



**St. Louis  
Elementary  
School**



## **The Math /Language Focus School**

Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education

### **Parent – Student Handbook**

September 2015 – June 2016



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## I. Introduction

### Name, Address and Telephone Number of School

St. Louis School  
861 4<sup>th</sup> Street SE  
Medicine Hat, AB  
T1A 0L5  
Ph: 403-527-7411

Fax: 403-527-7437



### Early History

St. Louis School was opened for the first time on January 3, 1913, with three classes. There were 70 students. The teaching staff consisted of Mother Mary Veronica, Mother Anna Mary and Miss Connersboy. The school was blessed on January 26, 1913. A large crucifix was placed in the school at that time. On April 12, 1928 the top floor and roof burned in a fire. By September 28, 1928 it was repaired and reopened with an enrollment of 144 students.

### School Staff

Principal	Mr. Patrick Weisgerber
Kindergarten	Mrs. Amy Jacober
Grade One/Two	Mrs. Maureen Woelfle
Grade Two/Three	Mr. Ray Hoger
Grade Four/Five	Mrs. Sharon Martin
Grade Five/Six	Mrs. Susan Flanagan
LLI (level literacy intervention)	Mrs. Susan Flanagan
Music	Mrs. Patricia Swan

### Support Staff

Secretary	Mrs. Charlotte Eresman
Learning Assistants	Mrs. Charlene Smith; Mrs. Louise Lalond; Mrs. Sonia McCue; Mrs. Lorene Stenhouse; Ms. Corrie Lee; Mrs. Nicole Crant; Mrs. Kim Schlenker; Ms. Rose Bellavance
Behaviour Associates	Mrs. Tory Beach
Custodian	Mr. John MacNeil
Librarian	Mrs. Judy Graham
Mental Health Worker	Jenesse Chamberlin
Occupational therapy	Pagasa DeMesa
Speech Pathologist	Asta Spakauskaite
CCT	Ashley Day

## **School Programs**

### **School District Philosophy**

– Showing the Face of Christ to All –

The Mandate of Medicine Hat Catholic Separate Regional Division NO. 20 is to “Show the Face of Christ to All”. All of our endeavors are directed towards the proclamation of the gospel of Christ and His invitation to the fullness of life. Jesus is the reason for our schools. He is the unseen but ever present teacher in our classes. He is the model for our staff and the inspiration of our students.

This mandate is reflected in our Three Year Education Plan, whose first goal states:

The Division will ensure the integrity and enhancement of Catholic Education, which for us has these fundamental components: Community, Spirituality, Sacramentality, Tradition, Hospitality, Rationality, Justice and Compassion.

Catholic Education embraces faith and learning. We seek to breathe the teachings and visions of Jesus into our schools, to bring together a rich diversity of students and staff who share together their spiritual journey. Catholic Education permeates our school buildings; what is taught and what is lived.

### **Subject Areas**

In addition to Catholic Religious Education, the main subject areas are: Language (reading, phonics, spelling, writing) Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Health, Physical Education, Music and Art. To reflect our Math/Language Focus additional instructional minutes will be directed to Math and Language. Also some content from other subjects will be integrated into Math and Language

## **Programs**

### **KINDERGARTEN**

The Kindergarten Program offered at St. Louis School will focus on back to the basics approach with a strong emphasis on phonics through the animated literacy program. This program provides classes for children who are five years of age by February 28, in the year they begin school.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS**

Children experiencing difficulty in Language Arts or Math can be referred by the classroom teacher for assessment. (Parents aware of learning difficulties are encouraged to inform the school). Assessments may be provided formally or informally in the school setting. If the child is found to need special help, it is available by the Special Needs teacher in the school. This means that the child is usually taken out of the classroom during that subject area instruction time.

Assessments are made at regular intervals and if the child has overcome his/her area of weakness, he/she continues in regular class. Parents are advised before any assessment or placement is made.

## **LITERACY PROGRAM**

The Literacy Program originated in the community to complement and enriches the language focus of St. Louis School. Based on the knowledge that strong literacy skills translate into success in many areas of a student's life, its mandate is to get kids "hooked on books."

