

VISION

Learning with Purpose

Striving for Excellence

Growing through Community

At NDSS, our mission is to inspire all to be curious, have confidence, use imagination, and persevere in their learning journey.

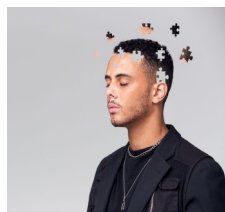
Term 4 Newsletter



Principals Message

So, here we are. The final term of 2021/2022! For staff and students, May & June are often the busiest months of the year. So, what will be our focus in the weeks that remain? There are many competing priorities for our collective attention, some arduous and some exciting.

Mental Health is a consistent topic between staff, with students and has been the underlying theme of my Principal Newsletter messages. I'm unflinching in continuing to advocate that we (*educators, students, parents*) must authentically discuss and address what I believe are crisis levels of [poor mental health](#) in our teenagers.



Previous newsletter messages have highlighted the growing body of social science research which supports what most educators already suspected were some of the biggest issues negatively impacting our student's ability to learn and impeding optimal functioning in their lives. We are witnessing firsthand the [skyrocketing numbers of teens](#) who report feeling anxious and/or depressed, the alarming increase in [depressive episodes for girls aged 11-15](#) linked to [social media](#) interactions, [chronic sleep deprivation](#) and decreased self-esteem in kids aged 13 to 16 due to [excessive smart phone](#) use and students increasingly report that they [feel lonely](#).

Based on my understanding of work published by Canadian [experts on this topic](#), I've come to the conclusion that it is not possible to have a serious conversation about the state of mental suffering amongst our teens without addressing [social media and smart phone addiction](#) as part of the discussion. But the smart phone isn't the only villain responsible for the mounting evidence as to what is causing this exponential [erosion of mental health in youth](#).

There are many issues playing more than cameo roles on the crowded stage of contributing factors. Some others include the on-going social and societal [effects of the pandemic](#), the shortage of primary care physicians in our communities, and lack of easily accessible preventative mental health programs.

Regardless of the complex root causes, the urgency to do more for our kids than simply state, '*mental health matters*' cannot be understated. **Strong statements are good – Decisive action is better.** This motivated the idea of a joint effort of our staff to focus, in concrete ways, on various aspects of mental health & wellness throughout the month of May.

With this in mind, NDSS has three initiatives in the coming weeks:

- ◆ **Cell Phone Free Mornings in May** – Teachers have volunteered to participate in a friendly, positive challenge that requires them to design lessons that do not use cell phones for mornings in May. Participating classes award themselves daily points for increments of time when cell phones aren't visible. And – yes – this includes asking students not to bring their phones with them when they use the washroom during instructional time. The class with the most points will get a pizza & dilly-bar party. There will also be randomized draws with other prizes for classes whose teacher choose to participate.
- ◆ **Mental Health Moments in May** – One of our gr. 12's, Kate Findley, designed her Capstone Project to facilitate the teaching of anxiety reducing tips and techniques for students to learn and then replicate on their own when needed. Each Tuesday in May, Block A teachers will be taking 5 min out of their class time to show an instructional video, created by Kate, which explains and models one of four techniques that have been proven to effectively reduce anxiousness. These strategies are free, discrete and the videos will be posted on our [new NDSS Student Support](#) webpage once ready. For more information please read Kate's write up on p.2 of this newsletter.
- ◆ **Internet Safety & Digital Literacy Workshops** – Students will participate in two of three 90 min. programs hosted by '[The White Hatter](#)' on May 10 or 12 and 26th. Here are the topics covered in these interactive sessions: [Privacy and Security in the Connected World](#) (gr. 8-10), [Leveraging the Internet and Social Media to Create Opportunities](#) (gr. 11-12) and [Cyberbullying, Sexting, Nudes, Intimate Images, and the Law](#) (gr. 8-12).

So, with these School initiatives underway in May, how can you help?

- **First**, please try not to text your teen (s) before [lunch time](#) as they will likely have their cell phone in airplane mode and put away in their bags. If there is a family emergency, please call the school at 250-740-2000 and one of our staff will go and get your child so they can call you back right away.

- **Secondly**, ask your teen (s) about the anxiety reduction techniques taught every Tuesdays during their double Block A classes and initiate conversation on the topics covered in the White Hatter workshops.

Thank you for supporting our School Wide Mental Health focus as we strive to end this school year in a **Good Way!**

Liana Appelt
Principal, NDSS

MENTAL HEALTH MOMENTS IN MAY

Hello NDSS Parents, Guardians and Students,

My name is Kate Findlay and I'm a grade 12 student at NDSS. Every grade 12 at NDSS does a Capstone project as part of their Careers 12 class. This project is meant to connect students to their intended field of study. For my Capstone project, I wanted to give back to my school through my intended field of study, mental health.

