## **PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE**

#### Dear Students and Families:

Happy Valentine's Day! We certainly felt the love in our school community last night! We opened our school yesterday evening for our incoming grade 7 students and families. They had the opportunity to tour the school and get a taste of what WGSS has to offer their children as they transition into grade 8 in September. We also hosted our Course Planning Parent Night for families with students going into grades 9 and 10, as well as those who are entering grades 11 and 12. We did it a little differently this year in that we had all of these information sessions on the same night: our *Course Planning Bonanza*! We had somewhere in the neighbourhood of 1000 people through last night, and by all accounts, it was a positive and successful evening. Thank you to our staff who hosted the evening, our GQs who were fantastic guides for our families, and thank you to our PAC who presented to our grade 7 families.

This week we also hosted our course planning virtual assemblies for students. Information about course offerings, special programs, and how to complete the course planning process was shared with students. One of the resources that we encourage our students and families to make use of is our <u>WGSS Course Guide Website</u>. It is loaded with information that can answer many questions for you. Huge thank you to our counselling team and our office staff who have worked to ensure that the website is updated with all the information to help students and families make good decisions about their course selections.

One thing I do want to emphasize is to please take time to discuss options for next year. We encourage students to be thoughtful and intentional about course selections. We build our timetable based on the selections that our students make now for next year. Making the right selections now ensures that we are able to build a better timetable, and also increases the chances that a student will be scheduled into the courses they want.

Please note that all course selections are due in MyEd BC on February 21st. Applications to special programs are also due on February 21st.

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Yesterday we hosted our virtual Semester 2 Reset assembly. We shared a few reminders about ensuring that we take every opportunity to create a welcoming and safe space for all students and that we all share in the collective ownership over making that happen. Some of our recent data from the *Tell Them From Me* survey that students completed, shows that we have continued to see increases in the positive sense of belonging for our community. An area of growth we discussed was ensuring that we are mindful of the language that is used and jokes that are made: a reminder of the powerful impact our language and words can have on others.

Last week we hosted our Seniors Night for our Senior Girls and Boys basketball teams. It was a wonderful celebration of our graduating student athletes and their contributions to Gator Basketball.

Another note in the world of Athletics is that our Curling team won the Easter Alley Championship! Go Gators!

The coming weeks will be filled with activity and events as our basketball teams head into the playoffs. We will also be hosting our annual Diversity and Respect Week, during the week of February 24<sup>th</sup>. We will share more information about that in an upcoming newsletter.

We wish you a wonderful Family Day weekend!

Mr· Jeremy Lyndon
Proud Principal

X: Dsd35wgss

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

February 17 Family Day – **School Closed** 

February 18 WGSS Dry Grad Meeting @ 6:30pm (Library)

February 19 Grade 9 & Catch-Up Immunizations

February 21 Online Applications for Specialty Programs Closes

Feb. 24 – Mar. 1 Diversity & Respect Week

February 26 Pink Shirt Day February 26 HUB Day March 5 HUB Day

March 12 & 13 Parent Teacher Interviews – Dismissal @ 1:55pm

March 14 Last Day Before Spring Break
March 31 School Re-Opens after Spring Break

## **IMPORTANT COURSE PLANNING DATES**



Feb. 14 – 21 Counselling Centre open @ lunch for Course Planning Q's
Feb. 19 – 20 MyEd help sessions in the library at lunch
February 21 Online course selection closes in MyEd
February 21 Online Applications for Specialty Programs Closes

## **COURSE PLANNING VIDEOS**

Our <u>WGSS Course Guide Website</u> includes helpful & informative course planning videos and presentations to watch while making selections for the next school year. Follow the links below for more information pertaining to each grade:

Grade 7 into Grade 8
Grade 8 into Grade 9
Grade 9 into Grade 10
Grade 10 into Grade 11
Grade 11 into Grade 12

### **Last Chance Yearbook Reservation**

If your student has yet to purchase a yearbook and would like to get one for this school year, Thursday February 20<sup>th</sup> is the last day to reserve one. After this date, yearbooks may be available on a first-come-first-serve basis, although availability will not be guaranteed. Prices for any remaining yearbooks will also increase from \$60 to \$65 after Feb 20<sup>th</sup>. Don't delay – get yours today on School Cash Online!

