

Westboro Elementary Parent/Student Handbook 2023 - 2024



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Sherwood Park, AB
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WESTBORO ELEMENTARY

Our Motto

Believe in yourself – imagine the possibilities.

Mission Statement

To prepare our students to be positively contributing members of society when they finish school.

Belief Statement

At Westboro Elementary we:

- Believe that all children can learn in a safe, caring environment that values diversity and collaboration.
- Engage learners; teach with compassion, model consideration and generosity of spirit resulting in team players and confident learners.
- Strive to have our parents, staff and community members actively involved in our students' learning and forge strong partnerships.

Message from the Staff

Westboro Elementary is an educational community where people work collaboratively to develop their own, as well as each other's, potential. In this community, emphasis is given to developing a safe, kind and welcoming environment. Messages that are transmitted promote human relations and personal regard.

We believe that forging a partnership with the home is essential, if we are to maximize student development: intellectually, emotionally, socially, creatively and physically. As educators we are committed to providing quality educational experiences in a safe and caring environment, in which all students can learn and experience success.

Whether you support your own child in homework, volunteer in the classroom, are active in the School Council, or assist with fund raising, your involvement helps to contribute to our positive school environment.

School Council and Westboro Parent's Society

Elections were held last spring in preparation for the new executive teams to assume office prior to the new school year. We encourage any parent/guardian who is interested to become actively involved the School Council and Westboro Parent's Society.

At Westboro Elementary, we believe that parent/guardian involvement is a critical factor in the educational achievements of our children. Our parents/guardians are active partners in education, whether they assist in the classroom, participate in the School Council or to act as an "at home" project volunteer. Parents/guardians are an integral part of the Westboro School family and are contributors to the success of the school.

At Westboro, there are two groups for parents/guardians: School Council and Westboro Parent's Society. The Westboro School Council and Westboro Parent's Society are legally two separate governing bodies who provide excellent support to the school. The School Council advises and provides input into school direction and activities such as the School Education Plan, transportation issues and building community. The Westboro Parent's Society focuses on fundraising for such items as computer hardware, field trips, school presentations, art supplies and music equipment. While these two bodies are separate entities, the same set of elected officers run both groups and both meetings are held on the same evening. Both groups create and publish separate agendas and minutes and are governed by different regulations.

School Council is regulated by The School Councils Regulation (113/2016). For more information, visit the Alberta Education website at: <https://www.alberta.ca/school-councils.aspx>. **The School Council Resource Guide (revised 2016) is an A-Z resource for school councils and can be found at <http://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca/?page=SCRGuide2>.** The Westboro Parent's Society is regulated under the Society Act and is also a registered charity governed by the Canada Revenue Agency.

Westboro Elementary School Council and Parent's Society Group Executive 2023-2024

Chair	Christan Rasmussen
Vice-Chair	Hilary Schmidt
Treasurer	Mallory Jackson

In our school, the School Council and the Parent's Society typically meet on the third Wednesday of each month from 6:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. to discuss a variety of topics and share information. For more information, please follow us on Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/WestboroParents>

If you would like to be added to the School Council/Parent Group email distribution list (we do not have access to parent email addresses through the school due to FOIP), email us at

WestboroParents@gmail.com

We email copies of our agendas and minutes, as well as other important information from time to time.

Alternatively, you can look up our information on the Westboro Elementary school website (www.westboroelementary.ca) under School Council.

School Council and Parents' Group meeting dates for the 2023-2024 school year are:

September 20, 6:30 p.m.

October 19, 6:30 p.m.

November 22, 6:30 p.m.

January 17, 6:30 p.m.

February 21, 6:30 p.m.

March 13, 6:30 p.m.

April 17, 6:30 p.m.

May 2, AGM 6:30 p.m.

