

West Vancouver Secondary School



Grade 8 Transition Guidebook



West Vancouver Secondary School – Home of the Highlanders!

Welcome to West Vancouver Secondary School

This guide is designed to help you and your child feel at home at West Vancouver Secondary School. It provides basic information about our school culture, what we expect from our students and how they can make the most of their experience at West Van Secondary.

OUR MISSION

To provide an environment in which students entrusted to our care gain self- confidence, recognize their self-worth, and become life-long learners and responsible citizens.

Mr. S. Rauh	Principal
Ms. J. Towers	Grade 10/11 Vice-Principal
Ms. S. Frith	Grade 8/9 Vice-Principal
Ms. A. Rice	Grade 8/9 Counsellor
Ms. U. Kerr	Administrative Assistant
Ms. T. Krieger	Grade 8 South Campus Office
Ms. Bornea	Business Manager
Ms. Avotins	Registrar
Ms. Kong	Data Clerk
Ms. J. McKee	Athletic Director
Mr. C. MacGillivray	Athletic Director



GENERAL INFORMATION:

School Website: <https://westvancouver-schools.ca/westvancouver-secondary/>

School Address: 1750 Mathers Avenue, West Vancouver, B. C. V7V 2G7

Contact by phone: 604-981-1100 - North Campus

604-981-1120 - South Campus

Hours of Operation:

School	7:15 am to 6:00 pm
Main Office	8:00 am to 4:00 pm
Office Voicemail	604-981-1100
Library	7:30 am to 4:00 pm
Cafeteria	8:00 am to 1:45 pm



Bring Your Own Device!

BYOD at WVSS is intended to optimize student learning, and to assist us as we develop student competencies including critical thinking and problem solving.

We would like to remind students and families of our Personal Digital Device (PDD) expectations, which have been key to fostering focused and engaging learning environments. Students are expected to use personal digital devices only with the explicit permission of a teacher or administrator, ensuring their use is intentional and supports learning.

Families can continue to support this by:

- Encouraging balanced screen time at home.
- Avoiding calls or texts to students during school hours.
- Modeling mindful device use when on school property and at home.

Let's keep building on the success of this initiative and continue supporting safe, focused learning for all!



HOW CAN I BE SUCCESSFUL IN GRADE 8?

1. Believe in yourself

- Set goals for yourself both in and out of school this year.



2. Be organized

- Use your device to connect with teachers, resources, and build a collaborative network.
- Use the WVSS App
- Keep your locker organized!

3. Be an entrepreneur with your time

- Plan your week.
- Develop a study plan which includes a time and quiet location.
- Schedule breaks and opportunities to connect with friends and social media.
- Minimize distractions to your learning.

4. Be successful in the classroom

- Manage class time appropriately.
- Be adaptable to different learning environments.
- Be prepared for each class.
- Be an active participant in class.
- Develop strong collaborative skills with classmates.
- Ask questions!



5. Be an information manager

- Use different techniques to understand and remember what you have read.
- Refer to class notes to support your reading.
- Ask questions about what you read or heard.
- Check for understanding with classmates and the teacher.
- Use your binder every day and keep class notes organized.

6. Be flexible

- Learn what works for you as a learner.
- Be receptive to feedback and be willing to listen to ideas from other people.
- Be a creative problem solver.



HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

Student Activities and Clubs

WVSS offers students a wide variety of extracurricular activities. Getting involved is a great way for your child to adapt to his or her new school.

CLUBS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Art Club ◆ Badminton ◆ Best Buddies ◆ Book Club ◆ Chem Buddies ◆ Dance Crew ◆ Debate Team ◆ Helping Hands ◆ Guitar ◆ Keys for Seniors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Law Club ◆ Math Contest Club ◆ Paws & Pastries ◆ Persian Club ◆ Philosophy Club ◆ Pre-Med Club ◆ Project Backpack ◆ Service for Seniors ◆ Teen Tutors ◆ Youth Engagement Society
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There are over 70 clubs to choose from, so we encourage our students to get involved!

SPORTS

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Rugby ◆ Swimming ◆ Volleyball (girls) ◆ Field Hockey (girls) ◆ Cross Country ◆ Boys' soccer * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Basketball ◆ Gymnastics ◆ Skiing/Snowboarding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Football ◆ Track & Field ◆ Mountain Biking ◆ Badminton * ◆ Golf * ◆ Tennis * ◆ Girls' Soccer * ◆ Ultimate *

****No specific grade 8 team, but grade 8 students may try out.**

VOLUNTEER OPORTUNITIES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Assemblies ◆ Library ◆ New Student Orientation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Library ◆ Grade 7 Orientation ◆ Parent-Teacher Interviews
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EASING THE TRANSITION TO SECONDARY

The first week of school is designed to have fun community building events where students participate in activities in their house teams.

