

# Vanier Catholic Secondary

16 Duke Road, Whitehorse, YT Y1A 4M2

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[www.vcss.ca](http://www.vcss.ca)

Ryan Sikkes, principal Jeanette Gallant, vice-principal

**September 2015**

## Principal's Message

Returning to school after the summer break is always bittersweet - for students and staff alike! While there is a sense of sadness that the long days are coming to an end along with the substantially reduced amount of free time, there is also excitement over reconnecting with friends and teachers, and the sense of a "fresh start".

This "fresh start" can be a little like a new year's resolution - sometimes the best of intentions only last a short time before old patterns and attitudes set in.

Research has provided a bit of advice on simple ways to help establish new patterns. One technique is to simply share your desired new pattern with someone else. Another is to write it down. Both of these have been shown to help people stick to their resolutions more faithfully.

Your child has probably made some resolutions for this coming school year in his or her head. It might be marks they want to achieve, or trying for perfect attendance, or perhaps to get on the honour roll this year.

I recommend to all parents/guardians to engage in a conversation with your children about their goals for this year. Better yet, work with them to write it down and post it somewhere prominent. Revisit this conversation periodically to remind both of you that success sometimes requires support and you are in it together!

We are pleased to welcome several returning and new staff this year:

- Amanda Cann is returning as our Gr. 8 & 9 Learning Assistance Teacher;
- Katrina Brogdon is returning as our Counsellor;

- Bruce Gillard has joined us for this year as our Religious Education Coordinator;
- Shannon Donald is joining us to teach French for the first semester;



- Jolene Campbell, Brandon Narine and Adrian Robinson are joining our staff as educational assistants;
  - Blondine Aitchison is our day custodian;
  - Janice Durant is our library technician; and
  - Fr. David Reilander, the new pastor of Sacred Heart Cathedral Parish, is our school chaplain.
- In other exciting news:
- Congratulations to Ben Craigen who was married to Jenna Frerot over the summer
  - Bill Willoughby and his partner Emily welcomed Ian Thomas Willoughby into the world on September 2!

I wish all families the best as we

settle in to this school year.

Sincerely,  
Ryan Sikkes  
Principal

*For the latest news and school information including school supply lists, visit our informative school website:*

**[www.vcss.ca](http://www.vcss.ca)**



# Dates to note for Term I (September/October)

The official 2015-2016 School Calendar can be accessed online at the Yukon Education website.



- Friday, September 18th—Crusader Day & Terry Fox Run
- Monday, September 21st—*From the Ground Up*—Veggie Box pick up
- Tuesday, September 22nd—School Picture Day
- Thursday, September 24 and Friday, September 25—Professional Development Days (NO SCHOOL)
- Tuesday, September 29—School Council Meeting
- Thursday, October 1st—Interims and Newsletters Mailed
- Tuesday, October 6—Post Secondary Information Night at Porter Creek Sec.—7 pm at PCSS Cafeteria
- Wednesday, October 7th—Whitehorse Schools Food Drive
- Thursday, October 8th - Thanksgiving Celebration 11am
- Thursday, October 8th —Parent Teacher Interviews—4PM
- Friday, October 9th—Parent Teacher Interviews—8AM (NO SCHOOL)
- Monday, October 12th - Thanksgiving Day (NO SCHOOL)
- Thursday, October 22—Grad/Parents Meeting—7 pm in VCSS Cafeteria
- Friday, October 23rd—Mole Day (it's a chemistry thing!)
- Friday, October 30th—Last Day of Term I
- Monday, November 2—First Day of Term II
- Tuesday, November 10—Remembrance Day Ceremony at 11 a.m.
- Wednesday, November 11—Remembrance Day (NO SCHOOL)
- Sunday, November 29—Advent and Share the Spirit Campaign begins

## School Council Corner

The next regular council meeting will be Tuesday, September 29 at 7:00 pm in the VCSS Library.

The members of our current council are:

- Edith Elder; Chair
- Michael Lauer, Vice-Chair
- Dianne Tait
- Maureen Long
- Shanon Cooper

Contact information for council members is posted in the front of the school and online at [www.vcss.ca](http://www.vcss.ca)

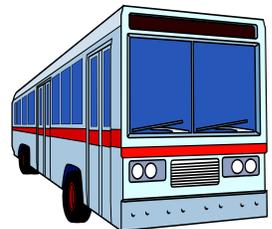
Hot Chocolate  
Coffee  
Mocha  
Ice Tea  
Fruit Infusion(sugarless)

\$1



## City of Whitehorse Transit

This year, the City of Whitehorse Transit program is available to all students who are eligible for school busing. Students can inquire in the office, where they will receive a registration form. They need to fill this out, obtain a parent signature and then return it to the office in exchange for a monthly pass.