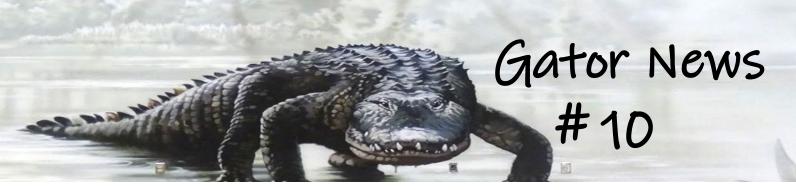
## **FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES**

At any time, a WGSS youth or their family member is welcome to contact a staff member for assistance with information about available confidential school and community-based resources and support.

Below is information we wanted to share as we all navigate these times.

ORGANIZATION	INFO	CONTACT	WEBSITE/CONTACT
Langley Christmas Bureau	Call to book an appointment. Currently taking applications for hampers.	604-530-3001 20245 Industrial Avenue, Langley	https://www.langleychristmasbureau.com/client-hamper-application/
Grocery Hampers	Available weekly	Langley Food Bank Sources	https://langleyfoodbank.com  https://www.sourcesbc.ca/our-services/sources-langley-food-bank/
Further Food Supports	Gateway of Hope  Raphael House		http://www.gatewayofhope.ca https://www.raphaelhouse.ca/
Community Integration Specialist	Assists with connection to housing, employment, income assistance, and community services	604-860-5736/Office 778-359-0105 Kapil Sharma (he/him)	kapil.sharma@gov.bc.ca
211	Income assistance, disability, community living, employment support, housing/shelter, and social supports	211 – Talk to a Navigator 24/7	https://bc.211.ca/agency-details/ministry-of-social-development-and-poverty-reduction-msdpr-9488485/
Breakfast Club at WGSS	Monday-Friday before school. Open to all students	In the cafeteria	Join us for a nutritious meal to start the day

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## **DROP-OFF AND PARKING AT WGSS**

We have received some feedback with respect to the parking lot and drop-off and pick-up before and after school. As you know, we have a very large school population. We have over 2200 students attending WGSS this year. Consequently, the morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up can be very busy and our school grounds and surrounding roadways become very congested. Based on feedback from students and families, we thought it would be helpful to send a few reminders:

- Please do not drop-off or pick-up students along Walnut Grove Drive. This is unsafe.
- If you can drop-off or pick-up your student in a neighbouring area that is not as busy, that would be helpful.
- If you can stagger your drop-off times (a little earlier) or pick-up times (a little later) that would also help to alleviate congestion.
- Please be mindful of blocking lanes if you are coming through the front of the school:
  - Please make room for our buses to be able to park and maneuver in the parking lot.
  - Please do not park in the lanes in front of the parking stalls; this holds up traffic and prevents cars from leaving the parking spots.
  - Please do not park in the designated bus zones.

As always, the health and safety of our students and families is paramount and we appreciate your cooperation with helping to ensure that our transition times are safe for all our students, families, and staff.

## INFORMATION ABOUT SCHOOL STATUS DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER

Snow closures and power outages are an annual occurrence in the Langley School District. So, where do you go to get information about the status of schools during periods of inclement weather? If you can access the internet via computer or smartphone, current information about Langley schools can be accessed on all school websites or <a href="www.sd35.bc.ca">www.sd35.bc.ca</a>. Updates are also posted to X (formerly Twitter) @LangleySchools and Facebook at <a href="www.facebook.com/langleyschooldistrict">www.facebook.com/langleyschooldistrict</a>. If you don't have internet connectivity but your phone is working, call a relative or friend in an area that has not been affected by the storm and ask them to check the district website for you. Local radio stations are also informed of school status in Langley. Tune in to CKWX 1130AM, CKNW 980AM, Country Radio 107.1FM, Pulse 107.7 or CBC 690AM or 88.1FM for updates.

