

# **GENERAL STEWART SCHOOL**



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## **2021/2022 HANDBOOK**

## **Principal's Message**

Hello and welcome to General Stewart. General Stewart is a small, community-minded school that has a strong tradition of excellence and community involvement. Our school Vision is that at General Stewart, we are kind, believe in ourselves, embrace challenges, treat everyone with respect, work hard and dream big! I am a big believer in creating opportunities for students. Opportunities to try new things, to work with others, to participate in extra-curricular activities. These opportunities help to develop the characteristics of a good citizen and a leader. This is what we want for our students. This upcoming school year will be much more complicated and will pose a number of challenges and changes as we deal with the heightened levels of concern as well as safety procedures. This situation may change as the school year progresses but I want you to know that we realize the importance of having students in school as well as the importance of health measures. Safety is our number one goal for our return to school plan. With that in mind, there are some changes that are being implemented at the start of this year. This will be re-visited and adjusted as determined by the School Board as the year progresses. You will find these changes on page 3 of this handbook.

We are very excited to be back in school with students and I know that there will be challenges this year. However, with challenges come opportunities. We will be flexible and work hard to make this the best year it can be, If you have any questions, you can call me at the school 403-328-1201 or email me at [chris.harris@lethsd.ab.ca](mailto:chris.harris@lethsd.ab.ca) .Thank you for your patience, consideration and cooperation. We are all in this together for our students.

## **STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK HIGHLIGHTS**

1. Call the teacher if you have a concern about your child(ren) and schoolwork.
2. If there appears to be a complication after you talk with the teacher, please call the principal Mr. Chris Harris.
3. If your child is ill and won't be attending school, please let the office know as we attempt to contact all families whose child(ren) is absent.
4. Students late to school must report to the main office for a late slip.
5. Students are expected to be in school and on time unless illness or a family crisis prevents attending.
6. Students absent from school are responsible for catching up on work missed.
7. Students leaving during school hours must be signed out in the office.
8. Building evacuations are practiced throughout the year; therefore, it is expected all students will wear appropriate footwear indoors.
9. Please label all personal items such as clothing, runners (shoes), toys, books etc.
10. Parent/Teacher Conference times are made available twice in the school year, once in October and then again in March. Please watch for these events. Parents can meet with teachers during the year by making an appointment.
11. You will be notified prior to any field trips taken by your child(ren). It is at this time we ask for volunteers to help out. If there is a medical concern the school should be made aware of (i.e. allergies, asthma), please inform the school office.
12. Any vandalism caused by individuals will be billed for the repairs or replacement of goods damaged.
13. The school's one location for "Lost and Found" is in the grade 3/4 - 4/5 entrance. Keys, glasses, rings, etc. will be in the office.
14. Due to the heightened level of concern for COVID-19, there is a continuation of some measures from last year that will be in place at the beginning of this school year. The next page will go over the specific changes for General Stewart School in the 2021-2022 school year. Please be aware that this situation is still fluid and may result in changes to school operations or procedures over the course of the year.

## **GENERAL STEWART 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR**

- The following measures may be changed over the course of the school year in accordance with the decisions of our School Board.
- Heightened cleaning, sanitizing, distancing and health measures are in effect.
- Frequent hand-washing.
- Water fountains are open and students are to bring their own water bottles to fill at the stations.
- Masks are mandatory for all staff and students from K – 5 when they are entering the school, leaving the school or in a common area such as the hallway or washroom.
- Within the classroom, mask use is encouraged and supported but not mandatory.
- Mask use outside is not required.
- Daily and routinely screen all staff and students using the screening form. This must be done each day by all staff and students before coming to school. Parents/Guardians and staff will each be provided a copy of the screening tool.
- Before coming to school each day, parents/guardians should assess their children daily for any new signs or symptoms of COVID-19 using the Alberta Health Daily Checklist. [COVID-19 Alberta Health Daily Checklist](#) (Note – scroll past the adult checklist to find the children checklist). Staff must complete the Alberta Health Daily Checklist for adults before coming to work. COVID-19 Alberta Health Daily Checklist Families and staff are not required to submit the checklist to the school. It is a tool to assess wellness. If a student or staff member has symptoms, they are directed to stay at home, seek health care advice as appropriate, and fill out the AHS Online Self-Assessment tool to determine if they should be tested ([COVID-19 Testing / Online Booking | Alberta Health Services](#)) or call Health Link 811.
- Students, staff or visitors who feel ill or have any symptoms of COVID-19 cannot enter the school. Anyone who tests positive or has symptoms of COVID-19 must follow Alberta's isolation requirements ([Isolation and quarantine requirements | Alberta.ca](#)).
- Signs will be posted reminding persons not to enter if they have COVID-19 symptoms, even if symptoms resemble a mild cold. [Signs on division website].
- Additional signage showing appropriate hygiene practices will also be placed in various places within the school.
- Hand hygiene expectations when entering and exiting the school and classrooms, before and after eating.
- Regularly remind students and staff of respiratory etiquette:
  - cover coughs and sneezes
  - avoid touching your face

