

SPRINGVALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL



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V1X 4H3 Web: www.sms.sd23.bc.ca

Principal: Mr. T. White
Vice Principal: Mrs. J. Voros

September 2011

Welcome back Stingers!

As the excitement builds for the beginning of a new school year, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all of the parents, staff and students who have already welcomed me as the new principal of Springvalley Middle School. I am also very appreciative of the assistance provided during the transition by Mr. Lea, Mrs. Voros, Mrs. Villeneuve, and Ms. Weninger. I would like to thank Mr. Lea and his outstanding leadership as the outgoing principal and for laying an outstanding foundation for learning at SMS. I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work with you and will continue to work hard to enhance the excellent reputation that has become the trademark of Springvalley Middle School.

My goal for the coming year is simply to make this the best school year ever for every student, parent and staff member!. I absolutely love having the opportunity to do the work I do. It is extremely fulfilling to know that our collective efforts can make such a profound impact on the lives of so many. I encourage you to join me in building on our strengths and addressing any challenges in a positive fashion.

I have 2 challenges for the students of Springvalley Middle School:

- 1 To be the most positive, respectful, and kind person you can be
- 2 To be the hardest working, most dedicated student possible

I look forward to the conversations about our school with students, staff, and parents as we get to know one another. It is our collective efforts that will make the difference! I sincerely look forward to working with you in the coming years!

Troy White, Principal

First Day Start and Dismissal Times

Classes will run from 9:00 am to 11:50 am on Tuesday, September 6. Busses will pick students up at their usual stops and deliver them to school for a 9:00 start, and return to the school for the 11:50 dismissal. Regular classes will begin on Wednesday, September 7.

Bell Schedule

Our bell schedule will remain the same as it was last year. The school day will end at 3:05 on both regular school days and on Special Days (for Clubs and assemblies). Details of the block rotation and bell schedule are included in the enclosed calendar/handbook.

If there is an adjustment to the bell schedule we will send notification home with students.

Grade 7 Orientation Day

The “big day” for our Grade 7 orientation is Wednesday, August 31 from 9-12 pm. Parents, please plan to drop your students off for the morning and return for them at noon.

Enclosed in the mail-out are:

- **September News Bulletin**
- **School Calendar / Handbook**
- **Student Fee Statement**

SMS School Goals:

1. To increase the number of students meeting or exceeding expectations in Reading and Writing.
2. To improve the number of students meeting or exceeding expectations in Numeracy.
3. To positively affect our school culture.

School Fees

\$50.00 Caution Fee (one-time fee)

\$30.00 Activity and Cultural Fee

The Caution fee is a one-time fee that is assessed when students arrive at middle school. It covers the cost of replacing texts, library books, sports jerseys and various school property items that a student could lose or damage. When students move to high school the fee is then forwarded to the high school for the same cautionary purpose. This fee is refundable when the student graduates, provided all books, jerseys, etc. are returned.

The Activity and Cultural fee covers the cost of the cultural performances that are offered throughout the year. As well, it covers the cost of lock rentals, school handbook and calendars, agendas, and other student equipment and activity needs.

During the first week of school all students will receive a printout indicating the amount of fees owing for the school year. Your quick attention to payment of your child's school fees is appreciated.

School Photo Day

Student photographs will be taken on Wednesday, September 21. Retakes are scheduled for Tuesday, October 18. The dress code is in effect for photo day.

Medical Alert

If your child has any medical problem of which we need to be aware, please come to the office and complete a *Medical Planning* form

If your child requires medication to be administered by the school, please ensure that a *Request for Administration of Medication* form has been completed by your physician, and brought to the office along with the required medication. Medications to be administered at the school office must be in a pharmacy-dispensed bottle bearing the child's name, medication and required dosage. This will help our office keep accurate records of any medical concerns.

School Calendar/Handbook

The enclosed calendar/handbook has all of the information you need to know about SMS and the values which guide our school, as well as policies and procedures for SMS and the district. The calendar portion is filled with important dates that have already been scheduled for this year. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the school.

