



Ecole Secondaire Robert McMath Secondary School

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September 2026

Dear McMath Students and Parents:

Re: School Opening 2026

We hope you and your family have had a restful and enjoyable summer and are feeling as excited as we are for the new school year. We are delighted to welcome both returning and new families for what promises to be another rewarding year of learning, growth and achievement. Working together with our students, staff and families, we will continue to strengthen the vibrant and supportive school community that makes McMath such a special place. We encourage you to take an active role in your child's educational journey by attending school events and meetings, participating in extracurricular activities, and sharing your thoughts and feedback throughout the year. At McMath we value the strong partnership between students, families and the school, and we look forward to working together to support student success.

Below please find some information about the upcoming school start up.

FIRST DAY INFORMATION

Tuesday, September 8th is the first day back for students and will involve grade assemblies followed by homerooms for students by grade level. Homeroom lists will be posted on our website and our front doors on Friday, September 4th by 5:00pm.

Please also note that all students are to **report to the Big (North) Gym first** at the beginning of their time slot. Students should bring a pen or pencil to homeroom.

Times for assemblies/homerooms are provided below. Please note that end-times are approximate. Once homeroom is over, students will be dismissed.

- Grade 8 9:30 – 11:30am
- Grade 9 10:15 – 11:15am
- Grade 10 10:45 – 11:45am
- Grade 11 11:15am – 12:15pm
- Grade 12 1:15 – 2:15pm

Regular classes begin September 9th for all grades. For the first week, beginning September 9th, students are to report to their homeroom at 8:30am each day for a short homeroom, followed by regular classes. For the first week of classes, please bring a pen, pencil and a binder with lined paper. More details about other school supplies needed will be provided by teachers in their classes.

STUDENT SCHEDULES

Students will receive their class schedules by email on Friday, September 4th by 6:00pm. Grade 8 students who are in attendance at the optional Orientation on Thursday, September 3rd will also receive a paper copy of their classes. Once you receive your class schedule by email, please print yours as needed, or take a screenshot. You can also enter your schedule into your paper or digital agenda (more information about agendas below).

Please note that the school timetable was built based on student requests made last spring. Most of our classes are at capacity and classroom space is extremely limited, which leaves very few options for timetable changes. Students had multiple opportunities to request class changes in the spring of 2026, so only timetables with errors will be considered. This week our counselling team is working hard to review requests made at the end of the 2026 school year, and counsellors will contact students via email to let them know if previously requested changes were able to be made given the restrictions in our timetable. Counsellors will continue to assist students with incomplete schedules the week of September 8th.

TIMETABLE AND PERSONAL LEARNING TIME (PLT)

As you may be aware, McMath follows a semester structure. Students will be taking 4 courses in first semester followed by 4 different courses in the second semester. The timetable will rotate midway through each semester. Please see the bell schedule attached to this email.

Personal Learning Time (PLT) Days will be on Tuesdays and Thursdays (with a few minor exceptions that will be noted on the school calendar). PLT is designed to give students time within the school day to take ownership of their education by working independently and choosing their own areas of focus. PLT also provides a structure for students to access learning support and collaborate with other students within the school day. This year, PLT will be scheduled as a 60-minute block between first and second period, and on-site attendance at PLT is mandatory. More information will be shared with students next week.

COLLABORATION TIME

On 9 days this year, all McMath staff will engage in Collaboration Time. On these days staff collaborate on various planning and activities to improve learning experiences for our students. While teachers are not available for one-on-one assistance with students during Collaboration Time, students are welcome to work independently or with peers in the school. Regular school classes begin at 9:30am on Collaboration Time days.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Most communication from the school will be emailed. To receive information in a timely manner, it is extremely important that the school have updated and current parent and student email addresses. **Please ensure that a current email address has been put on your child's BC Student Verification Form which your child will bring home on September 8th.** During the year, changes may be made by contacting our office in person or via email.

To receive the latest information about McMath, please visit our website regularly at <https://mcmath.sd38.bc.ca/>

The *Family WAAG* will also have information for parents and students posted by 6:00pm on the Sunday before each week, with updates for the following week's activities and highlights. You are also able to follow us on Instagram.

<https://www.instagram.com/mcmathsecondaryschool/>

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is crucial, as our students' success is important to us. If your child is absent or late, parents are asked to use our early warning number for excused absences or lates at **604-718-4004**. For same day attendance please try to call before 9:00am. We also have an automated call-out system to notify parents about students' unexcused absences.

A student needing an early dismissal for any reason must sign out from the office with a note or a phone call from their parent/guardian, and students returning to school from an appointment must sign in at the office. Recurring unexplained absences or lates will be dealt with by the classroom teacher and referred to the administration if needed. We thank parents in advance for your support in ensuring students attend school regularly and come to school on time. Together, we can ensure that all students receive the instruction and learning opportunities they deserve.