- dispose of used tissues promptly
- practice hand hygiene
- Field Trip and class visitations/presentations are permitted as long as transportation and other regulations are followed.
- At this time all assemblies and extra-curricular activities are cancelled. This will also be reviewed throughout the year.
- Parents/guardians will not be allowed into the school for student drop-offs and pickups. They will take place outside.
- Please do not drop off students early or pick them up late. We recognize the complexities of this situation and it may be difficult to organize but it is important to minimize the chances for mixing cohorts which can occur by dropping off students early or picking them up late.
- Parents will only be allowed inside the school for a scheduled meeting and only if they have used the self-screening tool and display no symptoms. A record of all visitors will be kept.
- School volunteers are permitted, at teacher's and principal's discretion, as long as they wear masks at all times and are not in more than one classroom in a day.
- We will use all three doors for drop-offs and pickups. Grade 2 students will use the main front doors. Kindergarten and Grade 1 students will use the South door nearest the playground. Grade 3, 4 and 5 students will use the North doors nearest the parking lot. There will be designated areas for each grade level to line up and their classroom teachers will meet them at the doors to let them in. At each door, there will be a slightly staggered entry meaning one of the classes will enter first then the second class will follow once the first class has entered their classroom.
- Recess times will be staggered with the same door usage as drop-off and pickup times. Cleaning and sanitizing procedures will take place before going outside for recess and also when coming in from recess.
- Lunch has been extended to one hour to allow for more efficient cohorting. There will be two shifts, where students will either go outside first and then come in to eat or vice versa. Once again they will use their assigned doors. Cleaning and sanitizing procedures will take place before going outside for recess and also when coming in from recess.
- Recyclables, including juice boxes, etc. are to be "packed in" and "packed out" meaning that students will put them back in their lunch containers and take them home with them.
- Students are also expected to clean up any garbage from their lunch.
- Additional personal items, including but not limited to, stuffies and blankets are not permitted to come to school at this time.
- To see the full Division Re-Entry Plan, please follow this link <https://www.lethsd.ab.ca/download/361500>

## **School Vision Statement**

At general Stewart we are kind, believe in ourselves, embrace challenges treat everyone with respect, work hard and dream big.

## **School Mission Statement**

We the General Stewart staff recognize and appreciate the uniqueness of each member of our community. We will guide and assist our students to be the best they can be, intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically within an atmosphere of warmth and togetherness, care and concern, respect and trust.

### **STUDENT SCHOOL DAY**

**Kindergarten**      8:10 – 11:13 a.m. Monday to Thursday  
8:10 – 11:50 a.m. on designated Fridays

**Grade 1 - 5**      8:10 – 11:50 a.m. 12:50 – 3:10 p.m. Monday to Thursday  
8:10 – 11:50 a.m. Friday

(a warning bell will ring five minutes prior to morning and afternoon start times)

**School Address:**      215 Corvette Crescent  
Lethbridge, Alberta  
T1J 3X6

**School Phone**      (403) 328-1201  
**School Fax**      (403) 320-1435

### **SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS**

Monday to Thursday      7:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.  
Friday      7:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS**

The school staff will be involved in professional development activities on pre-arranged days. Note the school calendar on our website for specific dates.

## PARENTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

### **SCHOOL COUNCIL**

General Stewart School is fortunate to have a very active and committed School Council group who provides important leadership to the school.

