



NEERLANDIA PUBLIC CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

“Learning To Serve”

General Handbook 2023-2024

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<http://www.neerlandiaschool.ca>

N.P.C.S. STAFF MEMBERS:

Administration:

Mr. Brett Seatter, Principal

Teachers:

Miss Natalie Borzel (will be Mrs. Kerckhof – Oct 1 2023)

Mrs. Sonja De Waal

Mrs. Megan Ferster

Mrs. Juanita Henschel

Mrs. Dallas Lee

Mrs. Laura Mast (on leave)

Mrs. Jill Olthuis

Mrs. Jill Rauscher

Mrs. Renee Rentz (on leave)

Mrs. Amanda Smith

Mrs. Lorna Strydhorst

Mrs. Kim Sybesma

Mrs. Cinnamon Thompson

Mrs. Kerry Vanderwekken

Mr. Brent Wierenga

Mrs. Katlyn Wierenga

Mr. Trenton Wierenga

Mrs. Lise Wruk

Support Staff:

Mrs. Debbie Fisher, Admin. Assistant

Mrs. Katie Blum, Education Assistant

Mrs. Ramona De Vries, Education Assistant

Mrs. Annemiek Elzinga, Education Assistant

Mrs. Carmen Ewasiw, Education Assistant

Mrs. Charlene Nanninga, Education Assistant

Mrs. Kym Peters, Education Assistant

Mrs. Shirley Rauscher, Education Assistant

Mrs. Lisa Seatter, Education Assistant

Mrs. Miranda Strydhorst, Education Assistant

Mrs. Nicole Wierenga, Education Assistant

Mrs. Brenda Gelderman, EA & Library Assistant

Mrs. Dagmar Visser, Library Assistant

Custodial:

Darcy & Laura Van Beek

Welcome to Neerlandia Public Christian School

Our Mission: “Learning to Serve.”

Neerlandia Public Christian School will provide a Christ-centered education so that students are equipped to serve God joyfully in all areas of life.

Dear Parents and Students:

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year at NPCCS. Our enrolment is around 259 students (this is including our Early Learning Prep students). We welcome a few new families to our school & community. We hope to make this a safe & yet fun environment for students.

As principal, my goal is to lead in an authentic and genuine manner. It is my sincere hope and prayer that we as a staff can lead students to experience God in their academics in a meaningful and purposeful way. The Christian focus in our school should be one of sincere everyday living where our thoughts, actions, beliefs and learning are a true reflection of God’s character and His desires for us to live our lives in a way that honours and serves Him. As a school, Christ is our cornerstone, meaning that we will bring our focus and alignment back to Him while we work as a team to provide high quality educational opportunities.

We are all part of His kingdom and our opportunities to learn, work and serve together should be highly valued as we have a unique opportunity here at NPCCS.

If you ever have questions about our school, please feel free to contact us at the school or come in to meet in person and have a visit. We want an open and honest environment where people feel comfortable and welcome at all times.

I look forward to working with you to provide the highest quality of Christian education for your children as we aim to shape the students into loving, caring servants of Christ.

Sincerely,

Brett Seatter
Principal, Neerlandia Public Christian School

School Council
Neerlandia Christian Education Society (NCES)

NPCS is a unique school in which the community & parents/guardians are keepers of the vision that drives us. The School Council's role is to provide community input and advise in order to support the education of the students. The Christian Education Society is our community promoting and supporting the Christian character of education at this school.

The NCES ensures that the teachers have access to Christian curriculum resources and professional development, including the Prairie Centre for Christian Education's annual teacher's convention.

We are members of the Prairie Centre for Christian Education (PCCE). Did you know that NCES pays \$77/student to PCCE to supply our teachers with Christian Education curriculum and training? A large part of your NCES membership fees go to covering this cost to ensure Christian content in our public school! Membership fees are \$300. per family that attends NPCS and \$150. for associate members (community members).

As a parent you have the opportunity and calling to be actively involved in the school through the School Council and NCES board.

