

Gem School Handbook

2020-2021



Striving to become the best we can be!

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Gem, AB
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The People of Gem School

Grasslands School Division

745-2nd Avenue East, Brooks, AB T1R 1L2

Phone: (403) 793-6700

Webpage: www.grasslands.ab.ca

Grasslands Board of Education

Jodi Trembecki (Chairperson)

Shaun Roth

Melanie Chapman

Melanie Reed-Zukowski

Pat Conner

Kathi Jacobson

Grasslands Central Office Staff

Superintendent of Schools

Assistant Superintendent

Assistant Superintendent

Assessment Consultant

Associate Superintendent

Finance Director

Bus Supervisor

Facility Manager

Scott Brandt

Sean Beaton

Katie Graham

Heather Craig

Rhian Schroeder

Shane Harahus

Lynetta Thiessen

Alan Kloepper

Gem School

Principal (Off-site)

Vice-Principal

Josh Gibbon

Shelly Heryford

Grade 1, 2, 3

Grade 4, 5, 6

Jasmine Chafe (on medical leave) / Tammy Miller

Shelly Heryford

Admin. Assistant/Librarian

Education Assistant

Custodian

Debbie Paetkau

Rose Klassen

Sara Krahn

Bus Drivers

Traci Thompson

Karen Walde

Travis Simo

South

Spare

(403) 641-3606 cell 793-3104

(403) 641-2471

(403) 641-3339

School Mandate

The mandate of Gem School is to teach children how to learn while developing intellectual and physical skills and a sense of responsible citizenship.

School Profile

Gem School is located in the community of Gem, 63 km northwest of Brooks. We have 20 students in grades one to six. Instruction is provided by two teachers (grades 1-3 and grades 4-6). Because of the multi-grade setting, Social Studies and Science are taught on a three-year rotating basis. Students are arranged in family groupings for many activities including the work we do with Character Education.

The community of Gem provides remarkable support for our school. We have a strong volunteer program. Besides helping in the classrooms, parents drive for field trips and sporting events, maintain the skating rink, coach a variety of sports and make themselves available for extras such as making props for the Christmas concert. They have very high standards for their students' learning and make sure their children complete their homework and study for exams.

Gem School is a busy, productive and happy place!

Belief Statement

The Gem School staff believes that an effective education program is based on the following principles of learning:

1. All children are capable learners.
2. Each child learns at an individual rate and benefits from a unique combination of visual, auditory, and tactile learning activities.
3. Instruction/assessment must accommodate multiple intelligences.
4. Children who experience success on assigned tasks learn effectively and develop self-confidence.
5. Learning is active; children learn when they are actively engaged.
6. Teacher planning is based on ongoing effective assessment.

School Council

The Gem School Council is made up of parents, teachers, principal, school board trustee, and a community member. We meet four times a year to provide opportunity for open discussion regarding topics such as field trips and bussing, specialized program funding, sports or music equipment, project planning, fundraising, upcoming events, or issues that arise within education. The list goes on. As parents we see value in being active in our children's education and supporting our teachers in this way. We value our community and realize they contribute to the quality of our children's education as well. We encourage and welcome all parents to attend school council meetings.

On behalf of Gem School Council,

Kimberley Doerksen, Chairperson

Grasslands School Year Calendar 2020-2021

Please find the Grasslands School Year Calendar on the website. Go to www.grasslands.ab.ca and find it on the main page.

Also find the Gem School Year Calendar by going to:

- www.grasslands.ab.ca
 - Our schools
 - Gem School
 - Documents
 - Calendar

Class Times

8:25	Morning Bell
8:30 - 10:00	Class
9:50 - 10:00	Recess
10:00 - 11:00	Class
11:00 - 11:10	Recess
11:10 - 12:10	Class
12:10 - 12:25	Lunch
12:25 - 12:55	Recess
12:55 - 2:00	Class
2:00 - 2:10	Recess
2:10 - 3:15	Class
3:15	Dismissal

Summary of Three-Year Plan

The goals associated with our three-year plan are directly linked to the following Grasslands Division Goals:

Goal One: *An Excellent Start to Learning*

-Children are reaching emotional, social, intellectual and physical development milestones and are ready for school.

