

## Teepee Creek School Handbook

### PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

The educational philosophy of Teepee Creek School identifies the purpose of education as being the education of the whole child, including the mental (intellectual), physical, emotional, social and spiritual (non-secular) aspects of the child. The purpose of education should be to provide all students with experiences and instruction, which will permit them to acquire skills, information and feelings of self-confidence and self-worth.

Through a balance of all the elements of education, we strive to provide our students with the means to achieve and succeed, preparing them to make an effective contribution to society.

Through knowledge of the strategies of instruction and with sensitivity to, and caring for, the needs of the child, we strive to treat each student as an individual. We strive to practice and to instill in our students' respect for others, respect for the environment, tolerance and respect for individual beliefs.

Understanding that students are individuals with a variety of needs and abilities, we strive to provide a variety of learning situations in order that every child may reach the highest goals of which he or she is capable.

In all our dealings with our students we will strive for consistency in our expectations, in discipline, and in providing a secure and stable environment. Understanding that making errors is part of the learning process, we will strive to provide an environment in which the child does not fear to risk and an environment in which learning is made enjoyable.

It is our belief, too, that students must take an active part in their own learning. Part of that learning must include guidance in the differences between privileges, rights and responsibilities and how they are inter-related both in society and within our school and how they affect the relationships of the individual on the whole.

Of greater importance is the maintenance of open communication between the school, the parents and the community. We will continually strive to seek ways in which this communication may be enhanced.

The successful education of our children is a joint responsibility between parents, students and teachers. Without mutual support the process of education is severely impeded.

\*Swim Fees - have been reduced from \$90 to \$25 by a \$40/student donation from the Booster Club and a \$25/student Recreation grant from the County of Grande Prairie.

\*Cultural Events - This fund is set up to provide students with an opportunity to attend special functions of a cultural or educational nature which they might otherwise not have the opportunity to enjoy.

\*CTS - As part of their complimentary program, junior high students will participate in Career and Technology modules. This year the junior high CTS classes will be working on Technology modules including Photography and Graphic Design that will result in the publication of a school yearbook. The \$40.00 fee will cover printing costs and each junior high student will receive a free yearbook.

\* The textbook fee is a rental fee. Students will be expected to pay for any lost or damaged textbooks.

### STUDENT UNION

Junior High students, through their Students' Union help run a variety of school programs such as the canteen, the milk program and hot dog sales. The elected executive also helps make decisions regarding fundraising, recess activities and some special event days.

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular and punctual school attendance is expected and necessary for success in school. A student may be released upon the written or verbal request of the parent. These absences may be treated as excusable or inexcusable depending on the application at the time of the request.

Any requests for children to leave the school early or to go home by alternative means of transportation should be made in person or in writing to the school office. Parents should also contact the bus driver and notify them of such changes.

A student who arrives at school on his/her own is responsible for arranging his/her own transportation home.

In case of a missed examination, it is not always desirable, convenient or even possible to allow students to write a similar exam at a later date. As such tests and examinations are normally known well in advance, we urge students and parents to try to avoid appointments, etc. whenever possible on these days.

### HOMEWORK POLICY

Because education is a lifelong process, which extends beyond the school, it is important that students recognize that learning occurs in the home and community. Since skills of independent study and learning outside the school are important, the school affirms and supports the assigning of homework at all grade levels based on the practice of good learning theory. It is

important that an awareness of a student's ability, grade level and home conditions will affect the amount and nature of the homework assigned. (Homework is considered here to include not only written work, but also related activities such as viewing specific television programs, news reporting, recreational reading, and other activities which are related to classroom work, but which are assigned to be done at home).

The aims of homework are:

to develop regular and efficient study habits

to reinforce learning

to allow for individual differences

#### Guidelines Re: Length of Homework Assignments for Average Students

Grade 1.....10 - 15 minutes

Grade 2, 3, 4.....15 - 20 minutes

Grade 5, 6..... 20 - 30 minutes

Grade 7, 8..... 30 - 60 minutes

It should be noted that these are suggestions for the "average" student and consequently the actual time spent by each student will vary considerably. Nevertheless, if your child is putting in consistently more time doing homework than the guidelines, please contact the school for clarification and/or possible adjustment to your child's program.

#### PARENT SUPPORT

Parents can support a child's interest in lifelong learning by encouraging good study habits and providing a learning environment in the home.

Provide a quiet, well-lighted place for your child to do homework.

Help your child budget time so that a regular schedule is set.

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 or when improvement is shown. Make constructive suggestions, but avoid severe criticism and undue pressure. A positive attitude by parents will encourage the student to do the best work possible.

Encourage and guide your child with assigned homework. Under no circumstances should you do it for your child.

Regular school attendance is important for your child's continued learning.

