

GRADE 7 PARENT & STUDENT NEWSLETTER

DEAR GRADE 7 PARENTS & STUDENTS

We hope the grade 7s are enjoying their final year of elementary school. We know that the transition to high school comes with it a mix of emotions for parents and students. Certainly, there is excitement and eagerness but also mixed in there is some nervousness about the unfamiliar. We hope that some of the information in this newsletter will help make things feel a little less daunting in September.

A LITTLE ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

One of the first things students will notice is that David Thompson (DT) is a much larger school than elementary schools. We have over 1200 students and 100 teachers and support staff. Each grade has between 230-280 students. In addition to classrooms, we have an auditorium, a cafeteria that usually serves hot food at break and lunch time, a library and 3 gymnasiums. We have specialized classrooms where we teach cooking, sewing, electronics, auto mechanics, woodwork, graphic arts, and video production just to name a few. We also have a garden in the front of the school where Fresh Roots grows vegetables.

REGISTRATION

All students attending a Vancouver public school who live in the DT catchment will automatically be pre-transitioned to DT for September. You just need to ensure your elementary school has your correct home address. You do not need to register at DT yourself. Your elementary school will give you an enrollment form to fill out for DT records. Please follow the elementary school instructions for the return of the enrollment form.



WHO'S WHO AT DT?

Here are some of the people you will get to know at DT next year:

Principal - Mr. R. Lopez

Vice-Principal (grade 10, 11) - Mr. G. Mar

Vice-Principal (grade 8, 9) - Ms. G. Tsui

Counsellors - Mr. R. Tanabe, Mr. R. Moy, Ms. R. Dhaliwal, Ms. S. Tsui

New Faces Leader Teacher - Ms. W. Monk

Office Staff - Ms. Lily (first aid attendant), Ms. L. Chan, Ms. M. Bie, Ms. N. Shu (first aid attendant)

Librarian - Ms. Y. Reddy

Indigenous Student Support Worker - Ms. M. Black

Student Engagement Worker - Mr. G. O'Donnell

Community Schools Team - Ms. H. Benson, Ms. M. Li, Ms. P. Holder

PAC president - Ms. Regina Prakash-Singh

Multicultural Worker (Chinese) - Mr. Patrick Wong

Multicultural Worker (Punjabi) - Mr. Bob Rattan

Multicultural Worker (Tagalog) - Ms. Lucia Sabado

Multicultural Worker (Vietnamese) - Mr. Yung Quach

Multicultural Worker (Spanish) - Ms. Claudia Sandoval



THE GRADE 8 YEAR

COURSES

Students in high school take 8 courses each year. As students move into the higher grades, they will get more and more choice in which courses they take. In their first year in high school, grade 8 students will get a sampling of what courses are available.



GRADE 8 COURSES

- English
- Social Studies
- Math
- Science
- Physical & Health Education
- French or Skills Development Centre
- Applied Skills rotation
- Fine Arts rotation or Band
- Career Education

APPLIED SKILLS

Applied Skills 8 is a rotation with one term each in the areas of:

- Business Education
- Home Economics (Foods & Textiles)
- Technical Studies

Students will get to try out some of elective areas and in grade 9, they will be able to pick 2 electives of their choice.

FINE ARTS

Fine Arts 8 is a rotation with one term each in the areas of:

- Performing Arts (Drama & Dance)
- Visual Arts
- Career Education

OR

- Full year Band with Career Education - No experience necessary

On the David Thompson enrollment form, students will be asked to choose the Fine Art elective. Students who wish to take Band will be enrolled in the course for the entire year. Alternatively, students can choose to take the Fine Arts Rotation of 3 courses. This is the only choice that Grades 8s will be asked to make in their course selection.

THE GRADE 8 YEAR CONTINUED

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

DT also runs a very successful Skills Development Centre for students who benefit from a little extra help and time with their course work.

Recommendation for the Skills Centre come from the Grade 7 teachers. If students are recommended for the Skills Centre, a letter will be sent home to parents asking for their approval. Students in the Skills Centre will drop French 8. In grade 9, these students can choose Spanish 9 (a beginner course) or Mandarin if they wish to have a second language. In some cases, students in the Skills Centre can choose to drop either the Fine Arts or the Applied Skills Rotations although this is not our recommendation.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Students new to Canada may be enrolled in some English Language Learning courses. Depending on the student's level of English, these courses will take the place of mainstream program English, Social Studies, and Science. ELL students will not be enrolled in French 8. Instead, they will have an additional English class. ELL levels are determined through testing at the elementary school just before Spring Break. Teachers will account for language development that will occur before September.

NEW FACES LEADERS

We have a very exciting program at David Thompson called the New Faces Leaders (NFL for short).

Ms. Monk runs this wonderful program along with her NFL leaders who are senior students (grades 10, 11 & 12) who act and serve as mentors to incoming grade 8 students.