Goal Two: Success for Every Student

- Students demonstrate proficiency in literacy and numeracy.
- Students demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving.
- Students demonstrate citizenship and entrepreneurship.

Goal Three: Quality Teaching and School Leadership

-Teacher preparation and professional growth focus on the competencies needed to help students learn. Effective learning and teaching is achieved through collaborative leadership.

Goal Four: Engaged and Effective Governance

- The education system demonstrates collaboration and engagement.
- Students and communities have access to safe and healthy learning.

Our full three-year plan is posted on our school website or is available through the school office.

Expectations for Students

There are four levels of expectations set for children and youth in Alberta schools. Expectations are set at the provincial level in law, the divisional level in Board of Education policy, the school level by the administration in consultation with the staff, and the classroom level set by the teacher. Expectations at all levels carry the weight of law.

Level One: Provincial (School Act: Section 12, Section 45)

Students – Section 12

A student shall conduct himself or herself so as to reasonably comply with the following code of conduct:

- Be diligent in pursuing the student's studies;
- Attend school regularly and punctually;
- Cooperate fully with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services;
- Comply with the rules of the school;
- Account to the student's teachers for the student's conduct;
- Respect the rights of others.

Responsibility to Students – Section 45(8)

- A board shall ensure that each student enrolled in a school operated by the board is provided with a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours.

Level Two: Division - Grasslands Regional #6 Policy 9.8.1 Discipline/Attendance

The purpose of discipline is to develop a student's self control in the learning environment and to maintain school conditions which will contribute to effective learning for all students. Discipline will not include verbal, emotional, or physical abuse as methods of corrective measures.

Students who attend school regularly have a greater opportunity to benefit from the school program. Regular attendance is therefore a requirement for all courses at all grade levels.

Level Three: School

At Gem school we believe that discipline is control of one's own behaviour. Control is learned. Our goal is to encourage and guide the children so they will learn to make appropriate and responsible choices about their behaviour.

In Gem School the students are expected to abide by four general rules:

1. Show up on time.
2. Be prepared.
3. Do assignments.
4. Respect yourself and others.

Although most behaviour issues will be dealt with in collaboration with students and parents, in cases where students pose a threat to themselves or others, Grasslands policy requires that these cases be responded to by school Threat Assessment Teams. This is referred to in the Fair Notice Policy that follows later in this document.

Level Four: Classroom

Teachers are expected to establish and enforce expectations for student performance and behaviour in their classes. Expectations set by classroom teachers have the support of administrators and the Board of Education.

VTRA Fair Notice Policy

Notice to parents and community that Grasslands schools are required to respond, as provided for in local policy, in all cases of students posing a threat to themselves or others.

The safety of our children is a top priority for all of us. Grasslands Public Schools have plans in place for responding to all situations in which students may pose a threat to themselves or others.

The Grasslands policy requires that principals complete formal threat assessments in all cases of students making significant threats to harm themselves or others. This message is intended to provide fair notice to all that, as a school community, we will be responding to all high risk behaviours to ensure we can protect the existing healthy, caring learning environment.

When students' behaviours pose a potential threat to safety or serious harm, the Grasslands Public Schools Violence Risk Threat Assessment (VTRA) Protocol helps Administrators take further steps to protect students' well-being. The protocol helps schools respond quickly to threatening incidents such as: possession of a weapon or a replica weapon, bomb threats or plans, verbal, written or electronic (internet, text) threats to kill or injure oneself or others or other threats of violence, fire setting.

The VTRA Protocol outlines how a school responds immediately to threatening behaviour. Administrators may first bring together a School VTRA Team. If the situation is serious, the Administrator may also consult with the Superintendent of Schools, and call in members of the community. This community team may include representatives of community agencies who work with us to keep our schools safer such as local police, children's mental health organizations or Human Services. Parents and guardians will be notified as soon as possible in the VTRA process. If parents/guardians cannot be reached, or if they choose not to provide consent, but a concern for safety still exists due to threatening behaviour, the threat assessment may still proceed. Personal information shared throughout this process will respect and balance each individual's right to privacy with the need to ensure the safety of all.

As always, student safety is our first priority. If you have any questions regarding the Grasslands VTRA Protocol, please contact your local school Administrator.