Please consider prayerfully how you can support us as we seek to serve you in your children's education.

The contact names for the NCES and School Council will be published on our webpage. Monthly reports are made in the monthly NPCS newsletters.

The School Council and Education Society usually meets once a month (we will publish dates/times). You are welcome to participate in those meetings.

NPCS Guidelines

What does it mean to be a Child of God? NPCS teachers are blessed with a wonderful opportunity to explore this question with the students. We realize that we have a responsibility to teach in such a way that students will recognize in their lessons and in their lives the grace of God and His amazing love for them and for creation. We also hope to recognize in them a desire to learn about their heavenly Father and His wonderful creation. More importantly, we hope that they will join Jesus in His redemptive work by using what they learn in order to serve others and to take care of our Father's world. A Christian learning community such as we have at NPCS provides us with an environment in which we can grow spiritually, academically and socially together.

No, we are not perfect. We know that there will be many times when we fail in our task and calling, as students and we as teachers and parents. The definition of a Christian is not about perfection, but about forgiveness and redemption. Let us promise each other right at the start of the year that when things go wrong we will seek to make them right again, in ways that reflect that we are all children of the same heavenly Father. Remember, Jesus Christ will be with us in the classroom, hallways and the playground of this school and through His Spirit He will guide us through the joyful and the stressful times.

This school is a special place. You are special people. We look forward to a blessed year together.

Please read the following basic information carefully. If you have questions, ask your teacher.

Absences

If students are going to be absent, parents (guardians) should send a note, send an electronic message (DoJo or Remind), email or call the administrative assistant before 8:45 a.m. on the day of the absence. If there is no note or phone call and we don't know why they aren't here, we may call home to make sure that everything is alright.

Student Fees

For the 2023/2024 school year Alberta schools will not be charging students for instructional fees (includes textbook fees, etc.) There will be fees still charged for field trips, extra-curricular activities, sports team fees, uniforms, etc. A list of current school fees will be assessed at the beginning of each school year and shared with parents via the school's webpage.

Online payments are preferred. There is an online payment set up via PowerSchool. Parents are still responsible for classroom supplies and these supply lists will be sent home each June. Parents can either purchase on their own or have School Start make up supply packages (online orders available) and delivered to home over summer break.

Student Behavior

There really is only one rule for student behaviour at NPCS: all students are expected to remember that they are called to live as children of God who love their heavenly Father and their neighbours. We trust and expect that you will show this love by being respectful, courteous and honest to all teachers, staff, volunteers, parents and fellow students.

At this school we teach young people to live as caretakers of the creation, which includes taking care of the school's and each other's property.

We try to encourage students to have a healthy respect for themselves as people preparing to rule the creation with Christ. We trust, expect and demand, therefore, that students will take their schoolwork seriously. Learning, as training and preparation for living as a child of the Kingdom, is an awesome responsibility.

The expectations for behavior at NPCS are also based on Pembina Hills Public School Student Code of Conduct (AP50-09, found at pembinahills.ca which is also in alignment with Alberta legislation (The School Act).

Discipline

Teachers at NPCS know that there will be occasions when student behaviour does not meet expectations. Their love for the students will then compel them to take appropriate measures to correct that behaviour. Teachers will be guided by the principle that all disciplinary action is intended to help and guide the student in the right path. The ultimate goal of disciplining is to assist students in becoming self-disciplined.

- 1) Remembering that the basis of discipline is disciple-ing, students will be treated with respect. The staff will always try to ensure that in the end students experience forgiveness and that where there has been hurt there will be healing.
- 2) We take all discipline situations seriously because we recognize the students' high calling. As teachers we work together with the home and we will inform parents and seek their support as necessary, especially in the case of repeated or consistent problems.
- 3) Discipline situations will have appropriate consequences: they will be dealt with in ways that are firm, fair and effective.
- 4) Teachers have the discretion to remove students temporarily to a "timeout area" in the classroom or another part of the school, including the office; to assign detentions; to give extra academic assignments; or to require service assignments in the school or community.
- 5) In some instances, students may be suspended or expelled in accordance with PHSD policies.