Students in Grade 8 will be organized into HOUSE TEAMS:

- **Grizzlies (red)**
- **Orcas (black)**
- **Thunderbirds (yellow)**
- **Wolves (white)**



WHAT COURSES DO GRADE 8's TAKE?

The courses offered at grade 8 are designed to develop a strong foundation in the core subject areas, and at the same time, provide opportunities to explore other areas of interest. Although the senior secondary school years provide opportunity for greater specialization, parents and students should be guided by the belief that a broad liberal education provides better preparation for the students.

We are proud to offer diverse educational opportunities to meet the needs of all our students; students and parents can collaboratively make decisions about program requirements for grade 8. We recommend contacting the grade 8 counsellor if you have any questions regarding programming.

Grade 8 Courses (typical timetable of required courses)

1. English (*English Language Adapted*)
2. Social Studies (*English Language Adapted*)
3. Mathematics (*Mathematics 8 Enriched*)
4. Science
5. Physical Education
6. French (*ELL*)
7. Fine Arts Rotation (*Foods/Textiles/Woodwork/Metalwork/Careers*)
8. Applied Skills (*Drama/Art/Photography/Dance*)
9. Optional Band and Choir
 - Concert Band & Choir — Before school class 7:30 am (9th class)
 - District Honor Choir — Audition Required (evening commitment)
 - Orchestra — String players or those who are advanced.

Fine Arts and Applied Skills will rotate throughout the year with approximately 23-24 or 17-18, classes in each area, respectively.



COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ENGLISH 8 / LANGUAGE ADAPTED ENGLISH 8

English Language Arts incorporates reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing and representing. Areas of study will include short stories, poetry, novels, non-fiction, media, and writing. Students will continue to develop and work towards levels of greater sophistication in their language usage and their appreciation of literature.

SOCIAL STUDIES 8

The primary goal of Social Studies education is to give students the knowledge, skills, and competencies to be active, informed citizens who can think critically, understand and explain the perspectives of others, make judgments, and communicate ideas effectively. In Social Studies 8, students will inquire into identities, cultures & geographies of the world, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, various indigenous civilizations and societies, the impacts of colonization and racism. They will also gain further knowledge on various social issues we face in society today.

LANGUAGE ADAPTED SOCIAL STUDIES 8

Social Studies Language Adapted courses are designed for English Language Learners whose skills are at levels 3 and 4. The goal is to develop the students' English language skills, while developing the critical thinking skills they will need to progress in Social Studies courses. The regular Social Studies curriculum is used to design units of study for these courses, while co-operative group work, research, writing skills, and public speaking are developed through the learning activities.

TRANSITIONAL SOCIAL STUDIES 8

Transitional Social Studies 8/9 is a program designed for English Language Learners whose skills are at levels 1 and 2. Emphasis will be placed on acquiring academic language and understanding of the core content of the Social Studies 8/9 curriculum.

MATHEMATICS 8

This mathematics course is designed to develop numeracy skills by combining mathematical knowledge, communication skills, problem solving, connecting ideas, reasoning, mental math, estimation, visualization, and the use of technology. Students will construct their own meaning out of mathematics, understand math in meaningful contexts, and learn to move from concrete to abstract ideas by linking concrete, pictorial and symbolic concepts.



MATHEMATICS 8 ENRICHED

The core content of these courses will be the same as Mathematics 8 but many of the topics will be extended. Selection for the Mathematics 8 Enriched courses will be made during the Spring of the following year by way of a problem-based assessment administered at West Vancouver Secondary School – extra space will be made in the fall for those students new to the District.

SCIENCE 8

Science 8 provides a general background for all students in the major sciences. Fun activities include hands-on labs and experiments, modelling projects, research assignments and dissections. Science 8 topics include: **Biology** – characteristics of living things, cells, the body's immune system, vaccines and antibodies. **Physics** – optics, electromagnetic radiation, properties and behavior of light, mirrors and lenses, human vision. **Chemistry** – characteristics and changes of matter, kinetic molecular theory and atomic theory. **Earth Science** – plate tectonics and Earthquakes, layers of Earth and volcanoes.