The purpose of our School Council is:

- to provide a communication link between our parents and the school;
- to provide an avenue through which concerns may be expressed;
- to provide support to teachers and students for school programs;
- to provide assistance with school activities;
- to provide information on topics of interest to parents via guest speakers;
- to provide liaison with the School Division by selecting a representative to serve on the Division School Council.

Every parent is automatically a member of our School Council and is entitled to attend all meetings. The Council consists of four officers – chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, treasurer, two representatives from each class, one teacher and the principal.

School Council meetings are at 7:00 p.m. on September 14<sup>th</sup>, October 26<sup>th</sup>, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, January 25<sup>th</sup>, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, April 26<sup>th</sup> and May 25<sup>th</sup>.

Some of the events and activities sponsored or supported by our School Council in the past include:

<b>Hot Lunch Days</b>	organized by School Council throughout the year
<b>Penny Carnival</b>	held in conjunction with Halloween
<b>Sports Day</b>	scheduled for June 22 <sup>nd</sup>
<b>Fund Raising</b>	held to raise funds for special school projects, activities, and all classroom and school field trips

Parents are encouraged to participate in the meetings and activities of our School Council.

## REGISTRATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Registration forms supply necessary information and must be completed at the time of admission. If you are unable to supply some of the information required at the time of registration, please provide us with the missing information as soon as possible so that our records are complete. It is vital that our records are current, especially should an emergency arise. Parents of students must provide legal documentation of their child(ren)'s birth date and proof of residency.

Whenever you have a change of phone number, address, employment or emergency contact person, please inform us immediately.

If your child will be leaving General Stewart School during the school year, please advise the classroom teacher and the secretary at least one week in advance. We will then have time to prepare the necessary transfer documents. All educational records will be released to the new school.

## **SCHOOL CHOICE – OUT OF BOUNDARY REGULATIONS**

### **Regulations**

1. Choice of schools shall normally be permitted only between school years. Admission to Kindergarten programs shall be in accordance with Division policy.
2. Authority for approving admission of students from outside the school attendance area shall rest with the principal. Decisions shall be based on established criteria. Students with special needs may be directed to a school other than their designated school. Decisions by the principal may be appealed to the Superintendent of Schools whose decision shall be final.
3. Once admitted into a school, a student from outside a school's attendance area shall have the same right to continued attendance as a student from within the school's attendance area.
4. Unless directed, the Division shall not be responsible for transportation or any costs associated with a student enrolling in other than their designated school.

The Board delegates to the Superintendent the authority to develop procedures necessary to implement this policy.

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

General Stewart's academic program is organized around kindergarten to grade five groupings. The academic program is based on the Alberta Program of Studies, Provincial Curriculum Guides and the Kindergarten Program Statement. The instructional program focuses on the development of the child's ability to live within his environment, to adjust to the reality of his world of home, school and play; the ability to grow physically, intellectually and culturally. These qualities can be developed with time, with mutual respect and understanding of child, parent and teacher.



We expect students to do their best work at all times. Generally, we expect most students to achieve one or more year's growth for each year invested in school. We recognize that each child is unique, each with his/her own strengths and weaknesses. To provide the best opportunity for each child to grow intellectually, General Stewart uses a number of diagnostic/prescriptive approaches for individual and small group instruction, particularly in Mathematics and Language Learning.

In accordance with Lethbridge School Division Policy, "Promotion and Retention of Pupils" the following will apply to students of General Stewart School.

For the vast majority of pupils, the sole determiner of promotion shall be the pupil's academic competency. This competency is to be measured by a fair and just evaluation procedure as outlined in Division policy.

No student shall be required to remain in any division (eg. grades 1, 2, 3 – division 1) for more than four years. The principal shall have the responsibility for making promotion decisions for pupils in his charge, except for specific special education pupils. In the latter case, promotion decisions shall be made jointly by the principal and the Director of Student Services or designate.

Every pupil, through his/her parents, shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent, a promotion decision that is believed to be erroneous.

### **REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS**

Reports to parents on student progress will be made three times during the year.

Conferences with your child's teacher may be scheduled at any time during the year. Phone 403-328-1201 or send a note requesting an appointment time.

We are eager to keep you informed on your child's progress and will periodically be in touch with you through newsletters, notes home, or phone calls.

