

# Welcome Back to School



August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025

Dear Students and Families:

I hope you have enjoyed a relaxing, rejuvenating summer and that you are looking forward to the start of a new school year! As the new principal of WGSS, I am really excited for our year ahead and all the opportunities we will have to learn together and continue to build an inclusive community with a sense of belonging for all learners. This package contains all the important information about what to expect in the next few weeks as school starts up and hopefully answers any questions you may have.

When you arrive at WGSS, you will notice that our custodial staff has worked tirelessly to prepare the school for September. Thank you to our entire custodial team! The school looks fantastic.

The office will be open from 9:00am – 2:30pm from August 21 – 29 and then return to regular office hours, 8:00am – 3:30pm, starting the week of September 2.

## Student Timetables

Student timetables will be published to MyEdBC on **Friday, August 22** after 3:00pm. Students can view them under Published Reports when they login to [MyEdBC](#). As there may still be timetable changes after this date, students are encouraged to view their amended timetable by clicking My Info (top tab) and Schedule (side tab); please **use List view not Matrix view** to see the correct block order.

If you are a new Gr 9 – 12 student, please login with your student number and the default password **Student\$35**. Please be sure you complete this first login on a desktop/laptop, not a mobile device. Students can then enter their courses into the My School Day app before they come to the first day.

The timetable is built from the original course requests students selected in February and then verified again in May. The creation of the timetable is a complex process, incorporating several factors and while the intent is for every student to have a complete timetable that includes all their requests, this is not always possible. As a result, some students may desire or require a course change. More information can be found later in this package about the process and prioritization for course changes. Please note that students need to attend the courses on their timetable until a change has been made and confirmed in MyEdBC. As well, due to a variety of factors, not every course change request can be completed.

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## New Students

Our first day of school for Grade 8 and all other new students in Grade 9 - 12, will be Tuesday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Grade 8 students will be at school from 8:30am – 11:30am;

New Grades 9-12 will be at school from 8:45am – 10:30am.

## New & Returning Students

**ALL** students will attend on Wednesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup> which will be a full day (Day 1: Block A (Homeroom) – ABCD) from 8:45am – 2:55pm.

As a school community, our focus will continue to be on cultivating a positive, inclusive culture that builds a sense of belonging for all learners. Students and staff are already planning some exciting events and activities to encourage all members of the WGSS community to engage in their school community. I also encourage parents to stay as actively involved and engaged in the school community as they can. Attending PAC meetings, attending parent-teacher interviews, parent nights, information evenings and extra-curricular activities are all great ways to stay connected to the school. Also, please stay connected with your child's teachers. The more regular the communication is between parents, students and teachers, the more all parties will be able to support students on their path to success.

## WGSS Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

*Welcome Back from the WGSS PAC President:*

On behalf of the Walnut Grove Secondary PAC, I'd like to warmly welcome you to a brand-new school year. Whether you're returning or joining our school community for the first time, we're excited to partner with you in supporting our children and making this year a success.

As many of you know, PAC contributions directly support programs and resources that enrich student learning and school life—everything from classroom enhancements to extracurricular opportunities. Every donation, big or small, makes a difference in what we can offer our students. If you're able, we encourage you to consider making a contribution this year to help us expand these opportunities. [Donate here](#)

We also invite you to stay connected with us online at [www.wgsspac.ca](http://www.wgsspac.ca), where you'll find updates and meeting information.

We're looking forward to a year filled with growth, community, and collaboration. Thank you for being such an important part of the WGSS family.

Warm regards,

Itzel Symonds

President, WGSS Parent Advisory Council

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## *PAC Executive Members:*

Our PAC Executive for the 2025 – 2026 school year:

- President: Itzel Symonds
- Vice President: Valerie Steckler
- Treasurer: Shivani Khera
- Secretary: Amy Olson
- DPAC Rep: Rebecca Hardin
- Members at large: Stephen Northrup and Tali Litvak Kor

## *PAC Meeting Dates:*

The first PAC meeting of the year is on September 11 at 7:00pm in the WGSS Library/Learning Commons. Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm in the WGSS library, with a few exceptions. There is no PAC Meeting in December or March. The meeting in June is a regular meeting as well as the Annual General Meeting.