## Addictions and Mental Health Counselling Information for Parents and Guardians

Alcohol and Drug Services (ADS) provides counselling for youth at Whitehorse high schools and at our location downtown in the Sarah Steele Building at 6118 Sixth Avenue. Our counsellors typically allocate a designated time per week to spend within each school to meet with youth who have requested our services, or who have been referred by a teacher, parent or guardian or another referral source.

The role of the Addictions and Mental Health Counsellor is to provide confidential and professional support for youth who may be experiencing challenges in areas such as, but not limited to: social concerns, substance use and addictions, family issues, separation/divorce, sexuality, emotions, eating disorders, self-harm, suicide, bullying, depression, fear and anxiety, loss and grief, and self-concept. Our counsellors offer individual counselling in a safe, non-judgemental environment and strive to support youth in developing the skills necessary for a healthy and productive lifestyle.

Youth aged 14 and over can request this service without the consent of their parent(s) or guardian; however, youth under the age of 14 require parent or guardian consent to receive services. In addition, youth can choose to include family members in this therapeutic process. If you believe that someone you know may benefit from additional support, you can access services through any of the following options:

- Contact respective counsellors directly depending on whether a youth attends a particular school;
- Contact Alcohol and Drug Services directly and request an intake with a youth counsellor;
- Discuss available options with the youth you are working with, and invite them to self-refer or request an appointment to learn more about counselling options through any of the options listed above.

For more information, or to request an intake appointment, call Alcohol and Drug Services at 667- 5777. As mentioned above, you may also directly contact youth counsellors by phone or email as follows:

Kaelin Shaden, Youth Counsellor  
336-1264  
Kaelin.Shaden@gov.yk.ca



## Vanier Tutoring Program

starts September 2 to June 5

**All Vanier students can receive free tutoring** for assistance in course work, assignments, organizational skills or test preparation. Students will be matched one on one.

To receive tutoring the student needs to *fill in an application* in the Skills Room (Room 3).

**Students in Grade 10, 11 or 12 can apply to be a tutor.**

Tutors can earn community service hours or an hourly wage (\$12.50-\$17.50/hour). Potential tutors need to *come in person* to see Ms. Bergsma and *fill in an application*.

### Tutor Training

Training sessions take place in late-September/early-October during lunch. This training is free of charge. (*If training is not completed, hourly wage is reduced.* )

For more information, please contact Barb Bergsma  
[barb.bergsma@yesnet.yk.ca](mailto:barb.bergsma@yesnet.yk.ca)

# From the Office

## Parking

Drivers are reminded that there is a pick-up loop near the student parking lot. We have a special bus that comes daily to pick up students in the staff parking lot. Please avoid dropping off here, and instead use the pick-up loop. Thanks for your cooperation!

## Field Trip Forms

Parents will notice many more field trip permission forms being sent home this year. Teachers are being encouraged to combine as many activities throughout the year on one form, but parents should expect to see a form any time their child does an activity off school property. The form is a way to ensure parents are aware of any risks that are associated with activities occurring off school property. If you have any questions about the forms, please contact the teacher issuing the form.



## Phone Us...Please!!

The office will be telephoning the parents of each student who is not excused and absent for the first block each morning. Parents are reminded that to keep proper attendance records for students, absences must be phoned in or they may be recorded as unexcused. Please call the school in the morning at 667-5901 if your child will be absent or late for school. For students who are sick, we would appreciate a phone call each day they are sick.

Our automated call system will call each evening for students with 'unexcused' absences.

If you have any questions about your child's attendance, please call the office.

## Interim Reporting to Parents

To improve parents' knowledge of students' progress, each teacher will be sending home a report at the midpoint of first term that will provide some information about what is happening in that class. This report might take a variety of formats from the traditional printout of grades to a letter describing the activities undertaken in class that month. Whatever the format, these reports will be mailed home with the newsletters in October and March, prior to parent-teacher interviews.

Our first set of reports will be mailed out no later than

October 1 to allow them to be received before Parent-Teacher Interviews which are scheduled for Oct 8/9.

## Mobile Devices

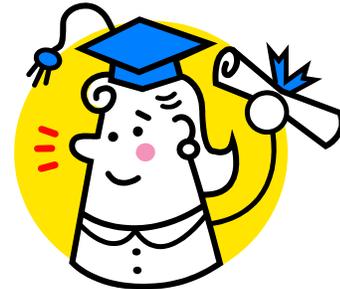
The school rule on mobile devices has changed this year to the following:

*"Mobile devices (e.g. cell phones, music players, etc.) may not be used in classrooms during class time."*

Students are permitted to use mobile devices during breaks and at lunch.

