

# Student/Parent Handbook 2016-17



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### **PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE**

At Riverdale School, our vision is to ensure that all students are engaged in high quality literacy learning experiences which provide opportunities to think critically, create meaning and apply knowledge. Evolving technologies are used to support students in preparing and succeeding in their ever changing world. We are a small school that takes pride in creating a safe and caring environment, where students are held to high academic and behavioural expectations.

Riverdale is a community school that fosters positive parent-school relationships. I encourage parents to take an active role in the academic and personal lives of their children. Together we will ensure the success of every child.

I am truly honoured to lead this community of learners in preparation for the opportunities inherent in the 21st century.

On behalf of all the staff, I welcome you to Riverdale School.

### **SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

The mission at Riverdale school is to ensure high levels of learning for all of our students. As a professional learning community, we are committed to collaboration and continuous improvement in order to provide high quality programming to all of our students. Teachers will ensure that all of our students experience high levels of success in learning the essential outcomes of the curriculum through formative assessment and summative assessments, intervention and enrichment. We envision a school that is responsive to the needs of our school community, and challenge each child to develop the core 21st century competencies in a safe, supportive and stimulating environment.

### **SCHOOL COMMUNITY PROFILE**

Riverdale School is located close to the city center in the historic river valley community of Riverdale. Our school has a small, but stable student population and proudly serves students from the Riverdale and the Edmonton community at large. The parent community values education, supports student learning, and has established a very active Parent Advisory Council. The school leases space to an out of school care (OSC) to provide before and after school programming for students to meet the needs of working parents in our immediate and extended community. The Riverdale Community League also has a partnership with the school and provides before and after school care to children in grades 4 to 6.

### **PROGRAMS AND ORGANIZATION**

Teachers are committed to quality teaching supported by targeted, and job embedded professional learning to ensure high levels of learning for all of our students. Teacher identified essential learning outcomes, and formative assessments enable teachers to provide quality programming for all students. Currently the school has 5 regular program classes of students from Kindergarten to Grade 6. Teachers program for students in a fully inclusive environment. Starting in grade 4, students receive instruction in French as a Second Language. We have a music specialist for grades 1 through 6. Furthermore, all classrooms are equipped with technology to enrich and support student learning. Extracurricular clubs, Artist in Residence, and City of Edmonton programs enhance our school.

## DISTRICT VISION, MISSION, VALUES, AND PRIORITIES

### VISION

Transforming the learners of today into the leaders of tomorrow.

### MISSION

We inspire student success through high quality learning opportunities, supported by meaningfully engaged students, parents, staff and community.

### VALUES

Supporting the Vision, Mission and Priorities are the District's cornerstone values of accountability, collaboration, equity and integrity.

### DISTRICT PRIORITIES 2014-2018

1. Foster growth and success for every student by supporting their journey from early learning through high school completion and beyond.
2. Provide welcoming, high quality learning and working environments.
3. Enhance public education through communication, engagement and partnerships.

### SCHOOL HOURS

8:40	Morning Bell
8:45	Classes Begin
10:30-10:45	Recess
11:45	Kindergarten Dismissal
11:45 -12:40	Lunch
2:15-2:30	Recess
3:30	Afternoon Dismissal
2:35	Thursday Early Dismissal

### SCHOOL CALENDAR

Please refer to the SchoolZone calendar and the Riverdale Assessment Plan for up-to-date information.

### ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

Regular and punctual attendance is expected of all students. Absences because of illness or medical appointments can be excused. Please contact the school for student absences. Children who are suffering from communicable diseases such as pink eye, mumps, and colds/flu should be kept at home until they are well. Children at school who are ill are often unable to function well at school, provide a source of infection for others, and usually recuperate faster at home. Responsibility for attendance and punctuality is placed with students and their parents. When your child returns from an absence, teachers will assist them in catching up. *Homework is not provided for extended holidays.*

### BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

At Riverdale and all EPSB schools, all students have the right to learn in a positive, cooperative and orderly school environment. Our students learn how to be responsible for their own behavior and to treat others with respect. Behaviors that infringe on the rights or well-being of others, physical or emotional, are unacceptable. Please see the EPSB Conduct Expectations attached.

