

Albert McMahon Elementary School



Parent Handbook and Calendar 2017 -2018



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Principal's Message

This handbook is intended to be a useful reference for families for the duration of the school year. You are asked to review the entire handbook paying special attention, please, to # 5 (Code of Conduct) and # 6 (SHARP Behaviour Plan). Parents, please review these sections with your child(ren). At the end of the handbook is a feedback form. Please send this form to the school office by September 18th. A cell phone permission form is attached to this document. Please complete this form if you wish to have your child bring a cell phone to school.

The Handbook contains a one page calendar for the entire school year. Please note: any changes to our calendar will be announced in regular newsletters, which are posted on the school webpage on the last Thursday of each month.

If you have any questions or concerns, please state them on the feedback form, or contact me at the office: my door is open!

Sincerely,

Hardeep Grewal
Principal

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ATTACHMENTS:

Annual Report 2011-2012
Cell Phone Permission Form
Feedback Form

A. BELL SCHEDULE (SCHOOL HOURS)

A.M.

First bell	8:25
AM session begins	8:30
Recess	10:15 - 10:30
Lunch hour	11:55 - 12:40

P.M.

Warning bell	12:35
PM session begins	12:40
School ends	2:23

B. TRAFFIC DROP OFF & PICK UP AREAS

Our parking lot can be very busy – your patience and cooperation regarding the following guidelines is appreciated:

- Please drop off and pick up children on the right side of the parking lot, moving past the flag pole, all the way down to the garbage bin
- Keep moving on the left side of the lot, to avoid “gridlock”
- Please do not drive, stop, or park in the bus lane or entrance to parking lot
- Please do not leave your car unattended unless it is in a designated parking space

C. ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL & SAFE ARRIVAL PROGRAM

- Students are expected to attend school every day unless they are ill or schools are closed.
- Students must be on time. Late students must report to the office for a late slip.
- If absences are extended or frequent, a doctor's certificate may be required.
- Students must bring a note from home if they need to leave school early.
- Parents, please phone by 8:30 a.m., to let us know that your child will be absent or late.
- Our secretary phones the homes of all absent students if we do not know why they have not arrived. The purpose is to ensure the safety of students whose absence has not been confirmed by their parents.

D. STUDENT SUPERVISION

Student supervision begins at 8:15 a.m., or earlier if students are participating in morning sports or arts practices. Please time your child's arrival so that he/she does not arrive prior to 8:15 a.m. Students arriving before that time will not be supervised. Students line up by the outside door of their classroom to enter the school when the first bell rings. Students are supervised after school until 2:38 p.m. each day. Parents are encouraged to pick up children by 2:30 at the latest. Adult "Supervisor Assistants" supervise students during the lunch hour. Activities supervised by teachers are also available at various times throughout the year.

E. FIELD TRIPS

All students require a signed permission form from their parents in order to take part in any field trip. Siblings may not accompany supervising parents on such field trips because of safety and insurance concerns. All volunteers need to go through the process of a criminal record check. The forms are available at the school office.

F. ILLNESS OR INJURY

If a student becomes ill or injured while at school, parents are contacted and asked to take the child home. If parents cannot be reached at home or at work, the school will contact the person designated as your emergency contact. Children will not be allowed to go home unless they have been signed out at the office and the parent or emergency contact has given the child permission to leave the school. In case of an injury requiring medical attention other than first aid, the parents or the emergency contact will be called immediately. If the parents or the emergency contact are not available, the child will be transported to the hospital and we will keep trying to contact the parents.

G. STUDENT PLANNERS

All grade 2-6 students are required to purchase student planners from the school. These planners help students learn to organize their time, to keep track of due dates for projects and tests, and to keep track of required homework. Planners also serve as a regular home-school communication tool for parents and teachers. Parents are asked to sign their child's planner every night. Primary students (Grades K-1) will be using clipboard folders. Both of these items can be purchased in September through the school's online purchase program <https://mpsd.schoolcashionline.com>. (Registration is required).

H. LICE

Head lice are tiny insects. They are difficult to see, but their eggs, or "nits", are found glued to the hair. Nits are different from dandruff as dandruff is easily removed while nits have to be pulled along the hair shaft. Head lice are spread by direct contact with an infested person, or indirectly by contact with their personal belongings like combs, hats, hair bands, clothing and towels.

