



# STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK



*2023-2024*

1026 Goldstream Avenue

250.474.1291

spencermiddleschool@sd62.bc.ca

Website: <https://spencer.web.sd62.bc.ca/>

# PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the 2023-24 school year. I am thrilled to be the Principal of Spencer Middle School. I look forward to continuing to work with this fabulous school community, consisting of students, staff and parents/guardians.

I have taught in Sooke School District since 2004 and have spent the majority of my career in middle schools. I was the former Vice-Principal at Spencer for five years before becoming a principal at a local elementary school. I have been the Principal at Spencer since February 2022. Prior to becoming an educator, I spent several years working for human rights and democracy-building organizations in Southeast Asia (Indonesia) and in Oceania. I speak English, French and Bahasa Indonesia and love meeting people from other cultures and countries.

I am excited to work alongside two incredible Vice-Principals: **Laura Lancaster (students M-Z)** and **Rob McAllister (students A-L)**. They are excellent supports for students and families and were also both teachers at Spencer at one time. We also have a supportive and amazing office staff consisting of: Ms Musgrave, Ms Pawson and Ms. Mugford.

I am fortunate to be surrounded by amazing people in our school and district. The staff at Spencer Middle School are outstanding educators and love working with such an incredible group of students. We truly care for the students and will do our best to create a culture where everyone feels like they belong, are included, and are safe.

I believe a healthy school community is one where parents are involved in the school and stay connected. I encourage you to get involved with the Parent's Advisory Council (PAC) and your child's teacher regularly. There are volunteer opportunities that come up throughout the year. I will send home a "Wildcats Weekly" email update every Wednesday. Please contact us if you have ideas, questions or concerns or require any assistance for food programs, fees, or other issues that come up. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

*Jen Nixon*



Mr. McAllister (students A-L), Ms. Nixon, and Ms. Lancaster (students M-Z) at the Tsouke Nation.

# WELCOME TO SPENCER MIDDLE SCHOOL



Spencer Middle School is one of five middle schools in the Sooke School District and is located in the heart of the City of Langford. It first opened its doors in 1977 and has welcomed students and staff ever since. At Spencer, we value: **Empathy, Honesty, Kindness, and Respect.** These values provide the foundation for how we encourage our school community to interact and are embedded within our code of conduct.

In alignment with the overall goals and aspirations of SD 62, at Spencer we acknowledge the middle years represents the defining period when young adolescents explore their beliefs, their values and their place in the world. We encourage you to explore the middle years philosophy, as posted on our website.

To start the school year, we will have approximately 600 students. In order to help build community, connection and belonging, the school is divided into eight cross-grade groups, or 'Families'. These family names are derived from the natural ecosystem surrounding us and are represented in both English and the local SENĆOŦEN Language: Raven (SQTO); Orca (KELĚEMEĆEN), Deer (SMÍET), Dragonfly (FEM, FEM, XIYO, ES), Swan (SW, EUKEN), Wolf (STKĀĀYE), Otter (SKAET), and Eagle (QELEŦSEN) – we encourage you to learn how to say your family name in Sencoten!

At Spencer we pride ourselves on building an inclusive, equitable, safe culture and community, where all students feel a sense of belonging and purpose. We are highly appreciative of the skilled and dedicated staff who work with amazing middle years students every day. Let's have a great year!



Sooke District Schools would like to acknowledge the traditional territories of the Coast Salish, specifically Esquimalt Nation and Songhees Nation on which Spencer Middle School is built; and the nations SD62 works with Beecher Bay, Scia'new Nation, T'Sou-ke Nation, and Nuuchahnulth Pacheedaht Nation to the west. We recognize the territory and nation. We thank them for sharing this beautiful land.



*Hych'ka* – Coast Salish

*Kleco Kleco* – Nuuchahnulth

HERE'S A SNEAK PEAK!

GRADES  
6-8

## SCHOOL GOALS

1. To develop our identity and build connections to place and people so that students have a strong sense of belonging and purpose.
2. To improve literacy and numeracy learning and development for Spencer students.

WE LOVE TO  
SHOWCASE OUR  
STUDENTS & SCHOOL

Please visit [School Consents Online](#) to ensure you have read and given consent for school-related items, such as photo consent!

WE VALUE:



**WE ARE A NO PHONE ZONE!**

Please keep phones in lockers or at home.

600  
STUDENTS

70  
staff

***We won the  
Community  
Clean Up  
Challenge 2  
years in a row!***



# EXPLORATORIES & PROGRAMS

The middle years are a time for students to explore. At Spencer, we offer a variety of programs to help students get the most out of their middle school experience. Whether it is through extracurricular opportunities, such as Athletics or Clubs, or through our school programming, there is something for everyone at Spencer.

