



Rycroft School
Box 278, 5208 – 45 Ave.
Rycroft, AB T0H 3A0
Phone: (780) 765-3830, Fax: (780) 864-1622
"Building Bridges to Success"



Policy Handbook

2011/2012

Principal's Message

Welcome back to Rycroft School! I hope you are all ready for a wonderful and exciting school year!

Our goal is to provide the best academic instruction and support for our students in a safe, positive and caring environment. In order to achieve this, we need the assistance from parents and guardians to encourage our students to attend school every day. By doing this, school will be a positive experience that will develop their skills so they are ready to move to the next grade.

During the year there will be many opportunities to join in on activities and special events. We hope to see many parents, guardians and community members participating with us whenever possible.

As for me, I am excited to be joining Peace Wapiti School Division as the Principal of Rycroft School. I am looking forward to meeting everyone and working with the students on a daily basis. I wish us all a successful school year!

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

~ Nelson Mandela ~

Enjoy your year!

Kids First!

Miss Casey Brown
Principal

Over the course of a school year, there are often questions which arise regarding certain policies or procedures at Rycroft School. This handbook is meant to provide a brief overview of that information, as well as our expectations of students. This year we are again including a condensed version of the handbook with our agendas. Hopefully, this will be useful to parents and students.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this handbook or about the programs or policies in the school, please phone or stop in. We believe communication between parents and the school is the key to operating a successful school. The staff is concerned with your child's progress and development and we will make every effort to do what is in your child's best interest.

School Phone: 780-765-3830 Fax: 780-864-1622

Rycroft School Administrative Staff:

Miss Casey Brown, Principal
Mrs. Sharon Magill, Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Sandra Sopko, Administrative Assistant

E-Mail: Each Peace Wapiti School Division employee has an e-mail address as follows:
fullname@pwsd76.ab.ca example: sharonmagill@pwsd76.ab.ca

Peace Wapiti School Division #76: Grande Prairie 780-532-8133: Spirit River 780-864-3741

Mr. Sheldon Rowe, Superintendent
Mr. Rodney Lee, Deputy Superintendent
Mr. Brian Shields, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Bob Stewart, Director of Special Programs

Rycroft School Profile

Rycroft School is located in the Village of Rycroft, seventy kilometers north of Grande Prairie, Alberta. Rycroft is one of twenty-four schools in the Peace Wapiti School Division #76. Our school has an enrollment of approximately 120 students from Kindergarten to Grade Nine. Our classes begin at 8:35 am and run until 3:30 pm. Due to our extended day, Rycroft School operates on a Compressed School Week (CSW) schedule and the school is closed on fifteen Fridays throughout the year. Our double graded classes vary in size from twelve to twenty-one students. Students learn and practice the important qualities of good citizenship on a daily basis. Our school rules reflect this philosophy:

Be Safe.
Be Responsible.
Be Respectful.

Students receive a well-rounded education and we are proud of their many successes, whether it is in academics, arts, or athletics. Academically, Province of Alberta Achievement test results in grade three, six, and nine, meet or exceed provincial averages. Elementary and junior high students participate in daily physical education classes.

Opportunities abound for students to find success outside the classroom. Extra-curricular sports include cross-country running, volleyball, basketball, badminton, track and field and softball at the junior high level, and cross-country running, soccer, floor hockey, volleyball, and softball at the elementary level.

Student Accident Insurance Program

Peace Wapiti School Division has a Student Accident Insurance Program that protects students and their families from some of the high costs of injury from accidents. The Student Accident Insurance program provides coverage for medical, dental, disability, and accidental death and dismemberment insurance on behalf of students participating in any school activities, including student transportation and school sanctioned events and field trips. All students are covered under the Division plan.

Parents/Guardians may wish to purchase additional coverage (summertime, weekend, and other non-school days) at their own cost; information packages are available at the schools. For all claims, please contact your school for a claim form.

2011-2012 School Year At A Glance

Aug 29 –District PD Day
Aug 30- Organizational Day
Aug 31 – Students First Day
Sept 5 – Labour Day
Sept 6 – First Day for ECS
Sept 16 – CSW Day – No School
Sept 23- School PD –No School
Oct -7 –CSW Day – No School
Oct 10 – Thanksgiving Day
Oct 21 – CSW Day – No School
Oct 28 – District PD Day
Nov 4 – CSW Day – No School
Nov 11 – Remembrance Day
Nov 25 – Day off in Lieu of PTI
Dec 2 – CSW Day – No School
Dec 9 – CSW Day – No School
Dec 17-Jan 2 - Christmas Break
Jan 3 – Classes Resume

