

## Greetings and Welcome Back École **Citadel Middle School Community.** ʔəmí ce:p

Another school year is before us, and we are excited at the arrival of our students and start to a brand-new school year. We hope you have all enjoyed a very restful summer full of family, friends, laughter, and outdoor adventures. We look forward to meeting you all and sharing our days with all your children over the next 10, 20 or 30 months of Middle School. Hopefully our students are excited to be heading back to school...it will be worth it! We are all looking forward to getting back at it, creating new memories, helping students be who they are, focusing on belonging, and building relationships and community together.

A very big welcome to those who are new to École Citadel Middle. Middle school is a wonderful place to live and learn. We invite you to get involved in the many opportunities that are available to our students, parents, and community members. For our returning students, I challenge you to bring your knowledge, energy and leadership as we endeavour to create a culture that is inclusive, diverse and truly amazing!

Please read the information below in this update carefully and stay up to date with school events by checking our website regularly and reviewing email communications and notifications from both the office and your classroom teachers. I have attached a few important documents to this introductory email that we will refer to several times in the coming weeks.

1. **Ecole Citadel Middle School Code of Conduct**
2. **Student Handbook**
3. **Year Long Calendar of Events** (updated regularly)

### **First Day of School and Opening Week**

Preparations have been made for an exciting year and we look forward to greeting all our students, new and experienced! Here is the shape of the day for our first day back on Tuesday September 5, 2023.

All Students will attend for a short time from 9:30 – 10:15 AM. It is very important that all children attend. If your child will be attending École Citadel Middle School in 2024-2025, but cannot make it to school on the first day, please let us know by contacting the school office by phone, 604-945-6187, or email [102-Secretary@sd43.bc.ca](mailto:102-Secretary@sd43.bc.ca)

We will just be taking accurate attendance and giving some instructions for their first full day Wednesday September 3rd. Upon arrival students will attend in their community meeting areas displayed below. An email will be sent out to you Friday August 30th, 2024, identifying which community your child will be a part of. These Community names are just placeholders as we will be revealing new community/team names with our students in the first week back.

**Green Group – meet students in AMPHITHEATRE**

**Red Group – meet students in the LIBRARY LEARNING COMMONS**

**Blue Group – meet students in the courtyard COURTYARD**

**Purple Group – meet students in ROOMS 101/102/103 MAIN FLOOR**

**Orange Group – meet students in the GYM**

\*\* There will be staff on hand to help with any questions students may have. Please see the [BELL SCHEDULE](#) that will begin officially on Wednesday September 4<sup>th</sup>. It is included in the Student Handbook attached and on our website. Please note Wednesdays are our late start days where staff gather for some collaboration time. Our first few days back will be committed to community building in our Communities/Teams focussing on activities that focus on our school vision, shared values, and themes for the year.

#### **Parking, Transportation and Student Safety**

There are only a few drop off and pick up spaces available in our traffic round about. Please be mindful that our parking lot is a **staff only parking lot** and spaces are limited. Please drive cautiously and think about student safety first. We strongly suggest you plan accordingly in the first few days and perhaps walk to school with your children, where possible. Drop off in the round about will likely be busy and we would love to reduce the congestion and do our part to be sensitive to the environment! Please take some time to remind your children about traffic safety and being mindful of crosswalks and sidewalk use. Student safety is of utmost importance to all of us, so please consider doing your best to support our plan. We all thank you.

#### **Timely Arrival**

Please assist your child in arriving to school on time. We have adjusted the schedule ahead five minutes this year to promote more timely arrivals. Schedules and routines are extremely important to a student's development and academic achievement as key concepts and lessons begin promptly at 8:45 AM. If your child will be late or absent please fill in an "[Absence Report](#)", or contact the school office by phone, 604-945-6187.

Our secretary "call back" is in place to help ensure the safety of our children and we call all contact numbers in priority sequence if a child is not accounted for. Please assist us by ensuring that you have called in to report your child's absence.