Please note that Langley District schools are all considered 'open' until a decision to close is required. Decisions on school closures are usually made by **6:30am**. As always, it is a parent's decision whether to send their student to school based on safety and individual circumstances. If you feel it is unsafe for you or your student to travel to or attend an open school for any reason, please keep your student home and report an absence to the school.

## **LAST CALL FOR GRAD PORTRAITS!**

Vibrant Photos is offering one more opportunity for Grad Portraits - including family & friendship sessions - at their **Maple Ridge Studio** (#10-20172 113B Street, Maple Ridge).

Please use the following links to book your photo session(s):

Saturday, February 15th: Family & Friendship Sessions:

https://form.jotform.com/Vibrant Photos/Feb22nd GRAD FAMILY Studio Photos

Saturday, February 22nd: Grad Portraits:

https://form.jotform.com/Vibrant Photos/Feb 22nd studio GRAD photos

We ask that you read **all the information** carefully. You will find answers to the majority, if not all, of your questions.

Reminder: if you are booking for this February session, you may not make it into the yearbook but will be still on the grad composite.

Please contact Vibrant Photos directly at **604-380-3388** if you still require assistance. Please click the link to complete this form.

## **HEALTH TIPS FROM FRASER HEALTH**

Health, safety, and wellness continue to be a priority in our schools. To help support our students and families, we are sharing important information from our community partner Fraser Health. Please see below for helpful reminders to support your student.

As the chilly winter season is upon us, there's a few extra things you can do to help keep your student healthy and well. Navigate this season with these essential tips:

#### **Bundle Up For The Cold**

Dressing appropriately for the cold weather is vital in keeping your student comfortable and protected. Wearing multiple layers is a great way to trap body heat and provide insulation against the cold.Keep a warm hat, gloves, scarves and insulated boots handy. Remind your student to wear these items before heading outside to play or going to school.

#### **Protect Against Winter Illnesses**

Winter brings an increased risk of colds and flus. Make sure your student is getting enough sleep, eating a variety of foods and staying hydrated by drinking plenty of water. Ensure your student receives their annual flu vaccine and talk to a health care provider about any additional vaccines that may be recommended. Teach your student good respiratory etiquette such as regular hand washing, covering their coughs and sneezes and staying home when sick. If they are sick and cannot stay away from others, they can wear a mask to reduce the risk of spreading their illness. Learn more about masks here: Masks (bccdc.ca)

#### Keep Their Bodies Moving

While colder weather may limit outdoor activities, it's crucial to keep your student active during winter as regular physical activity boosts their immune system and keeps them energized. Encourage indoor play and activities such as dancing, yoga or interactive video games that promote movement. Look for winter programs at local community centres or indoor sports facilities.

Find more tips for a healthy winter: <a href="https://www.fraserhealth.ca/health-topics-a-to-z/winter-health">https://www.fraserhealth.ca/health-topics-a-to-z/winter-health</a>

#### **Sexual Health Information (from Fraser Health)**

Health, safety, and wellness continue to be a priority in our schools. To help support our students and families, we are sharing important information from our community partner Fraser Health about sexual health for school-aged children and youth. Please see below for helpful reminders to support your child.

#### Healthy Childhood and Youth Development includes Sexual Health

Learning about sexual health, including understanding your body and its changes, health conditions, personal hygiene, healthy relationships, consent and sexuality, are all part of growing up. Talking about sexual health can allow young people to identify their values and develop skills that promote healthy decision making and sexuality.

#### How do I Teach My Child about Sex and Sexuality?

Talking to your children about sexual health is important. Establishing an open and trusting relationship with your child will help them know they can come to you for honest answers to their questions about sex and sexuality.

For help on how to talk to your child and what to include about sexual health take a look at the following information: **Sexual education for children – Fraser Health Authority** 

Learning about sexual health also means understanding sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI). Look at these two resources for more information: Sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression; Parents' Guide to SOGI in Schools / SOGI 123

#### **Youth Clinics**

Let your child know about our youth clinics. These clinics are located across the Fraser Health region and provide free, confidential information and education regarding sexuality and health to youth up to 21 to 24 years old (age varies by site). Learn more about the services available at youth clinics: Youth clinics - Fraser Health Authority

#### **Grade 9 & 10 Immunizations**

Public Health Nurses will be at Walnut Grove Secondary to immunize **Grade 9 and 10 students** on Wednesday, February 19<sup>th</sup>. If you are unsure of whether you are eligible for vaccines, please call the Langley School Nurse at 604-539-2909.

