way 😊.
- Ms. Eshal Khan will be transitioning to another school after the Winter Break. We are thankful to her for all the work that she has done to support our students.
- Ms. Claire Tabadero will also be transitioning to another school after the Winter Break. We are thankful for her support of students and helping them to find success.
- Ms. Adrienne Sargeant is retiring. Ms. Sargeant has been at WGSS for many years and will be dearly missed. Known as "Sarge" by many of us, she leaves huge shoes to fill, but we are very happy for her as she transitions into the next phase of her life.

When we return in the New Year, the remainder of the semester goes quite quickly and then before you know it, second semester will be upon us! So that you are able to mark your calendars, the last day of regular classes for semester one will be January 23. January 24 and 27 are Transition Days and December 28 is our Semester Turnaround day. Most students will not be in attendance on those days. Our grade 9 students will be presenting their mini-capstone presentations on one of the days and our grade 12 students who are completing CLC 12 in first semester will also be presenting their capstone projects. Please see below for additional details on the schedule for those Transitions days. Semester two begins on January 29.

Wishing you and yours all the best that the holiday season has to offer and all the best for a happy, healthy, New Year.

Mr. Jeremy Lyndon
Proud Principal



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IMPORTANT DATES

Friday, December 20	Last Day Prior to Winter Break
Monday, January 6	School Re-opens After Winter Break
Thursday, January 23	Last Day of Semester 1 regular classes
Friday, January 24	Transition Day (see info. in this newsletter)
Monday, January 27	Transition Day (see info. in this newsletter)
Tuesday, January 28	Semester Turn Around Day (students do not attend)
Wednesday, January 29	Semester 2 starts

TELL THEM FROM ME SURVEY

The “Tell Them from Me” survey which was scheduled as part of Wellness Week on December 11 was postponed. The survey provides valuable information on student well-being and their sense of belonging. The survey has been rescheduled for Wednesday, January 15.

CAREER EDUCATION NEWS

For students interested in pursuing Automotive, Carpentry, or Professional Cook 1 training as part of the dual credit SD 35 Career Education Trades Programs, there will be exploratory workshops happening on January 27 for these three programs. Please come pick up an application from your Career Advisors, Shalini Bajaj or Lindsey Verbeek in room 250. Applications are due January 13, 2025.



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NUMERACY ASSESSMENTS

Grade 10 students currently taking Math 10 will be completing their Provincial Numeracy Assessments between January 13 and 16. The assessment is designed to evaluate students' ability to apply mathematical concepts and reasoning skills in real-world contexts. It emphasizes critical thinking, problem-solving, and the practical application of math across various scenarios. The assessment is a mandatory part of graduation requirements and aims to provide insight into students' mathematical competencies.

January 2025 Graduation Assessment Schedule					
Class	Teacher	Block	Assmt	Session	Date
WORKPLACE MATHEMATICS 10 (02)	Nesbitt, Kate	S1A	NME10	Mon AM	13-Jan
WORKPLACE MATHEMATICS 10 (01)	Chi, Diane	S1B	NME10	Mon AM	13-Jan
FOUNDATIONS OF MATH AND PRE-CALCULUS 10 (05)	Sharkey, Donna	S1B	NME10	Mon AM	13-Jan
FOUNDATIONS OF MATH AND PRE-CALCULUS 10 (06)	Sharkey, Donna	S1C	NME10	Mon PM	13-Jan
FOUNDATIONS OF MATH AND PRE-CALCULUS 10 (07)	Sharkey, Donna	S1D	NME10	Mon PM	13-Jan
FRANÇAIS LANGUE SECONDE-IMMERSION 12 (01)	Anastasiou, Alexia	S1C	LTF12 written	Tues PM	14-Jan
FOUNDATIONS OF MATH AND PRE-CALCULUS 10 (12)	Heuving, Richard	S1D	NME10	Tues PM	14-Jan
FOUNDATIONS OF MATH AND PRE-CALCULUS 10 (08)	Nesbitt, Kate	S1C	NME10	Wed AM	15-Jan
FRANÇAIS LANGUE SECONDE-IMMERSION 12	Anastasiou, Alexia	S1C	LTF12 oral	Thurs AM	16-Jan
AM Session - arrive by 8:15 in the library; assessment runs from 8:30-11:30					
PM Session - arrive by 11:45 in the library; assessment runs from 12:00-3:00					
Students who have missed an assessment in a previous session/year will write either during one of the above days or in the April/June assessment session. Students will receive a TEAMS message with their scheduled assessment time if they are not in one of the above classes.					



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WELLNESS WEEK AT WGSS



December 9 to 13 students participated in Wellness Week. The week focused on student well-being, awareness, and resources.