Edmonton Public Schools also has a "Respectful Learning & Working" policy in place. As schools are a work place for adults and young people, EPSB requires all schools to encourage responsible behavior and choices while in the school, on school property and during school events.

### STUDENT SAFETY

Riverdale School remains committed to safety in all aspects. All students are introduced to fire safety, proper evacuation, and lockdowns. Should we need to leave the school in the event of an emergency, we will assemble at the Riverdale Community Hall at 9231 100 Ave NW, Edmonton, AB.

### INJURY/ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

First aid is administered to any child experiencing an injury at school. If it is a minor scratch or bump, first aid is administered and contact home will be made at the staff member's discretion. If the injury or illness appears more serious, parents will be contacted. Should we be unable to contact you, your child will be made comfortable and an ambulance will be called if the injury appears serious. This will be a school decision.

### PLAYGROUND RULES

To ensure the safety of all the children on the playground during school hours the following rules have been set in place for the children to follow:

- Suitable outdoor clothing and footwear are to be worn
- Children will use all equipment safely and report any faulty equipment to supervisors
- Children will follow the directions of supervisors
- Children will remain on school property

### FOOD AND SNACKS

We encourage students to bring nutritional snacks to school. Parents' cooperation in assisting us would be most appreciated. **As children may have peanut allergies, these products should not be sent to school.** Please let your child's teacher and the office know if your child has food allergies or other medical needs.

### MEDICATION

The administration of medication is the responsibility of the student's parent or guardian. Parents are encouraged to dispense any necessary medication at home. When students must take medication during school hours, the administrative assistant or principal may assist. In such instances, the following guidelines and procedures are required:

- A signed medical form from the parent and physician indicating the type of medication to be administered, required dosage, and action to be taken in the event of possible hazards or side effects.
- All medication must be kept in the properly labelled original container with the child's name and dosage clearly indicated.
- Medication is usually stored in the general office or kept with the teacher (this includes non-prescription medication)
- If you have questions, please contact the school

### ALBERTA HEALTH SERVICES

Alberta Health Services staff, from the East Edmonton Health Centre, provides immunizations and information. A nurse from Alberta Health Services provides Riverdale School with assistance and advice during the school year. For more information, contact the health centre at 780-342-4972 or the Health link at 811.

### SUPERVISION

Playground supervision is provided by the staff for a **15 minute** period preceding morning classes, as well as during recess periods. For this reason, we ask that students arrive **no earlier than 8:25 am** in the morning, and **12:35 pm at lunch, if they go home to eat.**

Parents need to be aware that they need to supervise their children in the playground if they give them permission to stay after school or if they come earlier than 8:25 am. **Supervision is not provided earlier than this time or after school by staff.**

### CANCELLATION OF OUTDOOR RECESS

Recess provides a break from regular school routine, a chance to get some fresh air and encourages healthy physical activity. Students need to be adequately dressed for the outdoors including: hats, mittens and winter boots for cold weather, and adequate rainwear and rubber boots for rainy days. EPSB policy states that recess will be cancelled when the temperature is below  $-23^{\circ}$  C. Recess may be cancelled on very wet or rainy days at the discretion of the principal or staff.

When recess is cancelled, students will receive a bathroom break and have an indoor recess. Students from Division II may assist teachers to supervise the younger students during inside recess. During very cold or rainy weather, children will be allowed into the school upon arrival and are asked to sit quietly in the entrance hall until the morning bell rings. **Supervision begins at 8:25 am on these days as well.**

### EXCLUSION FROM RECESS/PHYSICAL EDUCATION

As recess is an important aspect of a child's day, it is stressed that each child participates in this break. Children too ill to participate in regular recess are likely too ill to be at school. Children coming to school with significant illnesses are unable to function well at school and they also provide a source of infection for other children. If circumstances are such that a child must be excused from going out at recess, please send a note to the teacher or call or email the school office.

Physical activity is a critical aspect of your child's growth and development. The importance of daily physical activity is in the curriculum for all students. Students are asked to participate in physical education classes. Please email your child's teacher or call the school if you request that your child be excused.

### BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are special occasions at Riverdale School. Each child's birthday will be recognized in the school. If you wish to recognize your child's birthday in the classroom, please discuss your ideas with your child's teacher prior to the special day. Please be aware if you are bringing something for the students it is important you speak with the teacher. This is very important as young children can have food or other allergies.

