



School Handbook

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Can't find what you are looking for? [Email us](#) and let us know so we can include that information in this handbook.

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Welcome to New Horizons School

To all the returning parents, welcome back!

To the parents new to our school, we are excited to have you as a part of this unique and special learning community.

This handbook is intended to be a quick reference guide to our school. Should you require more information, please feel free to contact the office. A handbook such as this is continually a work in progress. If you have suggestions for improvements, we would be glad to hear them.

A. General Information

1. Contact Information

School Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Office Number: 780-416-2353

Student Transportation (Elk Island Public Schools): 780-417-8151

Website: www.newhorizons.ca

School Email: administration@newhorizons.ca

Staff Email: The staff email list can be found at [this link](#)

2. School Calendar

Our School Calendar can be found [here](#). You may also find our school events calendar at the bottom of our home page.

3. Start and Dismissal Times

Doors Open: 8:15 a.m.

- Students are expected to meet in the gym and remain there until the bus students arrive at approximately 8:25

Bell Schedule: Our bell schedule is posted on our website: newhorizons.ca

4. School Fees and Fee Waiver

In accordance with Board Policy #209, New Horizons School collects fees from each student.

- Parents will be sent an invoice via email and can pay electronically.
- Our fees schedule is posted on our website: <https://newhorizons.ca/school-fees/>

We understand that some families may have difficulty making a lump payment or being able to pay the fees. Two options are available for families facing financial hardship

- A flexible payment schedule can be arranged.
- A fee waiver program is available to address circumstances of financial hardship.

Please contact the office for more information.

B. About New Horizons Charter School

1. New Horizons School – A Public Charter School

New Horizons School was established in 1995 as Canada's first public Charter School. Our school operates as a public, government funded, charter school for gifted children.

Programs are currently offered for children in Grades K to 9. The school is governed by the Board of the New Horizons Charter School Society, a non-profit charitable society made up of parents, teachers, and interested community members. The society operates the school under a charter with the Minister of Education for the Province of Alberta.

For more about Alberta's public charter school system, [view this video](#) and visit [The Association of Alberta Public Charter Schools site](#).

2. School Mission Statement

The mission of New Horizons School is to meet the special academic needs of gifted students in a congregated setting in an environment that is low-anxiety, positive, and supportive of the individual. Gifted students need opportunities to be challenged, to think alternatively, and to pursue learning according to their own learning styles.

3. School Philosophy

Our program recognizes that gifted children tend to be very intense and focused. The school is on a continuous journey to seek and use a range of techniques identified by research as appropriate for meeting the unique needs of gifted children. The school embraces and enhances the Alberta Program of Studies from K to grade 9.

New Horizons is structured upon the appropriateness and characteristics of the students, determined by initial application information and assessments performed early in the school year. Timetabling will allow for some flexibility in grouping for instruction and activities. At times students will be streamed to work with those with similar achievement levels. The possibility also exists to group students with different levels of skill mastery to allow students to develop leadership, and to ensure that students can work with a range of individuals at various levels of ability.

The overarching principle of the program is to facilitate student growth and development academically, emotionally, and socially. In accordance with Alberta Education's mandate related to student learning and in meeting the needs of gifted students, the outcomes in this plan have been established to address the three goal areas mentioned above.

4. Charter Goals

Our charter is the document upon which our school is established, and it identifies the goals of our school.

Charter Goal 1: Student Learning is Improved.

- Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate mastery of learner outcomes mandated by the Alberta programs of study.
- Outcome 2: Students will become creative risk takers academically.

Charter Goal 2: Students will benefit from opportunities for positive social interaction.

- Outcome 1: Students will develop positive interdependence skills.
- Outcome 2: Students will become creative risk takers socially.

Charter Goal 3: Students' emotional needs are supported.

- Outcome 1: Students will develop independence, self-direction and self-discipline in learning.
- Outcome 2: Students will become creative risk takers emotionally.

The full charter can be accessed through [this link](#).

C. Traffic and Student Drop-Off & Pick-up

1. Parking

Parking at New Horizons School is scarce. Please follow the guidelines in our [Traffic and Parking Management Plan](#).

2. Drop-off and Pick-up

If you plan to drive your child to school and/or pick your child up after school, please read our [Traffic and Parking Management Plan](#) and associated links.

D . Transportation and Bussing

Bus Service

Bus service is provided by Elk Island Transportation. Parents should be notified of their child's bus by Elk Island Transportation over the summer. If you have questions regarding the bus service, please contact Elk Island Schools Transportation. (780-417-8151).

Transportation Fees

Transportation fees are set and collected by Elk Island Schools Transportation.

