



# NEERLANDIA EAGLE EXPRESS NEWSLETTER

February 2025

## Principal's Message

During my principal's messages this year, I have reflected a lot on family. I have written about welcoming family, family gatherings, encouraging our family members, and looking at our school family through a creation-fall-redemption-restoration lens. But what about when things aren't harmonious in a family. I know that as a family, we went through some rather trying times during COVID. There were a lot of different opinions, which were very strong. I'm sure many of you will be able to say the same. Some of us have made it through family conflict and we are still together. Others of us are estranged from family members.

I won't pretend to know how to ensure that families stay connected and strong, as I have seen breakdown within my own family that is yet to be healed, but I will look at myself and say what I believe I need to do (even if I don't always do it).

Romans 12:18 tells me that "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." This particular verse by itself does not say how to do this, but if I look at the verses before and after it, they tell me to "not repay evil with evil," to "do what is right in the eyes of everyone," and "do not take revenge."

Colossians 3:13 says "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." Here too, the verse before gives context, instructing me to have "compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." and after this it implores me that "over all of these virtues, put on love." I believe this means my motives should be love for others, regardless of the other person's stance.

Proverbs 15:1 reminds me that "a gentle answer turns away wrath," so I should deal gently with others, especially those who are likely to be angered by what I feel I need to share.

I know that this is all easy to say, but difficult to do. Even if I am able to do all of these things, conflict may still arise. This brings us back to the first verse I shared that reads "as far as it depends on you." I feel I need to make sure I am doing the right thing. If I persevere in doing the right thing, I have the best possible chance of healing the relationships that are important and dear to me, as I am endeavoring to do "what is right in the eyes of everyone."

I will pray that our students, staff and greater community will have the understanding and the strength they need to behave in ways that make their relationships strong and keep them strong. Please pray the same for me.

Prakash Raju  
Principal

## School Wide News

We have many field trips coming up, please be sure to check Powerschool to ensure forms and fees have been taken care of. Notes have gone home with students with more information. If you have any questions please contact the office.

Progress Reports will be sent home on March. 13, followed by parent teacher student meetings on Tues, March 18 and Wed, March 19, both in the evening. More information on booking will be sent out the first week of March.

## Lockdown Drill

In keeping with our school's commitment to student and staff safety, on February 13, 2025, we will be running a lockdown drill to ensure staff and students understand what to do during a lockdown.

Before that date, teachers will explain the lockdown procedure to students. Teachers will also talk to students about why we practise the lockdown drill – which is to help students learn what to do to be safe.

By running drills in a safe, age-appropriate and calm manner, we will help students cope with the concerns and anxious feelings they may experience.

At the end of this newsletter, we have attached a page that will give you more information about emergency drills and procedures at NPCS, including different ways we respond to emergencies, what you should do if the school is in an emergency situation, and frequently asked questions (FAQs).

If you have questions about this, please contact your child's teacher or our principal, Mr. Raju at 780-674-5581.



**Come explore with us!**

**NOW ACCEPTING**  
**2025-2026**  
**Early Learning**  
Pre-Kindergarten applications!

[pembinahills.ca/EL-apply](http://pembinahills.ca/EL-apply)

**Pembina Hills**  
SCHOOL DIVISION



**HAVE YOUR SAY**

Parents will be invited to participate in the **Pembina Hills Annual Satisfaction Survey** **February 3-14, 2025!**

*These surveys provide valuable parent feedback for education planning in our schools and division.*

*Parents will receive an email in early February with the link to the survey. If you do not receive the link by February 3, contact [phsdsurvey@pembinahills.ca](mailto:phsdsurvey@pembinahills.ca).*

*Thank you for your participation!*

**Pembina Hills**  
SCHOOL DIVISION

## Hot lunch Fundraiser

NCES will be hosting a hot dog lunch with Iced Tea on Tues. Feb. 25. Forms have been sent home, these are due back Tues. Feb. 11.