We had many clubs involved; the Art Collective Club sold handmade pieces with proceeds going towards Youth Mental Health Canada, the Music for Wellness group played piano in the foyer at lunch and had a pizza sale to raise funds for the Children's Hospital Music Therapy Program, and the Active Minds club shared strategies and reminder cards walking students through how to take a breath.

Students engaged in a lesson on gratitude and our ceramics classes are placing tokens of positivity around the school that can be collected by students. The Community Wellness Resources Fair that our Youth Care Workers, Sue and

Carleigh, put together was well attended. Volunteers from The Willows Family Life Centre, Langley Volunteer Bureau, Pacific Community Resources Society, Langley School Liaison Officers, Gateway of Hope - Salvation Army, Alcoholic Anonymous, Young Life, North Langley Community Church, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada, Langley Community Services Society and BC Emergency Health Services provided participants with practical tools and connections to support their well-being. The combination of engaging events and valuable resources left a positive impression on attendees. We hope that your student enjoyed engaging in our Wellness Week.



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FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

The Christmas season brings varied challenges to every family these days, one of which can be increased financial pressure. At any time, a WGSS youth or their family member is welcome to contact a staff member for assistance with information about available confidential school and community-based resources and support.

Below is information we wanted to share as we all navigate these times.

ORGANIZATION	INFO	CONTACT	WEBSITE/CONTACT
Langley Christmas Bureau	Call to book an appointment. Currently taking applications for hampers.	604-530-3001 20245 Industrial Avenue, Langley	https://www.langleychristmasbureau.com/client-hamper-application/
Grocery Hampers	Available weekly	Langley Food Bank Sources	https://langleyfoodbank.com https://www.sourcesbc.ca/our-services/sources-langley-food-bank/
Further Food Supports	Gateway of Hope Raphael House		http://www.gatewayofhope.ca https://www.rafaelhouse.ca/
Community Integration Specialist	Assists with connection to housing, employment, income assistance, and community services	604-860-5736/Office 778-359-0105 Kapil Sharma (he/him)	kapil.sharma@gov.bc.ca
211	Income assistance, disability, community living, employment support, housing/shelter, and social supports	211 – Talk to a Navigator 24/7	https://bc.211.ca/agency-details/ministry-of-social-development-and-poverty-reduction-msdpr-9488485/
Breakfast Club at WGSS	Monday-Friday before school. Open to all students	In the cafeteria	Join us for a nutritious meal to start the day



SEMESTER TRANSITION DAYS

To help prepare and support students for success, the District is sharing information with families regarding upcoming Semester Transition Days with our secondary schools. Although this is not indicated in the District calendar, please note the following days:

Friday, January 24 2025	Semester Transition Day
Monday, January 27 2025	Semester Transition Day
Tuesday, January 28 2025	Semester Turn Around Day (students do not attend)

What are Semester Transition Days?

As part of the District's Strategic Plan goals, schools are highlighting student transitions with various activities including but not limited to the following:

- Capstone Presentations and Celebrations for Grade 12 students
- Mini-Capstone Presentations for Grade 9 students
- Student Celebrations of Learning
- Additional Student Support Opportunities
- School visits from Grade 7 students from feeder schools for orientation

What does this mean for students?

- Not all students will be attending school on any or all these days.
- Students who need to be at school on one or all these days will receive communication from their school or teacher.

The following groups of students will be scheduled in these times:

- Grade 9s will be scheduled to attend between 9:00 am – 9:45 am on Friday, January 24.
- Grade 12s will be scheduled to attend 10:30 am – noon on Friday, January 24 for Capstone Presentations.
- Many of our GQs and Student Council members will be assisting with our transition event for Grade 7 students on Monday, January 27.
- Grade 8 and 10 students will not be in attendance on Friday January 24, Monday, January 27, and Tuesday, January 28.

These days are structured with the intention to ensure a smooth transition for our students and help foster student learning. If you have any questions, please speak with an Administrator.



One of the most important measures of student success is the measure of student transitions, when students successfully move on to the next step in their educational journey. This might include a student who goes from one course to the next course (e.g., English 8 to English 9), from one grade to the next grade, from one level of school to the next level of school (e.g., middle to secondary), or to post-secondary opportunities. At the end of each semester, secondary schools have Transition Days, in which staff create opportunities for students to demonstrate key transitions goals and growth and assist them in their transitions. Successful transitions are vital for students to build on the successes they have had, and prepare them for the new challenges in their new classroom, new school, etc. The Transition Days also allow for students to complete and present their major careers requirements. Some of the activities that occur during Transition Days in different secondary schools include:

- Mini-Capstone presentations by Grade 9 students;
- Capstone presentations by Grade 12 students;
- Careers and Capstone Fairs;
- Grade 7 visits to the secondary school;
- Other connections and activities between schools to assist in student transitions;
- Provincial Literacy and Numeracy Assessments for Grade 10 and 12 students.

