



<https://gss.sd42.ca/>

Reflecting on a Year in COVID.

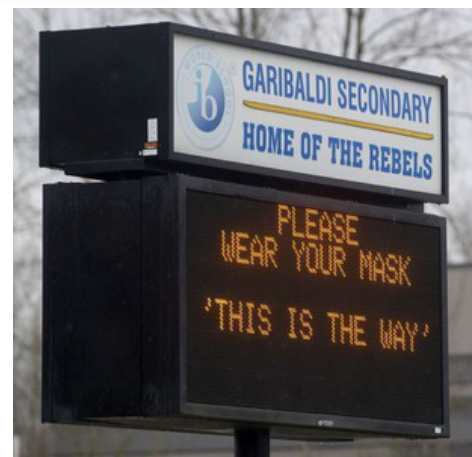
The COVID pandemic has created a great many challenges. It has been a challenge for every member of our school community. Together staff, students and parents have worked to keep one another safe. Together we have worked to make adjustments to our daily flow and routine, increasing the amount of contact cleaning, hand sanitation, spacing, and have changed several instructional practices in favour of practices with more personal spacing where and when possible. This has been a great challenge for our instructional staff.

Every day more than 1050 people enter our school. We have very few “forgotten” masks, less than 5 a day, and have an increasing percentage of students who choose to wear their masks in classroom environments where provincial regulations make masks optional. Mask compliance in the common areas is very close to 100%, and the exceptions are most often innocent mistakes as we all forget once in a while.

On January 31, 2021 GSS was identified as the first public school in BC to have an identified case of a COVID variant. At the time Fraser Health leadership tasked more than 80 staff and students to receive immediate testing. I believe it is a testament to the leadership of the school staff that all of the tests were negative. It is also important to recognize the leadership of Fraser Health that supported our community in moving the staff and students to the front of testing availability and developed new practices in a timely and supportive manner. We are indeed fortunate to live where we live and be able to access support for our greater community health.

We are continuing to work hard to support overall community health. Please support us in having positive conversations at home. We know the school community has been challenged this year, with many of the activities that are our heart and soul absent or modified. We look forward to their return, but until then, we need to maintain our positive pace. We need to continue to do the little things that are asked of us, and be sincere in our efforts to keep our school and families safe.

Respectfully,
Ian Liversidge



Parent Communication:

Maintaining contact with parents and students is more important than ever.

We are update the Gazette on the school website daily. Additionally information from the school district and the Province is posted to the GSS Main Page.

The Parent Portal is essential. Please ensure that messages from the portal do not move to your email spam folder.

Take Care
Be Safe
Be in contact as necessary.



Report Cards coming:

Report cards will be electronically issued April 30th. Please be sure to download the report card in its digital format from the MyClass System, which will be available for 30 days.

We do care about each student's pace and progress at school. Please feel free to contact teachers by email, or if you have a concern that is greater than a single teacher or subject, be sure to be in contact with the grade counsellor or grade administrator as necessary.

Improvements mid-year are best supported with good planning and good communication. We encourage you to have a conversation with your child about setting realistic goals for improvement.

Course Planning Well Underway

Students have completed selecting which courses they plan to take for the 2021 - 2022 school year. Course information presentations were done for each grade and the course information has been posted to the web at: <https://gss.sd42.ca/students/course-selection>

To complete their course selection, students met individually with a counsellor, vice principal or principal to have their data entered.

While changes can be made at a later date, the early data helps support school planning. Late changes often cannot be completely accommodated. So please be prompt in any changes.

If you have any questions regarding course selection and/or program choices please contact your student's counsellor.

Garibaldi IB Diploma Programme

Garibaldi is one of only 14 public British Columbia International Baccalaureate World Schools. The IB Diploma Program (IB DP) offers students the opportunity to complete their high school education in an internationally-recognized and internationally-focused program that will open many doors to the world of post-secondary education. Even more importantly, the IB Diploma Program exposes students to the wider, international world of lifelong learning by focusing on both depth and breadth of learning in all subject areas.

Students in the IB Diploma Program are given a unique education. They will:

- be encouraged to think independently and drive their own learning.
 - become knowledgeable, global minded citizens.
 - become more culturally aware, through the development of a second language, and through the international focus of the curriculum.
 - be able to engage with people in an increasingly globalized, rapidly changing world.
- The IB Diploma Program is recognized worldwide as the very best preparation for university and college bound students. Students who participate in the Diploma Program unanimously report that their first year at university is much less difficult and stressful because of their experiences in IB DP.

Students considering IB should plan for an academic pathway. While there are no specific required courses, it is important that students planning on a full IB Diploma remain in the Pre Calculus math stream and French. GSS offers a Guided Inquiry elective 9 that supports a positive progression to the grade 11 start of the DP programme.

The DP programme at GSS does not have an admissions assessment. We maintain an open policy supporting students who wish to enter as a full diploma student or certificate student, taking individual courses.

Complete information can be found online at: <https://gssib.sd42.ca>





GSS Yearbooks Remain for Sale.

We hope you are all keeping well in these trying times. We are working on having Yearbook completed on time. While we have sold many yearbooks, we still have about 50 books left to sell. They are sold on a first come, first serve basis. You can order them from the Parent Portal by completing the online form. This year's Yearbook more so than any other year, will be one that you truly want to have for your student or Grad.

