



# BETTY GILBERT MIDDLE SCHOOL

26845 – 27th Avenue, Aldergrove, B.C. V4W 3E6

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**Principal: C. Burns | Vice Principal: M. Guthrie | Admin. Assistant: M. Barr | Office Assistant: M. Mitchelmore**

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Welcome to the Betty Gilbert Middle School, Raptors family! Betty Gilbert Middle School is located in the heart of Aldergrove and together we work with our family of schools, Shortreed Community Elementary, Parkside Centennial Elementary, and Aldergrove Community Secondary to provide our students with opportunities for innovation, creativity, excellence, and the development of a greater sense of belonging.

BGMS has a school population of approximately 480 students in grades 6, 7 & 8. Our school has been designed to specifically support young adolescents as they transition through the middle years of their educational journey. The Langley School District's vision and Middle School Pillars are essential in creating our inclusive school culture which focuses on connection and belonging. Our school promotes our Raptor Traits which are: Respect, Kindness, Responsibility, Empathy, and Integrity. These traits provide a compass to help guide and shape our students on their journey. At BGMS, one of our school's central goals is a focus on improving student learning through meaningful relationships, connectedness, and creating a culture of care which we know is crucial to adolescent development. We strive to work alongside families, and the community, to increase student engagement and positively impact student achievement. Through connection, positive relationships, and encouragement we hope to inspire our students to meet their potential.

The Betty Gilbert Middle School learning community encourages students to explore their academic, creative, athletic, and leadership potential. Structures such as our Explorations (Visual Arts, Drama, Digital Photography, Videography, Robotics, Guitar, Coding; Woodwork) give students the opportunity to explore their passions and build upon their individual curiosities and skill sets. Our students also have the opportunity to focus on healthy well-being and physical fitness. Our Explorations and PHE program, combined with our extracurricular clubs and teams, provide students the ability to make new connections and expand on their learning in a wide variety of ways.

It is our goal to provide students access to wide-ranging academic, athletic, and creative pursuits set within an inclusive and caring culture. Working alongside our parent community we create a safe environment, filled with engagement, achievement, and encouragement, all while nurturing a sense of belonging. We believe our Raptors of today will become the tremendous leaders of tomorrow.

We encourage you to continue to be involved in your child's educational journey and we can't wait to partner with you. Have a fabulous summer and we look forward to welcoming our new Raptor families in September!

Sincerely,

Claire Burns

Principal

[cburns@sd35.bc.ca](mailto:cburns@sd35.bc.ca)

Mindy Guthrie

Vice Principal

[mguthrie@sd35.bc.ca](mailto:mguthrie@sd35.bc.ca)

## TRANSITIONING TO MIDDLE SCHOOL

The BGMS Admin have visited all Grade 5 classes from our feeder elementary schools. We have also hosted all of our Grade 5 students from our two feeder elementary schools. During this visit to BGMS, students had an opportunity to go on a tour of the school and grounds, meet some of our Grade 8 students, and play some fun collaborative games. In addition, each student received a BGMS t-shirt, so they can wear their spirit wear with pride! If your child does not attend one of our feeder elementary schools, they will receive their t-shirt on the first day of school.

The first day of school is **Tuesday, September 5<sup>th</sup> 2023**. On this day, our Grade 6's will attend for a half day and they will participate in a morning of orientation activities. Specific details regarding this day will be emailed to families in late August/early September.

## WHY MIDDLE?

Some of you may be more familiar with a Kindergarten to Grade 7 school model of schooling and are not aware of the amazing opportunities in a Middle School. Research supports the understanding that school can be a more productive and transformative experience when middle years students have been able to engage in specific and purposeful educational opportunities aligned with their developmental needs. We take pride in creating a safe environment where children are encouraged to explore, discover, create, and grow.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL PILLARS

1. Integrity...Safe Place and Transitions
2. Community...Connectedness...Staff Know Each Student
3. Excellence...Integrated Cross-Curricular Instruction
4. Courage...Explorations and Curricular Competencies

## TEAMING & LOOPING

Your child will be assigned to one Homeroom teacher who will be Teaming with one additional teaching partner. Students will remain with these teachers over a two-year period (for both Grade 6 and Grade 7) this is known as Looping. This means your child will have the opportunity to build solid connections over a two-year period with both of their core teachers. This allows for rich academic and social growth opportunities.