Here are the dates for PAC Meetings for the 2025 – 2026 school year.

- September 11<sup>th</sup>
- October 9<sup>th</sup>
- November 13<sup>th</sup>
- December – no meeting
- January 15<sup>th</sup>
- February 12<sup>th</sup>
- March – no meeting
- April 9<sup>th</sup>
- May 21<sup>st</sup>
- June 11<sup>th</sup>

We are very appreciative of our PAC and the Executive for the support that they provide for our students and our school!

## **Staff Changes**

Last year we said goodbye to several WGSS staff members as they moved on to retirement or other positions in the District. We are thankful to all of them for their dedication to our students and their commitment to WGSS. We wish them well on their next adventures!

We welcome the following new (and some returning) WGSS staff for the 2025 – 2026 school year:

- Ruth Babao – Science
- Marissa Barber – SEA
- Peter Bramhall – Resource
- Mikayla Conrad-Tomlinson – Drama and Humanities
- Chris Dalhuisen – Tech (Auto)
- Russ Furse – Science
- Julia Gabriel –English and AP
- Tanya Hutchison – Complex Resource
- Callum Learmonth – Tech (Robotics/Electronics)
- Rani Madray – Education Software Systems Coordinator
- Danielle Meshen – Home Ec and Musical Theatre
- Tanis Payne – Clinician
- Gulnisha Sidhu – English and ELL
- Emma Sweeney – English

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We are still filling positions for the upcoming school year and we will certainly be welcoming more folks to WGSS in the coming days and weeks.

I hope you enjoy the last few days of summer! Looking forward to an amazing year at WGSS!

Sincerely,  
Mr. Mike Pue  
Proud Principal

## **First Day of School – Tuesday, September 2- “Becoming One of Us”**

The first day of school is only for **Grade 8's** and any **new** Grade 9 – 12 students to the school. This gives our new Gators a chance to find out about the Gator Way and get to know the school before all of our other students arrive on Wednesday, September 3.

**Grade 8s** should arrive at school between 8:30am - 8:45am and pick up a **GREEN** copy of their timetable in the front foyer and then proceed to their Day 1 Block A. GQs (student ambassadors) will be in the foyer to hand out their timetables.

**New** students in **Grades 9 - 12** should arrive at the school between 8:45am – 9:00am and will get their **GREEN** timetable in the assigned room below:

Grade 9	Room 140
Grade 10	Room 142
Grade 11	Room 141
Grade 12	Room 145
Grade 10-12 ISP	Room 121

Grade 8s attend until approximately 11:30am

New Grades 9-12 students attend until approximately 10:30am

## **All Students Attend – Wednesday, September 3**

All students attend school on Wednesday, September 3 (8:45am – 2:55pm) and will go to their Day 1 Block A homeroom for attendance from 8:45am – 9:00am. All returning students are expected to check their current timetables on their [MyEd account](#). Parents and students who need help logging in to MyEDBC can request assistance [here](#). Please note that parents should be logging in to MyEDBC using their parent account which will enable them to see all of their children on one account.

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## Homeroom for the First Five Days at WGSS

It is vitally important that all students attend their Homeroom Day 1 Block A class from **Wednesday, September 3 to Tuesday, September 9 for the first 10 minutes (please do not be late)**. They must keep attending their original Day 1 Block A homeroom as this functions as your child's homeroom until September 9. We track whether the student is in attendance based on this information. Missing these homerooms may result in the student being de-registered from the school. See below schedule:

