

GENERAL STEWART SCHOOL



Telephone: (403) 328-1201

Fax: (403) 320-1435

Website: www.gs.lethsd.ab.ca

Email: stewart@lethsd.ab.ca

2024/2025 HANDBOOK

Principal's Message

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year at General Stewart Elementary! I am excited to be joining this great community to serve as your principal and to work with our dedicated staff, engaged families, and enthusiastic students.

General Stewart is known to be a small, community-minded school with a strong tradition of excellence and striving to be the best. As a school community, we will continue to focus on creating a supportive and inclusive environment where every student can thrive. The ongoing goal for the school is that at General Stewart, we are kind, believe in ourselves, embrace challenges, treat everyone with respect, work hard and dream big. I look forward to seeing all the amazing ways that we will grow and learn through these opportunities this year!

We value the partnership between home and school and encourage families to stay involved and connected. Your support is vital to our students' success.

Thank you for entrusting us with your children's education. Together, we will make this a fantastic year for our General Stewart community.

Please feel free to contact me at the school (403) 328-1201 or at ainsley.croil@lethsd.ab.ca with any questions or concerns.

Warm regards,

Mrs. Ainsley Croil
Principal
General Stewart Elementary

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 Mrs. Ainsley Croil.
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. 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.
10. 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.
11. Any vandalism caused by individuals will be billed for the repairs or replacement of goods damaged.
12. The school's one location for "Lost and Found" is in the grade 4/5 entrance. Keys, glasses, rings, etc. will be in the office.

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 8:35 – 11:45 a.m. Monday to Thursday
8:35 – 12:00 p.m. on designated Fridays

Grade 1 - 5 8:35 – 12:00 p.m. 12:40 – 3:24 p.m. Monday to Thursday
8:35 – 12:00 p.m. Friday
(a warning bell will ring at 8:28am)

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 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Friday 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 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 to be determined and will be posted on the school website when confirmed.

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

Hot Lunch Days	organized by School Council throughout the year
Penny Carnival	held in conjunction with Halloween
Sports Day	Date TBD
Fund Raising	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.

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.

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.

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 3/4/5 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 8:28 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 12:00 p.m. to 12:40 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.