### FROM OUR DISTRICT

#### Social Media Awareness Family Sessions

ERASE will be holding FREE virtual sessions on social media awareness for parents and caregivers. Here is the link for an upcoming communication with families for them to access these valuable sessions: <a href="https://pages.saferschoolstogether.com/erase-family-session">https://pages.saferschoolstogether.com/erase-family-session</a>

#### Open Parachute Virtual Parent Night Presentations

The Ministry of Education and Child Care, in partnership with adolescent clinical psychologist Dr. Hayley Watson from <u>Open Parachute</u>, will host three, free virtual sessions for parents, guardians and caregivers that will focus on practical skills you can teach your child and youth (ages 0-19) to prevent substance use and mental health needs. These sessions will build on a previous presentation, which focused on practical

conversation tools for speaking about substance use prevention with your children/youth. The *previous session* is not a pre-requisite for this session.

Key takeaways for participants during this session:

- Learn the factors that lead to substance use and mental health needs from a trauma-informed lens
- Focus on prevention rather than intervention/response
- Applies to parents, guardians and caregivers of all age groups (youth aged 0-5, 6-10, and 11-18)
- Learn ways that these skills can be applied to yourself and the rest of your family to support the mental health of parents, guardians and caregivers

Participants must register in advance. Session dates are:

- February 20, 6:00-7:30 pm PST
- February 25, 6:00-7:30 pm PST
- February 26, 6:00-7:30 pm PST

Please share this information within your school community to reach parents, guardians, and caregivers of all ages.

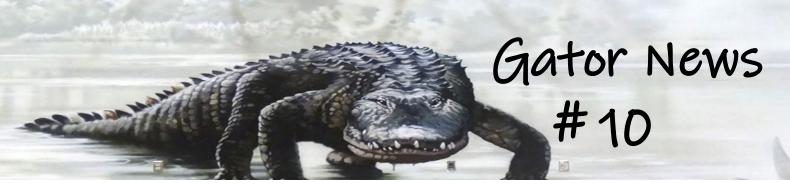
If you have any questions, please email the Mental Health and Substance Use team at educ.mentalhealth@gov.bc.ca.

#### Y-Minds: FREE Program for Teens, Youth, and Adults

Y Mind is a FREE seven-week group program for teens, youth, or adults who are managing mild-to-moderate anxiety, stress, or worry. Two facilitators guide the group through evidence-based coping strategies based on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), mindfulness, and self-compassion. Group sizes are kept small, with 8 to 12 participants per group to facilitate peer support and connection.

Participants may self-refer, no diagnosis of anxiety is needed, and you do not need to be a YMCA member. All Y Mind Teen and Y Mind Youth participants receive a free YMCA membership for up to 14 weeks, including 10 free guest passes to bring a friend to the Y.

To join Y Mind, you must first register <u>here</u> for an information session where you will meet the group facilitators and complete an intake for the program. Spaces are limited, so inquire ASAP to guarantee your spot at an information session.



#### Youth Train In Trades & Academic Duel-Credit Programs - APPLICATIONS OPEN

We are excited to announce that career program applications for the 2025/2026 school year are now available. SD35 offers programs in association with Post Secondary organizations such as: BCIT, KPU, VCC and UFV in Electrical, Automotive Service Tech, Professional Cook, Piping and Plumbing, Hairstyling, Landscape Horticulture, Welding, Carpentry, Early Childhood Education, Biomedical and Health Sciences. Students earn post-secondary credits while still in high school, and tuition is free!

There are program-specific Information Sessions (click here for details) planned between February and March. If you're interested in any of these programs, please connect with your Career Advisors: Lindsey Verbeek or Shalini Bajaj at the **Career Centre in room 250**.

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Instagram: Dwalnutgrovesecondary

February 14, 2025

#### This Month in the Arts - February 2025

The Arts are alive and well in Langley schools! Please check out the poster below for a quick glance and overview of all of the amazing Arts events and activities happening across schools in the Langley School District in February!