<b>WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3 - DAY 1</b> 8:45 – 10:35 Block A 10:40 – 11:50 Block B 11:50 – 12:25 Lunch 12:30 – 1:40 Block C 1:45 – 2:55 Block D	<b>THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4 - DAY 2</b> 8:45 – 8:55 Homeroom – Block 1A 9:00 – 10:35 Block C 10:40 – 11:50 Block D 11:50 – 12:25 Lunch 12:30 – 1:40 Block A 1:45 – 2:55 Block B
<b>FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5 - DAY 1</b> 8:45 – 8:55 Homeroom – Block 1A 9:00 – 10:35 Block D 10:40 – 11:50 Block C 11:50 – 12:25 Lunch 12:30 – 1:40 Block B 1:45 – 2:55 Block A	<b>MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8 - DAY 2</b> 8:45 – 8:55 Homeroom – Block 1A 9:00 – 9:55 Block A 9:55 – 10:35 REP Time 10:40 – 11:50 Block B 11:50 – 12:25 Lunch 12:30 – 1:40 Block C 1:45 – 2:55 Block D
<b>TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 - DAY 1</b> 8:45 – 8:55 Homeroom – Block 1A 9:00 – 9:55 Block B 9:55 – 10:35 REP Time 10:40 – 11:50 Block A 11:50 – 12:25 Lunch 12:30 – 1:40 Block D 1:45 – 2:55 Block C	<b>WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 - DAY 2</b> Regular Day 8:45 – 9:55 Block B 9:55 – 10:35 REP Time 10:40 – 11:50 Block A 11:50 – 12:25 Lunch 12:30 – 1:40 Block D 1:45 – 2:55 Block C

## Course Change Requests (Gr 9 – 12 ONLY; no changes for Gr 8)

As mentioned earlier, the timetable is built from the original course requests students selected in February and then verified again in May. We are very full this year; as such, many courses are also full which will make our ability to accommodate course change requests difficult, and in many cases, unlikely. In addition, when a student has selected a specific program or has specialized courses, this further significantly reduces the flexibility for changes to students' timetables. The last day to submit a Change Request is **Wednesday, September 10**. Students need to attend the courses on their timetable until a change has been made. Changes can be viewed through MyEdBC from the My Info (top tab), Schedule (side tab). Please be sure to **use List view not Matrix view** to see the proper block order.

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## Course Change Request Priorities

### PRIORITY 1:

#### INCOMPLETE TIMETABLES

- Student has 5, 6 or 7 courses instead of 8 in block A-D
- Student does not have 8 courses in the timetable blocks A-D (not including outside the timetable courses)

### PRIORITY 2:

#### INCORRECT TIMETABLES

- Student does not have prerequisite to the take course
- Student has already completed the course and it is still on timetable

### PRIORITY 3:

#### COURSE REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION

- Missing a core course for graduation (eg. English 12, Capstone, Indigenous course)
- Student requires another course for post-secondary pathway admission
- Needs Math or Science or Social Studies Senior course

### PRIORITY 4

#### ELECTIVE CHANGE

- Student wants change from original request

## Priority 1, 2, and 3 Course Changes OPEN from AUG 25 - SEP 10

Open to Grades 9-12

Available **Monday, August 25 at 9AM** and closes **Wednesday, September 10 at 5PM**. All Course Change Requests are done online using the links below (*note – links will be added in August*).

## Study Block Application Form FOR GRADE 11 & 12s ONLY

Submit online [Study Block Form](#) and upload completed [Study Block Contract Grade 11](#) or [Study Block Contract Grade 12](#) with parent signature

## Student Aide Application Form FOR GRADE 11 & 12s ONLY

Submit online [Student Aide Application Form](#)

## Priority 4 Course Change OPENS SEP 5 - 10

Available **Friday, September 5 at 9AM** and closes **Wednesday, September 10 at 5PM**. All Course Change Requests are done online using the links below (*note – links will be added in August*).