Bell Schedule

Westboro Bell Schedule 2023/24

Regular Times

Warning Bell	8:29	
Period 1	8:37 - 9:09	32
Period 2	9:09 - 9:41	32
Period 3	9:41 - 10:13	32
Recess	10:13 - 10:30	17
Period 4	10:30 - 11:02	32
Period 5	11:02 - 11:34	32
Period 6	11:34 - 12:06	32
Lunch/Recess	12:06 - 12:28 - 12:51	45
Period 7	12:51 - 1:23	32
Period 8	1:23 - 1:53	32
Recess	1:53 - 2:08	15
Period 9	2:08 - 2:40	32
Period 10	2:40 - 3:12	32
Instructional Minutes:		320

Early Dismissal

Warning Bell	8:29	
Period 1	8:37 - 9:03	26
Period 2	9:03 - 9:29	26
Period 3	9:29 - 9:55	26
Recess	9:55 - 10:10	15
Period 4	10:10 - 10:36	26
Period 5	10:36 - 11:02	26
Period 6	11:02 - 11:28	26
Period 7	11:28 - 11:54	26
Lunch/Recess	11:54 - 12:24 - 12:54	60
Period 8	12:54 - 1:20	26
Period 9	1:20 - 1:46	26
Period 10	1:46 - 2:12	26
Instructional Minutes:		260

District Contact Information

Westboro Elementary is proud to be a part of Elk Island Public Schools. Please visit the EIPS website at www.eips.ca to find a host of information about our schools, programs and district initiatives.

To contact **Central Office**, please call:
780-464-3477.

For questions about **Student Transportation**, please call: 780-417-8151.

Our Community & Facility

Westboro Elementary was built in 1970 and is located in an established neighbourhood in the southwest section of Sherwood Park. Westboro Elementary is a well-maintained facility with

Smartboard technology, FM system equipped classrooms, portable computer labs, a fully outfitted music room, a large gymnasium, and an extensive library. There are computers in the library dedicated to our Accelerated Reading (AR)

Program for our Gr 4-6 students and also used for student research. The library technician's time is used to enhance the overall appearance and operations of our library as well as technology needs in the classroom.

Enrolment

For the 2023 - 24 school year Westboro Elementary has a population of approximately 250 students and 32 certificated and classified staff. As a community school, most students reside in the Westboro area and some are also bussed in from the Village on the Lake area. We are also excited to start welcoming families from our Cambrian Crossing neighbourhood.

Programming

Westboro Elementary provides all the elements for students to have an engaging and positive educational experience. The varied needs of all of our students are met in a variety of ways through differentiation, Individualized Program Plans as required and excellent classroom instruction. Westboro Elementary is also proud to be the host school for two system programs; the PLACE program is designed to meet the needs of students with moderate cognitive disabilities and significant delays in all areas of development. The STEPS program is for students with severe cognitive disabilities and significant delays in all areas of development.

Students in Grades 4-6 receive French instruction through the French as a Second Language (FSL) program.

Social, emotional, and academic needs of students are met through the services of a part time counsellor. Westboro Elementary also works with our community to meet the needs of our students accessing service and support from Family Community Services and Alberta Health.

Character education and global citizenship are two focal points at Westboro Elementary. Our character

education program consists of student recognition, local and global outreach projects and daily choices that highlight positive and effective character traits.

Before/After School Child Care and Preschool Programs

Quality before and after school care is offered at Westboro Elementary through the Friends Club Out-of-School Care program. They offer breakfast and afternoon snacks, gym sports, outdoor play, homework club, computers, fun projects, field trips, arts, crafts and games. There are full-time and daytime spots for Kindergarten to Grade Six students. A pre-school program is also offered. For more information, please contact Kasia Spanialska at 780-707-4481 or through email at kspa@shaw.ca to register.

Communication Protocol

Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) has developed a Communication Protocol for schools to provide a framework for communication between schools and our families. The purpose of this document is to guide, manage, and improve school-home communication by offering a standard format, structure, and sequence for regular, ongoing communication.

This document outlines how EIPS' schools use a variety of communication formats, such as face-to-face meetings, email, School Messenger, and social media. It also provides a process for parents/guardians to use if they need to bring forward a question or concern. We encourage families to review this information so they know what to expect and what we expect of families.

Use of social media in any form should also be carefully considered. Respectful, appropriate communication is expected at all times. Please be aware of these expectations when posting to Facebook, Twitter or any other platform.