Bullying and Fighting

A special note about fighting and bullying: They are not allowed at this school!

Bullying, whether over a long or short time, whether physical, verbal, or relational, will be dealt with seriously. Bullying may include, but is not limited to:

- physical violence, attacks and punitive behaviour
- threats and intimidation
- stealing or damage of possessions
- exclusion and isolation from peer group activities
- sarcasm, shouting, coercion
- "ganging up"
- derogatory comments or actions about a person's appearance and/or clothing
- negative peer pressure

God's children should not do these things to each other and should not have to suffer them from each other. We should be celebrating our differences and learning how to use our differences to make the world a better place. Please support us in this way by communicating when issues arise so they can be dealt with in a timely & appropriate manner.

Technology

The proper use of computers at school will be explained early in the school year. This discussion will include rules about email, text messaging, and the safe use of the Internet & I Phones among other things. We are very strict about these things for the protection of all our students.

We understand and appreciate that cell phones are used for communication between students and home. This is allowed during scheduled school break (11:55 – 12:10). Otherwise they should be stored in lockers. However, cell phones and other personal technology devices are not to be used for recreation/entertainment purposes during school breaks. Students are expected to play either outside or in the gymnasium during breaks.

We live in a time of transition when it comes to technology and how readily we use it. Specific rules could vary from class to class or teacher to teacher – students need to abide by teacher's rules. We also include digital citizenship as a required component of our junior high courses.

Students are required to follow Pembina Hills Public School policies with respect to the use of technology. These policies & forms can be found on the PHPS website: AP80-01 Digital Citizenship & AP80-05 Technology Acceptable Use agreement (completed by students/parents). Failure to follow these policies can lead to a suspension or removal of student access to division technology, including accessing of PHPS wireless connections by personal devices.

Dress Code

Students should dress appropriately for school and school-sponsored functions, with an emphasis on neatness, cleanliness and modesty, as is becoming a Christian. The cooperation of all parents, teachers and students will mean having a minimum of rules within the following guideline, particularly for our pre-teen and teenage students: While dress need not be formal, it should not be recreation or beachwear casual. We suggest that shorts have a minimum 3-inch inseam.



Keep it comfortable and appropriate to a Christian school setting. Students dressed inappropriately will be spoken to privately and either warned or sent home to change, depending on the situation. Hats, baseball caps and hoodie hoods are not to be worn inside, especially not in the classroom.

Footwear

Students need to wear a pair of indoor shoes with non-marking soles whenever they are in the school. For safety and health reasons, bare or stocking feet are not allowed. Outdoor footwear goes on the shelves when you enter the building. When you leave, your indoor shoes stay inside. You need at least one set of each.

Homework and Assignments

It is the expectation of this school and Alberta legislation that each student will work diligently to complete their work. Occasionally this might involve homework especially at higher grade levels.



Visitors and Volunteers in the School

All visitors are asked to report to the school office. We welcome and appreciate the help of volunteers in our school. Teachers will keep parents informed as to various volunteer opportunities within the classroom. We require all volunteers that work in the classroom/office, supervise on playground or go on

field trips as chaperones to complete the Volunteer Form F4-60 and bring in a CRC (Criminal Record Check) and a CIC (Child Intervention Check). The Intervention check can only be obtained online.

Individuals who require a completed Intervention Record Check through Children's Services are to email CS.IRCNorthCentral@gov.ab.ca to request this form. You will receive an email reply with the form to complete electronically, along with instructions. Please hand in a copy to the school office.

School Emergencies: How do we respond to emergencies at school? Our first priority is the safety, security and well-being of our students and staff. Guided by our division's Emergency Response Plan, we have developed a plan which outlines our school's response to various emergencies.

What should parents do in an emergency?

