



Ocean Grove Elementary

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

The New Year is such a wonderful time to pause, reflect, and look ahead with intention. In these ever-changing times, our actions matter more than ever—they shape not only our own lives, but the lives of those around us. This is especially true in education. Each day, our school community plays an important role in the lives of children, and the positive impact we make truly matters. We know that when students feel supported and excited about learning, it influences their future in powerful ways.

At Ocean Grove, our shared goal is to meet the academic and social needs of every student. Working together, we can create an environment where every child feels encouraged, capable, and ready to thrive.

Attendance is also a key part of student success. Learning builds day by day, and when students are away, they miss valuable pieces of that learning chain. They also miss the rich discussions, connections, and collaborative moments that make the classroom come alive. Research consistently shows that students who attend school regularly have stronger learning outcomes, and your support in helping children be here each day makes a tremendous difference.

It's hard to believe we are almost in February and at the midpoint of our school year. This is the time when we begin planning for next year, and one of our biggest focuses is kindergarten registration and cross-boundary requests. Both have important deadlines coming up and more information is included in this newsletter. If you know families new to the area with a child turning five this year, please encourage them to register—we'd love to welcome them to the Ocean Grove community!

Warm Regards, Hendrick Horsthuis (Principal)

It's Kindergarten Registration Time Again!
Kindergarten registration will open on **Monday, February 2, 2026.**
Parents are instructed to register online in MyEd BC.
Complete information is listed in this newsletter.

Battle of the Books for the 2025-2026 School Year

The following message has been provided by our District to share with our Families and Caregivers:

As some of you know, elementary library programs are being delivered differently. Teacher Librarians are now providing prep coverage for classroom teachers, which changes how library time is scheduled and supported. Because of this shift, Battle of the Books will not be running this year.

We know this news may be disappointing for students who enjoy the program. Battle of the Books has been a valued literacy experience for many years, and we appreciate the excitement it has brought to students and families. Staff will be using this year to explore how the program might continue in the future in a way that is sustainable, including looking at coordination and funding needs.

Battle of the Books will continue in middle schools. Grade 5 students will have the opportunity to participate in Battle of the Books when they enter middle school next year. Our commitment to literacy remains strong. Students will continue to be supported through classroom learning and library programs that promote reading, inquiry, and a love of books. Thank you for your understanding and continued support.



Online registration will open Monday, February 2, 2026. If your child turns 5 in 2026, it's time to register. Register by May 11, 2026 to secure your space in your neighbourhood school.

In addition to English kindergarten offered at Ocean Grove, our school district offers other programs including Early French Immersion, Indigenous program, and home learning through eBlend.

For full information on the above programs and **“How Do I Register for Kindergarten”**, refer to full information on our school or the district [website](#).

When you register, you will need to upload the following identification documents to satisfy proof of age, address, etc.:

- Child's birth certificate (Canadian) or proof of citizenship;
- Child's care card (both sides);
- Proof of current residence (hydro bill, completed purchase/rental agreement, or property tax notice/assessment); and
- Custody agreement, if applicable.

Ensure that you provide an accurate email address and phone number for parent/guardian contact. Please note that a Hotmail email account sometimes doesn't receive emails from our district because it sometimes labels SD72 emails as spam or junk. You are encourage to provide a non-Hotmail address to ensure consistent communication from both the school and district.

Information will be emailed regarding our *Welcome to Kindergarten* event in May once the details have been finalized. This will be your opportunity to visit the school and obtain additional information regarding start-up in September.

Cross Catchment Transfers

Parents who would like their child to attend a different school instead of their catchment school need to submit an application for cross catchment transfer

by 4:00 pm on Friday, February 27, 2026

by uploading it as part of their online registration in MyEd or emailing it to:

student.registration@sd72.bc.ca

Kindergarten students MUST be registered at their catchment school BEFORE submitting an application for a cross catchment transfer, except for those with siblings already in attendance and who will still be in attendance in September at their requested school. In these circumstances, parents do NOT need to fill out an application for cross catchment transfer verifying sibling status, but they are requested to register their child by Friday, February 6, 2026.