There is an excellent collection of interesting and challenging books for each grade and reading level. Grades K, 1, 2, and 3 have daily exchanges, coordinated by the librarian, while grades 4 to 6 choose weekly, 2 books at a time. Each child is assessed by the teacher at the beginning of the year. He or she then reads at his or her level until they are ready to progress to their next level.

The community of St. Louis School celebrates literacy and is very fortunate to have benefited from the generosity of the individuals, community organizations, and companies who have donated over \$200 000.00 in support of building a love of reading for all of our students. This amount includes the \$150 000.00 Chapters Indigo Love of Reading Fund along with additional donations of over \$50 000.00 in books, shelving, and literacy carts for our school home literacy program. Our library, our classrooms and our literacy programs are top notch due to the very generous supporters in our community namely the Kinsmen Club of Medicine Hat, Golden K Kiwanis Club, Honda Canada, Bell Canada, Knights of Columbus, CWL, and the family of the late Miss Minique Olson.

## **THE DEN PROGRAM**

The Den Program holds the aim of equipping each student with the skills necessary to be integrated into the regular classroom. The program works to develop classroom skills, friendship making skills, problem solving and anger management. Through the daily instruction, practice building of these skills it is the hope of the program that the students will be successful in their regular classroom environment.

*"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."*

## **EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Many programs are provided for students outside of the regular classroom.

Athletic Association - All elementary schools have formed an association to promote Sports and inter-school activities. Many sports activities are held, for example; Sports days for grade four to six students are held throughout the year, usually on a Saturday, in sports such as: floor hockey, volleyball, basketball, baseball and soccer.

Skating and Swimming - These recreation programs are made available with the City to the schools on an exchange agreement. St. Louis students skate at the Arena and swim at Strathcona Pool.

Fun Sports Day - St. Louis School, in partnership with parents, holds a Fun Day to close out the school year. This event is held during the last week of June. Students by grade compete in a variety of events.

Science Fair - Students are encouraged to participate in the Annual Science Fair.

Free Throw Basketball - Students in grade 5 may participate in the annual Knights of Columbus free throw basketball throw.

Children's Art Exhibition - Works of student art are exhibited each year at the Alberta Teachers' Association Convention and at the Medicine Hat Art Museum and Art Gallery Children's Art Show.

#### Get Active

Since Sept 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013 St. Louis School and the downtown YMCA have been working closely with in a "Get Active" program. The main goal.....to get kids more active; as well as introduce them to physical activities they may not be fortunate enough to receive inside the school walls during school Physical Education classes. Activities such as Zumba, Karate, Wall Climbing, Yoga, Swimming lessons, and Rugby are just some of the activities offered. St. Louis School would like to thank the partners and all those who have contributed to the success of this program thus far.

### **III. Operational Procedures**

#### **SCHOOL YEAR**

The School Year is determined by School Board Policy. Three breaks are held during the year - Christmas break, which varies each year due to the day Christmas day falls. The Teacher Convention week in February, which includes the Family Day Monday, two days for teachers in lieu of Parent Teacher Interviews and two days while Teachers attend the Teachers' Convention. This break usually falls the week of the Family Day holiday. The Easter break begins on Good Friday and includes the week following Easter Sunday. There is no school on statutory holidays in addition to days determined by the Board.

## **SCHOOL TIMES**

School is in operation from 8:45 a.m. – 3:10 p.m. each school day. The following is the breakdown of the bell schedule for grades K to five:

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>
8:35am	Warning Bell
8:45am	Classes Begin
10:15am	Recess
10:30am	Classes Continue
12:00 – 12:25 pm	Outdoor Activity and Intramurals
12:25 – 12:50 pm	Lunch
3:10 pm	Dismissal

## **CLASS PERIODS**

This may vary from classroom to classroom, but in general, class periods are approximately thirty minutes in length or about 10 class periods per day with a morning recess break of fifteen minutes, in addition to a lunch break from 12 p.m. to 12:50 p.m.

**School Fees - ALL fees are due NO LATER THAN November 30, 2014.**

## **IV. Student Evaluation/Policies**

### **Student Evaluation**

#### **CLASSROOM TEACHER**

Each teacher keeps a record of student progress including result of tests and assignments given. The results of these tests and progress records of students are reported when students bring home their report card.

