



NEERLANDIA EAGLE EXPRESS NEWSLETTER

June 2025

Principal's Message

Last month, I mentioned how our students' grandparents are the "heart" of Christian Education, and how our parents are the "feet," supporting the school so it can move forward. I would like to mention that there is a group of parents, grandparents and other community members who have the key role of being the "guardians" of education at Neerlandia Public Christian School. This group is the Neerlandia Christian Education Society (NCES), which most (if not all) of the readers of this article are a member.

Key individuals in the NCES are our NCES Board Members. This society board works to give the support that only multiple families working together can give to Neerlandia Public Christian School. They are able to give financial support to ensure our school has strong Christian Education resources, especially the training and products provided by the Prairie Centre for Christian Education (PCCE). The NCES Board also advises me as I lead the school, but most importantly, the NCES is the guardian of Christian Education at NPCS, ensuring that Neerlandia Public Christian School is able to continue to be a Christian School.

If you are reading this article and you are not a member of the NCES, I would encourage you to become a member by making an annual donation of \$300 (if you have children who attend Neerlandia Public Christian School) or \$150 (if you don't have children who currently attend). All membership donations are tax deductible, and all of the money received is carefully budgeted to support Christian Education at NPCS.

Please be sure to watch for a request for membership in the new school year, and make your donation early so that the NCES knows what resources they have for the year.

There is one more important group at NPCS. This group is the "hands" of Christian Education. This group makes things happen at NPCS, and they do the hardest work in

Christian Education here. The Staff at NPCS are the "hands" of our school.

I have been incredibly blessed to work with the staff members at NPCS this year. I have been able to see their deep care and genuine love for each child at NPCS. I have seen the extra time staff members have put in at the school. I have observed lessons that took hours of planning and preparation so that they can be skillfully and effectively presented to and facilitated for our students. I have enjoyed seeing staff members work with students one-on-one or in small groups, to ensure that they know what they need to know. I have witnessed the staff's dedication in providing extracurricular opportunities for students. I have been visited by staff members who have worked together to plan field studies that are engaging and practical in their educational methods. I have worked with staff after school at Collaborative Team Meetings as we strategize together to best meet student needs. I have been petitioned by staff members to do things that ensure that students' best interest is kept a priority.

But if there is one thing I have consistently seen at NPCS, it is a Staff that is a unified team, with a clear purpose of meeting students' needs and giving every opportunity for students to grow in their relationship with Christ, helping them to explore how they can use their gifts, talents, interests and abilities to play their part in God's story, and make a difference in God's kingdom that only they can.

If you try to argue that you are most blessed by the staff at NPCS, you may find yourself in an argument with me, because I know I am the most blessed by the incredible team that I get to work with day after day at Neerlandia Public Christian School. I thank God for these incredibly effective hands, doing God's work in our school.

With this being our last newsletter before the end of the school year, I wanted to wish all of our readers a blessed summer. Regardless of where the next three months

take you, may you grow in your relationship with God and may you have wonderful opportunities to spend time with and serve others. We look forward to working with you for the rest of this school year and in 2025-26.

Prakash Raju

School Wide News

2025/2026	Staff assignments
Grade	Teacher
Kindergarten	Mrs. J. Olthuis
1	Mrs. J. Henschel
1	Mrs. R. Rentz
2	Mrs. L. Strydhorst
3	Mrs. K. Wierenga
4	Mrs. K. Sybesma
5	Mrs. D. Lee
6	Mrs. S. DeWaal
7 Homeroom	Mrs. L. Wruk
8 Homeroom	Mr. B. Wierenga
9 Homeroom	Mr. T. Wierenga
Music	Mrs. M. Ferster
JH and Inclusive Ed Coordinator	Mrs. A. Smith
Principal	Mr. P. Raju
Educational Assistants	Mrs. R. DeVries
	Mrs. A. Elzinga
	Mrs. C. Nanninga
	Mrs. S. Rauscher
	Mrs. L. Seatter
Library Assistants	Mrs. M. Olthuis and Mrs. B. Gelderman
Administrative Assistant	Mrs. N. Wierenga

As you may notice on the above staff list, there are a few staff members who will not be returning to work at NPCS next year. We would like to thank Mrs. Natalie Kerckhof for her service to NPCS over the last 3 years. She has been a blessing to our students, including all the work she did with extracurricular activities. Ms. Cara Corcoran covered Mrs. Cinnamon Thompson's maternity leave this year. I would like to thank Ms. Corcoran for all of her work at NPCS over the past few months, and especially for the extra musical elements she added during her time. Mrs. Thompson will be at Westlock Elementary School when she returns from her maternity leave next year. We thank her for the wonderful support she provided over the years she worked at NPCS.

