



BALLENAS BULLETIN

#7 March 12, 2026

School Website: <http://www.sd69.bc.ca/school/BSS>

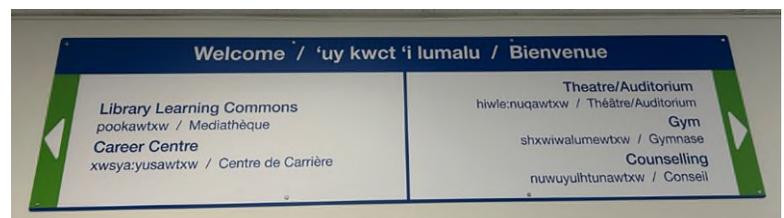
We would like to acknowledge that École Ballenas Secondary exists on the shared traditional territory of the Snaw'naw'as and Qualicum First Nations.

uy' skweyul! (Good Day) to the Ballenas Community,

Spring is (almost) here! As we sprung forward this past weekend and begin to see the days stretch a little longer, we are reminded how quickly the school year moves along. Spring Break is just around the corner, and we hope all members of our community are able to enjoy a restful and safe break. We look forward to welcoming students back at the end of the month, refreshed and ready for the final stretch of the school year.

We were grateful to see so many parents and caregivers participating in conferences this past week. These conversations are an important opportunity to connect about student learning, progress, and well-being. We truly value the partnership between home and school, and we encourage families to continue reaching out throughout the year. Open communication helps us work together to support each student's engagement and success at Ballenas.

If you have been in the school recently, you may have noticed the new welcome sign at the front of the building. We would like to extend our thanks to the Indigenous Education Department, as well as the Operations and Maintenance team, for their collaboration and support in creating this meaningful addition to our school entrance.



Special Olympics Shout Out

We would also like to give a special shout out to our Ballenas Special Olympics athletes and coaches. The dedication, enthusiasm, and teamwork demonstrated by these students is something our entire school community can be proud of. Opportunities like Special Olympics not only highlight athletic achievement, but also the values of perseverance, inclusion, and community that are so important to our school.

FLEX and Homeroom

February brought a short pause in our FLEX and Homeroom programming, and we look forward to returning to these important parts of our weekly schedule after Spring Break. FLEX and Homeroom provide valuable opportunities for students to connect with staff, access academic support, explore interests, and build relationships within our school community. We encourage students to make positive choices with their time and take advantage of the many opportunities available to them.

Field Update

We have been getting many inquiries into the status of our new sports field inside the track oval. The track project started in June of 2024. The sports field inside the track was only seeded after the track portion was completed in June of 2025. To date, the grass seed has only had 10 months of growth and will likely be ready for play in May. It was a significant investment and, to ensure it is not destroyed by the rigour of sports cleats, the grass needs to have an appropriate root length to maintain long term viability. Our field was recently tested by the turf specialist who maintains all the City of Parksville Fields (and has proven track record of building fields to sustain the rigours of sports programs) who determined that the root length is not adequate. As our field is currently dormant (today's weather indicative of late winter), Spring growth is needed to reach the required root length.

Code of Conduct, Attendance, and Engagement

As we move into the next part of the year, we would also like to highlight the importance of our **Code of Conduct**, attendance, and engagement. Our goal is simple: we want every student here, learning, participating, and feeling connected with a strong sense of belonging. When students attend regularly and engage in their classes and school community, they build relationships, confidence, and the skills needed for future success. We also recognize that high school can present challenges at times. Students are not expected to navigate those challenges on their own. At Ballenas, there are many adults available to help—teachers, counsellors, youth workers, support staff, and administrators. Support can look different for every student, whether it is help with learning, organization, well-being, or simply having someone to talk with. We encourage students to reach out when they need support and families to connect with us as well. Together, we can ensure that every learner feels supported, included, and ready to succeed.