Services Provided

Grasslands Public Schools is committed to providing the best possible programs and services to all students. We have an extensive network of professional services available to all students including Family Wellness mentors, Psychologists, Behavior Consultants, Occupational Therapists, Speech Language Pathologists, Physical Therapists and consultants in the areas of literacy and learning and innovation. These professionals are in our schools providing ongoing consultation and support to teachers, administrators and assistants. Your child/student may see different members of this team in their classrooms at various times working with school based staff. If, at any time, it is felt that support from one of these professionals would be beneficial to your child specifically, you will be contacted by the school to discuss the services recommended.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your school's administrator.

Hearing screening will be conducted (by registered Speech Language Pathologists) throughout the school year at all Grasslands Public Schools. School-age hearing screenings are an integral tool in identifying children with hearing loss who were not identified at birth, lost hearing due to lack of follow-up, or who developed hearing loss later. Without mandated routine hearing screenings in schools, students with unilateral, less severe, or late-onset hearing loss may not be identified or will be misdiagnosed and managed. Efforts to provide consistent protocols, screener training and follow-up through school-age will help ensure that children with hearing loss are identified and managed in a timely manner, and thereby minimize negative academic consequences.

(Source: <http://www.asha.org/Advocacy/state/School-Age-Hearing-Screening/>)

Parents will be notified of their child's results only if your child fails two screenings on two different dates. Further consultation and follow up from an audiologist will be recommended.

If you DO NOT want your child to be screened, please contact one of the Speech Language Pathologists listed below.

Jennifer Heinrichs, MSc, R.SLP
jennifer.heinrichs@grasslands.ab.ca
403-362-8729 ext. 113

Karmen Zich, MSc, R.SLP
karmen.zich@grasslands.ab.ca
403-362-8729 ext. 110

Student Fees

According to Grasslands policy 8.7.15, students are charged the following fees for using school-purchased materials.

Grades 1-6 Binders/Markers	\$10.00
Field Trip Bussing Fee	\$20.00 / Existing Students \$5.00

(fees carried over from previous year)

Field Trips

Swimming lessons: Each year Gem students take swimming lessons in Brooks. Funding for bussing and the lessons is provided through a grant from the Community Recreation Board.

Ski Trip: As part of the Physical Education curriculum, the grade 4-6 class participates in a one-day ski trip each year. Typically, the cost of this is covered by the school council.

Year-End Field Trip: The year end field trip is decided upon in collaboration with School Council on a yearly basis. Parents are invited to attend. Historically the school council has subsidized the cost of the trip. The decision to do so is done on a year-to-year basis. If School Council is unable to fund the trip and if cost is an issue, parents are asked to contact the school office and other arrangements will be made.

Curriculum-Based Field Trip: There is generally one field trip per year with the cost typically being covered by the school council.

Weather: Grasslands Policy 5.1.3.2

If buses are canceled or if the temperature reaches -37C, the vice-principal in conjunction with the bus drivers will determine if the bus routes will be canceled. The vice-principal of the school will contact the local radio station Q-13 or the Fox 101.1FM by 6:30 am to put an announcement on the local radio station. The bus drivers will contact all of the students on their route or put a phone fan out into operation. Please listen to one of these local stations for any school bus cancelation announcements. If bus routes are canceled for this reason, they will not operate all day.

School Closure:

1. A school will consider the need to close under the following conditions:
 - Power outage, utilities failure
 - Emergent reasons
2. When the school is closed for students, staff will be given specific directions regarding their attendance.
3. The principal will notify the transportation supervisor and the radio station as soon as feasible after the decision to close has been taken (preferably by 7:30 am in cases where the school will not open).
4. Principals will ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for any students who do arrive at school.

Student Services

Use of Technology

Grasslands Public Schools has established an internet acceptable use policy and an email policy. Information for parents is sent home at the beginning of the school year.

Lost and Found

All "found" articles should be turned in to the general office. If your child has lost an article, please ask at the office to look through the lost and found.

Communication

Communication between parents and our school is of paramount importance to the success of your children...our students. We encourage you to contact us regarding your child's progress, to share your suggestions or discuss any concerns you may have. It is our goal to maintain open, honest communication between all involved.