At the end of Semester 1, secondary schools also will have a Semester Turnaround Day, to be able to complete the many tasks that are necessary in ending one semester and starting another, including reviewing semester-end student report cards and re-working student timetables.

The dates this year for the end of Semester 1 are:

- Friday, January 24 – Transition Day
- Monday, January 27 – Transition Day
- Tuesday, January 28 - Semester Turnaround Day
- Wednesday, January 29 - Semester 2 Begins

If you have any questions about semester end activities, please contact the school's Administration.



DROP-OFF AND PARKING AT WGSS

We have received some feedback with respect to the parking lot and drop-off and pick-up before and after school. As you know, we have a very large school population. We have over 2200 students attending WGSS this year. Consequently, the morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up can be very busy and our school grounds and surrounding roadways become very congested. Based on feedback from students and families, 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.
- 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.

As always, the health and safety of our students and families is paramount and we appreciate your cooperation with helping to ensure that our transition times are safe for all our students, families, and staff.



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AMAZING GATORS DOING GREAT THINGS!



Some big news and congratulations for one of our Theatre Students, Kaylan R.! Kaylan has been awarded a full tuition scholarship for the acting program at Vancouver Film School.

Zoomfest 2024

*Best performance - Senior category
Short film - Me or Him?*



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GATOR ATHLETICS

Our 2024 Fall Sports Season has now come to a end. From September 3rd to November 30th, we had 226 students participate in Volleyball, Soccer (Boys), Cross Country, and Aquatics. Listed below are some of the highlights of the season.



*Senior Girls Volleyball Team
EVAA Champions (first time in the 33-year history of the school)
7th at Provincial Championships*



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*Senior Boys Volleyball Team
EVAA Champions
13th at Provincial Championships*



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*Grade 9 Girls Volleyball Team
2nd at EVAA's
9th at Provincial Championships*



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*Senior Boys Soccer Team
2nd at EVAA's
10th at Provincial Championships*



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Senior Girls Cross Country Team EVAA Champions

Taya H. - 2nd at EVAA's

Leila E. - 3rd at EVAA's

9th at Provincials

Senior Boys Cross Country Team 2nd at EVAA's

18th at Provincials

Bernardo S. - 13th at Provincials

Grade 8 Girls Cross Country

Zoe B. - EVAA Champion

Kiana C. - 3rd at EVAA's



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*Grade 8 Boys Cross Country Team
EVAA Champions
Tavin S. - 2nd at EVAA's
Matthew C. - 3rd at EVAA's*



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*Senior Boys Aquatics Team
Danny P. - EVAA Champion & Provincial Champion (100 Breaststroke & 200 IM)*

Lastly, a big THANK YOU to the 26 Teacher Coaches, Teacher Sponsors, Community Coaches, and Student Coaches that dedicated their free time to help make this season possible.

Well done, Gators! Chomp, Chomp, Chomp!



INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL STATUS DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER

Snow closures and power outages are an annual occurrence in the Langley School District. So, where do you go to get information about the status of schools during periods of inclement weather? If you can access the internet via computer or smartphone, current information about Langley schools can be accessed on all school websites or www.sd35.bc.ca. Updates are also posted to X (formerly Twitter) @LangleySchools and Facebook at www.facebook.com/langleyschooldistrict. If you don't have internet connectivity but your phone is working, call a relative or friend in an area that has not been affected by the storm and ask them to check the district website for you. Local radio stations are also informed of school status in Langley. Tune in to CKWX 1130AM, CKNW 980AM, Country Radio 107.1FM, Pulse 107.7 or CBC 690AM or 88.1FM for updates.

Please note that Langley District schools are all considered 'open' until a decision to close is required. Decisions on school closures are usually made by 6:30am. As always, it is a parent's decision whether to send their student to school based on safety and individual circumstances. If you feel it is unsafe for you or your student to travel to or attend an open school for any reason, please keep your student home and report an absence to the school.

WINTER HEALTH TIPS 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 winter health. Please see below for helpful reminders to support your student.

Keeping Your Student Healthy During Winter

As the chilly winter season is upon us, there's a few extra things you can do to help keep your student healthy and well. Navigate this season with these essential tips.

Bundle Up For The Cold

Dressing appropriately for the cold weather is vital in keeping your student comfortable and protected. Wearing multiple layers is a great way to trap body heat and provide insulation against the cold.

Keep a warm hat, gloves, scarves and insulated boots handy. Remind your student to wear these items before heading outside to play or going to school.