Thank you to Miss Janelle DeVries for working in our classrooms over the last few months as an Educational Assistant. She was a great help with after school sports

before she started with us as an EA. We wish her all of the best as she looks for a job as a teacher in the new school year. Previously, we missed saying goodbye to Mrs. Kym Peters. We have appreciated all of the work that Mrs. Peters did with our students in school, independently researching at home, and with extracurricular activities as well. We thank Mrs. Katie Blum for all of the wonderful work she did as an EA at NPCS. Mrs. Blum has worked with and positively influenced many students, and created interesting activities for them, over the last few years at NPCS.



Kindergarten Grad and Class Photos

Smart Photography will be here on Thursday, June 5th to take class pictures and Kindergarten Grad photos. When these orders are complete they will be mailed out directly to homes (not the school).

School Supply List

School Start supply lists will be sent home with report cards. This is not a mandatory program – we will also be sending home regular supply lists (shop on your own) with report cards. These lists will also be posted on the NPCS webpage by the end of June. List of possible school fees will also be posted on NPCS webpage. NIV Adventure Bibles will be provided free to all Grade 2 students and new students in Gr. 3-9. These are gifts from NCES!

Forms and Fees 2025-2026

We will continue using School Engage/PowerSchool to handle online registrations. Demographic verification forms (all students) will be available after August 19. Please update as soon as possible as there are forms connected that we need right away in September. Parents will need to have access to their PowerSchool Parent Portal. Parents need their User Name & password. School Messenger: we will continue to use this system to send out important messages via email throughout the school year.

Transportation Forms

For the upcoming school year 2025-2026 they will not be accepting any paper forms, all registrations must be done online. You can contact Transportation Dept. for more information (780-674-8509) Transportation forms including F5-01B are now available. There is no charge for NPCS students as we are an alternative Christian program. We encourage parents to take care of this by the end of June as the sooner you register the better to ensure a seat on the bus. Instructions for registering for transportation in the upcoming school year is found on the Pembina Hills website under Transportation & Register to Ride.

PHSD Board News

Technology Fees for 2025/2026

To help manage the cost of replacing aging equipment, a technology fee will be implemented for the upcoming school year. This fee will support the ongoing replacement of outdated technology, such as Chromebooks, view sonics, and other classroom devices, ensuring students have access to up-to-date learning resources.

- Grades 1–6: \$20
- Grades 7–12: \$35

Legislation - Bills 26, 27 & 29

The Government of Alberta has passed new legislation changes related to curriculum opt-ins, parent notification and athletic eligibility. Over the summer, Pembina Hills will be updating out Administrative Procedures to align with this legislation.

Some of what we will be seeing for the start of September 2025:

- Parents / Guardians will be required to opt-in to any sexual education programming.
- If any supplemental material beyond the Alberta curriculum is planned, families will receive 30 days' advance notice along with a permission form to be signed.

Board Approved Budget 2025/2026

Pembina Hills is facing a 2.7 million funding shortfall due to changes in enrollment and provincial funding formulas. While this reduction is beyond our control, it's having a significant impact on schools across the division. To manage this decrease, staffing adjustments are being made, including a 6.9% reduction in teaching positions and an 8.1% reduction in education assistant hours. Discretionary school budgets are also being reduced by 25.7%. These cuts are forcing us to make tough decisions - including placing class size caps for the upcoming year - to ensure we don't exceed what we can support.

NPCS 2025/2026 class size caps:

- Kindergarten - Grade 2: Max 25 Students
- Grade 3 - Grade 5: Max 28 Students
- Grade 6: Max 30 Students

While I won't sugarcoat the challenges, I want to be clear: I believe in the alternative program at NPCS and the importance of the education that you've chosen for your children. I remain committed to transparency and open communication - if you have any questions, concerns, or ideas - please don't hesitate to reach out.

Victoria Kane

Grade 9 Grad

Grade 9 Grad will be held on **Friday, June 20** -There will be a dinner (invited guests only) at 6:00pm and the ceremony (open to all) will be at 7:30 pm.