## On-line Clothing Store

Our on-line clothing store is available to order anytime, no limits on ordering. We have the website linked on our web page.

## PHSD Board News

### Rotary Music Festival

I'm pleased to share that our board has approved a \$2,000 monetary donation to support the upcoming 45th Annual Barrhead Rotary Music Festival, scheduled for March 5–13, 2025. Our funding will cover the entry fees for Pembina Hills students and ensure access to venues at BES and BCHS. This event provides your students with opportunities to participate in piano, speech, vocal, and instrumental categories, fostering the arts and youth engagement in our community.

### Municipal Partners Delegations:

We have started meeting with our municipal partners, and I've had the opportunity to connect with both the County of Barrhead Council and the Town of Barrhead Council. These meetings have been an excellent opportunity to share some of our successes and begin exploring ways we can collaborate on community-driven initiatives.

Victoria Kane  
School Board Trustee

## Pink Shirt Day

Pink shirt Day is on Feb. 26. This day has been recognized annually worldwide as a day to stand against bullying. On Wednesday, February 26, we encourage staff and students to wear pink.

## Sports

### Jr. High Basketball



#### Games:

February 3 - Tier 1 at NPCSC vs Pembina North (CANCELLED)

February 4- Tier 2 boys at NPCSC vs Fort Assiniboine, Tier 2 girls will practice after until 6:00 pm

February 5- Tier 1 Girls practice from 3:40 pm -5:00pm

February 11- Tier 1 Girls will be going to Athabasca, leaving the school at 2:15 pm (Parents will need to arrange rides)

February 12 – Tier 1 Girls will be going to CCRS from 4:00pm – 5:00pm. Tier 1 Boys will be playing at NPCSC from 4:00pm – 5:00 pm

February 13- Tier 2 at NPCSC from 3:45 pm – 5:00 pm

#### Practice times:

Boys practice Monday and Wednesday from 3:40-5:15pm

Girls practice: Tier 1 and 2 Girls practice Tuesday from 3:40- 5:00 pm. Thursday Tier 2 practice at 3:40-5:00pm, Tier 1 practice at 5:00 pm-6:15 pm.

Please make sure all forms and fees are completed through PowerSchool.

### Elementary Basketball

Feb. 3 – Fort Assiniboine and Swan Hills will come to NPCSC from 1:00 pm – 3:15 pm (teams 1 & 2 boys and team 1 girls will play) (CANCELLED)

Feb. 19 Team 2 girls and team 3 boys will play in Barrhead from 3:00pm – 4:30pm.

Feb. 27 – Final tournament in Swan Hills.

### Elementary Running Teams

Forms and Fees are available online.

Important Dates for the Running team:

Butterdome Practice Feb. 10, leave at 1:00PM return at 8:00PM. Grades 5/6

Elementary Eliminations at the Butterdome Feb. 24, leave at 8am and return at 3:00pm

Finals for Elementary at the Butterdome Saturday March 8<sup>th</sup> all day.

Dates for practices at the Barrhead Arena (parents to arrange rides):

Feb. 4 from 4:15 – 5:30pm

Feb. 18 – 4:15 – 5:30pm

Feb. 26 – 4:15 – 5:30pm

March 6 – 4:15 – 5:30pm

## NCES/NPCSC News

- Plans are coming together for our dinner and auction in March! See the separate ad in the Newsletter for all information and to purchase tickets.

- Feb 25 will be our next hot lunch. Hot Dogs and Iced Tea! If you are able to help, please contact Shawna Sotnikow at 780-282-0061.

- Jr High Parents: We are in need of student helpers during the NCES dinner and auction March 7. More information will be going home through teachers.

- Highlights from our Jan 20 meeting include: Approving hot chocolate and cookies again for Feb 5 Winter Walk, continued planning for the March 7 Auction, discussion surrounding the replacement of several trees on the school yard, overview of the 2025-26 School Calendar.