Public Health Nurses are no longer available to check for lice in schools. If the school becomes aware that a child has lice or nits, parents are contacted and letters go home with all children in that class warning parents that a case has been found. Parents of children with head lice must carry out an insecticide program (Kwelada shampoo) and must keep the children at home until all nits are removed from the hair. Call the Health Unit at 604-814-5500 for additional information.

I. PARENTS AS PARTNERS

a) COMMUNICATION/PROTOCOL FOR PARENT CONCERNS/INQUIRIES

Communication between home and school is continuous both through formal newsletters, bulletins, school and classroom notices, and many information contacts. If you have a concern (and no concern is too trivial), do not wait, contact the school immediately. Come in person and resolve the concern.

The teachers and administrators at Albert McMahan School work within a developing framework of reasonable expectations which has been established for the safety and well-being of all. We share the hope and concern of all parents that we provide the best educational experience possible for each child.

Should a concern arise, please observe the following guidelines in seeking its resolution.

- I. contact your child's teacher.
- II. contact an Administrator should further assistance be required.
- III. on the rare occasions when resolution cannot be reached at the school level, contact the School Board Office.

b) PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (PAC)

The Albert McMahan Parent Advisory Council performs a wide variety of functions for the benefit of our students. The council also provides a forum for communication between the home and the school so that parents and

educators work as partners in the education of our students. All parents and guardians of children attending Albert McMahan School are members of the council. PAC executive members are elected at a general meeting, once a year.

General membership meetings are usually held once a month. Read the calendar and school newsletters for the dates. These monthly meetings provide a forum for discussion of educational policies and issues, programs and school events; an opportunity to hear items and presentations of interest; and, a time and place to meet with other parents who share common goals.

c) VOLUNTEER WORK

Your participation at school as a volunteer means enriched learning experiences for children, and usually, increased student motivation! All parent volunteers must complete a Criminal Record check before assisting a child in any capacity. Here are just some of the ways parents can help:

- read stories to students
- hear students read
- play instructional games with students
- provide drills in various skills for individual students
- assist the teacher in a variety of ways within the classroom
- support and assist our crosswalk students/Walking School Bus Program
- be a "guest speaker" about your area of interest or expertise
- be a lice checker
- assist on special lunch days
- be part of our Parent Advisory Council Executive
- help supervise field trips
- demonstrate your favourite crafts to classes
- assist in a variety of ways as the needs arise

All parent volunteers at school and in the classrooms must keep all school information, and all matters dealing with student information or school personnel, strictly confidential.

d) HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM A PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCE

When parents and teachers work together, they make an unbeatable team. Parent conferences can help build teamwork that helps students learn better. Some planning by parents can help make conferences a success. Think about what you want to learn in the conference. Prepare some questions. For example:

- How is my child doing in class?
- Does my child use his/her time well?
- Does he/she have good work habits?
- Does my child usually turn in homework?
- Does he/she have missed assignments?
- Does my child have friends?
- How well does he/she get along with others?
- What can I do at home to support what the teacher is doing?



Talk with your child. Ask what he/she thinks the teacher will say. Ask if he/she has any concerns, and talk about likes, dislikes, problems and successes.

Ask the teacher to explain anything you do not understand. Special programs and services for students are sometimes referred to by their initials. For example, "LAC" means "Learning Assistance Centre." Be prepared to talk and listen. Tell the teacher what you see at home. Talk about your child's interests. Tactfully talk about any concerns. Be sure to let the teacher know about anything that might affect your child's learning.

Follow up. Stay in touch with the teacher. If you think of a question you didn't ask, write a note.

e) **HOMEWORK: HOW PARENTS CAN SUPPORT**

Parents can take an active role in helping their children to be successful in school by assisting in the development of good study habits. Some suggestions for supportive actions by parents:

- Ensure a quiet area, free from distractions and equipped with a desk or table is available to the student.
- Be aware of "normal" requirements for homework – if unsure, contact the school.
- In consultation with student, establish a regular time for homework that fits into the family routine.
- Review with student the completed work. Remember, your role is supporter, not critic.
- Encourage "success" - doing the best you can.
- Sign your child's planner to indicate completion of homework and awareness of the assigned classroom work.

f) **HOME READING**

Independent silent reading is one of the most important activities for the reading development of students of all ages. Children who read a lot become better readers because independent reading:

- enhances their reading comprehension
- provides them with a wide range of background knowledge
- accounts for one third or more of their vocabulary growth
- promotes reading as a lifelong activity



One of the best methods of encouraging children to read at home is to have parents model reading at home. If children see adults reading, they recognize the importance of reading. They will also learn that reading is a source of information, entertainment, and enjoyment. Children of all ages love to have a story read to them. We encourage students to read daily and to view reading as an enjoyable activity. We encourage parents to read to (or with) their children daily for at least 15 minutes.

