

# Welcome To Hillcrest Middle School



2015-2016



## HILLCREST MIDDLE SCHOOL

<http://www.sd43.bc.ca/middle/hillcrest/Pages/default.aspx>



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Nadine Tambellini, Principal  
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### MISSION STATEMENT

The Hillcrest School Community is committed to providing educational opportunities in a safe and respectful environment that encourages students to become responsible life-long learners, both individually and cooperatively.

### SCHOOL GOAL:

#### *Improve social responsibility skills*

Our new school goal this year is to improve student personal and social responsibility skills. Based on student performance, assessments and teacher observations our school is dedicated to developing and increasing our students' skills in the areas of personal and social responsibility with the emphasis on 'Building Community' within the school and surrounding community. Hillcrest teachers will continue using some innovative and fun approaches to teach students in this area such as focusing on the language and lessons of *The 7 Habits of Successful Teens*.

### ADMINISTRATOR'S WELCOME:

*Welcome to our school! We are proud to welcome you to Hillcrest Middle and look forward to getting to know you and your child. We are very proud of our middle school and would like to share some information that we hope will make your transition to our school as easy as possible. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions about our school.*

Miss Nadine Tambellini

## **HILLCREST MIDDLE SCHOOL PROVIDES:**

- A friendly, inviting, and academically challenging school climate.
- Abundant opportunities to build positive relationships between and among students and teachers.
- Small communities of learners where groups know each other well, and where learning experiences are interrelated and meaningful.
- A caring adult advisor or mentor who knows and is concerned about each student's academic progress and adjustment to school and life.
- An enthusiastic staff providing programs designed to help students reach their potential.
- An environment that capitalizes on the curiosity and creativity of students and displays student projects, art work, and reports.
- Flexible grouping of students to provide the best learning environment for students of varying abilities, interests and rates of learning.
- An activity program that encourages student participation in sports and interest-centred activities.
- Extensive opportunities for students to explore, experiment, and discover.
- A positive discipline program that guides students in becoming responsible for their own behaviour.
- Social experiences appropriate for the age level.
- Partnership with families and communities.
- A culture that celebrates human diversity and promotes tolerance among students and adults from diverse backgrounds.

## **POSITIVE BEHAVIOURAL SUPPORT**

Hillcrest Middle School has a Positive Behavioural Support program that has a clear set of behaviour expectations that allows discipline to be an educational process. Positive behaviours are recognized and reinforced through the Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens. Rights and responsibilities are emphasized as a means of teaching responsible citizenship. Respect for others, for oneself and for the environment are modelled by the staff and expected of the students.

## **TEAMING**

Hillcrest Middle School is very fortunate to have a talented, enthusiastic, and dedicated staff. The school is made up of 6 teams. Each team is a "school within a school" with its own team leader and student support staff.

TEAMING is an instructional organization in which two or more teachers pool their resources, interests, expertise and knowledge of students and share:

- The responsibility for planning, teaching, and evaluating curriculum and instruction in more than one academic area
- The same group of students
- The same schedule
- The same area of the building

TEAMING allows for a wider use of expertise and the special talents of each teacher.

TEAMING increases the opportunity for teachers to get to know students better and to share student information and classroom observations.

TEAMING provides the opportunity to share ideas and plans and gives more input into the use of time, schedules, facilities and curriculum materials.

TEAMING allows for the development of flexible schedules that can change daily, if necessary, and class sizes and groups that can change frequently.

TEAMING gives students and teachers the feeling of belonging to a small group which has common goals and whose members are supportive of each other.

TEAMING leads to discipline becoming a shared endeavour and, as a result, overall school discipline and student behaviour improve.

TEAMING provides an opportunity for teachers to learn more about curriculum areas and, in the process, cross subject-matter boundaries to develop interdisciplinary teaching units.