Jan 13- CSW Day – No School
Jan 27 – School PD – No School
Feb 10 – CSW Day – No School
Feb 17 – District PD Day
Feb 20- Family Day
Mar 8-9 – Teachers Convention
Mar 23- Day in Lieu of PTI
Apr 6 – Good Friday
Apr 9 – Easter Monday
Apr 6-15 – Spring Break
Apr 27 – CSW Day – No School
May 11- CSW Day – No School
May 18 – CSW Day – No School
May 21 – Victoria Day
June 1 – School PD – No School
June 8 – CSW Day – No School
June 14 – Last ECS Day
June 28 – Last Day for Students

Bell Schedule

Reg
Day

(Bell)	8:25	Buses unload, Student Entry Permitted
	8:32	Warning Bell
	8:33	National Anthem and Announcements
	8:35	Period 1 begins (42 min)
	9:17	Period 2 begins (42 min elem/52 min JH)
	9:59	Elem. Recess starts (15 min)
(Bell)	10:09	Warning Bell/Jr. High break (5 min)
	10:14	Period 3 begins (42 min)
	10:56	Period 4 begins (42 min)
	11:38	Lunch Break starts (22 min)
	12:00	Noon Recess starts (25 min)
(Bell)	12:25	Warning Bell (5 min)
	12:30	Whole School Reading Time (15 min)
	12:45	Period 5 begins (30 min)
	1:15	Period 6 begins (30 min)
	1:45	Period 7 begins (30 min elem/40 min JH))
	2:15	Elem. Recess starts (15 min)
(Bell)	2:25	Warning Bell/Jr. High break (5 min)
	2:30	Period 8 begins (30 min)
	3:00	Period 9 begins (30 min)
(Bell)	3:30 (3:00)	Period 9 ends, Dismissal (<u>Early Day dismissal -1/2 hour earlier</u>)

Early Dismissal is on the first School day Monday of every month.

School Fees

School fees are required for every student in attendance at Rycroft School as follows:

ECS	\$65.00/yr
Elementary	\$55.00/yr
Junior High	\$65.00/yr
JH Options	\$25.00/yr

School fees are used to offset the cost of program delivery and include a \$5.00 charge for school agendas. There may be times during the school year when other user fees may be assessed to students. These may include such things as swimming or skiing lessons. All fees are payable to Rycroft School and receipts will be issued. Any families experiencing financial hardship are requested to contact the school in regards to fees.

Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance is essential for every student in order to have the best chance of success at school. The School Act of Alberta requires all students to attend school each day that the school is in session, unless he or she is unable to attend school because of illness or some other unavoidable cause. When a student accumulates a significant number of absences (10 – 15%), an attendance notification letter will be sent home. Further accumulation of absences will necessitate a conference with parents, student, teacher and principal. Please call the school if you plan on keeping your child home from school for any reason.

Any student who is not at school, regardless of the reason, will be marked absent for attendance purposes. The only exception is a school sponsored trip, such as a sporting event or ski trip. Students who are ill are asked to request assigned work from a classmate or the teacher(s) when they return. Teachers may adjust timelines for work missed due to an excusable absence. Students who plan on being absent, should notify their teacher(s) as early as possible. Teachers will make an effort to provide the student with assigned work for their absence, provided that the student asks for the work and that the work is readily available.

Cell Phone Policy

Cell phones are not permitted in classrooms for any reason. If students must have their cell phones at school, they are to remain, turned off, in their lockers for the entire school day. Any student seen with a cell phone in the school will have their phone immediately confiscated. For a first offense, parents will be called and the phone will be returned to the student at the end of the day, for a second offense, parents will be called and asked to pick up their child's cell phone. In the event of a third offense, the phone will remain in the school office for the remainder of the school year.

Discipline Policy

Focus:

At Rycroft School, all staff supports a school environment where children are safe, responsible, and respectful. In an effort to promote these three important, but often overlooked attributes of good citizenship, students will be reminded whenever necessary about the Three Bees of Behavior:

Be Safe

Be Responsible

Be Respectful

Whether it is in the hallway, on the playground, toward another student, or toward a staff member, it is expected that all persons in the school are safe, responsible, and respectful to both themselves and others around them. Everyone who abides by these three simple rules contributes to an enjoyable work place for all.