## Contacts

### MyEdBC Problems:

[MyEdBC – Family/Student Portal Help](#)

### Resource Team

Ms. T. Kerr  
Mr. G. Esplen  
Resource Teachers

### ELL / ISP

Mr. P. Lincke  
Mr. R. Janzen

### Student Aide Requests

Ms. E. Florko  
Mr. N. Powell  
Ms. M. Harradine

## WGSSCOURSEGUIDE.CA

[Course Offerings](#) (shows full/cancelled courses)

See links below for Priority 1-4 Course Change Requests



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## Communication with Parents at WGSS

All our communication with parents is done through email. To stay informed about school events, please be sure the school has your most updated email address. Visit our social media frequently for updates on news and events in our school community. A bi-weekly newsletter is e-mailed home every other Friday afternoon as well as posted on our website under [Gator News](#) - so please look for it! If you need to update your email, please contact the main office at 604-882-0220.

## School Website and Social Media

Please check our [WGSS website](#) for updates and information and for those of you on Instagram, you can get a glimpse of Gator Nation or our account [@walnutgrovesecondary](#) or on X, you can follow what's happening [@sd35wgss](#)

## Student Fees

The Langley School District utilizes an online payment system that allows parents to pay for most school related items online. We are asking all WGSS families to pay their school fees using our online KEV payment system (<https://sd35.schoolcashonline.com/>). Please see the [handout](#) for more information on how to pay student fees at Walnut Grove Secondary School.

## Locker Distribution

Grade 8 students will be assigned their lockers during homeroom on Tuesday, September 2.

## Locker Selection:

**NOTE: Grade 9-12 students will select their lockers using our online locker management system:**  
<http://wgss.lockerassignment.com/>

User ID = WGSS Student Number

Password = Initials (legal name) followed by student number (ie. John Smith would be JS12345).

Our online locker management system will allow students to first login according to the following schedule. Once a student chooses their locker, they will not be able to change it. **Lockers are optional, if your student doesn't want a locker, do not select one.**

Friday, Aug. 29 @ 8:00am	Grade 12s	full and top lockers
Friday, Aug. 29 @ noon	Grade 11s	full and top lockers
Tuesday, Sept. 2 @ 8:00am	Grade 10s	top and bottom lockers
Tuesday, Sept. 2 @ noon	Grade 9s	top and bottom lockers

**Note:** If you have outstanding fees from previous school years, you must have this cleared before you will be able to select a locker. To check if a student has outstanding fees from previous year(s), please sign-in to your [School Cash online](#) account. Each afternoon (Aug. 29, Sept. 2-5) we will update student access to the system based on fees paid that day.

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## **ORDER YOUR GATOR GEAR!**

What better way to feel part of Gator Nation than WGSS school attire! Get your Gator Gear here: [https://store.vbsapparel.ca/wgss\\_fall2025/shop/home](https://store.vbsapparel.ca/wgss_fall2025/shop/home)

***Available until September 12 - order now!***

Here are some samples of what's available (more options available at the link above).



## **School Messenger Attendance Calls**

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.



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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.

Parents / guardians will need to report absences via the app, website, or toll-free number in a timely manner using [SafeArrival](#). Please use the three options above to report absences. The school office will no longer accept calls regarding attendance.

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

## **My School Day – Agenda App for Students/Parents**

Students have access to the electronic agenda called [My School Day](#). This is a free scheduling app and is designed to allow students to put their courses into our timetable so they'll always know their schedule while at school or home. It includes all of our 2025/26 calendar information including holidays and professional days. The app also enables notes to be put in for each block so it can act as an agenda to keep track of homework, create to do lists, and set reminders for particular classes. Additionally, we use this app to push out schoolwide messages as well such as school closures, bell changes, event reminders etc. Parents are also welcome to download the app so they can keep track of what class their child is in during the day.

## **Medical Alert – Life Threatening**

We want to ensure the school is up to date for any student with a **life-threatening** condition. If your child has a new or updated life-threatening condition, please request or complete a [Medical Alert form](#) and provide to Ms. Madray ([rmadray@sd35.bc.ca](mailto:rmadray@sd35.bc.ca)) in the office.

## **Parent Consents**

All parent consents are collected through an online form. At the beginning of the school year, an email with instructions will be included in that email to the primary guardian of each child as indicated in MyEdBC.