J. **HEALTHY SCHOOL POLICY**

Albert McMahon Elementary School takes a comprehensive approach towards school health. School health includes but is not limited to nutrition, physical activity, healthy relationships, and drug awareness. At the core of school health are the day-to-day activities planned, organized and taught by teachers: daily physical activities for students, lessons and units from the physical and health education and career education curriculum.

Healthy food is also addressed at our school in the following ways:

- Our PAC store offers a variety of lunch choices, and is in compliance with the Guidelines for Sale of Food and Beverages in Schools.
- Our school participates in the BC Fruit and Vegetable program.
- Celebrations are an important part of school. Teachers monitor the frequency and guide the planning of celebrations, which may include recognition of student accomplishments, or special days such as Halloween or Valentine's Day.
- Teachers discuss healthy choices with students when planning special activities and class celebrations.
- Parents are asked to consult with teachers when contributing food to class events.
- Parents are asked to not send "goodies" to class on birthdays (Teachers need to control frequency of food sharing, ensure that food meets healthy schools guidelines, and monitor for food allergies)
- Pop does not meet the guidelines and is not to be shared in classrooms
- When contributing food for class sharing, parents are encouraged to send healthy alternatives (see for example, [Bake Better Bites](#) on the Ministry of Education Healthy Schools website).
- Candy is rarely shared in classrooms, in very limited amounts on special occasions and is not used as a regular classroom incentive or reward.
- When a student has a life threatening food allergy, parents in that student's class are notified, and are asked to refrain from sending foods that could present a safety threat to a student.

Physical Activity

- Students participate in a variety of classroom daily physical activities, in addition to the regular Physical Education program
- Numerous extra-curricular and intramural activities are offered for students, including basketball, volleyball, floor hockey, and track and field
- Our school has a tradition of participation in the Terry Fox run and Jump Rope for Heart
- Our PAC raised funds, researched, and purchased playground equipment to encourage active play

Healthy Relationships

- Students are taught the SHARP behaviour plan (Safe, Helpful, Accountable, Respectful, and Positive). When students have difficulty with relationships with others, the SHARP behaviour guidelines are used as a teaching tool.
- Some classes have piloted the Restorative Resolutions process
- Our school has trained Peer Counselors helping younger students
- The SWAT (Students With an Aptitude for Teaching) program encourages positive relationships between older and younger students
- Classroom monitoring, and buddy classes also encourage positive relationships

Drug and Substance Abuse Awareness

- The DARE program is presented annually to grade 5 students
- Guest presenters for Fraser House present Drug and Substance Abuse Awareness programs to intermediate classes annually.

ALBERT McMAHON CALENDAR - 2017-2018

(subject to change – refer to website throughout the year for any updates)

First Day of School	Sept. 5 th - Dismissal at 11:00 a.m.
Non Instructional Day	Sept. 22 nd
Terry Fox Run	Sept. 28 th
Thanksgiving – No School	Oct. 9 th
Professional Dev. Day	Oct. 20 th
Non Instructional Day	Oct. 23 rd (Curriculum Implementation Day)
Remembrance Day	
Assembly	Nov. 7 th at 11:00 a.m.
Half Day Assessment	Nov. 10 th - Dismissal at 11:00 a.m.
Stat in lieu of	
Remembrance Day	Nov. 13 th
Report Cards home	Nov. 20 th
Non Instructional Day	Nov. 24 th
Christmas Concert	Dec. 13 th (tentative)
Last Day Before Vacation	Dec. 22 nd
Schools Re-Open	Jan. 8 th
Family Day – No school	Feb. 12 th
District Pro-D Day	Feb. 16 th
Books for Bedtime and Ready, Set, Learn	Feb. 22 nd at 6:00 p.m.
Provincial Pro-D Day	Feb. 23 rd
Half Day Assessment	Mar. 2 nd – Dismissal at 11:00 a.m.
Reports Home	Mar. 5 th
Non Instructional Day	Mar. 16 th
Spring Break	Mar. 19 th – 29 th
Good Friday	Mar. 30 th
Easter Monday	April 2 nd
Stat in lieu of Good Friday	April 3 rd
Schools Re-open	April 4 th
Non Instructional Day	May 18 th
Victoria Day	May 21 st
Kindergarten Orientation	June 1 st
Primary Sports Day	June 15 th
Intermediate Sports Day	June 22 nd
Year End Assembly and Last Day of School	June 28 th



