

# A.R. MacNeill Secondary School

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Principal: Mr. J. Blair, Vice Principals: Ms. Dauvery MacDonald & Mr. Afamdi Onukwulu

Assistant Superintendent: Ms. Braunwyn Thompson

Trustee: Ms. Alice Wong

PAC: Jag Reehal

Parent Newsletter – August 2025

## To MacNeill Students, Parents & Guardians,

We hope you are enjoying the absolutely fantastic summer weather by spending time with family and friends, and that you have had the opportunity to “refresh” and “renew” in these past two months! As the Principal at MacNeill Secondary, I am very excited to be starting another year along with all of you. I look forward to getting to know all the students, staff and parent community as the year progresses.

This newsletter is intended to provide some general information to our students and parents about important details pertaining to the first week of school. On behalf of the entire MacNeill Secondary School staff, we would like to extend a warm welcome to **all new MacNeill students** and their families, as well as **all returning families!**

*This is a LONG newsletter, but it has been created with all our community in mind! Please be sure to read through to the end to ensure that your child's start in September is smooth and please note the various dates, times, and important forms that we will require right at the start.*

### Introducing new staff ...

In September, we will be welcoming several new MacNeill staff members. It is my pleasure to welcome:

- |                       |                                    |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| • Taylor Sadler       | Teacher – French & Outdoor Inc     |
| • Lenaya Sampson      | Teacher – English & Socials (Temp) |
| • Ariel Hunt-Brondwin | Teacher – Drama & CLC (Temp)       |
| • Faaizah Khan        | EA – Life Skills                   |
| • Kevin McFee         | EA – Aspen                         |

September 2025 marks the beginning of the twenty second year since the opening of MacNeill Secondary School and our seventeenth year of the school-wide POWER program in the continued evolution of the school. Students new to MacNeill will learn about **POWER**: **P**ositive Attitude – participating enthusiastically; **O**wnership – being accountable; **W**e not Me – being safe, empathetic and welcoming; **E**xcellence – striving to do our best; and **R**espect – caring for self, each other and our environment. In our classrooms and around the school community, we will continue to strive to meet the school-wide expectations of our positive behaviour support program.

We believe in building relationships and making connections as the foundation for developing a strong learning community. This coming year promises to be a successful one as students, parents and staff commit to working hard and striving for excellence by creating a caring, respectful and responsible community for learners.

## Office Hours - Monday, August 25, 2025

Regular office hours at MacNeill are Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. beginning on Monday, August 25. It is also at this time the school administrators and counsellors will be available for appointments, if needed.

### A.R. MacNeill Home-School Communication

To provide parents information about what is happening at MacNeill, a WEEK-AT-A GLANCE (WAAG) is created each week. You can view the WAAG from our school website <https://macneill.sd38.bc.ca/news/newsletters>



Once again, this year, we will be requesting parents to provide an e-mail address or checking that the e-mail address already provided is correct. Communications will be sent to parents by e-mail and at various times automated SchoolMessenger telephone messages will be sent home with important notices. School Messenger messages are also automatically sent home when a student is absent from a class with no reason for the absence provided by a parent. Teachers may also send notices home with students throughout the year to highlight special events or field trip opportunities.

### MyEdBC and Parent Portal

**\*\* Please note that MyEd BC is currently unavailable until the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> week of September\*\***

At MacNeill Secondary, we will continue to have parents access their child's school information directly online. This system will go live for parents on the first week back. The MyEducation BC (MyEdBC) PARENT PORTAL which will allow parents and/or guardians to access attendance, term grades, and other information on their child(ren).

Each parent/guardian will have their own separate account (different than their child), and can view the following:

- Class Attendance Information
- Contact Information
- Student Demographic Information
- Student Schedules
- Published Report Cards
- Transcript Information

### **Account Problems?**

Accounts have been created using email addresses previously provided to the office. If you did not provide your email address or need to update your address, please send an email to [macneill@sd38.bc.ca](mailto:macneill@sd38.bc.ca) or please inform us in the main office by calling 604 668-6212 during the summer office hours. In the subject line of your email, please put Parent Portal, and in the message include the following: Student's Full Name, Pupil #, Parent/Guardian Name and email address.

### **Security**

Password protection is key, and you will be asked to change these every 90 days as a precaution. Please make sure to manage this information correctly to be able to access this site. MyEducation BC is a secure student information system used in most school districts in the province of BC. Security is guided by the rules and regulations of the School Act and Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA). If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our office at 604-668-6212.