Transportation Subsidy (Out-Of-County Students)

If you are out of Elk Island Public Transportation's service area and drive your child to school, you may apply for a transportation subsidy from Alberta Education. Information regarding this subsidy will be sent home to out-of-area parents in the first few days of school. If you do not receive it, please contact the school.

This is a time-sensitive application.

Severe Weather & Canceled Busses

During times of severe weather or extreme cold, Elk Island Transportation may cancel buses. Elk Island Transportation will notify parents as early as possible.

If buses are cancelled, *the school will remain open* (under rare circumstances, the school may be closed and parents will be notified). On such days, parents will be responsible for arranging transportation for their child.

E. Communication

1. Opportunities for Parent-Teacher Meetings

It is crucial that avenues of communication between family and school remain open and well used. We will stay in contact with news, questions, information, or concerns and ask that you do the same. This is in addition to these formal opportunities:

Meet the Teacher Night

- We hold our Meet the Teacher Night in September, to enable the parents to meet their child's teacher, and to discuss such things as the program, along with expectations for work and behavior.
- Meet-the-Teacher night is not a time to discuss your child's needs. Please arrange for a separate meeting for such discussion.

Parent –Teacher Conferences

- The fall parent-teacher conferences are scheduled a few weeks in advance of the report cards so that parents and teachers can discuss any concerns before the report card is issued. Individual Program Plans (IPPs) are also discussed at this meeting (see IPP in the Student Learning section of this Handbook).
- In the spring reporting period, student led conferences are held in the presence of the classroom teacher.

Parent Initiated Meetings

- Parents are invited to contact their child's teacher to arrange a mutually agreeable time to discuss concerns or questions.

2. Contacting Your Child's Teacher

Feel free to email your child's teacher, or to contact him or her by phone (780-416-2353)

- [Staff Email List](#) (note that all staff emails are addressed @newhorizons. ca)

3. Communicating Concerns

Positive, clear and respectful communication within the school community is an essential ingredient to enhancing the educational experience of students, parents, teaching and administrative staff. Successful communications and meaningful problem solving are more likely to occur when concerns are expressed in a clear and respectful manner.

Communication Protocol

At every level of New Horizons' organization, clear, direct and respectful communication will be encouraged and expected.

- Concerns and grievances are to be addressed directly to the staff member with whom the grievance exists and shall only be elevated to the next level after there has been opportunity provided for the concern to be addressed and resolved.
 - Concerns should be clearly articulated in a respectful tone to invite dialogue.
 - Your communication should include specific requests for action.
- Concerns and/or issues are to be addressed directly to the staff member with whom the grievance exists. *(To avoid bias in the case of an appeal, please do not cc school administration on emails.)*
- An appointment should be made at a time agreeable to both parties.
- If resolution is not reached, the concern and the attempts at resolution are documented and may be elevated to the next level using the same process: principal, superintendent, and then the Board.
- If a complaint is elevated, the person to whom it is elevated shall ensure that the communication plan has been followed and that resolution was meaningfully attempted.
- If the complainant has not followed the communication protocol he or she will be referred back to the appropriate level.

Other Considerations

Please avoid coming to the school unannounced and requesting a meeting without prior notification. While before and after school are often the times parents wish to meet with a staff member, such times are busy. Therefore, if you wish to have a successful discussion with your child's teacher, we urge that you arrange a meeting ahead of time to ensure that there is adequate time and attention to discuss your concerns.

4. School-Wide Communication to Parents

Email

In order to reduce the number of emails coming from the school, emails from the school are limited to only information that is vital/urgent for parents to read, or is time sensitive.

Parent Update

For other information that is important but not urgent or time-sensitive will be communicated through a weekly post called "**Parent Update**" [on the home page of our website.](#)

- We urge all parents to either check the website on a weekly basis, or **sign up to receive an email notification that a new post has been made.**
- Sign up for notifications at the bottom of our home page. You can also unsubscribe through the same process).
- Signing up for notifications will also notify you of general school updates (#3 below)
- While these posts will not contain sensitive information, they are intended for our parents and not the public at large. Therefore, these posts will be **password protected**. The password will always be **NHSParent2019**
- The benefits of using the post format include
 - easily accessed without getting lost in the emails stream
 - viewable in one location on the website (when you view a post, you can click on a link that has past posts)
 - notifications allow parents to delete that email without deleting the information

New Posts

For other information that is more general and may interesting be of interest to the public at large (eg. "This Week at NHS," stories that help promote who we are), we will continue to post it on [our home page](#).

- These posts are not password protected.
- By signing up for notifications (item #2 above) you will automatically receive these notifications.

Review and Read All Posts

To view the monthly news and parent updates as you might do with a traditional newsletter, click in the **"View All"** button beneath the news feed section of the Home Page.