Albert McMahan Elementary School

Code of Conduct

Purpose:

- ❖ To maintain a safe, caring and orderly environment for learning
- ❖ To establish and maintain an appropriate balance among individual and collective rights, freedoms and responsibilities
- ❖ To clarify and publish expectations for student behaviour while at school, while going to and from school, and while attending any school function or activity at any location

Reference to the BC Human Rights Code:

Albert McMahan School promotes the values articulated in the BC Human Rights Code respecting the rights of all individuals in accordance with the law. Discrimination is prohibited based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, physical or mental disability, political belief, sex or sexual orientation – in respect of discriminatory publication and discrimination in accommodation, service and facility in the school environment.

Conduct Expectations:

1. Treat yourself and others with **RESPECT**
 2. Demonstrate **ACCOUNTABILITY**
 3. Ensure the **SAFETY** of yourself and others by making wise choices
- * Specific expectations and rules are outlined in more detail in our SHARP Behaviour Plan.

Acceptable Conduct:

- Be respectful to yourself, others and property
- Be helpful to others by thinking and playing safe
- Report to an adult if you think someone needs help
- Think before you act
- Everybody has the right to learn in a positive environment
- Take pride in your accomplishments and strive for your personal best
- Avoid situations where you may be assumed to be guilty by association

Unacceptable Conduct:

These behaviours are examples only and are not an all-inclusive list. Unacceptable behaviours are ones that:

- interfere with learning
- interfere with the orderly environment
- create unsafe conditions
- involve name calling or inappropriate language
- involve bullying, harassment, intimidation or defamation
- Involve physical violence
- Involve retaliation against a person who has reported incidents

As students progress through maturity we expect increasing personal responsibility and self-discipline.

Consequences:

Discipline will be similar to that of a kind, firm and judicious parent. The severity and frequency of unacceptable conduct as well as the age and maturity of students is considered in determining appropriate action. For example:

- Responses to unacceptable conduct are pre-planned, consistent and fair
- Disciplinary action, wherever possible, is preventative and restorative rather than merely punitive
- Students, as often as possible will be invited to participate in the development of meaningful consequences

Notification:

Our school personnel will advise other parties of serious breaches of the code of conduct. For example, parents of student offenders and victims, school district officials, as required by law, and others, when deemed to be important to reassure members of the school community that school officials are aware of a serious situation or incident and are taking appropriate action to address it.



S.H.A.R.P BEHAVIOUR PLAN

In accordance with the Albert McMahon Elementary School Code of Conduct, we use the **SHARP** acronym to teach and promote positive behaviour:

S – Safe

H – Helpful

A - Accountable

R – Respectful

P - Positive

Using the SHARP acronym, students are taught a variety of behaviours and strategies related to social responsibility. WITS (Walk away, Ignore, Talk it out, Seek help) is an example of one strategy for students to solve problems peacefully. SHARP posters outlining expectations for student behaviour in all settings as well as specific settings, including *classroom*, *hallways*, *gym*, *playground*, and *assemblies*, are posted throughout the school. Students are recognized for positive contributions to the school community by receiving a SHARP behaviour ticket. Tickets are entered into a draw which occurs at each monthly Good News assembly. For misbehaviours, the SHARP posters are used as a teaching tool in discussing and reviewing expectations with students.

