



GESS Student & Family

2026-27 START UP GUIDE

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Week 1: September 8 - September 11

Monday – Sept 7	❖ LABOUR DAY HOLIDAY
Tuesday – Sept 8 Mini Block Rotations A/B/C/D	❖ WELCOME BACK - 9:15 am Homeroom (lists posted in foyer at 8:30) Mini Block Rotations – Early dismissal & bus pick-up at 12:05 pm 9:15 -Blk A (10:00- Blk A ₂)/ 10:25 -Blk B (10:45-Blk B ₂) / 11:00 -Blk C (11:20-Blk C ₂)/ 11:35 -Blk D (11:50-Blk D ₂)
Wednesday – Sept 9 A/B	❖ Homeroom (A Block) – 15 minutes (attendance & form collections) ❖ Regular day of classes: 9:15 am – 3:30 pm New Start & End Time! ❖ Gr. 9 Assemblies During Math
Thursday – Sept 10 C/D	❖ Homeroom (A Block) – 15 minutes (attendance & form collections) ❖ Gr. 9 Assemblies During Math
Friday – Sept 11 A/B	❖ Homeroom (A Block) – 15 minutes (attendance & form collections) ❖ Grade 12 Assembly – 9:35 am (theatre) ❖ Grad Presidential Candidate's Meeting – Lunch in Rm 301

Student Schedule Info for Tuesday, Sept. 8

In Homeroom (A Block), students will given timetables. This year because of capacity issues, changes will only be granted for exceptional educational based reasons – and even then, they may not be granted because of complicating factors.

Students are expected to remain in their classes until they are notified by counsellors of changes to their schedules (via email). Counsellors will do their best to make the course changes requested, but please understand many courses are full or aren't available in the blocks that students may have available in their schedules. We appreciate your patience as counsellors work through and prioritize requests.

Link for Course Changes

Deadline: Sept. 18



<https://bit.ly/46ey0A5>

Week 2: September 14 - September 18

- Sept. 14:** Metal Monday
- Sept. 15:** Grade Assemblies – Gr. 10-11
Gr. 9 Parent Info Night – 6-7pm (theatre)
Gr. 12 Parent Info Night – 7:15-8pm (theatre)
- Sept. 16:** Mandatory Gr. 12 Parent Zoom – 7 pm (Grad Retreat Information)
Follow this [Microsoft Teams Meeting Link](#)
- Sept. 18:** **SCHOOL PICTURE DAY** (Retake Day - Oct. 20 - am)
Last day for course changes for Semester 1



Grad Breakfast
Sept. 25

Oyama Ziplines
Grad Retreat
Oct. 1, 2, & 5





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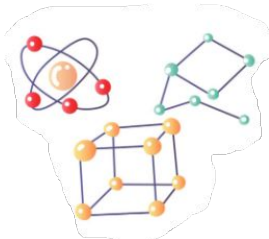
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Grade 9 Orientation Day - Sept. 3 - 9:00 - 11:30

Our Grade 9 Orientation is on **Thursday, September 3rd from 9:00 – 11:30**. The day is designed to help students feel more comfortable starting high school. During the orientation, the students will tour their new school, participate in fun activities with student leaders and peers, and meet some teachers and staff. We look forward to seeing everyone there!

During the September 3rd Orientation Day, Grade 9 students will receive their schedules. We will have staff and student leaders on hand to help students read their new schedules, learn the timetable, and find their classrooms. Grade 9 students should arrive at the outside entrance to the gymnasium and be ready for a 9:00 am start. For parents or caregivers who will be dropping off their kids, please return for the 11:30 am pickup.



GESS WELCOMES the following new & returning staff:

Welcome to the 2026-27 school year at George Elliot Secondary! We are excited to welcome both returning staff and those joining our school community for the first time. Our vision, "Love, Learn, Thrive," is reflected each day through the dedication, care, and commitment of every staff member. Together, we create a supportive and inclusive environment where all students can grow, succeed, and reach their full potential. Thank you for all you do, and best wishes for a fantastic year ahead!

Teachers

Mr. Luke Atherton	Mr. James Long
Mr. Andrew Cain	Ms. Deirdre Lucas
Mme Amelia Colquhoun	Mr. David Roberts
Mr. Tanner DeHart (RT)	Mr. Michael Ross
Ms. Brianna Harrison	(Success Teacher)
Ms. Breanna Kelly	Ms. Joann Vammen (LAT)
Mr. Justin Laurin	Ms. Sarah Wood

Support Staff

Mrs. Wynter Oakes (VP A-L)
Ms. Denise Mott (CEA)
Ms. Chantal Screen (CEA)
Ms. Marly Abbott (CEA)





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IMPORTANT START-UP INFORMATION

STUDENT VERIFICATION SHEETS: Each student will be receiving their individual student data verification sheet in homeroom. It is important that these be reviewed and signed by their parents/guardians and returned to their homeroom teacher as soon as possible. Current information on file is crucial in keeping families updated. Please sign this form even if there are no changes required. We really appreciate your quick attention to this document.