Welcome New Teaching Staff

Mr. Al Aeckersberg - grade 7

Ms. Kayla Dominelli, grade 8 and 9

Ms. Lynn Gritzfeld – grade 8

Student Drop-Off and Pick-Up



With our large population, we want to ensure that students arrive and leave our school safely. The parking lot has a drop-off/pick-up area at the front of the school. The left-most lane is a no parking zone as well as a fire lane.

Do not stop there. The lane closest to the school is for busses only. Please keep this area clear. You may also pick up students directly on Ziprick Road or on the side roads near our school. Your support in ensuring a safe entrance and exit to our school is appreciated!

Home/School Communication

Springvalley Middle School has an automated phone call out system. This system will be used from time to time to provide important information to parents.

Each staff member can be reached by phone (dial 862-3274 and request the staff member's voice mail). If you wish to go directly to voice mail, you can do so by dialing 250-870-5000 and entering the teacher's extension number, a listing of which can be found on the school website. In addition, each teacher has a school e-mail address which can be accessed from the school website to get a quicker response. This info is available at:

<http://www.sms.sd23.bc.ca/staff>

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School Supplies

All SMS students should use a planning insert for their 3-ring binder to organize the majority of their school work. Students will need a binder system to keep a hard copy of some home practice materials and occasional study notes. With this in mind, we are asking all students to purchase a zippered 2-inch 3-ringed binder (no larger please). Students are taught the process of "pruning" their notes for organizational and study purposes. This small binder will facilitate organization but keep the weight of the backpacks to a minimum.



Thank you for ensuring that you and your student have read through the following list together and that your student comes prepared for school with:

- 2-inch binder (zippered)
- Pencil Case
- A set of seven subject index tabs
- Lined and unlined binder paper
- Pens, pencils, ruler, eraser, geometry set
- Calculator
- Pencil crayons or felts

Your child may wish to purchase the following optional items:

- Scissors, glue stick, tape, pencil sharpener
- Thesaurus, pocket dictionary
- A flash drive for saving and transporting computer documents (500 mb or bigger)

Note: The use of "white-out" is discouraged by many teachers. Check with your child's teachers before purchasing this product. A few other specialty items may be requested by teachers, however sufficient warning will be given to allow students the time to purchase these.

Technology at SMS

Students will continue to use school-issued laptops for their core academic classes and for many of their elective classes. We use laptops that are kept in locked carts in classrooms. Students will still have space on the school's server to save their work, and teachers will continue to integrate technology into their classes.

Bikes, Skateboards, and Longboards

If your child rides their bike to school they need to bring a bike lock with them – the school has none to lend and no place other than bike racks for bikes to be stored.



Skateboards and longboards are the responsibility of students while at school. Please ensure, before your child brings any of those items to school, that they themselves are able to secure or store them safely.

Loss / Damage to Personal Property

Parents are asked to note that the school and the school district cannot assume responsibility for the loss of and/or damage to personal property which is brought onto the school property. In the event that your child does bring personal property of value, such as a musical instrument or bicycle to school on a regular basis, you may wish to have it insured. Please consult your homeowner policy insurance agent for further details.

FOIPOP (Freedom of Information/Protection of Privacy)

Freedom of Information/Protection of Privacy legislation requires parental permission before allowing us to provide the PAC with your name, home address and phone number as well your child's name and grade. We also require parental permission to publish your child's name and/or picture in our newsletter or webpage, yearbook, and on occasion, in the School District Calendar, annual report, brochures or webpage, as well as in the news media. Your son/daughter will be bringing home a form, explaining this in more detail and requesting a parental signature if you agree.

Breakfast for Learning

Starting September 12, breakfast of toast and juice will again be provided for SMS students. Thanks to Rick Potter of the Rutland United Church for spearheading this worthwhile project, and to the dedicated volunteers who care about our students. If you can, please volunteer to help out!

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Demographic Information Updates

Please keep us up-to-date with any changes to home and email addresses as well as home, cell and work phone numbers so that we can contact you in the event of an emergency.

Important Band Information

Grade 7 Instrument Selection Forms will be sent home with students during the first week of school. These forms must be submitted to Mr. Atherton as soon as possible so instruments can be distributed and students can begin practicing.

Should your child use one of the school's instruments you will be assessed an instrument user fee of to cover the cost of maintenance and cleaning of the instrument.

