

Columneetza Junior Secondary Student Handbook

2026 - 2027



Information in the Columneetza Junior Secondary School Handbook may be subject to change at any time

Columneetza Bell Schedule 2026-27

Warning Bell	8:40
8:45 – 10:05	First Period – ‘A’ Block
10:05 – 10:15	Break
10:15 – 11:35	Second Period – ‘B’ Block
11:35 – 12:25	Lunch
Warning Bell	12:20
12:25 – 1:45	Third Period – ‘C’ Block
1:45 – 1:55	Break
1:55 – 3:16	Fourth Period – ‘D’ Block

Buses Arrive starting at 3:21pm

Bell Schedule 2026-27

Warning Bell	8:40
8:45 – 9:50	First Period – ‘A’ Block
9:50 – 10:00	Break
10:00 – 11:05	Second Period – ‘B’ Block
11:05 – 11:55	Lunch
Warning Bell	11:50
11:55 – 1:00	Third Period – ‘C’ Block
1:00 – 1:10	Break
1:10 – 2:16	Fourth Period – ‘D’ Block

Buses are scheduled to pick up students earlier on these days.



Welcome to Columneetza Junior Secondary

At Columneetza Junior Secondary we are proud to offer a variety of courses and activities that will ensure all students have many opportunities to succeed and enjoy school. Columneetza is mainly Grade 7 – 9 with senior students in attendance for specialized courses such as: French Immersion, art, auto mechanics, metal work, welding, and power mechanics. Grade 7s enjoy a yearlong program while the Grades 8/9 students are in a semester schedule. We look forward to an exciting year and hope students take advantage of all the great things we can offer.

School Philosophy

In accordance with the philosophy of public education in British Columbia, the staff of Columneetza Junior Secondary recognizes two major responsibilities of this school. The first is to foster the individual growth and development of students to their fullest potential. The second is to assist students to become active and productive citizens in our society.

Mission Statement

Our Mission is to share a commitment to creating a healthy environment, which encourages respect for self and others, fosters individual growth through the pursuit of excellence, and promotes a sense of belonging in the school and the larger community.

School Code of Conduct

Part of ensuring that our Mission can be fulfilled is tied to the conduct of students and staff. The School Code of Conduct sets the standards of behaviour expected at Columneetza and provides the information from which behavioural instruction and accountability are derived.

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to establish and maintain a safe, caring and orderly environment required for purposeful learning. The code provides appropriate balances between individual and collective rights, freedoms, and responsibilities. Also, the code clarifies and publishes expectations for student behaviour while going to and from school including the school bus, at school, and while attending school functions or activities at any location and digital device guidelines. Please read over the Code of Conduct. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the school.

[Columneetza's Code of Conduct](#) (click link to access the full Code of Conduct)

Exit Doors:

In the morning, the front door will open for students and staff. There will be 2 additional exit doors unlocked at 8:10am when supervision begins for students and staff to enter the building near parent drop off locations: the doors into the upper floor of the main school building in between the cafeteria building and the industrial education building (by Room 130), and the back doors by the gym (small bus drop off and by Room 187). After

the first bell, all exit doors will be locked and doors to the cafeteria building and the industrial education building will be temporarily opened to welcome students into the space. This is to enforce student and staff safety. The front door of the school will always remain open during the school day. During breaks and lunch the 3 sets of exit doors will be opened to make school washrooms more accessible and monitored by Noon Hour Supervisors and administration.

Attendance:

Regular attendance is a crucial component of academic performance. Students are expected to be on time and attend every class. If students are ill or cannot attend for other justifiable reasons, it is up to the parent or guardian to notify the **School Messenger system 1 (833) 582-6944**, using the phone, the School Messenger App, website login or calling the school. <https://go.schoolmessenger.com> All undocumented absences will be considered unexcused and may result in consequences. Chronic attendance issues will result in a file review.

Absences /Punctuality:

When excused absences happen, students are required to work with teachers to make up missing work. Teachers and administration will work with students to solve attendance issues; however, unexcused absences may lead to follow-up actions if students continually miss classes or are continually late without reason.

