

QUAMICHAN SCHOOL

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Warm greetings from Quamichan School!

As we begin the 2025–26 school year, we're thrilled to welcome you and your child to our school community. This message is designed to provide key information about our start-up and help answer any questions you may have about your student's first days with us.

On behalf of our entire staff, we extend a heartfelt welcome to all families. We're truly looking forward to the year ahead and the opportunity to work together to support your child's learning and growth.

First Day of School – Grade 8 Students Only

 **Tuesday, September 2nd**


 **8:55 AM – 1:15 PM**


Grade 8 students will be welcomed into the school by staff and guided to the theater (MPR) to begin their day. From there, they'll be introduced to their teachers and accompanied to their classrooms by their A block teacher.

Our goal for the first day is to ensure a smooth and welcoming transition for our Grade 8 students. We'll focus on building a sense of community and helping students feel confident and comfortable in their new environment. Activities will include:

- Meeting all their teachers
 - Getting to know their classrooms and the school layout
 - Participating in community-building activities
 - Learning about school expectations
 - Receiving lockers and learning how to use their locks
 - Reviewing student timetables
 - Enjoying a lunchtime hot dog BBQ
 - Attending a grade-wide assembly to highlight the many exciting opportunities at Quamichan
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Wednesday, September 3rd – First Full Day for All Students

 **Date:** Wednesday, September 3rd

 **Time:** 8:55 AM – 3:15 PM

- **Grade 8 students** will report directly to their **A1 block classroom**.
- **Grade 9 students** will be welcomed by staff and directed to the **theater (MPR)** to begin their day. From there, they'll be guided to their A1 classrooms by their teacher.

The morning will focus on helping students get settled and comfortable in their school environment. Activities will include:

- Reviewing timetables
- Learning locker routines
- Understanding school and classroom expectations

In the afternoon, students will participate in a **mini timetable run-through** to help them get familiar with their daily schedule.

It's very normal for students to come home feeling a bit tired after these first few days—but hopefully also excited and full of stories to share about their new school year!

We'll be sending home a copy of our **Student Handbook**, which includes much of the information above, along with teacher contact details and other helpful resources.

Grade 8 Structure at Quamichan

Grade 8 Program

Grade 8 students follow a **linear timetable**, similar to their experience in elementary school. They will take their core subjects (English, Math, Science, Social Studies) all year long, taught by **two or three core teachers** who work closely together. Students will remain with the same core class group throughout the year, helping to build strong classroom communities.

In addition to core subjects, Grade 8 students will rotate through **12 different exploratory classes** over the course of the year, giving them a chance to experience a wide range of learning opportunities.

Class placements are made with thoughtful input from Grade 7 teachers at our feeder schools. Our dedicated counsellors work diligently to build balanced and supportive class groupings. If your child is experiencing challenges with their placement, we kindly ask that they give the first few weeks of September to settle in.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out:

 **Principal:** Claire Whitney – cwhitney@sd79.bc.ca

 **Vice-Principal:** Kim Magnan – kmagnan@sd79.bc.ca

Grade 9 Program Overview

Grade 9 students at Quamichan will also follow a **linear timetable** this year, meaning their courses will run throughout the full school year. One of the biggest changes from Grade 8 is the shift from exploratory courses to **elective classes**. Each Grade 9 student is placed in **three elective courses**, based on their preferences submitted last spring.

While we do our best to match students with their top choices, it's not uncommon for some to be placed in their fourth, fifth, or sixth choice. That said, most students receive at least one or two of their top three selections. Our counsellors carefully review each timetable to ensure placements align with teacher recommendations and student needs.

If your child is experiencing challenges with their schedule or elective placement, we encourage them to give the first few weeks of September to settle in. If concerns persist, students will be guided through the process of booking an appointment with a counsellor to explore possible adjustments.

On-Campus Lunchtime

Quamichan School will continue with **on-campus lunchtimes** this year, as we've seen great benefits in building community and connection among students. All students are expected to remain on campus during lunch to participate in activities and be present for school-wide events.

We have a **10-minute eating period** before lunch begins. This time allows students to eat and hear daily announcements with their teachers.