In addition to the regular areas of learning, students at Spencer will also have a variety of exploratory options. Students do not choose these options, but are assigned to them with the idea that by the end of grade 8 they will have had many opportunities. Students may also choose to do Band 6, 7 or 8 instead of the regular exploratory rotations, although they will have some exposure to ADSTs. Here are our Arts and Applied Designs & Skills Technologies Exploratory options for 2023-24



## 2023-24 ADST & Arts Education Offerings



Spencer Middle School	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
<b>ADST Offerings</b> (3 of the following)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Foods/Textiles,</li><li>• Digital Literacy/</li><li>• Entrepreneurship &amp; Marketing</li><li>• Woodwork/Metal</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Textiles/Design</li><li>• Metalshop/Design</li><li>• Computers/Robotics</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Food/Nutrition</li><li>• Woodshop/Design</li><li>• Media Arts</li></ul>
<b>Arts Offerings</b> (could be a combination of the following)	Drama, Visual Arts, Band	Visual Arts, Drama & Band	Music/Guitar, Drama, Visual Arts & Band





# EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPTIONS



At Spencer, we have a successful Athletics and Intramurals Program, with over 1/3 of students participating in school sports. We also have robust music and fine arts programs. All students will have the option for band or music in 2023-24. In addition, there are often extra curricular fine arts clubs, such as musical theatre, dance, choir, and percussion, which sometimes run during lunch break.

We had 23 extracurricular clubs in 2022-23, so let's hope for that amount - or more - again! These extracurricular clubs range from year to year. Some examples of clubs include: Cheer, Run, Dance, D & D, SOGI, Chess, Games, Robotics and many more. A key to success at middle school is to get involved - so we hope you get involved with some of the great extra-curricular options we offer!



# CLUB



# CODE OF CONDUCT

A “Code of Conduct” is a statement about how we work together. It outlines both our rights and our responsibilities as members of Spencer Middle School. A committee of students, parents, and school staff developed our “Code” in accordance with School District 62 Policy and the B.C. Human Rights Code. Information was collected from all groups and put together to make the Code of Conduct. Embedded within this code of conduct are the four Spencer values:

**Empathy, Honesty, Kindness and Respect.**

## A SAFE AND CARING COMMUNITY

Spencer Middle School is a safe and caring school. As members of this school community we have a responsibility to act in ways that are free of:

- Bullying, harassment, threat and intimidation;
- Physical violence and/or violence of any form;
- Verbal, physical, cyber or sexual abuse;
- Discrimination, especially based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or age (BC Human Rights Code);
- Theft, vandalism and general mischief.

Our safe and caring school environment does not tolerate the presence of:

- Intoxicating substances (such as alcohol or non-medicinal drugs);
- Weapons and explosives, regardless of whether real or replica;
- Intruders or trespassers;
- Smoking, vaping or associated paraphernalia.



# CODE OF CONDUCT (CONTINUED)

## ACCEPTABLE CONDUCT



*Students are expected to:*

- treat our environment and each other with kindness and care, empathy, honesty and respect.
- actively participate through effort and punctual, regular attendance, in their assigned education program.
- respect the rights and property of all Spencer staff and students.
- comply with classroom expectations set by individual teachers in order to ensure that all students' rights to effective and efficient learning environments are respected.
- wear clothing that is appropriate for an educational environment.
- respect all school and school related events and ensure they are free from use of restricted substances, weapons and of intimidation.
- respect and use school computers and technology appropriately.
- turn off cell phones and store in lockers throughout the day.
- stay on campus throughout the entire day.

## UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT

- Students will not interfere with the learning or learning environment of others.
- Students will not display behaviour that includes bullying, harassment, intimidation, or be racially, ethnically, or sexually prejudiced.
- Students will not steal, smoke, vape or be in possession of, or under the influence of, drugs or alcohol while on the school property or in attendance of any school events.
- Students will not plagiarize (copy) electronic or print media or other students' work or display any academic dishonesty.
- Students will not be involved in any acts of verbal or cyber-hate messaging/cyber-hate websites.
- Students will not be involved in any illegal acts such as assault, theft/vandalism or damage to property.

*We use restitution approaches and progressive discipline to deal with challenges students may face on a case by case basis.*





# STUDENT ATTENDANCE

**Attendance Email: [spencermiddleschool@sd62.bc.ca](mailto:spencermiddleschool@sd62.bc.ca)**

**Phone Number: 250.474.1291 extension 1**

Student success is directly related to attendance. In other words, we want students here at school! Regular and punctual student attendance is foundational to student success and engagement. Consistent attendance is the responsibility of the student and parent/guardian, but we can help support you along the way.

If a student will be absent or late, please let the office know using our email or phone systems. Absence(s) due to illness or other extenuating circumstances needs to be confirmed by the caregiver by telephone or email, prior to the absence or upon the student's return to school for the absence to be considered "excused."

A student requiring an early dismissal due to illness or for appointments during school hours will need to provide a written or telephone notice before checking out through the general office. Please give us advance notice prior to picking up your child early.

