

September Newsletter

With deep gratitude and respect, we are honoured to be learning and unlearning on the ancestral and unceded lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) & səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year!

It has been a wonderful start to the year at Norquay. Our hallways are once again filled with excitement as students reconnect with friends, meet new teachers, and settle into new routines. Thank you to our students, families, and staff for helping create such a positive start.

This year, as a staff will focus on two key areas: **Collective Efficacy** and **Reconciliation**.

Collective efficacy is the belief that when educators work together, students succeed. Research shows that student learning improves when teachers, support staff, and administrators collaborate toward shared goals and work together to support every child.

Reconciliation is about learning, listening, building respectful relationships, and taking action. This year, staff will be exploring ideas from David Robertson's *52 Ways to Reconcile* as we continue our learning journey together. At Norquay, we are committed to creating a school where every student feels welcomed, valued, and connected.

One way to be connected is by coming to the ... **Meet the Staff & Community BBQ with our community partners LunchLAB:**

Thursday, September 24

BBQ: 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Classrooms Open: 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Come meet staff, visit classrooms, reconnect with friends, and meet other Norquay families. Thank you to our PAC and LunchLAB volunteers for helping make this event possible.

The BBQ is by donation, and everyone is welcome. We hope you'll join us as we celebrate the start of a fantastic school year together.

Suggested donation:

Burger \$5

Hot dog \$3

Pizza \$2

Chips & Juice Box \$1

* A side salad will also be served.

Thank you for your partnership and support. We look forward to a year of learning, growth, and connection.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, September 21

Professional Development Day, classes not in session

Thursday, September 24

Individual photo day, please bring your smiles!

Thursday, September 24

Meet the Staff & Community BBQ

- BBQ: 3:00PM-5:00PM

- Classrooms Open: 3:30-4:30PM

Monday, September 28

Dancers of Damelahamid Presentation (Intermediate Students)

Tuesday, September 29

Orange Shirt Day (wear orange)

Wednesday, September 30

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (schools closed)

Tuesday, October 6

PAC Meeting, 6PM

Monday, October 12

Thanksgiving Day (schools closed)

Friday, October 16

PAC Pumpkin Patch, more details to follow





LIBRARY CORNER

A sunny, warm welcome back to students, staff, and families! We will use resources and activities in the Library, in the classroom, and at home this year to become lifelong learners, leaders, and readers!

A few reminders:

- Students can borrow books for 7 days and renew books at any time
- Students and Families can search for books, check their borrowing record, and search digital resources at <https://library.vsb.bc.ca/>
- Students in Grade 4 – 7 can sign up (soon!) to be Library Monitors who will keep our busy Library running smoothly this year

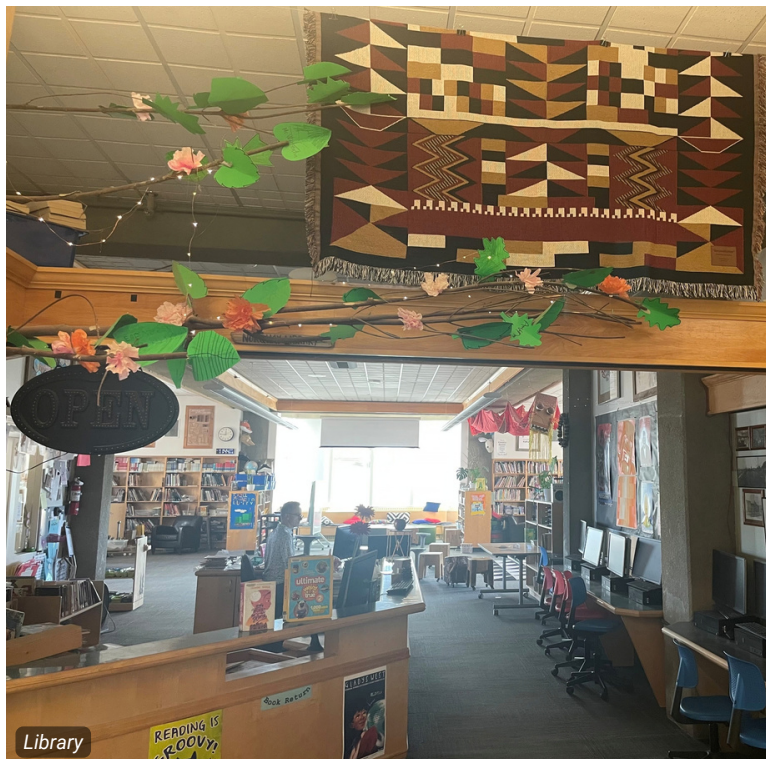
See you soon! Mr. Warkentin and the Norquay Library Club

