

GREAT LAKES CURRENT

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<http://glss.lkdsb.net>



Mr. P. Wiersma Principal
Mr. J. Gower Vice-Principal
Mrs. C. White Vice-Principal
Mrs. N. Harrett Office Supervisor

A Newsletter for Parents of Great Lakes Secondary School August 15, 2017

Welcome and Welcome Back

Beginning its second year of operation, Great Lakes has emerged as a strong school for academics, the arts, and athletics. With 95 caring staff members, we welcome and welcome back 1020 students including 195 grade nine students and 20 international students. 2017-18 is expected to be our last year at 275 Wellington Street. While we will be sad to leave a building that has served many of us and Sarnia for many years, we look forward to the addition and renovation that awaits us at 340 Murphy Road in September, 2018.

Student Registration and Grade Nine Student Orientation

Student registration (for pre-registered students) will take place the last week of August.

- On **Monday, August 28**, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m., grade nine students will register. From 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., they will have orientation activities concluding with lunch.
- On **Tuesday, August 29**, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., students in grade 10-12 will register.
- Students will have an opportunity to walk through the school to familiarize themselves with where their locker, classes, and school amenities are.
- At registration, students will pay their school activity fees of \$35 (cash or debit only) and receive their timetable, a locker assignment, and other school information. The student activity fee subsidizes general student activities and pays for lock/locker rental, computer network access, and printing.
- Students in grade nine and ten will share lockers.
- Physical Education uniforms are required for grade nine health and physical education classes and encouraged for grade ten through twelve classes. They can be purchased for \$25 (shirt and shorts) at the registration time or during the first days of classes. Additional shirts may be purchased for \$10 each.
- 2017-18 yearbooks may be pre-ordered for \$50 each.
- Students who do not register at the time of registration may register at the office on August 30, August 31, or September 1 or Tuesday, September 5, the first day of school.

Grade Nine Student iPads

Students in grade nine will be issued their iPad on Monday, August 28 at registration. Students and parents/guardians will be expected to hand in the 2017-18 Secondary Student iPad Use Agreement (included with this newsletter) prior to receiving the iPad. It is recommended that the parent/guardian take the iPad home and have it charged while the student participates in orientation activities after registration.

Student Registration Verification Form

Please find enclosed your child's Student Registration Verification Form. This form indicates the contact information, current address/phone number, as well as emergency contacts that we have on file for your child. Please confirm that the information is correct and indicate if there are any changes that need to be made. **Please return the Student Registration Verification Form at Student Registration** so we can have the correct information on file when school resumes.

Summer Office Hours

The school and office will be open from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday through Thursday, July 4 to August 24. On August 28, the school office will resume school year hours (7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.). Administrative team staff (principal, vice-principals) are available by appointment. New students who would like to register should make an appointment to see a vice-principal on August 28 and 29. Guidance counsellors will be available on August 28 and 29 on a first come, first serve basis.

Administrative and Support Staff

The following people are happy to support your child at school including

- Guidance: Mr. Bedard, Mr. de Schiffert, Ms. L'Heureux, Ms. Brennan (clerical)
- Resource: Mr. Cornell, Mr. Marr
- Student Success: Ms. Kaija
- First Nations: Mr. (Dallas) Sinopole, Ms. (Megan) Nahmabin
- Office: Mrs. Collier, Mrs. Kelly, Mrs. Pegg, Mrs. Harrett (office supervisor)
- Administration: Mr. Wiersma (principal), Mr. Gower (grade 11/12), Mrs. White (grade 9/10)

2017-18 School Year Calendar

The 2017-18 school calendar has been finalized and can be found on the school website. School will begin on Tuesday, September 5. Christmas holidays will be December 23 to January 7, and March Break will be March 10-18. The last exam day is June 27.

Wolfpack Athletics

Wolfpack athletics for the fall season includes junior and senior girls basketball, cross country running, junior and senior boys football, golf, junior girls and boys soccer, tennis, and junior and senior boys volleyball. Tryouts for girls basketball run August 30, 31, and September 1 at 10 a.m.. Tryouts for junior and senior boys volleyball begin Wednesday, September 6 at 2:30 p.m. in the small gym. Grade nine students are especially welcome. Listen to the daily announcements for more opportunities.

Volunteers

Great Lakes is fortunate to have approximately 35 people who volunteer their time to support student activities and events at the school. Volunteers are screened by the principal and have a police vulnerable sector check completed. Please contact the principal if you are interested in participating.

Community Involvement Activities

Students are required to complete forty hours of community involvement activities for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. Students are encouraged to complete these hours in the earlier years of high school and may begin the summer before grade nine. Ineligible activities include ones that would normally be a paid position (e.g. for a business) or activities that would normally be performed in the home (e.g. chores). See <http://www.lkdsb.net/Secondary/CommunityInvolvement/Pages/default.aspx> for more information.

School Council

The GLSS School Council is made up of parents, staff representatives, community members and the principal. The School Council provides a forum for people interested in public education to work cooperatively in developing common goals and plans to strengthen schools in order to improve student achievement. The Council meets regularly to discuss a variety of topics relevant to the school community. Input from the various council members shapes school policies and priorities. Meetings of the School Council are public, and everyone is welcome to attend. The first meeting of the 2017-18 school year is Tuesday, September 19 at 7 p.m. See the school website for past meeting agendas and minutes.

Student Handbook

The *Student Handbook* contains the school year calendar, student expectations, and supports for students. It can be accessed through the school's website.