The following is a chart listing the difference between excused and unexcused absences:

Excused Absences	Unexcused Absences
Student Illness	Sleeping-in
Medical/dental appointment	Went out for lunch
Death in the family	Transportation issues
School sponsored trips	Tired
Family emergency	Friend had an "issue"
Personal safety issues	Missed bus to other campus
Pre-arranged family trip	Away for any reason not considered excused

Extended Absences

If your child will be missing school for an extended time due to trips, illness or injury please provide notification to each teacher as soon as possible so an appropriate course of action can be developed to support your child

The "Dos" of Attendance:

Do attend all your classes.

Do inform your teachers if you know you're going to be absent ahead of time.

Do make arrangements to catch up on missed work.

Do have your parent/guardian phone the school or use the app before 9:00 a.m. when you are away.

Do be prepared to face the consequences if you miss class without a valid reason.

Do make appointments after school hours if at all possible (dentist, haircuts, etc.).

Do be on time for class. If unavoidably late, sign in at the office.

You may be asked to provide a parent/guardian note to explain absences and lates.

Students with unexcused absence on the day of a school dance or other after-school activity generally will not be allowed to attend the dance or participate in the activity.

Hallway Wandering: Students are expected to bring all necessary supplies from their lockers before class begins. If a student leaves a class, teacher permission is required, students are reminded to be quiet and considerate of other classes in session, and to be as quick as possible.

Leaving School Grounds:

At Columneetza the expectation is for students to remain on campus/school property during the school day. For example, this means students should not leave campus at lunch time unless they have parent/caregiver permission to go home for lunch. Students leaving the school at any time during the day are to inform the front desk secretary when leaving and arriving back at school (sign in, sign out process). The front desk will check with parents/caregivers to make sure students are supposed to be leaving the school premises.

Cell Phones & Digital Devices Guideline (also found in the full version Code of Conduct)

The Ministry of Education and Child Care and School District 27 Cariboo Chilcotin recognize that personal digital devices in schools can be used as a tool in learning, a means of communication for families and as entertainment. They can also be used as a means to harm an individual and can be a distraction to learning. As such, the Ministry has created a provincial standard for personal digital device use in schools to ensure the safety of all. "Personal digital device" means any personal electronic device that can be used to communicate or to access the internet, such as a cell phone or a tablet and includes the use of wired or wireless headphones/air pods.

At Columneetza we value learning and growth. Personal digital devices can contribute to learning when used appropriately and can be a barrier to learning when used otherwise. As a result, personal digital devices are to be used in the following manner when attending Columneetza:

- All personal digital devices must be put away during class time and not on the student's person. This includes all classes and learning times. Being put away can mean stored in a locker, backpack, or classroom management device such as a caddy, box, basket or some such means so that the device is not accessible. At Columneetza, the school has purchased cell phone caddies for each classroom. Personal digital devices should be turned off and/or ringers silenced. The goal of instructional time is to focus on learning without distraction or interruption.
- Bluetooth earbuds/air pods, tablets, and other digital devices used for non instructional purposes are included in the new guidelines and should not be on a student's person during instructional time.
- All personal digital devices must remain away for the balance of class time, they do not come out for any reason other than necessary medical monitoring or as a specific support to an IEP or plan. Parents are required to communicate and coordinate these circumstances with the school principal or vice-principal. For students with an IEP or plan the school will provide electronic devices to support learning and to access required online learning resources when needed.
- There may be limited occasions when students are invited to use personal digital devices for instructional purposes including digital literacy as directed by teachers during class time. Access to guest wifi at Columneetza for this purpose will require pre-approval from administration.

- Personal digital devices are prohibited in the following spaces as they pose a greater safety risk: gym, shops, washrooms and changerooms. When leaving their classroom during instructional time, students will be expected to leave their device stored in the classroom.
- Students who fail to comply with the school expectations on personal digital devices will face progressive discipline for breach of school rules.
- For parent/guardians, the school understands that the need to communicate with your young adult is important. Personal digital devices provide a means of direct communication for families. At any time, to communicate with your child, feel free to call the office and we will get a message to them to contact you. In times of an emergency, this will be done as quick as possible. Before school, during break times and after school are suggested times to contact your child on their personal digital devices. Please refer to the Columneetza daily schedule.
- The staff of Columneetza would like to suggest to parents that your student keeps all personal digital devices at home if at all possible. The school takes no responsibility for lost or damaged devices.

The staff of Columneetza recognize that they will role model using personal digital devices during instructional times other than for urgent or emergent circumstances. Administration reserves the necessity to use cell phone communication for purposes of student and staff safety and organization.

