

**So...**

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

**A little about École Alpha...**

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École Alpha is a secondary school of approximately 1100 students with a teaching staff of over 60. We are proudly a French Immersion School with a vibrant student community as well as the site for our district Mini-school for highly able learners. There are lots of different programs in the school – a chance for you to try different things and find out what's 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 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019 all grade 8 students report to the gym where you will be grouped alphabetically by last name into homeroom classes. You will be able to view your course schedules online through our MyEd program. Your first full day of classes will be on Wednesday, September 4<sup>th</sup>. An information letter in August 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.

## Where do I Keep my Things?

You will be given instruction on how to log in and use the online locker database. Grade 8 students are required to share a locker. If you want to share with a friend please be sure to choose your locker at the same time. There will already be a lock on your locker; the combination will be shown once you have chosen your locker. 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 check your locker at any time there may be concerns.



## What Courses will I take Next Year?

All students are required to take 8 courses each year:

1. English 8 or English 8 Enrichment
2. Social Studies 8 or Social Studies 8 Enrichment
3. Science 8 or Science 8 Enrichment or Discovery Sci 8/9 Accelerated
4. Math 8 or Math 8 Honours
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 or Drama 8 or Dance 8
  - 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)



**Enrichment Opportunities abound for Alpha students** in the areas of extracurricular involvement. Within coursework there are options for grade 7's entering grade 8.



### **What is Discovery Science?**

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.  
*Admission to the Discovery Science program is through teacher recommendation and application process due February 19<sup>th</sup>.*

### **Math 8 Honours**

Mathematics 8 Honours is designed for students who are interested in and capable of pursuing a more challenging course of study. Students will examine concepts at a deeper level than in the Mathematics 8 course and enrichment opportunities will be provided through the preparation and writing of math contests. The Mathematics 8 Honours course has the same learning outcomes as Mathematics 8. *Admission to the Math 8 Honours program is through teacher recommendation, application process and a math assessment. The application is due Feb 19<sup>th</sup> and the assessment will be held on April 9<sup>th</sup> at 3:30pm at Alpha Secondary School.*

### **Enriched Courses (English, SS and Science)**

The Enriched Program is designed to inspire, challenge, and stretch students who demonstrate strong work ethic, passion, and ability by providing them with vibrant extra-curricular experiences and the opportunity to develop their academic skills for post-secondary.

### **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. Student 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**

An introductory course for students to explore a variety of materials in 2-D and 3-D image making, develop basic drawing skills and study the work of selected artists.

Enriched students, in Grades 8 to 10, will deepen their capacities for critical and creative thought, effective communication, and personal and social awareness by joining with other passionate and motivated students in extra-curricular activities. In the senior grades, as students become mature and sure of their interests, they may elect to challenge themselves further with specific pre-AP and AP courses.

### **WHY INTEGRATE JUNIOR ENRICHMENT STUDENTS INTO INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS?**

BC has one curriculum for all students. École Alpha Secondary is a progressive educational institution where enriched students are integrated into inclusive classrooms and instruction is differentiated to meet the needs of all learners. We want to foster a strong sense of belonging at Alpha. Inclusive classrooms are essential for encouraging an appreciation for and acceptance of individual differences and strengths. This inclusive model promotes the development of meaningful friendships within grade cohorts and creates a vibrant Alpha community that reflects the true diversity of our society.

### **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.

### **MUSIC 8: BEGINNER BAND**

This course is an introduction course in which students are introduced to the technique, rudiments, and maintenance of a selected band instrument. Concepts such as articulation, embouchure, blend,

### **Dance 8**

During the school year we will work together to develop your technique and skills as a dancer. With a solid foundation of dance technique you will be able to explore and enjoy a variety of dance styles and genres. Whether you are interested in contemporary dance, hip hop, jazz, tap, break-dancing, musical theatre or any other style you can think of, it is essential that you have a solid foundation of technique. We will work on performance skills such as focus, dynamics, precision, and stage presence.

### **Drama 8**

This introductory course provides students with opportunities to experience, understand, and value the language and art of both drama and dance. The Drama portion of the course will encourage students to trust themselves and others while learning the fundamentals of theatre and the elements of basic acting. Students will explore the elements of drama through warm up games, improvisation, and role-playing. As well, students will learn the general rules of the stage, such as staging, blocking, voice, gestures and movement.

### **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.

balance, tone and style are introduced to form a foundation of musical awareness that encourages expression, reflections and performance. Students should choose Beginner Band 8 if they have no previous experience with an instrument.