## **Agendas**

Students in Grade 8 & 9 will be provided an agenda to use to help keep them organized, know the calendar dates and day rotations that occur during the year. This agenda will also help with understanding the expectations at MacNeill as it will have information about POWER, code of conduct, digital citizenship, how to get connected and stay involved, developing successful study habits, who can help and how to get help if needed and much more information about the school.

## **Personalized Learning Time – Continues at MacNeill this year!**

Personalized Learning Time, (PLT) is a period of time set aside each week for students to have self-directed learning time with their teachers. This is provided at each of the secondary schools, including MacNeill. It has been effective for students who utilize this time to stay ahead or to get caught up and we look forward to how students can use this time and how staff can support them during these times.

Personalized learning time will evolve as the school year begins to include a variety of options for students. We will have a soft start to the school year with students staying in their morning classes for the first three PLT dates to learn more about PLT, how to set goals to maximize their personal learning time. In addition to being able to access teachers for curricular support, we are looking to engage students in identifying areas of special interest, or passions and, working with interested staff, develop and design a menu of opportunities. Conversations with students will begin during the advisory Classes in the first week back.

### **Possibilities may include, but are not limited to:**

- Physical activities in the gym
- Extra learning support
- Curricular support
- Art opportunities
- Theatre and Dance opportunities for students to write/choreograph, rehearse and perform
- Music opportunities

It is expected that all students are at school that they will be engaged in learning of some sort. This will allow them to focus on how to become a more independent learner that allows them to stay ahead, get caught up if needed or expand their learning in a positive manner.

## **MacNeill Collaboration Time**

Along with other Richmond schools, MacNeill will continue to have **Collaboration Time**. To provide continued uninterrupted time for school staff to collaborate on effective practice, MacNeill will have 8 Collaboration Days. Our first Collaboration Day will be September 17. Students on these days will have the choice of studying at home or coming to school for their first class or coming to school at the regular start time to independently study in the school lounge.

Once our monthly Collaboration Dates are listed below:

September 17	January 21
October 15	February 18
November 19	April 08
December 17	May 20

## **What Advisory Class Am I In?**

The advisory Class is the student's homeroom class. During the advisory classes, students will be participating in activity and conversation aimed at building relationship and rapport among the students and staff. This will also be an opportunity for the advisory teachers to check in with each student to understand, support and promote active productive engagement with PLT learning. **Advisory Class lists will be posted in the front of the school windows on the first day of school showing student name, advisory class teacher and the room number.**

## **What Do I Do on the First Day of School?**

**Tuesday, September 2** is the first official day of school and students will check their homeroom/advisory class list which will be posted on the front windows of the school, then they will go to the Large Gym for their grade assembly. Each grade will have an assembly in the large gym, and then students will be dismissed to go to their advisory homeroom class. The grade assembly and advisory homeroom will take approximately one hour but will depend on the grade level (grade 8 approx. 60-90mins).

For the first day of school, students will need both something to write with, and write on. Students will receive a more comprehensive overview during the first week of school. Teachers will explain and discuss policies and procedures. A locker and a school lock will be assigned **if the student chooses to need this for the school year.** Important forms and handouts will be given to students. Since the first day of school is for advisory Class/homeroom only, students will not need to bring their lunches. *Students are to report to the large gym during the times listed below.*

**The Advisory class/homeroom for each grade for the first day of school are as follows:**

10:30am	Grade 8 (Students will be at school approx. 60 – 90 mins.)
12:00p.m.	Grade 9 & 10(Students will be at school approx. 60 mins.)
1:00 p.m.	Grade 11 and 12 (Students will be at school approx. 60 mins.)

*Our school has several student learning programs. Please note the information below specific to our **Life Skills** and **Aspen Learning Centre** programs.*

## **What are the start dates/times if my child is in the Life Skills or Aspen Program?**

If your child will be attending the **Aspen Learning Centre**, you will be contacted prior to the start of the year by the Aspen teachers and arrangements for the student's gradual entry plan will be determined.

If your child will be enrolled in our **Life Skills** program your child will start school Wednesday, September 3rd. Students in our Life Skills program should enter the school via the outside door into the Life Skills classrooms. The advisory Class/Homeroom for our Life skills students is with the Life Skills teacher, Mr. Raphael Lee & Mr. Dallin Akune.