### TELEPHONE USE

School phones are for official business. Students are permitted to use the school telephone at the discretion of the teacher or office staff. **Children are asked to make after school arrangements with friends before coming to school.**

### FIELD TRIPS

Field Trips are part of the programming at Riverdale School. We appreciate our Parent Advisory Council's assistance to support and extend classroom learning. This learning includes field trips and activities such as fine arts presentations and other resource people presenting information at the school. Expectations for student behaviour on field trips are the same as at school. No child will be refused the right to participate in field trip experiences due to a lack of funds (please direct inquiries to the principal). Students not able to go on certain field trips will be accommodated in other classrooms. If you would like to assist on a field trip, please speak with your child's teacher. Field trips are generally under the supervision of your child's teacher. EPSB regulations require parents to fill out a "Volunteer Registration Form" if they are volunteering.

### LEAVING THE SCHOOL

**Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds during class time or recess breaks.** If a parent must have a child leave the school during school hours, please contact the school prior to the absence. The school is responsible for the students, it is essential that we know where they are at all times. Students staying for lunch may not leave the school grounds. Parents and caregivers arriving at Riverdale are required to check in at the office and sign their children in and out as required.

### STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are expected to leave home with all the items they need for the school day such as school supplies, homework, student communication books and lunch, if required. Please help us in assisting your child to develop a sense of responsibility by supporting them to come to school prepared.

### ELECTRONICS

Some students have cell phones, games, and other electronic devices such as iPods, etc. Students are discouraged from bringing electronics to school as we cannot assume responsibility for these items should they become damaged, lost or stolen. All cell phones and electronics must be turned off inside the building during the school day **including recess and lunch hours.**

Furthermore, as per our district's code of conduct:

*"If Edmonton Public School Board staff have reasonable grounds to believe that an electronic device contains evidence pertaining to a breach of the District's Student Behaviour and Conduct Policy and/or the School Behaviour Policy, it is the expectation that students make available to school administration the unaltered contents of the permanent and/or removable memory of their cellular phone or electronic device. Failure to make the contents available can be considered willful disobedience and is grounds for disciplinary action."* Further information: District Support Services, at [780-429-8030](tel:780-429-8030).

### **BICYCLES, SCOOTERS, SKATEBOARDS, IN-LINE SKATES**

Students bringing the above items to school do so at their own risk. Please lock your bikes at all times. For the safety of all students, bicycles, scooters, skateboards and in-line skates may not be ridden on the school grounds during the day, other than to and from school. Children should be made aware of all the proper bicycle safety rules. Children are required to wear a bicycle helmet when riding.

### **CHANGE OF INFORMATION**

Students may have changes to their initial registration form during the year. Please ensure you inform the school office of any changes such as addresses, phone numbers, or medical conditions. This is important should an emergency arise.

### **DRESS CODE**

All students are expected to keep footwear on while at school, 'inside shoes' must be worn while indoors and 'outside shoes/boots' when outside. Girls and boys may wear shorts in warm weather, however bathing suits are not allowed. Summer tops for girls must have straps over the shoulders or around the neck.

### **HOMEWORK**

Homework is meant to:

- help support your child's learning;
- reinforce what your child learned in school; and
- give your child more time to complete assignments.

At Riverdale School, homework is not considered new learning, but rather the completion or reinforcement of material already learned during class time. Home reading is very beneficial to students and is also considered homework. Homework develops good study habits that support success in future academic work and is an essential part of the school routine. Our homework policies include:

- completion of work not finished in class
- working on long-term assignments (teachers ensure that longer projects have achievable segments, and that regular monitoring of progress occurs)
- review of learning for exams and assessments
- reading (length of reading time dependent on student's age)

### **PARENT COMMUNICATION**

Staff members at Riverdale welcome open lines of communication with parents. Please contact your child's teachers first with any questions or concerns. The principal may be approached if there are further questions. Please contact the principal for questions related to school policy and operation.