-We continue to accept NCES Family and Associate Memberships. Cost is \$300/family or \$150/grandparent or community member. These funds go towards PCCE fees, Christian curriculum, Christian Teacher Development, and more. Thank you to families who have submitted their fees.

-If you would like to volunteer with NCES during Hot Lunches, or any other NCES event, PHSD volunteer forms and required criminal record checks must be completed and handed into the office.

-Our next NCES meeting is Tuesday, February 18, 7pm at NPCSC.

NCES Board of Directions 2024-25 Kirstie Schatz (Chair), Charlene Fleming (Vice Chair/Playground Liaison), Alanna Breitreit (Secretary), Laura Braucht (Treasurer), Shawna Sotnikow (Hot Lunch Coordinator), Sandra Olthuis (Community/PCCE Rep), Cassie Wierenga (Fundraiser Liaison), Julaine Greilach (Member at Large)

## NCES Fundraiser Dinner & Auction

March 7, 2025 5pm

NCRC Fellowship Hall

Featuring "The Golden Keys"

With Bauer and Day

Tickets: \$60 each / \$480 Table

Silent and Live Auction

Ticket Purchase: Laura Braucht 780-674-7334

Like to donate? Contact Cassie Wierenga 780-718-2209

## **Library News**



### February hours

Monday – Thursday  
9:00 AM – 4:30 PM

### We are open

Thursday, February 6<sup>th</sup> 9:00am-4:30pm during the teachers convention

Friday, February 21

9:00 AM – 4:30 PM

### We are closed

Monday, February 17th for Family Day

Rhyme time runs every Wednesday  
from 10:15 - 11:00 AM

### Next Book Club

Tuesday February 25th at 7:30PM

We will be reading "The Frozen River"  
by Ariel Lawhon

## **Calendar of Events**

Feb. 5 – Winter walk in the afternoon  
(Weather Permitting)

Feb. 6 & 7 – Teacher convention - No school. Library is open from 9:00 – 4:30 on Feb. 6

Feb. 11 – Winspear Center Field trip Gr. 4 - 6

Feb. 14 – Alternate day, no classes

Feb. 17 – Family Day, No school

Feb. 18 – NCES Meeting

Feb. 21 – Jr. High Skiing at Misty Ridge

Feb. 25 – NCES hot dog lunch

Feb. 26 – Pink Shirt Day

Feb. 28 – Alternate Day, no classes

### **Looking Ahead**

Mar. 7 – Alternate Day, no classes. NCES Auction

Mar. 11 – 100<sup>th</sup> Day

Mar. 14 – Alternate day, no classes

Mar. 17 – NPCSC/ NCES meeting

Mar. 21 – Alternate day, no classes

Mar. 24- Mar. 28 – Spring Break

Mar. 31 – First day back after Spring Break

## ***FAQs for Lockdown procedures and drills at Neerlandia Public Christian School***

### **Q. What is a lockdown?**

A. If there is a threat inside and/or directly related to our school, our school will be placed in lockdown. Our exterior doors will be locked and staff will direct students to classrooms which will then be locked.

### **Q. What happens during a lockdown?**

A. A staff member will announce over the public address system that the school is in lockdown. Staff will direct students to classrooms where the doors will be locked, the lights will be turned off and the blinds and shades will be pulled down. Depending on the severity of the incident, staff may direct students to move away from door and window sightlines; ask students to take cover and ask them to remain quiet.

### **How 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 Pembina Hills website**

We will post information on the Pembina Hills website [pembinahills.ca](http://pembinahills.ca). Phone the PHSD Regional Services Office at 780-674-8500.

#### **2. Do not come to the school**

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 in to 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 the Neelandia Christian Reformed Church, our primary evacuation site. Students will stay at the evacuation site until it is safe to return to school or they are released to a parent/guardian.

### **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.