# Welcome to Grade 9

We are excited about the year ahead and look forward to working with you and setting you up for success this year and into high school. Grade 9 is a very important year where student success directly impacts the choices you will have in grade 10. The marks you earn in grade 9 determine where you will be placed in your grade 10 courses. For example, Western Canada High School, when looking for students to enter their 10-1 stream, is looking for students who have a minimum of 3s in all their core subjects.

As your teachers, you can be assured that we will work with you to meet your individual and specific needs. We have high expectations for ourselves and we have high expectations for our students. An essential part of language arts is reading. We expect you to be reading every day, this includes at home. You will begin each class with a period of reading time so you must be prepared to actively read. This means reading with a purpose, whether that is to uncover the theme in a novel or the main ideas in a newspaper article. Due dates are there as expectations, it is the student’s responsibility to discuss with their teacher any extenuating circumstances that may impact handing in their work a minimum of at least a day prior to the due date, so an alternative plan can be devised. Students not handing in work in a timely manner will be required to make up the time before, at lunch or after school. We would much prefer that students accept responsibility for their individual actions and be mature and responsible for ensuring all deadlines are met.

Efficient use of class time is expected. If you have not completed the work that is due the next day, you have an obligation to complete the work at home. Keep in mind that your job at this point, is to be a purposeful and engaged student. If there is no assigned homework, students should be reviewing course content from that and previous days. Again, if there is no homework, you should be reading either your novel or some news articles from a variety of sources. One change we have made this year is that we will not be having students, sign out individual textbooks for use at home. The textbook will be available on line through teacher blogs, students will only have access to a hard copy textbook for use at home by specific parent request, and then they will signed out through the Learning Commons. Students should also remember that the textbook is only one resource, and students will be expected to and provided with course materials from a wide variety of sources. Students are also expected to come to class aware of the current events, and be prepared to enter into class discussion around the topic(s) and be ready with their questions.

As parents, we ask that you monitor your child’s use of after-school time. Perhaps it would be helpful to have a daily check-in to see how some purposeful at-home learning time is going to be used on that day, whether that is to complete assignments, review of course content, studying for a test, or reading. Parents are encouraged to check the teacher blogs, by clicking on the button. ☺

All parents and students are asked to respond to this letter with your response and plan by Monday, September 11. Email addresses are provided below.

Looking forward to a great year!

Sincerely,

Mr. Fettes Ms. Hamm

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