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April 27, 2020

Dear Gr 5 Parents,

We are very excited to be welcoming our Grade 5 students to Royal Oak, although our transition process is going to look quite different this year given all that is going on in the world. As the response to COVID-19 in BC is in flux at the present time, I will send another update with more information about the transition process in the coming weeks as new information from our Provincial Health Officer comes available. For now, here's some information about our class building process and the sign up process for Gr 6 Band.

Class Building and Parent Placement Requests for the 2019-20 School Year

The transition from elementary to middle school is an exciting time for students and families! Regardless of what the transition process will look like for this year, I want to reassure you that we will continue to connect with our Gr 5 teachers and learning support teachers from Cordova Bay, Lochside and Prospect Lake to learn as much as we can about our new Gr 6 students! The process for building our Gr 6 classes begins with input from our Gr 5 teachers. If you have input into your child's placement at ROMS, talking with your child's Gr 5 teacher is the best place to start.

With the daunting task of placing 640 ROMS students into classes each year, our goal is always to create balanced classes that provide the best opportunity for student success. With so many factors to consider, class building is a complex process only made more complicated by a high volume of parent placement requests. It is our belief that, by middle school, students should be open to forming new peer relationships and that it's important for students to develop the skills to work with a wide variety of peers beyond their current social circle. We want to help our students develop the resiliency they need to thrive by teaching and encouraging flexible thinking and adaptability. We believe that our students are capable of working with and learning from the different personalities and styles of varying peers and teachers throughout their many years of schooling. Through such an approach, we are striving to meet our students' long-term needs as well as furthering Royal Oak's positive culture as an inclusive learning community built on our ROMS core values of curiosity, compassion and resilience.

Based on all of the above, we ask that parents **only make a class placement request in extraordinary situations warranting special consideration.**

In such extraordinary cases, please send your request by email to Karen MacEwan, Principal, at kmacewan@saanichschools.ca by our **deadline of May 8, 2020**, including:

- 1. Your child's name, current grade and current teacher
- 2. The nature of your placement request
- 3. The extraordinary learning, social-emotional, and/or other needs warranting such special class placement consideration

Please note that no requests are guaranteed, but your request and rationale will be considered during our class building process if submitted by this deadline.

We look forward work with you to support our students in navigating the challenges they face during the middle years. We believe that creating balanced, diverse classes will help our students learn how to work successfully with a variety of peers, develop their capacity to cope with challenges, and become more resilient learners.

Band Students

If your child is interested in taking Band at ROMS in Gr 6 there is a separate Band Registration form that will be available on our ROMS website (see ROMS Music Program under Quick Links, left-hand side). The registration form will be available on **Thursday, April 30th at 9am** and placement in Band 6 will be on a first-come, first served basis from April 30 onward until the Band 6 classes are full (and then we will go to a waitlist). For next year, band will be offered at Royal Oak during the regular school day rather than at 8am as it has been offered in recent years. Moving band into the timetable will allow the band program to grow and we hope that we will be able to provide access to music education for more students in this manner.

Students will alternate band with PE throughout the school year. This is how band is structured at many middle schools, and although it is not perfect, it allows students to enjoy all the Fine Arts and Applied Skills (FAAS) opportunities that are available at middle school and have access to band and PE as well.

Looking forward to meeting you and welcoming your child to the Royal Oak family.

Sincerely,

Karen

Karen MacEwan, Principal