

SPARTA AREA SCHOOLS

August 2025

# BELL RINGER

Home of the Michigan Blue Ribbon Exemplary School

www.spartaschools.org

## Together, WE Will!

As the Superintendent of Sparta Area Schools, I'm proud to share something that runs deeper than a motto in our district. It's a mindset, a commitment, and a reflection of who we are and what we value. We call it "WE Will."

These two words capture the heart of our district. They represent a daily choice to build meaningful relationships, create innovative learning experiences, and work together—students, families, staff, and community—to ensure every learner in Sparta thrives.

"WE Will" is how we live our mission: to empower a community of learners to lead meaningful lives.

It's also how we bring our vision to life: by creating the conditions where every student is known, supported, and challenged.

When you walk into a Sparta classroom, you'll see more than desks and lessons—you'll see students who feel safe, seen, and valued. You'll find teachers and staff lifting one another up and working as a team. Our schools are places where everyone belongs, and where high expectations are paired with deep belief in every student's potential.

You'll also find families who are engaged and welcomed. Whether it's through volunteering, attending school events, or simply asking how their child's day was, families are vital partners in our shared work.

What "WE Will" Sounds Like:

- •"I believe in you."
- •"Let's do this together."
- •"You matter here."
- •"We can figure it out."

These aren't just words. They are daily reminders that learning is a shared journey—and that in Sparta, no one walks it alone. At SAS, our work is grounded in values that

shape every classroom, hallway, and conversation.

We create belonging through care, trust, and respect. We believe every person has worth and deserves to be treated with dignity. We nurture learning through partnership between school, home, and community. We grow stronger through diverse voices and experiences. We hold high expectations and believe every student is capable of growth. We protect the physical and emotional safety of every student and staff member. We pursue innovation and relevance in learning, aiming for exceptional outcomes.

These aren't just statements. They're commitments we live out, together.

As we prepare for a new school year, I'm filled with gratitude—for our dedicated staff, our incredible students, and our supportive

families and community. The work we do in our schools is not possible without the people who believe in it and contribute to it every day.

So, as we look forward to the school year ahead, I invite each of you—parents, grandparents, community members, local leaders—to lean in, speak up, and stay involved. Attend an event. Volunteer your time. Ask a student what they're learning. Share your own story. Because when we say "WE Will," we mean all of us—working together, learning together, and growing together.

Thank you for being part of the Sparta Area Schools family.

Together, WE Will.

Thank you, Joel Stoner Superintendent of Sparta Area Schools



## Summer Fun at Sparta ECC

Our youngest Spartans enjoyed many fun activities at the Sparta Early Childhood Center Childcare.

Students had a special visit from the ice cream truck, took nature walks in our beautiful trail and on those hot summer days they played water games in the courtyard.

In addition to childcare, Sparta ECC offers Head Start, Great Start Readiness Program and tuition based preschool. Call 616-887-0068 for more information.







#### Ms. Ashlyn Mol: ASD Classroom Teacher

When not in school, Ashlyn loves doing anything outside. She loves to run, workout, hike, kayak and fish. She also has a big garden with 50 chickens, and 2 goats! Ashlyn went to



CMU and graduated with a degree in health and Physical Education. She is most looking forward to being back in a hometown community, and making a difference to students.

#### Mr. McPherson " Mack" Mroz: Special Education Teacher

McPherson "Mack" Mroz is a new special education teacher for Sparta Middle School (He has been a Special Education teacher at Sparta High School the past two years). Mack is also the head wrestling coach for Sparta High School since



2022. As a former graduate of Sparta (2000), he couldn't be happier to be working in the place where he grew up. His wife Kelsey (also a Sparta graduate) and Mack live here in Sparta along with their 3 boys, Alex (12), Oliver (9) and Braden (5). Mack started his journey to become a secondary education teacher at Central Michigan University, where he spent two years, before transferring to Grand Valley State University.



#### Ms. Kara Feldkamp: Middle School & High School Band

Kara recently graduated from Western Michigan University with Magna Cum Laude status. She completed her student teaching at Reeths-Puffer High School. Kara loves to craft, practice her color guard skills, bike, and go glamping with her friends and family.