## HOUSE TEAMS & ADVISORY

An important goal of Middle School is to provide intentional opportunities for kids to meet students other than just the ones in their homerooms. Enter 'House Teams'. Our House Teams help to develop connection between students in other grades and classrooms. Within our House Teams, we run Advisory, which is an intentional and dedicated time for students to learn about the Raptor Traits, to get to know more students within the school, and to be part of friendly competition with other Houses in the school. Throughout the year, you will hear about House Afternoons, Intramurals, Spirit Days, and our BGMS House Wars. All of which support our focus on connection and belonging for our students.

## BGMS EXPECTATIONS

At BGMS, we expect the best! We want our students to be able to empathize with others and have the moral courage to make the right decisions. We are hopeful that our parents will partner with us to promote the expectation that our students demonstrate the Raptor Traits of: Respect, Kindness, Responsibility, Empathy, and Integrity.

## RAPTOR RECOGNITION

Raptor Recognition acknowledges students who demonstrate the core values of the school and are recognized as positive role models at BGMS. It is also an opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of our artists, athletes and performers. Each term, teachers nominate students from their class that they believe deserve to be recognized for exemplifying our Raptor Traits. Receiving a Raptor Recognition award is a highly honoured and well-deserved moment for our students.

## STAYING CONNECTED

Good communication between home and school is critical to ensuring student success. BGMS will continue to work towards becoming a paperless school when it comes to communication with parents. In order to stay informed, please be sure you use at least one of the following online methods:

- **Email:** If you are not receiving emails, please contact the office to make sure your email address is correct.
- **Instagram:** Follow us @bgmsraptors
- **Facebook:** Follow us @bgmsraptors
- **Website:** [bgms.sd35.bc.ca](http://bgms.sd35.bc.ca)

## CLOSED CAMPUS

BGMS is a closed campus. Thus, no one is allowed to leave the school premises after arriving unless they are in Grade 8 and traveling to ACSS for a class or have written or verbal permission from a parent which is presented to the office. All visitors must check in at the office upon entering the school.

## LUNCHTIME

We do not have a cafeteria, so students will eat lunch in their classroom, sitting at their desks. After the eating period, students will head outside for fresh air and physical activity. There will also be a variety of lunchtime clubs and intramurals offered throughout the year.

## OUTSIDE DAYS

All days are outside days and students are expected to go outside for lunch play periods. Students must come dressed appropriately for the weather each day.

## PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY

Our policy is that when the morning bell rings, students must store away all personal electronic devices. These devices are not to be used, or seen, at any time throughout the school day unless granted permission by a teacher or administrator. We kindly ask parents to support our Personal Technology Policy by contacting the school directly if you would like to contact your child during the school day. Please let your child know that if you need to contact them, you will do so through the office.

## LOCKERS & LOCKS

Lockers are assigned by the classroom teacher, usually, within the first couple days of school. Please note that these are 'half' lockers so big suitcase-style rolling backpacks will not fit in them. Your child's teacher will explain their expectations around locks (many do not use locks) and decorating (each teacher has their own style for locker decoration).

## ILLNESS/ABSENCE

It is always best to keep sick children home from school so they can rest and recover more quickly. If your child will be away for an extended number of days, please contact their teacher regarding missed schoolwork.

## ATTENDANCE

Unless we hear from you, our automated attendance system will contact the home of every student who is absent. Please let us know in advance if your child will be absent or late by either:

- Using the link on our school website by clicking [here](#).
- Sending us an e-mail: [bgmattendance@sd35.bc.ca](mailto:bgmattendance@sd35.bc.ca) – please include the student's first and last name, date and reason for their absence.
- Calling the school at 604-856-8178

Thank you for your help with this as it saves you from receiving an unnecessary call, and ensures we are able to quickly confirm the safety of our students each morning.