1. Check the PHSD website. We will post information on the PHPD website pembinahills.ca and on Twitter @PHSD Schools and send out Alert via School Messenger. Phone the PHSD Regional Services Office at 780-674-8500.
2. Do not come to the school as you could put yourself in danger and get in the way of emergency personnel. In several instances, our exterior doors will be locked and you will not be able to get into the building.
3. Do not call or e-mail the school. We need to keep our phone lines open to communicate with emergency services.
4. Do not call, text or e-mail your child's cell phone. Depending on the threat, contacting your child's cell phone could endanger your child.

What happens during specific emergencies? As directed by local emergency personnel we will do the following:

1. If an incident or threat occurs inside or is directly related to our school, RCMP will instruct us to Lockdown our school which means we will lock all exterior doors. Staff and students will be directed to classrooms which will be locked. (e.g. dangerous intruder)
2. If an incident or threat occurs outside and is unrelated to our school, RCMP will instruct us to Hold and Secure which means we will lock all exterior doors. Students and staff may move freely in the school. (e.g. a bank near our school is robbed)
3. In some environmental or weather-related situations, authorities may direct us to Shelter in Place, which means we will keep students and staff in school until it is safe for them to leave. (e.g. chemical spill, blackouts, extreme weather conditions)
4. In some instances, we may have to evacuate the school. Students and staff will move to our primary evacuation site: Neerlandia Christian Reformed Church. Students will stay at the evacuation site until it is safe to return to school or they are released to a parent/guardian.

Note: If our primary evacuation site is compromised, we will move students to a secondary evacuation site. If this is the case, we will post this information on the PHSD website pembinahills.ca and on Twitter @PHSD_Schools.

Before an emergency happens:

1. Ensure the school has current Emergency Contact information for your child.
2. Talk to your child about the importance of following their teachers' instructions during an emergency.

Fire Drills & Lock Downs

Each year, the school will hold six fire drills. Students and staff will practice proper evacuation procedures. Each class has an area designated to meet on or near playground/parking lot. Students must wait to here the all clear signal before entering the school. Lock Downs & Hold & Secures are also practiced, usually twice a year.

Inclement Weather: Cancellation of school or of bus service due to poor weather will be broadcast on most radio stations and announced on both the PHPS and NPCS websites. NPCS is part of the Pembina Hills Public Schools. Unless otherwise indicated, if the buses are not running the school will still be open for those students who come anyway, but normal classroom activity will not happen.

When the temperature and/or wind chill drops below -25C or if it is raining heavily, students will likely remain indoors for recess.

The school administration will use discretion in these circumstances. Please ensure that your child(ren) are dressed appropriately for the weather.



BUZZER SCHEDULE

Morning Warning Bell: 8:20 am
Classes begin: 8:25 am
Morning Recess: 10:10-10:25 am
Lunch Break: 11:55 – 12:10 (Eat Lunch)
Outside Break: 12:10 – 12:40
Afternoon Recess: 2:10 – 2:25 pm
Dismissal Time: 3:40 pm
Busses leave at approx. 3:45 pm

NPCS is an Allergy Aware School

We have students in our school whose health depends on the avoidance of certain items to which they are allergic. The most common allergenics are peanuts and all other types of nuts as well as perfumes. As a Christian school community we are going to do everything in our power to lovingly support these students and to avoid putting them in danger.

That means:

- We will educate our students and parents on an on-going basis about the dangers that these allergies pose and about our responsibility to respond with loving carefulness.
- We are going to create as safe an environment as possible for all students.
 - In some classrooms, for example, we may place an absolute ban on any nut products whether in lunches or snacks of any kind. Because that is the source of the most immediate danger, this rule will be very strictly enforced, even if it means confiscating a lunch and working to find replacement food.
 - In the rest of the school we will insist that students avoid bringing products with nuts, and if they occasionally forget we will insist that they wash their hands thoroughly before touching anything an allergic child might touch later.
 - We will also require students to keep the use of perfumes and perfumed deodorants to an absolute minimum.
 - Parents and students, please be allergy aware and pack lunches and snacks accordingly.