Throughout my 5 years at NDSS I noticed a lot of my peers were struggling with the stress of being a student and the general anxieties life brings. I also noticed that there was a gap in resources, particularly for students who were struggling but weren't in acute crisis. These students get missed by the system because they don't raise the typical red flags, or aren't considered "serious enough" for intervention. Because they don't get the resources they need at that time, they either keep suffering and being missed, or they progress to a crisis.

Working with Ms. Appelt and Ms. Kemp I have developed a series of videos to help these students learn coping strategies. These strategies are typically learned in therapy, something many students don't have access to. These lessons will be shown over the course of May in a school wide initiative called Mental Health May. They will only take 5 minutes out of one A block class per week and will last for 5 weeks.

Although this is not a solution to the problem of mental illness our school is facing, it is a beginning for our school which will continue to educate students on mental health.

If you are curious about the specific skills or have any questions you are welcome to email me at kfindlay@learn68.ca.



Administration

Ms. Liana Appelt	Principal Grade 12's, Francophone
Mr. Shawn Shahi	Vice Principal Grades 8-11, A-K
Mr. Stephen Epp	Vice Principal Grades 8-11, Rum-Z
Ms. Shelley Gvojich	Vice Principal Grades 8-11, L-Ruff

Counsellors

Ms. Al-Hajj	A-Desilets & (Francophone)
Mr. Giske	Desmarais—Leischner
Ms. Tolsma	Leneveu—Ruff
Ms. Smith	Rumming—Z
Ms. Pyne	International Students/Scholarships

Staff emails are available at:

<https://nd.schools.sd68.bc.ca/our-school/staff-directory/>

New Ministry Graduation Requirement

In early March, the Ministry of Education announced changes to the BC Graduation Program requiring all students to complete four credits of an Indigenous-focused course taking effect for the 2023-24 school year.

For those students who are graduating in the 2024-25 school year, NDSS is introducing a four-credit English First Peoples focused Language Arts course at the grade 10 level. This course will fulfill new graduation requirements and build on work to date of incorporating Indigenous content and perspectives into the curriculum.

Currently, all grade 10 students are enrolled in a two-credit English First Peoples Writing course paired with another 2-credit option. Moving forward, students will continue taking English First Peoples Writing 10 (now bundled with either English First Peoples Literary Studies 10 or English First Peoples Media Studies 10) to meet the four-credit graduation requirement. These courses are designed to provide students with instruction and practice in writing for a variety of purposes and contexts with an Indigenous focus. They are grounded in the exploration and application of the writing process, inviting students to express themselves as they experiment with, reflect on, extend, and refine their writing through a First Peoples lens.

For those students who are graduating in the 2023-24 school year, NDSS and Nanaimo-Ladysmith Public Schools will continue to develop a plan to ensure all students receive the additional 2-credits required for graduation.

These changes represent important steps in the journey towards Truth and Reconciliation. We look forward to learning together as a school and a district.

Grad Corner

Graduation Rehearsal: June 28th

Information about exact times to follow

Commencement Ceremony will take place this year at the
Vancouver Island Conference Center :

June 29th 2:00-5:00

Grad Fees of \$85 must be paid in full prior to ticket distribution. (this does not include a yearbook)

Cap and Gown "Keeper" cap, gown, and v-stole ordering

URGENT Ordering deadline May 15 th, 2022 <https://www.buildagrad.com/ndss>

Tickets each student will be given 3 guest tickets for the commencement ceremony

If you have any grad related questions please see Judi Cox in the front office or email her at judi.cox@sd68.bc.ca.

Please create an account and register for Transcripts using the [Student Transcript Services](#)



Calendar

April 22	Semester 2 Term 1 Ends
April 25	Semester 2 Term 2 Begins
April 25-29	Numeracy/Literacy Assessments
May 4	Report Cards available on MyEd
May 5	Curriculum Implementation Day
May 6	Pro-D Day (No School)
May 23	Victoria Day (No School)
June 13-17	Numeracy/Literacy Assessments
June 24	Last day of classes
June 28	Grad Rehearsal PM
June 29	Grad Commencement PM
June 30	Administrations Day (No School)
June 30	Report Cards available on MyEd

Academies

Congratulations to those returning students and those who applied and were accepted to the upcoming Academies for 2022-2023. Vacant spots have now been filled by the lottery that took place before Spring Break.

Students who's names were not pulled will remain on the waitlist.

Thank you for your payments in such a timely manor. This is due to commitment and scheduling.



Congratulations!

Congratulations to the NDSS cheer team. On their second-place finish at the Sea to Sky Cheer championship.



STUDENT FEES

It is not too late to take care of your school fees. Student activity fees are essential for all students to pay, as the funds are used to support a variety of school-based events. Please pay fees as soon as possible on our [online cashless system](#) if you have not already done so!