As communication changes, this document may also evolve. We will work to keep parents informed should any processes change.

Communication at Westboro Elementary

Because of the importance of home and school communication, we have many systems in place to help ensure this. Good communication makes for a happy school community!

Another important source of information is our weekly newsletter and school calendar. **These are sent out electronically every Friday.** These will also be available on our website.

Our website, www.westboroelementary.ca, is also full of information and easy to access. Calendars, special events, past newsletters and forms are available here. If you cannot find or access something, please let us know.

E-mail with our staff is also easy. All addresses use the first name, separated by a period, followed by the last name. All letters of the name are written in lower case letters. The name is then followed by: @eips.ca. For example: joe.smith@eips.ca.

In addition, we also use a sign board outside the school to help keep you informed of upcoming events.

Classroom teachers will communicate on a regular basis to let you know what is happening in the classroom and to help you in your planning. (This may take the form of e-teacher pages, email updates, brightspace or classroom newsletters.)

a) Student / Parent / Teacher Conferences

Conducted in October and March, these conferences allow for clarification of student progress and conversation through virtual conferences and/or in person conferences.

b) Communicating Student Learning

Report cards are prepared and sent home in November, March and June to report on student progress for all students in grades 1 – 6.

c) E.C.S. (Early Childhood Services)

These children will receive a formal report three times a year as well.

Finally, and most importantly, please feel free to contact your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns. You can use email or call the school at 780-467-7751 to leave a voice message.

Your child's teacher should always be your first source of information.

School Fundraising

The Parents' Group organizes and runs a number of fundraisers during the school year. The funds from these events help support our school in many different ways.

Your support of these activities is optional. For more information or to become more involved, please speak to a member of the executive or visit our school webpage.

Bullying will not be tolerated at Westboro Elementary.

What Bullying Is ... and Isn't

What is Bullying?

According to the Alberta Education website (<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/safeschools/bullying-prevention.aspx>), bullying is a conscious, willful, deliberate, repeated and hostile activity marked by an imbalance of power, intent to harm and/or threat of aggression. It can be verbal, social, physical or [cyberbullying](#). It can occur within a [peer group](#) or between groups. It can occur at school and in [sports](#).

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, scapegoating, excluding others from a group, humiliating others, gestures or graffiti intended to put others down.

Physical Bullying—hitting, poking, pinching, chasing, shoving, coercing, destroying, unwanted sexual touching.

Cyberbullying—using the internet or text messaging to intimidate, put down or spread rumours about someone.

Please note: in order for us to respond to an incident of bullying, it must be reported to us in a timely manner. If we are not aware of the problem, it cannot be dealt with proactively.

Taken from the EIPS Policy 19: WELCOMING, CARING, RESPECTFUL, AND SAFE LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENTS

Bullying

means repeated and hostile or demeaning behavior by an individual in the school community where the behavior is intended to cause harm, fear or distress to one or more other individuals in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to an individual's reputation.

Promoting a Bully-Free Environment

In order to continue to promote a bully-free environment at Westboro Elementary a number of initiatives have been put into place:

- Participation by grade 6s in the D.A.R.E. program.
- School presentations and activities organized for students with an anti-bullying theme.
- Classroom presentations of rules for anti-bullying behaviour in each classroom.
- Implementation of a school-wide Character Education program.
- Review of appropriate steps students should take when confronted with bullying.
- Development of a classroom code of conduct.
- Development of programs for teaching social skills and friendship skills by the counsellor.
- Recognize and praise positive behaviours of students towards one another.
- Modelling of positive, respectful, and supportive behaviour.

- Quick response to reports of incidents and follow-up with involved students.
- Implementation of activities for the Anti-Bullying week in November.

Helping Victims of Bullying

We will listen to the child and let them know we are taking the issue seriously. We will deal with the bully according to the discipline cycle, as appropriate. We shall make sure that the child knows what to do to avoid retaliation. We will work on social skills with the children if they are often marked out as victims. This might include teaching children how to:

- Predict how peers will react to their behaviour.
- Read body language.
- Recognize when they are in trouble socially.
- Support others.
- Develop a positive relationship.
- Identify how others see them.
- Greet people appropriately.

