



BALLENAS BULLETIN

#4 December 17, 2025

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

As December arrives, École Ballenas Secondary School has been buzzing with activity and celebration. Our halls, gym, fields, and classrooms have been full of energy as students and staff head toward the winter break.

This month, our sports teams have been in full swing. Ballenas Senior and Junior Whalers Football teams both lost in the quarter finals but put in valiant efforts this season. Our volleyball wrapped up with both our Senior Girls and Junior Girls teams making Provincials, with results of 12th and 21st place finishes respectfully. Our Senior Boys finished 4th at Islands, narrowly missing a birth in the Provincials. Ballenas' 2 Grade 8 Girls teams finished 1st and 2nd after a showdown in the finals of their season end tournament. We are so proud of all our volleyball teams, but we now turn our attention to basketball, which is currently in full swing.

We also enjoyed the annual **Student vs. Staff Hockey Game**, a spirited event filled with school pride and friendly competition. This year, the staff managed to take the win—bragging rights secured until next year!

Excitement is building as students rehearse for our upcoming musical theatre production of **Footloose**, coming to the stage in February. A highlight of the season was our **Winter Evening of Music**, where our talented music students once again showcased their dedication and artistry on a truly special evening for our community. Jollification has been generated by our leadership students who hosted the winter formal **Snow Ball** dance and have initiated entertaining activities for our students such as the **Grinchler, Spirit Week & Reindeer Games** and a **Gingerbread House Competition**.

Our **School Plan focus on engagement in learning** has been front and center this month, particularly following the learning updates sent home in November. **IE Plans were sent home on December 8**, and our school-based teams are working diligently to support students and families in completing these plans prior to the start of Semester Two.

In keeping with our commitment to student safety, we held an **Earthquake and Fire Drill**, ensuring our school community remains current and confident with emergency procedures. Special thanks to Assistant Fire Chief Steven Liedl for walking through the drill with us and sharing important safety reminders.

A much-loved December tradition took place on Wednesday. Many staff and students helped prepare our annual **Turkey Lunch!** The entire Ballenas community was treated to a full turkey dinner in the MPR. This event is always a highlight of the season and a meaningful way to show our gratitude to students as they head into the winter break. A heartfelt thank you to our staff, food classes, and the many student helpers whose hard work and enthusiasm helped make this special day possible.

We would like to remind families to please have ongoing conversations with students about **street safety**, including wearing helmets and being visible. With darker mornings and earlier evenings, it is especially important that everyone takes extra care. We also ask for increased vigilance during **pick-up and drop-off times** to help keep all members of our community safe.

Our **Code of Conduct focus for December** is **Respect of Place**. We encourage all BSS students to represent our school positively when out in the community on field trips and to continue showing respect for our learning environments here at school.

As the year comes to a close, we would like to extend a **heartfelt thank you to our parents and caregivers** for your continued support of our school community. We also wish to express our **deepest gratitude to our dedicated staff**, whose commitment and care make École Ballenas such a positive place to learn, grow, and belong.

We wish all of our students and families a safe, restful, and joyful holiday season. We look forward to welcoming everyone back in the new year.

With gratitude,

Thank you | Hay cep qa’ | Merci

Ballenas Administration

DATES TO REMEMBER

DECEMBER

19 Last day of classes prior to Winter Break

JANUARY

5 School reopens after Winter Break
8 PAC Meeting 6:00 PM
14 Virtual Town Hall – QSD Catchment Boundaries Online Session 6:00 PM TEAMS
21 DPAC Meeting 6:30 PM
23 Semester 1 Ends
23 S1 x 3 Ends Grade 8s
24 Grad Bottle Drive
26 Turnaround Day – Students do not attend
26 Semester 2 Starts
27 S2 x 4 Starts for Grade 8s
27 Regular Board Meeting 6:00 PM



WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE

JANUARY

7 Day 1
14 Day 2
21 Day 1
28 Day 2

Grad Photos will be happening at Ballenas February 2-5. Book now here: [Concept Photography](#)

BSS Power Mechanics is looking for old lawnmowers, pressure washers, and any other type of small gas engine for students to take apart and rebuild. We will gladly accept any donations regardless of condition.