## **Absent During the First Week?**

Please note: If your son or daughter will be absent during the first week of school in September but intends to return to MacNeill, it is vital that the school be informed as soon as possible. This will enable us to organize classes accurately and ensure that absent students have a timetable and locker when they do arrive. Please complete the "Late Return" form and submit this to the school office before school begins. The "[Late Return Notice](#)" form can be downloaded from the school website.

## **What Will the First Week Look Like?**

### **Wednesday, September 3**

8:30-8:50	Students will report to their Advisory/homeroom classes/teachers- Collection of forms, timetables distributed to students and go through their agenda.
8:55-10:10	Period 1
10:15-11:30	Period 2
11:30-11:45	BREAK
11:45-1:00	Period 3
1:00-1:45	LUNCH
1:45-3:00	Period 4

#### Thursday, September 4

8:30-8:50	Students will report to their Advisory/homeroom classes/teachers- Collection of forms, timetables distributed to students and go through their agenda.
8:55-10:10	Period 1
10:15-11:30	Period 2
11:30-11:45.	BREAK
11:45-1:00.	Period 3
1:00-1:45.	LUNCH
1:45-3:00	Period 4

#### Friday, September 5

8:30-8:50	Students will report to their Advisory/homeroom classes/teachers- Collection of forms, timetables distributed to students and go through their agenda.
8:55-10:10	Period 1
10:15-11:30	Period 2
11:30-11:45	BREAK
11:45-1:00	Period 3
1:00-1:45	LUNCH
1:45-3:00	Period 4

On Tuesday, September 2, 2025, students will be given a copy of their schedule.

#### **Counsellors & Course Changes**

If there appears to be a mistake on the schedule/timetable, the student is to attend the class printed on the schedule until a meeting with their counsellor can be arranged or a new schedule if given in their next day advisory/homeroom.

**\*\*\*It is important that you take care and consideration as you are only able to enter a course request once\*\*\***

**Deadline for course change requests is Wednesday, September 10.**

We have a digital process for course change requests. The link to the online form can be found [HERE](#).

Counsellors will communicate via e-mail if the change is possible or not. All course changes will be completed by as soon as possible if they can be made.

**Direct Email requests will not be considered.** Students are assigned to counsellors by last name. Changes to a timetable are made when there is a serious problem such as missing courses or placement in the wrong level of a course.

#### **Student Counsellors:**

Heather MacLeod	Grade 8-12 students with the last name A-I
Mel Voulgaris	Grade 8-12 students with the last name J-M ( <b>Monday to Wednesday Only</b> )
Joe Vernier	Grade 8-12 students with the last name N-Z



## **Parents: School Forms That Need to be Signed and Returned before September 5, 2025**

### **1. BC Student Information Verification Form – please ensure that your child’s information is up to date and accurate. (This is a double-sided form).**

It is essential that the school has accurate emergency contact information. Enclosed with this information package is a copy of the BC Student Information Verification Form that the school currently has on record for your child. Please review the information and make any required changes. **Please also ensure that you have provided emergency contact names and phone numbers.** Please include your child’s legal **and** usual name.

### **2. Use of Personal Information/Responsible Technology Use form.**

#### **Lockers**



Students will be moving from classroom to classroom during the day and will need a place to store their books, coats, gym strip and other belongings so they do not have to carry them around. The school provides each student with a locker and a combination lock. Lockers are located throughout the school. Lockers and locks will be assigned and distributed to students on the first day of school in advisory class.

Lockers must be locked to ensure belongings are secure. Students are advised not to share their lock combination with anyone. Although every precaution is taken, sometimes lockers can be broken into. **We ask students not to bring valuables to school.** The lockers and locks are school property, and these locks need to stay on the main school lock. As well, we reserve the right to check them if deemed necessary.

**If students do not wish a locker, they just need to inform their advisory teacher during the first week of school.**

#### **Gym Lockers**

When taking PE students will be able to use a locker in the change room to store clothing and books for the period that they have **PE only** (this should not be used as a personal locker, locks will be removed and cut off). For this, students must have an additional lock to carry with them for use during the PE class block. The school does have locks for sale that can be purchased from Ms. Ng, our business assistant for \$9.00. We remind all students that all valuables such as wallets and cellphones should **NOT** be stored in PE lockers.

#### **Important Message from the PE Department**

We are looking forward to meeting you in September! We hope you are active during the summer months and ready to continue that during the school year. The PE department staff would like to remind you of two important things. There is a need to purchase a lock for daily use of the gym lockers. Bags on the gym floor or items left in open lockers pose various safety and security issues. Please leave things safely locked away to minimize your own risk.

