



Diamond Vale Elementary School

2675 Coldwater Avenue
Merritt, B.C. V1K 1B2

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1st September, 2026

Dear Diamond Vale Families,

Welcome back to the 2026-27 school year! We are excited to welcome our students and families back and look forward to another year of learning, growth, and connection.

Staff Updates

We are pleased to welcome several new team members to Diamond Vale this year.

- **Ms. Jenna Kane** will be joining our teaching staff.
- You will also see a new face and hear a new voice in the front office. **Mrs. Kathleen McCormack** is currently on leave, and we welcome **Mrs. Alisha Hedrick**, who will be supporting our school community until Winter Break.
- We are excited to announce the return of our **StrongStart Program**, which will be led by **Mrs. Marni Gage**, (aka Ms. Marni) who joins us from Merritt Central Elementary.

Please join me in welcoming these staff members to our school community.

We also have a familiar face with a different name. Congratulations to Ms. Malika Hayward who got married in the spring and will now be known as **Mrs. Vaartstra** (aka Mrs. V).

Class Placements

As in previous years, student enrollment continues to fluctuate with registrations and transfers occurring right up to and during the first week of school. Because of this, students will be grouped in multi-grade learning groups for the first few days of the year while we finalize class organization.

We anticipate sharing finalized class placements with students and families by **Thursday afternoon of next week**.

If you are receiving this message and know that your child(ren) will **not** be returning to Diamond Vale this year, please contact the school office as soon as possible. This information helps us greatly as we finalize our classes.

First Day of School

School will be in session from **10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 8**.

Upon arrival:

- Students in **Grades 1-3** should proceed to the **primary playground**.
- Students in **Grades 4-7** should proceed to the **intermediate playground**.

Students should look for a teacher holding a sign with their grade level. Staff will help direct students to the gymnasium, where they will learn about their learning groups for the first few days.

As registrations continue to arrive, please remember that **class placements have not yet been finalized**. The teacher your child is assigned to on the first day may not be their classroom teacher for the school year. Having a conversation with your child about this before Tuesday will help ensure a smooth and positive start.

School Supplies

Students only need to bring a few basic supplies on the first day:

- Pencils
- Ruler
- Eraser
- Scissors
- Coloured pencils or crayons

Classroom teachers will let students know when to bring the remainder of their school supplies.

Hot Lunch Program

Our Hot Lunch Program will begin on **September 28**. More information, including ordering details, will be sent home in the coming weeks.

Until then, please send a packed lunch with your child each day. Please note that we do not have facilities for heating food. However, students are welcome to bring hot food in a thermos-style container.

Breakfast Program

Our Breakfast Program is available to all students from **8:00 a.m. to 8:20 a.m.** in the **T-Room**, which can be accessed from the primary courtyard.

The Breakfast Program will begin on **Wednesday, September 9**.

Safe Arrival Student Absence Reporting

To report your child's absence, please use one of the following methods:

- Visit **SchoolMessenger**
- Use the **SchoolMessenger App**
- Call **1-844-434-8117**

Parent Handbook & School Code of Conduct

Please find attached our Parent Handbook, which contains important information about daily routines, school expectations, dress code, and other aspects of school life at Diamond Vale. We encourage all families to review it carefully. In particular, please take a moment to familiarize yourself with our school policy regarding the **use of personal digital devices**.

Administrative Procedures

For information on Nicola Simikameen School District's administrative procedures please visit [Administrative Procedures | Nicola-Similkameen School District](#) Of particular note should be [1 - Admin Procedures - Student Behaviour and Discipline - January.15.2025.pdf](#) and [4 - Admin Procedures - Parent-Guardians Concerns & Complaints - April.9.25.pdf](#)

Thank you for your continued support of our school community. We are excited to begin another wonderful year together and look forward to seeing everyone on Tuesday.

Enjoy the remainder of the Labour Day weekend!

Warm regards,

Becky Puterbough

Principal

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