The School Board Office will notify cross catchment transfer applicants directly by the end of April if their application has been approved or not.

Late applicants: may be submitted by Friday, May 15th. Where possible, these late applications will be processed no later than the end of the school year. Any applications made after May 15th may not be processed until the first week of school in September.

Instructions for Cross Catchment Transfer applications:

- Download an Application for Cross Catchment Transfer form (available on website);
- Complete one form for each student requesting a transfer; and
- Upload the completed form as part of the online registration in MyEd (see instructional video on website) OR email directly to:

student.registration@sd72.bc.ca.

The same deadlines also apply for non-Kindergarten students wishing to transfer to a school out of their catchment.

Applications will be processed based on availability of space, facilities, program, class size and composition requirements and staffing resources appropriate for the applicant.

Childcare Applications

If you are interested in applying for before/after school childcare at Ocean Grove, please refer to the out-of-school care page on the district website and apply using the posted forms. Application are NOT made through the Ocean Grove school office, but at a district level.

Completed childcare applications should be emailed to: childcare@sd72.bc.ca or dropped off at the school board office located at 425 Pinecrest Rd.

Student Lunches & Snacks

There has been a noticeable increase in the amount of students requesting extra food at lunch time. Kids are growing and the weather is colder, often resulting in an increase in appetite.

We ask that you check regularly with your child to ensure that their nutritional needs are being met at school or if you need to add extra items. Sometimes it is a preference for something different that we may have available.

That being said, lunches will continue to be provided for any student that requires one at school.



Too many children are coming to school without the appropriate clothing / footwear for our often rainy, windy and cold winter weather.

Students should be prepared to go outside in all weather conditions, and should have a dry change of clothing kept at school if needed.

Yes, even the older students. Thank you.



Chess Club will begin on Friday, January 23rd. Interested grade 3 / 4 / 5 students may meet with Mrs. Sharpe in the Library on Fridays during long recess until Spring Break.

Club members with consistent attendance will have the opportunity to participate in the District chess tournament that will take place on March 4th. More information to follow.



Orca Wear for Sale: We have limited sizes of certain items of our Orca Wear school clothing available to purchase. If interested, please contact Mrs. Worsley in the office.

Hoodies (\$43):	Youth Large (2)	X-Large (3)
	Adult Small (3)	
T-Shirts (\$25): Youth	Large (1)	X-Large (2)
	Adult Large (1)	
Sweatpants (\$35):	Adult Medium (1)	



If you missed out on the first order before Winter Break, here's your chance to purchase one of our awesome clothing items!

CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK PROCEDURE (Jan 2026)

Thank you very much for your interest in volunteering at our school. All volunteers potentially having unsupervised access to children require a criminal record check. Please use the link and access code below to complete your free criminal record check online through the Province of B.C. You will need to use your BC Services Card and the BC Services Card App on a mobile device to verify your identity during the process.

Online Link: <https://justice.gov.bc.ca/criminalrecordcheck>

Access Code: XZS9885H7S

If you are unable to complete the CRC online because you do not have a BC Services Card . . .

Contact the school office to request a **Manual Application Package**. You will have to complete and submit this package directly to the School Board Office (425 Pinecrest Rd.) **in person**, and have your identity verified by one of the district's CRRP authorized contacts.

Once you have applied for a Criminal Record Check please advise us via email to oceangrove@sd72.bc.ca, so that we may update the district's database.

A Criminal Record Check will be valid for 5 years, however, a **Volunteer Application Form** (available from the office) is required each school year.



If you would like a list of student first names for Valentines, please ask the Classroom teacher.

