

August 29, 2023

Good day McMath Students, Parents & Caregivers ...

We are excited for the start of school next week. On behalf of the McMath staff, I hope you had a terrific summer with family and friends. Whether you traveled far or near, we hope everyone was safe and enjoyed their journey. We are fortunate here in Steveston that school start up will not be disrupted due to forest fires, unlike many students across the country and the 1000s who are still evacuated from their homes. Hopefully the recent rain will help and allow those communities to resume school as soon as possible.

We hope that you are relaxed, recharged and have new learning goals for the upcoming year. There were many summer projects undertaken at McMath and we thank the summer staff who have worked hard to prepare the building for the arrival of staff and students.

A special welcome to the students of the **Grad Class of 2024!** This coming year will be a special year and we will support you the best we can as you transition to your plans for life after secondary school. This will be the busiest and the most exciting year and we also look forward to celebrating your graduation!

We also want to welcome the incoming **Grade Eight students**, the Grad Class of 2028. You may be a bit nervous and excited at the same time which is normal. The Grade 8 informal orientation is tomorrow, August 30th at 10am. This is an opportunity to have an early look at your timetable and navigate the rooms for your semester one classes. Leaderships students will be attending to help and guide the Grade 8's tomorrow and next week.

McMath is excited to have many new educators to our McMath Team. Please welcome our **new Wildcat staff members**.

Ms. Arvanitis	Counsellor
Ms. Steblin	Learning Services
Mr. Hass	Leadership and English
Mme Grondin	Science and French Immersion
Ms. Myskiw	Art and Home Economics
Ms. Smirfitt	English
Mr. Track	English
Mr. Nguyen	English and Humanities

The purpose of this letter home to students and parents is to provide updates and inform you of the plans and procedures for the school start up. Like last September, there are no health mandates this year. However, the norm now is if you are sick, please continue to stay home. Staff and students can choose to wear a mask or not. Let's have a great 2023-2024 school year everyone!

First Day of School – Tuesday September 5th

On Tuesday, September 5th, students will ease back to school with a grade assembly and then homeroom. This will take about an hour for Grade 9 to 12 students. Grade 8s will be given a bit more time to find their classes and sign up for their lockers - with the help of Leadership students. We will begin with a welcome assembly in the Large (North) Gym, we will share the details of the week, remind students of expectations and procedures, and talk about upcoming activities. Then students will go on to their Homerooms to receive their schedules, important forms to be completed, and other start up business.

Students should arrive for their **Grade Assembly** in the Large Gym on **Tuesday, September 5th** at:

Grade 8s	9:30 am
Grade 9s	10:15 am
Grade 10s	10:45 am
Grade 11s	11:15 pm
Grade 12s	1:15 pm

An alphabetical list of students with their Homerooms will be posted on our front doors by 4 pm Friday. For the rest of the week, students will begin each day at 8:30 am with Homeroom. The altered schedule for September 4-8 is attached.

Lockers and School App

Locker allocation will be using the App. Students will be informed of the online system in homeroom during the first week of school in homeroom.

McMath has an *MySchoolDay App* available for free on iPhone and android. This app is an easy way to access various information about the school and the calendar. Students and parents can download the app. More information will be sent in homeroom.

Student Schedules and Course Correction Requests

Our master schedule for the entire school is very full. We have just over 60 new students over the summer. Counsellors have been working hard to ensure students are in their requested courses, register new students, and balance classes the best they can. Remember, our timetable is built on students' requests from the spring. Students had a chance to change courses with the course verification form last school year. If there is an error complete the online Course Correction form – more details will come regarding how to access the form. Please note we will not make changes for teacher preferences and many forms may not be able to be processed as the courses may be full. We have many waitlists already for many courses.

Course Correction forms will close on Thursday, September 14th at 3pm.

Grade 8 Orientation Activity

We have a new activity for our Grade 8's. Instead of an orientation day at the school, this year, we are taking ALL grade 8's and some leadership students to WildPlay in Maple Ridge for the day on September 20th. The cost will be \$15 and more details to come.

School Vandalism and Break-ins

Most of our current students and parents are aware of our ongoing vandalism in the school bathrooms and broken windows around the school.

Unfortunately, we had many broken windows again this summer. We also had the bike racks flipped upside down. Most concerning there were 4 small fires this summer. The fires were on the long grass in the gardens. We were lucky the fires were spotted and reported by community members and staff extinguished the fire before any part of the school caught fire.

So why are we sharing this information? Why is this happening to our wonderful building in this amazing community? We need help from our community to help this to stop. Please speak with your teen and if they have heard anything or have any information, please report that information to the RCMP or to the school administration. Any information provided will be confidential. WE have posters in the school that states "Silence is Acceptance". We need to stop these criminal activities and we ALL want to have a safe and secure facility for our students to grow and learn. Thanks for your cooperation and we all hope this will stop.

School Fees and Business Assistant

There are certain fees for students, activity fees, course enhancement fees, and optional fees for sports, clubs, and workbooks. If your family is not able to pay certain fees, please contact Mr. Johnstone or your student's counsellor by phone or email. We have funds from the Ministry and the district to pay for those fees. This process is confidential and not arduous.

Since late spring, we have not had a Business Assistant to manage our accounts, fees, purchasing, and everything do with money for McMath. Our timeline for fees will be delayed once we have a BA hired. This could take some time, so please be patient with fees and other school business.

KEY SEPTEMBER DATES:

Homeroom and Grade Assemblies	September 5
Classes Begin - Homeroom ABCD	September 6
First Day with the regular bell schedule	September 11
Course Correction Forms due 3pm	September 14
School Photo Day	September 18
PAC Meeting at 7pm	September 19
Grade 8 Activity Wildplay All Day	September 20

Grad Kick Off @3:15pm	September 21
Grade 12 Parent Info Night @ 5:30pm	September 21
Meet the Teacher @ 6:30pm	September 21
Pro-D Day	September 22
Collaboration Day (9:30am start)	September 27
Orange Shirt Day	September 29
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation	September 30

For more information about our programs and updates please check the school website <https://mcmath.sd38.bc.ca/> and our Instragram @mcmathsecondaryschool

Please find our first week's bell schedule and student calendar attached.

We are really looking forward to reconnecting with our students on Tuesday, September 5.
Remember the importance of Wildcat PRIDE!

Sincerely,

Mr. J Johnstone Mr. L. Banta Ms. A. Naidu
McMath Secondary School
"Home of the Wildcats"