Students who are caught using their mobile devices during class time may have them confiscated and sent to the office. On the first offence, the device will be returned at the end of the day. On second and subsequent offences, the device will be kept for a parent to come and pick up.

If parents have urgent messages for their child, please call the



## Post Secondary Information Session

PCSS will be hosting the annual Post-Secondary Information night this fall on October 6 at 7 pm at the PCSS cafeteria. Counsellors from all three secondary schools will be facilitating this session and extend a warm invitation to all secondary students to attend (not just this year's grads!)

# VANIER LEARNING COMMONS NEWS

Attention! Attention! The heart of Vanier School is no longer the Vanier School Library...it is now the **Vanier Learning Commons**. This move has transformed us from being a place where you find books to being a centre of learning within the school. We are committed to moving students and staff from being consumers of information to being creators who use this information to turn their knowledge into action!

Students, staff and parents are welcome to use the library each day from 8:15 am to 4:00 pm. You can use the space to collaborate with a classmate on a class project, do your homework, choose books from our amazing collection, use a computer to access our great research databases, play board games or just spend time with your friends. The teacher-librarian, Ms. Clarke (see above) is looking forward to meeting you!



## **VANIER BOOKS ARE NOT FOR KEEPS!!**

**Ms. Clarke's recipe for a great school year:**

1. always eat a good breakfast
2. floss daily
- 3. RETURN YOUR OVERDUE TEXTBOOKS!!!**

These textbooks are needed for courses being taught this year. Don't deny other students the chance to learn all the fantastic things that you did. Remember: overdue books will remain on your record until the book is returned or payment is made. Start this year off with a clean slate!

## **MAKE YOUR MARK – enter our bookmark contest!**

The Vanier Library is holding a contest to choose a new school bookmark. You have until **Tuesday, September 22** to doodle, draw, or paint your way to fame. The winner will be announced on Friday, September 26 and will receive a gift certificate from Mac's Books. October is Canadian Library Month so **BOOK** it down to the library and pick up an entry form today!

**READING is a beautiful thing.**

**Today. Every Day. Read for twenty minutes!**

## VANIER SOCIAL JUSTICE CLUB – how can I be a part of it??

The Vanier Social Justice Club is an active and enthusiastic school group which is open to students from all grades. It is a great way to meet new people, have fun and do rewarding work for our community and our world!

We meet **every Tuesday at 12h15 in ROOM 14**. Bring your lunch, bring a friend and help decide which activities the group will take on. In the past, we have

written letters for Amnesty International, organized a Cinderella's Closet evening to help graduates find gowns for prom, made sandwiches for the Outreach Van, raised money for **Little Footprints, Big Steps** to help children in Haiti, bought school supplies for students who are

living at Kaushee's Place and raised awareness at Vanier about a variety of issues such as AIDS, child soldiers, and the access to education for girls in developing countries. There is no end to the difference that we can make!

Come and see Ms. Hamel (rm. 14) or Ms. Clarke (Learning Commons) for more details.

### Upcoming Events:

**DANCE PARTY IN THE PARK:** Wednesday, September 16

This event starts at noon in LePage Park. It is a



fundraiser for **Blood Ties Four Directions** and their work to help people affected with AIDS. Instead of walking for this cause, we will be dancing in the park!! The students who participated last year had a fantastic time! Transportation is provided for all students wishing to participate.

**LITTLE FOOTPRINTS, BIG STEPS FASHION BLOW-OUT** - Wed, Sept 23, Thurs, Sept 24, Fri, Sept 25

Karen Wienberg, Morgan's mum, is organizing a clothing sale to raise money for Morgan's amazing work with children in Haiti. The sale takes place at

CYO Hall at 4th Ave and Steele St. Volunteers are needed on Wednesday, September 23rd to help to set up and price all the items. Shopping is open to everyone from 9:30am to 8:30pm on Thursday and

Friday. Students can help at this time to keep things tidy and assist shoppers. **Please spread the word!** There will be great Footwear. Handbags. Accessories. Coats. Jackets. Sweaters. Pants. Dresses. Skirts. Formal wear. Wedding dresses. Sportswear. Casual. Gift ideas. Fall. Winter. Spring. Summer. - something for everyone!

Speak to Ms. Clarke or Ms. Hamel if you wish to help out!

**What are you waiting for? Be the change that you want to see in the world!**