



**Sparwood Secondary School**  
Newsletter  
[www.sd5.bc.ca/school/sss](http://www.sd5.bc.ca/school/sss)  
FEBRUARY 2024



### A Message from the Principal

We are already halfway through the school year! Final report cards for semester one have been published on the Family Portal. Please log in to view your child's achievement this year. If you have any questions about your child's classroom achievement, please contact the teacher. We value regular communication between school and home.

We are looking forward to semester two. In the coming weeks we will see our graduating students working hard to raise money for their year end celebrations and prepare for their graduation on May 31 and June 1. It is wonderful to see how supportive our community is for our grads. Our basketball teams are at the peak of their season, and we have two more ski days planned in February and March. February is also Black History month, and we are celebrating it with information, education, food, and games.

In the coming weeks we will begin preparing students for their course selection for next year. It may seem early to think about next year, but information about the classes students need and want help inform the decisions we make for the courses we offer. I sent a survey out last week to gather interest about having a music program. We had approximately 25% of parents from our school population respond. Those responses were overwhelmingly in favour of having a music

program at Sparwood Secondary. The next step will be to collect this information from our students when they make their course selections.

We work hard to keep our attendance records accurate and up to date. Teachers take attendance in the first few minutes of class. If a student is late, they need to check in at the office, get a late slip and go to class. Once the student arrives in class, the teacher will adjust their attendance to mark the student as late and record the time they arrive. If the student does not go straight to class, their teacher does not know the student has arrived and the attendance does not get changed. This is why there is sometimes a discrepancy between a student being at the school and a student being in class. To avoid any confusion, please communicate with the office any time your child will be absent or late and remind your children to talk to their teacher when they arrive in class and hand in the late slip. We care about knowing when our students arrive in their class.

We are looking forward to the next few weeks and supporting your children with their learning. When you have questions or concerns, please reach out to us. We are here to help!

Erin Hay  
Principal, Sparwood Secondary



The Indigenous Studies class wrapped up the semester by presenting their final projects. They studied resistances to colonialism and created art pieces to represent their chosen resistances. Each student chose a resistance and formed an inquiry question to research and answer. Some chosen topics included the MMIWG campaign, Ghandi's Salt March, and numerous resistances in Africa.

## Upcoming Dates

February 16	No School – Yellow Day
February 19	No School – Family Day
February 28	Pink Shirt Day
March 1	No School – Yellow Day
March 15	Last Day of Classes Before Winter Break
March 18 – April 1	Spring Break
April 2	First Day of Classes After Spring Break
April 18	Quarter 3 Ends
April 19	No School – Yellow Day
April 22	No School – Green Day
April 23	Quarter 4 Starts
April 24	Drama Performance 1:00 & 6:30
April 25	Drama Performance 1:00 & 6:30
April 26	Drama Performance 1:00 & 6:30
April 29	Report Cards

## A Message from the Vice-Principal

### Black History Month

I'm proud to announce that our school is taking steps to recognize Black History Month during February. Our planning committee is comprised of students, staff, and community members, some of whom are from our local Black community. Black History Month at Sparwood Secondary will celebrate the triumphs and contributions of Black individuals to history and culture, aligning with the 2024 theme of 'Black Excellence: A Heritage to Celebrate; a Future to Build.' Since this marks the first formal recognition of Black History Month at our school, we will dedicate time at the beginning of the month to help our school community understand the history and purpose behind it. Throughout February, members of the Black community in the Elk Valley will provide experiential learning opportunities for our students and staff, fostering a better understanding of Black culture.

## AI and Education

Navigating AI and its benefits and consequences in education is certainly a hot topic right now. While some may worry that AI will eliminate creative and critical thinking in schools, others seek to understand how to maximize the potential AI offers students. Recently, I read a study\* comparing academic results from students who relied solely on AI, students who relied solely on a teacher, and students who used a combination of learning from a teacher and using AI to supplement learning. In this study, the group of students using a combination of AI and a teacher ended up being very successful, as they could fill in gaps when teaching styles and points did not match individual student levels of understanding. Students could also use AI to help explain what they were trying to learn in alternative and/or simpler ways. More than ever, our students have an abundance of technology at their disposal. I hope that students who choose to use AI do so responsibly and in a way that benefits their learning as well as their potential.

Kyoungwon, S., Tang, J., & Yoon, D. (2021.) The impact of artificial intelligence on learner-instructor interaction in online learning. *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education*, 18(54).

## 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#/="](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)



## Athletics

### Bantam Girls

This bunch of girls have worked hard and been successful. Their first tournament in December they won beating Jaffray in the final. After Christmas we continued our winning way, beating Fernie in league games and winning our second tournament. We are undefeated at 10-0! But we still have lots to work on leading up to Zones mid-February.

- Coach Laurie



### Bantam Boys

The season has had its ups and downs but all in all the team is amazing. I'm extremely proud of all the boys can't wait for the EK's.

-Assistant Coach Scott Salekin



## Junior Girls

The junior girls have had a great start to the season! We placed 3rd in the Fernie and Parkland tournaments and were undefeated at Mount Baker's tournament last weekend. We are looking forward to our last couple tournaments and competing at zones! We have seen steady improvement this season and can't wait to see the end results!

-Coach Duffy



We are getting closer and closer to securing funds for our Ninja Fitness Playground!

Manitoulin generously donated over \$4000.00 dollars to our project. The generosity of our community is amazing.



We also received a cheque from the Elk Valley Thrift Store for an amazing \$10000.00!!! This little store never ceases to amaze us.