### **MUSIC 8: CONCERT BAND**

This course is intended for students who have already taken Elementary Grade 7 Band course. The course will involve instrumental technique, performance, theory, music history and music appreciation as they relate to the repertoire studied. Students will be required to attend all scheduled extra-curricular rehearsals and performances as part of the course expectations.

### **MUSIC 8: CHAMBER CHOIR (*Offered as a 9th course*)**

This course is meant to give an advanced level of choral learning to students who have strong enough skills to participate in the ensemble. As with Concert Choir, students are expected to attend all rehearsals and performances. Please contact the choir teacher if you are interested in this course. This is an auditioned ensemble.

### **CHORAL 8: CHOIR (*Offered outside the timetable*)**

Choir 8 is intended as an introductory choral experience. 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 technique through the performance in choir. Choir is at 7:20 a.m. on alternate days throughout the school year.



### **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. Fundamental to success at secondary school is organization and time management – 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 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

## **What is a Semester System?**

Schools on a semester system are divided into 2 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 – Science 8  
Block 2 – Home Ec 8/Tech Ed 8  
Block 3 – Social Studies 8  
Block 4 – Art 8

### **Semester 2 (Feb-June)**

Block 1 – Math 8  
Block 2 – French 8  
Block 3 – English 8  
Block 4 – 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.		
Block 2	10:12 – 11:34	82
Lunch: 11:34 a.m. – 12:17 p.m.		
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.

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?**



Report cards are issued quarterly: Interim report cards are issued in November and April with Semester Final reports issued 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'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 contacts the school in the morning to notify the school of your absence. When you return to school, you are required to bring a note from your

## **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 (Connect), 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. Youth Services Worker – Wendel Williams 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

parent/guardian and show it to the office and each of your teachers. When the office receives notice from your parent/guardian either by phone 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:**

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
<b>Boys Rugby</b> (Gr. 8-9) <b>Boys Soccer</b> (Gr. 8-12) <b>Boys Volleyball</b> (Gr. 10-12) <b>Cross Country</b> (Gr. 8-12) <b>Girls Volleyball</b> (Gr. 8-12) Swimming (Gr. 8-12)	<b>Boys Basketball</b> (Gr. 8-12) <b>Girls Basketball</b> (Gr. 8-12) <b>Gymnastics</b> (Gr. 8-12) <b>Skiing</b> (Gr. 8-12) <b>Wrestling</b> (Gr. 8-12)	<b>Badminton</b> (Gr. 8-12) <b>Ball Hockey</b> (Gr. 8-12) <b>Boys Rugby</b> (Jr. & Sr.) <b>Boys Volleyball</b> (Gr. 8-9) <b>Girls Netball</b> (Jr. & Sr.) <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 to our 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.

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 and in the entrance foyer each day and on our website.

The Student Council at Alpha is very active and organizes lots of 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.burnabyschools.ca](http://www.alpha.burnabyschools.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.

1. Students who have difficulty with the academic curriculum receive support through our learning support department. Subject teachers may also refer for extra help during class.
  - a. **Learning Support** – Targeted intervention to facilitate student success while remaining integrated in their academic courses.
  - b. **Literacy/Numeracy** – The literacy/numeracy program is designed to assist students in building strategies for comprehension and understanding. Literacy is intended to improve an individual student's skills in reading a wide variety of texts. Numeracy is intended to facilitate skill building in mathematics. Students within this program may eventually transition to regular coursework in their senior years to achieve a Dogwood graduation, or remain in the program upon graduation to receive a School Leaving Certificate.
2. **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.

- c. **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.
2. **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. Students in this program receive a School Leaving Certificate upon their graduation.

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

[www.alpha.burnabyschools.ca](http://www.alpha.burnabyschools.ca)

## **Questions?**

Specific classroom concerns can be addressed directly to your child's subject teacher. Staff email addresses are on our website. The teacher will contact you when they are able. At any time please feel free to contact your child's counsellor to discuss concerns you may have. Email the counsellor directly or phone the school office at (604) 296-6865 and they will put you in contact with your child's counsellor.

If your son or daughter is ill or absent from school, please call 604-296-6865, and press extension "2" to notify the school of the absence. When your child is late or has missed a class that is unexcused you will be contacted with 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 Council (PAC) and are encouraged to attend monthly meetings which happen on the first Monday of each month. Check your child's planner, our website or the online school calendar for dates of parent teacher meeting opportunities in each semester. Please be sure that your email address is up to date so that you receive school information and updates.