



2024 ANNUAL REPORT



ASPENGROVE
SCHOOL

*Strong Roots,
Bright Futures*



ASPENGROVE
SCHOOL

20²⁴₂₅ ANNUAL REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from Head of School	4
Message from Board Chair	5
Looking Back: Year in Review	6
Graduation Spotlight: Pathway to Bright Futures	10
Our Community is Growing!	12
Campus Development Plan	13
Volunteers and Donors, Thank You!	14
Aspengrove Alumni Report 2024-25	16



MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL

Strong Roots. Bright Futures. As we reflect on the past year at Aspengrove School, there is much to be proud of – and even more to look forward to. The year was marked by meaningful progress, thoughtful innovation, and a growing sense of momentum as we pursue our bold vision of becoming a world-class school for mid-Vancouver Island.

With every milestone – academic achievements, program expansion, new partnerships, and enriched student experiences – we have stayed true to our mission: to develop global leaders of character, purpose, and impact. Our students continue to inspire us with their curiosity, resilience, and commitment to making a difference in their communities and beyond.

These accomplishments are the result of our exceptional community. We extend our deepest gratitude to our faculty and staff for their tireless dedication to excellence in teaching and care. To our families, thank you for your partnership, trust, and unwavering support. And to our donors, volunteers, and friends – your generosity is helping us build a stronger future for Aspengrove and for the students we serve.

The year ahead holds great promise. With strategic investments in our campus, continued development of signature programs, and a renewed focus on student-centered learning, Aspengrove is poised to lead, grow, and thrive. Together, we are building not only a school – but a legacy.

Let us move forward with pride in all we have accomplished and confidence in what lies ahead.

Yours in learning,



Gary Kern
Head of School

MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR

It is an honour to reflect on the past year on behalf of the Board of Governors. Our role is to ensure Aspengrove School continues to thrive today while also preparing for a strong and successful future.

Over the past year, the Board has focused on strategic planning, financial stewardship, and supporting school leadership. We are working to ensure the school's growth is balanced with careful planning, and that new initiatives—whether in programs, enrollment, or campus development—are aligned with Aspengrove's long-term vision.

We are fortunate to have a Head of School and leadership team who are deeply committed to our students. The Board is proud to support their work and to help foster a school culture built on excellence, accountability, and care.

To our faculty and staff—thank you for your dedication to providing the very best education. To our families—thank you for your trust and partnership. And to our donors and supporters—your contributions are helping us build the future we envision.

Looking ahead, the Board remains committed to ensuring Aspengrove continues to flourish, not just for today's students but for generations to come.

Best regards,



Iain McIver
Board Chair



Looking Back: Year In Review

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

PYP and MYP Exhibitions

The Junior School celebrated learning at the Grade 5 level with the Primary Years Programme Exhibition. All of our Grade 5's prepared a self-directed final project that shared their learning over a given topic with the school community. Their understanding, presentations and communication skills were on full display.

(Re) Introduction to Honour Roll

The Senior School re-introduced the Honour Roll to our students, recognizing academic excellence at the mid-term and end of the year. We are proud of the 38 students who achieved this challenging academic standard.

Math Competition Results

Students from the early grades through Grade 12 participated in various math competitions locally and nationally, including the prestigious Canadian Open Math Challenge where two of our students ranked in the top 25% and one student ranked in the top 10%. Aspengrove students consistently earned distinctions at every test they competed in.

Graduation Results

We are proud of our graduates who were accepted to 23 universities combined, including some of the best programs in Canada. Our outstanding academic achievement is reflected in their International Baccalaureate results, averaging 34 compared to a global average of 30.5. Their total scholarship offers averaged \$16,500 per student.

EXEMPLARY EXPERIENCES

Senior School Co-Curriculars

The expansion of the Grade 8-12 co-curricular programs saw a dramatic increase in student involvement. This year, we grew to over 12 competitive athletic teams in volleyball, basketball, golf, mountain biking, skiing and snowboarding, rock climbing, ultimate frisbee, and track and field. These teams added to our existing complement of arts and leadership co-curriculars, which included offerings such as Model United Nations (MUN), e-sports, music, and arts.

