

**COUNSELLING DEPARTMENT
INFORMATION SHEET FOR GRADE 8 PARENTS
2017-2018**

GRADE 8 COUNSELLORS:

KEEL FREEMAN (LASTNAMES A-G) kfreeman@vsb.bc.ca (604) 713-8233

WENDY HIGENBOTTAM (for last names H-M) whigenbott@vsb.bc.ca (604) 713-8233

JOE LEE (for last names N-Z) jolee@vsb.bc.ca (604) 713-8233

In Grade 8, the counsellors split the students up alphabetically. Starting in Grade 9, the previous year's Grade 12 counsellor will pick up the entire grade group and follow them until they graduate.

Counselling in high school differs from elementary counseling. The main difference is that students are eligible to access counseling support confidentially on a drop-in basis. We provide support on a variety of issues from: mental health, socio-emotional struggles to course and career advising. In high school, we also: teach, do scheduling, timetables, scholarships, post-secondary planning, credits, and track your child's graduation progress.

Each counsellor has approximately 300 students, so students requiring extensive support, or in-depth therapeutic work and/ or urgent mental health support will usually be recommended to see a community health provider or mental health clinician as well. We can also recommend services and support to families as well as outside counseling services.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM GRADE 8 PARENTS

MY CHILD HAS A SPECIAL NEED, WHO SHOULD I CONTACT FIRST WITH QUESTIONS/CONCERNS?

If your child is in the TAP Program contact teacher, Colin Maclean

If your child is in the LSP Program contact teacher, Kim Kwan

If your child has an IEP but is not in a program, contact our Resource Teacher Alana Rentz: arentz@vsb.bc.ca

I HAVE A CONCERN OR NEED CLARIFICATION ON SOMETHING THAT'S GOING ON IN MY CHILD'S CLASSROOM...

You should always contact the teachers first to clarify. A full email directory for teachers is on the Tupper website. Can't get a response to an email? try leaving a phone message at the office.

MY CHILD HAS TO MISS SCHOOL, WHAT DO I DO?

No need to call the school like you may have in elementary. When your child is feeling better, send them back to school with a note. The note should include: dates absent, reason for absence. Student will then check in at office when back and pick up an absence slip to attach to the note, it goes around to all 8 teachers to sign and then it MUST come back to the office so the absences can be marked excused in the computer. I know it sounds confusing but they will learn the process and office staff will help.

MY CHILD IS ABSENT DUE TO A SERIOUS ILLNESS/ EVENT... FOR OVER A WEEK

Please check in with the counsellor and let us know what's happening. We can let teachers know what's going on and may be able to collect some homework and can be of support to your child if there is a serious situation.

WE ARE GOING ON VACATION DURING SCHOOL TIME....

Vacations during the school year are not recommended, especially long ones. They can really disrupt your child's education—especially in math and your child may fall dangerously behind. Teachers are not obligated to provide homework for students on vacation. If you cannot avoid it, please contact us in counselling and we can walk you through the process.

HOW WILL I KNOW HOW MY CHILD IS DOING IN SCHOOL?

In high school you will get three report cards for our three academic terms (December, spring and June). The final mark is usually the average mark of all three terms (with the exception of final exams that may be included, check your child's course outline). If your child is at risk of failure, you will get an INTERIM REPORT mailed to your house in between the report cards. If you want to get academic updates in between, you should contact the teachers directly (Email directory on Tupper website). **IT IS IMPORTANT TO ALWAYS INFORM THE OFFICE OF ANY ADDRESS/ CONTACT NUMBER CHANGES FOR THIS AND MANY OTHER REASONS.**

I GOT A ROBOT CALL FROM THE SCHOOL THAT SAID MY CHILD WAS MISSING A CLASS...

The school uses an automated system that notifies parents on attendance and important school events. If your child is really late for class or does not attend, chances are they will be marked absent and you'll get an automated phone call. If you would like clarification on attendance, contact us in counseling. Grade 8 students who skip classes are a big concern for counselors and you will hear from us if this happens. **IT IS IMPORTANT TO ALWAYS INFORM THE OFFICE OF ANY CONTACT NUMBER CHANGES. YOU WILL NOT GET AUTOMATED CALLS IF YOU DO NOT HAVE AN ACTIVATED VOICEMAIL OR VALID EMAIL ADDRESS.**

WHERE CAN MY CHILD GET ACADEMIC SUPPORT?

Tupper has a Homework Club that is free and especially good for Grade 8's. Homework Club runs Tuesday and Thursday afterschool until 6 and includes snacks, free tutoring and is fun. Highly recommended by us in counseling! If your child is in a SKILLS BLOCK they will be getting extra help from a support teacher with their academics. Also, if your child has an IEP, check with Alana Rentz about academic support services.

WHAT SPORTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR GRADE 8's & WHEN ARE TRYOUTS?

Volleyball	Rugby (September)
Basketball	Wrestling
Track and field	Soccer
Softball	Tennis

TEXTS/ CALLS DURING CLASS TIME....

Each teacher has an individual class policy when it comes to cel phones but most teachers will confiscate a student's phone if they are caught using it during class time. Please familiarize yourself with our bell schedule and avoid calls during class time. If you have an URGENT matter, you can always reach your child through the main office (604) 713-8233

WHERE DOES MY CHILD HANG OUT AT LUNCH?

Grade 8's usually hang out in the foyer, cafeteria or in the fourth floor hallway. Some students will attend clubs at lunch or go to the gym to watch practices etc. Our lunch break is 45 minutes, so we do not recommend students leave campus to go for lunch as they are often late for their afternoon classes. Buying a monthly lunch pass for your child is a convenient way to provide a nutritious lunch and have them stay on campus. Forms and fee details are at the office.

MY CHILD HAS THE NEW IPHONE 10...

Lucky kid! Please tell them to keep it on them and the ringer off and to not to leave it unattended. Thefts happen at all Vancouver schools and we are not responsible for valuables.

OTHER STAFF YOU SHOULD KNOW

Nick Akrap, Vice Principal/ Grade 8 Administrator. (604) 713-8233

Carla Aird, Youth Worker for students not in a program. (604) 713-8233

Chad Carpenter, Aboriginal Enhancement Worker (604) 713-8233

Kelly Melsness, Drug and Alcohol Prevention Counsellor

We have multicultural support workers at Tupper for our Filipino, Chinese, Arabic, Spanish-speaking and Vietnamese parents and students.

Call the office when you have SERIOUS or TIME SENSITIVE concerns especially anything concerning student safety, bullying or behavior.

HOW DO I STAY UP TO DATE ?

- Check your child's agenda
- Visit the Tupper website regularly
- Sign up for the PAC newsletter
- Log in to the Myed bc Parent Portal
- Make sure the school has your current email/ phone number for important messages
- Call the counsellors if you have any questions!