OUR PARKING LOT

We encourage all students to walk or cycle to school as often as possible. Not only is this healthy and environmentally friendly, but it also reduces traffic around the school each morning and afternoon and ultimately makes our parking lot safer. If you live a longer distance away, please check the bus schedules. If you must drive to drop-off or pick-up students, please be a good neighbour; please ensure you are going the speed limit in a school zone, do not block crosswalks or oncoming traffic, and watch for kids walking and biking to school. Student drivers with N's are reminded that they are legally only allowed a maximum of 1 passenger, excluding family members. The student parking lot is on the east side of the school by the gyms. All student drivers who will be driving to school will need to register their car with the office. A form will be made available the first week of class.

STUDENT AGENDA BOOKS

This year our grade 8s and 9s will receive paper agenda books which will be distributed during homeroom. and our grade 10 – 12 students can choose to use our digital agenda book, *MySchoolDay*. Student agendas are an excellent source of information about our school rules and policies. We strongly recommend both students and parents read through the information at the front of the agenda to begin a successful year. Agendas are also a great place to record homework, class marks, and upcoming due dates.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Attached to this email is our 2026-2027 school calendar. We encourage you to check out our website for the most up-to-date calendar.

LOCKS AND LOCKERS

Students will have the opportunity to apply for lockers online. More information will be coming to students next week in homeroom. Lockers are where students can store their coat, lunch, PE strip, school supplies and books. Locks are provided by the school for all grades, and students must use the lock and locker assigned to them. Students should not leave money or valuables in their lockers. Please keep lock combinations private so that your things stay secure. Students who wish to use the PE lockers for storage during their PE class can bring their own lock for use, but these lockers may only be used by students during their PE class and must be removed at the end of class.

WHAT TO WEAR TO SCHOOL?

Please be respectful of our diverse community and remember we are a place of learning. Clothing worn to school should demonstrate self-respect for oneself and others, and demonstrate respect for the school community. We ask that students do not wear clothing with inappropriate messaging or graphics.

GENERAL FEES

Secondary schools have standardized the costs of general school fees (i.e. student council/activity fees, student agenda books, communication fee) at a total of **\$28.00 per student**. Students are not charged basic course fees; however, there are still charges for some optional activities, workbooks and enrichment projects. There are also charges for optional athletic teams, clubs or graduation events. *Enrichment fees* may apply in a course in which a student wishes to undertake an optional project that is beyond the core requirements of the course and which he/she/they will keep. Examples at McMath include costs for more elaborate projects and materials in courses such as Woodworking, Textiles and Fine Arts. In addition, students may be charged a fee to participate in an optional field trip. Students who are unable to pay such fees due to financial hardship should speak to Ms. Vaughan or their counsellor. Parents will get a notification from CashOnline via email for fee payment.

SCHOOL AFFORDABILITY FUND

We are pleased to announce that we will continue to have access to the Student and Family Affordability Fund. This is funding designed to assist families who require financial assistance with school related costs in areas such as school and course fees, school supplies and course materials, field trips and school-related extracurricular opportunities. Please contact Ms. Vaughan directly if you are in need of assistance (avaughan@sd38.bc.ca). As always, all requests will be treated with dignity and your privacy will be respected. We want to work with our families to ensure that our students, your children, have everything they need in order to be successful at school.

PERSONAL DIGITAL DEVICE GUIDELINES

While we recognize that cell phones are very much a part of our lives today and can have useful applications which can support learning, they can also be very disruptive to learning. We remind students and parents that cell phones are not permitted during class time unless specifically requested by the teacher for an educational purpose. Please see the attached Policy 104-G (A) Acceptable Use of Personal Digital Devices and Policy 105: District Code of Conduct, which includes language restricting the use of personal digital devices by students to enhance online safety and ensure a focused learning environment, District Policy around digital device usage at school.

PERSONAL VALUABLES

We remind parents and students that, sadly, the theft of cell phones, bikes and personal items sometimes happens. The school is not responsible for the theft of student valuables. We advise students and parents that valuables should be either left at home or kept in students' possession at all times. Students who are biking to school are reminded to make sure they lock their bikes to one of the racks at the school. In order to avoid theft, please use a good lock that cannot easily be cut such as a U-Lock.

SCHOOL PHOTOS

Photo day is on Monday, September 21st. All students will have their photos taken for their Student ID-card and Yearbook. Should you wish to order photos you can do so online with a QR code that will be provided on photo day. Photo Retake Day is for students who were absent on the original photo day or for those purchasing a photo package and will take place on Wednesday, October 21st.

IMPORTANT DATES

To get a good start to the school year, please make note of the following dates for September:

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| • Monday, September 21 | Photo Day |
| • Tuesday, September 22 | Grade 8 Day |
| • Wednesday, September 23 | Collaboration Day (classes being @ 9:30am) |
| • Thursday, September 24 @ 5:00pm | Meet the Teacher Night |
| • Thursday, September 24 @ 6:45pm | Grade 8 Caregiver Info Night |
| • Friday, September 25 | Pro-D (School Closed) |
| • Monday, September 28 @ 5:30pm | Grade 12 Caregiver Info Night (Virtual) |
| • Tuesday, September 29 | Orange Shirt Day |
| • Tuesday, September 29 | Grad Boat Cruise |
| • Wednesday, September 30 | National Day for Truth & Reconciliation (School Closed) |

Best wishes for the remainder of the summer. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Sincerely,



Aviva Vaughan
Principal