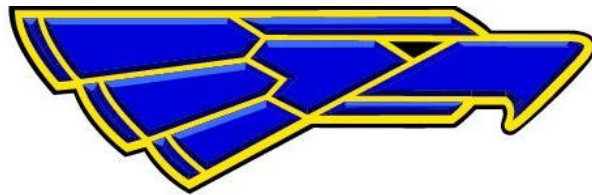


ÉCOLE ALPHA SECONDARY SCHOOL

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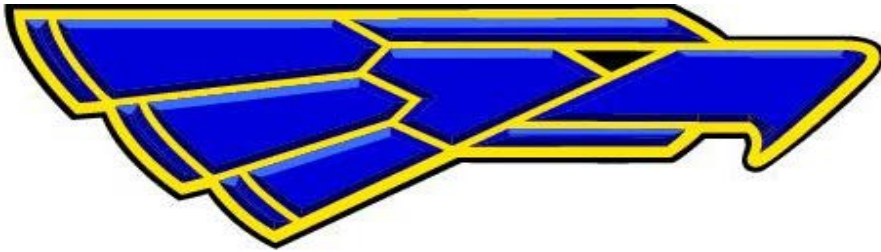
**AZTECS**



GRADE EIGHT INFORMATION

**At École Alpha Secondary School we have our 3 R's!**

- RESPECT yourself and others
- RESPECT learning-
- RESPECT the environment



**So...**

**You're coming to High School!**

**A little about École Alpha...**

Principal                    Mr. T. Wozney

Vice Principals:        Mr. B. Paré  
                                  Ms. M. Lim

Counsellors:            Ms. A. Basran  
                                  Mr. J. Berkbigler  
                                  Ms. G. Cordoni

Learning Support:    Ms. E. Kidd

École Alpha is a secondary school of approximately 1050 students with a teaching staff of over 60. We are a proud French Immersion School with a vibrant student community. We are also the site for Burnaby District's Mini-school for highly able learners. There are many different programs in the school, offering you the opportunity to try different things and discover out what works best for you.

The mission of École Alpha Secondary staff, together with our parents and our community is to provide a supportive climate in a multicultural environment where all individuals have the opportunity to maximize their talents for the benefit of society. Through academic, creative and extra-curricular pursuits, students and staff are encouraged to develop their potential with a desire to engage in lifelong learning.



## Where do I go on the First Day of School?

On the first day of school, Tuesday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018 all grade 8 students report to the gym where you will be grouped alphabetically by last name into homeroom classes. From there, you will go with your homeroom teacher to your homeroom class. You will be given your scheduled timetable of classes, and will meet your teachers. Your first full day of classes will be on Wednesday, September 5<sup>th</sup>. At the end of August a letter will be mailed to families of Grade 8 students, explaining what to expect during the first week of September.



## What is Homeroom?

A homeroom is not a subject class that you take, it is a classroom to which you are assigned for the purpose of relaying information. You will attend a homeroom on the first day of school, but after that, you will only be asked to go to your homeroom when particular information needs to be distributed to students.

## Where do I Keep my Things?

You will be assigned a locker in your homeroom. There will already be a lock on your locker and you will be given the combination. Keep your combination a secret and your valuables at home. The school cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items. You may also need an extra lock for a gym locker if you want to leave items in the changing room while you take your PE class. **ALWAYS** lock up your things. Lockers are school property and administrators can open and check your locker at any time if there are any concerns.



## What Courses will I take Next Year?

All students are required to take 8 courses each year:

1. English 8
2. Social Studies 8 or Social Studies 8 Enriched
3. Math 8 or Math 8 Honours
4. Science 8 or Science 8 Enriched or Discovery Science 8/9 Accelerated
5. Physical Education 8
6. French 8
7. Applied Skills 8
  - Home Economics 8/Technology Education 8 (alternate days for one semester) *or*
  - Entrepreneurship & Marketing/Computers & Digital Literacy 8
8. Fine Arts 8 – Choose one of the following:
  - Art 8/Drama 8 (alternate days with Physical Education for the school year)
  - Beginner Band 8 (alternate days with Physical education for the school year)
  - Band 8 (alternate days with Physical education for the school year)
  - Choir 8 (alternate days for the school year at 7:20 am; students choosing this option will have an open block within the regular timetable)



### **What is Social Studies 8 Enriched**

Students in Enriched Alpha Social Studies courses will be integrated into the regular Social Studies 8 classroom, and will have the opportunity to express their interest and ability while being guided by their teacher. Regular classroom instruction and assessment will be augmented with extension projects or enrichment components that students choose to complete if they want an enriched designation. Students may also be required to demonstrate a deeper understanding of course material through self-directed learning opportunities including field trips and fairs. Curiosity and inquiry will be the primary drivers for students who wish to receive an enriched designation.

