



GEORGE ELLIOT SECONDARY SCHOOL

10241 Bottom Wood Lake Road, Lake Country, B.C. V4V 1Y7 Ph: 250.870.5102 • Fax: 250.870.5002

August 31, 2020

Hello GESS parents and students,

We are looking forward to welcoming students back to safe classrooms on September 10th or 11th. Starting school will be different than last year, so we thank you for both your patience as we planned for back to school and your diligence in helping us keep everyone safe.

Please review the attached plans and documents on basic procedures for returning to school. Staff will familiarize students with safety procedures and ensure clean, safe learning spaces, but knowing our new procedures will help you make sure students travel safely and arrive to school in good health.

All Secondary schools across our district have moved to a modified quarter system so that we can keep learning groups small, avoid too much change to student schedules, and still provide students with voice and choice in their education. Here is a sample timetable for how the year will look:

	Semester 1				Semester 2			
	Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4	
	5 weeks	5 weeks	5 weeks	5 weeks	5 weeks	5 weeks	5 weeks	5 weeks
AM	Period A	Period B	Period C	Period D	Period A	Period B	Period C	Period D
PM	Period B	Period A	Period D	Period C	Period B	Period A	Period D	Period C

- Staggered entry and dismissal times will reduce volume in our hallways and common areas.
- During non-instructional time, students will be expected to physically distance and not congregate.
- When students enter the building, they should go directly to their class and not socialize in common areas.
- Masks will be required and provided for all staff and students in common areas where physical distancing cannot occur outside of learning groups.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Prior to 9:00 am	Student arrival and staggered entry.				
morning	Instructional Time (Morning Block) All students, every day, staggered breaks				
lunch	Release will be staggered and 50% of grade 10, 11 and 12 will head home Remaining students will eat lunch in their morning block classroom Students may not wander in halls or common areas				
afternoon	Instructional Time (Afternoon Block) Grade 10, 11, and 12 students will attend on alternate days, with physical distancing and staggered breaks				
3:15 pm onward	Staggered dismissal of classes staggered by exit locations to mitigate intermingling and allow for controlled pick-up and loading of school buses				

You can learn more about district-wide plans for safety, returning to school, and provincial updates at sd23.bc.ca. Thank you for staying engaged and connected to our school community. By working together, we can help students feel welcome, safe, and ready to learn.

Mr. C Schwartz

Mr. D Smith

Mr. R Wakefield

Additional Details for George Elliot Secondary

Learning Group Details

In adherence to our District plan, students in grades 7 and 8 have been placed in learning group cohorts that do not exceed 60 pupils. For those students in grades 9-12, the learning group cohort size is not to exceed 120. Students must stay with their learning group cohort throughout the day to limit interaction with other students, especially in common areas and during breaks. At George Elliot we've been able to ensure that our learning group cohort sizes are well under the maximums.

Revised Student Timetables

A team of staff have worked for days to adjust our timetable to meet the new requirements set out by the Province. We have made every effort to honour student choices made in the spring but some changes were necessary and unavoidable. Therefore, requests for course changes will be extremely challenging this year due to learner group cohorting and health and safety reasons. As a result, changes will be as minimal as possible to maintain optimal school function and keep cohorts from mixing. Changes will only be considered under exceptional and unique circumstances for educationally sound reasons. We ask for parent and guardian understanding of the various additional factors that will limit our ability to accommodate most requests during this time.

Course Rotation – Grades 7, 8, and 9

Students will remain with their teachers in the learning group cohort throughout each quarter.

Course Rotation – Grades 10, 11, and 12

In the first half of the quarter (5 weeks), students will receive daily face-to-face instruction within their class learning group cohort and their classroom teacher in the morning. The second course in the afternoon will be a blended course of face-to-face instruction with their teacher and self-directed at home on alternating days.

After the five-week period, the full-time learning group will switch places with the group that received afternoon blended instruction. This midpoint transition will result in students receiving an equal amount of in-class instruction in both courses for a total of 75%.

September 10 and 11th

Students will attend school for one day this first week back as follows;

- Grades 7, 8, and 9 will attend all day on Thursday, September 10.
- Grades 10, 11, and 12 will attend all day on Friday, September 11.

Emails will be sent to each household letting parents and students know which classroom they are to report to that day. Once there they will receive their adjusted schedules and receive their site safety orientation.