Bus Safety and Transportation Rules and Procedures

For a complete review of all behaviour expectations and discipline procedures on buses, please visit eips.ca. Generally speaking, students are expected to:

- Sit in an assigned seat and remain seated while the bus is en route, using quiet conversation.
- Keep all objects and parts of the body inside the bus.
- Refrain from eating or drinking.
- Use only electronic games or musical devices which do not emit noise.
- Scan their bus pass each time they board or depart the bus.

Elk Island Public Schools will hold an annual in-service for Bus Operators to assist in dealing with student behaviour, safety, and medical concerns. Also, an emergency bus evacuation drill will be reviewed at least one time during the school year.

Lunch Hour Expectations

When students are at school for lunch they are supervised while they eat in their classrooms. During this time, the following rules are shared by all students:

- Students are to remain seated in their desks and talk quietly with polite table manners.
- Students are also expected to clean up after themselves and dispose of garbage before classes begin - this includes desk top cleaning and floor sweeping as required.
- Students are not allowed to share food, given the possible allergies that may be present in the classroom.
- **Students are expected to follow the directions of the noon-hour supervisors at all times.**

Please note: While a teacher or supervisor may provide encouragement to a student to eat, it is still the student's responsibility to ensure that he or she is eating their lunch.

Consequences may include the following:

1. Warning
2. May be asked to eat lunch in a designated spot
3. Sent to the office
4. Suspended privileges

Supervision Fees

There is a one-time yearly fee of \$47.00 for kindergarten students, \$94.50 for grade 1-6 students for noon hour supervision with a rate of \$255.00 for families with three or more children. These fees are cost recovery only and they help pay for Noon Hour Supervisors.

Nut Aware

We have a number of students who are severely allergic to peanuts and/or nuts. These allergies can be severe enough to cause anaphylactic shock and exposure to residue is a problem. We request that peanut/nut products not be sent in anyone's lunch. If your child suffers from a severe allergy, please ensure that you have shared this information with us and that non-expired Epi-pens, inhalers or antihistamines are available for treatment if required.

We ask your cooperation and diligence in not sending any lunch or snack products which contain nuts into a class with a severe allergy.

Emergency Procedures

Several practice drills are held throughout the year to prepare students for internal and external emergencies. Detailed information about these drills can be found at eips.ca, as well as on our own [school website](#).

Cold Weather

Students are encouraged to come prepared for playing outside in each season – rain, snow, sun or cold! During colder winter days, please make sure students are dressed appropriately with hats, mitts, boots and snow pants. Given the fluctuating temperatures inside our school, a warm sweater is always a good idea during the winter. Due to the Covid-19 recommendations, students will be outside for gym classes as well.

Indoor Recesses

Students will be enjoying the great outdoors unless it is approximately -22 degrees Celsius or colder, taking into account the wind chill. During inside recesses, students may have a short washroom break if required. They are then expected to remain in their homerooms where they may engage in quiet activities, games and conversation.

Recycling

We encourage students to bring their juice boxes and other recyclables home for recycling.

Student Transfers

During the school year there may be student transfers either in or out of our school. At that time, the student's fees will be pro-rated and the family either reimbursed or charged the remaining book rental fee.

Attendance and Late Arrivals

Continuous attendance, by all students, maximizes their learning. When students miss school, they miss learning! Likewise, continuous late arrival at school also causes a student to miss learning. If it is unavoidable that a student miss some classes during

the school day, please let us know by calling the office at 780-467-7751.

If you are planning to be away for a longer period of time, please try to let your teacher and the school office know as early as possible and remember that ultimately, your child is responsible for the material missed during his/her absence. Another option may be to consider having your child catch up when he/she returns home! Please also try to keep in mind the period of time when will be administering the Student Learner Assessments (SLAs) when planning your vacations!

Please note that if a child is to be released from school at a time other than the regular dismissal time, a signed note from the parent must be sent to the teacher. Parents/guardians picking up their child before the end of the school day are to phone the office and we will sign the child out. Thank you for continuing to make Westboro a safe place!