Happy holidays everyone! Please remember to save your bottles and cans for the **Prom Bottle Drive** happening on **Saturday January 24th 9:00am-2:00pm** in the Ballenas parking lot. If you are available, we would love to have your help sorting bottles or picking up cans from your family, friends, and neighbors! If you haven't yet signed up to receive emails about prom, please email bssgradinfo@gmail.com and ask to be added. Don't worry - you are just signing up for information, not committing to anything! REMINDER - Prom 2026 will be taking place on **Saturday June 27th** at **Tigh Na Mara**.

Next PAC Meeting will be held Thursday January 8th, 2026, starting at 6pm in the Learning Commons/Library. All Parents/Caregivers of BSS students are welcome and encouraged to attend.

SD69 COMMUNITY PAGE

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

WHALEBONE THEATRE PRESENTS

Footloose



Ballenas Secondary

FEB 17, 18, 19

24, 25, 26

7PM

\$15 @ Ballenas Online Store

BOTTLE DRIVE

DONATIONS ACCEPTED

PROM 2026 FUNDRAISER!

**Save the Date, Save the
Bottles, Make Prom Shine**

**Saturday, January 24th
9:00 am to 2:00 pm**



ÉCOLE BALLENAS SECONDARY SCHOOL

135 PYM ST, PARKSVILLE



Dear Parents, Caregivers, Guardians, and Families:

As we head into the holiday season, I want to extend my sincere thanks to every parent, caregiver, and guardian for your enthusiastic participation in your school community. I hope you enjoy this break with your families as our students look forward to more opportunities for growth and adventure in the new year.

My goal is to ensure schools are trusted community hubs, where you can feel confident your child is getting a world-class education while being treated with care and respect. Safe and inclusive classrooms are a huge part of that work, because everything we do is rooted in one thing: helping children thrive.

Our government has acted on the issues that matter to you. Whether it is increasing early literacy screening, expanding Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and CPR learning or bringing back the access zones that keep protesters away from school grounds, my commitment to you is to continue to listen to your concerns and take action.

One resounding theme I have heard from parents is the negative impact cell phone use and social media is having on kids. In addition to empowering school districts to ban cell phones in class, we continue to work closely with experts to ensure students, teachers and families have access to resources that help navigate complex issues, like low self-esteem, bullying or substance use. Our [crase](#) website is a wide-ranging tool where everyone can access information and resources, including free training to protect your child's safety online and find helpful tips to support important conversations to have with your kids.

I know the price of groceries is a constant worry and kids cannot achieve success if they come to school hungry. Thanks to the provincial Feeding Futures program, almost 90 percent of schools now have a school food program, offering stigma-free food to anyone who wants it.

Schools are where kids learn, play, and grow. They have incredible potential to help fulfil the child care needs of B.C. families. Recently, we changed the School Act to make it easier for boards of education to offer child care on school grounds, all year. Access to high quality, inclusive and affordable child care is a game changer for families, early learners and school communities, and I will continue to support the expansion of this critical service.

As the calendar year comes to an end, I hope you and the students in your life reflect on how much growth, excitement, and learning you have been a part of this school year. On behalf of the Ministry of Education and Child Care and the Government of B.C., I wish you a restful holiday season, filled with joy, family, and friends.

With gratitude,

Lisa Beare
Minister



À l'attention des parents et des autres responsables parentaux,

À l'approche du temps des Fêtes, j'aimerais vous remercier sincèrement de participer avec enthousiasme à la vie de votre communauté scolaire. J'espère que vous profiterez de cette pause en famille avant que les enfants ne retournent à l'école pour une nouvelle année d'apprentissages et d'aventures.

Mon objectif est de faire en sorte que les écoles soient des lieux de confiance où votre enfant reçoit une éducation de calibre mondial dans la bienveillance et le respect. Pour y parvenir, il est essentiel d'offrir des classes sûres et inclusives. Toutes nos actions reposent sur un seul but : aider les enfants à s'épanouir.

Notre gouvernement a agi sur des enjeux qui vous tiennent à cœur. Qu'il s'agisse d'augmenter le dépistage précoce des difficultés en littératie, d'élargir l'enseignement de la réanimation cardiorespiratoire et de l'utilisation du DEA ou de rétablir les zones d'accès pour empêcher des manifestants de s'approcher des écoles, je m'engage à continuer d'écouter vos préoccupations et d'agir.