## Curling

The Sparwood Secondary curling team of Ashton Lucas, Damian Fischer, Brody Kerkhoven and Alex Vezina traveled to Kimberley on the weekend to take on the Selkirk Secondary team for the right to represent the East-West Kootenays at the Provincial Championship. The best of 3 game championship began on Friday night. The Kimberley Curling Club had the ice in great shape with lots of curl and keen ice. This presented a challenge for the SSS boys who gave up a commanding 8-0 lead after 4 ends. Ends 5, 6, and 7 saw our team stealing points to gain 4 back. Unfortunately, they ran out of rocks in the 8th end and ended up losing the battle. The second game on Saturday morning saw the team struggling with the curl again and gave up a disappointing 8-0 lead after 3 ends. They scored 2 in the 4th end and battled hard with 3 close rocks needing measurements, but it was not in the cards for the SSS boys. Selkirk won again, giving them the right to represent the Kootenays at the High School Championships in Kelowna in March. This is not the end of competition for these curlers, however, as Alex will be competing in a regional U21 provincial competition in February. Also, Brody and Damian will be competing on a Kootenay team at the BC Winter Games in Quesnel on February 21-25. We wish all 3 boys' good luck and good curling.

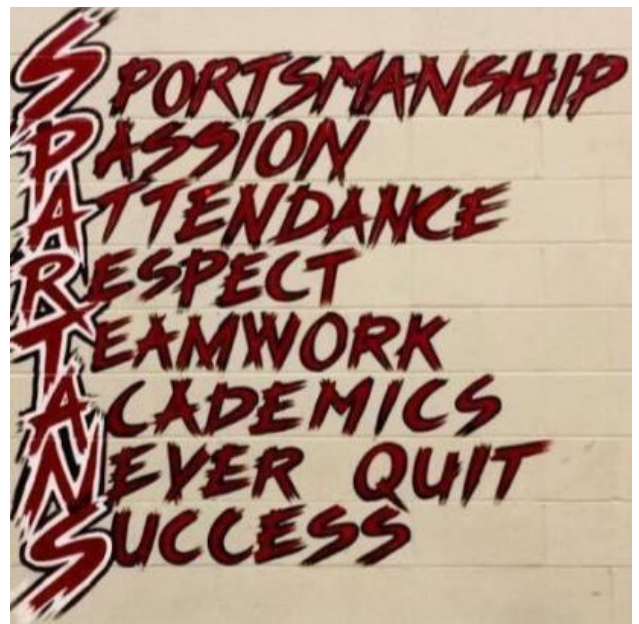


Shout out to Western Financial donated over \$1400.00 towards uniforms for our Track and Field team. Your generosity is so greatly appreciated.



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.

Remember the Core Covenants of our Athletic Program



## Electives Department

So many cool things are happening in our electives department! Here are a few of them:

Grade 8/9 are learning how to use mixed media in Art class. Inspired by the artist Loui Jover students took pictures of famous artists and incorporated line, shape, and pattern into their pieces.

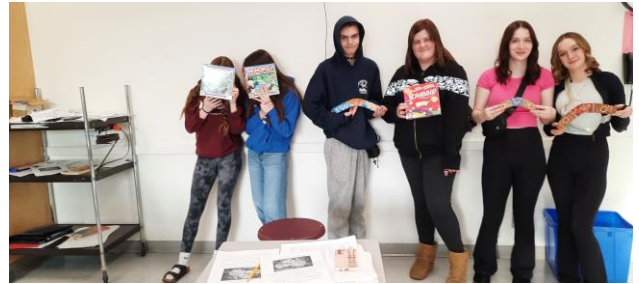


Grade 8/9 art students created their own I spy project.



## English 9 Extension Learning Day Activity

Students completed an online search-challenge about Australia and the top winners won Aboriginal designed boomerangs that were brought back from Australia by Ms. Gonsalvez.



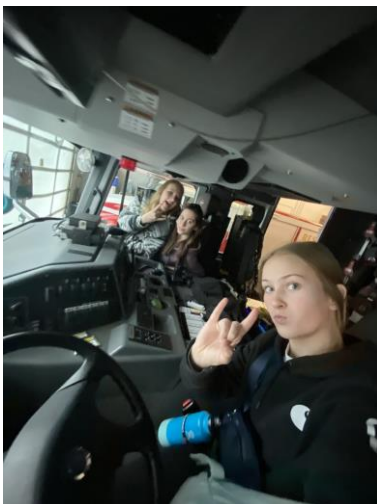
## Social Justice

The Social Justice 12 completed a unit on peace which culminated with making chocolates, enjoying a chocolate fountain, and watching the movie Peace by Chocolate which is based on a true story.



## Careers 10

Ms. Duffy's careers 10 class toured the District of Sparwood and learned about a variety of different career opportunities! Throughout this tour the students visited the municipal office, leisure center, fire department, and public works. A huge thank you to the District of Sparwood for accommodating this tour!



Photos of the grade 7s making fry bread with Faye, her mother and sister. Faye and her family came into the grade 7 classes to discuss Ktunaxa culture and language and make fry bread with the students.

## Learning Extension Day

During one of our learning extension days Ms. Duffy's math 9 class invited Ms. Rooney's class from Frank J Mitchell to come and decorate cookies with them! Each student paired with a buddy and decorated two cookies each!



Here are some photos of the grade 7s who completed a STEM challenge in Socials 7 where they built ancient Greek chariots!



The Law Studies 12 conducted a mock trial based on a murder mystery that they participated in during an earlier Learning Extension afternoon. Students played the parts of judges, clerks, witnesses, and lawyers.



**Thank you to Shaw's for donating two boxes of safety glasses to the shop class!**

**THANK YOU!**