GENERAL FIELD TRIP PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION: Every student is required to have a general field trip permission form on file for each school year. This permission form enables classroom teachers to take their students off site for walks in our community throughout the year (ie: Terry Fox Run, Rail Trail walks, etc.). These forms will be given out in homeroom and we've also included the form [here](#), for those who are able to complete this from home. Please sign the form and send it back to school with your child this week so it can be returned to homeroom. Thank you!

GESS PAC (Parent Advisory Council) MEETINGS: PAC meetings will be held on Mondays at 6:30pm, once a month throughout the school year. **All parents are welcome** and invited to attend these meetings.

2026-27 GESS PAC Executive:

President: **Roslyn Hazen**

Vice President: **Bretta Lawton**

Secretary: **Jodee Mochinski**

Treasurer: **Brian Zurek**

Members at Large:

Craig Catton, Ian Long, Sarah Garlick

PAC Email:

ges.pacpresident@sd23.bc.ca

Upcoming PAC Meetings:

- * September 21
- * October 19
- * November 16
- * December 7
- * January 18
- * February 22
- * **NO March Meeting**
- * April 12
- * May 17
- * June 14 – PAC AGM

Lockers are distributed in homeroom *by student request* during the first week of school.

Student MEDICAL Information

Parents/Guardians: To support our students diagnosed with life threatening medical conditions, please fill out the important applicable forms that have been provided on our website under the Medical tab. Please email them to our school email at ges@sd23.bc.ca or bring them into the main office.

Link to these documents: [MEDICAL](#)

- *Medical Alert Planning
- *Medication at School
- *Anaphylactic Student Plan
- *Diabetes Support Plan
- *Seizure Action Plan





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PLEASE VIEW OUR WEBSITE FOR CURRENT AND IMPORTANT UPDATES! www.ges.sd23.bc.ca

***Keep a sharp eye on the calendar as changes are made quite frequently.**

STUDENT FEES: Please pay all student fees online by visiting our website at www.ges.sd23.bc.ca and click on the **School Cash Online** button to register. The student activity/cultural fee is \$30, Yearbook Fee (optional) is \$50 and the Grad Fee is \$125. *Fees will be posted early September.*

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT: The purpose of the George Elliot Code of Conduct is to provide and maintain a safe, caring and orderly environment for all students and their learning. Please see our website for this document.

The Central Okanagan Public Schools' Appeal Process

Policy 3090 – Appeals states that “A student or a parent of a student who is entitled to an educational program in the Central Okanagan Public Schools may appeal a decision of an employee of the Board of Education which significantly affects the education, health, or safety of the student”. For a complete description of the Appeals Policy along with the recommended steps to follow in attempting to solve a problem, please refer to Policy 460 – Appeals that can be accessed from the Policies link under the Board of Education heading on the Central Okanagan Public Schools homepage at www.sd23.bc.ca.

The Central Okanagan Public Schools' Financial Hardship Clause

The Board of Education has indicated “that a student will not be excluded from any educational program due to financial hardship”. This clause in the Regulations provides for the private and confidential consideration of financial circumstances of individual students and families, while preserving the dignity of families which may be unable to pay. Please contact the school Principal if you are facing a financial hardship that may restrict the ability of your child to access a school program.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE: To learn how to report your child's absence using the **School Messenger App**, please visit: <http://www.sd23.bc.ca/schoolmessenger/Pages/default.aspx#/z>

ACCIDENT INSURANCE:

Central Okanagan Public Schools does not insure expenses for student injuries that occur on school grounds or during school activities. Parents and guardians can voluntarily purchase private accident insurance. The Kids Plus Accident Insurance Program that was previously offered to our students was discontinued in 2019. The IA Financial Group now offers the Family Accident Reimbursement Plan (FARP) which is a voluntary plan that provides coverage for students and their families against accidental injury, unexpected medical expenses, and critical illness. To apply for the Family Accident Reimbursement Plan or to find out more, click [here](#).



École George Elliot Secondary is situated in Lake Country, and the school has a proud tradition of excellence that spans more than 60 years. We acknowledge that we are learning on the unceded Traditional territory of the Okanagan, Syilx, People. We are known as the George Elliot Coyotes, and the Syilx word for coyote is **sənklip** (*sen-kleep*). Through our school district's Indigenous Education department, we acquired a Syilx Edler's approval for our school to use this word.





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Be Connected

Communication with families is a top priority at George Elliot. Here are the main communication tools at our school.



Email. Please be sure to add ges@sd23.bc.ca to your safe senders list. Don't let important emails and newsletter from the school end up in your spam, junk, or promotions email folders.