Safety Considerations for all schools

Getting Ready for School - Daily Health Check

This is the critical first step in providing a safe learning environment and we will need parental help with this. If your child is experiencing cold, influenza, or COVID-19-like symptoms they must not take the bus or go to school. They should seek assessment by a health-care provider and self-isolate while they await the results and not return to school until their symptoms have resolved. Staff will be required to do the same Health Check each day. **Any student, staff or other person within the school who was identified as a close contact of a confirmed case or outbreak must stay home and self isolate.**

If individuals begin to experience symptoms of COVID-19 while attending a school, the symptomatic individual will be promptly sent home or separated into an area away from others until arrangements can be made for them to go home.

Please refer to this Daily Health Check tool for guidance

Daily Health Check			
1. Symptoms of illness*	Does your child have any of the following symptoms?	CIRCLE ONE	
	Fever	YES	NO
	Chills	YES	NO
	Cough or worsening of chronic cough	YES	NO
	Shortness of breath	YES	NO
	Sore throat	YES	NO
	Runny nose / stuffy nose	YES	NO
	Loss of sense of smell or taste	YES	NO
	Headache	YES	NO
	Fatigue	YES	NO
	Diarrhea	YES	NO
	Loss of appetite	YES	NO
	Nausea and vomiting	YES	NO
	Muscle aches	YES	NO
	Conjunctivitis (pink eye)	YES	NO
	Dizziness, confusion	YES	NO
	Abdominal pain	YES	NO
	Skin rashes or discoloration of fingers or toes	YES	NO
2. International Travel	Have you or anyone in your household returned from travel outside Canada in the last 14 days?	YES	NO
3. Confirmed Contact	Are you or is anyone in your household a confirmed contact of a person confirmed to have COVID-19?	YES	NO

*Check BCCDC's [Symptoms of COVID-19](#) regularly to ensure the list is up to date.

If you answered "YES" to any of the questions and the symptoms are not related to a pre-existing condition (e.g. allergies) your child should **NOT** come to school.

If they are experiencing any symptoms of illness, contact a health-care provider for further assessment. This includes 8-1-1, or a primary care provider like a physician or nurse practitioner.

If you answered "YES" to questions 2 or 3, use the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to determine if you should be tested for COVID-19.

You can access the full Central Okanagan Public Schools Staff and Student Safety Plan at [http://www.sd23.bc.ca/pages/Publications.aspx#/="](http://www.sd23.bc.ca/pages/Publications.aspx#/=)

Bus Students

Students must practice physical distancing while waiting for the bus. Students should have their own seat and follow the assigned seating plan for their bus. When bus seating requires students to sit next to each other, students should wear a mask and avoid personal contact. Please see the district Transportation safety protocols for in-depth information.

Site Entry

Students will need to enter GESS at various entry points. Students should arrive at school no sooner than 8:45 and immediately go to a hand washing station or use hand sanitizer upon entry into the building. Once hands are washed they will proceed directly to class to start their day.

There are numerous entry points at George Elliot. Students will use the entry point closest to their morning class.

As a reminder, schools remain closed to adults unless they have an appointment or invitation from administrators.

Learning groups

Students must stay with their learning group throughout the day to limit interaction with other students, especially in common areas and during breaks.

Hygiene practice throughout the day

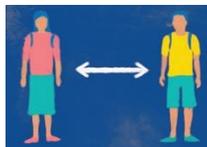
Students should perform hand hygiene before and after breaks, eating and drinking, using shared spaces (eg. gym, library, playground), using the washroom, after sneezing or coughing, and whenever hands are visibly dirty.

Feeling sick during the school day

If a student feels sick or shows any symptoms during the school day, they must report to the office and staff will follow protocols for isolating the student and returning them home.

Physical distancing

Students must keep 2m away from those outside their learning group. Do not share personal items such as food, school supplies, or clothing.



Additional Safety Procedures for George Elliot

Drop-off points

Drivers who are dropping students off at George Elliot are asked to drop students off in the parking lot or bus loop at a location closest to their site entry point (see Site Entry below). This will help mitigate congestion of students as they enter the building.

It is preferred that drivers park in the parking lot and allow students to safely exit the vehicle so they may then walk to the building. If drivers choose to use the bus loop please do so in a quick and efficient manner as it is used by District busses. Drivers using the bus loop should be prepared to be delayed if they happen to be in the loop behind a bus.

