

Grand Forks Secondary School,

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Principal: T. Eccleston | Vice Principal: J. Dowswell

Principal's Message

Welcome, students, to a great year at GFSS. We are looking forward to creating a fun year full of learning and laughter. I'd also like to welcome our new staff members: Natalie Lewis and Whitney Stevens, and welcome back Katrina Tarrant.

I'd also like to say, "Welcome!" to any new families and new students to our learning community. We expect to have more than 425 enrolled students this year. Thank you to our counsellor, Mrs. Webster and our Vice Principal, J. Dowswell for creating timetables that offer the best experience possible for students.

Our fall volleyball season will be starting right away. Thank you, Coaches, for getting us started off. The swimming team will be diving in this fall as well. I encourage all students to jump in and get involved with our athletic teams. We will also be launching our Mountain Bike, Warhammer Club and E-Sports Clubs soon. Go Wolves!

Good thinking begins with a nourished body. At GFSS, students are offered free breakfast snacks each morning starting after September 9th. Please view our full bell [schedule](#) on our website.

For every student, the student council and activity fee is \$20 (helps pay for Spirit Week, Pumpkin Carving Supplies, Gingerbread House Making, Spot the 'Elf on the Shelf' and many more things that students engage in for fun.

There are other reasonable fees to pay for course consumables such as food, fabric, wood, etc. Individual teachers will let students and families know these fees. If there is any financial hardship, please contact the office.

Students and parents, please be aware of the updated [Code of Conduct](#) (section 10) on personal digital devices. Starting on Sept 3rd, all students must abide by the updated policy on personal digital devices (see a summary below or use the link to read the policy in full).

Regular attendance, 4 days each week, is the key to student success. To maximize student learning, please make appointments on Fridays or other days when the school is closed. If students are going to be absent, please call 250 442 0954.



At GFSS we believe in pro-active communication. Please reach out to our teachers and administration team if you have any concerns.

I am thrilled to be joining Vice Principal Dowswell and the entire GFSS learning community and cannot wait to meet you all. Let's have a great year!

Sincerely,

Tom Eccleston, Principal

New and Returning Staff

- Whitney Stevens
- Natalie Lewis
- Katrina Tarrant

Welcome!

Important Dates

- First day of school and early student dismissal – Sept 3 (11:30)
- Parent Advisory Meeting – Sept 16
- West Kootenay Regional District Parade of Programs – Sept 19 (evening)
- Fall Photo Day – Sept 23
- Orange shirt day – Sept 26
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation – Sept 30 (school closed)
- School in Session, Friday Oct 4
- Thanksgiving Day, Oct 14 (school closed)
- Fall Photo Retakes – Oct 30

Student Council / Student Voice Club

Students are the centre of all that our school should be. Students' thoughts, opinions, and involvement matters. To raise the voice of students in school activities, we are promoting a Student Council. Our hope is that the new Student Council will represent the perspectives of students and advise school administration and faculty on concerning matters. Additionally, we hope the Student Council will help make school fun and promote school spirit through organizing special events and helping model an inclusive, positive culture. Details about how to get involved will be announced in early September.

Other Extra-curricular Activities coming this Fall.

- Gr 8 Girl's Volleyball - Coach Josh Mace
- Jr Girl's Volleyball - Coach Martin Christman
- Sr Girl's Volleyball- Coach Leanne Keys
- Jr Boys' Volleyball - Coach Dave Dunnet
- Sr Boys' Volleyball - Coach Hailey Stuart
- Swimming - Coach Laura Lewis
- Warhammer Club (starting Wed. September 11 with Sponsor Teacher DeWinter-Wilkie)
- E-sports Club
- Mountain Bike Club



Website

Learn what's happening at GFSS by going to our [website](#). Additionally, we also will occasionally post photos and flyers for special activities on our [Facebook](#) page.

Code of Conduct Updated to Restrict Devices

Please remember that access to and the use of **personal digital devices** will not be permitted during instructional time (phones, smart watches, earbuds, video games, etc....)

These devices have a demonstrable net negative effect on student learning and the school environment. They have numerous negative health effects and increase the frequency and intensity of social-emotional problems. Also, a lot of time is wasted when students are distracted on their device instead of putting effort into learning.