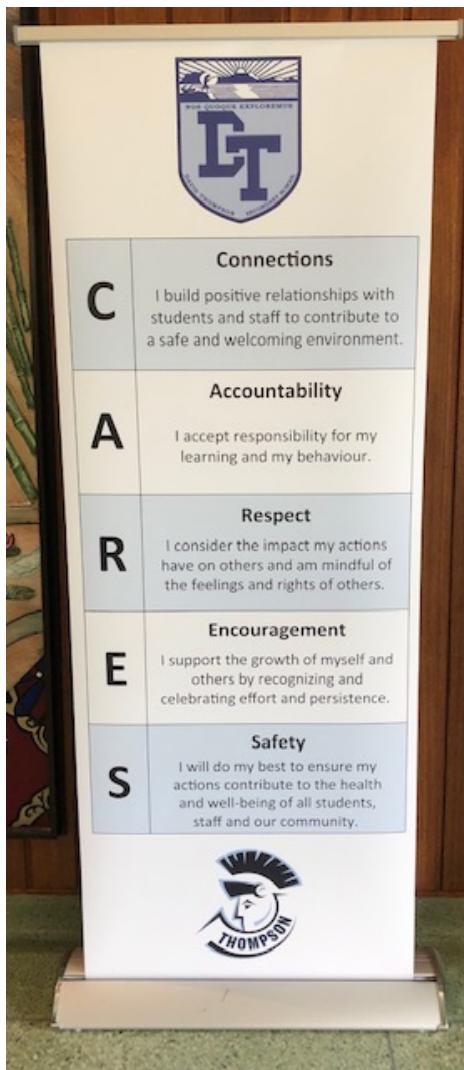
NFL puts on events throughout the year to welcome grade 8s to DT. This photo is from Pumpkin Carving in 2019. Hopefully, we will be able to return to some of these activities next year.

This year, the NFL students have created a virtual tour of DT. Check out their video on the DT website: [Welcome to DT](#)

DT CARES

DT CODE OF CONDUCT

At David Thompson, we have something called a Code of Conduct that we follow. It guides our behaviour and the way we treat one another at the school. There are reminders of our Code of Conduct throughout the school.



WHAT DOES CARES MEAN?

C - CONNECTIONS I build positive relationships with students and staff to contribute to a safe and welcoming environment.

A - ACCOUNTABILITY I accept responsibility for my learning and my behaviour.

R - RESPECT I consider the impact my actions have on others.

E - ENCOURAGEMENT I support the growth of myself and others by recognizing and celebrating effort and persistence.

S - SAFETY I will do my best to ensure my actions contribute to the health and well-being of all students, staff and our community.



LIFE AT DAVID THOMPSON

THE YEARLY SCHEDULE

At this time there is still a little uncertainty around what the yearly schedule will look like in schools next year. The following schedule is the one that has traditionally been followed at DT. If the district's health and safety plan develops a different type of yearly schedule, then we will make the alterations as needed. For example, this school year, all public schools in British Columbia switched to a quarterly school year where students took 2 courses at a time for 10 weeks.

Sample Grade 8 schedule in a regular year:

Day 1

Period 1 - Math 8
 Period 2 - Science 8
 Lunch
 Period 3 - Drama 8
 Period 4 - French 8

Day 2

Period 1 - Applied Skills 8
 Period 2 - English 8
 Lunch
 Period 3 - Socials 8
 Period 4 - Physical and Health Education 8

DT typically operates on a Day 1 / Day 2 linear system where students will take 8 courses for a full year. They take 4 courses on Day 1 and 4 courses on Day 2 and the two days alternate every other day for the entire year. Which courses fall on which day will be determined when the computer system schedules the students.

THE DAILY SCHEDULE

In a typical year, school starts at 8:30 and ends at 3:03. This is our daily schedule:

Time	Day 1	Day 2
8:30		Warning Bell
8:35 – 9:49	Period 1	Period 1
9:49 – 10:06		Silent Reading
10:06 – 10:21		Nutrition Break
10:16		Warning Bell
10:21 – 11:35	Period 2	Period 2
11:35 – 12:20		Lunch
12:15		Warning Bell
12:20 – 1:38	Period 3	Period 3
1:38 – 1:48		Break
1:48 – 3:03	Period 4	Period 4

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS TEAM CST

The wonderful ladies of the CST, Heidi, Maggie and Pauline can be found in Room 109. Visit any time for snacks, support, and super people!



LIFE AT DT CONTINUED

JOIN A CLUB!

DT has numerous clubs that meet at lunch as well as after school. Many of these have been able to continue virtually this year.

Examples: Hunger Bites, Service Club, CHAT, Here 4 Peers, Library, Debate, Time and Effort, Yearbook, True Crime, DT Medical Club, and many many more



This photo is from Clubs Day in the fall of 2019. This year, we held a Virtual Clubs Day on Teams.

JOIN A TEAM!

DT has numerous sports teams that practice and play in different seasons throughout the year.

Examples: Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Badminton, Golf, Track and Field and many many more



FINAL REMINDERS

- Ensure your elementary school has your correct home address.
- Fill out the DT enrollment form and return to your elementary school.
- ENJOY THE FINAL MONTHS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL!!!