



**Sparwood Secondary School**  
Newsletter  
[www.sd5.bc.ca/school/sss](http://www.sd5.bc.ca/school/sss)  
NOVEMBER 2023



### A Message from the Principal

We are already halfway through semester one! It has been a busy time as I establish new connections with the students and staff at our school. I am grateful for the opportunity to be back at Sparwood Secondary and for the opportunity to have a role in your child's education.

Our school has already had several great experiences this school year. Many students had the opportunity to play volleyball and represent Sparwood Secondary. Representing our school on a sports team or on a field trip is an important responsibility for our students and our coaches. We are very proud of our teams, and we sincerely appreciate it when our teams represent our school and our community well both on and off the court.

We have had several opportunities to gather as a whole school to learn and to celebrate. The annual Terry Fox Run and fundraiser for cancer research inspired some healthy fundraising competition among our senior volleyball teams. The senior boy's team was able to raise more money than the girl's team and they celebrated by throwing some pie at the senior girl's team members. All teams demonstrated their excellent sportsmanship and the rest of the school cheered on the fun!

We have also gathered to learn about some important topics. One of these opportunities was our student led assembly for Truth and Reconciliation. The students who led this assembly were Aria Cancela and Haylea Hayward. Leading this assembly was part of their Grade 12 Capstone project. We also gathered to learn from the life experiences of Brady Leavold. Mr. Leavold was a talented hockey player with many opportunities ahead of him. He shared the hard lessons he learned when he used drugs and alcohol to cope with the hardships he experienced. He was a captivating speaker, and our students appreciated the opportunity to learn from his mistakes. Most recently we invited the elementary school to our gym to recognize the importance of Remembrance Day. Mr. Sommerfeld, Ms. McCormack, students from Sparwood Secondary and Frank J. Elementary led the assembly for all students and honoured guests to observe.

It is important for our school to provide these opportunities to gather to celebrate and learn. We want our students to have opportunities for leadership to help them grow and learn to be future leaders in our communities. I look forward to many more great experiences this school year.

If you ever have any questions or concerns about your child at school, please reach out to me ([erin.hay@sd5.bc.ca](mailto:erin.hay@sd5.bc.ca)) or Mr. Sommerfeld ([jason.sommerfeld@sd5.bc.ca](mailto:jason.sommerfeld@sd5.bc.ca)). We are here to support your children with their education and school experiences.

Sincerely,

Erin Hay

November 17	Report Cards
November 24	No School – Yellow Day
December 8	No School – Green Day
December 22	Last Day of Classes Before Winter Break
December 25 – January 5	Winter Break
January 25	Quarter 2 Ends
January 26	No School – Yellow Day
January 29	Semester 2 / Quarter 3 Starts

## Learning Extension Afternoons

One of the most important goals we have as a school team is to engage our students in their learning. With this goal in mind, we will be changing the schedule of eight of our school days this year to provide an afternoon of deeper learning experiences.

When we have a scheduled Learning Extension afternoon, we will have three shorter classes of 54 minutes in the morning. The morning start time and lunch bell will remain the same. For the afternoon, we will have one longer class for the duration of the afternoon. Dismissal time at the end of the day will also remain the same. The intention of this time is to provide teachers with the opportunity to engage their classes in active learning experiences and build positive relationships.

Some of these learning experiences might include:

- cross curricular learning with another class
- inviting a guest speaker to share content knowledge or experiences
- taking students outside for place-based learning
- taking students out in the community to build community connections
- participating in a lab
- planning art, music or cooking opportunities that take more than the usual amount of class time
- exploring math centres for hands on application of math skills

This time will be varied from teacher to teacher.

Attendance is very important! The learning opportunities and projects created during these days will not be easily replicated with a homework assignment or worksheet.

One of the outcomes of this plan is to also build stronger connections with peers and with the classroom teacher. Strong relationships to the school community are one of the characteristics of student success. I will be seeking feedback from teachers and students throughout the school year. If you have feedback you would like to share, please let us know. We will have one Learning Extension afternoon per class in each semester. Our first Learning Extension Afternoon was scheduled for Thursday, November 16.

The schedule for these days is as follows:

<b>Learning Extension Afternoon</b>
Period 1 8:40-9:34 54 min.
Period 2 9:39-10:33 54 min.
Period 3 10:38-11:31 53 min.
LUNCH 11:31-12:21 50 min.
Period 4 12:21-3:11 (5 min break at teacher discretion) 170 min.

### When your child is absent from school.

There are times when your children need to miss school. Please use the School Messenger App to record the absence as often as possible. If you are unable to use the App, you can also email the school at: [sss.mailing@sd5.bc.ca](mailto:sss.mailing@sd5.bc.ca) or call us at (250)425-6666. When you sign your child out for an absence, it is important that they leave the school until they sign back in. This helps us know which students are in the school so that we can maintain accurate information in case you need to contact your child or in the event of an emergency.