GESS Coyote Connections Weekly Family Newsletter. Each week our weekly Coyote Connections newsletter will be shared with families via school messenger email. This "Parent Newsletter" will share important information for the week as well as upcoming important dates. Please ensure you are signed up for School Messenger so you receive this important communication.



GESS Website. Our school website can be found at <https://ges.sd23.bc.ca/>. The website contains the latest information on topics including important dates, PAC information, staff contact information, and more.



Online Calendar. For the latest and most updated information and event dates, the GESS calendar can be found at <https://ges.sd23.bc.ca/calendar-main>. You can subscribe the calendar directly to your phone so that you never miss a thing!



Google Classroom

Teacher Communication. Our teachers may use Google Classroom, or another similar tool to support student learning. In addition, information for grads will be posted in their own Google Classroom account.

BUS STUDENTS:

Students must be registered in order to ride the school bus. Please visit the school Transportation website for more information: [SD23 Transportation](#) or 250-870-5151.



GRADE 12 INFO:

- *Sept. 11 – Any grade 12 students interested in being **PRESIDENT?** You must attend the candidate meeting Sept. 11 at lunch – Room 301
- *Sept. 17 – **Grad Council** meetings are every Thursday at lunch in Room 301 (Annex). First Meeting is lunch on Sept. 17th
ALL GRADE 12s WELCOME!
- *Sept. 15 – **Grade 12 Parent Info Night**
7:15 – 8 pm (theatre)
- *Sept. 16 – **MANDATORY** Grade 12 Parent Mtg via Zoom at 7:00 pm. Grads, if you want to go on the Zipline Retreat, your parent/guardian **MUST** attend this meeting. [Teams Meeting Link](#)
- *June 12, 2027 (Saturday) - **Prom**
- *June 25, 2027 (Friday) - **Convocation**





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**Check
this out**



GESS - ABCD Block Rotation

Example ABCD block rotation

Parents:

Here is an **example** of a student timetable and the block rotation.

To request a MyEd Password reset:

ges@sd23.bc.ca

Rotation:	A/B	C/D	B/A	D/C
9:15 – 10:34	A1 <i>Social Studies 10</i>	C1 <i>Concert Band 10</i>	B1 <i>Foundations and Pre-Calc 10</i>	D1 <i>French 10</i>
8-minute break from 10:34 – 10:42	A2 <i>Social Studies 10</i>	C2 <i>Literary Studies 10</i>	B2 <i>Foundations and Pre-Calc 10</i>	D2 <i>French 10</i>
10:42 – 12:00				
12:00 - 12:45	LUNCH			
12:45 – 2:04	B1 <i>Foundations and Pre-Calc 10</i>	D1 <i>French 10</i>	A1 <i>Social Studies 10</i>	C1 <i>Concert Band 10</i>
8-minute break from 2:04 – 2:12	B2 <i>Foundations and Pre-Calc 10</i>	D2 <i>French 10</i>	A2 <i>Social Studies 10</i>	C2 <i>Literary Studies 10</i>
2:12 – 3:30				
ALTERNATING WEEKS ON CALENDAR	WEEK #1		WEEK #2	

Example student schedule from MyED

Course	Description	Room	Teacher	Term	Schedule
MMUCB10-4L-01	CONCERT BAND 10	107 BAND	McGarry, Dave	FY	C1(1)
MLTST10-2L-01	LITERARY STUDIES 10	302	Marples, Lisa	FY	C2(1)
YHRA-0A-4L-02	FITNESS 10	100C GYM	Vicaretti, Dan	FY	PM1(1)
MSS--10-4S-02	SOCIAL STUDIES 10	208	Schwartz, Lee	S1	A1-A2(1)
MFMP-10-4S-01	FOUNDATIONS OF MATH AND PRE-CALCULUS 10	212	Maddox, Tyler	S1	B1-B2(1)
MSC--10-4S-12	SCIENCE 10	128	Ohashi, Tyler	S1	D1-D2(1)
MTMET10-4S-02	METALWORK 10	138 METAL	Stewart, Keith	S2	A1-A2(1)
MCLE-10-4S-04	CAREER LIFE EDUCATION 10	320	Sookchoff, Brent	S2	B1-B2(1)
MFR--10-4S-02	FRENCH 10	202	Davidson, Monica	S2	D1-D2(1)

Term / Schedule descriptions:

- FY is Full Year
- S1 is Semester 1, S2 is Semester 2
- A1 is the first A-block of the day, A2 is the second A-block of the day (same with B,C,D)
- AM/PM are outside the timetable





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Using Your Phone at George Elliot

As we begin the new school year, we continue to support BC's restrictions on personal digital devices during instructional time. These expectations are designed to help students stay focused on learning, engage more actively in classroom discussions, and reduce distractions that can interfere with academic success.