With gratitude,

Thank you | Hay cep qa' | Merci

Ballenas Administration

Expectation Matrix		
We Respect Others by:	We Respect Ourselves by:	We Respect this Place by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Treating others with respect and dignity ✓ Respecting others' privacy ✓ Communicating respectfully and using kind words ✓ Following the guidance and direction of school staff ✓ Being an upstander vs a bystander ✓ Understanding that any form of discrimination will not be tolerated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Striving to get adequate sleep and proper nutrition ✓ Prioritizing our mental health and learning ✓ Prioritizing attendance and engagement in class ✓ Staying home when we are sick ✓ Recognizing that vaping, smoking and substance use is harmful for our growing brain and body ✓ Accepting policies that are in place to keep everyone safe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Using school materials, library books and devices with care. ✓ Keeping our classrooms, shared spaces, playgrounds and community clean and free from litter and vandalism. ✓ Moving safely around the campus and respecting the personal space of others – this includes walking your wheels ✓ Being aware that we are members of the community and need to contribute positively to our neighbourhood and town.
<p>When we make mistakes we: We take responsibility for our actions and impact. We work to make amends to whomever or whatever was harmed and we solve conflicts peacefully. We move forward and learn from our mistakes.</p>		

DATES TO REMEMBER

MARCH

- 12 PAC Meeting 6:00 PM
- 13 S2 x 4 Ends Gr. 8s
- 13 Last Day of classes prior to Spring Break
- 30 Schools reopen after Spring Break

APRIL

- 3 Good Friday – Schools not in session
- 6 Easter Monday – Schools not in session
- 9 PAC Meeting 6:00 PM
- 13 Term 3 Begins
- 15 DPAC Meeting 6:30 PM
- 28 Regular Board Meeting 6:00 PM

FROM THE PROM COMMITTEE

Thank you so much to everyone who attended our Burger & Beverage Night, donated to the silent auction, bought some delicious Mitchell's Soup, or dropped off bottles at a bottle drive! You have helped us raise an impressive amount to make prom amazing for our grads, and we are not done yet!

We are still looking for local businesses who would be interested in sponsoring our dry grad event in exchange for great recognition, local promotion, and a tax receipt. Please email lisa@bettermousetrap.ca for more details. You can also donate on the Ballenas website (choose Initiative: Dry Grad/Prom) which is a great way for grandparents and out of towners to contribute!

If your student is graduating this year and you haven't signed up for emails yet, please send a message to bssgradinfo@gmail.com.

REMINDER - Prom will be on **Saturday June 27th** at Tigh Na Mara.

If you have not done so, please pay the first \$75 fee on School Cash Online or in the office as soon as possible. No child will be denied a prom ticket for financial reasons - please see the school administration if payment is a problem.

PAC MEETINGS

Please join PAC at our next meeting - Thursday March 12th, beginning at 6pm in the Learning Commons/Library. All BSS parents and caregivers are welcome and encouraged to attend. We look forward to seeing you there!

SCHOOL BOUNDARY CHANGES APPROVED FOR 2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR

The approved elementary adjustments respond to current enrollment pressures at Springwood Elementary and will take effect beginning in the 2026–2027 school year. The proposed secondary adjustment decision was deferred to a future year to allow for additional reflection, and possible consideration by the next Board of Education.

A letter to parents/caregivers at Springwood, Nanoose Bay, École Oceanside and École Ballenas can be found [HERE](#)

A link to the Virtual Town Hall can be found [HERE](#) as well as a copy of the slide deck presented.

A link to the January 27th Board Meeting can be found [HERE](#)

RDN SPRING 2026 ACTIVE LIVING GUIDE

The RDN Active Living Guide is now online only: Check out the offerings at the following link: [Spring 2026 Active Living Guide](#)

SD69 COMMUNITY PAGE <https://www.sd69.bc.ca/Community69/Pages/default.aspx#/=>

Dear Parents/Guardians of Grade 10,11,12 Students,

Student Learning Survey Parent Version Dear Parents/Guardians,

The Student Learning Survey (SLS) has been administered every year in BC public schools since 2001. Prior to 2016-17 it was known as the Student Satisfaction Survey. We've worked hard to improve the survey and make it more useful for students, parents, teachers, and schools.