NCES/NPCSC News

-May 27 NPCSC/ NCES held our AGM. We had a great turn out and thank everyone for their participation in meaningful discussions with admin and PHSD. Highlights include:

- Thanking retiring board member Shawna Sotnikow for her 3 year commitment to the board, as she steps down.
- After a member vote for 2 open positions, with 3 names standing, Kirstie Schatz was re-elected to a second 3 year term, and Meagan Neill was elected to her first 3 year term. We thank all candidates who let their name stand.
- NCES budget was passed for the 2025-26 school year.
- Questions were raised to PHSD Trustees about the budget cuts for 2025-26, resulting in staffing cuts and classroom caps. We encourage anyone who has questions to reach out to our PHSD Trustee Victoria Kane for more information.
- NCES provided lunch for NPCSC Staff for their Collaboration Day June 2, as a thank you for their hard work and dedication over the last year.
- NPCSC will once again host PHSSAM on June 6. NCES will be running the concession as a fundraiser for ongoing projects.
- The 3rd phase of our playground build is on track to happen this summer, along with matting of the Gaga pits. Keep your eyes out over the summer as you pass by the school, to see the progress!
- Our Annual Welcome Back Pancake Breakfast is scheduled for Friday August 29! All families and community members are welcome.
- We would like to wish everyone a safe and fun summer break! See you all in September!
- Our final NCES meeting of the 25-26 year is June 16, 7pm at NPCSC.

NCES Board of Directors 2024-25:

Kirstie Schatz (Chair), Charlene Fleming (Vice Chair/ Playground Liaison), Alanna Breikreitz (Secretary), Laura Braucht (Treasurer), Sandra Olthuis (Community/PCCE Rep), Cassie Wierenga (Fundraiser Liaison), Julaine Greilach (Hot Lunch Coordinator), Meagan Neill (Member at Large)

Field Trips

We have several field trips coming up for the month of June. Classroom teachers will be sending home detailed notes with dates & times. All of the forms & fees will be posted online via PowerSchool. Please check regularly to ensure your child has proper forms completed & fees paid. Several of these trips will require parent volunteers. We have been informed by the RCMP if we require parents to obtain a criminal record check that they require a letter from the school requesting this. Please contact the office if you are planning on getting one. We require the Volunteer form 4-60 completed and the intervention record check and this is now done online. You need to send email to CFS.IRCNorth@gov.ab.ca to request the form. You will then complete and they will return to you and then you need to share with the office.

Sports

Jr. High Track and Field

Several of our Jr. High students qualified to go to Zones to be held at Onoway School on Tues., June 3.

Library News

Thank you for supporting our Scholastic book fair. We received \$185 in Free books and made \$650 in profit.

June Hours

Monday - Thursday
9:00 AM - 4:30 PM



We are Open

Friday, June 6 and June 13

The last day for students to check out books will be June 12th and all books need to be returned by June 19th

Our Summer program begins July 3rd
Our theme this year is "Under the Sea"
We are open Thursdays during the summer
July 3 - August 21
9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Calendar of Events

***several field trips coming up in June – teachers will be sending out information for classes.**

June 2 – Teacher day, no classes

June 3 – Jr High Track & Field Zones at Onoway

June 4 – Grade 3 & 9 Telus World of Science

June 5 – Kindergarten Grad Photos and Class Pictures

June 5 & 6 – Jr. High Band Camp

June 6 – PHSSAM (Track meet here for Gr. 4-6)

June 9 – Kindergarten Telus World of Science

June 10 – Gr. 4 Wetlands

June 12 – Grade 2 Fort Edmonton

PAT – Gr. 6 LA Part B. Grade 9 PAT LA Part B

June 13 – **PAT Grade 6 Math Part A. Grade 9 Math PAT Part A.**

Grade 3 Swimming at Barrhead Aquatics Center. Grade 4 Field trip. Grade 5 & 7 Fort Edmonton.

June 16 – NCES Meeting

June 17 – **Grade 6 Math Part B PAT. Grade 9 Math Part B PAT**

June 18 – **Grade 6 Social PAT, Grade 9 Social PAT**

June 19 – **Grade 9 Science PAT.** Grade 6 Field Trip.
Gr. 1 Zoo Field Trip

June 19-25 – Gr. 7 & 8 Exams

June 20 – Grade 9 Grad

June 24 – Grade 2, 4, and 6 Swimming at Barrhead Aquatics Center

June 26 – Tropical Day!
Grade 1 Swimming in Westlock.

Exam make up day.

Last student day!