### **What is Discovery Science 8/9 Accelerated?**

Admission to Alpha's Discovery program is based on a recommendation from the student's elementary teacher. The course is an accelerated delivery of both Science 8 and 9 curriculum. This course is designed for students who are interested in and capable of pursuing a more challenging course load at an accelerated pace.

### **What is Science 8 Enriched?**

Students in Science Enrichment are integrated with the regular class. The students complete the same curriculum but with added independent research topics completed through further scientific study. Students are expected to complete one major project for each unit of study, as well as one additional inquiry project of the student's choice. Students will consult with their teacher and discuss an individual plan to enrich their own learning. After successful completion of the criteria, students may be eligible to receive an Enriched designation on their report cards. Success in Science Enrichment means completing requirements independently, meeting deadlines, and checking in regularly with their teacher.

## **What is Math 8 Honours?**

Mathematics 8 Honours is designed for students who are interested in and capable of pursuing a more challenging course of study. Honours students will be challenged by in-depth study of some concepts beyond that required by the prescribed curriculum, such as those brought in mathematics contests. The aim of the course is to provide students with the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to be numerate. Students will learn to reason logically, employ quantitative and spatial information, and apply a variety of mathematical methods to solve problems. The focus will be on the conceptual understanding of numeracy concretely, pictorially and symbolically.

The Math 8 Honours curriculum will be covered with in-depth enrichment exercises. *Admission to the Math 8 Honours class is through an application process which is due on February 19<sup>th</sup>, and a math assessment completed at Alpha at 12:30 on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018.*

## **Support for Students**

Some students entering Grade 8 are still working on mastering some of the concepts taught in Grade 7. In consultation with the elementary schools, classes are designed for these students (listed later in the program). It is intended, if possible, to prepare students for regular programming.

## **What is Applied Skills: Home Ec. 8/Technology Ed. 8:**

This is a course that introduces you to the applied skills electives offered at Alpha. Your class will receive instruction in Foods/Nutrition, Clothing/Textiles, Technology, and Woodworking. These two classes alternate days (ie. you will go to Home Economics on one day and Technology Education the next day for one semester).

## **Entrepreneurship & Marketing/Computers & Digital Literacy 8**

This course allows students to experience, explore and develop the exciting topics of entrepreneurship and marketing, computers, and digital literacy. Students will display their creativity by constructing a business plan for a product that they will prototype, test, make and share. Students will develop computer skills that will benefit them throughout high school, including Word, PowerPoint, Excel, introduction to computer coding, and keyboarding techniques. Additionally, students will examine the critical topics of internet safety (cyberbullying), digital self-image, and research techniques.

## **What is Fine Arts?**

You will have the opportunity to choose one of the following fine art elective options for your grade 8 school year.

## **Art 8/Drama 8**

Art 8 and Drama 8 are opportunities for you to experience elective study in the area of fine arts. These courses will allow you to explore a variety of techniques and mediums in both visual art and drama. Art 8 and Drama 8 alternate days with PE, so for one semester you will have Art every second day, alternating with PE. In the other semester you will have Drama alternating with PE.

## **Beginner Band 8**

This course is an introductory course in which students are introduced to the maintenance, technique and rudiments of a selected band instrument. Concepts such as articulation, embouchure, blend, balance, tone and style are introduced to form a foundation of musical awareness that encourages expression, reflection and performance. *Students should choose Beginner Band 8 if they have no previous experience with an instrument.*



## **Band 8**

This course provides an opportunity for students to expand on their band experiences from elementary school. Students will continue to master their individual instrument and frame their musical experiences through independent learning as well as group rehearsal. Students will perform a wide variety of music. *Students should choose Band 8 if they have one year of experience with an instrument.*

## **Choir 8**

While no prior experience is required for this course, previous participation in choir would be an asset. Students will develop music-reading skills, knowledge of music and vocal techniques through performance. Students choosing choir will have an unscheduled block alternating with PE during the school day as Choir class is outside the regular timetable. *Choir is at 7:20 a.m. on alternate days throughout the school year.*