To support our students, we've updated our [Code of Conduct](#) (Section 10) to reflect the need to restrict their use to only with the teacher's explicit direction (for educational purposes). Otherwise, all devices need to be silenced, put away in lockers and not accessed in-between classes nor on field trips.

Staff will be frequently communicating this restriction policy so that all students and families have fair notice. Families, please join us in sharing this important message with students.

Student Supplies & Fees

Being well prepared is another key to success. Please review the [School Supply List](#) and come prepared for learning. Student fees are \$20 this year (all students). Locks are \$8 and must be obtained from the office.

Extra-curricular Activities (sports and clubs) and some courses have additional fees. Teachers will communicate them to students. If there is any financial hardship, please contact the office.

Bell Schedule

Welcome Bell: 8:12 am

- Period 1 (85 min) – 8:17 – 9:42
- Period 2 (85 min) – 9:47 – 11:12
- Period 3 (85 min) – 11:17 – 12:42
 - LUNCH (44 Min) 12:42 – 1:26

Welcome Bell: 1:26

- Period 4 (120 min) – 1:30 – 3:30

Early Dismissal Bell Schedule

Welcome Bell: 8:12 am

- Period 1 (85 min) – 8:17 – 9:42
- Period 2 (85 min) – 9:47 – 11:12
- Period 3 (85 min) – 11:17 – 12:42
 - LUNCH (44 Min) 12:42 – 1:26

Welcome Bell: 1:26

- Period 4 (60 min) – 1:30 – 2:30



Bussing & Student Drop-off/Pick-up

All students taking the bus must be registered. All families need to fill out the forms to take the bus. If your child has never been registered on a bus, please fill out the Bus Registration form. Please access the [Bussing Protocols](#), [Bus Registration forms](#) and [Bus Route information](#) online and return to the school office (gfss@sd51.bc.ca).



Reminder that student drop-off and pick-up must happen in the east or west parking areas. There should be no parent cars nor bicycle traffic through the central bus lane.

Health and Students' Absence

We remind everyone to be aware that no-one should come to school if they are sick and unable to participate fully in routine activities. It is each of our responsibilities to practice health awareness.

Please advise the office (not just classroom teachers) if your child is going to be absent for any reason or any duration of time. The absentee Auto-Dialer system is in place again this year. If your child has missed a block during the day and we have not been notified, the system will phone and email you. The system will not call if students are late to class, only for missed classes. Please let the office know if your contact information has changed so we can update it in the system.

Have you moved or updated your phone number?

Communication to families is very important for student success. Please let us know of any changes to your address, phone number or email address. We use an update form that students complete on the very first day. Parents, please check that your student knows of any changes to your contact information.

Yearbook Club

We are actively seeking new members to join our enthusiastic group. We will begin meeting mid-September to begin planning and photographing school events. Stay tuned for announcements as the group normally meets on Wednesdays at lunch in the art room. Please see Ms. Doyle (teacher sponsor) if you have any questions about joining or how to get involved in your school community.

Mountain Bike Club

The GFSS Mountain Bike Club will be riding Tuesdays, 3:45-6:00 pm, September 17 through October 22. The club is open to students grade 8 through 12. Bikers of all experience levels welcome.



PAC

The GFSS Parent Advisory Council (PAC) is here to ensure that parents and caregivers have an organized voice in their child's education. PAC offers an opportunity to be involved in the student experience (e.g., by providing funding for some extracurricular activities, field trips, clubs); while providing parents with a place to voice concerns and issues and receive direct feedback from the school administration and School Board Trustees.



PAC meets each 3rd Monday of the month, and you can view PAC [meeting minutes](#) on our webpage.

Bouquets

- Boundary Electric for installing energy efficient bulbs and dimmers.
- District custodians for cleaning the school so it is ready for students.
- District facilities employees for making hundreds of repairs throughout the school.
- E-Sports Club and Sponsor Teacher, Scott De Wynter-Wilkie for representing us in Hawaii this summer.
- School Counsellor T. Webster and Vice Principal J. Dowsell for building student timetables.
- Teachers for engaging with professional learning and department coordination this past week.
- Administrative Assistants for preparing start-up documentation for students.
- Athletic Director R. Freisen and volunteer coaches for preparing for sports teams.

Thank You!