SAFER SCREENS: AGES 0 TO 5 YEARS



Screen Time: Time spent watching any screen such as gaming devices, phones, tablets, television, laptops and computers

Time **OFF** screen is essential for:

- **Self-regulation:** the ability to manage emotions, attention and energy to promote positive well being.
- **Language development:** The development of language ranges from making noise when spoken to, to understanding complex questions, and engaging in conversation with others.
- **Social development:** the ability to foster and maintain meaningful relationships with others.
- **Creative thinking:** encourages children to problem solve, and explore unfamiliar areas and ideas.

Delaying the introduction to screen time has been associated with better language skills.



Screen time is **NOT** recommended for children who are **2 years and younger**.

Children **ages 2 to 5** should be limited to **1 hour or less** per day.



Research has shown increased screen time to children aged 2 to 5 years old to be associated with:

- Misbehaving
- **Hyperactivity:** being easily distracted, impulsive, having a difficult time concentrating, constantly moving or fidgeting, and aggressiveness
- **Inattention** (distraction) problems.



Turning off the 'Background TV' can **positively** affect:

- Attention
- **Language Development**
- Working memory
- **Impulse control:** the ability to choose a response by pausing and thinking, instead of reacting immediately
- Increase quality parent - child interactions
- Promote Imaginative play



Excessive screen time has been associated with **nearsightedness** (also known as Myopia) in children.



Myopia: Distant objects are blurry, but objects that are near may be seen clearly

Challenging Behavior

Using screens as a soothing strategy or reward may increase outbursts of **'acting out'** if the screen is not allowed.

Children learn from example! When you use electronics in front of your child, it **increases** the chances of **children misbehaving to hold your attention**.

Your child may act out because they love you and want to connect.



Canadian Paediatric Society
"Positive Discipline"



The family media plan allows families to establish screen time rules and expectations.





SAFER SCREENS: AGES 5 TO 12 YEARS



Screen Time: Time spent watching any screen such as gaming devices, phones, tablets, television, laptops and computers

KNOW THE HEALTH FACTS

Screen time for more than 3 hours a day at 5 years old increases the risk for **disruptive behaviors** by 7, such as:

- Aggression
- Anger
- Argumentativeness
- Defiance.



Unmonitored screen time increases the risk of children talking to **strangers** and viewing inappropriate content.

Watching screens 1 hour before bed can stop **melatonin** production, causing children to stay awake.



Melatonin: A naturally occurring hormone produced by your body that regulates sleep/wake cycles.

1 hour or less of screentime for 5 to 12 year old's has been linked to lower risk of depression, compared to no screen time.



In children **10 years and older**, 2 hours of screen use daily was associated with:

- Positive psychosocial function
- Life satisfaction in children **older than 10**
- **Increased feelings of independence**

Compared to Teenagers (13+) using screen time, **Children (5-12)** appear to be at an **increased** risk of:

- Disruption of sleep
- Negative Social development
- Negative Brain Development



Between the ages of 8 to 12 years of age, increased screen time is associated with:

- Irritability
- Depression
- Inattention (distraction)
- **Hyperactivity.**



Hyperactivity: being easily distracted, impulsive, have a difficult time concentrating, constantly moving or fidgeting, and aggressiveness

According to a Canadian survey:

- **43%** of children in grades 4 to 11 have spoken to online strangers
- **89%** of children **thought** they knew how to protect themselves online.



Canadian Ophthalmologists (Eye Doctors) recommend:

- Limiting screen time based on age and need
- Take **regular screen breaks**
- Practice a **screen free hour** before going to sleep



Screen time has been associated with symptoms of **disordered eating** in children such as:

- Anxiety around appearance
- Concerns involving their body image.



Disordered Eating: a range of eating behaviors and patterns that have negative attitudes towards body weight/shape, physical appearance and food. Behaviors include limiting food intake, going on a diet, binge eating lots of food in one sitting, use of diuretics and laxatives, and avoiding meals.

Communicating online can:

- Promote feelings of social connectedness
- Decrease depressive symptoms, especially in socially anxious kids



- **Allow kids to share personal information online.** Anxious/Depressed kids are more likely to share personal information to online strangers