It is the only source of province-wide information of children's learning experiences. The information is very helpful for others like the Ministry of Health, who use it to improve health services for children across BC. Your participation is an important contribution to improving the educational experiences of children.

The survey currently has the same questions regardless of your child's age, although we recognize that there may be a need to have a version for parents of younger children and one for parents of older children. On this survey, you are welcome to not answer any questions you feel do not apply to you or your child.

It is important for you to know that your information is protected under Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Your responses are will be kept anonymous: no one will be able to personally identify you or your child(ren) through your responses.

This survey is voluntary and your response is encouraged, not required. Please do not include any third-party information (e.g. talk about other specific people) survey or any personal information about yourself. If any personal or identifying information about yourself or others is included it will be deleted before results are processed and stored. Data will be stored in Canada and accessible only within Canada.

If you have multiple children in the BC education system, please feel free to complete a survey for each child, even if they are at the same school. We will ask a few demographic questions at the beginning of the survey. Your responses are anonymous; your child will not be identified as a result of your participation in the survey.

We sincerely appreciate your input and thank-you in advance for your participation.

To complete the survey:

1. Go to any computer that has an up-to-date internet browser access at home, work, or school and go to the following link: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/support/student-learning-survey>.
2. Click on the Parents icon for Direct (logon-free) Access
 - District: the name of your child's district
 - School: the name of your child's school
 - Language: the language of your choice
4. Complete the survey by clicking on the appropriate circle to answer each question and click "NEXT".
5. When you are finished with the survey, you will get a message "Thank you for sharing your views".
6. Once complete, your school will have the results immediately

The survey will be open from now until May 1st.

Warm regards,

Ballenas Secondary School Administration

Hi Parents,

We're excited to launch our **Ballenas Grad 2026 Soup Fundraiser** in partnership with **Mitchell's Soup Company**, and we would love your support!

 **Campaign runs February 12 – March 12**

We've teamed up with Mitchell's Soup Company — a Canadian, family-owned artisan brand known for their handmade, small-batch soup, stew, chili, rice dishes and dessert mixes

Why this fundraiser is a win:

- Each mix makes **8–10 hearty servings** — perfect for families and meal planning
- Easy to prepare — just add a few fresh ingredients
- Huge variety of delicious options
- **35% of every sale goes directly to Ballenas Grad 2026**

Your purchase helps fund:

✨ Prom & Dry Grad

✨ A safe, fun celebration for our grads

How it works:

- Order online anytime between **February 12 – March 12**
- All soup is **shipped to the school**
- Orders will be available for **pick up at Ballenas Secondary School, likely near the end of March** (we'll confirm the exact pickup dates once delivery is scheduled)

 Order here:

<https://raise.mitchellssoupco.com/ballenasgraduationcommittee/ballenasgradcommittew26?a=17&at=1770658730139&as=k>

Please share the link with family and friends — anyone can order and support our grads!

Thank you for helping us make Dry Grad and Prom 2026 an incredible and memorable experience for our students.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out.

Gratefully,

BSS 2026 Grad Parent/Caregiver Committee



Island Health Step Up Youth Volunteer Program

The Step Up Youth volunteer role:

The Step Up Youth Program runs from September to April each year and offers an exciting opportunity for youth ages 15–18 to make a real difference in their communities. As a Step Up Youth Volunteer, you'll provide compassionate support to patients, residents, visitors, and staff—helping to create a warm and welcoming environment in Island Health facilities. Along the way, you'll gain hands-on experience in healthcare, build confidence, and develop valuable skills in communication, teamwork, and leadership. Step Up is more than just volunteering—it's a chance to grow, connect, and inspire others.

