



ÉCOLE SECONDAIRE
HANDSWORTH
SECONDARY SCHOOL



September 1, 2022

Dear Handsworth Families,

Tl'iknumut, Bienvenue, and Welcome! Handsworth staff have been busy preparing for the beginning of another exciting school year, and we're pleased to provide the following updates to help students and their families transition into the fall routine. Please take a few moments to review the following important information.

With a projected enrolment of 1489 students, including 263 new grade 8 *Royals*, and over 120 staff, Handsworth continues to be one of the largest school communities on the North Shore. This year, we are excited to welcome a few new faces to our teaching staff, including Mr. Brault (immersion), Mr. Diakuw (music) and Mr. Gallant (athletic coordinator), and to welcome *back* to Handsworth Ms. Ferguson (English), Ms. Sidhu (science), Mr. Reble (humanities) and Mr. Worley (business). We're pleased to welcome support staff members Ms. Nguyen as our new Lab Tech, and welcome new and returning Education Assistants Rebecca Sumalde, Kabreena Badesha, Simran Kooner, Simran Gosal and Cathy Delaney. Our office staff has also seen some changes, with Ms. O'Bryan taking over as our Admin Assistant for the retired Ms. Bell, Ms. Nesbit moving into our Records Clerk position, and Ms. Nina Powell as our new Secondary School Assistant. Also returning to Handsworth in a new role is Ms. Meghan Downie who will be our Vice Principal overseeing Grades 9 and 10.

With the support and inspiration of our Teacher Leadership Team, our school theme for this year is '**New Beginnings**'. This captures a shared sentiment of appreciation of the first full year in our new building, and of emerging from the pandemic challenges of the last 2.5 years with a renewed sense of optimism and opportunity.

We are especially looking forward to having our grade 8 students embark on their *new beginning* of their 5-year journey with us. A key facet of this is the re-introduction of our *Grade 8 Retreat*, which is back after a 2-year year hiatus, happening September 13th and 14th. Incoming grade 8 families should already have information regarding this event, but in case they do not, please contact Grade 8 Administrator, Ms. Jagruti Desai (jdesai@sd44.ca). Additional information will also be forthcoming shortly. As part of the retreat our Grade 8s will be inducted as *Royals* in a new Handsworth T-Shirt!



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One of the key facilities upgrades over the summer was the installation of our theatre seats. Thank you to all of our donors who participated in the *Take Your Seat* fundraising drive last school year in support of this enhancement. We are so proud of our theatre and look forward to welcoming the entire school community to one of our performances throughout the upcoming year. For 2022-23, our fundraising focus is in support of our outdoor athletics spaces. Families are invited to make an optional donation to support these efforts, and you will see the opportunity to do so in your student's *School Cash Online* account. Our [HPAC](#) has also been instrumental in promoting this initiative, and I would invite any interested parents to contact the HPAC to see how they can support.

Construction activities continue around school property, and it's timely to remind students and families to use caution and be mindful, particularly when traveling to and from Handsworth. As always, we continue to encourage students to walk, bike or transit to school whenever possible. When travel by car is necessary, we ask parents to make use of designated drop off areas located to both the north and west side of the building. The eastern parking lot that was temporarily available for student use last year has been cordoned off for upcoming landscaping work. Parking is prioritized for the 120 staff who work in the building as well as district itinerant staff, with some visitor spaces available at the front of the school. Demolition at the old school site is almost complete and we anticipate the final wing of the old building to come down within the next month.

Based on student, staff and community feedback during last school year, the 2022-23 timetable has been refined again. It preserves the semester system and maintains a consistent afternoon block to provide students opportunity and choice with academies, while also shortening the typical block duration. Our *Tutorial Time* feature has also been retained, and I encourage all of our students to make the most of this time by connecting with their teachers between 8:30am and 9:12am each morning to avail themselves of this excellent support. Students will begin their year in semester 1 with four different on-timetable classes. Please visit our school website for details of our [full timetable](#).

We are looking forward to welcoming students back in to the building on September 6th for their opening grade assemblies, facilitated by their grade counselor and administrator, in our newly furnished theatre. Please note the following schedule:

- **Grade 8** - Tuesday September 6th at 8:45am
- **Grade 9** - Tuesday September 6th at 10:05am
- **Grade 10** - Tuesday September 6th at 10:55am
- **Grade 11** - Tuesday September 6th at 11:45am
- **Grade 12** - Tuesday September 6th at 12:35pm



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Wednesday, September 7th is the first official day of classes. We will be holding an 8:30am [homeroom](#) to review Health and Safety items with students, and to distribute their timetables. September 7th is also photo day, so students are asked to please come prepared with a smile!

I would like to extend a special acknowledgement to our grade 12 students; the class of 2023. I am extremely excited to be working with our graduating class as the grade administrator. I'd ask that you please keep an eye on your inbox as I will be sending out some important information next week with respect to Graduation 2023. If you would like to receive information from our Grad Parent Coordinators (including *parent run events* and how to volunteer) please register [here](#). ***All school-sanctioned event information will be sent from Handsworth through school messenger.***

As I enter my 16th year at Handsworth, first as a teacher, then Vice Principal, and now as Principal, I am immensely humbled and honored to have the opportunity to lead this school community into its next chapter. It is an absolute privilege to welcome our students to Handsworth each day, and to care for and nurture their social and intellectual growth. I look forward to supporting all our families and invite you to contact me at any time with your concerns, hopes or highlights. Handsworth continues to be a welcoming and inclusive school that excels in academics, arts and athletics, and I am excited to build upon that strong tradition in the upcoming school year.

Sincerely,

Mark Barrett
Principal
Handsworth Secondary