#### Virtual Family Math Day - February 22, 2025

The Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy in the Faculty of Education at UBC is hosting a virtual Family Math Fair on Saturday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> from 10am - 11:30am. UBC Faculty of Education Graduate Students and Teacher Candidates will engage students, teachers and parents in Hands-On, Minds-On Math Activities for all ages. Click <a href="here">here</a> for more information.











Photo credits left and right: Paul Joseph  $|\mathit{UBC}\>$  Brand and Marketing

## **Virtual Family Math Fair**

Saturday Feb 22, 2025, 10:00am - 11:30am PT

Virtual through Zoom with

UBC Faculty of Education Graduate Students and Teacher Candidates













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Sat Feb 22, 2025 10:00am-11:30am PT



Hands-on Minds-on Math Activities for all Ages!

All Welcome: Families, Teachers, Parents

**Event FREE! | Registration Required** 

For more info and to register: https://tinyurl.com/UBCFamilyMathFair2025





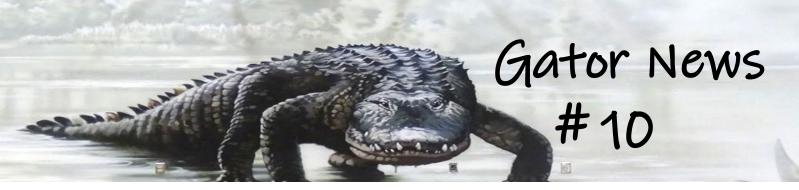


## FROM OUR COMMUNITY



Gordon Greenwood Elementary is hosting a family fun night on Friday, May 30th for the community. They are reaching out to see if there may be any students who would be interested in helping volunteer at their event and would be happy to sign off on any volunteer hours, if needed.

Anyone interested in helping can email them directly at ggepac@hotmail.com or reach out to their principal at <a href="mailto:AJoo@sd35.bc.ca">AJoo@sd35.bc.ca</a>.



## **FROM OUR PAC**

## Happy Valentine's Friday from your WGSS PAC!

We hope the second semester got off to a good start for everyone.

The PAC has been quite active since the Christmas holidays. At our January meeting, we discussed and approved a second round of funding requests for student clubs and societies.

In case you didn't know, every school PAC can apply for and receive funds from the BC Gaming Commission on a yearly basis. The amount given by the Gaming Commission varies by school size, but is generally around \$20 per student, and is given to the PAC to disburse for eligible extracurricular requests and projects around the school. Disbursement of these funds is tightly regulated by BC Gaming Commission guidelines.

Our first round of funding disbursements is generally done in November, and if there are funds left over, we open up a second round of requests in the New Year. At this second round, we were happy to be able to approve all eligible requests.

We just held our February meeting this week. Among other topics, we discussed the timely topic of mental health supports available for students. The WGSS Counselling Department offers a wealth of information on their

website: <a href="http://wgsscounselling.weebly.com/">http://wgsscounselling.weebly.com/</a>. We're also continuing to discuss "succession planning" - recruiting a new PAC executive for the coming school year. Most of the current executive is either graduating or not eligible for another term. Open positions for the new school year include President, VP, Treasurer and Secretary. Please consider volunteering for your PAC. As the parent of a high school student, it can sometimes feel challenging to stay connected to events around the school, if not the district. Being a part of the PAC helps you stay informed and be a part of your child's high school journey.

Finally, please donate to your PAC if you can. We generally do not fundraise, because most of the school's fundraising centers around Dry Grad, and we have no wish to compete with that. Funds donated to the PAC do not fall under regulated guidelines, which means we have a lot more leeway in how we use the funds to support students and the school. Any amount helps, and we are incredibly grateful for your support. You can donate at <a href="https://www.schoolcashonline.com/">https://www.schoolcashonline.com/</a>. Please select your student, and then scroll down to "PAC Dondations". Your WGSS PAC thanks you sincerely!





## ONE & DONE FUNDRAISER

## No selling required! Just your support!

Now that elementary school is behind you, you're probably ready to leave behind all those requests to sell or volunteer! We get it, and we won't ask you to do either.