A WARM WELCOME TO NEW STAFF

We are excited to welcome several new staff members to the Norquay community:

- Ms. Puche – Kindergarten Teacher
- Shea Henry – Indigenous Education Enhancement Worker
- Ms. Cheung – Speech-Language Pathologist
- Ms. Soo – School and Student Support Worker
- Ms. Mariel – School and Student Support Worker

We are thrilled to have them join our team and look forward to the many ways they will support students and families this year.



Biography

Debra Sparrow was born and raised on the Musqueam Indian Reserve and is self-taught in Salish design into design and jewellery-making. Her contemporary work combines textile and Salish design into geometric, hand spun blankets and hangings and can be seen in various museums and institutions, including the Vancouver Airport, Museum of Civilizations in Ottawa and the University of British Columbia. Debra designed the logo for the Canadian Men's Hockey Team for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in Vancouver, B.C. She also continues to work on the pieces close to her heart at her home in Musqueam. It is Debra's hope to educate others about the beauty and integrity of her people's history through her art. Debra is a highly accomplished weaver, and for over 20 years has played a pivotal role in the ongoing revival of Musqueam weaving.

<https://thebluecabin.ca/residency/skains/debra-sparrow/>

"Her work has blanketed the City of Vancouver and VSB schools, both inside and out."

Chas Desjarlais, Director of Instruction - Indigenous Education

Reconciliation Blanket

The Reconciliation Blanket was designed by x^mmaθk^wayəm (Musqueam) artist, educator and master weaver Debra Sparrow. The blanketing of your school is an extension of Debra Sparrow's work of **Blanketing the City of Vancouver** and blanketing the district with her beautiful weavings.

Using the QR Code, we ask that you watch the VSB Blanket Unveiling video where Debra shares her teachings of the reconciliation blanket.

Debra Sparrow, x^mmaθk^wayəm Master Weaver

"The blankets take Mother Earth and turn it into a prayer, in which we then wrap around our loved ones"

Morgan Guerin, x^mmaθk^wayəm Knowledge Holder



STUDENT INFORMATION PACKAGES

Student information packages will be sent home with students on Friday, September 18 and should be returned by Friday, September 25. These packages include both manual forms and online forms that need to be completed. Keeping contact and medical information up to date helps us keep students safe. If you need assistance, please contact the school office.

- Manual forms should be filled out and returned to your child's classroom teacher.
- Online forms can be completed by visiting: <https://myforms.vsb.bc.ca>. If the link does not open automatically, please type it directly into your browser.

To access the online portal, you will need your child's Personal Education Number (PEN).

If you do not have your child's PEN, please visit the following link to retrieve it: <https://penrequest.vsb.bc.ca>. We appreciate your support in completing these forms promptly to ensure we have accurate and up-to-date information for all students.

CLASS PLACEMENTS

It has been a pleasure walking through the school over the past few weeks and seeing students settle into their new classrooms, reconnect with friends, and begin building new relationships.

Creating classes is a thoughtful and complex process that our staff take very seriously. Planning begins months before September, with teachers and support staff carefully considering many factors to ensure each student is placed in an environment where they can learn, grow, and thrive. One important consideration is peer groupings, including placing students with positive role models and classmates who will support their learning and well-being.

Our goal is always to create classroom communities that are balanced and designed for optimal learning. While friendships are important, placements are made with the broader learning environment in mind so that every student can flourish.

Another factor in class organization is enrollment and grade-level numbers. For example, this year we have a much smaller Grade 7 cohort than in previous years, which resulted in more combined classes than we would typically have.

We know that the start of a new year can bring excitement, uncertainty, and adjustment for students and families alike. We appreciate your trust in our staff and the care they put into this process.