Monthly Calendar							Teacher Days	Student Days	Dates & Details
August 2020							5	1	25 Staff organizational time/Admin Council - PM 26 - am New Teacher Orientation/Staff organizational Time 26 - pm Staff organizational time 27 Welcome Back & Divisional PLCs 28 Staff organizational time 31 Classes start
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat			
2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
9	10	11	12	13	14	15			
16	17	18	19	20	21	22			
23	24	25	26	27	28	29			
30	31								
Sept 2020							21	20	7 Labour Day Holiday 21 School-based or interschool PD Day
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat			
6	7	8	9	10	11	12			
13	14	15	16	17	18	19			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26			
27	28	29	30						
Oct 2020							21	20	5 District Inservice Day 12 Thanksgiving Day
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat			
4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
11	12	13	14	15	16	17			
18	19	20	21	22	23	24			
25	26	27	28	29	30	31			
Nov 2020							20	17	11 Remembrance Day 12 Lieu day for Parent-Teacher conferences 13 In Lieu Day for PLCs - no school 30 School-based or interschool PD Day
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7			
8	9	10	11	12	13	14			
15	16	17	18	19	20	21			
22	23	24	25	26	27	28			
29	30								
Dec 2020							14	14	21-31 Christmas Break
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat			
6	7	8	9	10	11	12			
13	14	15	16	17	18	19			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26			
27	28	29	30	31					
Jan 2021							20	19	1 Christmas Break 4 Classes resume for students 29 District Inservice Day
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat			
3	4	5	6	7	8	9			
10	11	12	13	14	15	16			
17	18	19	20	21	22	23			
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30			
Feb 2021							19	15	1 Semester 2 Begins 15 Family Day 16 In Lieu Day for PLCs - no school 17 Lieu day for Parent-Teacher conferences 18-20 ATA Teachers' Convention
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
14	15	16	17	18	19	20			
21	22	23	24	25	26	27			
28									
March 2021							23	22	15 School-based or interschool PD Day
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
14	15	16	17	18	19	20			
21	22	23	24	25	26	27			
28	29	30	31						
April 2021							16	16	2-9 Easter Break 12 Classes resume for Students
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat			
4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
11	12	13	14	15	16	17			
18	19	20	21	22	23	24			
25	26	27	28	29	30				
May 2021							20	19	21 School-based or interschool PD Day 24 Victoria Day
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat			
2	3	4	5	6	7	8			
9	10	11	12	13	14	15			
16	17	18	19	20	21	22			
23	24	25	26	27	28	29			
30	31								
June 2021							19.5	19	25 Last day - Elem/Jr High Students 26 Last day - Sr High students & all staff
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat			
6	7	8	9	10	11	12			
13	14	15	16	17	18	19			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26			
27	28	29	30						
Total Year							198.5	182	Elem/Jr High
								183	Sr High

LEGEND	
[Light Green]	Staff organizational day - no students
[Light Blue]	District Inservice - no students
[Light Orange]	In Lieu Day for PLCs - no school
[Light Purple]	Holiday for staff and students
[Light Yellow]	School-based or interschool Prof. Learning - no students
[Light Green]	Classes start or resume for students
[Light Blue]	In Lieu Day for P-T Conferences - no school
[Light Yellow]	Semester Two Begins
[Light Purple]	Teachers' Convention - no school
[Light Blue]	Last Day of School Elem/Jr. High Students
[Light Green]	Last day - Sr. High students & all staff

Number of Days Per Semester			
Sem 1	Operational	Instructional Ele/Jr	Instructional Sr.
Aug	5	1	1
Sept	21	20	20
Oct	21	20	20
Nov	20	17	17
Dec	14	14	14
Jan	20	19	19
Total	101	91	91
Sem 2	Operational	Instructional Ele/Jr	Instructional Sr.
Jan	0	0	0
Feb	19	15	15
Mar	23	22	22
Apr	16	16	16
May	20	19	19
June	19.5	19	20
Total	97.5	91	92
YEAR	198.5	182	183

AB Ed. & Board Required Instructional Hours
Kindergarten - 475 hours per year
Grades 1-9 - 960 hours per year in each grade
Grades 10-12 - 1000 hours per year in each grade