### **SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

In addition to our regular programs, General Stewart School offers the following special programs and services to help meet the needs of students and parents:

### **LEARNING SUPPORT PROGRAM**

General Stewart School offers services of a specially trained teacher to work with children who have learning difficulties/exceptional abilities. This program is

designed to help students in the regular classroom who need reinforcement/assistance/enrichment in particular skill areas. The program is intended to meet individual needs by providing support to regular classroom instruction. Students are not placed in this program without parent consent.

### **FAIR NOTICE OF THREAT/RISK ASSESSMENT**

Our School Division believes in creating safe and caring environments for students and staff. Any incident where a student engages in behaviour which threatens or appears to threaten the safety of others will be investigated. The school principal can implement a risk assessment for behaviours that are worrisome including writing or drawings with violent themes; references to or involvement in violent activity at school; or an increased interest in activities that are deemed as dangerous to the safety of others.

A threat assessment is implemented when a student threatens to kill or injure others, brings a weapon to school, or makes direct verbal or written violent threats to others. The threat/risk assessment regulations are outlined in policy 700.6 in the School Division policy handbook available at <https://www.lethsd.ab.ca/our-district/policies2>.

### **CARE TEAM**

CARE Teams in Lethbridge School Division are comprised of Counsellors, Indigenous Education and Making Connections Staff.

### **SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST**

General Stewart School has access to a psychologist to do in-depth testing of students beyond the testing means of the school. Information meetings following the testing are held with parents and teachers.

### **INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

This department has recently undergone some changes and was previously know in the Division as FNMI education. John Chief Calf is the Coordinator and Melanie Morrow is our Indigenous Education Elementary teacher. They, along with their whole team work to support all schools on Lethbridge School Division.

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS**

A variety of extra-curricular activities are planned for students during the school year. These are designed to extend the learning in regular instruction programs

so that students are able to explore and enjoy activities aimed at lifelong skill development. These are voluntary but students are encouraged to participate. Extra-curricular activities are primarily designed for students in grades 4 and 5; however, programs will also be offered for grades 1, 2 and 3. As previously mentioned, all extra-curricular activities have been cancelled at this time. We will review this throughout the year, directly reflecting Alberta Health Services recommendations and the level of risk involved.

## **HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

As this new school year begins the Chinook Health Region will once again deliver their comprehensive school health (CSH) program entitled “Healthy Schools Healthy Futures”. CSH is a team approach to school-based health promotion involving programs and activities that take place in our schools and community. The goals of this program are:

1. to promote the health of students and their families
2. to prevent specific diseases, disorders and injuries
3. to assist students that are in need or at risk
4. to support those persons experiencing poor health

Our school health nurse, Leanne Stephens, is a key member of the “Healthy Schools Healthy Futures” team. Her role is to collaborate with students, families, school staff, police and others in an effort to meet your health needs. She is an access point to resources and information on many health-related topics including healthy eating, tobacco, stress, self-esteem, depression, relationships, bully/harassment, violence, physical fitness, disease and illness. If you would like further information on “Healthy Schools Healthy Futures” please contact Alberta Health Services at 403-388-6655.

## **SPEECH PATHOLOGIST**

General Stewart has the services of a speech language pathologist to work with children who have delays/disorders in the following areas:

- language (e.g. grammar errors, understanding stories),
- fluency (stuttering).
- speech (pronunciation errors) and
- voice (e.g. hoarseness, nasal sounding)

Treatment may consist of individual or group sessions at school, home programs, parent-child evening groups, and consultation to the school and/or parent. Parents are invited to attend testing, an information meeting following the testing, as well as treatment sessions.

For Kindergarten to grade 3, a parent or teacher can make referrals to the speech language pathologist. For grades 4 and 5, referrals must come from the child's pediatrician. For more information, contact the school office or call Children's C.A.R.E. Services (403-329-5255).

### **FIELD TRIPS AND CLASSROOM PRESENTATIONS**

Field trips are an extension of the classroom instructional program. On-site visits to farms, forests, factories, the neighborhood, and organizations give children knowledge that they can use in further classroom work, especially in reading, speaking and writing. Parents must sign a field trip permission form before a student may leave the building on an out of town field trip. Students who are not permitted to go on a field trip will be accommodated in the school with pre-assigned tasks. Parents (volunteers) are encouraged to assist and attend field trips.