TRANSITIONAL SCIENCE 8

Transitional Science 8 is designed to support English Language Learners by providing language adaptations of the Science 8 curriculum. Students will develop academic and scientific vocabulary and language structures while learning about the same major areas as Science 8.

PHYSICAL and HEALTH EDUCATION 8

PHE promotes a positive attitude towards an active and healthy lifestyle. Health topics include healthy relationships, safety and injury prevention, and substance abuse.

Goals are to assist students in developing and maintaining physical fitness, to develop skills and knowledge in a wide variety of athletic and recreational pursuits. PHE offers an environment which encourages co-operation, responsibility, sportsmanship, and the development of self-esteem. Students are offered most of the following activities: Fitness activities, Basketball, Volleyball, European Handball, Soccer, Football, Road Hockey, Dance, Softball, Track & Field, Lacrosse, Rugby, Weight Training, Minor Games and Badminton.

FRENCH 8

Through comprehensible input and interactive storytelling in French, students will acquire the language necessary to communicate in a variety of meaningful, real-life situations. Authentic communication using high-frequency vocabulary is emphasized. Listening and reading skills are a focus for this course and, as students progress, speaking and writing will further develop their communicative competence. Appreciation for the cultures of the Francophone world will also be developed through stories, music, film, and other engaging activities.



APPLIED SKILLS 8 Rotation

Various mini courses make up Applied Skills 8. Students take Home Economics, Information Technology, Career Education, and Industrial Education. Home Economics units include food studies and textile studies. Computers include drafting and an introduction to many computer programs. Industrial Education includes woodwork and mechanical power systems.

FINE ARTS 8 Rotation

Five mini courses make up Fine Arts 8 (i.e.: Art, Dance, Drama, Music and Photography). Students will rotate through the mini courses taught by various specialist teachers.

GRADE 8 Electives: A music elective is available to students before school – either JUNIOR CONCERT BAND and/or CHOIR. Junior Concert Band a/o Choir may be taken as an extra, ninth/or tenth course. These courses are offered in the morning prior to regular classes or during the regular schedule instead of Fine Arts 8.

THE LEARNING SUPPORT CENTRE

The Learning Support Centre offers instruction to students from grades 8-12. Learning support is a scheduled block of time during which students are given assistance with homework, test taking skills and other learning strategies.

SD45 District Programs at WVSS (please contact the counsellor for more information!)

District Programs | West Vancouver Schools

DISTRICT PROGRAMS	PREMIER PROGRAMS	PREMIER ACADEMIES
ADVANCED PLACEMENT	CARPENTRY: YOUTH TRAIN IN TRADES	BADMINTON
EARLY LEARNING (CHILDREN AGES BIRTH TO 8 YEARS OLD)	CYBERSECURITY & ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE	BASEBALL
ELEMENTARY BAND	FASHION INDUSTRY	BASKETBALL
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL)	FIRST AID SWIM TRAINING (FAST)	FENCING
FEEDING FUTURES	DISTRICT ILLUMINATE CHORAL ENSEMBLES	FIELD HOCKEY
FRENCH IMMERSION	IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME	HOCKEY
IB PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAM	IGNITE YOUR PASSION: BIG BAD BOT BUILDERS	MECHATRONICS ROBOTICS
IB MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME	IGNITE YOUR PASSION: GREAT BOTS OF FIRE	SOCCER
IDEC	JUNIOR IGNITE DISTRICT CHOIR	TENNIS
INGLEWOOD SECONDARY	OUTDOOR RECREATION	VOLLEYBALL
INTERNATIONAL	200 HOUR YOGA TEACHER TRAINING	
MONTESSORI	YELL ENTREPRENEURSHIP 12 PROGRAM	
PROPERTIES FAMILY HUB		
PURSUIT		



WHAT IS THE IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME?



The IB Diploma Programme is designed as an academically challenging and balanced programme of education with final examinations that prepare students, normally Grades 11 and 12, for success at university and beyond.

The Benefits of an IB Diploma

- IB is designed to lead to a diploma that will be accepted and valued in many countries.
- IB students are well prepared for first year university and have a high completion rate.
- IB students have enhanced opportunities to win awards and scholarships.
- IB students who achieve well are given advanced placement and/or credit at university.
- IB also enriches students with a global perspective.

Highlander Pride

West Vancouver Secondary School's first group of IB Diploma students graduated in 1989. We are the oldest IB Diploma Programme on the North Shore and proud of our Highlander tradition of excellence in academics and athletics.