Care • Learn • Lead

The volunteer experience may include:

- **Social Engagement:** Spending time one-on-one with patients or residents—chatting, playing games, working on puzzles, reading together, or simply listening and offering companionship.
- **Mealtime Support:** Helping with non-medical mealtime tasks, such as removing lids, delivering water, or assisting residents as they eat.
- **Exercise and Mobility:** Accompanying patients or residents on short walks or assist by pushing a wheelchair (with staff permission), always staying within the site grounds.
- **Creativity and Celebration:** Share your artistic side by making cards or decorations, creating art projects, or helping prepare for special events and holidays.
- **Musical Connection:** Sharing or enjoying music together—play an instrument or create a calming atmosphere with background music.
- **Clinic Support:** Welcoming and assisting patients and visitors in medical clinics by providing friendly directions and guidance.

Healthcare guest speakers:

You'll also have the opportunity to join a monthly Guest Speaker series, featuring a diverse lineup of healthcare professionals. Past speakers have included physicians, nurses, medical imaging technicians, psychiatrists, social workers, dietitians, pharmacists, and more—offering you a behind-the-scenes look at different careers in healthcare and inspiring your own career path.

Interested?

Visit www.islandhealth.ca/stepupyouth for more info
Email stepupyouth@islandhealth.ca with any questions

Step Up and C●A●R●E

Step Up and LEARN

Step Up and LEAD

Volunteer Resources & Engagement: Trusted. Included. Valued.

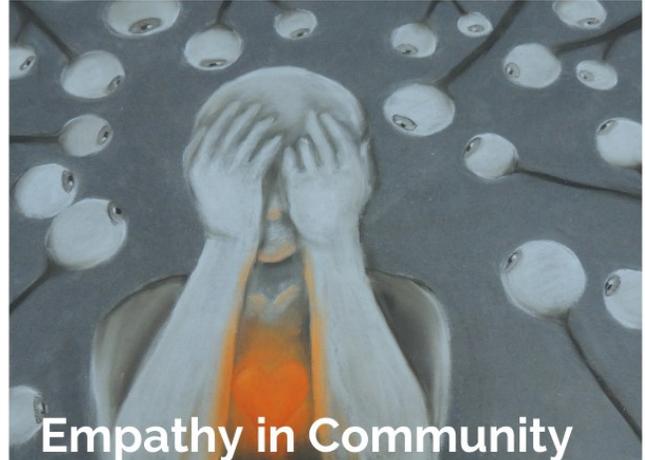
Mindfulness in May

The Art of Empathy and Kindness 2026

Open Call to Youth for Submissions

Grades 5-12 in SD 69 and Surrounding Area

Including Home Learners



EARLY SUBMISSIONS BY **FEBRUARY 14TH** FOR A CHANCE TO BE FEATURED ON THE EXHIBIT POSTERS AND WIN EXTRA PRIZES

Visual Art: drawing, fabric art, painting, mixed media, sculpture.
Literary Art: poetry, song, music. **Photography:** digital, and print.

DEADLINE EXTENDED MARCH 20TH

Submissions will be displayed at the Qualicum Library during BC Youth Week and National Mental Health Week

SUBMIT ONLINE HERE:

<https://mindfulmay.artistquarter.com/>

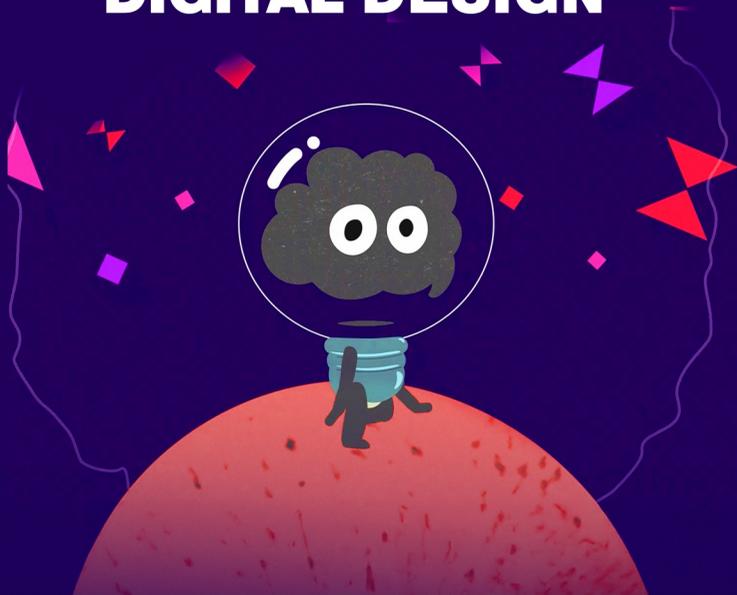
Sponsored By:



EXHIBITION: APRIL 28TH - MAY 10TH

For questions or more info, contact Diane at moraninthemoon@gmail.com

DIGITAL DESIGN



**FOUNDATION VISUAL
ART & DESIGN**



EXPAND YOUR CREATIVE TOOLKIT IN A DAY OF HANDS-ON WORKSHOPS



**PRACTICE DESIGN THINKING WITH
FOCUSED CURIOSITY**

Today's creatives succeed when they match their passions with intentional direction grounded in real world opportunities; this is precisely what designers do. Professional Motion Designer and VFS Digital Design Senior Instructor Nour Al-Amoudi will lead you through a workshop that will show you how to think beyond what "looks good" – thinking instead of how you can lend your skills and creativity to solve problems and connect messages to audiences.



**TURN IDEAS INTO AN ANIMATABLE
CHARACTER**

Animation is the illusion of life and a cornerstone of the entertainment industry. Join Animator and Comic Book Artist Dylan Moore for an animation demo showcasing how quickly and freely ideas from the earlier mind-mapping session can be turned into characters and brought to life with the right skills and imagination.

PARTICIPATE IN A FILM SHOOT

Join VFS Instructor Chad Costen on-set for an exclusive hands-on film production demo. Assume a crew role and experience how the director, lighting team, and camera operators work together to film an actor in front of a projected background.



SCAN TO REGISTER



LIMITED SEATS. REGISTER NOW!
MARCH 27 | 9:30 A.M. – 1:30 P.M. | 151 W CORDOVA ST, VANCOUVER, BC



Full list of events and details Available at:

www.mabr.ca/upcoming-events

Event Details



FRIDAY April 10, 2026

Deep Bay Marine Field Station - Open House

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Deep Bay Marine Field Station, 370 Chrome Point Rd., Bowser

Contact: deepbay@viu.ca

Web: deepbay.viu.ca

Kw'a'luxw (Englishman) River Nature Preserve Tour – Nature Trust BC

10:00 pm – 12:00 pm

Englishman River Estuary, Mariner Way, Parksville, BC

Contact: slukas@naturetrust.bc.ca

Web: www.naturetrust.bc.ca

Milner Garden Tour

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Milner Gardens and Woodland, 2179 W Island Hwy W, Qualicum Beach

Web: www.milnergardens.viu.ca

Brant Wildlife Festival Open House

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

MABR Education Centre 124 West 2nd Avenue, Qualicum Beach

Contact: ray@mabr.ca

Web: www.mabr.ca

Lift-Off – Brant Wildlife Festival Opening Celebration

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm (doors open at 5:00 pm)

Bayside Resort 240 Dogwood Street Parksville

Contact ray@mabr.ca

SATURDAY April 11, 2026

Photography Workshop with Laura Lefurgey-Smith

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

MABR Education Centre 124 West 2nd Avenue, Qualicum Beach

Register <https://www.lauracollette.ca/workshops>

Arrowsmith Cycling Club Family Group Ride

10:30 am – 11:30 am

Englishman River Fall's Provincial Park Picnic Shelter

Contact: events@arrowsmithcyclingclub.com

Web: www.arrowsmithcyclingclub.com

Birds and Bino's BC NatureKids outing with Arrowsmith Naturalists

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Seaside Nature Park Island Hwy W at Crescent Rd W, Qualicum Beach