Consult your child's teacher as soon as a problem arises.

## DRESS CODE

Standards of dress and personal hygiene must be maintained while in attendance at school.

The appearance of any young person is primarily the responsibility of that individual and his/her parents. We expect students to maintain that type of appearance that is not distracting to classmates, others students, the staff, or to the detriment of the educational process of this school. Where the student dress is felt to be distracting he/she will be so informed by his/her teacher, the school principal, and/or the counselor.

It should be noted here that "beer shirts" and T-shirt "art work" which is crude or offensive is considered inappropriate and hence is not allowed in our school. Also, spaghetti straps are considered distracting and too revealing and hence are also not allowed in our school. Both of these regulations are supported by the school council.

We would also urge that during the winter season, parents ensure that their children are dressed adequately to withstand the rigors of winter weather. Should their bus break down or become stranded, it is essential that students be appropriately dressed.

All students should have a separate pair of non-marking shoes restricted for indoor use. (These shoes may be their Physical Education runners.)

## USE OF CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cellular telephones are not to be used during the school day at any time. Students who do bring cellular telephones to school must keep their phones in their backpack during the school day, while on school property. Teachers may allow the use of cellular telephones during field trips and other off-site activities.

Occasionally, students may be permitted to use other electronic devices, such as electronic games and music systems at school. However, students should also use their recess time to actively play and exercise. The school strongly discourages students from bringing such devices to school and does not accept any responsibility if any of these devices are damaged or lost.

## ILLNESS

Normally students too ill to go outside for recess are generally too ill to be at school. This is

especially true in the case of severe colds where continual attendance at school can delay recovery and provide a source of infection for other students.

Due to a lack of space within the school, it is impossible to provide an ill student a comfortable place to rest during the day. Whenever possible, parents or the emergency contact person will be contacted and asked to take the child home. The homeroom teacher of the child shall monitor the condition of the child.

#### MEDICATION

Staff members may not administer oral medication of any kind to students unless the parent has completed the appropriate forms. Forms can be filled out at the school office. This includes all prescription and non-prescription drugs. Prescription medication must be accompanied with written instructions.

#### STUDENTS LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS

Pupils leaving school grounds must provide a note from their parents/legal guardians or have permission from the Principal or his designate.

#### INTERNET ACCESS

All students are given the opportunity to access information via the "Internet". Failure to comply with the terms stated on the student registration form will result in limited or a total ban of this privilege as also outlined on the registration forms signed by the parents/guardians.

#### FIELD TRIPS

Various out-of-classroom experiences may be planned for the students throughout the year as a supplement to the school program. Parents will be notified in advance of all field trips requiring private or public transportation prior to their occurrence. A completed permission slip is required from each child for any field trip that extends a radius of 80 km from the school or if the field trip is outside the regular school day before he/she can attend. "Blanket" forms may be used for repeat trips such as sports teams. This consent form is your authorization for your child's participation. Students not returning permission forms will be accommodated in other classes.

All field trips are under the supervision of at least one staff member. If parents would like to volunteer, please contact the supervising staff member.

## NEWSLETTERS

In an effort to help keep you aware of the many events and happenings in the school, we will be sending home a weekly newsletter each Thursday with the youngest child in each family.

## LOCKERS

Students and parents should be aware that school lockers are the property of the school and may be opened by administration at any time. Lockers are not one hundred percent secure and valuables are best left at home.

## PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports will be issued to students three times this year. The first progress report will be issued November 8, the second on March 14, and the third and final report is given on the last day of school in June. It is anticipated that parents will be able to monitor their child(ren)'s progress daily/weekly via internet and the new web based software Peace Wapiti School Division is implementing.

With the issuing of the first and second progress reports, time is set aside for parents/guardians to come to the school and meet with the teacher(s) to discuss their child's progress. These conferences are an essential component of the reporting process. The first Parent/Teacher Interviews will be November 13th, from 4:30 pm – 7:30 pm and November 15th from 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm. Appointments may be made through the office beginning November 5th. The second Parent/Teacher Interview is scheduled for March 17th from 4:30pm – 7:30pm and on March 19th from 4:00pm – 7:00pm. Appointments may be made through the office for this interview beginning March 10th. Each appointment is set for 15 minutes. If you feel you need more time, please book more time. Booking appointments allows teachers to be better prepared for the interview and will limit wait times for parents.

Although parent-teacher conferences are pre-scheduled, parental contact is encouraged whenever there are concerns regarding the welfare and progress of the child. Please call the school and arrange a mutually convenient time for a conference.

