

# École Intermédiaire Shuswap Middle School

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December 5, 2025

Hello Shuswap Middle School Students and Families!

Happy December! December hit with a blast of snow and it is looking a little more like winter out there! With that comes all the fun of slippery roads and sidewalks. Please take extra caution during drop off and pick up times as it gets more than a little icy out there. Also, a gentle reminder that all drop offs should be in the lower parking lot (aka dirt parking lot). It gets too congested up at the top parking lot and we have hundreds of students walking through that area to enter the building. When you enter the dirt parking lot, please pull ahead as much as possible so that vehicles don't block access. Please note that the bottom parking lot is "enter from the top and exit out the bottom onto Okanagan". Thanks for helping keep everyone safe.

New phone system! We have just transitioned to a new phone system as our old phone system was definitely at the end of it's life. I imagine there may be a few glitches along the way, but so far things are going smoothly since we went live on Tuesday afternoon. One thing that will really help us out is if you need to pick up your child early from school, please send a message via email to the office <a href="mailto:sms@sd83.bc.ca">sms@sd83.bc.ca</a> or directly to their teacher, with the time you will want them to be at the office.

Yours truly,

Ms. Edgell, Principal Mr. Petch, Vice Principal

### School goals:

Every year, each school creates a plan to help focus on both academic and social development. This year we are really focusing on writing and for math each grade has a different key area of focus.

**Writing goal**: Classes are continuing to focus on writing and each classroom teacher has been using the results of the school wide write to pick the area they are focusing on first.

<u>Helping at home:</u> Something you can do at home to help with generating ideas is to ask a question such as "Should you have to have your learner driver's license for 12 months?" or "Should school hours be longer for Monday through Thursday and then have Fridays off?" Have your child give you two main reasons for their answer. This can all be done orally as generating ideas out loud helps to organize thoughts for a well written answer. Having your child explain each of the reasons will help them learn to support their answers with details and evidence, which is one of the most important things we are working on to develop writing.

**Numeracy goal**: This year we are focusing on ensuring students are able to compute percentages at grade 6, work with positive and negative numbers at grade 7, and use fractions to solve equations at grade 8. These concepts are absolutely critical to have mastered in order to have success at the next grade level.

<u>Helping at home:</u> Here's a great game for thinking creatively about math equations: **Around the House!** 

Materials needed: 3 regular dice and a piece of paper and pencil for each player How to play: (example follows the instructions below)

Player 1: Rolls all three dice. See if they can use all three dice, using any or all operations, to create the first target number of 1. If Player 1 is successful, they record the equation and crosses off the 1 on the house. Then, without re-rolling the dice, Player 1 sees if they can create an equation equivalent to 2 (using same dice). If they can, they cross off 2, they record the equation, and Player 1 tries to create an equation equal to 3 and so on. When Player 1 cannot find an equation to equal the target total, then Player 2 gets a turn.

Player 2 picks up the three dice and rolls them all. If they can create the total from this new roll then play continues as above with crossing off the number and trying with the same dice for the next total. When they can't make a move, play passes to the next person and so on.

The winner is the person who crosses off the final 10 and therefore makes it all the way around the house first.



Example:

Player 1 rolls



Player 1 needs to make "1" so they say 2 + 2 - 1 = 1. Then they cross off "1" on their house. Player 1 now needs to make "2". If they cannot make "2" then play passes to Player 2. In this example, depending on the understanding and level of the child, they can make "2" by doing  $3 - \frac{2}{2} = 2$  Then Player 1 can try to make "3". In this example 3 + 2 - 2 = 3. To make "4"  $3 \times 2 - 2 = 4$ . Player 1 continues on with the same roll until they cannot make the next number. The play then passes to the other player.

#### Winter Market

Silver Team has been busy coordinating the Winter Market again this year. This is such a great event! Thank you to those who have been dropping off donations. There are a lot of great items for shopping on December 16! Classes will have the opportunity to tour through the market and purchase items to give as Christmas gifts. Conversations at home prior to December 16 will help students think of thoughtful gifts that will meet the interests of those they are buying for ©

#### Winter activities

With the arrival of the snow, so too comes the snow related activities. Some of our students are enjoying sliding down the (steep) hill onto the lower field. The school has some crazy carpets for students to use. Students may bring some sleds from home, as long as they are "soft" sleds. Please not that the school cannot be responsible for the sleds. Students are reminded that they cannot slide head first or standing up.

**Snow balls.** Although a good snow ball fight might be a tonne of fun at home, we really can't be throwing snowballs at school. This rule is certainly not unique to SMS-you will find that rule across Canada in schools! Please help us by having a conversation with your kids about saving snowball activities for a more appropriate venue. There are so many things that kids <u>can</u> do during lunch time-

let's focus on those!