BC Ministry of Education Satisfaction Survey - Parents

Each year, students in Grades 4, 7, 10 and 12, their parents in ALL B.C. public schools are invited to participate in an annual online satisfaction survey about their school experience.

The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete. **All responses are anonymous and confidential.**

The survey website: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/sat_survey/access.htm

No password is required.

SD42 Enhanced Cleaning in Schools – Vital Oxide

The health and safety of our students and staff is always our primary concern. In the context of the current COVID-19 pandemic, we have the added responsibility of ensuring that our facilities are cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the Provincial COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines for K-12 Settings.

The school district uses the Vital Oxide solution as part of its enhanced daily cleaning regimen implemented to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. It is hypoallergenic, biodegradable, fragrance-free, food-safe, and non-toxic. The product is registered with the Environmental Protection Agency and has one of the safest classifications possible while also killing 99.999% of bacteria and viruses within minutes.

The district initially used a bleach-based cleaner when schools reopened for in-classroom instruction in September but switched to the eco-friendly Vital Oxide in late October/early November to address feedback received from schools. Fraser Health has confirmed that this product is not hazardous and non-toxic, and is not expected to cause respiratory or skin irritation. Eye contact may cause mild irritation.

As always, if you have any concerns, please make sure to share these concerns with me. You can reach me at the school by email at iliversidge@sd42.ca. In rare instances where an adverse reaction does occur, the district can switch to a different hypoallergenic product for that classroom.

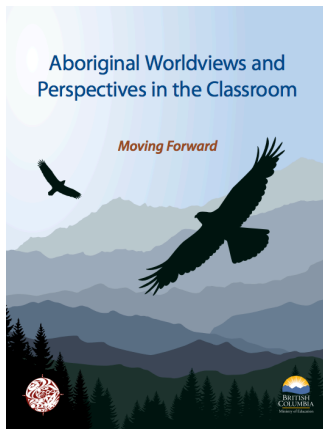
Grade 7 Day - May 26, 2021 7PM

This year there is a significant change in the Grade 7 Day event. This year the connection with the incoming grade 8 students will be done in an evening digital event. A zoom link and more information will be directly sent to the current Grade 7 families in the coming week.

The current grade 8 students will have a regular school day. In the past, one day in the last week of May, grade 7 students attended their new high school in place of the grade 8 student. This will not occur in the May 2021.

If your son or daughter is in grade 8 please ensure that they attend May 26th as it is a regular day.





First Peoples Principles of Learning.

There are 9 First People Principals of Learning. Each is unique and reflective of positive values we look to bring to our school community:

Learning involves patience and time

This principle reflects the awareness that knowledge and understanding is built over time, often requiring a recursive approach to teaching and learning. It reflects the understanding that Indigenous knowledge is the result of centuries of learning and teaching in by Indigenous peoples.

This principle directly supports the idea that learning is an individualistic process that cannot be rushed or arrived at according to a pre-determined schedule (including specific age). This refers to the understanding that learning happens when a person is ready for it, and that learning is most effective when it occurs in a setting where the learning can be applied in an authentic context. The need for patience and time is also a requirement to

develop thorough conceptual and transferable understandings, rather than surface level familiarity. In order to develop understanding, information needs to be examined/explored from multiple perspectives, in different contexts, and over time.

In First Peoples' contexts, this understanding of learning is also the result of cultural values of collaboration and taking the time needed to develop consensus. Collaboration requires that all people in a group contribute according to their specific skill sets, or "gifts". Through collaboration group members also learn from each other.

Traditionally, group decisions were often made through consensus rather than by voting, and this requires the time needed for everyone to have a say and be heard. It requires skilled negotiation, a process that also requires patience and time, and encourages people to listen to and understand differing perspectives. And while the process takes longer than a "majority wins" process, decisions that result from the consensus process tend to build stronger communities

From: <https://firstpeoplesprinciplesoflearning.wordpress.com/>

Mental Health Resources:

310 Mental Health Support -24/7 (emotional support):

<https://pathwaysbc.ca/programs/42>

BC Health Link:

<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/mental-health-substance-use/resources>

Pack in and Pack out - Reducing school waste

At the start of this school year we were very worried about the amount of garbage and waste that the new normal would create. This is due primarily to a recent reduction in the classroom number of garbage bins as SD 42 moved to a recycling based program several years ago . In September GSS asked students to please pack out their personal / lunch waste. Today, I believe this will be a positive legacy of the pandemic.

Everyday more than 600 people eat lunch, mostly outside. The amount of waste and litter, while not perfect, is much less than I expected. Thank you the families that have taken the pack in pack out mindset into your planning. It has made a difference.

Student teachers from UVIC, UBC and SFU

Building a school community means showing that the staff is active in the leading and leadership process. A great way to do this is to support student teachers in their journey. We also need to be sure to find a balance where teacher candidates are spread across grade and elective areas. This school year GSS has hosted teachers from UVIC, SFU and UBC. The provincial need for qualified teachers is increasing so we are fortunate that our staff is supporting a positive entrance into the workforce for several teacher candidates, and as a byproduct, we create a pool of new teachers, keeping SD 42 ahead of the challenging employment environment.