However, the PAC still needs your support. We continue to fund important school programs and requests that go beyond the standard curriculum, enriching our students' educational experience.

Please consider making a contribution through our ONE-AND-DONE fundraiser. A simple donation—no selling, no volunteering required—just your generous support to help keep these programs going!



Scan the QR code or <u>click</u> here to donate on School Cash Online towards **PAC Donations** 

- \$15 Bidding wars at a silent auction? No, thanks!
- \$10 Chasing down corporate sponsors? No, thanks!
- \$5 Selling chocolates or wrapping paper to my friends and family? No, thanks!
- Other I love this school and I am happy to help!

X: Dsd35wgss

February 14, 2025





## Free Winter Program for Families!

Learn about healthy eating, physical activity, and building long-lasting habits as a family in Generation Health Community. This 10-week program for families with children ages 8 to 12 is FUN and interactive!

Delivered through YMCA BC starting February 2025 on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday evenings.

Families who join this program will receive a complimentary YMCA membership.

Register today!







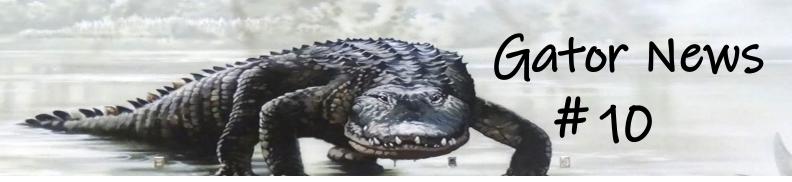


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## Fairy Godmother Foundation

## Are you in need of grad wear for prom?

The Fairy Godmother Foundation is here to help! We provide FREE grad wear (dresses, suits, shoes, accessories) to students who may not be able to afford them, ensuring everyone has the chance to celebrate this special milestone.

Who Can Apply?

Any high school student in need of assistance with prom attire.

How to Apply:

Visit your school counselor and let them know you'd like to be considered for assistance.

Once applications are reviewed your councellor will contact you with further details

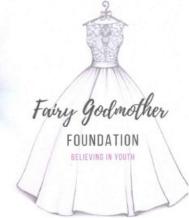
Let us help you feel like the star you truly are on your big night!

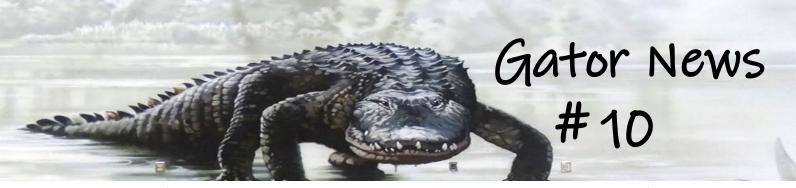
Our team is excited to work with you to find the perfect outfit for your prom night!

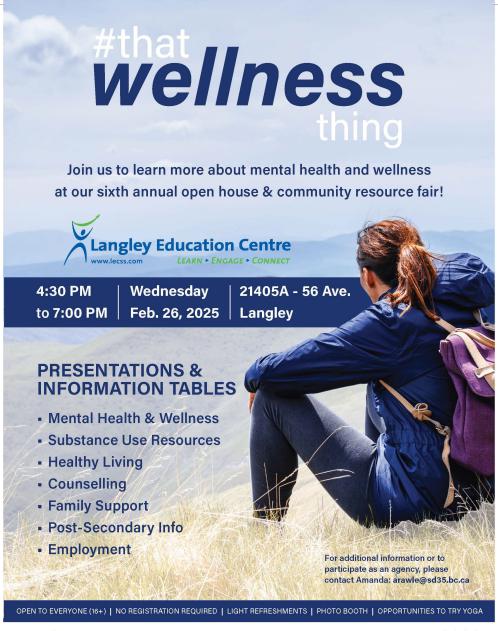
The Fairy Godmother Foundation – Where every student deserves to shine!