At GESS, we recognize that technology remains an important learning tool when used purposefully and under teacher direction. The provincial restrictions are not about eliminating technology, but about ensuring that it is used in ways that enhance learning rather than compete with it.

We appreciate the support of families as we work together to create a positive, focused, and respectful learning environment where every student can thrive. Before the school year begins, please take a moment to review the [Using Your Phone at George Elliot Infographic](#) with your child.

Using Your Phone at George Elliot

KNOW WHEN YOU CAN (AND CAN'T) USE YOUR DEVICE!

- 1 NO PHONES DURING CLASS**
Not allowed unless a teacher says so.
 - Phones must be powered off or silenced.
 - Stored in your bag or designated area.
 - No texting, scrolling, or gaming during lessons.
 - EXCEPTION:** If a teacher or principal gives permission for learning.
- 2 WHEN YOU CAN USE YOUR PHONE**
Allowed in these situations.
 - For learning activities directed by staff
 - To build digital skills in class
 - For accessibility or medical needs
 - When a teacher explicitly allows it
- 3 STRICTLY OFF-LIMIT AREAS**
Never use phones here.
 - WASHROOMS
 - CHANGE ROOMS
 - ANYWHERE PRIVACY IS EXPECTED
 - Respect the privacy of others. These spaces are always off-limits.
- 4 USE TECHNOLOGY RESPECTFULLY**
Be a responsible digital citizen.
 - Be kind and respectful online and offline.
 - Follow school rules and academic honesty.
 - Use devices responsibly on school networks.
- 5 FOCUS ON LEARNING**
When you put your phone away, you open the door to more opportunities!
 - Learn more. You understand better and remember more.
 - Do your best. Stay focused and achieve your goals.
 - Build your future. Every lesson today helps create more opportunities tomorrow.
 - Feel better. Less distraction = less stress and more confidence.
 - ★ Focus today. Succeed tomorrow.**
- 6 REMEMBER**
 - Follow the reasonable requests of the adults in the building.
 - You don't need your own device—schools provide access when needed.

Love = Learn = Thrive





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Know the Rules Before You Ride

According to British Columbia's Motor Assisted Cycle (E-Bike) Regulation, there are specific age limits and safety requirements for operating e-bikes and e-scooters on public roads. Here are the key points:

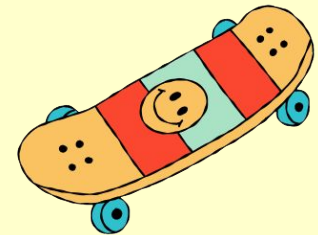
- Standard E-Bikes: Riders must be at least 16
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/transportation/driving-and-cycling/cycling/cycling-regulations-restrictions-rules/e-bikes>
- Light E-Bikes: Riders must be at least 14 years old
- E-Scooters (stand-on-top): Riders must be at least 16 years old
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/transportation/driving-and-cycling/cycling/electric-kick-scooter-rules>
- E-Motorbikes are not permitted on public roads in BC and should not be brought to school.

Students and their families must ensure that students are of legal age to ride E-bikes or E-scooters. To assist students and families with this item in the code of conduct, we are providing this Know the Rules Before You Ride infographic from the RCMP. Students and members of the public in violation of the Motor Vehicle Act can be referred to the RCMP.

 MICROMOBILITY: KNOW THE RULES BEFORE YOU RIDE					
Not all small or electric vehicles are treated the same under the Motor Vehicle Act					
	Where Can I Ride?	How old do I need to be?	How fast can I go?	License and Insurance?	What Else Should I Know?
 E-Bike	Anywhere where bicycles can ride!	14 + for light e-bikes; 16+ for standard e-bikes	Light e-bikes: 25 km/h Standard e-bikes: 32 km/h	No Drivers License or Insurance required	Must have fully operable pedals
 E-Scooter	Only in communities participating in the pilot project	16+	25 km/h	No Drivers License or Insurance required	Illegal outside of pilot communities
 Moped/LSM	On public roadways only	16+	70 km/h	Drivers License and Insurance required	CMVSS compliance label required
 E-Dirt Bike	Not on roads, sidewalks or bike lanes	Not legal at any age on public roads	Not permitted on public roads	Cannot be registered or insured	Not legal e-bikes or LSMs
 Mini-Motorcycle	Not on roads, sidewalks or bike lanes	Not legal at any age on public roads	Not permitted on public roads	Cannot be registered or insured	Do not meet safety standards



Skateboards, bikes, and scooters



Students are welcome to ride their bicycles, scooters, and skateboards to school. They are an effective, healthy means of transportation to and from school. We ask that once on property you walk your ride to the secure location. Bikes and scooters can be locked outside on the designated rack and skateboards will fit in student lockers.

We also encourage students to wear helmets while using bicycles, scooters and skateboards and ask that parents/guardians please have a discussion with your child about traffic safety.

