

## School Council Message from Administration – September 2025

Hello Bear Council,

Welcome back to a new school year. We are all excited to see everyone and we are so thankful to be part of a supportive community that involves our parents. We appreciate you making the time for us, our school, our staff, and, of course, our students.

As we enter year four, things have a good sense of calm and smooth. Not to jinx anything, but the hard work that we have put in seems to have paid off in that students understand the expectations and what it takes to make them a Lakeshore Bear. Our students have come in ready and eager to learn. They have demonstrated kindness and a willingness to be part of our school.

As a lottery school, we have been able to manage our staffing and class size considerations. This has led to predictability at the school level. We have tried to keep the balance of admitting as many students as we can, while being able to ensure safety and quality programming. Our class sizes are currently: grade 6 – 31, grade 7 – 32, grade 8 – 29, grade 9 – 30. We feel these are manageable class sizes, and we believe they are in-line (or below) most middle school class sizes in south Calgary.

Of course, we understand that the lottery process leaves some of our community families in an overflow position. While this is not always seen as a preferred position, our friends at Nickle School have offered a welcoming home to our Mahogany and Auburn Bay families. Where possible, we have called back students and will continue to maintain our callback lists. Currently, we have 188 students in overflow to Nickle.

As we have grown and developed as a learning community, our values have also evolved. Our internally created staff guiding document, previously known as the Lakeshore Lighthouse, has transformed into the principles of the BEAR, which now aligns with the same qualities in which we are promoting with our students – Bravery, Excellence, Ambition, and Respect. It is such a great connection to see our staff choosing to align with our student-created document. Our core beliefs about prioritizing learning, relationships, and collaboration are still present in our document and our goal is to create one shared set of values which could be read from a student, staff, or parent lens which defines who are as a school. Stay tuned for that!

With our focus on learning, we know that our teachers provide quality instruction through innovative task design and assessment practices. Our progression for this year is on more individualized attention to students, and we are going about that in four distinct ways:

- 1) Lesson Requests and Lesson Invitations – These are opportunities where teachers will offer 1-1 and small group sessions for students who may need a boost or reassurance with curricular concepts
- 2) Targeted Interventions – Through the support of our Educational Assistants, English as an Additional Language Assistant, Library Assistant, and our newly established Literacy Teacher position, we hope to be able to identify students who could benefit from intervention support and provide that to them in ways which can boost their foundational knowledge
- 3) Level Up for Power Up – We have moved our Power Up classes to half year instead of full year options which has allowed us to lower class sizes and target specific areas for growth with identified students. Can you imagine the opportunity of having 2.5 hours / week in a class of 3-8 students and one teacher? We know the lower class sizes will lead to more personalized instruction.
- 4) Study Clubs – Our teachers are always good about providing options outside of core instructional hours to help students. Many will open their classrooms at lunch or provide “office hours” for specific support. Our Get SET club also operates each Tuesday at lunch for students in Grades 7-9.

Where we need parental support is understanding that additional help is not unique, nor does it say that a student is singled out or struggling. We want to normalize support as just what we do at Lakeshore to help students perform better. So, if your child comes home saying they had a “lesson invite” or tells you they had to work with another staff member outside of the classroom, we want to embrace this as an opportunity.

It's hard to believe that the school year is in full swing already and many of our clubs are starting operation. Our Lakeshore News team is recruiting anchors and correspondents, and our Student Council and Well-Being Ambassadors are searching for new members. Lakeshore Drama is also finalizing the selection of their spring musical and soon auditions and practices will be underway.

On the travel front, our Grade 8 sailors are preparing for their west coast adventure and our Grade 9s are getting set for their interprovincial trip – this time to Ottawa AND Montreal.

Our Athletics teams in Soccer and Basketball are already formed, and our Cross-Country team competes in their season finale next week. Bears Athletics is rising to prominence in all sports, and we continue to offer development teams for basketball. Soon, our wrestling team will begin their season too.

What has been highlighted in our startup is the collective efforts of all of our staff. We know the things they do day-to-day are amazing, but the extras which they provide are what makes our school special. We are so thankful to be at a school with so many great people. You are also part of that, because you help to make things go around and make sure the people who matter have what they need to do what they do best. Thank you Mama and Papa Bears and we look forward to a great year together.

Ian Fero, Principal

Malynda Kouperman, Assistant Principal