If you have questions about your child's placement, please feel free to reach out. We are always happy to connect and support a successful start to the school year.

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

Regular attendance helps students build routines, develop friendships, and stay engaged in learning.

Please continue to notify the school through the Safe Arrival process if your child will be absent, late, or leaving early: <https://www.vsb.bc.ca/john-norquay/safe-arrival>.

If your family is experiencing challenges with attendance, please reach out so we can work together to support your child.

While regular attendance is important for learning and building connections at school, we understand that families may occasionally need to be away. As outlined in **Administrative Procedure 330 - Student Attendance**, schools generally hold a **student's space for up to 20 consecutive school days of absence**, after which registration may need to be reviewed, particularly where waitlists exist. Please note that teachers are not required to provide work for extended absences.

A reminder that drop off is 8:55 AM and pick up is at 3:00 PM this year.



TECHNOLOGY PLAN FUNDRAISER UPDATE

Thank you to everyone who has supported our Technology Plan fundraiser.

Together, we have raised **\$5,118.11** so far:

- School Fair: **\$1,504.00**
- Silent Auction: **\$1,703.00**
- Direct Drive Campaign: **\$1,911.11**

Your generosity helps provide technology that supports student learning and engagement.

Donate here:

[John Norquay Elementary - PAC DIRECT DRIVE TECHNOLOGY PLAN](#)

We are hoping to hit our goal of \$35000!

LUNCHLAB IS BACK!

We're excited to launch LunchLAB again for the 2026/27 school year, with service starting in early October on Wednesdays and Fridays. LunchLAB brings freshly prepared, nutritious lunches made from scratch by our Chef in Residence and student chef cohorts.

For families who are new to Norquay, LunchLAB is available to participating intermediate classes (generally grades 5, 6, 7). Students can register as LunchLAB eaters and enjoy healthy, delicious meals, while our Grade 6 student chefs help prepare and serve lunches as part of the program, and enjoy the meals too!

A few things to know:

- Registration for classes participating in LunchLAB will be sent out next week, so please keep an eye on your inbox.
- We're hosting a Volunteer Open House on October 14. If you're curious about getting involved in the kitchen or classroom, come learn more and meet the team.
- Families can learn more about LunchLAB by visiting: <https://www.growingchefs.ca/lunchlab>

More details will follow soon. We can't wait to get cooking with your students this year! LunchLAB will be at the Meet the Staff/PAC BBQ on Thursday, September 22, please come by and say hi!

VOLUNTEER WITH LUNCHLAB AND JOIN THE KITCHEN CREW!

HELP STUDENTS COOK, SERVE, AND SHARE NUTRITIOUS MEALS WHILE GETTING A BEHIND THE SCENES LOOK AT LUNCHLAB!

WHAT YOU'LL DO:

- Support students in prepping, serving, and sharing delicious lunches
- Help with kitchen and cleaning tasks
- Be part of a fun, supportive team and community