FaceBook

Our Facebook is located at <https://www.facebook.com/New-Horizons-School-for-Gifted-Learners>
 Notices and links about news updates on our website will be posted on FaceBook.

5. Teacher Communication to Parents

Parents can expect the following communication from their child's teacher.

- Elementary (K-6)
 - An introductory email at the start of the year that will include
 - contact information
 - how agendas will be used
 - how and when communication will occur
 - how parents can access student progress
 - Timely communication of concerns regarding achievement, behaviour, or other issues via email or phone call.
 - Timely communication of upcoming special classroom/divisional events.
 - Individual Program Plan Updates will occur during the second and third reporting period, or when necessary in between reporting periods.

- It is expected that each child from K-6 maintains a daily agenda. Brief comments may be passed onto parents via the agenda (eg. Great Day!), **but any issue of importance will be communicated by email or phone call.**
- A Classroom Website that will include
 - links to the programs of study
 - monthly updates of program progress (notification of updates sent to parents)
 - a calendar of classroom events that can be shared with parents
 - only parents and students will have access to this website
- Junior High (7-9)
 - Introductory email at the start of the year that will include
 - contact information
 - how and when communication will occur
 - how parents can access student progress
 - Timely communication of concerns regarding achievement, behaviour, or other issues via email or phone call.
 - Timely communication of upcoming special junior high, classroom or course based events.
 - A website that will include
 - links to the programs of study
 - monthly updates of program progress (notification of updates sent to parents)
 - one junior high events calendar that can be shared with parents

F. Parent Bodies at New Horizons School

1. New Horizons Charter School Society: Parent Membership

New Horizons Charter School Society (NHCSS) is a registered non-profit society, which is the decision making body of the School. All parents are eligible to become a NHCSS Member by signing a **Declaration of Understanding**. *Please watch for a form to be sent to all parents at the beginning of each year.*

2. New Horizons Charter School Society: Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is elected by members of the Society and provides overall governance to the school. The Board consists of up to seven directors, elected for a two-year term. Terms of service are staggered so as to provide continuity on the Board.

Meetings are held approximately once a month and all parents of children in the school are encouraged to attend.

For more information regarding the Board, please visit the [NHS Board & Society Information and Documents](#) on our website.

3. New Horizons School Council

The purpose of the Council is to:

- provide input to the school administration from the school community in areas relating to our children's education, fundraising, discipline, school maintenance, organization, and programming;
- provide information to parents on topics about school programming and educational issues;
- develop special events that foster participation and well-being of the school community;
- communicate information to parents and the community; and
- promote pride in the school and community.

All parents of students in New Horizons School are considered members of the School Council, and are welcome to attend any or all meetings. Meetings are monthly and dates will be communicated at the start of each school year.

Any parent of a student in the school may run for Council executive. Elections are held annually in June. Meetings are held as required, generally on a monthly basis, at the school. For more information, visit the [School Council Page](#).

4. Fundraising Association of New Horizons School (FANHS)

FANHS is an independent fundraising body for New Horizons School. It is composed of parent volunteers interested in raising funds for school events, purchases, or other designations.

Each year, in collaboration with the school, the School Council puts forward a request for funds to FANHS, and FANHS organized fundraising events for those purposes.

Our school is supported in many ways through the work of FANHS. Any parent of a student enrolled in the school may be a part of this body. Meetings are held at various times to meet the schedules of the various members. Visit the [FANHS](#) page on our website for more information.

G. Volunteering at New Horizons School

Parents are an important part of our school, and we encourage parents to volunteer for Board, School Council and FANHS positions as well as become involved in the everyday life of their children at school.

Volunteer services are usually coordinated through either the classroom teacher or the FANHS Volunteer Coordinator.

Parents can become involved as special resource persons or volunteer to assist in the office, library, or in classrooms/field trips, special events, or playing an active role under the supervision and direction of a teacher.

Board Policy #204 requires that parents volunteering in any capacity **must** complete, on an annual basis, a [Volunteer Registration and Confidentiality Undertaking](#) , and a [Criminal Record and Child Welfare Record Declaration](#). Hard copies are sent home at the start of each school year, or parents may download and sign the form and bring it to the school office.

H. Lunch Hour Supervisors

Each fall, we put a call out for Lunch Hour Supervisors.

Lunch hour supervisors play an important role in our school by helping to keep lunch hour safe for our students and by providing an opportunity for teachers to have a lunch break.

Lunch hour supervisors receive an honorarium for their volunteer work.

If you have been a lunch hour supervisor in the past, please contact the office as soon as possible with the days on which you will be available.

All new lunch supervisors are required to complete [an on-line application form](#) and submit the following documents. Please notify the office that an application has been submitted.