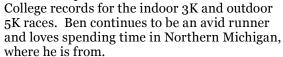
## Tiffany Andrews: Science & Social Studies

Tiffany comes to us from Greenville Middle School, where she has taught since 2019. Before that, she taught in Virginia. Tiffany is a Sparta resident with two children, Laura (4th grade) and Bryan (Kindergarten), who already attend Sparta. Tiffany

loves spending time with her family, reading, and gardening.

#### Ben Hardy: Social Studies wate ege,

Ben is a graduate of Aquinas College, where he was also a part of the Cross Country and Track & Field programs. Ben earned All-American Honors in the 3,000-meter Steeplechase and also holds the Aquinas



## Mackenzy Nichols: Social Studies

BELL RINGER

Mackenzy is coming to us from Greenville High School, where she has taught since 2020. Mackenzy has been the JV Girls Basketball Coach at Greenville since 2021 and has also been involved withthe National Honor Society. Mackenzy likes to play sports, read, and spend



time with her family & her dog, Braxton.

#### Steven Kunst: Social Studies & Technology

Steven joins SMS from The West Michigan Academy of Environmental Science, where he has taught since 2010. Steven has experience coaching basketball, cross-country, and soccer. Steven is a fantastic mountain l



is a fantastic mountain biker and gravel rider and is also a runner.



## Back-to-School Events & Info for the 25-26 School Year:

SMS 2025 Open House: Date: Monday, August 18th | Time: 4:30 pm-7:00 pm

All SMS Students & Families Welcome!

#### •Student Pictures:

Student Pictures will be taken at the Open House Student Picture forms will be sent via a link in August to your email. If you

would like a paper form, they will be available for pick up in the SMS Office. Picture Retakes will be on September 29th

#### •Student Schedules:

Student Schedules will be available to see on PowerSchool on Wednesday, August 13th.

Paper copies will be available at the SMS Open House.

#### •Chromebook Pick-Up:

#### **ATTENTION 6th GRADE FAMILIES:**

- Chromebook pick-up for all 6th-grade students will take place at Open House.
- Chromebook pick-up for students who left devices here over the summer will be at the SMS Open House.
- Students who did not pick up their Chromebook will receive it on the first day of school.

#### First Day of School: Wednesday, August 20th

 $\bullet 6th \ Grade \ Camp \ @ \ Camp \ Henry:$ 

Dates: October 6th-10th

6th Graders Attend Camp M-W or W-F

All 6th graders and their families will receive a 6th Grade Camp folder with detailed information at our Open House.

• If you are unable to attend our Open House, your student will receive their information on the first day of school.

#### 25-26 SPARTA MIDDLE SCHOOL DAILY SCHEDULE:

(Updates/Changes from last year are highlighted in orange.)

We will be opening doors at 7:25am for students to enter the building from the bus loop or via the main entrance if they walk or are dropped off in the morning. Students will have from 7:25 am to 7:35 am to get their breakfast in the cafeteria if they would like to eat before school. Students will need to be in their morning E4S class by 7:40 am.

#### Regular Daily Schedule:

Doors Open/Breakfast	7:25am-7:35am
E4S	7:40am-8:05am
1st/2nd	8:10am-9:40am
3rd/4th	9:45am-11:15am
5th/6th (& Lunch)	11:20am-1:25pm A Lunch: 11:20-11:50 (7/8) B Lunch: 11:53-12:23 (6) C Lunch: 12:26-12:56 (7/8)
E4S/Earned Activity Time	1:30pm-2:16pm

#### 1/2 Day Student Schedule: (No Lunch on 1/2 Days)

Doors Open/Breakfast	7:25am-7:35am
E4S	7:40am-8:05am
1st/2nd	7:40am-8:35am
3rd/4th	8:40am-9:35am
5th/6th	9:40am-10:31am