TEAMING results in a more productive classroom/school environment. It has the potential to deal with affective areas (human relations, responsibility, citizenship, etc.) in which middle school students have need.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

### **COUNSELLING INFORMATION**

Counselling services are available to students for personal and educational concerns. Our counsellor and youth worker are available on a drop-in basis before and after school as well as at nutrition and lunch breaks. During class time, students are encouraged to set up an appointment. Parents with concerns regarding their child's progress, program of study and social and emotional wellbeing are encouraged to contact our counsellor and/or the core teacher at any time.

### **STUDENT SERVICES**

The purpose of the Student Services team is to assist teachers in meeting the diverse needs of all students within their classrooms. Adapting or modifying content or process are approaches we use to ensure the inclusion of all students in the classroom. In other cases, students may benefit from one-to-one or small group instruction in the Student Services Learning Centre.

***Programming is determined by the needs of the student in collaboration with parents and the classroom teacher.*** The Student Services team includes resource teachers (one assigned to each team), and the Special Education Assistants. Services offered through Student Services include E.A.L., Learning Assistance, Gifted and Resource Room. Students identified and receiving extensive and long term support require an Individual Education Plan outlining the program adaptations and modifications. The success of a student's program, achievement or behaviour is evaluated on a regular basis. If success is not forthcoming, the Case Management team is asked to provide more suggestions either for school-based interventions, such as home communication books.

Our ultimate goal is to have each student achieve his/her full potential. Please feel free to contact the Student Services teacher on your child's team if you have any inquiries or concerns.

### **WHAT WILL THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL BE LIKE?**

The first day of school can be a little scary trying to find classrooms, and meet new teachers. Your teachers know how you feel! Relax! We'll help you every step of the way. Don't forget that the first day of school in September will only be 45 minutes to an hour long and you should leave your supplies at home that day. **DO NOT BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP.** There will be teachers and older students to help you. More information regarding times and activity fees will be provided to parents through an email or letter in the week prior to the start of school.

### **WHAT SHOULD I BRING TO SCHOOL ON MY FIRST FULL DAY?**

You should come prepared with your school supplies. You will also need a lunch. Please be sure you have the correct supplies per the list sent home in the week prior to the start of school and posted on our website.

### **WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE FIRST DAY AND WEEK OF SCHOOL?**

In the week prior to the start of school, your child will receive an email or letter from the school with information about the first day of school including what time to be at school and where to meet. For students, the first day is 45 minutes. The second day of school will be a regular scheduled day, starting at 8:35 and ending at 2:55. Students do not need to bring any materials on the first day of school. For the first few days, students will be involved in team and school orientation activities so the students can get to know the school and staff can get to know the students.

### **HOW BIG IS HILLCREST MIDDLE?**

- We currently have 580 students in Grades six through eight
- Our school is big, but it is divided into teams designed to make the transition from the smaller elementary school smoother for our incoming students

### **WHAT ARE STUDENT ACTIVITY FEES?**

All middle school students in our district pay a student activity fee which covers the cost of the lock and locker rental, a student agenda, and materials for some explorations courses such as technology education. This year, the fee is \$35. Students will be asked to pay their student activity fee during the first week of school. If you have questions about paying the activity fee, please feel free to contact our office to arrange for alternate payment if necessary.

### **WHAT TIME WILL SCHOOL START?**

School starts at 8:35 am and ends at 2:55 pm. The call in bell rings at 8:20 am.

#### **Class and Bell schedule**

8:20	Call In Bell
8:35	Block A
8:40	Attendance Bell
9:30	Block B (No Bell)
10:20	Nutrition Break
10:35	Block C
10:40	Attendance Bell
11:30	Block D (No Bell)
12:20	Lunch
1:05	Block E
1:10	Attendance Bell
2:00	Block F (No Bell)
2:55	Dismissal

From time to time we use alternate bell schedules for early dismissals or assemblies but this is the main bell schedule we use.

### **WILL I KNOW ANYONE IN MY CLASS?**

Yes, you will have friends placed in your homeroom class and “community”. You will also make many new friends as well you can visit other friends from other classes at recess and lunch.