**It is expected that a parent(s)/guardian(s) of students will monitor their attendance by checking the MyEducationBC Family portal and consult their teacher, a counsellor or administrator if assistance or advice is needed.**

Spencer is a "**closed campus**" meaning once students arrive on school grounds, they may not leave without involvement of a parent/guardian. Students may not leave school grounds during recess, lunch break or while waiting for the bus.

**We want to support you and your child before attendance issues become a concern.**

Continued truancy/unexcused absence may result in:

- a meeting where student and parent(s)/guardian(s) are required to attend with the Principal and/or the Vice-Principal to explore solutions to address attendance.
- potentially not meeting the required Learning Standards and impacting grades.
- non-disciplinary actions to support student via a referral to School or District-Based Team to access supports.

# STUDENT FEES

We use School Cash Online for all fee payments at Spencer Middle School. Please read the how-to guide on our website to ensure this system is set-up for you. We also accept cheques, made out to SD 62. Please see below for the approved middle school fees. Other fees (i.e. field trips, grade 8 celebration) also will come up throughout the year. **We never want a student to miss out on any opportunities due to financial difficulties, so please contact us if that is the case.**

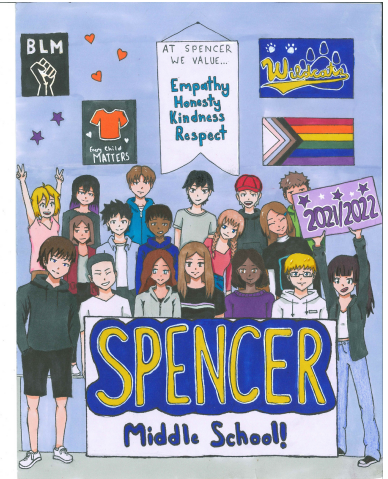
## **SD62 Middle Schools Fee Schedule** **2023-2024**

STANDARD FEES	COST	Notes
Text Books	\$50.00	Flat fee for all texts which are damaged beyond use or lost.
Lost Novel	\$15.00	Flat fee for all novels.
Locks	\$14.00	Dunsmuir, Spencer, Centre Mountain Lellum and John Stubbs only.
OPTIONAL FEES	COST	Notes
Athletic Participation	\$40.00	One fee (\$40) allows students to participate on as many teams as they wish. Additional costs for travel, accommodation and meals may be required.
Yearbook	\$40.00 - \$50.00	Optional - Prices will fluctuate based on production costs.
Food Safe	\$55.00	If offered.
Applied Design, Skills & Technology/ Exploratory		As needed throughout year (see examples below).
Band Instrument Rental	\$150.00	Less depending on instrument.
Band Uniform Rental & Cleaning	\$25.00	Optional.
<b><i>Please note: a 2.5% administrative fee will be added to cover costs related to the processing of credit card payments.</i></b>		
Other fees may be charged prior to a course for value-added products, or for projects taken home or consumed. Cost lists will be provided:  <u>Examples:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ADST classes (a) projects taken home (b) specialty materials (c) food taken home</li> </ul> Other fees may occur in association with Optional Curricular Events such as: <u>Examples:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dance outfits for performances.</li> <li>Travel, accommodations, meals and registrations.</li> <li>Exploratory Program (busing, projects to take home).</li> </ul>		
<b>No student will be denied educational opportunities if they do not have the ability to pay. Please contact your assigned principal, vice-principal or counsellor to request for fees to be waived due to financial hardship.</b>		

# RESOLVING CONCERNS

From time to time you may need assistance, support or to share a concern. We appreciate if you reach out to us directly if you have a concern, idea or question.

- As a general guideline, communication should remain as close to the 'source' as possible. For example, if the topic pertains to something within the classroom, speak to the classroom teacher.
- See the [Steps to Resolve a Concern](#) outlined on the SD 62 website as to where to start in dealing with any concerns that you might have.



## FOOD & FINANCIAL SUPPORT

**We never want our students or families to miss out on opportunities.** If you need school supplies, or wish to be part of our food programs, please contact us. We have a drop-in Breakfast Program, a new Flourish Schools Hot Lunch Program (40-50 lunches) and Backpack Buddies so students can bring home a bag of food for the weekend. We also have student backpacks full of school supplies. As well, if a field trip is out of reach financially, please speak with your teacher and we will make sure your child doesn't miss out. Just contact us and we can help.



# CONTACT US

We look forward to hearing from you!

## **Office Staff:**

**Taylor Musgrave**, Admin Assistant/Office Manager

**Sara Pawson**, Records and Systems Clerk

**Jackie Mugford**, Front Desk Clerk

## **Principal/Vice-Principals:**

**Jen Nixon**, Principal

**Laura Lancaster**, VP

**Rob McAllister**, VP



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THANK YOU! WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU THIS YEAR!