Middle School Teams and Activities

At the Middle School, all of our students represent Aspengrove in competitive soccer, volleyball, and basketball. Additional clubs challenged students in coding, band and various other games.

Junior School Clubs and Activities

At the Junior School, over 85% of our students participated in a club. We also saw the introduction of student-led clubs including *Junior School's Got Talent!*

Outdoor Education

Students from Grades 4 through 11 engaged in outdoor activities ranging from overnight stays in the Ravens Nest for Grades 4 and 5 to overnight hiking at Strathcona National Park.

Looking Back: Year In Review

MILESTONES

This year we celebrated a number of firsts.

Middle School Launch

The inaugural Middle School division, composed of Grades 6 and 7, was created to provide support for students specifically at this stage of life and learning. With core teachers who specialize in this age group and a mentorship program with the Senior School, the Middle School is able to bridge the gap between elementary and high school experiences in a challenging and supportive environment. We are happy to hear how well the Middle School was received by parents, teachers, and students.

Arts Week

We were thrilled to introduce a week dedicated to celebrating and promoting creativity and innovation. Our students worked with guest artists, danced with professional performers, and concluded the week with an Evening of the Arts.

Grandparents Day

In April, we welcomed over 100 VIPs – our grandparents – to campus! It was wonderful to welcome family members from as far away as Winnipeg to learn about Aspengrove and see their grandchildren in action!

Senior School Evenings

Our student council organized several evenings for students to gather including the wildly successful Winter Formal, Halloween After-Party, and Board Game Cafe for Grade 8 to 12 students. These were wonderful ways to celebrate the seasons and have fun together.

SIGNATURE EVENTS AND TRADITIONS

We are proud to be building traditions at Aspengrove. Throughout the year, these events brought our community and families together yet again.

Ravens Rumble

The 2nd annual Ravens Rumble saw over 400 participants, including students, family members, friends, faculty, and staff engage in our obstacle course fun run and year-end picnic. The event also successfully raised over \$45,000 towards Science and Innovation initiatives at the school.

Aspenghoul Spooktacular

Also returning for a 2nd year, the Spooktacular was scarier than ever! This Aspengrove Parents' Association event welcomed the community to our school and served up a chance to connect, collect candy, and try not to be scared.

Aspengrove Day & Social

The second annual celebration of Aspengrove's history began with a recognition of the school's history. In the evening, parents came together at beautiful Superior Farms to connect and enjoy an art auction showcasing our students' incredible work, with proceeds supporting our arts program.

Careers Day

In February, we welcomed four alumni back to campus to present on their respective career paths in law, medicine, nursing, and interior design. They shared their experiences, responded to student questions, and provided insight into the opportunities and challenges within their fields. Our students left inspired, energized, and with a broader sense of what's possible in their own futures.

Graduation Spotlight: Pathway to Bright Futures

As a university preparation program, Aspengrove supports all students in determining and successfully obtaining entrance into the right program for them upon graduation. Students in Grades 11 and 12 work directly with our University Counsellor to identify the best university that will set them up for future success and ensure all necessary prerequisites are completed ahead of time for a successful application.

New this year, we introduced a Pathway Program to support earlier discussions about university and career planning. Beginning in grade 8, students meet with an advisor—and their parents—for guided conversations about future plans. These meetings provide opportunities for students to receive feedback, explore ideas, and make connections related to potential career areas that align with their passions and strengths. Starting these conversations early helps students gain a clearer sense of their goals and the paths they might pursue after graduation.

GRADUATION SPOTLIGHT

Acceptance Results

- 100% acceptance rate – this cohort received offers from 23 institutions across Canada, the United States, the UK, and the Netherlands. List of accepted offers is on the following page.
- Average of 4.89 offers per student
- 89% of our students were accepted to what they had ranked as their first-choice school
- Accumulated Scholarships: \$150,500 or over \$16,500 per student

The students accepted offers and/or indicated plans to matriculate to the following institutions:

University Name	Program Name
Queen’s University	Bachelor of Health Sciences
University of British Columbia	Bachelor of Arts
University of British Columbia	Bachelor of Arts: International Relations
University of British Columbia	Bachelor of Science
University of Calgary	Kinesiology
University of Manchester	Law and Criminology
University of Victoria	Bachelor of Arts: Focus in Psychology
University of Victoria	Bachelor of Science
University of Waterloo	Computer Engineering

Our Community is Growing!