**HUGE THANK YOU TO KOMATSU FOR THEIR GENROUS DONATION OF A SET OF MECHANICS TOOLS FOR THE SMALL ENGINES CLASS.**

## A Message from the Vice-Principal

We've had a great start to our year at Sparwood Secondary, and I have very much enjoyed continuing to grow the relationships with our students, staff, and families that I began cultivating last year. One notable change we have made this year is for our graduates. There is no more Capstone booklet as there had been in the past, as much of the feedback surrounding the Capstone booklet was not positive. This year we have moved to my Blueprint platform for students to complete the CLC portion of the Capstone course which students can access from their Portal homepage. my Blueprint is an exceptional platform for delivering the BC Careers curriculum, and as such, may be used in CLE for Grade 10s, as well as for students in Grades 8 and 9. We hope the switch will provide students a better understanding to complete coursework required for the CLC/Capstone program and will be easier to access and harder to lose.

As we saw measured improvement last year in attendance, we have tightened up our own standards on acceptable attendance rates for the school year. Last year, families were alerted when students had unexcused lates and absences accounting for at least 17% of their classes. This year, we have targeted 15% as our school goal for unexcused lates and absences. Year over year, we will be moving towards a 10% target. Students who have greater than a 10% rate of unexcused lates and absences for their classes are recognized by academic researchers as students who see a dramatic reduction of academic achievement, as well as an increase in risky behaviours. If you know your child is going to be late or absent for a class, please use the school Messenger app, or call the office to excuse them.



## Safe Arrival

Just a reminder if you haven't done so already sign up for school messenger.

You can find all kinds of info and resources on School Messenger on our District website <https://www.sd5.bc.ca/studentparent/SchoolMessenger/Pages/default.aspx#/=>

REMEMBER: If you are not receiving e-mails, please check your junk mail to redirect. E-mails should come from [broadcasts@schoolmessengermail.com](mailto:broadcasts@schoolmessengermail.com)

## Outdoor Education

On October 19, the Outdoor Education class from Sparwood Secondary hiked the Matevic Draw. After completing an in-class unit on forest fires, the students challenged themselves with the 7km hike including the steady climb to the top to learn more and to take in the fantastic view!





## Indigenous Studies

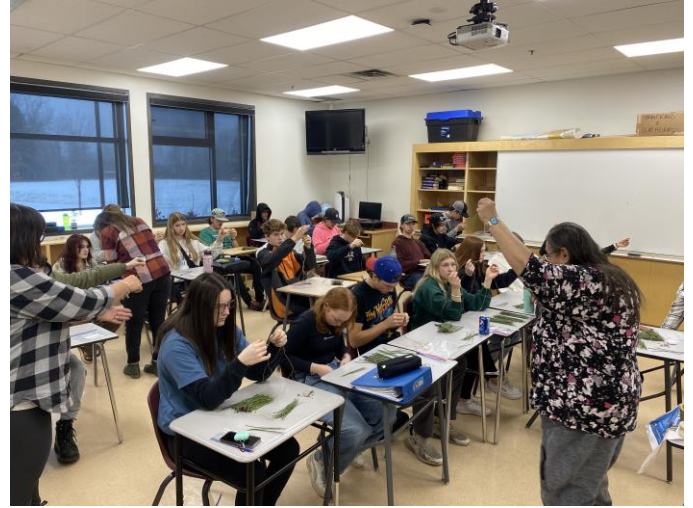


On October 16 Metis Elder, Clayton Paul, graciously took Ms. Traub's Indigenous Studies class to look at pictographs near Coal Mountain. They ended the day with fishing, fire-building with flint and steel, and cooking Bannock.



The Indigenous Studies class had Faye and Diane O'Neil and her sister, Dianne in to teach them how to make pine needle baskets.

The next week Faye and her mother, Joan came in to help the students learn about Indigenous Veterans Day.





## Athletics

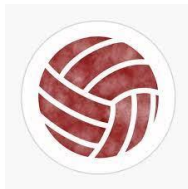
Basketball is starting! Please see our Facebook page for practice times and tournament schedules.

But first, let's have a look at our volleyball season:

### Bantam Girls

The bantam girls had a great season and were able to compete in four tournaments. The girls placed 2nd in every tournament they attended, including zones! The girls worked hard all season and were able to develop their skills and game knowledge. We hope the girls continue with volleyball and grow into great volleyball players. Overall, it was a fantastic season!

-Coach Sopko and Coach Duffy



### ESports

We are very proud to announce that our Esports team collected their first ever victory this season! The fall title the students selected is Rocket League, and this year we have been put in a new division that has allowed us to play teams from BC, California, and Hawaii. Once the spring season of Esports starts, we are likely going to begin playing Super Smash Bros. again.

-Jason Sommerfeld

## Junior Boys

The junior boys worked hard this season to improve their skill set. They fought hard and battled their way through games entertaining the audience with their gritty style. It was a pleasure to coach the boys this year. They made me proud.

