



TRANSITION ACTIVITY UPDATE - April 2019

“The best of both worlds”

As you know, all Stratford Central (SC) and Stratford Northwestern (SN) students, including incoming grades 7 and 9 students, will be together at SN for the 2019-2020 school year, beginning September 2019. Throughout the past several months, staff and students have been working on planning for this transition. Information has been provided through FAQs on the Board website, and more information will be provided as plans are finalized. Below is a general update of Transition activities.

Co-Principals at Stratford Northwestern

Principal Kevin Mills and Principal Emma Watts will be co-principals throughout the Transition Year, but their roles will be altered slightly. Principal Mills will supervise and be responsible for the day-to-day running of the combined SC and SN schools at SN, beginning in September 2019 through June 2020. Principal Watts will be released part-time to work on the vision year plans for 2020-21 and beyond. Principal Watts will also be responsible for special education programming at SN and other system tasks throughout the Transition school year.

Student Council Planning

Both SC and SN secondary student bodies (grades 9-12) will hold a spring election in May for available student council positions. All executive positions will be held by a student from each school. For fundraising, the joint school will be treated as one student body. The elected joint student council will meet in early June to plan for September activities.

More information will follow about how grades 7 and 8 students will be able to have their voices heard.

Learning Services Update for Students With Special Education Needs

Special education resource teachers from Stratford Northwestern and Stratford Central are currently working on supportive transition planning for grades 7-12. Transition meetings with the feeder schools are complete and parents can expect contact from resource teachers in the next few weeks.

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's transition into Grade 7, please contact Dawn Dingman at Stratford Central or Amanda Boogerman at Stratford Northwestern. Secondary transition questions should be directed to department heads, Heather Jones at Stratford Northwestern or Liz Lagerwerf at Stratford Central.

Sports Update

Department Heads and members of the physical education departments have been meeting to establish answers to sports-related questions. We expect that 50% of the sports teams will use the name Huskies and 50% will use the name Rams. *(continued on next page)*

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We are verifying with OFSAA that this plan will be approved. Coaches for school teams are being coordinated. More information will follow.

Student Events Update

During the last week of April, student leaders from both schools will be invited to facilitator training sessions at Stratford Northwestern. Students will be preparing to design and lead an activity to gather student voice on effective transitioning for our Grade 11 students at both sites during the week of May 20th.

The Leadership class at Stratford Northwestern has invited the Grade 11 students from both schools to attend a motivational assembly with Canadian author and explorer Adam Shoalts on May 17th. This will kick off the student voice activities planned for the following week in May.

Grade 8 Celebrations Thursday, June 20, 2019

Grade 8 celebrations will be held at both Stratford Central and Stratford Northwestern on Thursday, June 20th, prior to the last week of school. This special arrangement will give students an opportunity to celebrate their success in their home school. More information will follow from each school as plans are finalized.

It is our expectation that students will continue to attend after graduation. The activities planned for the last week of June will lead to a more successful first week of school in September, as they are geared to orientation and building relationships. Staffs and students are working very hard to create activities that will promote a sense of belonging and well-being, reduce anxiety and provide some hands-on activities while meeting new students during that last week of June.

School Bus Transportation from Central to Northwestern June 24-28

During the last week of June, there will be shuttle buses departing from the flats (lower Central parking lot) every morning and returning after school for grades 7 and 8 students who live 1.6 km or more away from SN and who would have to walk to SN.

ADVENTURE DAYS Last week of June (24th to 27th) at SNSS (Grades 7 and 8)

ALL staff and students will be at SN effective June 24th.

Plans are underway for a series of adventures for students from Central and Northwestern during the last week of June. These activities will involve team building, motivational speakers, art, mindfulness, and FunTECH, where students will choose from a range of activities.

A bus ride to the YMCA and St. Paul's gymnasium to allow students to familiarize themselves with the transition plan for phys ed, drama and dance classes is being organized for this week.

More information will follow, but the final days of June promise to be full of fun and activities where students will get to know one another. The focus will be on developing a sense of belonging for all students! The AMDSB Mental Health Lead and Mental Health Counsellors will also be on hand that week to promote healthy choices and share information about how they can support students.

Details are still being worked out for September, but there will be an onsite administrator to assist students with supports, concerns, modelling and addressing behaviour, and to cross students between buildings. We are very excited to be able to utilize the YMCA spaces and to promote healthy lifestyle choices and a range of activities. All students - even students in French Immersion - will have access to instrumental music classes at St. Paul's gymnasium.

SN Transition Tours Held March 28 for Grade 8 students in Rural Feeder Schools

Students in Grade 8 from Downie, Sprucedale, Central Perth and North Easthope visited SN for lunch in the Screaming Avocado on March 23rd and had a tour of the school. They engaged in some fun activities and were able to ask questions.

Exit cards gathered from students before they left indicated they enjoyed the day and felt that questions were answered, other than questions about lunch hour, start and end times, lockers and the amount of homework. Many of these questions will be confirmed in future Transition newsletters as we finalize schedules and details. Students who have unanswered questions are encouraged to request that their school principal contact Principal Mills or Principal Watts on their behalf.