WVSS has a diverse and international student population, so IB is a perfect fit. The literal translation of WVSS's motto "Faire Sans Dire" is "do without speaking". IB is also all about action and change.

Contact Information:

Nicola Colhoun, IB Coordinator: ncolhoun@wvschools.ca

General information is available on the IB website: www.ibo.org



West Vancouver Secondary School – Home of the Highlanders!

WHAT WILL MY LEARNING UPDATE LOOK LIKE?

Reporting Dates:

There are three formal learning updates during the school year:

Term One	September – November
Interim Report	Mid October (Comments only – no marks)
Term Two	December – March
Parent Teacher Conferences	January
Term Three	April – June

Throughout the year, progress reports or other informal reporting, providing incomplete work or suggestions for improvement, can also take place at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

Student Evaluation and Grades:

Grades 8 & 9: Students receive a proficiency grade on all learning updates:

Emerging, Developing, Proficient or Extending.

Proficiency Scale	→			
	Emerging	Developing	Proficient	Extending
	The student demonstrates an initial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.	The student demonstrates a partial understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.	The student demonstrates a complete understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.	The student demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the concepts and competencies relevant to the expected learning.

Grades 10-12: Students receive percentages and a letter grade on all learning updates.

The chart below lists the B.C. Ministry of Education percentages:

A	(Excellent)	86 - 100%
B	(Very Good)	73 - 85%
C+	(Good)	67 - 72%
C	(Satisfactory)	60 - 66%
C-	(Minimally Acceptable)	50 - 59%
IE	(Insufficient Evidence)	Learning outcomes not completed
F	(Failing)	0 - 49%



HOW DO I MAKE THE HONOUR ROLL?

The school maintains two Honour Rolls
Academic Honour (gr 10-12) and the Highlander Distinguished Learner (gr 8-9)

The Honour /Distinguished Learner Roll will only be based on courses taken at West Vancouver Secondary School or with the West Vancouver School District from September to June. External, Equivalency, Summer School, Challenge, Distributed and Distance Learning outside of West Vancouver School District, Careers, and Non-credit courses will not be included in the calculation.

The **Highlander Distinguished Learner Award grade 8-9** is given to grade 8 and 9 students that demonstrate proficiency or better in 7 of their 8 courses at the end of the year. These awards celebrate our students that demonstrate complete understanding of the concepts and skills in all areas of learning. In addition, students must:

- Successfully complete Career Education 8 & 9
- Complete and submit their goal setting and self-assessment of the core competencies.

Establishing good work habits is essential to success. Here are three ways in which students can demonstrate excellent work habits which will lead them to become distinguished Highlander learners.

Responsibility	Cooperation	Independence
Attendance	Participation (attitude/ contributes)	Time on task
Punctuality	Teamwork	Effort
Preparedness: materials, work, and attire.	Respect for others.	Attitude
Completion of assignments	Following Instructions	Time management
Homework		Seeks extra help
Respect for work.		when needed.
Catches up missed work.		



WHAT DOES MY DAY LOOK LIKE?

WEEK ONE				
Monday (FIT)	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday (FIT)	Friday
DAY 1 - 12FIT34	DAY 2 - 1234	DAY 1 - 2314	DAY 2 - 23FIT14	DAY 1 - 3124
Block 1 8:30-9:37	Block 1 8:30-9:50	Block 2 8:30-9:50	Block 2 8:30-9:37	Block 3 8:30-9:50
Break 9:37-9:52	Break 9:50-10:00	Break 9:50-10:00	Break 9:37-9:52	Break 9:50-10:00
Block 2 9:52-11:00	Block 2 10:00-11:20	Block 3 10:00-11:20	Block 3 9:52-11:00	Block 1 10:00-11:20
FIT 11:00-11:50	Break 11:20-11:35	Break 11:20-11:35	FIT 11:00-11:50	Break 11:20-11:35
Block 3 11:50-12:55	Block 3 11:35-12:55	Block 1 11:35-12:55	Block 1 11:50-12:55	Block 2 11:35-12:55
Lunch 12:55-1:40	Lunch 12:55-1:40	Lunch 12:55-1:40	Lunch 12:55-1:40	Lunch 12:55-1:40
Block 4 1:40-2:48	Block 4 1:40-3:00	Block 4 1:40-3:00	Block 4 1:40-2:48	Block 4 1:40-3:00