- Criminal Record Check
- Child Intervention Check
- Volunteer Registration and Confidentiality Undertaking , and a Criminal Record and Child Welfare Record Declaration

I. Services

1. Hot Lunch

FANHS coordinates a hot lunch program. A hot lunch is offered on Tuesdays and Wednesdays throughout the year. For more information, visit the [Hot Lunch Program Page](#).

2. Out-of-School-Care

Out-of-school care is available for school aged children (4/5- 12 years old). The service is provided by a private contractor, Friends Club Child Care.

For more information, contact Kasia Spanialska:

- Phone: 780-707-4481
- e-mail: kspa2006@gmail.com
- Website: <http://www.newhorizons.ca/out-of-school-care/>

3. Lost and Found

Each year we collect dozens and dozens of lost-and-found items. Items that are found are stored in bins near the main entrance to the school.

We suggest that all clothing items have your child's name on the tag for identification.

Valuable items such as phones or devices are kept in the school office.

J. School Access

1. Morning Access

- Students will be able to enter the school at 8:15 a.m. and remain in the gym under supervision until the arrival of bus students at 8:25 a.m.
- It is expected that students remain orderly while waiting in the gym. Instruction begins at 8:35 a.m.

2. Access During the School Day

- The doors lock at 8:45 a.m. and remain locked until 3:14 p.m.
- To gain access to the school, please press the buzzer.
- Doors open in the morning at 8:15 a.m.

3. Signing In and Out

- When you enter the school during the school day, please report to the office and sign-in.
- Sign out when you leave the building.

4. After School Pick-up

- Kindergarten: Please refer to the guidelines from the Kindergarten Teacher.
- Our halls and entrances are congested at dismissal time. Therefore, we recommend waiting for your child outside or in the foyer.
- If you wish to meet your child in the school, please note the following
 - Main entrance doors open at dismissal time (3:14 p.m.)
 - Avoid standing in the entrance to reduce congestion
 - Please remove wet/muddy footwear and wait in the foyer.

5. Can I escort my child to his/her classroom in the morning?

- kindergarten: Please refer to the guidelines from the Kindergarten Teacher.
- For the first week of school, parents who wish may escort their child to the classroom. After the first week, please allow your child to make his or her way to the classroom independently.

K. Absences / Lates

Attendance and Punctuality: A Student and Parental Responsibility

Section 31(a) of the *Education Act* states that a student “has the responsibility to (a) attend school regularly and punctually,” and Section 32 (b) states that it is the parent responsibility to “take an active role in the child’s educational success, including assisting the child in complying with section 31.”

If you drive your child to school, please ensure you arrive before 8:35 a.m. when classes begin. Late arrivals are disruptive to your child’s learning, and to the learning environment of other students.

After five late arrivals in a month, the school administration will contact parents.

Reporting Absences and Lates

It is essential that parents notify the school when their child is absent or late.

While we contact all parents when a child is not in school and either the teacher or the office has not been notified, this can be a long process when we have several unexcused absences. Please assist us by notifying the school ahead of time.

Please inform the school of your child’s late arrival or absence in one of the following ways:

- [on-line report](#)
- phone call
- email to the office or to your child’s teacher

L. Lunch & Recess Time Time at NHS

Expectations

- All students go outside for morning recess (15 minutes) and the first half of the lunch break (25 minutes), weather permitting.
- New Horizons School has teacher and parent lunch supervision.
- Noon hour supervision is paid for by the lunch fees provided by those who use this service.
- Supervisors then bring the students in where they eat lunch in their classrooms.
- All students are expected to remain in the designated supervised areas.
- Only junior high students may leave school grounds independently (see below).

Students Leaving School Grounds

- Under no circumstances will students be allowed to leave school during class time without first obtaining permission from their parents

- Students leaving the school independently for an appointment must have parental permission.
- Parents who pick up their child during the instructional day should notify the school office or the teacher before hand.
- Students who return to school part way through the school must report to the school secretary.
- Anyone taking their child out for lunch or an appointment is asked to sign in and out *at the office*.

Junior High: Leaving School Grounds

- Junior High students may sign out to leave the school grounds during lunch recess.
 - Parental permission is required. Please contact the office for a copy of the consent form.
 - All school behavior expectations apply when students leave school grounds for lunch.

“In” Days - Severe Weather

When the weather is inclement, students will remain inside during recess and lunch breaks. Inclement is defined as heavy rain, temperatures below -23°C or a wind chill of below - 23°C.

- When an “In” Day is called due to cold, junior high students will need to remain in the school.

M. Addressing Student Social/Emotional Needs

Counselling Services

New Horizons School is currently piloting a program through Educational & Counselling Support Services (ECSS Psychological) which provides a variety of services and supports to our students.