Student Use of Telephones

We ask that students use the school telephone for emergencies only. Students who have cell phones are not permitted to have them on during class hours.

We would also appreciate it if telephone messages to be relayed to students through the office could be limited. If you are changing plans for pick up or drop off, please ensure that you share this information with us as early as possible during the day as it may be difficult to locate your child's class if they are outside or in another location other than their classroom. **Whenever possible, please plan ahead and send messages to teachers in your child's agenda.**

Student Use of Cell Phones

Student use of cell phones is strictly forbidden.

Personal Communication Devices

As per EIPS Policy 24, Personal Communication Devices:

- *Students in kindergarten to Grade 6:* No access to cellphones or personal devices during the school day, including during breaks and the lunch hour—the only exception, students with a diagnosed medical condition or an identified inclusive educational need.
- Students are strongly encouraged to NOT bring any devices to school. If a student does, the device must stay in his/her backpack.
- Students caught using any devices will be told to bring it down to the office and they can pick the device up at the end of the school day.

Student Dress Code

Students are expected to dress in a neat and appropriate manner both for school and weather conditions.

We ask students to wear proper footwear at all times in order to promote good hygiene and to be prepared in case of any emergency drills. Please provide both indoor and outdoor footwear and try to look for running shoes that have white or light soles that do not mark our gym floor.

In order to help out our custodians, please remember to make sure that you remove outdoor shoes or boots when coming into our school.

Personal Property and Lost and Found

Please be aware that items can occasionally go missing in a large school community. To this end, please try to refrain from bringing expensive equipment such as iPods or cell phones to school. Each year many items of clothing and shoes remain unclaimed in the "Lost and Found". Items that are

not collected will be donated to a charitable organization, so please contact the school office and we will be happy to check the lost and found for you. Our Parents' Group also offers a fundraiser through Mabels Labels that could help you with this – see a council member for more information.

Parking, Pick-up and Drop-off Traffic and Safety Patrollers

Parking and student pick-up / drop-off is an ongoing concern for our school community.

Thank you to the many parents who continue to respect the rules around drop off and pick up for our students at Westboro Elementary!! Please note that the west end of our bus lane is for handicapped parking only. Also we have posted signs around entrances and exits regarding areas for stopping. Please respect these signs. Parking in these areas can inhibit vision, making our students and other vehicles hard to see and potentially causing accidents.

Did you know that...?

...It is illegal to park within 5 m of an entrance, driveway or crosswalk?

...The speed limit in specifically marked school zones is 30 km/h. A school zone is in effect on school days from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.?

...The fine for failing to yield to a pedestrian in a crosswalk or passing a vehicle stopped at a crosswalk is \$575?

...The fine for stopping in a zone marked as busing, handicapped or no stopping is \$275?

At Westboro Elementary we are fortunate to have great neighbors who allow us to access their parking lot to expand the available parking for our parents and visitors. These businesses have kindly requested that our parents **do NOT park in any of the stalls** along the front of this lot, facing the businesses themselves, as this can detract from business and also impede employees from arriving for work.

We also have a dedicated young group of student volunteers who control crossing at our marked crosswalk. Please watch for them and respect them as they try to do a very important job!

Finally, please remember that we will only release your children to those adults that you have identified as being able to pick them up from school; typically this includes parents. Custody orders must be up-to-date and specific in order to legally direct us in this manner. Please ensure that you share all information with the school and that specific written instructions are provided to us if required. If you are picking up your child during the day, please ensure to call our school and we will sign your child out.

Thank you for all you do to help keep our children safe!

Illnesses and Accidents

If a child becomes ill at school, the parents will be contacted to take the child home. If the parents/guardians are unavailable, the school will phone the emergency contact person. If neither the parents/guardians, nor the emergency contact can be reached, the child will remain in the school infirmary until contact can be made. If the illness appears to be severe, the principal or designate will make a decision as to whether medical attention is required.

Accidents are to be reported to the office. In most instances, the secretarial staff are able to handle these situations. If the incident is serious, parents/guardians are notified. If the school is unable to make contact, the child will be taken to the appropriate emergency facility (hospital/clinic), as required.