À maintes reprises, j'ai entendu les parents décrire les conséquences néfastes que les cellulaires et les réseaux sociaux avaient sur les enfants. En plus d'avoir donné aux conseils scolaires le pouvoir d'interdire les cellulaires en classe, nous travaillons étroitement avec les experts afin que les élèves, les enseignants et les familles aient accès à des ressources pour les aider à aborder des problèmes complexes, comme la faible estime de soi, l'intimidation ou l'utilisation de substances psychoactives. Notre site Web [Web erase](#) est un outil complet où chacun peut trouver de l'information et des ressources. On y trouve notamment des formations gratuites pour protéger la sécurité des enfants en ligne et des conseils utiles pour aborder des sujets importants avec eux.

Je sais que le prix du panier d'épicerie est une préoccupation constante et que les enfants ne peuvent pas donner le meilleur d'eux-mêmes s'ils ont le ventre vide. Grâce au programme provincial *Feeding Futures* (nourrir la relève), près de 90 % des écoles proposent désormais des programmes de collations et de repas. Ainsi, tous ceux qui le souhaitent ou qui en ont besoin peuvent recevoir de la nourriture sans craindre d'être stigmatisés.

Les écoles sont des lieux où les enfants apprennent, jouent et grandissent. Elles ont également un potentiel incroyable pour aider à répondre aux besoins des familles en matière de garde d'enfants. Récemment, nous avons modifié la Loi sur l'éducation afin de permettre aux conseils scolaires d'offrir plus facilement des services de garde dans les écoles tout au long de l'année. L'accès à des services de garde de grande qualité, inclusifs et abordables change la donne pour les familles, les jeunes élèves et les communautés scolaires. Je vais donc continuer de soutenir l'expansion de ce service essentiel.

J'espère que vous et vos enfants songerez à tous les progrès, bonheurs et apprentissages qui ont ponctué l'année qui s'achève. Au nom du ministère de l'Éducation et des Services à la petite enfance et du gouvernement de la Colombie-Britannique, je vous souhaite des vacances reposantes et remplies de joie en compagnie de vos proches et amis.

Avec toute ma gratitude,



Lisa Beare

Ministre de l'Éducation et des Services à la petite enfance

Free and Lower-Cost Food in Oceanside

Across The Region	
Elementary and Secondary Schools in Qualicum School District	All schools offer meals at no or very low cost. Subsidies are available if students are not able to purchase the food. Speak with the school principal. Schools also provide snacks (in addition to meals) as needed.
Manna Homeless Society 250-248-0845 Email: oceansidemanna@gmail.com Website: https://www.mannahomelessociety.com/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 'Manna Mobile' delivers needed provisions including groceries. Operating 365 days a year and covering the following areas: Nanoose Bay, Parksville, Errington, Coombs, Whiskey Creek, Hilliers, Qualicum Beach, Qualicum Bay and Bowser. Manna Wednesdays: offers an opportunity to stock up on weekend groceries at the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen on Wednesdays from 11:00am to 1:00pm at Mt. Arrowsmith Salvation Army Community Church, 187 Alberni Hwy, Parksville.
Tina, Community Outreach & Connection in Oceanside Services 250-228-7877	Provides meals, a snack bin, pantry items, and produce from her minivan. Thursdays and Sundays at 4pm at the empty lot behind the McDonalds in Parksville. Afterwards on Thursdays and Sundays at the Smithers RV community in Errington. Also, mobile elsewhere in the region.
Arrowsmith	
The Bradley Centre 975 Shearme Road, Coombs 250-248-2336 Email: thebradleycentrebookings@gmail.com Website: https://www.thebradleycentre.com/assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connections Cafe: Thursdays, 11am-1pm \$2 for soup and coffee. Membership required. Sharing Table: Free food. Take what you need, leave what you can. Thursdays, 11am-1pm. Open to the public (no registration required). Farmers Market Nutrition Coupon Program. Runs June – October. For eligible members.