Services

- group counselling related to school issues (eg. sportsmanship, relationships, conflict resolution, etc.)
- individual counselling related to school (relationships, personal strategies, executive functioning)
- Coordinating off campus resources and supports with parents
- providing teachers with whole class supports as requested

Sensory Room

- Gifted students often experience their world with intensity. Kazimierz Dabrowski, (1902-1980) characterized these intensities as overexcitabilities. One of the ways New Horizons School supports gifted students, their overexcitabilities, and their intensities is by providing them access to our [sensory room](#).

Other Supports and Services

- Zones of Regulation
- Mindfulness
- Restitution Self-Discipline
- Growth Mindset

N. Healthy Schools - Snacks

Nut Aware School

New Horizons School is committed to providing a safe environment that is inclusive for all children. In common with most other schools, we have a number of children with life-threatening peanut and tree nut allergies.

We are not a “Nut Free” school because we can’t guarantee that students or adults have not brought nuts, or traces of nuts, into the building. However, in order to prevent a tragic incident, we ask that parents please be aware of what you are sending with your children to school and avoid sending items that contain peanuts or tree nuts.

NHS Snacks Policy

- Students will not be kept after school without parental notification and approval.

O. Student Health

Student Illness at School

- If a student is too ill to remain in class, the school staff will contact a parent to take the child home. In the event that a parent cannot be contacted, is unable to collect the student, or if the illness is not of a serious nature, the student may rest at the office or in our infirmary. The emergency contact for the ill child is only made if the parents cannot be reached and the child is too ill to rest comfortably at school.

Accidents at School

- When minor accidents occur that do not appear to require medical attention, parents will be contacted by phone or email to make them aware of the incident. If the accident appears more serious, the parents will be contacted and requested to come to school so that they may seek medical attention for the child.
- If parents are unable to be reached, an emergency contact will be called.
- If the emergency contact is unavailable, a staff member of the school will arrange for medical assistance as deemed necessary including a 911 call.

Administering Medicine to Students

The Board Policy #405 recognizes that some students must have prescribed medication during school hours requiring the cooperation of school staff. At all times, final responsibility for such medical treatment rests with the parent/guardian, or in the case of independent students, with the student.

Non-Prescribed Medicines

- Non-prescription drugs such as aspirins, cold remedies and inhalants shall not be administered to students by school staff without the written permission of the parents/guardians.
- Students bringing over-the-counter drugs such as aspirins/cold remedies or prescription drugs such as asthmatic inhalers to school require written authorization from their parent(s) and /or physician prior to bringing any form of drugs onto the school property or to any school related activity.
 - The authorization must clearly state that these medicines are self administered.
 - These medicines must be stored at the office.
 - Parents/Guardians must fill out a [Medication Form](#) to accompany the medication when brought to the office so administration can be recorded.

Prescribed Medicines

- Parents/guardians requesting the administration of prescription medication shall provide a written request and instructions using a separate form from above. Please request this form from the office if needed.
- The Principal, in consultation with staff, shall make the decision whether to comply with a parents/guardians request to administer prescribed medication and/or personal care to a student.
- Where procedures beyond a written prescription are required, written instructions shall be received from the physician concerned.
- When the principal agrees to the parent/guardian request, he/she shall designate staff members who mutually agree to administer medication.
- The principal shall immediately notify the parent/guardian if he/she disagrees with the request.

P. Emergencies

Emergency Drills/Practices

New Horizons School conducts drills with the entire school for the following:

- Evacuation Drill (fire or other emergency for which being in the school is unsafe)
- Lock-Down (Internal Threat)
- Procedures for other emergencies such as lockdown from an external threat, and severe weather are reviewed with the students.,

Emergency School Closure

In the case where NHS needs to be closed for an emergent reason and not indicated on the approved school calendar,

- announcements will be posted on our website and Facebook page.
- announcements will be sent to local radio stations beginning at 6:30 a.m. or as early as possible.

In the case of the school needing to close **when the instructional day has begun**, in accordance with Board policy, the principal will make arrangements for early dismissal.

- All parents or emergency contacts will be notified.
- Parents are encouraged to have a contingency plan in place for the care of their children if it becomes necessary to close the school.

Emergency Evacuation Centre

If the school is required to be evacuated during the instructional day, and re-entry into the school is not permitted, students will move to our evacuation centre at Westboro School at 1078 Strathcona Drive, Sherwood Park.

- All parents or emergency contacts will be notified and updated on transportation and other necessary information

Types of Lockdown:

Lockdown: Outside Threat

A lockdown may occur if a threat exists outside of the school.