Attendance

Research consistently shows that students who attend school regularly are more successful students. If your child will be absent from school, please call the office before 9:00 am to inform us of the reason or to alert us to any concerns. As well, if your child must leave the school early for an appointment, please provide a note or come to the office to personally sign your child out. Students are reminded that a parent is required to sign out at the office when they leave early. If arriving late, students are required to sign in at the main office prior to heading to their classes.

Gr. 8 and 9 Exploratory Course Changes

Students' electives were assigned based upon the course selection sheets completed and signed by parents in the spring, and the configuration of the timetable and the availability of seats. Course change request forms will be available during the first week of school. Not all requests will be granted.

Monthly School Newsletter

The newsletter is uploaded to our website at the beginning of every month. You can read the newsletter at www.sms.sd23.bc.ca/newsletters.

Technology Policy

Students are discouraged from bringing iPods, MP3 players and other listening devices to school. If they are brought to school they are to be left in the student's locker during class time. Confiscated items will be taken to the office and returned only after consultation with Administration.

Cell phones, hand-held communication devices, and cameras are not to be brought to school. If a parent deems it important for a student to bring a cell phone to school, it must be left in the student's locker until the end of the day. Cell phones, hand-held communication devices, and cameras will be confiscated and returned only after consultation with Administration. In the case of repeated violations parents will be notified and the student will be asked to leave their technology at home.

Students are responsible for their behaviour on school and district computer networks just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. Students will be expected to adhere to standards as established by the "Student Acceptable Use Agreement". Violations of the provisions of this agreement may lead to the revocation of access privileges and/or suspension.

Best Choices Bistro

Best Choices Bistro opens Monday, September 12th with a continued commitment to making healthy foods enjoyable and affordable for our students and staff! Homemade burgers, samosas, salads, cinnamon buns, Italian sodas plus new choices will be available at break and lunch!

Gardens in our Community

The Choices program is working on a science/math initiative called *Gardens in our Community!* We are willing to come to your backyard to dig and encase a garden that is yours, with no cost to you. We will be learning to test different soils and make amendments necessary for plants to grow well. We will also be growing seedlings in the spring that you will be able to purchase for a low cost to populate your garden. If you would like us to build you a garden please contact Ms. Angle with the Choices Program!

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SMS Growth Goals

All staff is very proud of the work that has been done in making progress with our school goals. For the 2011-2012 school year our goals will continue to be:

1. To improve our students' literacy results.
2. To improve our students' numeracy results.
3. To positively affect our school culture.

You can help us with these goals by staying involved in your child's education. This means that you are aware of what is happening at school, you know what assignments and tests are due and discuss the results with your child, and lastly, you have high expectations for your child's success at school. Research consistently shows that this kind of involvement leads to better student success.

While we will be encouraging every student to 'get involved' in SMS, your involvement will provide a strong example in support of this critical message.

Voluntary Student Accident Insurance

Voluntary student accident insurance is available through *IAP Kids Plus*. This insurance reimburses accident-related medical and dental expenses that are not covered by provincial, extended health or dental plans. Application forms are available at the school office, or online at iapkidsplus.com

Appeals Policy

School District #23 Policy 460 – Appeals, reads:
"A student or a parent of a student who is entitled to an educational program in School District No. 23 may appeal a decision of an employee of the Board of Education which significantly affects the education, health or safety of the student."

Employee decisions relating to individual students should be carried out in accordance with principles of fairness. The appeal process should encourage all parties to disputes to understand the concerns of the other parties and make good faith efforts to resolve disputes to mutual satisfaction.

The Board of Education generally encourages complaints and disputes to be dealt with at the point closest to where the dispute first arises."

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call or come in to the school to discuss them.

The Policy in its entirety can be accessed at <http://www.sd23.bc.ca/PolicyHandbook/policies/460.pdf>

PARENT RESPONSE FORM

Please complete the question below to indicate you have read this month's newsletter, and return it to school office with your son or daughter. The completed form will be part of a draw. Students must return this form by **Thursday, September 15th** to be eligible for the draw. Six students will receive a **coupon for a slice of pizza, available during Friday lunchtime pizza sales.**

Question: The new principal's name is _____.

Student Name: _____ KAT # : _____

Parent/Guardian Name (print): _____ Phone #: _____

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