Lunch Options:

- 🍷 **Snack Shack** will open for lunch purchases starting **Friday, September 5th**, with a limited menu until **Monday, September 8th**. We recommend students bring a packed lunch on **Wednesday Sept. 3rd and Thursday Sept. 4th**.
- 🥗 **Nourish Cowichan** will begin offering **free nutritious lunches** starting the **second week of school**.
- 🍎 Our **free salad bar and fresh fruit** will be available **daily** at lunchtime starting the week of September 8th.
- 🌭 A **hotdog BBQ** (including veggie dogs and gluten-free buns) will be held for **Grade 8s on Tuesday, September 2nd**, and for **all students on Friday, September 5th**.

Advisory Program


We will continue our **Advisory Class** every **Wednesday** between the two morning blocks. This 30-minute session focuses on:

- Social Emotional Learning
 - Building classroom community
 - Encouraging student voice
 - Strengthening school connection
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Student Advisory Representative Meetings

We're excited to host **monthly meetings** with student representatives from each advisory class. These meetings provide a valuable opportunity for students to share their ideas, feedback, and perspectives on school life.

Welcome Back Family BBQ – Wednesday, September 10th

 **Date:** Wednesday, September 10th

 **Time:** BBQ at 5:00 PM | PAC Meeting at 6:00 PM (Library)

Families are warmly invited to our **Welcome Back BBQ**—a great chance to meet staff, tour the school, and connect with other families. We also encourage parents to attend our **PAC meeting** following the BBQ.

School Supplies


We ask that students come prepared with **basic supplies**. If purchasing supplies is a challenge, please don't hesitate to contact us—we're here to help.

Recommended Supplies:

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|-------------------------------------|--|
| • Binder with dividers (7 sections) | • Ruler |
| • Lined paper | • Scientific calculator (recommended for Gr 9) |
| • Pens and pencils | • Glue stick |
| • Eraser | • Scissors |
| • Pencil crayons or felt pens | • Backpack |
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Photo Day

 **School Photo Day:** Wednesday, September 24th

 **Retakes:** Friday, November 3rd

More information will be sent home with students closer to the date.

Cell Phones

To support focused learning, **student cell phones must be powered off and stored in lockers or placed in a bin in the classroom.** If brought to class, phones will be collected by the teacher. If your child prefers not to have their phone collected, they should leave it in their locker or at home.

If you need to reach your child urgently, please call the office at **250-746-6168** and we'll ensure they receive your message. Otherwise, we ask that communication via cell phone happen during lunch breaks.

Physical Health Education (PHE)

Our PHE program promotes active, healthy lifestyles in a safe and inclusive environment. Please note the following expectations:

- **Gym strip** is not required but changing for class is encouraged for hygiene.
 - **No electronics** during PHE—phones should be left in lockers.
 - **No gum, food, or drink** in the gym or fitness portable. Water bottles are encouraged.
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School Fees

The **Student Activity Fee** is **\$25.00 per student**, supporting guest presentations and special events. We encourage families to use **School Cash Online** for convenient fee payment.


School Cash Online Setup

If you haven't already registered, please follow these steps after **August 30th**:


1. Visit sd79.schoolcashonline.com and click **"Get Started Today"**
2. Confirm your email and sign in
3. Add your student(s) and opt-in for notifications

Bussing Information

For transportation inquiries, please contact:

 **Phone:** 250-748-1066

 **Email:** busregistration@sd79.bc.ca

 **Website:** sd79.bc.ca/services/transportation

School Hours

Quamichan School will be open for students starting at 7:45am and the gym and library will usually be available for students in the mornings. Our last busses leave just before 4:00pm and the school will be closed for students at 4:00pm unless they are participating in supervised activities.

Parent Communication

We aim to send **weekly email updates** throughout the school year. If your email address changes, please notify the school office. You'll typically receive messages from:

- **Claire Whitney (Principal):** cwhitney@sd79.bc.ca
- **Front Desk Secretary** quamichanfrontdesksecretary@sd79.bc.ca
- **Head Secretary:** quamichanheadsecretary@sd79.bc.ca

We're working hard to create a safe, welcoming, and enriching school experience for all students. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Warm regards,

Claire Whitney – Principal | cwhitney@sd79.bc.ca

Kim Magnan – Vice-Principal | kmagnan@sd79.bc.ca