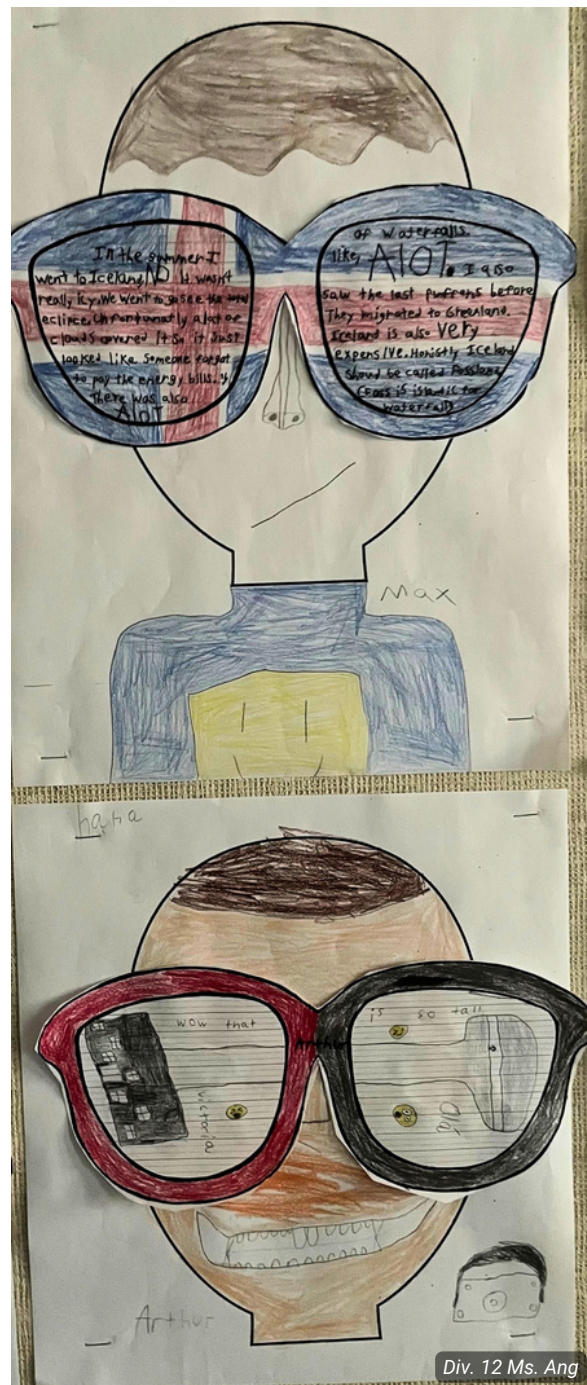
WHY VOLUNTEER?

- Enjoy the meal you helped create with fellow volunteers and students
- Learn new kitchen skills from professional chefs!
- Make a difference in your school community

SCAN THE QR CODE TO LEARN MORE AND SIGN UP!

"IF YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT VOLUNTEERING, GO FOR IT!"
LunchLAB Volunteer

"I FEEL VERY GRATEFUL TO BE PART OF THE VOLUNTEER TEAM IN THIS AMAZING PROGRAM, IT REALLY FUELS ME WITH ENERGY!"
LunchLAB Volunteer



NORQUAY SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT

At Norquay, we work together to create a safe, caring, and inclusive community. Our Code of Conduct is built around three simple expectations:

**Be Kind
Be Safe**

Be the Best Learner and Leader You Can Be

These expectations are highlighted regularly during morning announcements and classroom discussions. Students are encouraged to think about how they can show kindness, make safe choices, and positively contribute to our community both at school and beyond.

Read the full Code of Conduct here:

<https://media.vsb.bc.ca/media/Default/medialib/norquaycofc.0484f173695.pdf>

NORQUAY GARDEN APPRECIATION

A heartfelt thank you to the families, students, staff, and community members who cared for the Norquay garden throughout the summer. Thanks to your efforts, students returned to beautiful flowers, thriving plants, and welcoming outdoor learning spaces.

A special thank you to Jen, our PAC Garden Representative, for organizing the summer watering schedule. Your dedication is greatly appreciated.



DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP AND PERSONAL DEVICES

At Norquay, we help students learn how to use technology safely, responsibly, and respectfully.

The Vancouver School Board follows the BC Ministry of Education guidelines for personal digital devices in schools:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/personal-digital-device-restrictions-in-schools>

Cell phones, tablets, smart watches, and other personal devices must be turned off or on silent mode and kept out of sight during the school day, including recess and lunch.

Devices may be used:

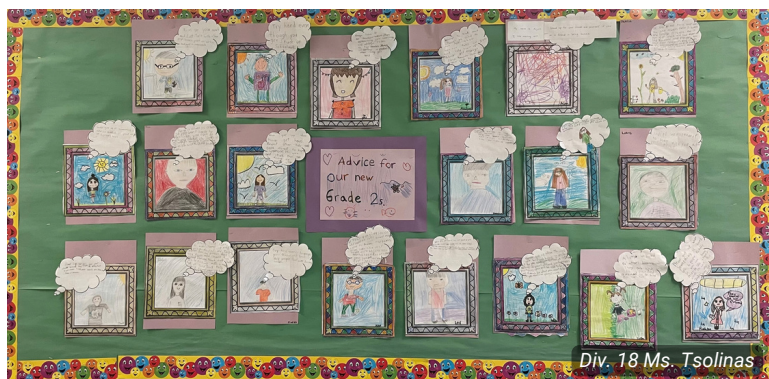
- When directed by staff for learning purposes
- For medical or health needs
- As part of a student's support plan

Please note that the Vancouver School Board is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen personal devices.