#### Sparta Area Schools 2025-2026 **District Calendar**

August 10	
August 20	First Day for Students
August 22	No School for Students
August 29	No School for Students
September 1	Labor Day - No School
October 1	Student Fall Count Day
October 16	Half Day for All Students
October 17	No School for All Student
November 14	Half Day for K-5th
November 26-28	Thanksgiving Break
December 18	Half Day for 6th-12th
December 19	Half Day for All Students
December 22-31	Christmas Break
January 1-2	Christmas Break

January 5	
February 12	No School for All Students

April 13	
May 21 May 22	8th Grade Recognition High School Graduation Half Day for All Students Memorial Day - No School
	Half Day for All Students Last Day of School (Half Da

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	No Sci	nool				
	Half Day Secondary Only (6th-12th)					
	Half Day Elementary Only (K-5th)					
	Half Day All Students (K-12th)					
	First Day of School—Wed August 20th					

School Building	School Hours	1/2 Day Dismissal
Ridgeview	8:40am-3:35pm	11:55am
Appleview	8:25am-3:20pm	11:40am
Middle School	7:40am-2:16pm	10:31am
High School	7:50am-2:30pm	10:45am

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2025								
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8	9	10	11	13				
15	16	17	18	19				
22	23	24	25	26				

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### BELL RINGER

Sparta Area Schools 2025-2026				
Open House Dates & Times	School Hours & Drop-off/Pick-up Times			
Sparta Early Childhood Center	Sparta Early Childhood Center			
	Child Care:			
• ECSE :	Monday-Friday, 6:30am – 6:00pm			
Open House: August 18, 2025, 4:00pm-6:00pm	3's Preschool			
First Day: Wednesday, August 20, 2025	Full Day: Mon-Thurs, 9:00am – 3:30pm			
	Partial Day: Tues, Wed & Thurs, 9:00a-12:00pm			
3's Preschool:	ECSE:			
Open House: September 4, 2025, 4:00pm-6:00pm	Monday-Thursday			
First Day: September 15, 2025	AM Section: 8:20am-11:35am			
	PM Section: 12:15pm-3:30pm			
• GSRP:	• GSRP 4's:			
Open House: September 4, 2025 4:00pm-6:00pm	Monday – Thursday 8:50am-3:30pm			
First Day: September 8, 2025	Headstart:			
	Monday – Thursday 7:35am-2:35pm			
Ridgeview Elementary – Grades K-2	Ridgeview Elementary – Grades K-2			
	Drop-Off: 8:40am			
DK/Kindergarten, 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade Open House:	School Hours: 8:40am – 3:35pm			
Monday, August 18, 2025 - 4:00pm-6:30pm	Bus Rider Release: 3:35pm			
	Parent Pick-Up: 3:20pm			
First Day of School: Wednesday, August 20, 2025				
	*Half day Bus Rider dismissal: 11:55am			
	*Half day Parent Pick-up: 11:40am			
Appleview Elementary – Grades 3-5 & BAC	Appleview Elementary – Grades 3-5			
	Drop-Off: 8:25am			
3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Open House:	School Hours: 8:35am – 3:20pm			
Monday, August 18, 2025 - 4:00pm-6:30pm	Parent Pick-Up: 3:20pm			
First Day of School: Wednesday, August 20, 2025	*Half day dismissal: 11:40am			
Middle School – Grades 6-8	Middle School – Grade 6-8			
	Drop-Off: 7:25am			
6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Open House:	School Hours: 7:40am – 2:16pm			
Monday, August 18, 2025 - 4:30p-7:00p	Parent Pick-Up: 2:16pm			
First Day of School: Wednesday, August 20, 2025	*Half day dismissal: 10:31am			
High School – Grades 9-12	High School – Grades 9-12			
	Doors Open: 7:20am			
9 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> Open House:	School Hours: 7:50am – 2:30pm			
Monday, August 18, 2025 - 4:30p-7:00p	Parent Pick-up: 2:30pm			
First Day of School: Wednesday, August 20, 2025	*Half day dismissal: 10:40am			

#### RIDGEVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SUPPLY LIST 2025/2026

#### DEVELOPMENTAL KINDERGARTEN

- 2 boxes of tissue
- 4 containers of play-dough 2 sets of individual watercolor sets
- · 4 packages of baby wipes
- 8-10 EXPO dry erase markers • 1 package of Crayola markers
- 1 roll of Scotch packaging tape
- 1 pair of 5 inch child scissors
- 1 package of Crayola crayons
- 4 Elmer's glue large size • Labeled hard plastic water bottle
- Labeled pencil box
- Girls Ziplock sandwich bags
- Boys Ziplock gallon bags Optional/Helpful;
- · plastic spoons, black duct tape, paper plates

#### KINDERGARTEN

- (please only label the pencil box with child's name)

   6 Elmer's washable glue sticks large size only
  (.77 oz) (The small sticks dry out quickly and break off easily)
  - 4 boxes of Crayola crayons 24-pack 1 box #2 HB Dixon Ticonderoga soft lead pencils (pre-sharpened preferred)
  - 2 packs of washable Crayola markers Classic
  - Colors, Wide tip (8pk)

    1 box of Crayola colored pencils 12-pack
  - 2 Composition Notebooks
  - Pencil box-hard plastic box
  - 1 roll of paper towel
  - 2 containers of Clorox disinfectant wipes 2 boxes of tissues

  - Dixie Cups
- 1 box of classroom snacks

# TEEING UP HOPE AUGUST 9. 2025- GR/SPARTA MOOSE LODGE

At just 10 years old, Anniemae is facing challenges most of us take for grantedher eyes struggle to work together, making it difficult to see clearly and track movement. Binocular Vision Dysfunction, along with 11 other diagnoses, affects her daily life, but with vision therapy there is hope! Unfortunately treatment is costly and neither health or optical insurance cover it. Join us for a special outing to rally around Mae, support her journey, and help her access the treatment she needs.

#### **Appleview Elementary School Supply List** 2025-2026

#### 3rd Grade:

- 2 Elmer's washable glue sticks (.21 oz)
- 1 box Crayola crayons (16 or 24 pack) 1 box washable markers
- 1 pair scissors
- 36 wooden pencils (#2 Ticonderoga or Dixon) 2 highlighters (different colors)
- 1 box of colored pencils (12 pack)
- 1 pencil box
- 1 spiral notebook, wide-ruled (1 subject size) 1 composition book
- 4 poly folders, 2 pocket (1 each of blue, red,
- green and yellow) No Prongs Please
- 2 Expo Thin Fine Tip Dry Erase Markers Headphones/Earbuds - no wireless headphones
- Wired/Wireless Mouse (strongly recommended)
- Facial tissues

Optional:

- Disinfectant wipes
- Hand sanitizer

#### 4th Grade:

- 4 Elmer's washable glue sticks (.77 oz)
- 24 wooden pencils (#2 pencils) 1 2-pack highlighters (multi-colored)
- 3 spiral notebooks
- 4 folders, 2 pocket, blue, red, green and yellow
- 2 folders, 2 pocket (plastic) any color
- 1 Pair of Scissors
- 1 box of crayons or colored pencils
- 2 Expo Markers
- Headphones or Earbuds
- \*No Trapper Keepers please\*

#### Optional:

Tissues Hand Sanitizer Clorox wipes

Underlined items are color-coded by teacher for Cavner, Ley, and Davis. Please see the key at the bottom of this page. If students don't have Cavner/Ley/Davis, they can choose any color of binders, notebooks, and plastic folders.

One 1.5" three ring binder 3 composition notebooks

3 plastic folders

1 pair of earbuds/headphones REQUIRED (with case preferred)

5 plastic dividers with pockets

1 pencil pouch with 3 holes for binder

2 packets of loose leaf wide ruled lined paper (100-150 sheets in each packet) At least 2 packages of 24 pencils (pencils

- not provided by teacher) 1 pack of pencil cap erasers
- 1 pair of scissors
- 2 large glue sticks
- 2 highlighters
- 4 Expo (low odor) dry erase markers (any colors)
- 1 pack of sticky notes (any color)
- 1 box of markers
- 1 box of colored pencils

#### OPTIONAL:

- 1 box of facial tissues 1 large hand sanitizer
- 1 pack/tub of disinfecting wipes
- 1 black Sharpie marker
- 1 wireless computer mouse