#### **REPORT CARDS**

Teacher report cards are prepared three times during the year. Report cards give the pupil's grades on each subject according to the teacher's assessment. This is based on teacher-prepared tests, assignments, and teacher observation. Written comments are included in the report card to explain possible reasons for any discrepancy in grades.

#### **PARENT TEACHER INTERVIEWS**

A Parent Contact Night is held in October. Parent-Teacher Interviews are held twice a year, once after the first and the second report cards. Parents unable to

attend their interview at the scheduled time are urged to make arrangements to see the classroom teacher at a time convenient to both of them.

## **PROMOTION POLICY**

Every student has a right to an education and teachers and parents should encourage students to always do their best. Retention is only recommended when it is considered in the opinion of the teacher, the administration and parent that the student could profit by repeating the grade. In other cases, students experiencing learning problems are recommended for special programs.

## **HOMEWORK**

Not all students work at the same rate of speed, therefore, all students do not finish all assignments during a class period. These students are encouraged to stay in at recess and after school or take home the work to finish. Parents are asked to co-operate with the school to provide a place for the child to work if he/she brings work home. If questions arise regarding homework, please contact the child's teacher regarding the assignments.

## **Student policies**

### **RIGHTS OF STUDENTS**

1. I have the right to feel safe at school.
2. I have the right to state my ideas and opinions in an appropriate manner.
3. I have the right to be accepted as an individual and treated with dignity and respect.
4. I have the right to learn and take pride in my achievements.
5. I have the right to use the school's property as well as my own personal property appropriately.
6. I have the right to learn from my mistakes.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS**

1. I will behave safely and allow others to be safe also.
2. I will be an active listener.
3. I will accept the individuality of others by respecting and treating them fairly and with dignity.
4. I will be responsible for:
  - attending school regularly and on time
  - completing my work to the best of my abilities without interfering with the work of others
5. I will take care of all property as if it were my own.

I have the responsibility to make restitution for any wrongs I have done.

# Bullying Policy

## PURPOSE

The goal of St. Louis School's anti-bullying policy is to ensure that all students experience a safe, Christian environment that is conducive to learning.

## DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Alberta Education defines bullying as the following:

- Bullying is a relationship problem. It is the assertion of interpersonal power through aggression.
- Bullying involves:
  - Repeated and consistent negative actions against another.
  - An imbalance of power between the bully and the target.
  - Contrasting feelings between the bully and the target as a result of the bullying episode (the child who bullies may feel excited, powerful or amused, while the target feels afraid, embarrassed or hurt).

The four most common types of bullying are:

- **Verbal Bullying**—name calling, sarcasm, teasing, spreading rumours, threatening, making references to one's culture, ethnicity, race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation, unwanted comments.
- **Social Bullying**—mobbing, scape-goating, excluding others from a group, humiliating others, damaging someone's social reputation, gestures or graffiti intended to put others down.
- **Physical Bullying**—hitting, poking, pinching, chasing, shoving, coercing, destroying, unwanted sexual touching.
- **Cyber Bullying**—using the internet or text messaging to intimidate, put down or spread rumours about someone.

## Responsibilities

At St. Louis School we recognize that we all share the responsibility to prevent bullying.

**Students** are encouraged to;

- A. Report incidents of bullying they witness to the teacher in charge at the time of the incident, or to another staff member as soon as possible following the incident.

- B. If student sees another student being bullied they can take some positive action to stop the bullying such as tell them to stop or ask an adult for help. **Students MUST ensure they are NOT taking the matter into their own hands.**
- C. Make it clear to their peers that bullying is not accepted.

**Staff** are expected to:

- A. Remain alert to signs of bullying and act promptly and firmly against it according to the school's discipline policy
- B. Report incidents of bullying to the principal or teacher in charge, who will determine if further disciplinary action should be taken, and/or if parents should be notified.
- C. Offer support and encouragement to students being bullied, including notifying parents, principal, and/or support staff as needed.
- D. Encourage all students to refrain from bullying behavior, and encourage reporting of any bullying behaviors they witness.

**Parents** are encouraged to:

- A. Listen to their child and encourage their child to speak to their teacher at school and/or contact the school if they have a concern (eg. Principal)
- B. Report concerns of bullying behavior to their child's appropriate teacher as soon as possible following the incident(s). If concerns are not handled sufficiently at this level, a report should be made to the principal
- C. Support the school's anti-bullying policy and actively encourage their child to avoid bullying behavior.

