



Adam Robertson  
Elementary



# **WELCOME TO ARES FAMILY HANDBOOK**

A GUIDE TO HELP YOU  
BECOME CONNECTED TO OUR  
SCHOOL COMMUNITY

2025-2026





# OUR FOUNDATION

## The Circle of Courage

At ARES, we're proud to build our school culture around the Circle of Courage—a model of youth empowerment and resilience based on the work of Brendtro, Brokenleg, and Van Bockern in *Reclaiming Youth at Risk* (1990). Rooted in Indigenous wisdom, this model highlights four essential needs for healthy development: Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity.

We believe that when students feel a sense of Belonging, they feel safe, valued, and ready to grow. As that foundation strengthens, they begin to develop Mastery and Independence, and from this confidence, Generosity naturally follows.

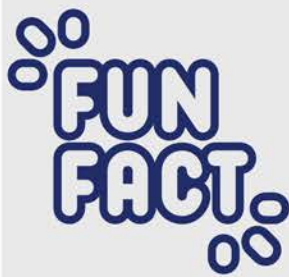
Throughout the year, you'll see many activities designed to help students, staff, and families feel connected. When adults feel like they belong, they can better support students to thrive—creating a kind, caring, and courageous school community for all.

### School Goal

**To actively incorporate the Circle of Courage philosophy and the four universal needs of all children (Belonging, Independence, Generosity, & Mastery) into our school-wide culture.**







## ARES

304 Students

13 Classrooms (Grades K-7)

31 Staff Members



## What to Bring to School

- Indoor running shoes (Easy-on/off styles for younger students)
- Reusable water bottle (Refill stations available)
- Change of clothes for primary students (pants, shirt, underwear, socks in a separate bag)
- Healthy lunch & snack in litter-free containers



## SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Supplies will be provided by the school. The **\$45.00** fee can be paid online through our website, at the office, or to classroom teachers. (Cheques payable to ARES)

## SUPERVISION

Morning Supervision starts at **8:20**. Please do not send students to school before this time, so that we can ensure their safety.

## BELL SCHEDULE

Welcome Bell 8:45

RECESS - All students 10:45 - 11:00

LUNCH 12:00 - 12:45

Upstairs Outside 12:00 - 12:30

Downstairs Outside 12:15 - 12:45

End of Day 2:45







# Bussing

## Bus Registration

Don't forget to register if your child will be riding the bus.

<https://www.sd8.bc.ca/busregistration>

***\*\*The last bus leaves ARES around 3:05\*\****



## School Website

[ares.sd8.bc.ca](https://ares.sd8.bc.ca)

Our school website is filled with valuable information to keep you well-informed about our school community. Please take some time to browse through all of the sections.

## Monthly Newsletter

At the end of each month we will email you our website link, where you will find our school newsletter.

Please stay connected with the amazing things that happen at ARES.



[ares.sd8.bc.ca](https://ares.sd8.bc.ca)

## Absences

Please report absences or late arrivals using:

- SchoolMessenger SafeArrival app
- Email
- Phone
- Online form

If we don't hear from you, Mrs. Scott will call to ensure your child is safe.

Reporting absences in advance saves Mrs. Scott valuable time. Thank you!

SCHOL MESSENGER SAFE  
ARRIVAL APP

<https://home.schoolmessenger.ca>

PHONE

**250-428-2051**

E-MAIL

[clerical.ares@sd8.bc.ca](mailto:clerical.ares@sd8.bc.ca)

ONLINE FORM

[ares.sd8.bc.ca](https://ares.sd8.bc.ca)







# Meal Programs

## Breakfast Program



- Our amazing PAC (Parent Advisory Council) serves breakfast daily in the gym starting at 8:20 AM.
- All students are welcome to grab a snack or meal, then head outside to visit or play until the bell at 8:45 AM.
- The menu changes daily and may include: Smoothies, fruit, muffins, milk, scrambled eggs, cereal, oatmeal, grilled cheese, or pancakes.
- It's a peaceful, social way for students to start their day!
- Want to help? PAC is always looking for volunteers—let us know if you'd like to get involved!

## PAC HOT LUNCHES

PAC will send out information for Hot Lunches, that all students have the option to sign up for.

If you are unable to pay for these occasional meals, please let us know and we will confidentially ensure your child is included in the meal plan.



## DAILY BAG LUNCH

Our Feeding Futures program is another option if you find your family struggling to provide daily lunches for your children.

Please reach out if you would like us to add them to our list and we can ensure they will receive a healthy lunch each day.



## Snack Counter

New this year, we have a snack counter located outside the office. Students can help themselves to healthy options such as fresh fruit, granola bars, fruit leather, dry cereal, yogurt, and cheese. We will guide students to use the station responsibly—taking appropriate portions, being mindful of others, and keeping the area clean.





# PAC

Our **Parent Advisory Council** meets monthly and ALL parents are welcome to attend these meetings.

PAC is a crucial part of our school community. They support our meal programs as well as fundraise for field trips and schoolwide activities. This devoted group also provides input and ideas to support the overall well-being of our school.

We would LOVE for you to be a part of this dynamic team.

**AdamRobertson.PAC@gmail.com**

## Breakfast Program Funding



Our Breakfast Program is funded through grants, sponsorship, and donations. To continue offering this free meal to ARES students, we require financial support. If you or your business are willing to donate or sponsor a portion of this worthwhile endeavor, please reach out to PAC at:



**AdamRobertson.PAC@gmail.com**



## Lost & Found



We display all Lost & Found items at the top of our hallway ramp, just through the middle doors of the school. Please check this area regularly. Every few months, we donate unclaimed items to Gleaners.



*We Love Our Volunteers*

## Parents Visiting and Volunteering

Volunteering or Visiting the School?