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## **Aboriginal Program Support & Self-Identification of Aboriginal Ancestry**

The Langley School District has an Aboriginal Program that provides enhanced services to students who self-identify as having Aboriginal ancestry. To be part of the Aboriginal Program, students must complete the Self-Identification form, voluntarily self-identifying their Aboriginal ancestry, that can include First Nations (Status or Non-Status), Metis or Inuit Ancestry. No documentation is required.

If you have previously filled in this form while attending WGSS, you do not need to complete the form again...*only grade 8 students and new grade 9-12 students* should complete the form. Please see the form in this package for details. Contact the WGSS Aboriginal Support Worker Shannon Beaudry in Room 249 or via email at [sbeaudry@sd35.bc.ca](mailto:sbeaudry@sd35.bc.ca) for more information.

**\*\*Please fill out only if student has Aboriginal ancestry – one form per child\*\***

## **French Immersion, Gator Pod and BYOL for Grade 8s & 9s**

This is a reminder to parents of our Grade 8 students in Gator Pod or French Immersion and for Grade 9 and 10s in French Immersion. All of these students will need to have laptops for their classes this year. These programs provide students with the opportunity, at the teacher's discretion, and with parent support, to use personal laptop computers to support learning in the classroom. We believe that the use of digital technologies to enhance student learning is a key part of preparing students for lifelong learning. The teachers of this program work cooperatively to plan, organize, and teach our students. The technology will be integrated into the classroom to help bring real-world experiences into the classroom.

## **RECOMMENDED SPECS FOR STUDENT BYOL DEVICES**

### Supported Hardware:

- Min screen size: 9.8" and up
- Hard drive size: 128 GB
- Keyboard
- Wi-Fi: 802.11 n/ac and up

### Supported Operating Systems:

- Windows 10 version 1903 and up
- OSX 10.13 and up
- IOS 11 and up

We do not want any students excluded from opportunities at Walnut Grove. If your child is in a BYOL program and your family is not able to provide their own laptop, please contact Meg Harradine, WGSS Vice-Principal at [mharradine@sd35.bc.ca](mailto:mharradine@sd35.bc.ca) to arrange for an alternative.



ABORIGINAL PROGRAM  
Langley School District #35  
4875-222<sup>nd</sup> Street, Langley, B.C. V3A 3Z7



## Self-Identification of Aboriginal Ancestry (First Nations, Metis or Inuit)

**\*\*Please fill out only if student has Aboriginal ancestry – one form per student\*\***

Aboriginal Ancestry is determined on a voluntary basis through self-identification. This includes First Nations (Status or Non-Status), Metis or Inuit Ancestry. **No documentation other than this self-identification is required and the ancestry can go back several generations.**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Aboriginal Ancestry: ☐ Yes

Specify Ancestry if known: \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g. Sto:lo, Cree, Inuit, Metis, etc.)

School Attending: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (month/day/year) Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Siblings: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_  
(with ancestry) \_\_\_\_\_

\*By signing below I acknowledge that the above-named student is of Aboriginal Ancestry (First Nations, Metis or Inuit)

### Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Consultation and Consent to Service

#### Aboriginal Education Programs/Services

- Academic and Personal Support
- Home-School communication (letters, phone calls, etc.)
- Cultural enrichment
- Graduation/Scholarship/Bursary/Post-Secondary Info
- Early Literacy/Numeracy support
- Monitoring of academic progress and attendance
- In-class Cultural Presentations/Events
- Leadership Conference

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\*I give consent for the above-named student to access the programs and services available through the Aboriginal Program.

\*This signature is considered consent for the duration of the student's enrollment in their current school.

\*Consent can also be given verbally by phone or by email to your Aboriginal Support Worker.

\*To revoke this consent you must contact the Aboriginal Program office at 778-736-0736.

\*I give permission for the above-named student's picture to be used in newsletters, webpage, etc. ☐ Yes ☐ No

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date Signed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address - if changed)

Please return this form to the above-named student's school ASAP. If you have any questions, please call 778-736-0736.