-Coach Thurman and Coach Fischer



## Junior Girls

The SSS Jr Girls Volleyball team had a remarkable season. They took 1st place in their first tournament and placed second in another shortly after. This year the team consistently won many games and lead to a lot of development and confidence for each player. The coaches couldn't be prouder to have been apart of the team. Congratulations to everyone on their hard work this season.

-Coach Broad



## Senior Boys

The Senior Boys volleyball season was an exhilarating journey marked by passion, teamwork, and unwavering determination. The boys embraced each game as an opportunity to showcase not only individual skills but worked hard to showcase the strength that comes from a united team. The games they will remember the most are those where they were playing together as one team and not as six players on the floor. The season was a testament to resilience and sportsmanship. As we navigated challenges and celebrated victories, the boys created memories that will last after the final whistle. This season was a chapter of personal growth, friendship, and the pursuit of excellence on and off the court.

**Good luck at Kootenay Zones in Castlegar boys!**

**-Coach MacCormack and Coach Fischer**



To stay up to date on games and schedules and other important information with Sparwood Secondary School sports, please follow us on Facebook and like our page.

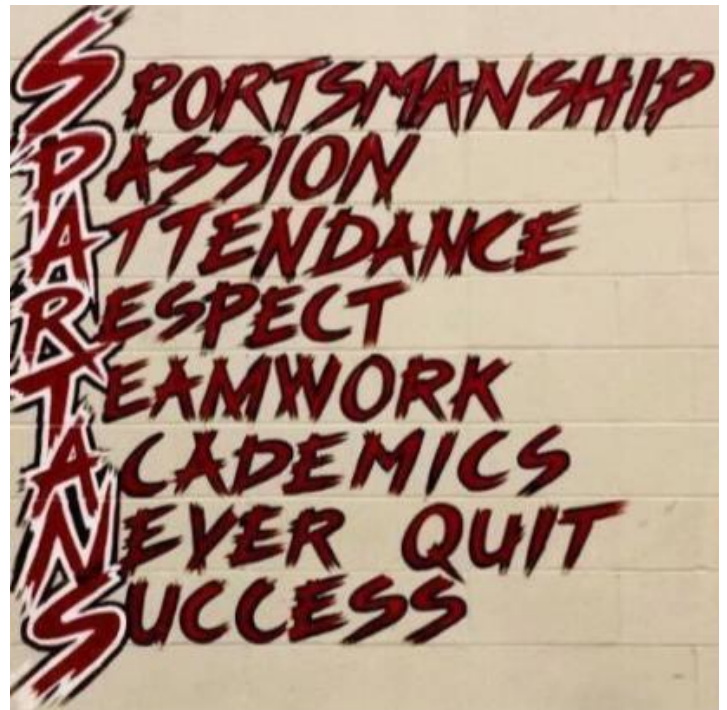
## Sr. Girls

Our senior girls have had a fantastic season this year, with lots of competitive play! They finish 1st in their most recent tournament in the Crowsnest Pass with a 6-0 record – not even giving up a single set. On the horizon, the girls have their zone championship which is being held in Elkford on November 17th and 18th – come cheer on your Spartans!

**-Coach Wagner**



Remember the Core Covenants of our Athletic Program

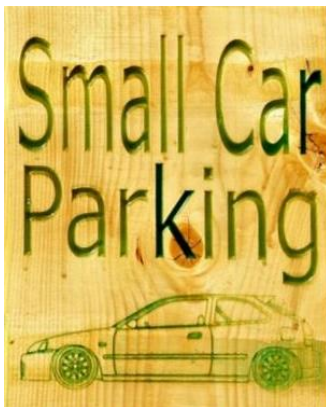




## Electives

### Design 10-12

Design 10-12 class made signs for trail users in the Elk Valley. They made new signs for the parking lot at the Montane Trail head to show visitors where to park their vehicles and direct them to the barn.



## Shop Class



The students were delighted by the donation of new tools donated by Komatsu.



Taking apart engines in the small engine repair class.



SSS student milling one of the logs that Mitchell Excavating donated.



## Social Studies



The grade 7 Social Studies class has spent the past two weeks learning all about ancient Egypt and the life of Egyptians! We have learnt about ancient Egyptian culture, religion, and social structure. The class was able to deepen their learning by visiting Kom Ombo, Edfu, Queen Hatshepsut's tomb, Giza pyramids, the Sphinx and Abu Simbel through virtual reality with the support of Mrs. Froehler, the Helping Teacher of Transformative Learning!

## Foods Department



## Social Studies / French

On November 8th, Social Studies and French 7 were very lucky to have Faye and Joan O'Neil come to our classroom to speak about Indigenous Veterans Day. We were able to listen to them talk about the significance of Indigenous Veterans Day and learn about their family's personal connections to World War Two! The students were incredibly engaged in the artifacts and images that Joan and Faye brought in.