Procedure:

There may be time when students do not live up to these expectations and actions must be taken to promote safe, responsible, and respectful behaviors. The following steps are to be considered whenever dealing with inappropriate behaviors:

1. The teacher / supervisor is the first line of discipline and must employ a variety of strategies including reminders to keep students on task and displaying appropriate behaviors. At this stage, the focus of such strategies should be on improvement rather than punishment.
2. Communication with parents / guardians is essential.
3. The role of the school administrator is to support teachers and assist when necessary. Should assistance be required, the teacher / supervisor is to use a referral form to document behaviors for reporting of such to the school administrator.
4. If disciplinary actions are necessary, they may include retribution, assignment of extra work, detention, suspension, or referral to Peace Wapiti School Board for an extended suspension or expulsion.
5. Students who fail to improve behavior following disciplinary action will be subject to increased consequences.
6. Recommendation of suspensions for periods exceeding five days will be referred to the Peace Wapiti School Board.

Definitions:

Unacceptable behaviors are those that contravene the Three Bees of Behavior (being safe, being respectful, and being responsible) and include all aspects of bullying:

Physical Aggression: pushing, hitting, grabbing, pinching, spitting, tripping, etc.

Social Alienation: gossiping, embarrassing others, verbal or racial slurs, group exclusion, etc.

Verbal Aggression: mocking, put-downs, swearing at others, etc.

Intimidation: threats, dirty tricks, etc.

Sexual Harassment: remarks, gestures, or actions of a sexual nature

Behaviors that may warrant automatic suspensions include:

fighting,
theft,
vandalism,
swearing at others,
lying,
disrespectful behavior,
compromising safety,
repeat offenses,
bullying

Suspensions from classes for one to five days may be issued for any of the above actions. Suspensions may be: in-school or out-of-school, subject to the decision of the school administrator in conjunction with parents.

Dress Code

Students are expected to dress in a manner that is consistent with self-respect and which is acceptable to everyone. Clothing with offensive graphics or slogans or which attracts undue attention is not acceptable. For example:

Skirt or short length should be at or below fingertips when standing with arms at sides

Spaghetti straps and deep "v" tank tops are not appropriate

Pants should be pulled up high enough that undergarments do not show

Students wearing unacceptable clothing or lack of clothing will be asked to change, or cover up. Headgear or hats for all students in all grades are not acceptable. Footwear that will damage the floors will not be permitted. All students need a pair of „inside shoes“ as well as their outdoor footwear in order to help maintain the cleanliness of the building.

Homework

In order for homework assignments and study to contribute to the educational growth of a student, it needs to be done on a regular basis. The following are recommended average times that students should engage in home study:

Grade ECS to 3: 10 to 30 minutes per day (Reading with an adult is good)

Grade 4 to 6: 40 to 60 minutes per day

Grade 7 to 9: 60 to 90 minutes per day

Please note that these are average times, and that your child may need more or less time, depending on his or her study habits. Should your child seem to require more time than you deem necessary, please contact his or her teacher to find out more about the assignment or unit of study. Discussion with the teacher may help clarify the situation or modify the instructions to best suit the student's ability. Students receive an agenda to help them record and organize school and other activities. For additional help in organizing their homework assignments, parents may request that one or both of the parents, and/or teacher sign their child's homework book daily. Parents can support a child's interest in lifelong learning by encouraging good study habits and providing a quality-learning environment in the home.

- Provide a quiet, well-lit place for students to do homework and study.
- Set aside a pre-determined and regular homework and study time.
- Take an active interest in what your child is doing in school. Ask for an explanation of particular assignments and what is being learned.
- Compliment good work.
- Praise your child when improvement is shown.
- Make constructive suggestions, but allow students to do their own work.
- Regular school attendance is important for your child's continued learning.
- Consult your child's teacher as soon as a problem arises.
- Read your newsletters.
- Ask to see your child's agenda daily

Exam Exemption Policy

The teachers of Rycroft School believe that exam writing is a valuable skill that needs to be practiced throughout high school by all students, as it culminates in writing of diploma exams. Notwithstanding the above, the teachers at Rycroft School believe that junior high students need to be rewarded for demonstrating diligence throughout the year. Therefore, junior high students may be granted an exemption from writing a final exam within the following guidelines:

1. The student must have achieved at least 80% and be in good standing in a course to be granted an exemption from writing a final exam.
2. Students cannot be exempted from writing a government issued achievement exam.
3. The student's final mark will be calculated with no penalty for exemption from writing the final exam.
4. Students cannot be exempt from writing all of their final exams. They must write at least one of Math, Science, Language Arts, or Social Studies.
5. Students who choose to write a final exam from which they have been exempted will have their final exam included in their final course mark.
6. The teacher of a course will notify students granted final exam exemptions at least one week prior to the last class of the course.
7. Students who are exempted from a final exam must have permission from a parent or guardian. The written permission form must be returned to the teacher or office before the last class of the course.