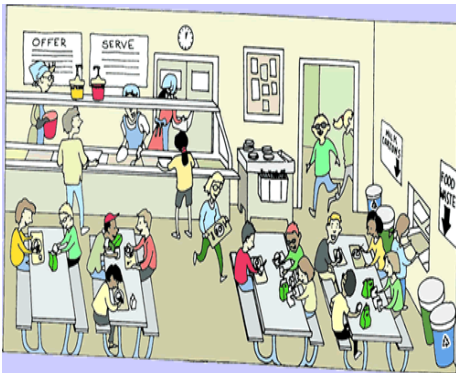


## **What do I have to wear for Physical Education?**

Physical Education strip is required for every class. You may wear any type of shorts (except cut-offs), a t-shirt (a change of shirt is recommended), socks and running shoes. Sweat/track suits may also be worn. You should be prepared to go outside – bring extra clothing when necessary. If you don't go to class with the correct gym strip you will not be allowed to participate and your mark will be affected.

## **Where do I eat lunch?**

The Alpha Cafeteria has lots of seating for you to take your lunch to eat there. If you choose to purchase your lunch, the cafeteria offers a variety of menu items at reasonable prices. Food is available for purchase both at morning break and at lunch hour. Students also eat their lunches at their lockers and in the hallways. We would appreciate you staying on school campus for your lunch break.



## **What kind of school supplies do I need?**

You will need the basic supplies like pens, pencils and lined notepaper. Most students use 3-ring binders for notes and assignments. Each of your subject teachers will let you know if you need any additional supplies specific to their class.





### **Do I get an Agenda Planner?**

A school planner will be issued to you in homeroom during the first week of September. In it, you and your parents will find useful information and important dates and activities. Use your planner to keep track of assignments, dates work is due, and when tests are scheduled. Organization and time management is fundamental to success at secondary school – your planner should be an integral part of your life at Alpha.

### **Is High School Harder than Elementary School?**

The courses at secondary school are more intense than those at elementary school, so it is extremely important to keep all your work up to date. All the good work habits you have been practicing at elementary school are the same as what is needed to be successful at high school. There are always lots of people here to help you with managing your workload. Speak with your classroom teacher if you have any concerns over the work you have been assigned or if you are having any difficulties so that they can help. Remember there are always lots of adults in the building here to help you succeed.

## What is a Semester System?

Schools on a semester system are divided into two parts. Students take half (4) of their courses from September to January, and the other half (4) from February to June. A typical grade 8 schedule looks something like this:

### Semester 1 (Sept-Jan)

Block 1 – Math 8  
Block 2 – Home Ec 8/Tech Ed 8  
Block 3 – Social Studies 8  
Block 4 – Art 8/PE 8

### Semester 2 (Feb-June)

Block 1 – Science 8  
Block 2 – French 8  
Block 3 – English 8  
Block 4 – Drama 8/PE 8

You will not know what your schedule looks like until you arrive at school in September.

## What Time does School Start?

	<b>Time</b>	<b>Minutes</b>
AM	7:30 – 8:35	65
Warning Bell: 8:35 a.m.		
Block 1	8:40 – 9:58	78
Nutrition Break: 9:58 – 10:12 a.m.		14
Block 2	10:12 – 11:34	82
Lunch: 11:34 a.m. – 12:17 p.m.		43
Block 3	12:17 – 1:35	78
Block 4	1:42 – 3:00	78

Starting in October, tutorial time is added to our Wednesday timetable. All classes for that day will be shortened. It is a requirement that students attend tutorial time.

## **What is X and Y Block?**

X and Y block are early morning classes that provide instruction time for Alpha's Music program. If you take Choir 8, this is when your class will be scheduled as choir occurs at 7:30 a.m. on alternate days throughout the year.

## **When do I get Report Cards?**



Secondary schools have not printed any report cards since June 2017. Parents now have access to student information such as attendance and report cards through the Family Portal. Report cards are posted quarterly: Interim report cards are issued in November and April with Semester Final reports posted in February and June at each semester's end. You may receive classroom interim reports between formal reporting periods. Sometimes teachers will issue an "I" report meaning that you are missing assignments or have work that is incomplete. The "I" report gives you an opportunity to make up some or all of what is missing in order to pass the course. If you do not complete what is expected of you, the report following an "I" can be a failing mark.

