

Thomas Haney Secondary School

FEBRUARY 2023

February 1st, 2023



A few highlights from January



January featured our grade 8 Peak Pod taking transit all the way to Stanley Park and then running 10km around the Seawall. The day featured stops at Siwash Rock and Lumberman's Arch at Stanley Park. It was an awesome day for students. Last week, Ms. Miguel's grade 9 Foods classes did a Food Truck project and invited classes to sample some amazing dishes and desserts such as Churros, Mochi, and Burrito Bowls to name just a few. January also saw the return of the Sr. Boys Basketball Thunder Class tournament with a 1:00pm Friday game with St. John's from Vancouver. The stands were packed with students and the game was back and forth all game. Ms. Brema and her musical theatre students presented three shows of *Mama Mia*, January 27th and 28th. It was an awesome production that featured a grade 12 student director, Ashley Dezura, and many amazing performances. The crowd sang along to many of the familiar tunes from the show! Our ski and snowboard club has been to both Mount Seymour and Whistler this month. We encourage students to be involved at school to have fun, make friends and make some connection. All our clubs are list on our school website under programs ([School Clubs](#))

Semester 2 BEGINS Thursday, February 2nd - Let's Start Strong!!

We want to see your teenager every day!

As we enter the second semester, we would like to remind all parents/caregivers of the role that good attendance plays in the success and well-being of students. Every day a student is absent is a lost opportunity for learning and connecting. The purpose of this

message is to provide information and resources to parents in order to help improve student attendance and, consequently, student achievement. We learned from the pandemic how important it is for our students' mental health to be learning in-person from their teachers and alongside their classmates.

Chronic Absenteeism

Most teenagers miss a few days of school each year without long-term consequences. However, when they miss many days, the effects are almost always negative. Over the course of a student's high school career, missing 10 percent of school days would equate to missing an entire semester of school.

Lates

We recognize that it is hard to avoid being late once or twice during a school year. Life throws obstacles at all of us. However, we encourage students to be on time because it sends a positive message to their teachers and ensures that important learning isn't missed. School starts with TA (Teacher Advisory) at 8:30am and teachers are eager to start the day well. TA is a fundamental pillar of Thomas Haney that creates a positive school connection, relationships and supports student daily planning.

Can Students still Work at Home?

As a self-directed school, students in grades 11 and 12 have the ability to work at home for a ½ or full day if their schedule allows for it. There are Work at Home request forms in the office that need to be signed by student, parent/guardian, Teacher Advisor (TA) and principal. Semester 1 report card will be used to help determine work at home status for students as being in good standing academically is one of the key school criteria for having this privilege. A new form is required for semester 2 as students now have new schedules.

What Can Families Do?

Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school and themselves. Try to send the message that every day is important. Good attendance will help children do well in high school, college and in their careers.

What you can do:

- Avoid scheduling vacations when school is in session. They are considered unexcused absences.
- Build regular routines for evenings and mornings.
- Talk about the importance of regular attendance and about how your child feels about school.
- If your teenager seems anxious about going to school, talk to teachers, school counsellors, or other parents for advice on how to make them feel comfortable and excited about learning.
- Develop back up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Ask a family member, neighbour or another parent for help.
- Seek support from school staff if you are really struggling to get your teenager to school.
- Monitor the use of technology - There is no doubt that video games and social media can prevent good sleep habits which can have a devastating effect on

attendance and mental health. Please help your teen monitor the use of electronic devices as they are sometimes unable to do so on their own.

- Encourage the positive use of OPEN blocks - Every day students in grades 9-12 have the opportunity to make academic choices in consultation with their TA.

What we're planning to do:

The administrative team and teaching staff will be talking to students who are late and absent during the first few weeks of semester 2. We want to gather information from students so that we can better understand how to address this issue and encourage students to change their habits.

Attendance Notifications

Most of our teachers take attendance at the beginning of class by logging into their MyClass accounts and registering absences and lates digitally. If a teacher has already taken attendance when a student arrives, it is important for the student to check in with the teacher later in the lesson so that attendance can be updated. Students can log in to their MyClass accounts later if they want to confirm that attendance was changed.

Kelty Mental Health - School Anxiety & Attendance Challenges for Parents and Caregivers: Webinar Series (BC Children's Hospital series)

- Feel free to check out the following webinar series on school anxiety and attendance from Kelty Mental Health: ([LINK](#))
- <https://keltymentalhealth.ca/school-attendance-webinars>

Foundry - Maple Ridge (Mental/Physical Health Services)

- Student mental/physical health services are also available through Foundry - Maple Ridge ([LINK](#)) <https://foundrybc.ca/ridgemeadows/>

We realize that there are a number of reasons why your child may be late or absent to school. Please use the Parent Portal to log the absence or send a note or call the school in advance if you know your child will be out of school ahead of time.

We hope this information provides clarity of our attendance processes, encourages the value of regular school attendance and provides helpful contacts and resources for families.

Thank you for your support. Our staff really look forward to working with your teenagers every day.

Important January Dates:

- Wednesday, Feb. 1st - Flex day; no classes
- Wednesday, Feb. 1st - Student Forum at Swan-e-Set
- Thursday, Feb. 2nd - First day of Semester 2
- Thursday, Feb. 2nd - Grade 8 (current grade 7s) Registration OPENS
- Feb. 2-11th - Quebec Trip (Mr. Williams, Ms. Fischer & Ms. Preddy)
- Tuesday, Feb. 7th - Reports Cards LIVE on MyClass
- Wednesday, Feb. 8th - Thunderfest (Community Carnival) - 4:00-7:00pm
- Thursday, Feb. 9th - Report Card Distribution (paper-copies in TA)
- Wednesday, Feb. 15th - Winter Sr. Formal (Dinner & Dance)
- Friday, Feb. 17th - Grade 8 (current grade 7s) Registration CLOSSES
- Tuesday, Feb. 21st - Non-Instructional Day (No school for students)
- Tuesday, Feb. 21st - PAC Meeting at 7:00pm
- Wednesday, Feb. 22nd - Pink Shirt Day in BC (Anti-Bullying Awareness)
- Monday, Feb. 27th - Collaboration Day for Staff (LATE start for students)

Key Contacts

The following list of Counsellors and Administrators and their grades are listed below:

- **Administration**
 - Mr. Rowell (Principal - Grade 12s)
 - Darren_Rowell@sd42.ca
 - Ms. Clayton (Vice Principal - Gr. 8 & 10s)
 - Andrea_Clayton@sd42.ca
 - Ms. Kania (Vice Principal - Gr. 9 & 11s)
 - Lisa_Kania@sd42.ca
- **Counsellors**
 - Mr. Grill (Counsellor - Gr. 8, 10 & 12s M-Z)
 - Dan_Grill@sd42.ca
 - Ms. McBride (Counsellor - Gr. 9, 11 & 12s A-L)
 - Krysta_McBride@sd42.ca

Please do not hesitate to email Darren_Rowell@sd42.ca if you need further information or have any questions.

Sincerely,

Darren Rowell
Principal, Thomas Haney Secondary School