Contact: ray@mabr.ca

Web: www.naturekidsbc.ca

SATURDAY April 11, 2026 continued

Event Details



Pacific Brant Carving, Woodworking and Art Show

10:00 am – 5:00 pm

Qualicum Beach Civic Centre, 747 Jones St, Qualicum Beach

Contact: bill.beese@gmail.com

Web: www.thebrant.ca

Nature-Based Book Swap

10:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Bellflower Bookshop 133 West 2nd Ave Qualicum Beach

Contact: bellflowerbookshop@gmail.com

Web: www.bellflowerbookshop.ca

Heritage Forest Tours

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Heritage Forest, Crescent Rd E, Qualicum Beach

Register by emailing: heritageforest@shaw.ca

Web: www.heritageforest.ca

Drop In Nature Art with Leslie Love

12:00 pm – 4:00 pm

MABR Education Centre 124 West 2nd Avenue, Qualicum Beach

Contact: ray@mabr.ca

Web: www.inkymoon.ca

Brant Family Free Swim at Ravensong pool

1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Ravensong Aquatic Centre, 737 Jones St, Qualicum Beach

Contact: ray@mabr.ca

Brant Festival at the Qualicum Beach Museum

1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

587 Beach Road Qualicum Beach

Contact: qbmuseumadmin@shaw.ca

Web: www.qbmuseum.ca

Kw'a'luxw (Englishman) River Estuary Tour – Arrowsmith Naturalists

1:30 pm – 3:30 pm

Englishman River Estuary, 100 Shelly Rd, Parksville

Contact: dhutchings40@gmail.com

Registration by email to ray@mabr.ca

April : Hamilton Marsh Tour

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Hamilton Marsh, Hilliers Rd S, Qualicum Beach

Contact: mwagenaar@rdn.bc.ca

SUNDAY April 12, 2026

Pancake Breakfast at Kwalikum Secondary School

9:30 am – 11:30 am

Kwalikum Secondary School 266 Village Way, Qualicum Beach

Contact: ray@mabr.ca

Pacific Brant Carving, Woodworking and Art Show

10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Qualicum Beach Civic Centre, 747 Jones St, Qualicum Beach

Contact: bill.beese@gmail.com

Web: www.thebrant.ca

SUNDAY April 12, 2026 continued

Event Details



Tour of Heritage Forests

10:30 am – 12:30 pm

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Heritage Forest, Crescent Rd E, Qualicum Beach

Register by emailing: heritageforest@shaw.ca

Brant in the Bay

12:30 pm - 3:30 pm

Parksville Community Park, 193 Island Hwy E, Parksville

Contact: arrowsmithnaturalists@gmail.com

Web: www.arrowsmithnats.org

Brant Festival Family Day

12:30 pm - 3:00 pm

Oceanside Place 830 West Island Highway, Parksville

Contact: ray@mabr.ca

Brant Festival Free Skate

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Oceanside Place 830 West Island Highway, Parksville

Contact: ray@mabr.ca

Brant Coloring Contest Voting

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Oceanside Place 830 West Island Highway, Parksville

Contact ray@mabr.ca

Movie Night with the QB Cinema Society

6:30pm

Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 76, 180 Veterans Way, Qualicum Beach

Contact: info@qbcinema.org

Web: www.qbcinema.org

Monday April 13, 2026

Infrastructure for Nature by Town Qualicum Beach

10:00 am – 11:00 am

Qualicum Beach Rain Garden at Memorial Ave and Crescent Road

Register at ray@mabr.ca

Basic Bird ID & Birdwatching Workshop

1:00 pm – 4:30 pm

North Island Wildlife Recovery Centre, 1240 Leffler Rd, Errington

Register at wildlife@niwra.org

Web: www.niwra.org

Save Estuary Land Film Screening

2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Berwick Parksville 180 Jensen Ave E Parksville

Register at communications@ffccs.ca

Web: www.ffccs.ca