

July 6, 2021

Good morning,

My name is Todd Clerkson, and I am the proud Principal of Heritage Woods Secondary School. We have an amazing school community and are excited about welcoming your kids! I am sure there are some nerves for both students and parents but rest assured that the vast majority of students will adjust quickly. For those that do need additional support we have a great team of teachers, counselors, administrators, and a youth worker that can help kids make the adjustment.

I know we just finished the year, but here is an outline of what the first day/week typically looks like, along with some other general information. I apologize for the amount of info. No need to over-analyze it as it is meant as a general overview. I will follow-up with more concise instructions and explanations closer to the start of the year.

****We are planning for a return to 'normal' next year. This means a semester system (students take 4 courses in each semester) and an expectation of full-time student attendance.**

***I have attached the bell schedule, calendar, and student handbook. The vast majority of students start in Period 2 (9:16 AM) and finish after Period 5 (3:27 PM).**

We also try to keep the school website as up to date as possible:

<http://www.sd43.bc.ca/school/heritagewoods/Pages/default.aspx#/=>

Tuesday, September 7, 2021:

**** Grade 9s: Will attend from 9:30 AM-12:00 PM (intro to school and procedures, tour, Advisory, **photos taken**, ...).**

- 8:30-9:30 AM (Gr 10s attend) students will attend Advisory and get photos taken.
- 9:30-10:30 AM (Gr 11s attend) students will attend Advisory and get photos taken.
- 10:30-11:30 AM (Gr 12s attend) students will attend Advisory and get photos taken.

Bell Schedule for Wed.-Fri.:

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

Forms and Fees:

As we will be returning to regular activities, there will be a \$45 activity fee again next year. Payments will be made on-line. Details to follow in August.

Lockers:

We use an on-line locker assignment system.

***It 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!

Students use their student number as their password (the number can be found on their Student ID Cards from Grade 8). If you do not have the student number our office staff can provide it for you.

School Supplies:

Students should just bring basic supplies to start with (binder, paper, pen, pencil, ...). Individual teachers will specify if other items are required.

Student Schedules and Course Changes:

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).

When will my child get their course schedule?

Students will receive their schedules on the first day of school (September 7th).

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.

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.**

****Currently Agility and Athletic Training are full and will not be offered to Grade 9 students. It is an extra course so re-programming will not be necessary.**

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.

Course Change Process

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)
- did not 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

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 grade 12 many students talk about how their passion ended up coming from a course they never would have expected.

Bring Your Own Device:

HWSS is a full 1-to-1 laptop school. Students bring their own laptops to enhance their learning. All Grade 9s will take a course called *Applications of Digital Literacy 10*. The goal is to teach students digital fluencies which will enhance their learning while also teaching them about ethical on-line behaviour and internet safety.

*The course will also include the development of an on-line portfolio which students will build on over their 4 years at HWSS and culminate with their Capstone Project in their Grade 12 year. We also expect to use a similar platform to document students' self-assessments of Core Competencies.

We understand that most of our feeder schools are already participating in one-to-one programs so many students will already have devices. Minimum requirements would typically be a computer that is not more than 3 years old. If it is a PC it needs to at least run Windows 7 or if it is a Mac, it should run a newer version of IOS or OSX.

*We do not want you to go out and spend a ton of money. All students need is something with decent processing speed and the ability to connect to the internet.

If you cannot afford to purchase a device:

If your family has explored purchasing options but are not able to obtain a device, please contact me. We will create a list of students in need of devices and do our best to provide access to a device for the school year. Since the school will own those devices, students will be responsible for returning them at the end of the school year and will be responsible for any loss or damage.

WE ARE KODIAKS!

We will also be providing new students with a WE ARE KODIAKS t-shirt to welcome them into our school community.

** Here are some videos that will give you some positive vibes about HWSS, including one related to Grad – your kids will be there before you know it – time flies!

<https://www.sd43.bc.ca/school/heritagewoods/Videos/HWSS--1%20Word.mp4>

<https://www.sd43.bc.ca/school/heritagewoods/ layouts/15/Lightbox.aspx?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.sd43.bc.ca%2Fschool%2Fheritagewoods%2FVideos%2FKodiak%20Spirit%20Assembly%20Video.mp4> (click Download after window opens).

<http://www.sd43.bc.ca/school/heritagewoods/ layouts/15/download.aspx?SourceUrl=/school%2Fheritagewoods%2FPublications%2fHWSS+Grad+2019+Highlight+Video.mp4>

I will follow-up with more information closer to the start of the school year.

Have a great summer!
Todd Clerkson
Principal
HWSS