Consequences for violation of Personal Digital Devices

Students who fail to adhere to the school and classroom guidelines for digital devices may be subject to the following:

- Have their device taken away by a teacher or administrator
- Be prohibited from having a device on school property.
- Be suspended in accordance with [AP 320—Student Suspensions](#)

While at school students are expected to learn, play and socialize away from the daily distraction of personal digital devices. The general expectation is that students are not to be using personal digital devices during instructional time at school to promote a safe, equitable and positive learning environment throughout the day.

Tobacco Products:

Columneetza is a "Tobacco Free" school. Students are not permitted to smoke, vape or chew tobacco on school property. All students caught using smoking products, including vapes, will have them confiscated. Progressive discipline will ensue.

Alcohol or Drugs:

Any student under the influence or in possession of drugs/alcohol at school will face progressive discipline. Students under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be sent home to their parent/caregiver or designate for safety reasons.

Weapons:

The possession or use of weapons at school will result in progressive discipline up to an indefinite suspension. Such weapons may include but not be limited to replicas, knives, firearms, laser pointers, firecrackers,

explosives, pepper spray, bear spray and tasers. For students who work ranches and mistakenly brought their working knife to school are asked to contact administration immediately.

Harassment:

Harassment is an unwelcome comment or conduct that may lead to adverse or negative consequences for the victim of harassment. Under all circumstances, harassing behavior is inappropriate. In the case of sexual harassment, it may be referred to the RCMP.

Appropriate Language:

Students are expected to express themselves in a positive, courteous manner. The use of vulgar or abusive language is inappropriate in or around the school. The use of 'please' and 'thank you' is encouraged.

Behavior on School Buses

Students are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner, obeying all bus rules and instructions from the driver. Busing is a privilege not a right. **UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT IN THE BUS LOOP OR ON A BUS MAY RESULT IN THE LOSS OF BUS RIDING PRIVILEGES OR OTHER DISCIPLINARY ACTION.**

Cheating:

Cheating is a serious offence and will be dealt with by the teacher or the administration for repeated offences. Plagiarism (copying someone else's work and presenting it as your own) is cheating.

Student Dress:

The key word for Columneetza's dress code is **APPROPRIATE**. Beachwear is not permitted, and footwear must be worn at all times. Students dressed inappropriately or wearing clothing/hats referencing alcohol, drugs, profanity, derogatory or inappropriate or disrespectful comments, or sexual innuendo will be asked to change. No open toe shoes in shop classes. Clean indoor shoes and gym strip required for the Gym. Students in violation of the dress code will be asked to remove a hat or use the changeroom/washroom to change inappropriate apparel. Parents or caregivers may also be called.

Internet Use:

All students and their parent/guardian sign a Computer/Privacy Consent form. If a student violates the Computer/Privacy Consent internet privileges may be suspended.

Field and Athletic Trips

Students who are to be absent from their regular classes due to other school related activities must receive permission from their subject teachers and make up missed work. Teachers may refuse to give permission for students to travel on school activities if the student's performance or attendance is a concern. Participation in school activities is a privilege. While on a school sponsored trip, students are subject to all policies, rules, and regulations of Columneetza and School District #27.

General Information

Fees:

In accordance with Ministry of Education policy, there are no course fees. However, the school does levy certain fees for optional programs available to students. If payment causes hardship, please contact the school.

These fees are payable during the first two weeks of school:

Grade 8 & 9 Hockey Program

No fee

Aquatics Program
Yearbook
Locks

No fee, optional \$50 for certification
\$50 for students who wish to purchase a yearbook
\$15 the school sells locks, at cost, for lockers or students
can bring their own.

Other Fees or Costs:

In those courses where students undertake project work over and above the basic course work and/or wish to use more expensive or additional material than that provided, students will be charged for the additional costs. (Ex: Woodwork, Metalwork, Auto Mechanics, Baking and Cooking, Aquatics).

Counseling Services:

School Counselors, a Youth Engagement Worker and Indigenous Support Workers are available. Students can make appointments for course changes with counselors. Counseling sessions of a personal nature can be made at any time. Counselors may also refer students to outside agencies for further mental wellness supports.