## **How Much Homework should I be doing?**

You should regularly schedule time to complete homework, review notes, and study for tests. If you don't, you may fall behind the rest of the class. In grade 8, we suggest you allow about 1 to 1½ hours of time every weeknight to complete homework.



## **What if I don't know how to do my Homework?**



If you don't understand your homework, the first person to see is your teacher. In addition to this though, the Learning Support room, 211, is open and offers extra help to students before school, at lunch, and after school. It also helps to contact another student in each class so that you can ask for help; especially if you have been away. See your counsellor if you still have concerns.

## **Who can I turn to if I want some help?**

1. Any of your subject teachers
2. The Learning Support teachers are available to help with study skills, organization, time management, reading, writing and math or science skills
3. Your counsellor is available to help you make decisions about school or coursework and to help cope with problems with school, friends, or family
4. Safe School Specialist – can help mediate peer issues
5. Aboriginal Support – is available to support Aboriginal students
6. Administration – your vice-principal is available to help students
7. RCMP Liaison Officer – is our on-site police officer



## What if I'm late or absent?

If you are late for class, you may be required by your subject teacher to make up the missed time. As well, if you are late repeatedly, your subject teacher may phone your home.

If you are absent from school, your parent/guardian should contact the school in the morning to notify us of your absence. When you return to school, you are required to bring a note from your parent/guardian and show it to the office once each of your teachers has signed it. When the office receives notice from your parent/guardian either by phone, email or with a note, your absence is recorded as "excused".

If your absence extends for longer than a day, your parent/guardian can email teachers to ask if it's possible to provide homework to the office for pickup by friends/family.

## So, what else is offered at Alpha?

### **Athletics:**

<i><b>FALL</b></i>	<i><b>WINTER</b></i>	<i><b>SPRING</b></i>
<b>Boys Rugby</b> (Gr. 8-9)	<b>Boys Basketball</b> (Gr. 8-12)	<b>Badminton</b> (Gr. 8-12)
<b>Boys Soccer</b> (Gr. 8-12)	<b>Girls Basketball</b> (Gr. 8-12)	<b>Ball Hockey</b> (Gr. 8-12)
<b>Boys Volleyball</b> (Gr. 10-12)	<b>Gymnastics</b> (Gr. 8-12)	<b>Boys Rugby</b> (Jr. & Sr.)
<b>Cross Country</b> (Gr. 8-12)	<b>Skiing</b> (Gr. 8-12)	<b>Boys Volleyball</b> (Gr. 8-9)
<b>Girls Volleyball</b> (Gr. 8-12)	<b>Wrestling</b> (Gr. 8-12)	<b>Girls Netball</b> (Jr. & Sr.)
<b>Swimming</b> (Gr. 8-12)		<b>Girls Soccer</b> (Jr. & Sr.)
		<b>Golf</b> (Gr. 8-12)
		<b>Mountain Biking</b> (Gr. 8-12)
		<b>Tennis</b> (Gr. 8-12)
		<b>Track &amp; Field</b> (Gr. 8-12)
		<b>Ultimate Frisbee</b> (Gr. 8-12)

## **Clubs and Organizations:**

Clubs and Committees are two important links to our school and community. All students have the opportunity to belong to any of the sponsored groups. If students wish to start a new club they must find a staff member as a sponsor, complete a “Club Proposal Form”, and then present the idea to the Administrative Team for approval. Presentation meetings are held on Wednesday mornings at 8am.

Drama	Global Students	Photojournalism
Environment	Math Club	Science
Food Culture	Mental Health Awareness	Sports Council
Grad Council	Offence (Social Justice)	Ultimate Frisbee
United Relief	Swimming	Card games
Junior Dance	Musical Theatre	Tennis

## **How do I join Activities?**

Listen for the announcements in the morning at the start of period 2 and look for them in the daily student bulletin regarding when to sign up for these teams and clubs. The daily bulletin is posted in classrooms each day and is on our website.

Alpha’s Student Council is very active and organizes many fun activities: dances, lunches, noon hour activities and special events at Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine’s Day. Grade 8 students also participate in a student orientation session one day in September.