### **CAN I CHOOSE MY CHILD'S TEACHER?**

The teachers at Hillcrest spend an enormous amount of time building balanced classes which are designed to meet the needs of our students. Because of the complexity of this task, we do not accept requests for specific teachers. We do, however, accept requests which describe a type of learning environment which your child tends to learn best in. For example, if your child tends to learn better in a more structured learning environment, we will do our best to accommodate your request. If you would like to make a learning environment request regarding your child's placement, please contact Miss Tambellini by mid-May.

### **WHAT DO YOU DO TO EASE THE TRANSITION FROM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TO MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS?**

- Students will have several opportunities to visit our school during the spring
- The Principal and/or Vice-Principal will meet with students at each elementary school to give them a flavour for middle school
- The counselor and student services teachers will visit each elementary school to meet with students
- The counselor and students services teachers will visit each elementary school to meet with each child's teacher to discuss programming, learning needs, etc.
- We host an annual Open House each spring, in which parents and students are invited to tour our school and meet our wonderful staff
- We invite students to Hillcrest to experience an afternoon of fine arts presented by our current students

### **ARE THERE SCHOOL BUSES?**

- The school district does not provide bus service for any students.

### **HOW DOES THE TIMETABLE WORK?**

- Each day has six 50 minute periods or blocks
- Five of those blocks are spent in the team in core classes and include Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, Math, French, P.E., and HACE (Health and Career Education)
- One of the blocks is spent in explorations class (Tech Ed, Home Ec, Dramus, and Art) from Mondays to Thursdays

### **WHAT ARE TEAMS?**

- Our middle school is divided up into schools within a school, or 'teams'
- Each team is usually made up of four classes of students and teachers
- Students spend the majority of their day within the team area, working with the same group of students and teachers
- In grade six and seven, students will spend the majority of their day with one or two teachers, depending on the team
- There are 5 teams at Hillcrest – one grade eight team, three grade six/seven teams, and one MACC grade six, seven, and eight team
- All six and seven classes are 'blended', meaning there is a mixture of grade six and seven students in each class
- Teachers from each team meet to plan curriculum together and organize team events such as field trips, team assemblies, etc.

### **WHAT IS A STUDENT AGENDA/PLANNER?**

It is a daily organizer where you will keep track of assignments, due dates, tests and other information. It also contains important information about school rules, routine and policies so be sure to carry it with you to each of your classes.

### **WILL I HAVE HOMEWORK?**

You will have homework most nights and the amount will vary, but expect an average of 45 minutes to an hour per night. In grade 8 the amount of homework will increase. You should write your assignments in your agenda book so you can remember them. This is the key to staying organized. If your teachers don't assign homework, take some time in the evening to review your notes, read, review on-going projects, and organize your notebooks. **STAY UP-TO-DATE!** Remember the harder you work during class the less homework you will have at night.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF I'M LATE?**

Try not to be late but if you are **sign in at the office**. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR YOUR SAFETY. Bring a note from your parent/guardian excusing your tardiness. Try to arrive at school by 8:20 am so you can go to your locker, get prepared and be in your class by the attendance bell at 8:40 am.

### **WHAT DO I DO IF I'M GOING TO BE ABSENT?**

Your parent/guardian should call the school (604) 936-4237 or submit an absence electronically on our public website using the 'eform' button and selecting the absence report option. Parents can also leave a message on the answering machine.

After 8:00 am they may speak to a secretary, or send an email directly to the office staff. If the school doesn't receive a call, then we must telephone your parent/guardian in order to ensure that you are safe. Students who are absent for 2 or more days should contact the school for homework. Parents should be aware that teachers are not always able to provide hand-out materials for student absences and certain classes have their homework posted on our public website.

### **WHAT DO I DO IF I NEED TO LEAVE EARLY?**

Bring a note from your parent/guardian to show your teacher. Check with your teacher and then sign out at the office when you leave. Arrange with your parent/guardian to meet you at the office, because they must sign you out before you leave the school.