### **SCHOOL ZONE**

Riverdale uses SchoolZone as a primary means to communicate District, Community, School and Classroom news. Information specific to your child is also included, such as newsletters, field trip forms, homework assignments, student assessments, and fee information sheets. The main SchoolZone page also has a calendar, displaying key dates and school-wide activities. Parents can set their SchoolZone accounts to alert them via email when new information is posted to SchoolZone. Parent passwords for new families are sent home with students during the first week of school. If you are experiencing difficulty with SchoolZone, or have not yet received your password, please contact the office. A user guide is posted on SchoolZone. Please take the time to use this vital communication tool.

### TRANSFERS

If you are moving out of Riverdale School, please inform your child's teacher as early as possible. Please return school property, such as textbooks and library books.

### HIGHLIGHT ON LEARNING

Each teacher will invite parents to the school at a time outside of conferences to showcase the learning that is happening in classrooms. Teachers may have parents to their individual classroom or a group of teachers may host a larger event. Please check the newsletter and SchoolZone for dates as they are announced. The Highlight on Learning will be a special time for your child to showcase what they have learned and to celebrate their success.

### INTERIM UPDATES

One of the ways that we help parents stay informed about their child's learning is to provide Interim Updates throughout the year. These updates contain both formative assessments and summative assessments. Academic updates are provided for the core subjects: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

- Interim Update 1 - October 14, 2016
- Interim Update 2 - January 27, 2017
- Interim Update 3 - April 27, 2017

### PROGRESS REPORTS

Student progress is reported three times each year – December 2, March 16, and June 29. At Riverdale School, student grades/marks are reported using letter grades for all courses. Kindergarten students will receive the Early Years Evaluation Teacher Assessment feedback instead of a first report card. Grade 1 students will not receive achievement marks for the first reporting period, but they will receive comments. How well your child is demonstrating curriculum expectations is reported using the following assessment standard:

- Exemplary 80 - 100% A
- Proficient 65 - 79% B
- Adequate 50 - 64% C
- Limited Below 49% D

### LEARNER SUPPORT PLANS

Students with diverse educational, behavioral and/or medical needs will be supported with a Learner Support Plan which may include an Individualized Program Plan (IPP), an Individualized Behavior Support Plan (IBSP), English as a Second Language Benchmark Tracking, and/or an Individualized Medical Management Plan (IMMP). Staff will collaborate directly with parents about these specialized supports on an individual student basis.

IPP Family Input Forms are due back to the school on September 23, 2016 and IPP's will be released on SchoolZone on October 28, 2016.

### CONFERENCES

Conferences at Riverdale have a variety of formats; they may be goal setting, teacher led or portfolio conferences. A link will be posted on SchoolZone near each conference date with instructions on how parents can use our online system to pick conference times. Teachers and parents may schedule a conference outside of the set dates below as needed.

- Goal Setting Conferences - The week of October 4 - 7, 2016
- Portfolio Conferences - The week of March 6 - 10, 2017

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

### THE ROLE OF THE HOME

What happens in the home affects how well your child learns at school.

Children need:

- to know that you believe school is important
- eight to ten hours of sleep every night
- a nourishing breakfast in the morning
- clothing suitable for the weather (heavy coat, hat, mittens, warm boots in fall and winter) and cotton shirts, sun hat, sunscreen in spring and summer)
- playtime with friends and other family members

What you can do at home to help your child in school:

- children need a place to do their school work
- set some limits - be flexible, some nights more time will be needed than others
- put aside a block of time for doing homework (keeping it consistent can be helpful)
- take an interest in the work your child is doing by asking about what they are doing, what they have learned, and help them review their work before a test
- review work to see if it has been completed and is ready for school the next day
- encourage your child to take responsibility for completing their homework

### PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers play a very important role in the programs at Riverdale. They are involved in many types of activities ranging from clubs, the library, the classroom, whether they help at school or from home; all of which ultimately benefit the children. We are very fortunate to have so many people in our community who are willing to donate their time to help in our school. When parents volunteer, the school benefits, the children benefit and the parents themselves benefit. Please contact your child's teacher or the principal for more information.

### RIVERDALE PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)

Open communication and collaboration between the home and school are critical to student success. The Parent Advisory Council's primary focus is on fund-raising activities to support the school, but we all work together to promote the free exchange of ideas between parents and school staff relating to school issues, programs and policy. Parents can be involved by attending meetings, taking on formal roles, and/or volunteering time on a casual basis. For more information about how you can be involved, contact the school office. Watch SchoolZone for dates and times.