Student Learning Support:

Additional help for students is available from the Learning Support staff. Students may be considered for Learning Support either by teacher recommendation or by student/parent/guardian request. Assistance may be short or long-term depending upon the individual's need.

Course Changes:

Most classes are generally full or very near full so changes will only be considered if they are essential or specific to educational needs. No courses may be added or dropped without counselor consultation, parent/guardian consent and administrative approval. Students in grades 7, 8, 9, must carry a full course load (8 courses).

Lockers

All students will have access to a locker if they want and will sign a locker contract. It is the student's responsibility to provide a combination lock. With the combination given to your homeroom teacher. Lockers must be emptied at the end of the year or when a student withdraws from school. The lockers are the property of the school, and the administration reserves the right to access a locker at any time if necessary. Please keep your locker locked, clean and free of graffiti/stickers. Do not give your combination to other students. Do not move lockers without approval from the administration. The school does not assume responsibility for lost or stolen items.

Library:

The Library is open to students before and after school at Librarian's discretion, and during the lunch break. Librarian staff are available to help. There are also computers available for student use.

Medical Room:

If ill, a student should report to the office. A secretary may check the student into the medical room or arrange to have a parent pick up the student. Injured students may be treated by a first aid attendant and, if necessary, transported to hospital. It is the student's responsibility to explain a "medical room" absence from class and address the issue of making up any missed assignments/tests.

Reporting Procedures:

During the year, students receive 4 learning updates (3 for Grade 7's). Teachers will provide updates on student progress or contact home if necessary (such as students having many incomplete assignments). Parent- Teacher evenings are held in the fall and spring; the specific dates are on the school calendar. Parents/guardians may call the school/teacher to arrange a teacher meeting at any time.

Assemblies:

Assemblies occur throughout the year and provide an opportunity for students to experience various cultural activities, to recognize student achievement, to discuss the Code of Conduct or to mark special occasions. Some assemblies are attended by all students while others may be for selected grades or groups.

Clubs & Athletics:

These activities require a commitment of time and energy but are a rewarding part of school life, students are encouraged to participate. Please read the newsletter and/or listen to announcements for the various activities available to students. School teams may include soccer, basketball, volleyball, ultimate, track & field, and rugby. School clubs include Student Voice, D&D, Fitness Club, League of Legends and possibly some new ones.

Leadership:

All students are welcome to become active in the Columneetza Junior Secondary Leadership. Its focus is to organize and provide worthwhile and enjoyable activities for the entire student body. Announcements are made with regard to times and dates of the meetings and the functions.

Student Parking:

For those senior students attending the Columneetza Campus, students must drive in a safe manner at all times and observe all signs. Parking privileges may be revoked by administration for unsafe driving or inappropriate conduct in the Columneetza parking lot. Do not park in the front of the school, this is reserved for staff.

Fire Drill & Emergency Evacuation:

In the event of a fire drill or similar emergency, the school must be cleared quickly. The safety of students and staff and the safeguarding of public property are all considerations thus orderly conduct is essential. Follow teacher directions to designated safe areas (generally on the field). Stay with your class, accurate attendance during emergencies is crucial. Six (6) fire drills will be conducted each school year. In the event that it is not safe to remain outside of Columneetza, the school population may be re-routed to Nesika Elementary (beside Columneetza) or the TRU Campus on Western Avenue.

Lock Down Procedures:

When the building needs to go into lock down, the alarm will announce "lock down" over the P.A. system and all staff and students must find the nearest secure classroom and wait behind locked doors until an all clear signal is given. Students must avoid using cell phones and parents must avoid entering the school until it is deemed safe to do so. Two (2) lockdown drills will be conducted each year and students and parents will be told the dates of the drills.

<u>Columneetza Junior Secondary 250-392-4158 (general inquiries):</u>
<u>Administration:</u> Holly Zurak (Principal), Matt Cullum (Vice-Principal), Alina Cameron (Vice-Principal)
<u>Clerical:</u> Kyla Mathews (Reception), Jennifer Champion (Financial) & Lara Agapow (Records)
<u>Counselors:</u> Tara Burtenshaw & Jonathan Harding
<u>Indigenous Support Workers:</u> George Fraser, Jordy Moise & Katrina Wilde
<u>Youth Engagement Worker:</u> Teri Plumb

Facebook Page – Columneetza Junior Secondary School –School Page

School Website: <https://cjs.sd27.bc.ca/>