\$20.00 Student activity fee

\$85.00 Grad

\$60.00 Yearbook

DON'T MISS OUT ON A YEARBOOK!

Do not wait until the last minute to purchase your yearbook, they must be ordered early so we can anticipate demand!

Covid Information and Updates

Please visit our NLPS website at <https://www.sd68.bc.ca/covid-19/> for current information including Government of Canada Travel Advisory, Health and Safety and Frequently Asked Questions.

At this time masks are mandatory. Please ensure your child has a mask upon entry. Not sure whether you are well enough to attend school? Please follow [Daily Health Check & What to Do When Sick](#) to self assess before leaving home.



Upcoming Information Sessions:

Activity Assistant Information Session – [June 30 from 6:30 – 8:30 pm](#)

Check out this great video from the Engineering Club's recent soap-box derby: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pard9zM9dTE>

Recruitment Updates:

Applications for September 2022 are still being accepted for some programs. We invite you to check out [our list here](#). The Bachelor of Arts (BA) program is one program option. Students can choose full or part time options and take as few as 1 course during the school year within the BA program. [Talk to a Recruiter](#) about your next steps: connect@viu.ca or 250.740.6672.

Advising Updates:

Advisors are offering [Web Registration and Course Selection Sessions](#) to help you prepare for your registration date this May. If you haven't had a chance to meet with us regarding your course planning, we encourage you to [visit our webpage](#) for all the different ways to connect with us or reach us by email: advising@viu.ca or phone: 250.740.6410.

If you have applied to a limited entry program preparing a back up plan can be a smart choice. Reach out to an Advisor to discuss yours today. In some circumstances it is possible for students to begin earning credits towards their goal credential even if they have not been accepted into that program.

If you missed it, check out a recording of our March 3rd [Next Steps Information Session](#) and our [April 19 Advising Q&A Presentation](#)

Services for Aboriginal Students (SAS):

New Indigenous students are encouraged to meet with a Services for Aboriginal Students Advisor, either virtually or in-person. Details can be found [on our webpage](#). Alternatively, you can email SAS@viu.ca or call 250.740.6510.

Global Committee



GC has been busy this spring! Through bake sales and sunflower seed sales, we donated \$500 to [Canadian Red Cross](#) for [Ukraine Humanitarian Relief](#). We also hosted a Global Trivia event with tasty prizes. Through May and June, watch out for a Game Show Extravaganza fundraiser for the [Canadian Mental Health Association](#).



The Breakfast Program

This service began the beginning of October with the help from volunteer students and teachers.

The program is located in the small cafeteria from 8:00 to 8:25 M-F.

Come and enjoy a warm bagel/muffin/fruit etc. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day!



MY SCHOOL DAY APP

Stay current on this **FREE** school app. Enter in your schedule, appointments, sporting events, etc. Add contacts, teachers and color code important reminders. Stay connected with NDSS!





[Island ConnectEd](#) important information heading into the home stretch...

Grade 10-12 Courses

As we move into the final quarter of the school year, students are expected to have **all of their coursework completed/submitted by June 15th** to guarantee that the work will be reflected on the June report card.

If you are unable to complete all coursework by June 15th, students **must discuss extending their course(s) into the summer with their teacher(s)**. It is possible that after June, there will be a different teacher (as the new school year starts in July). This may mean that course materials may also be different.

Courses completed **after** June 15th may not have their final grade processed until October due to Ministry system shutdowns over the summer.

Important Note for Grade 12 Students:

If a Grade 12 student extends a course beyond June, they may be declined entry into universities that require a June graduation. This will also result in a transfer from your existing school to Island ConnectEd. This means that your transcript will have Island ConnectEd on it and all graduation documents (if you graduate) will be sent there rather than your main school. All students are encouraged to communicate with universities prior to this to ensure they meet all entrance requirements and timelines.

As we make our way to the end of the school year, students should be working with their teacher(s) to complete their course(s) by June 15th—email, call, chat in person. If students are inactive in their coursework or are not communicating, they may be withdrawn. Please be sure to work with your teacher(s) and submit work regularly.

Sincerely,
Justin Mark
Principal, Island ConnectEd
Main Office: 250-756-9901

Driving School

- Driving Lessons**
Beginner and refresher lessons
Class 7N Road Test Prep
Class 5 Road Test Prep
- Best Instructors**
Knowledgeable
Experienced
Patient
- Our Social Responsibility**
Investing in local community
Truly making a difference
Keeping our roads safer

www.cl-driving.ca

Crystal Niskasari
Driving Instructor

Changing Lanes

Driver's Education Ltd.

250-327-2637 crystal@cl-driving.ca
cl-driving.ca Nanaimo • Duncan • Victoria

Check out [YOUth Nanaimo](#) on Facebook for various programs in the city. This is a Non-profit Organization.