Free and Lower-Cost Food in Oceanside

Arrowsmith	
Oceanside Community Church 1420 Alberni Hwy, Errington For Good Food Box Program Registration: nanaimogoodfoodbox.com	Distribution point for the Nanaimo Foodshare's Good Food Box. A bag of fresh fruit and vegetables once a week at a reduced cost of \$15. Subsidized bags are sometimes available and added proteins/items often gifted at pick up. Pick-up: Thursday from 2:30pm to 4:00pm. Registration required.
Nanoose Bay	
Nanoose Community Services 250-468-9888 Email: hello@nanoosecommunityservices.org Website: nanoosecommunityservices.org	Monthly support provided to help local households access food. This includes grocery gift cards and, when available, fresh produce. Registration required.
Parksville	
DayHomes Society 778-674-0535 Email: Oceansidedayhomes@gmail.com Website: dayhomes.org	Provides 10 meals- first come, first served. Sundays at 1pm. In the parking lot of the Arbutus Grove Church, 170 Hirst Ave West. Free.
Good Food Box by Nanaimo Food Share Website: nanaimogoodfoodbox.com	Get a bag of 7-9 fresh fruit and vegetables once a week at a cost of \$15. Order online and pickup at Oceanside Church Thursdays 2pm-4:30pm. Delivery is available on a limited basis within Parksville to people who are unable to pick up in person. Deliveries happen Thursdays between 10am - 4:00pm. Registration required.
Knox United Church 345 Pym St 250-248-3927 Website: www.kucparksville.ca	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Gathering Place: Lunch on Tuesdays September – June. Free or low cost. • Mini Food Bank: Available during the Gathering Place. Free. • Food Vouchers: May be available during The Gathering Place. Free.

Free and Lower-Cost Food in Oceanside

Parksville	
Mt. Arrowsmith Salvation Army Community Church 187 Alberni Hwy 250-954-0707 Email: mountarrowsmith.pqbadmin@salvationarmy.ca Website: https://parksvillesalvationarmy.ca/services/soup-kitchen/	Soup Kitchen: Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 11:00am - 1:00pm. \$4 requested donation.
PQB Fruit Tree Project 133 McMillan Street 250-240-3564 Email: pqbfruit@gmail.com Website: pqbfruit.org	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAC Community Garden. Take/pick vegetables/fruit. Daily. Free. • Community Pantry. Leave what you can, take what you need. At the MAC Community Garden. Free. • Fruit Tree Gleaning. 1/3 of the fruit that is picked goes to the homeowner, if desired, 1/3 to the volunteers, and 1/3 is distributed from the community garden and pantry. Free.
Parksville Community Centre 223 Mills St 250-248-6234 Email: Info@parksvillecentre.ca Website: www.parksvillecommunitycentre.ca	Lunch at the Centre. Menu changes weekly. Most Wednesdays, 11:30am-1pm. \$10. Must pre-pay on the Monday of the same week.

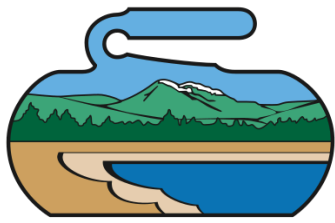
Free and Lower-Cost Food in Oceanside

Parksville	
<p>SOS (Society of Organized Services) 245 Hirst Avenue West 250-248-2093 Website: sosd69.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meals on Wheels: Delivered at lunchtime on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. \$14. Subsidies may be available. Registration required. • Emergency Assistance: Grocery vouchers may be available to low-income individuals during times of crisis. Intake appointment required. <p>All Child, Youth, and Family programming includes food. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Night: Dinner provided. Tuesdays 4:30 - 7:00pm. Free. Registration required. • TICTAC: Snacks provided to participating parents and children. Parksville: Mondays 9:30-11:30am; Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:00-11:00am. Qualicum Bay: Wednesdays 9:30-11:30am. Free. Registration required. • Kids Movement: For children in grades 4, 5, 6. Snacks provided. Thursdays 3:00-5:30pm. Free. Registration required. • School Night Out: For youth in grades 7 & 8. Dinner provided. Mondays 3:30-7pm. Free. Registration required. • Youth Open Space: For youth in grades 9 – 12. Dinner provided. Wednesdays 3:30-7pm. Also one Wednesday per month in Qualicum Beach. Free. Registration required.