- *A flashing blue light outside the main entrance* will indicate we are in lockdown.
- If a threat exists outside of the school, no one except for emergency personnel will be able to enter or leave the school.

Communication:

- An email will be sent to all parents communicating the nature of the lockdown and any other pertinent information it can share.
- An email will be sent to all parents indicating when the lockdown has been lifted.

Parent Responsibilities

- Parents are asked to refrain from coming to the school to reduce congestion for emergency personnel.

- No one except emergency personnel will be allowed to enter or leave the school while the school is in lockdown. Do not come to the school to pick up your child. You will not be allowed entry.
- Please do not phone the school so that incoming and outgoing lines remain open.

Lockdown: Inside Threat

New Horizons School staff conducts lock-down drills with its students who are aware of the procedures when a lockdown is called.

A lockdown may occur if a threat exists inside the school.

- *A flashing blue light outside the main entrance will indicate we are in lockdown.*
- If a threat exists inside the school, no one except for emergency personnel will be able to enter or leave the school.

Communication:

- All communication will be coordinated through emergency personnel.

Parent Responsibilities

- Parents are asked to refrain from coming to the school to reduce congestion for emergency personnel.
- No one except emergency personnel will be allowed to enter or leave the school while the school is in lockdown.
- Please do not phone the school so that incoming and outgoing lines remain open.
- **Refrain from contacting your child by phone.** While all students will be instructed to put their phones on silent, they may not have done so. *A ringing phone may put your child and other children at risk.*
- *Follow all directives communicated by emergency personnel.*

8. Inclement Weather/Extreme Weather Conditions

Canceled Buses School

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Severe Weather Drills

We conduct severe weather drills in late spring when severe weather such as tornados may occur.

Lockdown Drills

In the event of an intruder or threat, the school will be locked down and the police contacted.

As a lockdown drill can sometimes increase student anxiety, parents will be advised of a lockdown drill via e-mail, letter home or phone message prior to the drill.

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12. The School Website

- Our school's website (www.newhorizons.ca) is updated regularly.
- Please note that there are two menus on the home page
- o Main Menu located at the top of the page

o Quick-Links menu on the right side of the page that provides information to many aspects of our school including documents such as our Education Plan.

o

D. Expectations for Students

A. Our Social Contract

New Horizons School, we are fortunate to have a student body, staff, and parent community who maintain a positive school atmosphere. However, a school is a human environment, and conflicts will and do arise.

As we work and learn together – students, staff, parents, and guests – we are all expected to do so within the bounds of our social contract below.

We believe that ...

Our school is a place of learning.

It is a place where we all treat each other with respect and honesty.

We learn and play in a way that is safe and fair.

We hope that you feel welcome in our school and contribute to the positive atmosphere by honoring our social contract.

1. Student Code of Conduct

Parents are encouraged to review the complete **Student Code of Conduct** that can be found on our website (<http://www.newhorizons.ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Code-of-Conduct-2016.pdf>)

2. Use of School Phone

The phones in the school are for staff use. However, it is understood that on occasion it is crucial that a student contact a parent. At those times, students may have use of the school phone only after obtaining permission from the office staff or teacher. The office phone is not to be used to make play/homework dates.

Students who have cell phones will be requested to leave them in their lockers until break times when they may be used.

3. Electronic Devices

Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement

We are pleased to be able to offer fee free electronic learning devices to our students to make information that supports learning as accessible as possible.

With technology use comes responsibility. All of our Grade 4-9 students and parents are required to sign our *Student Acceptable Use Agreement For Technology* every three years.

Cell Phones

- Students from Grades K-6 are expected to keep their cell phones in a secure location and refrain from using them from arrival at school until after school dismissal. **Please use the office to contact your child during school hours.**
- Students from grades 7-9 are expected to **not** bring their cell phones to class unless approved by a teacher. Students from grades 7-9 may access and use their cell phones before school and during breaks.
- Students must be logged into the school wi-fi while using their own device at school to ensure that their content runs through our school filters.

b) Game Devices

Students are expected to put away their gaming devices when they arrive at school. Students may access their devices at the end-of -day dismissal.

c) Cameras and Photos

Taking photos of other students or staff is prohibited unless the photography is approved by a teacher for an instructional or school promotion activity.

d) MP3 Players/ iPod's

MP3 players may be used in class with the teacher's permission.

- AdGuard (AdBlocker) has been force-installed on all Chrome browser and Chromebooks
- Any extensions requiring the "VPN Provider" or "Set Proxy" permissions have been blocked (these are used to circumvent our web filter)
- Safe Browsing is always enabled and enforced.