\*Apply ASAP as space is limited\*

For more information, ask your counsellor



































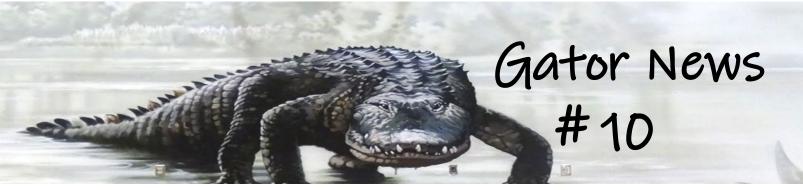














The four Rotary Clubs of Langley are proud to announce the tenth annual SASSY Awards Langley.

In the previous nine years, SASSY is proud to have awarded just over \$114000.00 to Langley youth. SASSY stands for "Service Above Self" Student Youth. Incorporating Rotary's guiding motto, the awards aim to recognize and celebrate the leadership achievements of Langley youth who exemplify the ideals of Rotary by making a positive impact in our Langley communities.

Awards focus on students who have shown demonstrated, committed leadership of a group or task. Nominations are now being accepted in seven categories for youth aged 15 to 21 living in, and/or who have made a significant impact in leadership roles within the Township or City of Langley.

The awards will be presented as part of the awards show on Thursday May 8th, 2025, at the Chief Sepass Theatre, located in the Langley Fine Arts School. An applicant must also be available, if chosen for the top three in one of the seven categories, for interviews on Saturday morning, April 12th, 2025.

You must be available and attend both the **April 12th** judging and the **May 8th** Awards Show to be eligible to receive a cash and recognition award. Please put these dates on your calendar!

Each Category Award Winner (one in each of the seven categories) will receive: • \$1,200 Cash Award • SASSY Recognition Award Each of the two runners up in the seven categories will receive a \$600.00 cash award.

More information is available at: <a href="https://www.sassyawardslangley.ca">www.sassyawardslangley.ca</a>

X: Dsd35wgss Instagram: Dwalnutgrovesecondary



## **WGSS PAC NEWS**

Find us on Facebook/ Meta as "WGSS PAC", or on our website: wgsspac.ca, or email us at <a href="mailto:contact.wgsspac@gmail.com">contact.wgsspac@gmail.com</a>.

As before, the WGSS PAC would like to ask families to donate if you can. Donations to the PAC can be made through SchoolCashOnline. Your donations help the PAC fund scholarships for graduating students, as well as school projects that benefit students for which we can't use Gaming Commission funds. We are grateful for any amount - every little bit helps us make this school more awesome for our kids.

Here are the dates for upcoming PAC Meetings for the 2024 – 2025 school year.

- March (No Meeting)
- Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>
- Tuesday, May 13<sup>th</sup>
- Tuesday, June 10<sup>th</sup> (Regular PAC Meeting and Annual General Meeting)

## **WGSS DRY GRAD NEWS**

We encourage all parents/guardians of Grade 12 students to attend and learn how you can help and get involved in organizing a great and safe event for the Grads of 2025!

You can also find us on Facebook at Walnut Grove Secondary Dry Grad 2025.

All meetings will be held in the **WGSS Library from 6:30-7:30pm**: Tuesday, February 18 – SECURITY, FIRST AID & BAG CHECK-IN ONLY Tuesday, March 11 Tuesday April 1 Tuesday April 22 Tuesday May 20 Tuesday June 3 – LAST MEETING

- Don't forget to donate all your refundable cans & plastic bottles to the Dry Grad Return-it account!! Details here: <u>Return-It Depot</u>
- Our WGSS Dry Grad Committee is currently running the following fundraiser:
   WGSS Dry Grad-Langley School District Foundation
- Class of 2025 50/50 Fundraiser \*New\* See flyer below for details!



# OUR BIGGEST FUNDRAISER OF THE YEAR!!



Walnut Grove Secondary School Walnut Grove Dry Grad 2025

Winner takes half OF THE JACK POT

Help support grads of 2025 make their night special



ORDER TICKETS HERE TO WIN:

https://wgssdrygrad2025.rafflenexus.com/

**OR SCAN QR CODE** 



Important dates
Deadline: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at 11:59 p.m.
Draw date: Friday, March 14, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.

Thank you for supporting dry grad for our 2025 graduating students

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