### **WHAT DO I DO IF I'M ILL?**

Ask your teacher for permission to go to the office. Office staff will assist in contacting your parent or sign you in to the medical room.

### **WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE A LOCK OR LOCKER PROBLEM?**

Each student is assigned a lock and locker at the beginning of the year. If a student has a problem during the year they should see their core teacher or check with the office staff.

### **WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE LOST SOMETHING?**

Check the Lost and Found. If it is something small (glasses, jewellery) check at the office.

### **WHAT IF I RIDE MY BIKE OR SCOOTER TO SCHOOL?**

Bike racks are available near the portables and also in the south courtyard. The latter location is the most secure. Students need to lock their bikes in the bike racks during the school day.

## **CAN STUDENTS LEAVE THE SCHOOL GROUNDS DURING THE DAY?**

Absolutely not. Part of our overall student safety plan is knowing where all our students are during the day. Students may not leave the school grounds unless they have a note from their parent giving them permission. We treat this very seriously and parents of students who choose to leave the grounds without permission will be contacted.

## **WHAT HAPPENS AT LUNCH IN MIDDLE SCHOOL?**

- Students can eat in the cafeteria or in most classrooms
- We have many activities offered at lunch times – intramurals and games room and we encourage students to bring a friend and join in competitions and games
- the library is usually open at lunch time
- we have an adventure playground which is developmentally appropriate for our young adolescents
- our plan is to continue to work on providing more outdoor activity areas in the near future

## **WHAT IF I WOULD LIKE A SNACK?**

There are vending machines that sell juice and healthy snacks at nutrition break, lunch and after school. Students are not to go to the vending machines during class time or between classes. Our cafeteria is open during lunch time and sells lunches and snacks. Also, hot water is free if you bring your own instant noodles. There are also free microwave ovens. We do not supply cutlery.

## **CAN YOU CHEW GUM DURING SCHOOL?**

No. You are not allowed to chew gum during school. Gum makes an unbelievable mess in a building. If you get caught chewing gum once, you will be asked to take it out. After that, you will have to face the consequences of the individual teacher. Each teacher has his/her own set of consequences.

## **HOW DOES COMMUNICATION WORK AT MIDDLE SCHOOL?**

- You should receive a school newsletter once a week on Fridays, which will outline what has been happening around the school and inform you about upcoming events and information from our Parents' Advisory Council once a month – we encourage you to become involved in your middle school PAC!
- We have a very detailed website which is updated on a weekly basis-check it out at [www2.sd43.bc.ca/hillcrest/](http://www2.sd43.bc.ca/hillcrest/)
- Students are expected to use a daily planner or agenda, in which homework, messages, and reminders are recorded
- If you have a question or a concern about something that is happening in the classroom, please contact the teacher
- If you have a question or concern about something that happens in a common area, on the way to and from school, etc. please contact the Principal or Vice-Principal

## **HOW DOES REPORTING WORK AT MIDDLE SCHOOL?**

- You will continue to receive three formal core report cards per year which will contain letter grades, effort marks, and structured anecdotal comments
- You will also receive two informal reports – one is usually an interim checklist and the other may be a student LED conference or a second checklist report
- You will also receive a separate report for explorations subjects which gives a letter grade, effort mark and one or two comments
- We generally have parent teacher conferences in the first term for all students



### **WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I BELIEVE MY CHILD IS BEING BULLIED AT SCHOOL?**

According to school and ministry surveys, the great majority of our students report that they feel very safe while at our school. Our staff work very hard to create and maintain a safe and respectful learning environment. Occasionally however, a student may feel that they are not safe at school because of another student's actions. If this happens to your child, please take the time to listen carefully to what your child has to say, then contact the school. If the incidents are occurring in class, please contact the applicable teacher. If the incidents are occurring outside of class, please contact the Vice-Principal or Principal.

