



September 6, 2014

School Opening Update and Port Moody Secondary Information

Students, parents and guardians,

I am writing this letter to provide students and parents with some information regarding school start-up, registration day processes, and ideas to support student learning during the teacher strike and government lockout action.

At this time we do not have a confirmed date for school opening for the first day of school. The school districts are waiting for direction to open schools. When we receive this information, our Superintendent, Mr. Tom Grant, will send an official letter to school principals to email to parents and guardians, and post on school's websites. Port Moody Secondary's website is www.pmsblues.net. The school district will also post the letter on the district website www.my43.bc.ca. Please continue to check the school's website for the updates.

Over this week, I have spoken with parents regarding school timetables and suggestions to support their child's learning during this job action.

Student timetables: At this time our vice principals are working diligently to address multiple timetabling requirements: balancing academic courses in each semester, adjusting courses due to repeating a subject, and summer learning course work completed or not completed. At the same time, we are reviewing class size and composition. Usually this work is completed in June and prior to school opening in August by our counsellors, learning support teachers and administration. Since this did not occur, we are completing this work. Therefore, we do not have any finalized student timetables and we are unable to provide them to students or parents at this time.

Concerns due to late a school start-up: We understand that for students the delay of school start-up can be very worrisome with concerns regarding completion of course curriculum in time to write provincial and International Baccalaureate exams, and learn the curriculum at each grade level. When schools reopen please be assured that all staff will be working together to review curricular outcomes and teaching approaches to ensure that all students are able to demonstrate the necessary learning to meet their course work towards graduation, as well as their personal long term goals and plans.

Preparation prior to school opening: Our suggestion is for students to review last year's academic courses, particularly English, Social Studies, Mathematics and Science for grades 9 and 10 students. Senior students should review past learning relevant to this year's courses that were selected. This would include the core academic courses, as well as elective courses such as French 11 or Economics 11 for preparation of the grade 12 level course. By reviewing the classroom notes, assignments and quizzes, students will feel more confident. This preparation may help reduce anxiety and sharpen understanding of learning concepts from last year.

In addition, we have received some helpful information regarding resources on-line that have been recommended for all learners. Please see the following sites:

The primary resource is the Ministry of Education Parent site, *BC Parent Info*, which includes many useful resources for all grade levels as well as *OpenSchool BC* online course material. The Learning Resources page can be found at <http://bcparentinfo.ca/learning-resources/>

We further recommend two specific resources at LearnNowBC:

- o <http://www.learnnowbc.ca/LearningResources.aspx> - includes more resources, often grade specific, including digital activities and videos
- o <http://www.learnnowbc.ca/studycentre/default.aspx> – offers free online tutoring services (beginning Sept 7th)

Port Moody Secondary School opening and school start-up: When the date for opening the school is confirmed, as mentioned earlier in this letter, you will receive a message from the Superintendent and Port Moody Secondary School. With the school message, there will be further information about the **“Look of the First Day and Week”**. The first day is traditionally a one hour “Registration Day” where grade 9 and 10 students arrive for a 10 am Phoenix (homeroom) class and grade 11 and 12s meet at 1 pm. At this time we hand out agendas, lockers, student schedules, and collect start-up information.

The **“Start-up Package”** was mailed home to you with forms to complete. If you did not receive a package, the *Port Moody Secondary August Newsletter and Start-up Package* is posted on the left side of the school website page under “announcements”. Please go to www.pmsblues.net. On this registration day, students are asked to bring all of the requested parent signature documents and the white envelope to the Phoenix class. We appreciate your assistance with returning these forms as quickly as possible. For further assistance please contact the Port Moody Secondary School office at 604 939 6656.

Yours truly,

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