Free and Lower-Cost Food in Oceanside

Parksville	
Salvation Army Food Bank 886 Wembly Road 250-248-8793 Email: mountarrowsmith.pqbadmin@salvationarmy.ca Website: http://parksvillesalvationarmy.ca/services/food-bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Bank: Clients are welcomed by appointment once per month. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays from 8:30am-3:30pm. Wednesdays & Fridays between 8:30am – 11:30am. Free. Registration required. • Community Table: Fresh produce. Wednesdays & Fridays 8:30am-11:30am. Free. No registration required. • Free Shelf: Non-perishable items. Available Monday – Friday during Food Bank hours. For registered clients. • Emergency food hampers: Available to first-time clients needing urgent assistance. Registration required.
Qualicum Beach	
St. Stephens Church 150 Village Way Website: https://www.ststephensucqualicum.ca/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday Lunch: Weekly lunches available for the community and high school students. Thursdays 11:30am-1:00pm. Free. No registration required. • Take out lunches provided to outreach workers to distribute to homeless and unhoused. Free. • Monthly Sit-Down Dinner: 3rd Tuesday of each month at 5:00pm-6:30pm. Free.

To update the resource: Kimberley Toonders, Food and Nutrition, Island Health at kimberley.toonders@islandhealth.ca



Parksville
Curling Club



Learn To Curl

ONLY
\$99*
*plus GST

5 X FRIDAYS
FROM JAN 16

7-9PM

A 5-week Learn To Curl program to help you unpack the basics of curling in a fun, friendly and welcoming setting. Suitable for all ages and all fitness levels.

All curling equipment provided.



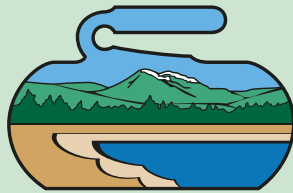
250-248-3764



parksvillecurling.com



Junior Curling



Parksville
Curling Club



Fun for everyone
8-17 years old!

\$50
Winter
season



Mondays 3:45-5:15 pm January to March

For more information or to register
email juniorleague@parksvillecurling.com
Reserve your spot!



250-248-3764



parksvillecurling.com

No experience necessary.
All equipment provided.

Sandy Shores Skating Club

CANSKATE LEARN TO SKATE PROGRAM

Ideal starting point whether your child wants to go into hockey, figure skating or have occasional fun skating recreationally. Our programs are sanctioned by Skate Canada and taught by Skate Canada accredited coaches.



*Ongoing
registration*

Oceanside Place Victor Kraatz Arena

Schedule and registration:

<https://sandyshores.uplifterinc.com>



Educational Charity
ripplefoundation.ca/contest



INSTRUCTED BY IMOGEN MCPHERSON-FORSTER

Creative Kids at The MAC

After School Art Club



FEBRUARY-APRIL

THURSDAYS 4-6 PM

Ages 8-15

\$25
PER CLASS



IN THE MAC STUDIO



McMillan Arts Centre (MAC)
133 McMillan Street, Upper Level
Parksville, BC V9P 2H5
(250)248-8185
www.mcmillanartscentre.com
Gallery & Gift Shop Hours: Tuesday-Sunday, 11am to 3pm

School
for the
Creative
Arts





Use
your
voice
for Safety



2026 WorkSafeBC Student Safety Video Contest

WORK SAFE BC

Submit your video and you could win a cash prize!

Have you ever seen something unsafe at work and kept quiet because you were afraid, or didn't feel confident enough, to speak up? Tell us how young workers can use their voice for safety to speak up when something feels unsafe.

The contest is open to all students in British Columbia enrolled in grades 8 to 12. One video will also be recognized with additional prize money from the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety and advance to their national Focus on Safety Youth Video Contest.

Bonus Prize: One lucky creative team will win the Actsafe Aspiring Filmmaker Award, which includes tickets to the 2026 B.C.'s Arts and Entertainment Safety Conference and Gala, a behind-the-scenes tour of a local motion picture and television production and more!

Deadline for submissions: Thursday, April 2, 2026 at 5 p.m. Find the entry form and contact details at worksafebc.com/studentvideocontest



Books by Thomas Meehan/Music by Charles Strouse/Lyrics by Martin Charnin
Original Broadway Production Directed
by MARTIN CHARNIN

Annie

QUALICUM BEACH SCHOOL OF DANCE
Village Theatre Qualicum Beach
January 9th to 18th



Info and tickets @ www.ticketowl.io/qbsd

Is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).
All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI.
www.mtishows.com

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