For information about digital literacy and online safety, please visit:

<https://www.vsb.bc.ca/digital-literacy-and-safety>

Thank you for partnering with us to help students use technology safely and responsibly.



Div. 18 Ms. Tsolinas



FAIR NOTICE: STUDENT THREAT RISK ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL

The Vancouver School District and its community partners are committed to maintaining safe, caring, and inclusive schools.

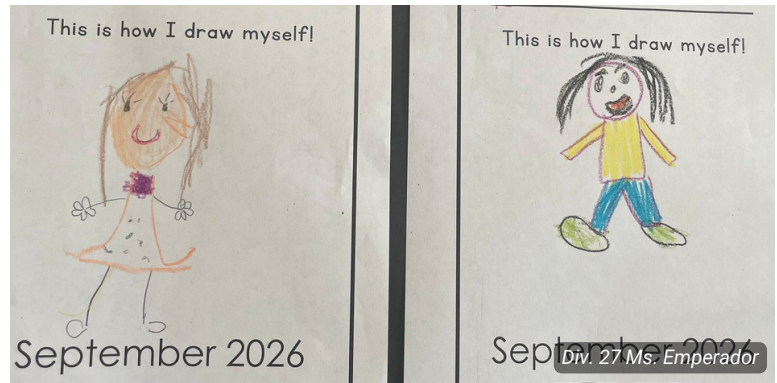
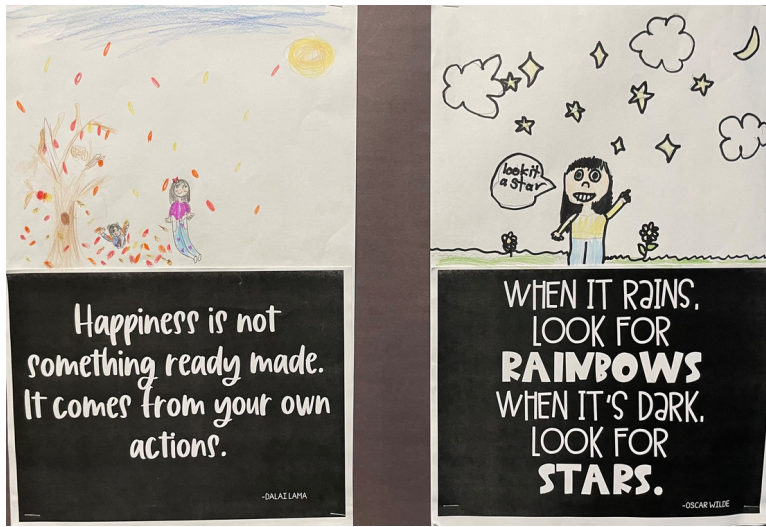
If a student makes a threat of violence or harm toward themselves or others, the school may initiate the VSB Student Threat Risk Assessment Process.

The purpose of the process is to:

- Ensure the safety of students, staff, and the school community
- Understand the level of risk
- Identify supports for the student involved
- Prevent violence through early intervention

Parents and caregivers will be informed when their child is directly involved in the process unless doing so compromises safety or an investigation.

The Threat Risk Assessment process is intended to support student well-being while helping maintain safe schools for everyone. For more information: [VSB Fair Notice](#).



TRAFFIC SAFETY REMINDERS

Student safety is everyone's responsibility.

Please help us keep students safe by:

- Following parking and stopping regulations
- Using designated drop-off and pick-up areas
- Avoiding the staff parking lot during drop-off and pick-up times
- Walking, biking, or participating in "Drive to 5" whenever possible
- Watching carefully for pedestrians, cyclists, and crossing guards

Learn more about Drive to 5:

<https://media.vsb.bc.ca/media/Default/fgg/5/Active%20Travel%20Toolkit-1.pdf>

Pick-Up and Drop-Off Reminder

If you need to leave your vehicle for any reason during pick-up or drop-off, please park in a designated parking space (30-minute Green P, 2-hour Green P, or unrestricted parking).