The following are some of the proposed steps to be taken when dealing with bullying incidents:

1. Isolated or initial incidents which **do not** constitute bullying will be handled by the teacher in charge at the time of the incident.
2. Any incidents which may constitute bullying should be reported immediately. The teacher in charge at the time of the incident will immediately deal with those involved in the incident.
3. If the bullying does not cease after the student has been disciplined, parents will be notified and other action will be taken according to the school discipline policy.

## Attendance and Late Policy

Regular attendance and punctuality are important factors in achieving excellence in the teaching/learning process in the classroom.

Punctuality is an important expectation of student behavior, according to the School Act. Punctual students show respect for the learning of others by not disrupting a class in session, and they hear important instruction that is usually given at the start of a period.

The School Act states that students are to attend school regularly and punctually unless the student is unable to attend by **reason of sickness** or other **unavoidable cause**.

The following are actions taken by the school to promote regular and punctual attendance.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

a) **Parents** have the primary responsibility for attendance.

b) **Teachers** are responsible to take attendance each day and turn it into the office for recording.

c) **Parents** are responsible for informing school personnel of all absences within 48 hours of which the absence has occurred. Phone the school at 403-527-7411 to excuse your child.

d) **Students** are responsible for all class work and assignments even if their absences are unavoidable or school generated. (Field trips, sports, etc.)

e) **Attendance at Assemblies and Religious Celebrations is COMPULSORY!**

<b>Beginning of the Year</b>	School will make students and parents aware of the attendance policy via the school website and School newsletter.
<b>Ongoing</b>	Parents/Guardians will be contacted daily by the attendance secretary in regards to unexcused absences.
<b>After 6 <i>inexcusable</i> and/or 15 Total Absences/ late</b>	A letter will be sent home indicating the attendance policy and an attendance profile of that student will be attached.
<b>After 9 <i>inexcusable</i> and/or 20 Total Absences/ late</b>	Student will be required to meet with school counselor, administrator, or school social worker to diagnose the problem and recommend written solutions to alleviate the circumstances that are contributing to the truancy. A Second letter will be sent home indicating the attendance policy, written plan as well as an attendance profile of that student.
<b>After 12 <i>inexcusable</i> and/or 25 Total Absences/ late</b>	The administration will contact the parents and request a meeting to go over the student's attendance profile and to discuss A <b>CONTRACT</b> for regular attendance
<b>After 15 <i>inexcusable</i> and/or 30 Total Absences/ late, or 3 breaches of the attendance contract.</b>	The student will be referred to the Attendance Board and all matters will be dealt with accordingly

## STUDENT ABSENCE DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

Parents/guardians sometimes choose to take students out of school for extended periods such as vacations, visits to relatives, assistance to the family and so on. In such situations, **the school does not grant permission for the absence.** Parents/guardians must accept full responsibility for the detrimental effects of the absence. Regular class attendance is important to achievement. If an absence is planned during the school year, the student or parent should let the school administration and the various subject teachers know well before the absence. Teachers **may** give guidance and assignments that will reduce the negative effects of the absence. **Please note that in virtually all situations, significant absences will have a detrimental effect on achievement.**

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

The classroom teacher handles the matters of discipline. Severe cases are referred to the Principal. If the problem continues, the parents will be notified for possible action to be taken.

### Parental Enquiries and Protocol

- 1) Parents who wish to discuss a matter of student discipline or concern should first contact the child's teacher. This is very important as the problem or misunderstanding can usually be cleared up immediately.
- 2) Further inquiries or complaints should then be addressed to the school Principal.
- 3) If the matter cannot be resolved by the Principal, the parent may contact the Superintendent

Gum and sunflower seeds are not allowed in the school or on the playground. Skateboards and roller-blades are also not allowed for the safety of the students and others around them. Students are not to wear hats in the school.