Protect Against Winter Illnesses

Winter brings an increased risk of colds and flus. Make sure your student is getting enough sleep, eating a variety of foods and staying hydrated by drinking plenty of water. Ensure your student receives their annual flu vaccine and talk to a health care provider about any additional vaccines that may be recommended. Teach your student good respiratory etiquette such as regular hand washing, covering their coughs and sneezes and staying home when sick. If they are sick and cannot stay away from others, they can wear a mask to reduce the risk of spreading their illness. Learn more about masks here: [Masks \(bccdc.ca\)](https://bccdc.ca/Masks)

Keep Their Bodies Moving

While colder weather may limit outdoor activities, it's crucial to keep your student active during winter as regular physical activity boosts their immune system and keeps them energized. Encourage indoor play and activities such as dancing, yoga or interactive video games that promote movement. Look for winter programs at local community centres or indoor sports facilities.

Find more tips for a healthy winter: <https://www.fraserhealth.ca/health-topics-a-to-z/winter-health>



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FROM OUR COMMUNITY

Fairy Godmother Foundation

Are you in need of grad wear for prom?

The Fairy Godmother Foundation is here to help! We provide FREE grad wear (dresses, suits, shoes, accessories) to students who may not be able to afford them, ensuring everyone has the chance to celebrate this special milestone.

Who Can Apply?
Any high school student in need of assistance with prom attire.

How to Apply:
Visit your school counselor and let them know you'd like to be considered for assistance.
Once applications are reviewed your counsellor will contact you with further details

Let us help you feel like the star you truly are on your big night!

Our team is excited to work with you to find the perfect outfit for your prom night!

**The Fairy Godmother Foundation –
Where every student deserves to shine!**

Apply ASAP as space is limited

For more information, ask your counsellor





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UP TO \$20,000
IN SCHOLARSHIPS



2025 Challenge

Design a culturally sensitive and environmentally responsible solution to reduce human-caused wildfires in the local Harrison Lake area, while minimizing negative impacts on First Nations cultural practices, ecosystems, and wildlife.

More Information



LEARN MORE AND
ENTER YOUR SECONDARY
TEAM AT
[HTTPS://BIT.LY/4E48JED](https://bit.ly/4E48JED)





WGSS PAC NEWS

Find us on Facebook/ Meta as "WGSS PAC", or on our website: wgsspac.ca, or email us at contact.wgsspac@gmail.com.

As before, the WGSS PAC would like to ask families to donate if you can. Donations to the PAC can be made through SchoolCashOnline. Your donations help the PAC fund scholarships for graduating students, as well as school projects that benefit students for which we can't use Gaming Commission funds. We are grateful for any amount - every little bit helps us make this school more awesome for our kids.

Happy holidays from your WGSS PAC! We wish you all a restful break from everything school-related! 😊

Here are the dates for upcoming PAC Meetings for the 2024 – 2025 school year.

- December – no meeting
- January 14
- February 11
- March – no meeting
- April 8
- May 13
- June 10 (Regular PAC Meeting and Annual General Meeting)



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ONE & DONE FUNDRAISER

**No selling required!
Just your support!**

Now that elementary school is behind you, you're probably ready to leave behind all those requests to sell or volunteer! We get it, and we won't ask you to do either.

However, the PAC still needs your support. We continue to fund important school programs and requests that go beyond the standard curriculum, enriching our students' educational experience.

Please consider making a contribution through our ONE-AND-DONE fundraiser. A simple donation—no selling, no volunteering required—just your generous support to help keep these programs going!



Scan the QR code or [click here](#) to donate on School Cash Online towards **PAC Donations**

- ✓ **\$15** - Bidding wars at a silent auction? No, thanks!
- ✓ **\$10** - Chasing down corporate sponsors? No, thanks!
- ✓ **\$5** - Selling chocolates or wrapping paper to my friends and family? No, thanks!
- ✓ **Other** - I love this school and I am happy to help!





WGSS DRY GRAD NEWS

We encourage all parents/guardians of Grade 12 students to attend and learn how you can help and get involved in organizing a great and safe event for the Grads of 2025! You can also find us on Facebook at *Walnut Grove Secondary Dry Grad 2025*.

All meetings will be held in the **WGSS Library from 6:30-7:30PM**

Tuesday, January 7

Tuesday, January 28

Tuesday, February 18

Tuesday, March 11

Future Meeting dates will be determined.

Thank you for everyone's support in 2024. We can't wait to continue our Fundraising efforts in 2025. **WATCH FOR OUR 50/50 RAFFLE COMING IN 2025.** Link and QR code will be available January.

Don't forget to donate all your refundable cans & plastic bottles to the Dry Grad Return-It account.

SUPPORT DRY GRAD 2025

Donate cans, plastic bottles in clear or clear blue bags

1. Go to Return-it Walnut Grove Bottle and Return Centre
2. From Kiosk print label enter # 604-111-2025
3. Stick label on bags.

All Funds will go to dry grad.

LOCATION ADDRESS
20280 97AVE, LANGLEY
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Our WGSS Dry Grad Committee is currently running the following fundraiser:

[WGSS Dry Grad-Langley School District Foundation](#)