ENROLLMENT TRENDS

The 2024-25 school year saw a significant increase in enrollment from 2023-24, growing to 292 students. As we begin the 2025-26 school year, enrollment continues to grow with a record high of 340 students. We are thrilled to welcome more students and families into our community and are happy to share that this growth in enrollment means Aspengrove can offer additional programs, electives, and overall vibrancy for our students.

A key factor in successful enrollment growth is maintaining a high retention rate among our existing families. Keeping current students and families at Aspengrove is vital, as they are the heart of our community – shaping our culture, upholding our high standards, and creating the connections that make our school so special. Retention is also a strong indicator of the impact our school has on students' experiences. We are proud to report that 2024-25 saw the highest retention rate in the past ten years!

ADVANCEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

This past year, we proudly reintroduced the Annual Fund—an important way for our community to support initiatives that go beyond our daily high-quality education. It gives everyone a shared opportunity to support the school's most important priorities, and we are excited to continue this work in the 2025-26 academic year.

We are also pleased to share that over \$100,000 was raised last year through individual contributions, event support, and the Annual Fund. These gifts help advance the school, enabling the creation of new classes and clubs, enhancing student experiences in design, robotics, and technology, and improving our learning spaces.



Our family chose to donate to Aspengrove to support the school's commitment to advancing its STEM programming, which we believe is critical in preparing students for the future.

~ Eaton Family

Campus Developments

Over the past year, Aspengrove School has made significant strides in revitalizing and enhancing our campus to better support learning, community, and student well-being. As part of our long-term vision to create a world-class educational environment, we have invested in purposeful improvements that enrich daily life for students and teachers alike and align with our mindset of achieving high.

A major highlight has been the revitalization of our Main Building, breathing new life into the heart of the campus. With upgraded finishes, improved functionality, and refreshed communal spaces, the Main Building now better reflects the vibrant and innovative spirit of our school. The Hive has become the central gathering point for our Senior School students and has created a sense of vibrancy and community.

Recognizing the importance of belonging and age-appropriate spaces, we started to create a dedicated Middle School hangout and play area—a place where students in Grades 6 and 7 can connect, relax, and enjoy unstructured time outdoors in a space designed just for them. Our commitment to excellence in teaching and learning has also been reflected in the enhancement of classroom environments across multiple grade levels. These upgrades support more flexible, student-centered learning and align with our evolving pedagogical goals.

Another exciting addition this year was the creation of the robotics lab and related components, marking the beginning of the expansion of our STEM offerings. This focus on hands-on learning encourages creativity and problem-solving, and with plans for a dedicated STEM space imminent, students will soon have even greater opportunities to explore technology, design, and the arts.

These facility improvements are not just upgrades, they are expressions of our commitment to create an inspiring, supportive, and future-focused learning environment for every student at Aspengrove.



Volunteers and Donors, Thank You!

Thank you to all of our volunteers who donated their time on committees, in classrooms, and around campus to make last year successful and engaging for our students. We are so appreciative of your support and truly could not do it without you!

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Chair: Iain McIver

Vice Chair: Daniel Martinez

Members:

- Clare Carson
- Tony Ciammaichella
- Mike Harris
- Matthew Williams

COMMITTEES

Finance Committee:

Mike Harris (Chair), Iain McIver, Kurtis Bosecke, Susan Shultz, Daniel Martinez, Catalin Albu, Gary Kern, Luigi Simpatico

Risk Management Committee:

Clare Carson (Chair), Matthew Williams, Meaghan Molloy, Catalin Albu

Governance Committee:

Matthew Williams (Chair), Clare Carson, Eileen Braithwaite

Advancement Committee:

Daniel Martinez (Chair), Stu Setch, Tamara Dawson, Brent Barootes

Campus Development Committee:

Iain McIver (Chair), Tony Harris, Mark Taylor, Brian Henning, Catalin Albu

ASPENGROVE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

Executive Team

Chair: Monika Lombardi

Vice Chair: Diana Zwanenburg

Treasurer: Sheena Eaton

Secretary: Khush Verraich

Fundraising: Aileen Saunders

Event Director: Tanaska Armstrong

Grant Director: Kelly Williams

Supportive Directors: Bibi Bennekou & Sarah Russick

Appointed Representative

Translation Liaison: Chengdao (Richard) Lyu

Found and Misplaced Coordinator: Tricia Waugh Fawkes

Used Uniform Coordinator: Kim Robson

Hot Lunch Coordinator: Erin Setch & Kim Robson

Aspengrove Alumni Report 2024-25

We are thrilled to have welcomed ten new graduates into our Alumni Association last year. Now in our 21st year as a school, we are seeing a significant increase in the number of Aspengrove Alumni and enjoy keeping up with them. Our alumni are going on to find success in life and stay connected with classmates and friends they met here at Aspengrove.

QUICK ALUMNI FACTS:



Total Alumni
(including 2025 Grads)
*with 76% of alumni actively engaged today.

214



Number of Alumni meet-ups in 2024-25:

7



Number of Podcast episodes released:

6

TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF THE CAREER PATHS OUR ALUMNI HAVE PURSUED:

- Daniel Taylor (2008) - Cloudhead Games VR Designer
- Elijah Silva (2010) - Actor
- Iman Sheriff (2011) - Medical Doctor in Vancouver
- Elliott DeLure (2012) - Biomedical Engineer
- Laura O'Keeffe (2014) - Biomedical Research at MIT, BSc at McGill
- Liam King (2018) - Medical Doctor
- Ivan Bao (2018) - PhD Rocket Science at Michigan
- Jenna Krawchuck (2019) - UPenn Ivy League
- Max Zhu (2021) - Goldman Sachs
- Matthew Hutchison (2024) - Goalie for Moose Jaw Warriors (WHL)

STAYING CONNECTED: ALUMNI ACTIVITIES

There are a number of ways for alumni to stay connected, including alumni gatherings and meet-up nights, tuning into the Beyond the Grove podcast, and joining us back on campus for career day. Below is a list of events that happened last year.

- OCTOBER

 - Alumni Meet up in Vancouver - The Painted Ship
 - Alumni Meet up in Victoria - The Bard and Banker
 - Beyond the Grove Podcast Alumni Feature - Sara Taylor
- DECEMBER

 - Alumni Winter Social - Aspengrove School
 - Beyond the Grove Podcast Alumni Feature - Magnus Hanson
 - Alumni Visit to Grade 10 Careers - Hans J., Matthew H., Jess H., Kali F. and Pam D.
- JANUARY


 - Beyond the Grove Podcast Alumni Feature - Victoria Welte
- FEBRUARY

 - Career Day - Featuring Emma Digney, Liam King, Sarah Reay, and Victoria Reynolds
- MARCH

 - Alumni Meetup with Krescyn Moonsamy and University Tour of McGill
- MAY

 - Alumni Meet up in Nanaimo - Black Bear Pub
 - Beyond the Grove Podcast Alumni Feature - Nicole and Megan Saunders





The most important thing I learned at Aspengrove that prepared me for the future was how to get along with anyone. In a small school, spending so much time with the same people, I got to know everyone very well, including the teachers. I was endlessly surprised and delighted by these friendships. This is a useful thing to experience because it taught me you can always find a way to work and connect with anyone, in any environment.

~ Iman Sheriff



ASPENGROVE SCHOOL

*Strong Roots,
Bright Futures*

We extend our deepest gratitude to our families, alumni, faculty, staff, donors, and community partners. Your commitment and support make it possible for Aspengrove to provide students with an education rooted in care, challenge, and opportunity. We are aiming for new heights and are grateful for your vision, generosity, and engagement as we take our next bold steps toward becoming a world-class school. Every gift of time, talent, and resources helps us to nurture strong roots and prepare bright futures for the next generation of learners and leaders. We are so excited to be part of your journey





ASPENGROVE
SCHOOL

aspengroveschool.ca

Strong Roots,
Bright Futures