

# SEXSMITH STARS NEWS



7410 Columbia Street Vancouver, BC V5X 3C1	Mr. Joel Levine Principal	PHONE: 604-713-4901 FAX: 604-713-4903
Ms. Magdalena Kassis Director of Instruction 604-713-5097	Ms. Sandy Lowe Office Admin Assistant	Mr. Gurmit Sangha PAC Chair

**NEWSLETTER #1** **September 2017**

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL

### WELCOME BACK!

I hope everyone has had a fantastic summer break and are well rested for another busy school year. I am excited to be at a new school and looking forward to meeting everyone and learning the common practices and routines that are unique to Sexsmith. September is a busy month for everyone as we get settled into new classes. We want to make sure that our organization is well thought out and then quickly have the students move into their new classrooms. While we do consider parental requests when making class placement choices, the overall needs of all the students is our primary focus. Once your child is with their new teacher, we would ask that you complete the many forms and submit the appropriate fees as soon as you are able to. More detailed information will be sent home shortly. Of particular note this year for parents is a new attendance/safe arrival procedure that all schools in Vancouver will be following. Please read the section below carefully and ensure that you are notifying the office every time your child is absent from school by 9:00 am on that day.

### 2017/18 School Staffing Updates

We have several new staff members that I am happy to inform you about. Ms. Mai McHardy will be teaching grade 6. Ms. Sarah Greig will be teaching grade 5. Ms. Anna Morris will be teaching grades 4/5. Ms. Brenda Dyer will be teaching grades 1/2. Ms. Sarika Nanda will be our new kindergarten teacher. Ms. Mari Sekikawa will be working with our support staff team as an SSA. Finally, Ms. Keo will be continuing her parental leave and a temporary replacement teacher will be hired later this month and Ms. Picard has moved schools and her replacement will also be hired later this month. Welcome to everyone!

### Communication

Communication is so important to a successful relationship between home and school. Please feel free to speak with your child's teacher about any concerns you may have. Check your child's agenda or communication book on a daily basis. This monthly newsletter is meant to keep you informed of all school activities. The school website, will be updated regularly with relevant school information, so please check that often. **If we don't have your email or current contact information, please ensure that you hand that in as soon as possible.** We will be trying to save paper by emailing all future newsletters and important information and would appreciate your cooperation with this goal.

### Split/Combined Classes

Split or combined classes (1/2, 3/4, 4/5 etc.) often cause unnecessary concern with parents. There are many misconceptions about what this means. We want to assure you that we look carefully at the makeup of each class and try to balance them out

so that your child is in the best possible learning environment. It is important to remember that, **particularly in the elementary grades**, all children are learning skills along a continuum and being in a straight grade or a split class has little impact on the development of those skills or the educational experience that we offer. The content (topics i.e. animal habitats) at each grade level can be covered in many different formats, so children do not lose out if they are in a split grade. In many cases learning alongside younger or older students has other benefits that a straight grade doesn't offer. Please see the PDF below for further information. It can be printed or we have copies at the school for you to have. [Combined classes](#)

## **New Safe Arrival Procedures for 2017-18**

### **Reporting Student Absences:**

Student safety is of paramount importance at the Vancouver School District. Ensuring student safety is a shared responsibility. In order to assist schools, we ask parents to notify schools of student absences. **If your child will be absent from school, please phone the school to report this absence as early as possible. Parents should leave a message on the answering service by calling 604-713-5159 extension #80.** Messages can be received before the office is open. School offices are busy places: consistently notifying the school in advance of your child's absence will significantly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Safe Arrival Morning Routine.

To Report Your Child's Absence – Please call **604-713-5159 extension #80** prior to 9 am on the first day of the absence

### **Student Sign out Procedure:**

**When you pick up your child during the school day, please ensure that you sign them out at the school office.** If you do not sign out your child, they will be unaccounted for, and the school will identify your child as a 'missing' student and will commence a search of school grounds. **If the school staff do not locate the child, and are unable to reach a parent promptly, the school will call the Vancouver Police Department.** Therefore, clear communication is essential for ensuring the safety of your child and to prevent unnecessary searches.

Thank you for helping us keep your children safe!

## **PAC News**

On behalf of the Parent Advisory Committee, we want to welcome all the returning and new students and parents. The first PAC meeting will be on Thursday September 14 at 6:30pm. All parents are welcome to attend. If you would like to contact PAC or volunteer to help out with a program please email [sexsmithvolunteers@gmail.com](mailto:sexsmithvolunteers@gmail.com) .

## **Code of Conduct**

The school code of conduct is an essential component in having students develop and maintain positive relationships. It guides everyone in our positive interactions and helps students deal with conflicts and difficult situations. The beginning of the school year is a great opportunity to take a moment to review the Sexsmith Code of Conduct with your child and ensure they understand the different aspects of the document. A link to the Sexsmith Code of Conduct is [here](#) or a paper version is available in the office.

## Important Dates in September

Tuesday September 5	First Day of School Grades 1-7 attend 9:00-10:00 am only (students return to last year's classes) New kindergarten students attend 1:00- 1:30pm (meet in the lunch room)
Wednesday September 6	First full day of classes for grades 1-7 New Kindergarten students on modified schedule
Wednesday September 13	First full day for new kindergarten students
Thursday, September 14	PAC Meeting at 6:30pm
Friday September 22	Professional Day - no school for students
Thursday, September 28	Performance – Story telling begins at 9:15am (four performances throughout the day)
Friday September 29	Terry Fox Run (pm)

## Important Upcoming Dates in October

Wednesday October 4	Goal Setting conferences - dismissal at 2:00pm conferences 2:15 – 6:00pm
Thursday October 5	Goal Setting conferences - dismissal at 2:00pm conferences 2:15 – 6:00pm
Monday October 9	Thanksgiving – school closed
Friday October 13	Individual Photo Day
Friday, October 20	Professional Day – no school for students

Please check our website [sexsmith.vsb.bc.ca](http://sexsmith.vsb.bc.ca) for the regularly updated school calendar