**Students are also reminded that the Richmond School District has a “no scents” policy.** A recommendation is to bring a change of clothing and a towel to shower or wipe yourself down at the end of each class. Please do not use scented products as students and staff may have allergic reactions to them.

## What Supplies Do I Need?

Individual course teachers will inform students of required supplies during the first week of school. For students wishing to purchase supplies before then, the following list of supplies will meet the general needs for most courses. Some teachers may require a few more specialty items, but students will be told of this when they are needed.

basic calculator	pencils	blank paper	gym strip (shorts or
paper scissors	pens	pencil crayons	track pants, t-shirt
ruler	geometry set	binders	and runners)
glue stick	lined paper	pencil case	

## What Other Costs Can Be Expected?



All secondary schools in Richmond have a standard school fee. This fee covers the cost of a student agenda, lock and locker, communication fee and some student activity costs. **The General School Fee is \$28.00.**

There are other optional and additional activity and enrichment program costs. Grade 12 students will have optional costs for a Graduation and Valedictory Ceremony, Grad Boat Cruise, Winter Formal, Dinner and Dance and Dry Grad cost. Each student will have an itemized fee statement given to them. Throughout the school year there will be other curricular and extra-curricular activities which will be planned that may incur cost to students. For safety and efficiency reasons, we want to reduce the amount of Cash & Cheques coming into our school. School related expenses will be online soon for you to make payment. **All Parents & Guardians will need to register for a school cash online account.**

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Fast. Safe. Convenient.

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**1. Create Your Profile**  
Go to the School Cash Online home page  
<https://richmond38.schoolcashonline.com/>  
and click on "Get Started Today".

**2. Confirm Your Email**  
Check your inbox for the email confirmation and click on the link inside. Sign in with your new login details.  
*Stay connected by selecting "Yes" to email notifications about upcoming fees.*  
☒ I want to receive email notifications for new fees assigned to my student and updates on school-related activities.

**3. Add a Student**  
Click "Add Student" and fill in the required fields with your child's details.

**Purchase these items and more online.**  
Use your computer, tablet or smartphone to register and pay online.

**Which payment methods are accepted?**  

**Credit Card**  
Pay with Visa or MasterCard on School Cash Online by entering your credit card number, CVV number (the three digits on the back of your card), card expiry date, and billing information.

**eCheck**  
An electronic version of a paper check used to make payments online. Anyone with a checking or savings account can pay by eCheck on School Cash Online.

**myWallet**  
An online wallet that can be loaded to hold funds and pay for your child's fees on School Cash Online. myWallet also allows you to allocate funds to pay for school fees at a later date.

**Why sign up for School Cash Online?**  
School Cash Online is an online parent portal that offers a safe, fast and convenient way to pay for school activity fees.

- ✓ Pay for your child's school fees online. Anytime, anywhere.
- ✓ Stop sending your child to school with money.
- ✓ Get automatic email notifications about upcoming school fees and activities.

parenthelp@schoolcashonline.com or 1.866.961.1803

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### Lunches at MacNeill



Lunch at MacNeill on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday is from 1:00p.m. to 1:45 p.m. There will be a 15-minute break 11:05-11:20. On Wednesday and Thursday lunch time is 1:07-1:52pm. If students do not go home for lunch, the students have lunch in the school lounge, open classrooms or outside weather permitting.

Cafeteria service at MacNeill is open from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Service is not available to students during class time. The cafeteria offers breakfast sandwiches, bagels and other breakfast items. At lunch, there are daily lunch specials, noodle bowl, soup, sandwiches as well as short order items. Students can check for specific items and costs on the menu board posted in the lounge. All food and beverage offerings provided meet the provincially mandated guidelines for food and beverage sales in schools.

### **IMPORTANT**

#### MacNeill Traffic/Student Drop-off



The traffic at MacNeill before school and at dismissal can be a very frustrating experience for drivers and also not a safe one for both pedestrians and drivers. Please observe the traffic directional markings painted along our driveways. There is NO PARKING or STOPPING in front of the school facing Number 4 Road. This area is for daily school bus loading and District service vehicles. The STUDENT DROP-OFF is along the south wall of the gym facing Granville Avenue. Please observe the HANDICAP parking signs. We hope this will make for smoother traffic flow and enhance safety for all. The parking area for MacNeill students who drive their car to and from school is in the south parking lot along the gym.

