



## BOWEN ISLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOL E-BULLETIN

### Welcome to the 2024-25 School Year!

#### A message from Mrs. Magrath:

Welcome to the new school year!

Our staff is eager see our returning students and welcome our new families and students to the BICS community. We are excited to launch our pods (house groups) and work together to strengthen our connections with one another, the Bowen community, and the amazing natural environment Bowen has to offer. We know core skills in literacy and numeracy are essential and will have targeted reading instruction for our primary students and will be strengthening and solidifying these skills with our intermediate students. Our staff will be using Mathology in Grades 2-7 to support numeracy instruction and extensions. Math IXL will no longer be supported by the district; however, families can purchase their own subscriptions if they wish. More information about our year ahead will be shared with families at *Opening Day on Tuesday, September 3rd from 9-10am.*

Please see below for more information about next week's schedule, updated personal digital device expectations, and online policies and procedures forms to complete in advance of the school year. We appreciate families completing the forms as soon as possible and speaking with their children about appropriate times all school community members (staff, parents, students) can use their devices. Important dates will be shared regularly via BICS This Week and can be viewed on our school website under School News <https://westvancouver.schools.ca/bics-elementary/our-school/school-news/>. You can also find the bell schedule for this year, along with the bus schedule, and code of conduct.

Have a wonderful long weekend and we look forward to seeing everyone on Tuesday!

#### Monday

- Labour Day - school not in session

## **Tuesday**

- 9am-10am First Day of school for new and returning students in Grades 1-7
  - No buses today
  - Families and students should come into the gym when the bell rings. Students will sit with their class from last year and new students will meet Ms. Fairbank in a signed area at the side of the gym.
  - Students will join their classes or tour the school from 9:15-10:00am while Mrs. Magrath will share opening remarks and school direction, along with PAC members who will share their plans for the year and volunteer opportunities.

## **Wednesday**

- 8:35-2:35 School in session; buses will be running; lunch and snacks needed
  - Students will return to their classrooms and will learn their pod group. New students will report to the library and be placed in classes.
  - Pods will assemble in the gym and work together in multi-age groups on creative and energetic pod activities throughout the day on our theme of "BICS community members are Compassionate, Connected, Curious and Confident."
- 9-11am Kindergarten Gradual Entry for Group A
  - Parent Orientation from 9:10-9:40am
  - No buses for Kindergarten students
- 12-2pm Kindergarten Gradual Entry for Group B
  - Parent Orientation from 12:10-12:40am
  - No buses for Kindergarten students

## **Thursday**

- 8:35am Students in Grades 1-7 assemble in grade groups in the gym to start the day.
  - Grade groups will spend time together and teachers will share new class placement with these small groups after recess. Students move to their new class.
- Kindergarten Gradual Entry continues
- School supplies delivered to students who ordered from Creative Packs.
- 5pm Mandatory parent meeting for Grade 7 parents regarding Camp Elphinstone trip on September 24-26th

## **Friday**

- Kindergarten Gradual Entry continues

## **Upcoming dates:**

- September 18th: Open House early dismissal at 1:52pm

- Families are invited to come tour the classrooms and meet the teachers. The PAC will be hosting an event around 2:30pm with more details to come.
- September 20th: Professional Development Day (school not in session)
- September 24-26th: Camp Elphinstone field experience for Grade 7 students

### **Online Policy and Procedures (To be completed each school year for each student):**

Every year, parents are required to complete a new online Policies and Procedures Form for each of their children attending West Vancouver Schools. Failure to complete this form may result in your child being unable to participate fully in classroom and school activities. Click to access the [2024-2025 Policies and Procedures Form](#)

### **Optional Accident Insurance for Families**

Each year the school district reminds families that they have the option to purchase insurance coverage against accidental injury, unexpected medical expenses, and critical illness. There are many different voluntary plans that provide coverage for students and their families against accidental injury, unexpected medical expenses and critical illness. Families are encouraged to do their due diligence when choosing a provider.

### **Personal Digital Device Expectations - NEW!**

At West Vancouver Schools, we understand that personal digital devices offer students valuable opportunities to collaborate, create, and communicate, enhancing their learning experiences. We also recognize the importance of maintaining focused and safe learning environments for all students. Recently, provincial guidelines and legislation have further highlighted the need to minimize distractions, as digital devices can interrupt class time, interfere with student concentration, and disrupt the educational setting.

To support focused and safe learning environments, West Vancouver Schools is refining our approach to digital device use and will be uniformly applying personal digital device expectations across all schools. Starting this school year, personal digital devices will only be allowed with the explicit permission of a teacher or administrator, who will provide clear guidelines to ensure their use is intentional and directly supports student learning. Additionally, considerations will be made to accommodate students' medical and health needs, accessibility, and accommodation requirements.

Here's what this means for different school levels:

- Secondary Schools: Personal digital device expectations will be in place during instructional time. Instructional time is during classes, assemblies and all school related learning activities.
- Elementary Schools: Personal digital device expectations will apply throughout the entire school day, including before school, after school, and during break times. Cell phones will not be used at all during school hours.

#### How You Can Help:

To support these updated expectations, we ask parents and guardians to:

1. Familiarize Yourself: Please take the time to read through the [Parent/Guardian Guide to Personal Digital Devices](#) to fully understand the new district-wide expectations. Additionally, review any specific guidelines or expectations provided by your child's teacher(s). Understanding both the general and specific expectations will help you support your child in following the new expectations effectively.
2. Model Appropriate Use: Demonstrate and discuss the importance of limiting device use at home, especially during family time or other important activities. Your behavior sets a powerful example for your child.
3. Encourage Balance: Help your child find a healthy balance between screen time and other activities, such as reading, outdoor play, or family interactions. This will reinforce the focus on learning during school hours.
4. Mindful Communication: Please avoid calling or texting your child during school time unless it's an emergency. Remind your child that school time is for learning, and that messages can wait until after school. If urgent communication is needed, please contact the school office.
5. By working together, we can create a safer, more focused learning environment for all students. These small steps at home can make a big difference in reinforcing the positive changes we're implementing at school. Thank you for your cooperation and support.

# West Vancouver Schools

## Parent & Guardian's Guide to Personal Digital Devices



While digital devices can enhance learning in many ways, allowing students to collaborate, create and communicate, it is important that they are used in a mindful and meaningful way.

Personal digital devices should only be used with the permission of a teacher or administrator. Additional considerations will be made to provide for student's health and accessibility needs, and accommodation requirements.

**Elementary**  
Cell phones should NOT be used in elementary school.



**Secondary**  
Cell phones should only be used in class if specifically required for a learning task

What can parents and guardians do to help?

- Understand the digital device expectations at your child's school
- Support and encourage your child's appropriate use of digital devices
- Refrain from contacting your child during the school day. If it's an emergency, contact the school office
- Personally model and encourage digital device limitations (boundaries?)