- Please sign in at the office when you arrive
- To volunteer in any capacity, you must complete both each September:
  - A Criminal Record Check
  - A Volunteer Application
- See Mrs. Scott for the Criminal Record Check link & Volunteer Package.

There are many ways to get involved—through PAC or in your child's classroom. Let your child's teacher know if you're interested!



# Our Staff

Principal - Tanya Christenson  
Vice Principal - William Klassen  
Kindergarten - Lindsay Miller  
Kindergarten/Grade 1 - Amanda Smith  
Grade 1 - Jen Gardner  
Grade 2 - Linda Cote  
Grade 2/3- Caroline Vandenberghe  
Grade 3 - Melissa Feragotti  
Grade 3/4 - Lisa Page  
Grade 4 - Heather Vigna  
Grade 4/5 - Matt Blick  
Grade 5/6 - Max Percival  
Grade 6/7 - Tesse Poznikoff  
Grade 6/7 - Danielle Sonntag  
Grade 6/7 - Kyla Hamm

Office Clerical - Mary Scott  
Education Assistant - Rhonda Sloss  
Education Assistant - Karen Mottl  
Education Assistant - Cindy Healey  
Education Assistant - Colleen Kuny  
Education Assistant - Dora O'Brien  
Education Assistant - Jacqui Miller  
Library Clerical - Lillian Leslie  
Aboriginal Education Success Teacher -  
Danielle Sonntag  
Aboriginal Youth & Family Liaison - Josie Fullarton  
Custodian - Aaron Bennett  
Custodian - Victoria Buckley  
Fine Arts Teacher - Blakeny Delcaro  
Inclusion Support Teacher - Darci Bysouth  
Inclusion Support Teacher - Tracy Walker  
Inclusion Support Teacher - Candace Ivanco  
Teacher Librarian - Tracy Walker  
Social-Emotional Support Teacher - Darci Bysouth

## HELP!

Please reach out to Mrs. Christenson if you have a question or concern regarding your child.

If we are made aware of an issue, we can quickly act and find the best way to make a positive change.

## Support



At A.R.E.S. we want to ensure all students feel supported and heard.

If your child is struggling socially, emotionally, or academically, please let us know. If there are friendship concerns, we would like to find a healthy way to address the situation.

If you believe your child requires support, please reach out to Tanya Christenson, Principal, via phone (250- 428-2051) or email:

[tanya.christenson@sd8.bc.ca](mailto:tanya.christenson@sd8.bc.ca)



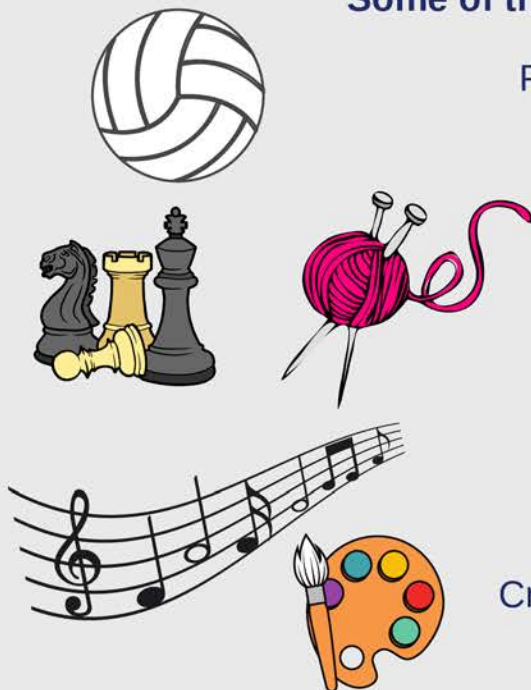


# Extra-Curricular Activities

We offer a variety of activities and programs for students to participate in throughout the year. As they move into their intermediate years, the opportunities increase, which enhances their sense of belonging.

Students will learn about these opportunities in the daily announcements, on our Information Board near the entrance of the school, in our school newsletters, through classroom teachers, and through parent emails.

## Some of the activities we offer include:



Performing Arts Club  
Spring Musical  
Chess  
Basketball  
Volleyball  
Art Club  
Yoga  
Beading  
Regalia Making  
Knitting Club  
Cross Country Running



## Our Safe Space

Our library is open daily from 12:00 to 12:30 for students in Grades 4–7. While most students enjoy being outside, the library provides a comfortable, closely supervised indoor space for those who prefer it.

Students can read, play board or card games, draw, paint, build, or play Chess during this technology-free time. It's a place for groups of friends to enjoy activities together, as well as a safe space for individual students to relax and connect with new peers.







## Buddies & Community Courage Groups

Each primary class is paired with an intermediate class for regular buddy activities, giving younger students a chance to look up to their older peers while the older students grow as leaders. We also come together in multi-aged Community Courage Groups, where students build connections across all grades through schoolwide activities. These relationships foster **belonging, generosity, independence, and mastery**, while encouraging every student to contribute and lead.



## Assemblies

Assemblies are held whenever there is a purpose, such as introducing a schoolwide community activity, celebrating special events, or marking important ceremonies. Families are always welcome to attend, and we share the dates in emails and in the monthly newsletter under Important Dates. On average, we come together for one or two assemblies each month.



## Home Routines to Develop Independence

Beginning in Kindergarten, help your child build daily home-school routines to develop responsibility. Encourage them to independently:



- Pack and unpack their backpack
- Keep their backpack in a set spot at home
- Share notices, agendas, and reading bags with family
- Prepare a healthy lunch together with a parent
- Fill their own water bottle
- Dress for the weather and pack needed gear (mitts, toque, etc.)
- Follow a regular bedtime and tech-free evening routine (bath, teeth, reading, etc.)

## ARES Vision

*To support the development of RESILIENT children who can thrive in any community.*