## PAYING EXTRA FEES

Sometimes parents will be asked to pay for extras around the school such as field trips or agendas. In order to make this as easy as possible, we ask that you use the schoolcashonline system whereby parents pay directly online. If you need to create an account then please click [here](#). If your family would benefit from financial support, please reach out to the school so we can assist you.

## SPIRIT WEAR CLOTHING

Our BGMS spirit wear is available to purchase at our online store. Please write your child's name on all tags. Please note that the Youth sizes run quite small and many of our students order adult sizes. If you have questions while ordering, please direct all inquiries to the vendor rather than the school, as they are an independently run company. Clothing will only be shipped to BGMS, not to family residences. To order click here: [BGMS Spirit Wear Online Store](#)

## PEOPLE WHO WILL PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN YOUR CHILD'S LIFE AT BGMS

### **HOMEROOM & TEAMING TEACHERS**

Your child will have a homeroom teacher and there will be one other classroom your child will work in each day. These two teachers are your child's core teachers and they work closely alongside one another to ensure students have a successful learning experience.

### **EXPLORATIONS & PHYSICAL & HEALTH EDUCATION**

Throughout the school year, your child will work with various BGMS teachers while having the opportunity to try different Exploration classes at BGMS. These short courses allow students to develop their areas of passion and to experience new and creative opportunities. Students will participate in PHE on our shared school campus including use of the turf fields, the new fitness challenge course, the outdoor track, the gym at BGMS, and possibly a gym at ACSS.

### **RESOURCE TEACHERS AND EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS**

If your child has a Ministry Designation, a Resource Teacher will work with your family to set individual education goals and support the educational journey of your child. Your child might also work alongside one of our amazing Educational Assistants who provide additional supports within the classroom setting.

### **SCHOOL COUNSELOR**

BGMS has a tremendous school counsellor named Mr. Wiebe. He is an excellent resource who is able to provide social and emotional support for your child. Students and parents are encouraged to call or leave a note for Mr. Wiebe in order to set up a meeting.

### **LEARNING COMMONS TEACHER**

Our Learning Commons has an expanding collection of fiction and non-fiction books, plus technology resources - including a 3D printer, vinyl cutter, laser engraver, and heat press. In addition to library skills, our Learning Commons teacher, Ms. Lauman, cooperatively plans and teaches lessons with classroom teachers. Ms. Lauman also provides lunch-hour access, holds book exchanges, and offers drop-in Makerspace sessions which include activities such as robotics, building, circuitry, crafts, and Rubik's Cubes.

### **BAND TEACHER**

Ms. Mills is our amazing Band teacher! She runs the programs both here at BGMS, and at ACSS. Thus, continuity for our students is excellent as their musical skills can develop over many years under the talented guidance of Ms. Mills. Band classes run before/after school as well as during the academic school day. This means that Band students will miss some class time in order to maximize their band opportunities.

### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER SUPPORT (ELL)**

BGMS has an ELL support teacher named Mr. Chiba who works with students for whom English is their second language. Mr. Chiba is an expert in English language acquisition and is able to provide support for all levels of ELL development.

## ABORIGINAL SUPPORT WORKER

Ms. Peters is our Aboriginal Support Worker. She provides support for Indigenous students in various ways including both culturally, socially, and emotionally. Ms. Peters is passionate about weaving with wool, baking, and building positive relationships with students.

## YOUTH CARE WORKER

Our Youth Care Worker provides support to both students and families. They help students build connections, support social & emotional growth, find creative ways of managing challenging student behaviors, and help families with receiving food and clothing supports.

## THE ROLE OF PARENTS

Many hands make light work, and our PAC is an integral support structure that works alongside the school administrators to positively impact BGMS students and school culture. The PAC applies for necessary Provincial government grants, assists with fundraising, and hosts activities and events throughout the school year which make a huge positive impact on our school. Parents who would like to get involved with the PAC, are invited to email [bgms.pac@gmail.com](mailto:bgms.pac@gmail.com) for more information. Parents can also join the PAC facebook group at BGMSPAC.

**We can't wait to meet our new students and get another epic middle school year underway!**