If good news is to be shared, or problems occur, the teachers will contact you or feel free to contact him/her at the school. This sharing process and communication is vital.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

The purpose of this program is to assist students who appear to be experiencing difficulty with one or more areas of their educational program. Classroom teachers, upon parental/guardian approval will recommend students with difficulties. Specified staff will be working with these students individually and/or in small groups. Through continuous evaluation, the student's progress is closely monitored and his/her programs are modified as required. The length of stay

in the program varies with each student. Other program modifications may be designed and implemented by the regular classroom teacher within the classroom.

#### LIBRARY

The library provides students with a variety of reading materials for pleasure and academic studies. If a student does not return a book they have signed out on the date it is due, the student will be given a verbal warning to return the book. Once it is overdue by two weeks, a reminder notice may be sent home informing the parents/guardians of the overdue book. Once the book is overdue at least three weeks, a bill will be sent home. Administration fees of \$1.50 will be added to the cost of the book. No student shall be permitted to sign out any other books if he/she has an outstanding library fee.

#### STUDENT RECORD UP-DATING

In order to maintain an efficient level of communication, please keep the school office informed of any changes to student information such as emergency contacts, phone or cell numbers, work numbers of parents, addresses and pertinent medical information as soon as they occur.

#### PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Evidence increasingly points to the value of physical activity in promoting overall achievement. To this end we are continuing to develop a strong physical activity program with the emphasis on participation and involvement. All students are encouraged to take part. Physical education is a mandatory part of the education program, and as such, only in very specific instances, such as physical injury or incapacitating health consideration, will students be excused from participation.

All requests for students to be excused from participation in physical education or from some specific activity must be given by the parents to the appropriate teacher. Requests for lengthy exemption for medical reasons must be accompanied by a doctor's certification.

Also, for hygiene reasons, all grade 5 to 8 students are expected to have a change of clothes for physical education, complete with proper footwear.

#### EXAM EXEMPTIONS – JUNIOR HIGH

Students in grades 7-8 who meet the criteria described below may be exempt from writing their final exams. The criteria for exemption include:

80% or higher year-end average in the subject to be exempted from before exams.

Minimum 68% average in every subject.

Special exemption from the principal.

Junior high teachers will meet in the middle of June to make recommendations for exemptions and decide which exam(s) students must write. A list of the students and the exams they are exempt from writing will be posted at least the weekend before exams are scheduled to begin.

#### VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

For safety and security, please be aware that all visitors are required to check in at the office unless you have been invited to the school for a specific event. Also, all volunteers must sign in at the office due to a workers compensation regulation. If you would like to volunteer in the school, please call your child's teacher to arrange a time that would be most beneficial to all. If you would like to specifically volunteer to work in the library, please contact Mrs. McNally.

#### PERSONAL PROPERTY

School personnel cannot accept responsibility for the personal property of students. Please identify all outerwear, footwear, and school supplies with your child's full name.

Students are strongly discouraged from bringing expensive personal property such as personal music players and video games as well as items which are provided by the school as part of the regular program such as softballs, soccer balls, footballs, etc..

#### COLD WEATHER POLICY

In the interests of student safety, parents/guardians are to ensure that all students riding on school buses during the winter months be appropriately attired, including proper footwear, headwear and gloves. In the case of inclement weather our school follows divisional policy regarding school closure. This means that normally, even though buses may not run because of weather conditions, the school remains open. If buses do not run, parents have the option of transporting their children to school. Please note that if buses do not operate in the morning it is the parents' responsibility to pick up their children in the afternoon. Please see Board Policy EEAF for specific details.

#### DROPPING OFF OR PICKING UP YOUR CHILD

Students who are dropped off in the morning after the school busses have arrived are required to walk behind the last bus in the bus lane. Parents who are picking their children up at the end of

the day are asked to pick up their child prior to any bus arrival or to wait on the sidewalk until all busses have left the bus lanes.

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

The discipline policy developed for Teepee Creek School is a series of 5 sequential steps that are to be followed by the school staff when dealing with inappropriate student behaviour at school. Serious violations will bypass certain steps.

### Classroom Misbehaviour

Step 1: Staff deal with any inappropriate student behaviors immediately and consistently.

Step 2: Staff contact the parents of the student, by phone or personally, if he/she continues to exhibit inappropriate behavior.

Step 3: Principal will contact parents/guardians and a meeting may be arranged with the student, parent(s), teacher(s) and principal if the inappropriate behaviors continue after step 2. At this meeting, the teacher(s) will give a detailed account of the inappropriate behaviors to the student and his/her parents. At this meeting, a team approach will be used and an action plan will be developed to help find a solution to the problem. Students may be placed on a behaviour contract. In many circumstances, a telephone conversation may be sufficient.

Step 4: If the inappropriate behavior continues, the principal will notify the parents/guardians and in consultation, the student will be placed on a 1 to 3 day in-school suspension. Any student placed on an in-school suspension will have all extra-curricular privileges, recesses and noon-hours suspended for that duration. Teachers will provide and collect completed work from these students on a daily basis. Junior high students will receive a 1 to 3 day in school or out of school suspension at this time.