- Safe Search for Google Web Searches is enforced
- Strict Restricted Mode for Youtube is enforced
- Search Suggestions have been turned off
- Apps and Extensions have been limited to those that have been explicitly allowed (whitelisted).
- Incognito Mode has been disabled.
- Clearing the Browser History has been disabled
- Chromebooks will now lock the screen on screen close (to prevent other students from using their accounts)
- The “New Horizons” collection shows by default in the Chrome Web Store

4. Personal Property

- The responsibility for the safekeeping of personal property brought onto school premises rests with the owner of the property.
- The school is not responsible for the recovery of lost or stolen property. Staff will investigate reports of missing personal property.
- To assist the school, all personal property, including clothing, should be clearly labeled with the owner’s name.
- School personnel may, at their discretion, hold a pupil’s property for safekeeping.

5. Lockers

- Lockers are provided to grades 4 – 9, and locks provided to students in grades 4-9. Students must use school-issued locks.
- Lockers are provided as a convenience for students and can be subject to a search. School administration must have “reasonable grounds” to conduct a search, and does not have to advise a student of any “legal” rights prior to a search. School administration does not require a warrant or police assistance to conduct a search on school property.

6. Homework

The amount of homework assigned will vary at each grade level. Students may be assigned homework for the following reasons:

- to enable those who have been absent from school to catch up with the rest of the class,
- to develop a particular skill,
- to keep up with the rest of the class,
- to facilitate review,
- to foster deeper investigation and enrichment, and
- to develop good study habits.

7. Dress Code

While New Horizons School recognizes that the primary responsibility for a student’s attire resides with the student and their parent(s) or guardian(s), New Horizons School is responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, that student attire

does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student, and that dress code enforcement does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income, or body type/size.

- [Complete Dress Code](#)

8. Recess

Elementary Students

- All elementary students are expected to go outside for morning, lunch, and afternoon recess (see “In Days” in the next section.).
- Students may remain inside only by request from the parent for special circumstances, or by permission from a teacher.
- Students are expected to remain on school property and in view of supervisors.

Junior High Students

- During lunch, junior high students are expected to go outside but may remain inside only by request from the parent for special circumstances, or by permission from a teacher.

9. Leaving School Grounds (Grades 7-9)

Many junior high students wish to leave the school grounds and walk to the local store during lunch hour. In such case, parents must annually complete the *Leaving School Grounds Permission Form*. Students are expected to sign out and sign in upon return.

F. Parent Communication

G. Technology at NHS

1. Acceptable Use of School Technology Agreement

- All students and parents are required to sign an *Acceptable Use of School Technology Agreement*.
- These agreements are renewed every three years.

2. Technology Availability

- Wi-Fi is available throughout the school.
- Students from kindergarten to grade 1 have generous access to iPads.
- Students in grades 2 to 3 have generous access to Chromebooks.
- Students from grades 4-9 are assigned individual laptops.
- Our technology is a “no-fee” resource. These laptops must remain in school.

3. School Google Account

Each student at New Horizons School has a school Google account.

- They are provided with a username and password upon registration to NHS.
- Each Google account is associated with an email account.
- Generally, students do not begin using their personal accounts and email until Grade 4. Parents will be informed when this occurs.

H. Student Learning

1. Reporting Student Progress

- Grades K- 9 are issued three report cards during the school year: November and March and the last day of school in June. Students not present will have their report cards mailed to them unless reports are complete and ready before the student’s departure.
- Report cards for the K-6 students are outcomes based. In other words, key learner outcomes for the term will be identified on the report card and a numerical level of achievement will be assigned to each outcome.
- Percentages and letter grades are used for reporting core subject progress at the junior high level. Levels of achievement are used for reporting on the option courses.

2. Individual Program Plans (IPPs)

- An I.P.P. is a mandatory requirement of Alberta Education for each student identified as having special needs. This includes gifted and talented students. It is a plan of action designed to ensure the provision of appropriate programming for students with special needs.
- This plan is a collaborative effort between the parent of a student and the teacher. The teacher will contact parents in the fall for input on the I.P.P.
- An I.P.P. will be developed based on parent, student (if applicable) and teacher input. Parents will be given a copy of the IPP for review.
- Parents could choose to approve the IPP electronically or choose to meet with the teacher in person. The IPP remains in place from one year to the next until a revised one is completed.

3. Provincial Achievement Tests

- Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs) are given to students in Grades 6, and 9. These tests are administered in May and June and results are returned to the students in the fall of the following year. Grade 6 and Grade 9 write Sa PAT in Social Studies, Science, Math, and Language Arts test.
- Alberta Education is in the process of replacing the Provincial Achievement Tests with Student Learning Assessments (SLAs). Grade 3 students will participate in these assessments when they are implemented.