Administration of Medicine to Students

If a student needs a prescribed medicine administered during the school day, the parent/guardian must complete a personal medication form (available from the office or through our [school website](#) requesting such service and giving full instructions on the procedure to be. Students are not to self-administer prescription medication at school due to the possible dangers it poses to other students.

Counselling Services

Counselling services are available at the school and are designed to meet the needs of all students. Parents/guardians and teachers may make referrals to the counsellor who can then follow up with appropriate supports for students. This may take the form of a checklist, ISP, assessment or other interventions and/or accommodations. Students may also make self-referrals for personal counselling. The counsellor may refer to other agencies and acts as a liaison to these agencies. Consultation with the school staff and with parents/guardians is an important part of this program.

School Cancellations/Closures

Elk Island Public Schools

Suspension of Bus Service Due to Inclement Weather Bulletin

For the complete administrative procedure, please visit:

<http://www.eips.ca/>

Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) is responsible for ensuring that each of its students is provided with an education program consistent with the requirements of the school; therefore, schools shall remain open to students during the times and dates established in school calendar(s). The Division may, however, temporarily suspend school bus services and close a school building if the health and safety of students and staff is endangered.

Procedures

1. School bus service may be suspended by the Superintendent, in consultation with the Director, Student Transportation, when at 5:00 a.m., Environment Canada reports a temperature of -40 degrees Celsius, including wind chill factor, in one or more region.
2. School bus services may also be suspended or delayed by the Superintendent, in consultation with the Director, Student Transportation, due to adverse weather or road conditions.
3. The Director, Student Transportation shall take into account the Alberta Motor Association and/or weather office when making a

- recommendation to the Superintendent regarding the suspension of school bus services.
4. Suspension of school bus services may be limited to a specific region of EIPS.
 5. Suspension of school bus services may be done on a route-by-route basis.
 6. The Superintendent, in consultation with the Director, Student Transportation, shall make a decision regarding school bus suspension by 5:30 a.m. (or the previous night if conditions make it obvious that service will be suspended the following day).
 7. When school bus services are suspended by the Superintendent, schools shall remain open to students.
 8. If unsafe road conditions occur, the Director, Student Transportation, in consultation with the bus operator, has the discretionary power to decide not to operate or to abandon completion of the morning route by returning students to their homes. Student Transportation staff must ensure students have adequate access to residences.
 9. When weather or road conditions deteriorate during the day, the Director, Student Transportation may authorize individual or all buses to leave school prior to regular dismissal time.
 10. Should weather conditions be extreme or deteriorate during the day in a particular region/area, the Principal, in consultation with the Superintendent, may close the school to all students and staff.
 11. The Principal, staff and school bus operators shall take steps to ensure students arrive home safely when they are dismissed earlier. This includes attempts to contact parents/guardians/emergency contacts to ensure students have adequate access to residences. In remote areas, where parents cannot be contacted, students shall be kept at the school.
 12. Bus operators are to hold themselves in readiness for service in cases of pending extreme conditions.
 13. Parents/guardians and school bus operators shall be advised annually of the procedures used for the suspension of school bus service.

Communication

14. Student Transportation staff shall contact all parents/guardians, Principals and bus contractors by automated phone message to announce any suspension of bus service.
15. Student Transportation staff shall update the bus status notice on all school and division websites.
16. Communication Services shall advise the media of the Superintendent's decision.
17. Communication Services shall notify the subfinder secretary to advise all assigned substitutes of any school closure.
18. Communication Services shall compose an appropriate taped message for the Central switchboard, Community Hotline (780-417-8122), Inclement Weather Staff line (780-417-8158), StaffConnect, and the EIPS website.
19. All such messages will be posted by 6:30 a.m.

Students

20. For the safety of students, it is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure:
 - their children are suitably dressed for weather conditions
 - arrangements have been made for alternate shelter for their child if no one is home.
 - on days when school bus services are suspended due to inclement weather or hazardous road conditions, parents/guardians who have brought their children to school will be responsible for picking up their children.