The pick-up and drop-off zones (Red P and 3-minute Green P) are intended for short stops only and are designed to help many families access the school efficiently during busy times. These zones work best when drivers remain with their vehicles and keep traffic moving for others.

Laneway Safety Reminder

There is clear **No Stopping** signage posted in the lane north of the school (Street and Traffic Bylaw 2849, s. 17.6(a)).

To help keep everyone safe and ensure access for residents, service vehicles, and emergency vehicles, please do not stop or park in a way that obstructs travel through the lane or along the street (Street and Traffic Bylaw 2849, s. 19.1(d)).

We appreciate everyone's cooperation in helping maintain a safe and orderly environment for students, families, neighbours, and the wider community.

Thank you for helping keep our community safe.

OPTIONAL STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

The following voluntary plans are provided directly by the insurance companies and are not administered or endorsed by the Vancouver School Board.

The plans offer coverage for accidental injury, unexpected medical expenses, and critical illness, and may help supplement costs not covered by provincial health insurance or parents existing extended health and dental benefit plans.

The following providers offer student accident insurance plans:

- Insuremykids: [School Resources - Insuremykids](#)
- Industrial Alliance (Family Accident Reimbursement Plan): [Group Insurance - Special Markets | iA Financial Group](#)

Additional information, planning details, and enrollment options are available directly through the providers' websites. Families with questions about coverage, eligibility, claims, or enrollment should contact the insurance provider directly using the contact information available on their website.



E-SCOOTERS AND E-BIKES

Please see below for the current City of Vancouver and Province of British Columbia regulation. We ask for your support in ensuring students travel safely and within the law.

Under provincial legislation and the [Electric Kick Scooter Pilot Project Regulation](#), as well as City of Vancouver bylaws, electric scooters are permitted only under specific conditions:

- Riders must be 16 years of age or older
- Helmets are mandatory for all riders
- Scooters may be used on designated roads and bike lanes, but not on sidewalks
- Riders must follow the same rules of the road as cyclists (e.g., obey traffic signals and signage)
- Scooters must not exceed prescribed speed limits (generally up to 25 km/h where permitted)

For more information, please visit: [E-scooters | City of Vancouver](#) and [Electric kick scooter rules and safety - Province of British Columbia](#).

Under provincial legislation and City of Vancouver bylaws, electric bikes are permitted under the following conditions:

- Riders must be 14 years or older for a light e-bike and 16 for a standard e-bike
- Helmets are mandatory for all riders
- Light e-bikes must not exceed 25 km/h and standard e-bikes 32 km/h
- E-bikes may be used on designated roads and bike lanes, but not on sidewalks
- Riders must follow the same rules of the road as cyclists (e.g., obey traffic signals and signage)

For more information about e-bikes, please visit: [E-bike requirements - Province of British Columbia](#) and [Motor Assisted Cycle \(E-Bike\) Regulation](#).

We are increasingly concerned about:

- Students under the legal age riding electric scooters and bikes to school
- Multiple riders on a single device
- Lack of helmet use
- Riding on sidewalks, including near school entrances
- Riding on school property, including playgrounds
- Unsafe speeds

These behaviours pose a significant safety risk to students and to others in our community.

As a school, we ask families to:

- Ensure your child meets the legal age requirements before riding
- Reinforce helmet use and safe riding practices
- Remind your child to dismount upon arriving on school property
- Review routes to ensure compliance with city and provincial regulations

Thank you for partnering with us to keep our students safe.

PAC CORNER

Welcome to the new school year! The Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is excited for all the upcoming events and encourages all family members and guardians to become involved. Everyone, not just the members of the executive committee, are a part of the PAC. Whether you can help to organize events or lend a helping hand to clean up, please reach out to the PAC through email norquaypacteam@gmail.com or message your class WhatsApp group representatives to volunteer your time. A PAC Welcome letter will be sent home outlining the year's details and events.

We look forward to seeing you!

PAC Executive Committee

Office Administrative Assistant: Sandy Lowe

Principal: Deena Kotak Buckley

Vice Principal: Curtis Mathewson

PAC Chairpersons: Hannah Tan

School Liaison Trustee: Victoria Jung

Director of Instruction: Chris Wong

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