## LUNCH TIMES

- 1) A bell will ring at 12:00 pm to signal students to begin recess.
- 2) At 12:25 pm, lunch will begin.
- 3) Students are expected to clean up their desk area after they have eaten.
- 4) All students that eat lunch at school will eat their lunch in their classroom. Students are expected to finish eating their lunch at their desks.
- 5) Any student who abuses his/her lunchroom privileges may be asked to eat his or her lunch outside the classroom, and/or with the principal.

- 6) Students who eat lunch at school are expected to remain on the school grounds for the entire lunch period.

## **DRESS POLICY**

Students' appearance and dress is to reflect a standard of modesty and courtesy that is appropriate and fitting for an educational environment of the school and for making a smooth transition to the work place. Clearly not appropriate for school are extremes of style including, but not limited to, the following: exposed under-garments, open side shirts, "see-through" attire, clothing that shows buttocks, obvious cleavage, and/or excessive waist/midriff, and clothing with symbols, insignias, and printed messages that are inconsistent with the District Mission Statement.

Facial and body ornaments (e.g. protruding spiked jewelry) that may endanger safety are unacceptable. All dress and attire should reflect Catholic values.

The Principal or the Vice Principals shall make the final decision on the acceptability of any style of dress. All violations will be dealt with on an individual basis. Students in violation of the dress code may be required to cover up or change their clothing, or may be sent home to do so. If parents come in with proper clothing, the student will remain in the office until the parents arrive and the change in clothing has occurred. Subsequent violations may result in a suspension.

Administrative Procedure 331

### **STUDENT DRESS CODE - AP 331**

Dress influences the attitudes of students to themselves and to their work. Just as there is a mode of dress suited to the playing field or the gymnasium, to various social activities, and to formal functions, so there is a mode of dress suited to the classroom. Our commitment to educate the "whole" child so that students can be contributing members of society necessitates that children learn respectable modes of dress.

Students will be expected to dress in a modest and appropriate manner. It is the expectation that all students be clean, tidy and respectful in appearance.

## **PROCEDURES**

1. The principal, in consultation with staff, School Council and Student Council shall further define appropriate dress for the school.
2. The principal, in consultation with staff and School Council shall develop procedures on how best to deal with students who are inappropriately dressed. These procedures shall be communicated to parents at the beginning of each school year and at other times when necessary.

## **V. Student Support/services**

## **SCHOOL NURSE**

The Medicine Hat Health Unit keeps a regular record of every child's immunization and health record. Periodic visits are made to the school to give booster shots and check students' eyesight, hearing, height and weight growth, etc. Parents are sent consent cards requesting permission to immunize. Parents are asked to return these cards as soon as possible.

## **DENTAL HYGIENISTS**

The District Health Unit Dentist visits the school checking teeth in the primary grades (grade 1 & 2). Parents are notified of any dental work that should be done. It is important that a child's teeth be checked at least once a year.

## **PARENT VOLUNTEERS**

Parents wishing to volunteer their services on a part-time basis may contact the office.

## **SUPERVISION/COLD WEATHER POLICY**

Before school, supervision begins at 8:15 a.m. Please do not have your child dropped off or arrive at school earlier than this time to ensure they are safely supervised. On extremely cold days (-18) students will be allowed to come into the school. **After school there is no supervision on the playground.** Students ***must*** leave the school grounds and report home when school is dismissed for the day.

## **SPEECH THERAPY**

The School District employs a part-time Speech Therapist. Children with speech problems can be referred by the teacher or parent for assessment. If a problem is determined, therapy can be implemented. Parental consent and assistance in the program is required.

## **LIBRARY SERVICES**

The school has an excellent library of reference and free-reading books. Students are allowed to sign books out of the library for periods of one week after which they should be returned or renewed. Any book lost or destroyed will be charged to the student to be replaced. Parents are asked to encourage students to read library books. The City of Medicine Hat Public Library also provides many services available to all students and general public.

## **SCHOOL INSURANCE**

Parents wishing to obtain accident insurance for their children can do so by contacting any insurance company. Insurance forms are distributed through the school and brought home during the month of September.

## **COMMUNITY WORKER**

The Community Worker works closely with the Principals, staff and school councils of the two schools in the Flats area, St. Louis School and Elm Street School. The community worker can help you in assessing your child's and /or family' individual needs and if necessary, help you in making referrals to the appropriate agencies, e.g. College programs, counseling and dealing with work related issues.