### **RELEASING CHILDREN DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds without permission of the principal or designate. Parents taking a child from the school must inform the office upon leaving. Normally students will be released only to parents or guardians listed on the registration form.

We assume responsibility for the safety of each child entrusted to our care. Cooperation on the above is essential to the children's safety.

### **STUDENT MEDICATION**

Lethbridge School Division policy 504.1 will be strictly adhered to with respect to the administration of medication to students. In cases where the health of a student is dependent upon the administration of medication during school hours, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to file a detailed medication/personal care request and authorization form with the school. Over the counter medication will NOT be provided to students.

### **FIRST AID**

When a student is injured at school, staff members, to the best of their abilities, may give the child emergency first aid. A parent, or other person listed on the registration form, will be notified. If a student is deemed to be at high medical risk the student will be transported to hospital by ambulance.

### **STUDENT DRESS**

Students are encouraged to establish good health practices by dressing appropriately for the weather conditions. Please ensure your child wears clothing appropriate for their developmental age.

All students should have appropriate gym footwear available. Footwear, which is soiled or wet due to inclement weather, cannot be worn in the school. To that end, we request all students have a second pair of shoes and that they be left at the school.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

The school's one location for "Lost and Found" is in the grade 3/4 - 4/5 entrance. Keys, glasses, rings, etc. will be in the office. However, children are not always sure of their things, particularly when many children have similar articles (boots, mitts, and jackets). You can help your children and us by labeling everything your child brings to school. In July we will donate all unclaimed articles to the Making Connections program.

### **BICYCLES**

All students are encouraged to ride bikes to school providing they practice good safety habits. The guidelines below are designed to ensure the safety of our students.

1. Bikes are not to be ridden on the school grounds.
2. Bikes should be parked in the bike racks and locked to prevent theft.
3. Students should not ride double.
4. Students should realize bikes are brought to school at their own risk.
5. Wearing a safety helmet is now mandatory by law.

### **SKATEBOARDS, ROLLER BLADES, BICYCLES AND SCOOTERS**

Skateboards, roller blades, bicycles, skateboards and scooters are considered methods of transportation to and from school. Upon arriving on school property, bikes should be parked, skateboards carried and roller blades exchanged for shoes.

### **WAR TOYS (Play guns etc)**

Due to continued tragic events in schools, both internationally and locally, guns (of any sort) and war toys will not be allowed at General Stewart School. Special circumstances can be discussed with the principal.

### **FIRE DRILLS**

Regular emergency school evacuation drills will be held during the year. Everyone (including visitors) must be able to follow the evacuation procedures to ensure safety. All persons in the school must wear footwear during the school day.

### **LOCKDOWNS**

School Board policy mandates at least two lockdown practices per year, one in the fall and the other in spring. Parents will be informed both before and after this practice has occurred.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

Open and regular communication between school and home is very important. Staff and parents are encouraged to keep in touch by conferencing, calling by phone, writing notes, etc.

Regular communications from the school will include:

**Newsletters:** These will be made available to you on our website by the first day of the month. An email copy will also be sent to parents who have provided us with an email address. Hard copies will be available in our office for those requiring one.

**Field Trip Notices:** Parents will be informed of all field trips.

**Special Notices:** Frequently it will be necessary to send home additional school information. Be sure to check with your child for this information.

**Communication is a two-way process. Let's keep in touch.**

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Normally, students will be expected to remain outside until 8:10 a.m. and during recess breaks. In the event of severely cold or wet weather students will be permitted to come inside into designated areas. During such weather, students are encouraged to arrive just before school starts as well as to dress appropriately for the conditions.

### **RECESS BREAKS**

Students benefit from the recess breaks they are given in the morning and at lunch. All students are expected to go outside during recess. If the weather does not co-operate, we will allow all students to remain indoors. If there is a medical reason your child should not go outside, please bring this to our attention.

### **LUNCH TIME**

Our lunch break is scheduled from 11:50 a.m. to 12:50 p.m. **Please note there are no microwaves available for students to reheat lunches.**

### **STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE**

The General Stewart staff will endeavor to create a positive school climate by taking a positive approach to the management of student behavior.

We care about our students and want them to become responsible and self-disciplined citizens. We will make every effort to help students learn to be personally responsible for their behavior.