**GET INVOLVED AND YOU WILL GET MORE OUT OF YOUR HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE!**



**We welcome you to the École Alpha Community!**

[www.alpha.sd41.bc.ca](http://www.alpha.sd41.bc.ca)



## **INFORMATION FOR PARENTS**

Most students entering secondary school enroll in the regular academic program. There is flexibility, however, to adjust or enrich work, depending on the needs of each student. At Alpha the grade 8 cohort model is supported by our learning support department where targeted support is provided to students directly within the academic classes. This in-class support model allows grade 8 students to experience success in all of their classes, affording them involvement in French and elective options.

1. Students who have difficulty with the academic curriculum receive support through our learning support department. Subject teachers may also refer students for extra help during class.
  - a. **Learning Support** – Targeted intervention to facilitate student success while remaining integrated in their academic courses.  
Support may include: organization, social, emotional, behavioural, and/or academic support outside/within the mainstream classes.
  - b. **Literacy/Numeracy** – The literacy/numeracy program is designed to assist students in building strategies for comprehension and understanding. Literacy is intended to improve a student’s skills in reading a wide variety of texts. Numeracy is intended to facilitate skill building in mathematics.
  - c. **Access** – This program supports students with mild to profound learning challenges and/or those who may be physically challenged. Individual Educational Plans are developed for each student in collaboration with parents, outside agencies, and school staff, and are designed to meet the needs of each student. The major emphasis of this program is on functional academics, social skills and personal planning skills. Inclusion in regular elective classes is an important feature of the student’s program. Students in this program receive a School Leaving Certificate upon their graduation.
2. Enrichment opportunities abound for Alpha students in the areas of extracurricular involvement. Within coursework there are options for exceptional grade 7’s entering grade 8.

**Mathematics 8 Honours** – Mathematics 8 Honours is designed for students who are interested in and capable of pursuing a more challenging course of study. Honours students will be challenged by in-depth study of some concepts beyond that required by the prescribed curriculum, such as those brought in mathematics contests. The aim of the course is to provide students with the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to be numerate. Students will learn to reason logically, employ quantitative and spatial information, and apply a variety of mathematical methods to solve problems. The focus will be on the conceptual understanding of numeracy concretely, pictorially and symbolically.

The Math 8 Honours curriculum will be covered with in-depth enrichment exercises. *Admission to the Math 8 Honours class is through an application process which is due on February 19<sup>th</sup>, and a math assessment completed at Alpha at 12:30 on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018.*

### **DISCOVERY SCIENCE 8/9 HONOURS - ACCELERATED**

Admission to Alpha's Discovery program is based on a recommendation from the student's elementary teacher. The course is an accelerated delivery of both Science 8 and 9 curriculum. This course is designed for students who are interested in and capable of pursuing a more challenging course load at an accelerated pace.

**French 8 Challenge** – Students who have received extended levels of instruction in French through prior programming at elementary school may enter grade 9 or grade 10 French directly in their grade 8 year. Mastery of French learning outcomes must be demonstrated.

**ELL Program:** Provides various levels of English Language Learning instruction to meet the developing needs of English language learners. Students are supported in a variety of ELL classes to help increase reading, speaking, and writing skills. ELL students take regular classes in Math, Physical Education and Fine Arts elective.

## **Questions?**

Specific classroom concerns can be addressed directly with your child's subject teacher. Staff email addresses can be found on our website; you may also send emails directly to classroom teachers by logging in to your MyEd account through the Parent Portal. Alternatively, you may call the main line 604-296-6865 to connect to voice mail using the staff directory. Please feel free to contact your child's counsellor at any time to discuss concerns you may have. Counsellors can be contacted directly through email, or by calling the main line and accessing the staff directory to connect to their extension.

If your son or daughter is absent from school due to illness, appointments or family commitments etc., please call the main line and press "2" to connect to the absence voice mail. If your child misses, or is late for a class that you haven't excused, you will receive a message from the auto dialer.

## **Get Involved!**

Like your child, you will get more out of the "high school experience" if you are involved. You are now a member of Alpha's Parent Advisory and are encouraged to attend monthly meetings; the first Monday of each month. Check your child's planner or the calendar on our website for dates of parent teacher meeting opportunities in each semester. Please provide the office with your email address to receive important school information and updates.

Alpha's website is a great place to get specific information on our school and its programs:

**[www.alpha.sd41.bc.ca](http://www.alpha.sd41.bc.ca)**