Traffic Flow inside GESS

As we have all become familiar by now, it is important to manage traffic flow inside the building. Signage and arrows on the floor have been installed to help with this. The standard rule inside the building will be stay to the right (ie "rules of the road").

Common areas

As part of the Public Health Order, students will not be permitted to congregate in hallways, the foyer or other common areas. As such, **the appropriate use of masks will be required for staff and students in these common areas** where physical distancing cannot occur outside of the student's cohort. Masks will be provided by the District upon request.

Appropriate times to use a mask include but are not limited to;

- riding the bus to/from school following Transportation guidelines
- outdoors on school property where people may be around those from other learning group cohorts (ie. arrival, dismissal)
- entering or exiting the school and/or arriving on school property where physical distancing cannot occur
- moving through hallways, using washrooms, or while in any common area outside of a learning group cohort's classroom
- waiting to be picked up on property where physical distancing cannot occur
- lining up in designated areas for school bus pickup

Staggered entry, breaks, lunch and dismissal

As part of our safety plan it is necessary to put in measures that will help alleviate congestion, it is necessary to stagger movement through our building.

Students are required to have their lunch break in the classroom with their morning learning group cohort or they may choose to go outside as an alternative. If students leave the building at lunch they are required to handwash upon re-entry.

George Elliot remains a closed campus for students in grades 7 and 8.

Once students are dismissed for the day they are to leave the property as soon as possible, limiting congregations outside the building with learners from outside of their cohort.

Food service

For the months of September and October food services beyond our brown bag lunch program are suspended. We will revisit options to open up food service as regulations permit.

Leaving school

Once students are dismissed for the day they are to leave the property as soon as possible, limiting congregations outside the building with learners from outside of their cohort. Student dismissal will be staggered and students will use the closest exit to leave the building.

Mask use is required once students leave their classrooms until they exit school property.

Additional Information

Technology

Students who have their own personal device or are in possession of a District assigned device are encouraged to bring them to school when they attend. This will help to minimize the number of students sharing devices as much as possible. We are continuing to encourage students who have their own personal learning device (e.g.. Chromebook, Laptop, tablet) to bring those devices to school in lieu of using a shared school device. Personal devices can connect to the **Guest WiFi** in buildings. If device sharing is necessary, please know that devices will still be available in schools for any student that needs one

Cleaning regimens

General cleaning and disinfecting of the premises will occur at least once a day. Cleaning and disinfecting of objects and high-touch surfaces (e.g. door handles, light switches, faucet handles, toilet handles, tables, desks & chairs used by multiple students, water fountains, keyboards, etc) will occur at least twice per day as this will help prevent the transmission of viruses. In addition, the District has provided our school with electrostatic sprayers which will disinfect classrooms each day.

Shared Equipment

Staff and students should not share personal items (pens, food, beverages, phones, cloth towels, etc). Personal items should be labelled with a person's name to discourage accidental sharing. Bottle filling stations are available and students and staff are encouraged to use their personal water bottles.

Lockers

The school will not be providing lockers for student use this year. Students are required to "carry in and carry out" their belongings on a daily basis. Families and students should be strategic about what to pack to school for the day.

PE Change rooms

PE change rooms will not be used at this time. We encourage students to come to school in clothing that is appropriate for PE and the weather conditions.

Band and Hockey Academy Safety Procedures

There are additional health and safety requirements for these programs of choice:

- For Band programs across the District, learners from mixed cohorts will remain physically distant at all times, and whenever appropriate it is highly recommended they wear masks. Regular hygiene procedures will apply regarding sanitizing and hand washing.
- For the GESS Hockey Academy, District staff is still clarifying specific, additional procedural requirements, as well as factoring in the procedures for the rink and travel to and from. Details will be shared with those specific families when information comes available.

Mental Health Resources for parents

Anxiety and uncertainty created by the COVID-19 outbreak should not be disregarded. It is important to remember that mental health is just as important as physical health, and to take measures to support mental well-being. See below for resources.

There are several documents for parents available on the district website and shared via counsellors and through a dedicated Mental Health Webpage. This webpage is updated regularly. The link to the webpage is:

<https://www.centralokanagancontinuityofeducationalopportunities.com/mental-wellness-families>

Outside agency supports and connections

The Mental Health team has been in regular communication with members of ARC Programs, The Foundry, Child Youth Mental Health and Interior Health to get clear information from these community agencies about their remote and face to face services for children and families.