# Fun and games in 2026



We are super excited to announce that SMS is holding a community wide Family Math Games night on Monday January 12, 2026. John and Jane Felling, founders of "Box Cars and One-Eyed Jacks" will be here to lead families through some super fun games using cards and dice. John and Jane are very sought after presenters and have worked with families and teachers all across North America. We are super fortunate to be able to bring them here to Salmon Arm. There will be a primary session, focused on games suitable for Kindergarten through grade 3, and an intermediate session focused on games suitable for grades 4-8. This will be super fun evening- so bring your kids and come enjoy an hour of good times! Please pre-register for this session by completing the short registration using this

QR code. Hope to see you there!



## Learning updates

The first written learning update of the year will be coming home on Tuesday December 16, 2025. One thing you will notice is that this year Language Arts is split into Reading, with a proficiency level given, and Writing and Oral language, with a separate proficiency level. This is an important change as it will hopefully give a clearer understanding of where your child is at. It is often the case that students are stronger at reading than writing, or perhaps the other way around, and this way you will see their true level for each area. In the near future, we hope to put examples on the SMS website of what proficient writing looks like at grade 6, 7 and 8. We hope this is a good resource for parents and students to see what they are aiming for by the end of the year.

#### **Sports News**

Volleyball is wrapping up and basketball is already underway for grade 8's. Basketball for grade 6/7 will happen after Winter Break. Wrestling is underway already, with four wrestlers already having competed. The next match comes up on December 14. Good luck to our wrestlers and thanks to Mrs. Sterkenburg for coaching! Morning open gym is continuing on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays starting at 7:10. Drop in and get the morning started off in a great way!

#### **Celebrations**

In addition to some very successful sports seasons, we are also seeing some academic successes in classes. We are really proud of our students who are working hard to ensure they are organized and working to their best on their assignments. A recent highlight for me has been watching the students in the dance unit in their PE classes. The joy, determination and kindness that I've witnessed has been truly heartwarming.

# Things to note

December can be a difficult time for many people. While it certainly can be a season of joy, celebration and wonderful family time, it can also bring heightened feelings of grief, loss and depression. Please take a moment to check in with each other and reach out to someone sooner rather than later if needed. If there is anything we can do at school to support, please reach out. Together we are better.



# **Parent Advisory Council news**

Our PAC has been very busy with two major undertakings so far this year- a highly successful Purdy's fundraiser and a school clothing sale. Thank you to all for their efforts! We are now searching for a secretary to start in January. This is not a huge time commitment, but is a vital role in the PAC. If you are interested in possibly taking on this role, please reach out to Morgan Turland at <a href="mailto:mtm.">mtm.</a> mturland@gmail.com. We need you!

# Yearbooks

If you are interested in purchasing a yearbook, please visit the online order site at <a href="https://sms.sd83.bc.ca/yearbook/">https://sms.sd83.bc.ca/yearbook/</a>



December 12 Ugly Sweater Da
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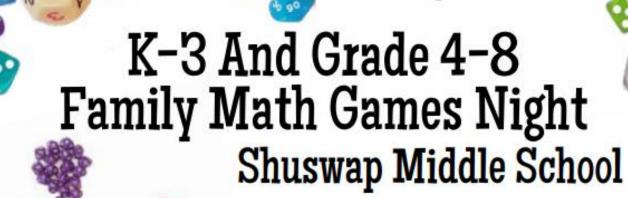
December 16 PJ day!

December 16 Winter Market brought to you by the Silver Team

December 16 Written Learning Update goes home: check backpacks!

December 19 Last day before Winter Break and also "Holiday Bling" day

January 5 First day back in 2026! January 20 Band concert 6:30 p.m. January 26 PAC meeting 6:30 p.m.



Benefits for Kids:

Come to Shuswap Middle School and spend an evening playing a variety of K-3 and Grade 4-8 math games using cards and dice! Each registered family will receive a packet of math games to play along with the presenter, and materials will be provided for use during the event. The sessions for both grade levels will be held simultaneously. Bring your best energy and get ready to PLAY!

Games are a fun way to review and strengthen basic math skills at home!

Children who are secure in their math skills will grow in self-esteem and have greater success in school.

Benefits for Parents:

Games are a motivating, simple and economical homework support that reinforce concepts taught in school.

Your presenter will provide you with strategies, tips and tricks to help your child with math fluency

Games Reinforce:

Counting

Problem Solving

Basic Facts: +, -, x, + Place Value

WHEN: Monday, January 12th, 2026 5:30-6:45 PM

WHERE: Shuswap Middle School

TO REGISTER: Please Scan the QR code



RSVP By: January 8th, 2026