WEEK TWO				
Monday (FIT)	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday (FIT)	Friday
DAY 2 - 31FIT24	DAY 1 - 1234	DAY 2 - 1234	DAY 1 - 23FIT14	DAY 2 - 2314
Block 3 8:30-9:37	Block 1 8:30-9:50	Block 1 8:30-9:50	Block 2 8:30-9:37	Block 2 8:30-9:50
Break 9:37-9:52	Break 9:50-10:00	Break 9:50-10:00	Break 9:37-9:52	Break 9:50-10:00
Block 1 9:52-11:00	Block 2 10:00-11:20	Block 2 10:00-11:20	Block 3 9:52-11:00	Block 3 10:00-11:20
FIT 11:00-11:50	Break 11:20-11:35	Break 11:20-11:35	FIT 11:00-11:50	Break 11:20-11:35
Block 2 11:50-12:55	Block 3 11:35-12:55	Block 3 11:35-12:55	Block 1 11:50-12:55	Block 1 11:35-12:55
Lunch 12:55-1:40	Lunch 12:55-1:40	Lunch 12:55-1:40	Lunch 12:55-1:40	Lunch 12:55-1:40
Block 4 1:40-2:48	Block 4 1:40-3:00	Block 4 1:40-3:00	Block 4 1:40-2:48	Block 4 1:40-3:00



HOW DO I USE MY LOCK?

For example – Combination is 8 – 29 – 42



1) Turn right two or more whole turns and stop at the first number (8)

2) Then turn left one whole turn past the first number and stop at second number (29)

3) Now turn right directly to last number (42), pull down to open

DAILY ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to always be in all classes and on time. Grade 8 students are not permitted to leave the school grounds during school hours.

Excused Absence from Class

Parents must be aware that absences, whether excused or not, will impact achievement. If a student is ill or will be late for school, parents are requested to inform the school (wvss@wvschools.ca) before 8:25 a.m. and state the name (spelling the last name), grade and the reason for the absence or late-ness.

Illness, family funerals or emergencies are generally the only acceptable excuses. Early family vacations do not constitute a 'compelling extenuating situation'. It is the student's responsibility to contact teachers or friends to find out what work was missed.

Students who must leave the school before afternoon dismissal must sign out through the Main Office. If a student does not have a note and a parent cannot be contacted, the student will not be given permission to leave except in exceptional circumstances.

Students are not excused from one class to do work for other classes. **Missing one class to do work for another class constitutes an unexcused absence.**

Unexcused Absence from Class

Attendance is recorded by teachers on the computer network every period. Initially, subject teachers will deal with students about unexcused absences by applying consequences. However, if a student is developing a pattern of unexcused absences or lates, counsellors and administrators will be involved, and consequences will follow progressive discipline as outlined in the code of conduct.



Synrevoice

West Vancouver Secondary has an “electronic call-back” communications/technology to enhance communication between the school and parent(s) / guardians.

- * Starting at 6:00 p.m. each evening, Synrevoice phones the parent or guardian of each student who has been (absent) unexcused from one or more classes that day.
- * Completes calls by 9:00 p.m. Should there be no answer at home a voice message will be left on answering machines.

Communication:

A further function of Synrevoice is the ability to communicate information to all parents/guardians. Examples may include school closure (emergency procedures), information on reporting, report card distribution, future activities, and even specific messages to grades or groups. e.g. Grad Requirements, etc. .

Family Holidays and Missed Work

If parents opt to take their sons/daughters out, it is their prerogative. Any work missed is solely the student’s responsibility. An ‘extended absence’ form must be completed prior to the start of the absence. The teachers should be informed at least one week in advance. However, teachers are not expected to provide extra classes, make-up tests, or specific work to be completed. Some class activities cannot be replaced.



COMMUNICATION

School Website:

<https://westvancouver-schools.ca/westvancouver-secondary/>

School Announcements

Announcements are read every morning and are also posted daily on our school app. We do not interrupt classes during the day with student messages (except for only very urgent messages).

Student Telephone

A student telephone is available in the South Campus and North Campus offices if needed.

Grade 8 Newsletter

Families receive a monthly newsletter highlighting the events that have taken place in the classroom and outside the classroom. This is a glimpse of the everyday happenings of a Highlander.

E-Bulletin

The school e-bulletin is the primary means of information communication to families. Every Thursday, families receive a newsletter with the latest information and reminders of upcoming events. It is very important that we have your correct emails in our system in order that you receive these weekly bulletins.



MY GOALS FOR GRADE 8:

What strategies will I use?

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-

What will I do in meeting new people?

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-
-

What clubs will I join?

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-
-

What teams will I join or try out for?

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-
-

Who could I ask for help?

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-
-