**TEACHER SPECIFIC COLORS (for** binders/folders/notebooks):

Cavner - PURPLE Ley - GREEN Davis- BLUE



### The PowerSchool **Student/Parent Portal** will open:

ELEMENTARY

Friday, August 8th at 12:00pm

SECONDARY

Wednesday, August 13th at 8:00AM

Once the portal opens, you can log in to:

- ✓ Complete your Annual Forms
- √ View your student's schedule



## The SEF Welcomes Back Students and Families

The Sparta Education Foundation (SEF) awarded over \$38,000 in classroom grants to Sparta Area Schools students during the 2024-25 school year. Some grant highlights included funding transportation for 12 field trips, All Kids Bike Learn-to-Ride Kindergarten Physical Education program kit which included special balance bikes, helmets, and a teacher demonstration bike that benefited 160 kindergarteners last spring (and will for years to come), Protect Young Eyes presentations for our students and families, additional technology for Appleview Elementary's Stem Lab, sensory items for our two new ASD classrooms, and additional equipment for the filmmaking and broadcast journalism students are just a few examples. The SEF offers grant rounds throughout the school year to help provide extras for education.

The SEF was founded in 1991, based on the belief that Sparta students should not be limited to minimum standards due to a lack of state funding for education. Since that time, many Sparta Area Schools students have benefited from SEF-funded grants that provide the "Extras for Education", but still the need continues.

Our mission is to help provide creative, progressive and innovative educational opportunities for our students and staff which are beyond the normal operating budget of the school district.

Please consider making a contribution and give our students important enrichment opportunities that would not be available otherwise. Go to the CONTRIBUTIONS page on our website for details spartaschools.org/sef





## BELL RINGER

## Savor Sparta - a delicious way to support education

Donate September 8-26, 2025. Make a \$100 donation to the SEF and receive a \$50 gift card to a restaurant of your choice. Gift cards will be mailed October 3-10, 2025.

SEF is hosting its first ever Blue & White Night on November 6, 2025. This is a new annual signature event celebrating and raising funds for the SEF grant program which enhances educational experiences for students throughout the Sparta Area Schools district. More details coming soon, stay tuned and mark your calendar.



Another way to support SEF - purchase 50/50 raffle tickets at Sparta Spartans varsity football home games.

September 12, 26, and October 3, 24.

Look for the SEF table near the flag pole at the Spartan Stadium entrance.

## 465 S Union St, Sparta, MI 49345 https://sparta-education-foundation.givecloud.co sef@spartaschools.org





Our **High Quality Program** is free to pregnant women and families with children ages 0-4.

### Early Childhood Programs

#### **Home Visiting**

Our Home Visiting program focuses on preparing your family for the school years ahead. Each family is paired with a Home Visitor who will provide individualized support specific to you. Families and Home Visitors work together to set and achieve goals, promote development and access community resources. Socializations and family engagement events are offered to all families and provide opportunities to build relationships and explore the classroom environment.



#### Pregnant Women

- Weekly visits alternating between the Agency Nurse and Home Visitor
- Education and information from our "Partners for a Healthy Baby" curriculum
- Prenatal health and postpartum recovery information
   Mental health and postpartum depression resources.
- Support building healthy relationships with family and baby

#### Birth - 3 years old:

- Weekly visits with Home Visitors
- Develop parent as child's first and best teacher
- Support in using the home environment to enhance child's school readiness outcomes
- Monthly in-home snack experience
- Regular developmental and social-emotional

#### Infant/Toddler Rooms

Providing a safe, nurturing environment is the top priority for our Infant/Toddler classrooms. Each child has a primary caregiver who partners with the family to best understand the child's cues and ensure their needs are met. Learning takes place during every part of the day in these classes through individualized daily routines.



#### Preschool

We understand that children learn through experience and strive to nurture the whole child in our preschool programming. In addition to math, reading, science, social studies, and art skills, our students develop skills in cooperation, problem solving, and personal responsibility.



Supporting you as your child's first, best teacher!

Contact us for more information: hs4kc.org