Step 5: If the student continues to display inappropriate behavior, the principal will communicate with the parents of the student. Suspension from school will result from either this dialogue or further inappropriate behaviors. If suspension occurs, elementary students will receive a 1 to 3 day out of school suspension and Junior high students will receive a 3 to 5 day out of school suspension and may be recommended to an alternate method of education.

Serious violations of student conduct, such as fighting, vandalism of school or personal property and willful disobedience are to be referred to the principal or acting principal immediately. Documentation from the supervising staff member is essential. The Principal or his designate will deal with these students as mentioned in steps 3, 4 or 5; depending on the severity and reoccurrence of the violations.

Where a student does not show signs of significant improvement, alternative methods of education will be recommended.

## SWIMMING LESSONS

Although not mandatory, to fulfill the aquatic component of their physical education program and by the request of the School Council, each year all our students travel to Grande Prairie for swimming lessons, a program, which is partially funded by the School Council. This year the program will begin on April 1st, 2008 and last until April 10th, 2008. All lessons are from 11:00 am – noon and 1:00 - 2:00 pm. All students are encouraged to participate, as it will provide the students with the opportunity to complete the equivalent of one swimming level. Parents of kindergarten children who are participating in swim lessons may arrange bussing of their children into Grande Prairie on non-kindergarten instructional days by contacting the school.

## KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten will be in operation every Tuesday and Thursday. Each kindergarten day will be for the full day and is an integral part of our school program. This year the program begins with individual interviews on Tuesday, September 4, 2007. Kindergarten first day of regular classes will be Thursday, September 6 th. The last day of Kindergarten will be May 29 th, 2008.

## PLAYSCHOOL

This year playschool, which is operated by Family Services ( County of Grande Prairie) will be held in our school on Monday and Wednesday morning. This year's program will commence on Monday, October 1, 2007. For more information, please call Theresa McLeod at 568-3093.

## SCHOOL COUNCIL

All parents are encouraged to take part in School Council activities. The function of this body is to help provide effective communication between parents and staff to ensure the best education for all our children. This is the forum for you to provide input regarding the direction our school should be taking. The first meeting for 2007/2008 school year will be on September 24, 2007 at 4:30pm. All teachers will be available for the half hour prior to this meeting to give parents who are new (or returning) to the school an opportunity to meet their child's teacher(s). For further information feel free to call the school and we will direct you to the appropriate member of the executive.

## STUDENT PROMOTIONS

During the school year, where a change of program for a student appears advisable, the teacher(s) concerned should bring this information to the attention of the principal as soon as possible so that some appropriate action may be taken.

## YEAR-END PROMOTIONS AND REPEATS

### 1. Elementary

Parents of students who are encountering problems with their class work should be contacted as soon as possible during the school year. Where retention is a serious possibility this information should be given on the spring report card and a meeting with the parent(s) may be arranged.

At the parent meeting, which will normally include the parents, the teachers involved and the principal, the following will be considered:

strategies and procedures to assist the students to cope

special circumstances affecting the child's performance

alternatives for the following term

The educators involved will make a decision regarding recommended student placement for the following year. This decision will be discussed with the parents involved. A final decision will then be made.

If the parent does not agree with the school's decision he/she may refer to Board Policy HKE.

### 2. Junior High

The minimum acceptable standard for promotion shall include an average of at least 50% in the core areas Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies with a final grade average of over 50% in at least 3 of the 4 academic subjects. Students must also have a final grade average of at least 50% in the elective subjects.

Students who are encountering problems with their class work should be advised on the spring report card, or earlier in the year, if possible and no later than April 30<sup>th</sup> of their possible retention.

A meeting with the affected parents may be requested.

At this conference, the parents will be advised of the difficulties that the students are encountering and will be advised of possible strategies and programs to assist the student to cope.

In June following completion of the final exam schedule, a decision on all students will be made. This decision will be communicated to the parent involved prior to the end of the school year.

Special circumstances may be considered upon written request of the parent. Long-term illness, special disabilities, etc. will be taken into consideration in advancing students on a conditional basis to the grade level they should have achieved under normal conditions, providing there is some basis for believing that the student in question may improve his/her level of performance the following term.

In cases where the parent does not agree with the decision of the school, the written wishes of the parent will be given careful consideration before a final decision regarding promotion (or retention) is made. However, the final decision will not be based solely on this factor.

In cases where the parent still does not accept the school's decision, he/she may refer to Board Policy HKE.

## AWARDS

At Teepee Creek School, we offer a variety of awards. These awards are the hi-light of our June year-end assembly. Throughout the year we recognize student achievement as well.