

## Start-up Info 2023-2024 School Year:

Good morning,

We are looking forward to meeting all of our incoming grade 9s in September!

I know school just ended last week, but here is an outline of what the first day/week will look like next year, along with some other general information. I will follow up with more specific information in late August.

\*I have also attached the bell schedule and calendar (additional school-based Pro-D dates are December 4, 2023 & May 17, 2024). We also try to keep the school website as up to date as possible: <http://www.sd43.bc.ca/school/heritagewoods/Pages/default.aspx#/=>

\*\*Most grade 9s will start in Period 2 (9:16 AM) and finish after Period 5 (3:25 PM)

\*\*\*There will also be some other days where some students are not in session, including Provincial Assessment dates in January, April and June (exact schedule to be determined).

### **Tuesday, September 5, 2023: (First Day & Photo day!)**

- 9:00-10:15 AM (**Gr 10s** attend) students will attend Advisory for attendance, schedules, fee statements, ... and then get photos taken.
  - 10:30-11:45 PM (**Gr 11s** attend) students will attend Advisory for attendance, schedules, fee statements, ... and then get photos taken.
  - 12:00-1:15 PM (**Gr 12s** attend) students will attend Advisory for attendance, schedules, fee statements, ... and then get photos taken.
- \* **Grade 9s: Will attend from 12:30 AM- 2:30PM** (intro to school and procedures, Advisory, tour, and then get photos taken (at **1:30 PM**))

Students may be done sooner, depending on how long it takes to get their photo taken.

### Bell Schedule for Wed.-Fri.:

For the remainder of the week, we will be operating on our regular bell schedule.

### Forms and Fees:

Students will receive a fee statement on the first day. Fees are paid on-line. Parents will also be required to complete some on-line forms and to submit an information verification form.

### Lockers:

On-line locker assignment system will be live at the end of August. Specific dates and log-in details to follow. Please only select a locker if you plan on using it!

#### School Supplies:

There is no school supply list. Students should just bring basic supplies on the first day (binder, paper, pen, pencil, ...). Individual teachers will specify if other items are required.

#### Student Laptops:

HWSS is a one-to-one school, meaning that all students bring a laptop to school to support and enhance their learning. We do have a limited number of basic laptops we can loan to students who need to use one temporarily, but we ask students to bring their own if they have them. Contact Mr. Clerkson if you need to borrow a laptop.

#### **\*\*Increased Enrolment and Impact on Student Scheduling\*\***

Our in-catchment enrolment has increased significantly in recent months. Consequently, our population could be up by as many as an additional 100 students compared to the start of the 22-23 school year. Currently we run the majority of our classes in Periods 2-5, with the exception of Band, Agility and Foods in period 1. To create space for the additional students/classes, we have had to schedule 20+ more classes into Period 1. So instead of 125 students starting at 8:00 AM each semester, we will have as many as 500. Some of these students will have 4 classes in a row and finish at 2:11PM, while others will have open period in the day and still finish at 3:25 PM (it just depends on their course selections and how the final schedule shakes out). This is a typical scenario in most schools, but something we have been able to avoid up until now. Regardless, it will all work out!

\* We have worked to avoid placing grade 9 classes in Period 1 as we want to ensure consistency for the grade 9s in their transition year.

#### **Student Schedules and Course Changes:**

##### When will my child get their course schedule?

Grade 12s will be able to access their schedules prior to school starting (date tba).

Students in Grades 9-11 will receive their schedules on the first day of school (September 5th).

\*All students are expected to take at least 8 courses. Off blocks are not an option, with the exception being Grade 12 students (there is an application and approval process).

##### Will they be able to make changes to their schedules?

There will be very few cases where we will be able to make changes to student schedules in September.

##### Why?

The students' schedules are based on the course selections they made in the Spring. These selections are the basis for the school's timetable which consists of over 600 classes. The decision on which courses to run and how we will staff the school is based on the course selections. Making this giant puzzle even more complicated is the fact that it is done in the context of considering staffing capabilities, room availability, and adhering to class size and composition legislation.

\*\*Current students were also given a printout of their selections in May so that they could verify them and bring any needed corrections to their counselors' attention, and also a schedule preview in June.

Despite all of this, we are able to place students in the courses they selected as primary requests or alternates in most cases.

\*\*Courses will effectively be locked or closed in September and then careful adjustments made as new students register, etc. This process will be similar at all high schools in the district.

#### Context:

In addition to the general complexities of timetabling, we are required to make our best efforts to balance the classes as per the Supreme Court of Canada decision pertaining to class size and composition language for schools in British Columbia.

To ensure that we are adhering to the legislation we need to track every course change to avoid putting classes into violation. In other words, if a student wants to switch a class, but by doing so that change makes the class go over on size or composition, we are not able to accommodate that request.

#### Criteria for changes:

If a student requires a change for one of the reasons listed below, they will see their Vice-Principal who will then direct them to their counselor if the request meets the criteria.

Course changes in September will only be made for extenuating circumstances:

- schedule is incomplete
- failed or did not complete a summer/online course
- missing a course needed for Graduation or Post -Secondary (bring paperwork to support your request i.e. program of interest and what is needed)
- didn't receive any of the electives chosen in the Spring (we will be cross checking initial request sheets including alternates)

However, NO course changes will be made for the following reasons:

- o Wanting a class in a different block
- o Wanting a different elective

- o Wanting a different teacher
- o Wanting a class with a friend

**\*\*After receiving their final schedules on the first day, students requiring changes that meet the above criteria can email their counselors.**

Thank you for your understanding. Things will work out. Students take a wide variety of courses over the four years, and they all add to the depth of their journey. In many instances, students find passion in areas that they may not have discovered otherwise!

This year's Grad Highlight Video so you can see what to look forward to 😊

 [2022-2023 Heritage Woods Highlight Video.mov](#)

Have a great summer. Go Kodiaks!

Todd Clerkson  
Principal  
HWSS