Rycroft School Advisory Council and Friends of Rycroft School

The School Advisory Council (SAC) is a volunteer organization that operates in support of the school. The group normally meets six times during the school year, most often on a weekday evening. Some exceptions do occur. An Annual General Meeting is also held in October to elect officers. For a list of current officers, please contact the school. Any parents of a student at Rycroft School, as well as community members, are welcome to attend council meetings.

The Friends of Rycroft School was formed in 2006 with the goal of raising funds for a new school playground. All persons over the age of eighteen years making a contribution of time or money are eligible to be members of this association. The group is overseen by an elected Board of Directors. They have obtained a Casino license. Funds from such Casinos will be used to enhance and augment the educational opportunities available at the school.

Parental Involvement and Communication

In an effort to keep parents informed of the many happenings and achievements in the various classrooms of our school, a weekly newsletter is published on Thursdays. This newsletter is also directed at informing parents of some of the upcoming events in our school. Community groups are welcome to submit items for publication, if space permits. Please be sure to ask your child for his or her newsletter on Thursdays.

School Volunteers

Rycroft staff encourages adults who would like to volunteer at the school to become involved. There is always room for an extra pair of hands in the classroom, office, library, gymnasium, or during field trips, special events, or recesses. To volunteer time, simply call and inquire. Be sure to sign-in in the volunteer record book. Both the staff and the students appreciate the extra help.

Computers and the Internet

Students under the supervision of a staff member may use computers in the main computer room (and some classrooms) for educational purposes only. Students are each assigned an individual log-on access code. All individual work saved must be saved in a file assigned to them, or on their personal disc. All students who wish to use the Internet must abide the Peace Wapiti Internet Usage Policy and have a signed agreement to such on file with the school. Students may lose their Internet access privileges for failure to abide by the policy. The computer room is often open at noon for supervised student work.

Lockers and Valuables

Students in grades 5 – 8 are assigned a school hallway locker and a gymnasium change room locker if they choose. Combination locks are provided free of charge by the school. Students cannot use their own locks. A replacement fee will be charged to students who need a lock replaced. Students are strongly advised to keep their locker and valuables secure, as the school cannot be held responsible for lost or stolen property.

Lockers and combination locks are school property and are issued to students for use during the school year on the condition that the school reserves the right to search and/or repossess the locker at any time without notice.

While students are free to decorate the inside of their assigned lockers, all decorations must be in good taste and maintain a standard acceptable to everyone. Students who do decorate a locker are responsible at the end of the school year for completely removing all decorations without damaging the surface of the locker.

Textbooks

Students are responsible for all school materials assigned to them. Excessive damage or loss will result in the cost of repair or replacement being charged to the student or parent. Students are also responsible for returning each textbook or item to the teacher from whom it was received. Leaving books or supplies in a classroom, locker or the office does not constitute returning it.

Picking Up and Dropping Off Students

The safety of our students is of utmost importance. The following two procedures will reduce the risk when picking up or dropping off students. When picking up or dropping off your children, you are requested to please use the east parking lot, and not the staff parking area. As well, please be reminded that there is no stopping in front of the school during bussing times morning or afternoon. Simply have the student walk down the sidewalk from the parking lot to their assigned entrance door or visa versa. Should you wish to pick up your child during school hours, please park in the same east parking lot and then proceed into the school office to sign out your child in person. Students can wait in class until you arrive. They will then be called to the office to sign out with the parent.

Students Leaving School Grounds

For the safety of all, students (of all grades) may not leave school grounds during school hours, including lunch time, unless they have a note and or phone call from parents granting them permission to do so. Parents must enter into the office to sign out their child from school. Students who live in town and regularly go home for lunch, may have a single permission note on file for the entire school year, and may sign themselves out for lunch. All students must sign back in when returning to school during school hours.

Extra-curricular Activities

Rycroft School offers a variety of opportunities for students in grades five to nine to become involved in extra-curricular activities. Rycroft School Raider sports teams include cross country running, volleyball, basketball, floor hockey, badminton, soccer, and softball. Students must be in good standing both academically and behaviorally, in order to exercise the privilege of participating in any extra-curricular activity. Students, who do not maintain a positive work ethic in school, may have their participation status reviewed.

While the school will subsidize the cost of participation and transportation to a certain degree, there may be a user fee associated with each activity or event. Students are also required to have been granted permission from their parent or guardian for each activity or event. Parents who wish to transport their own child to an event are welcome to do so. Students and parents are welcome to arrange their own transportation to extra-curricular events provide that they inform the supervisor of any such arrangements.