### **IS THERE A LOT OF PEER PRESSURE TO DO THINGS THAT YOU SHOULDN'T DO?**

Most of the students say that their friends don't pressure them into doing things they do not want to do. But, sometimes other kids can make things awkward. You need to remember to do only what you are comfortable with and what you know your family thinks is right. Friends who make their friendship conditional upon you doing or saying things you don't want to, are not really true friends. We have lots of people at Hillcrest to help you deal with peer pressure. These include: noon hour supervisors, counsellor, youth worker, administrators, and teachers. Please come and talk to us if you are feeling uncomfortable.

### **WHO CAN YOU TALK TO IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM?**

If you have a problem, you can talk to the school counsellor, the youth worker, a school administrator, or a teacher that you trust. They are all good listeners.

### **WHAT IS THE DRESS CODE AT HILLCREST MIDDLE SCHOOL?**

At Hillcrest you can wear almost anything you like, if it is in good taste. There are only a few restrictions. Hats, shirts that advertise drugs, alcohol, cigarettes or shirts with foul language are not allowed. You need to dress appropriately, which means that clothes that reveal too much of your body or underwear (crop tops, halter tops, 'skimpy' tank tops, short t-shirts, spaghetti straps, tiny miniskirts, etc.) are not allowed. No one wants to see your underwear or too much skin.

### **DOES HILLCREST MIDDLE SCHOOL HAVE A BAND OR CHOIR?**

Hillcrest Middle school has both beginner and advanced bands. They meet at 7:45 am before school starts 2 times each week. Hillcrest also has choir and they meet twice a week, once at 7:45 am before school starts and once at lunch. These are considered to be additional classes and you will get a mark for band and/or choir on your report card. There is an important meeting for parents at the beginning of the school year. Further details regarding date, time, and location will be outlined during the first week. Let us know immediately, if you wish to join the band and/or choir.

### **WILL I BE 'CUT' FROM A SCHOOL ATHLETIC TEAM?**

No! We have a 'no cut' policy. If you make practices and work hard you will play for a team.

### **WHAT TYPES OF ACTIVITIES DOES THE SCHOOL HAVE?**

Hillcrest has many teams, clubs and activities. There are a number of dances, spirit days, assemblies, and other special events throughout the year. Join a team or club and have fun and make friends. The key to enjoying your middle and high school years and being successful is GETTING INVOLVED!

## **SOME ACTIVITIES TYPICALLY OFFERED AT HILLCREST MIDDLE SCHOOL**

- Badminton
- Band
- Basketball
- Choir
- Drama
- First Nations
- Go Girls
- Intramurals
- KVR Bike Trip
- Leadership
- Library
- Me to We
- Recycling
- Skiing/snowboarding
- Spirit Squad
- Swim Club
- Table tennis
- Track & Field
- Triathlon
- Volleyball
- Wrestling

## **PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Hillcrest Middle School has a very active PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL. Please check the newsletters and our public website for the dates of the PAC meetings. These meetings are general/executive meetings and are open to all parents of Hillcrest Middle School.

### **The PAC is made up of the following positions:**

Chairperson

Vice Chair

Past Chair

Secretary

Treasurer

Fundraising Co-ordinator

Parent Education Co-ordinator

D.P.A.C. Representative

Health & Safety

It is well documented that students of parents who are active in the school do well, so we hope that we see lots of parents taking advantage of these opportunities by getting active in PAC or volunteering for other types of involvement.



### **SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

Hillcrest Middle School is situated near Mundy Park on Como Lake Avenue and Thermal Drive. Opened in September 1999 to accommodate grades 6-7 and in September 2000 for grades 6-8. Two portables have been added to the campus to accommodate the growth, the full and part time staff includes more than 60 educators and support staff.

Hillcrest Middle School is well-equipped to offer an extensive educational program. In addition to regular classrooms, the facility includes a large Gymnasium, multipurpose room, Library, Learning Resource Centres, Counselling Centre, Music/Band room, two Computer labs, Drama room, Home Arts room, Art room, Technology Design lab, and Technology shop.

Our community is very diverse with a multitude of cultural backgrounds, native languages, and socio-economic levels.

**“A Journey to Success”**