#### **Class Placement**

It is our goal to have classes confirmed by Friday, September 6<sup>th</sup> 2024. However, September frequently brings surprises with changes in enrolment, so it is possible that students will continue to meet in communities for the duration of the first week of classes and possibly

beyond. Our opening week(s) are devoted to community building on many levels allowing students and teachers to develop school and Community /Team spirit and get to know each other. School expectations for personal and social responsibility will be reviewed in all areas of the school as we highlight our core values of ***Take Care of Ourselves, Take Care of Others and Take Care of this Place***, at École Citadel Middle School. This year we will focus more on identity and belonging as we share activities across classrooms and learning communities. Start up weeks at the Middle Level are very important in establishing culture and commitment to our vision and goals, and of course have some fun!

### **School Supplies**

Students will be told on Tuesday what supplies they will need to bring over the course of the first week. It is likely that only the basic pencil box with something to write and colour with will be required. You can review our school supply list on our website here: [Citadel School Supply Lists](#)

### **BYOD (Bring Your Own Device)**

Technology is an incredible tool that supports learning, and we want to ensure students have easy access to it on a regular and timely basis. This does not mean their entire days will be in front of a screen. We will continue to have clear expectations for technology use that include **“Tech Free Breaks”** at Nutrition Break, Lunch, before and after school in the building. This includes all cell phones and personal devices to be stored away when not in use supporting learning in the classroom. More information will be coming to all of you providing details on our process and ideas about how best to make it work for your family. Please stay tuned. If you have yet to purchase a laptop for your child, do not worry. Your child will not need their computer at school until the second week of September once we have our school year rolling along and students are finalized in their core classes.

### **Lunches**

Students will not require a lunch on the first day (Tuesday), but beginning on **Wednesday September 4th, please send your child with a snack, lunch and refillable water bottle** in the morning. If for some reason you need to drop off a lunch for your child, it can be left at the office for your child to pick up during their non-instructional times. We will begin our year with students getting some time to eat their lunches inside and then **getting outside, RAIN or SHINE for some fresh air**. Fresh air and getting outside is crucial to student development and maximizing learning.

### **Communication**

Announcements that are made each morning at the school are posted on our website daily to facilitate shared communication between the classrooms and our school community. Parents with messages for their children are asked to contact the office. Notifications of these messages will be passed on to the student during Nutrition Break, Lunch time or at the end of the day. We are protective of the learning environment for all of our students, and it is not appropriate to interrupt classes with messages concerning social arrangements. We also ask parents to respect our technology expectations and **not to text**

**or contact** their child directly by cell phone during the school day. They **WILL NOT** be able to respond as their phones will be away in lockers or in teacher cabinets in classrooms. Messages sent through the office are always the best way to go. We will respond to any emergency messages promptly. Please help us support the need to keep cell phones away during the school day. Thank you.

### **Early Dismissal**

Whenever possible, please make appointments for your child outside of school hours. If you do need to pick up your child early, **we ask that you advise your child, your child's teacher and the office in advance** so that the student is ready to leave without interrupting their classmates. All students must sign out in person at the office before leaving school property. Students must have permission to leave before they will be allowed to sign out. Permission may be in the form of a phone call or email to the office, or a note. This year we will be ending five minutes later at 3 PM every day and we expect students to be in class until the end of the day. Please plan your day accordingly as we will not be dismissing students early on a regular basis to make an earlier bus.

**Parent involvement at the middle years level is crucial** in determining success for all learners. We know adolescence can be a time to gain some freedom from parents and guardians and we still want you all actively involved daily. In the coming days and weeks, we will encourage you to contact the school and even look into supporting some of our initiatives through the Citadel PAC or through your child's classroom. **Parents are essential partners in the learning process.**

We are all looking forward to meeting you all in the coming weeks and months. It is our pleasure to work with your children across their time at Middle School and we thank you for sharing them with us everyday.

**Kind Regards, hay čx<sup>w</sup> q'ə, A Bientot**

**Mark Clay, Principal & Rachel French, Vice Principal**

**Get Ready for an EXTRAORDINARY Year Ahead!**