Student Transportation

Please direct questions about student transportation to Student Transportation Services at 1-877-330-4287.

Staying Informed

The school's website, <http://glss.lkdsb.net>, contains the daily morning announcements, the monthly calendar of events, and the student handbook. The website is the primary means of communicating with parents.

Daily updates are provided to students, parents, and the community via the school's Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts. These pages can be accessed through the school's website and do not require a registration.

Parents and guardians may add their e-mail addresses to our student information system. This will allow for periodic updates. Some teachers will use this e-mail address to send parents grade updates. To participate, please complete the Canadian Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL) consent form found on the school website.

Bus cancellation information is posted each school day by 6:30 a.m. at <http://www.schoolbusinfo.com/>. Alternately, MySBI is a free app that also provides bus cancellation and delay information. GLSS is in transportation zone two. On days that the buses are canceled, the school will remain open, and teachers will conduct classes.

Parking

During school hours, on-site parking is restricted to staff. Students may park at the Sarnia Arena. Vehicles found parked at the school during school hours without a parking pass clearly visible in the front windshield may be towed at the owner's expense.

Inn of the Good Shepherd Back to School Kits

For families with financial need, The Inn of the Good Shepherd (115 John Street) is providing over 500 return-to-school kits to students on August 29 and 30 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. The kits are specific to grades and are filled with school supplies such as pens, markers, rulers, calculators, math sets, binders, scissors, and more. Items are placed in a new backpack along with a few snacks and drink boxes. Contact 519-344-1746 for more information.

Attendance

Attendance is the most critical ingredient to being academically successful. Each course includes 89 classes, and missing classes or coming late to class represents missed learning opportunities. Please encourage your child to make attendance a priority. Please contact the school if classes need to be missed for illness, medical appointment, or another necessary reason.

Student Wellness and Bullying Intervention Line

Call the school if there is a concern about a student's wellness or there is a bullying situation that you are aware of. Messages may be left anonymously. The line is monitored regularly by the principal. Available 24 hours a day, call 519-336-6131 and select option 5.

Student Accident Insurance

Enrolment forms for IAP Kids Plus Accident Insurance (<http://www.kidsplus.ca>) will be provided to students within the first couple of weeks of school. This insurance is recommended for families that do not have extended health or dental plans and includes such benefits as accidental dental, eyeglasses, hospital and paramedical, emergency out-of-province/country travel, private tutor and more. There is a choice of two plans for \$14.50 or \$33.50 per year. Parents are reminded that the Lambton Kent District School Board, or its insurer, does not pay for student medical expenses due to a student injury while involved in school activities.

Serious Student Medical Concerns

Schools are responsible for planning for students that have serious medical concerns such as anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes, and other health issues that may be life threatening. If your child has a serious medical concern, then please contact vice-principal Mr. J. Gower (jeremy.gower@lkdsb.net) or Mrs. C. White (caroline.white@lkdsb.net) to discuss. This information will then be made available to school staff including your child's classroom teachers, guidance counsellors, administrators, and office staff.

Final Exams

All students are expected to write their exams as scheduled by the school. Exams are **not** rescheduled for reasons such as work schedules or vacations. The only acceptable reasons for absence from exams are for illness, bereavement or court appearance. Medical notes will be required for students who are absent from exams due to illness. Absence from an exam for any other reason will result in a mark of zero for the exam portion of the course.

A Culture of High Expectations

Educational research and experience suggests that student achievement and success occur when parents, teachers, school administration, and the broader community work together to have high expectations for our students as well as ourselves. We believe that all students can learn, progress, and achieve at high levels given time and support. Therefore, our plan this year is to continue to develop a culture of high expectations as evidenced by:

- Regular attendance – Students need to attend class to be taught, to learn with and from other students, to receive ongoing descriptive feedback from their teachers, and to be evaluated with integrity. Each class will be meaningful, relevant, and productive.
- Student advocacy – Students will be explicitly taught learning skills and how to advocate for themselves. This will be an emphasis for students who have individual education plans (IEPs).
- Achieving at high levels – The provincial standard is a 70-79% (level 3). Experience shows that students who do not achieve at this level or higher are not adequately prepared for the next grade level. Incentives, support, and encouragement will be given for students to achieve at these levels. For example, students in certain grade nine and ten courses who achieve at least a level three or four and meet attendance expectations will have the option of not writing the final exam.
- Student academic support
 - Assistance in class, at lunch, and after school will be available for struggling students.
 - Peer tutors will be available in many grade nine and ten courses.
 - Our student success teacher and resource teacher will be available for academic support.
- Parental communication – Teachers will contact parents as learning, behavioural, or social/emotional challenges arise. Parents are asked to also communicate when there are questions or concerns.

Important Dates and Activities

August 28	Grade 9 Student Registration, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m., Orientation, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
August 29	Grade 10-12 Student Registration, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
September 5	First Day of Classes
September 11	School Pictures
September 14	Grade 9 Parents' Night – 7:00 pm
September 15	Grade 9 Welcome Day (Rain Day Sept. 18)
September 19	First School Council Meeting – 7:00 pm
September 28	Homecoming /Great Lakes Idol
September 29	PD Day
October 17	Progress Reports
October 19	Parents' Night – 6:00 pm
October 27	PD Day
November 16	Provincial Report Card
November 24	PD Day
December 21	Awards Ceremonies – 12:00 & 7:00 pm
December 23 – Jan 7	Christmas Break
January 26 – Feb 1	Exams
February 5	First Day of Second Semester
March 10 – 18	March Break
June 7	Graduation – 7:00 pm