4. Parent Portal

We have just migrated to a new School Information System for students in grades. We will be implementing the system the 2017-2018 school year.

5. Student Awards

Honour Awards-Junior High–Grades 7/8/9

To qualify for an honors award a student must attain an overall average mark of at least 80% in each of the four core subjects of Mathematics, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies. They must also obtain a 70% mark in all other subjects.

Trevor Kuziw Award

This award is given to a student (usually in junior high) who demonstrates a high level of service to the school.

Citizenship Award

Awards are presented annually to grade 4-9 students who demonstrate outstanding citizenship in their class rooms. These students display a positive attitude and are well respected by their peers.

Service Award – Grade 4 - 9

Students that provide service to the school as a whole are recognized at our annual awards ceremony. There are a number and a variety of activities that students may get involved in to earn this award. These activities vary from year to year.

Academic Awards – Grade 7 -9

Students have the opportunity to receive academic awards for excellent achievement in the academic courses and French.

6. Math Acceleration

- Some students in grades 1-9 may demonstrate outstanding math skills and require more challenge than what the regular program of study offers. Such students may be accelerated as a strategy to meet their high math learning needs.
- With parent consent, students are assessed with a grade-level assessment. Should students score in a range that is high enough, they are re-assessed with an above-grade-level assessment. If a student scores in a range that makes acceleration a viable strategy, parents may agree to having their child accelerated.
- The school teaches math at the same time. Therefore, a student is accelerated moves to the classroom to join other students at the same grade level in math. For example, a student in grade 3 who is accelerated to grade 4 math will join the grade 4 math class for math instruction.

7. In-depth Studies

Elementary

An In-depth Studies opportunity is offered at all grade levels. These studies are designed to hone research and presentation skills as the students study their own areas of special interest. While there is time scheduled for this course at school, due to the nature of each student's individual project he/she may wish or be required to do some work on it at home.

Independent studies fairs are held throughout the year to celebrate what has been learned independently.

Junior High Investigations

In-depth studies at the junior high level are called Investigations.

Twice a year, the junior high schedule will be rearranged to create an Investigations Week. Students will be given time to focus on their independently chosen project and present it on the last day of the Investigations Week.

8. Library Books

- Books may be signed out for a two (2) week period and may be renewed if not reserved. Reference books must be used in the library.
- Overdue library fines are not levied. However, if an item has not been returned after a reasonable number of overdue reminders, the student will be required to pay for the missing item or return it immediately. The student is responsible for any damages to items he/she has signed out.

9. Learn Alberta

- Learn Alberta is a wonderful site for supporting student learning. You must visit it especially the Online Reference Center.

- To get to the site, visit www.learnalberta.ca. Each school has a username and password shared by all members of a particular school. The username and password will be made available to all students and parents of New Horizons School.

10. Field Trips

Field trips are provided for students throughout the year as a supplement to the school program. Parents will be notified in advance of trip plans. Children who are not able to participate in a field trip will be accommodated in another class during the time of the field trip.

For each field trip, information and permission forms will be sent to parents. All students going on a field trip will be required to have a permission form signed by the parent. These forms will be kept in the school office.

On field trips, students are expected to conduct themselves according to behavioral expectations set out in the “Code of Conduct”. In situations where the field trip involves an overnight stay or use of special equipment, rules of conduct will be outlined in a letter to parents and students.

Please see the “Fees” section in this handbook for field trip costs.

Our Junior High students may participate in a yearly adventure trip which is *not funded* by the school. Students are given opportunity to fundraise to pay for their trip with the assistance from the Junior High Fundraising group should families decide to participate.

11. Extracurricular Programs

New Horizons Nighthawks

Junior high students have the following extracurricular sports opportunities to compete against schools from Elk Island Public and Elk Island Catholic School Boards:

Cross Country

Volleyball

Basketball

Badminton

Grade 5/6 Nighthawks

Grade 5/6 students have the opportunity to join these sports and play against other schools.

Volleyball

Basketball

Reach For the Top

Students from Grade 7-9 are invited to join our School’s Reach For the Top Trivia team.

Chess Club

Students can be part of Chess Club through Jumping KNight Chess which provides lessons to students in grades 1-9. This takes place after school and is an additional cost paid to the Jumping KNight's organization.

Lunch Hour Clubs

A variety of lunch hour clubs are offered to students mainly during the cold winter months. Updates will be made as the year progresses.

8. Inclement Weather/Extreme Weather Conditions

When the weather is inclement, students will remain inside during recess and lunch breaks. Inclement is defined as heavy rain, temperatures below -23°C or a wind chill of below - 23°C.

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I. Student Activities

1.Student Fundraising Initiatives

- Students who wish to initiate a fundraiser must apply by using this form.