**Grade 11-12 Parent Post-Secondary Presentation–Tuesday, September 23, 2025, 6:30 p.m. – Virtual Meeting (Link to follow)**

#### **“Supporting Your Child in Grade 12 at MacNeill”**

Grade 12 is an important and eventful year for students and their families. There are credits and courses that must be completed and post-secondary education to make applications to. MacNeill counsellors and administration will be providing parents with information about the must-dos for students and activities and events in this last year of public education at this meeting.

Grade 11 students and their parents are welcome to attend this meeting too. Grade 12 parents have often commented on having wished they had access to the information provided at this meeting one year earlier! So, 11 families, please feel free to join us!

#### **MacNeill Parent Advisory Council**

Parent involvement and support at school makes a significant positive difference to student success. We hope that parents will become part of the school’s many events and activities. All parents are members of the MacNeill PAC. The first PAC meeting is on Wednesday, September 24 at 6:30p.m. in the school library.

PAC meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month.

**For the 2025-2026 school year, PAC meetings are scheduled for:**

September 24, 2025	January 21, 2026
October 15, 2025	February 18, 2026
November 19, 2025	April 15, 2026
December 17, 2025	May 13, 2026 (AGM)



### Some Important Dates to Note:



September 2	<b>First day of the new school year:</b> <b>Grade 8s at 10:30 a.m. in the Large Gym</b> <b>Grade 9s and 10s at 12:00 p.m. in the Large Gym</b> <b>Grade 12s and 11s at 1:00 p.m. in the Large Gym</b>
September 3	Classes begin for everyone with Advisory Class.
September 4	Classes begin for everyone with Advisory Class.
September 5	Classes begin for everyone with Advisory Class.
September 15	<b>Photo Day</b> – EVERYONE must have their picture taken. These pictures are required for Student ID Cards as well as for the yearbook
September 17	<b>Collaboration Day</b> - Students are welcome to attend school for self-directed study in the lounge. Period 1 starts at 9:45am.
September 18	Meet the Teacher Night
September 19	Pro D Day
September 23	Grade 11/12 Parent Post-Secondary Presentation 6:30 p.m. (Virtual)
September 24	PAC meeting 6:30 p.m. ( Library)

For other dates such as holiday times and professional development days for 2025-2026, you can refer to the school calendar which will be located on the MacNeill School website in the “School Information” folder under “[School Calendar](#)”.

Whew! You made it to the end of the newsletter!

We thank you very much for making the time to read it to the end.

We look forward to welcoming back our Raven Community in September!

Sincerely,

John Blair

Principal



## Bell Schedules (September 2, 2025 – June 19, 2025)

PLT occurs on Wednesdays and Thursday but in the middle of the day starting the week of September 10 & 11.

### MACNEILL BELL SCHEDULE 2025 - 2026

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<b>Period 1</b> 8:30 – 9:45	<b>Period 1</b> 8:30 – 9:45	<b>Period 1</b> 8:30 – 9:38	<b>Period 1</b> 8:30 – 9:38	<b>Period 1</b> 8:30 – 9:45
5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes
<b>Period 2</b> 9:50 – 11:05	<b>Period 2</b> 9:50 – 11:05	<b>PLT</b> 9:43 – 10:31	<b>PLT</b> 9:43 – 10:31	<b>Period 2</b> 9:50 – 11:05
<b>Break</b> 15 mins	<b>Break</b> 15 mins	<b>Break</b> 15 mins	<b>Break</b> 15 mins	<b>Break</b> 15 mins
<b>Period 3</b> 11:20 – 12:35	<b>Period 3</b> 11:20 – 12:35	<b>Period 2</b> 10:46 – 11:54	<b>Period 2</b> 10:46 – 11:54	<b>Period 3</b> 11:20 – 12:35
5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes	5 minutes
<b>Advisory</b> 12:40 – 13:00	<b>Advisory</b> 12:40 – 13:00	<b>Period 3</b> 11:59 – 13:07	<b>Period 3</b> 11:59 – 13:07	<b>Advisory</b> 12:40 – 13:00
<b>Lunch</b> 13:00 – 13:45	<b>Lunch</b> 13:00 – 13:45	<b>Lunch</b> 13:07 – 13:52	<b>Lunch</b> 13:07 – 13:52	<b>Lunch</b> 13:00 – 13:45
<b>Period 4</b> 13:45 – 15:00	<b>Period 4</b> 13:45 – 15:00	<b>Period 4</b> 13:52 – 15:00	<b>Period 4</b> 13:52 – 15:00	<b>Period 4</b> 13:45 – 15:00