S.H.A.R.P. BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS

	Safe	Helpful	Accountable	Respectful	Positive
Everywhere	-Hands and feet to self	- Help others	- Be honest - Report bullying - Report vandalism - Follow directions	- Listen - Follow school dress code - Use garbage cans - Recycle	-Say nice things -Talk out problems calmly
Hallways	-Walk	- Hold doors open for others	- Go directly where you are supposed to go	- Walk quietly	-Smile
Playground	-Use equipment responsibly - Stay off railings - Stay in designated play areas	- Pick up litter	- Line up promptly and quietly when the bell rings	- Play by the rules	-Ask others to join your group
Gym	-Use equipment responsibly -Wear appropriate gym clothing and footwear	- Put equipment away	- Use change rooms appropriately	- Change quickly and quietly - Display good sportsmanship	-Say encouraging words
Assemblies	-Sit in your designated spot, silently, on your seat	- Sit still, silently and patiently	- Follow directions of assembly leader or presenter - Listen	- Clap appropriately - Raise your hand to speak - Stand, hands at sides when singing national anthem	-Encourage and congratulate others appropriately and sincerely

- In addition to these school wide expectations, each teacher will share specific classroom expectations with students
- Additional specific school expectations are listed below

ALBERT MCMAHON: SHARP BEHAVIOUR SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

In accordance with our Code of Conduct and SHARP Behaviour Goals, the following specific expectations apply:

- A. **Attendance:** Students should arrive on time and attend school every day, unless they are legitimately ill.
- B. **Before and After School:** Students line up outside of classroom exterior door to enter. At 2:23 pm students exit via the classroom exterior door and go directly home.
- C. **Weapons (real and toy):** No weapons, real or toy, are permitted at school. Laser pointers are not permitted, due to the potential for serious eye damage.
- D. **Electronic devices (including cell phones):** Electronic devices, such as portable electronic games and mp3s, are to be left at home. Students are discouraged from bringing cell phones to school, and are not permitted to use cell phones during school hours at school. (Cell phone permission forms may be obtained at office)
- E. **Use of the School Phone:** The school phone is used, with permission, (phone pass from teacher), by a student to communicate:
 - 1. Illness
 - 2. Unavoidable changes in home transportation arrangements.*** Social planning for stay-overs and play dates is done at home**
- F. **Bicycles, Skateboards, Roller Blades and Scooters:** Skateboards and roller blades stay at home. Bicycles and scooters may be ridden to and from school, but must be walked while on the school grounds. Bicycle and scooter riders should wear helmets. Bicycles and scooters are required to be parked and locked in the bicycle racks provided. During the school day bicycle racks are out of bounds.
- G. **Boundaries:** The chain link fence (West, North, and East sides) and the railing (South side) define the school grounds the students must stay within during the school day. The crosswalk is used by students as they walk to the school from the parking lot before school, and to the parking lot after school.
- H. **Lunch Break:** Students eat their lunch in their classrooms, seated in a chair. Classrooms are tidied before students are dismissed. Students are dismissed by the lunch supervisor. A letter of permission from a parent/guardian is needed for a student to go home for lunch.

- I. **Outside Days:** Hall passes are given by the lunch supervisors to students needing to go inside. Primary students play in the East Zone and Intermediates in the West Zone. Snow, ice, acorns, sticks, etc. must stay on the ground.
- J. **Inside Days:** Students are to play games quietly in their own classrooms. Students may leave the classroom to use washrooms, but should not visit in other classrooms or wander in hallways.
- K. **Washrooms/Change-rooms:** Students are expected to use the washrooms and return to their designated class directly and immediately. Gymnasium change-room washrooms are for P.E. classes only. These washrooms are to be accessible through the gymnasium only.
- L. **Library:** A supervisor must be present at all times. Chairs are to be returned to tables. Leave the library neater than you found it. Speak quietly in the library.
- M. **School Dress Code:** Students are to dress appropriately for school (midriff and undergarments covered, hats and hoods off inside the building, no slogans or images either promoting alcohol, drugs, or violence or demeaning other people).
- N. **Healthy Eating:** A variety of healthy snacks are available at our school store. Gum is not allowed at school. Some classes are designated “nut free” due to individuals with serious nut allergies.
- O. **Latex Sensitivity:** We have latex sensitivities at the school as well, therefore, no balloons please.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR ENCOURAGEMENT AND RECOGNITION

Positive behaviour is encouraged in the following ways:

- Buddy classes: intermediate classes provide guidance and show positive role modeling to younger primary students
- SWAT (Students With an Aptitude for Teaching): a reading tutoring program where grade 5 and 6 students help younger students
- Peer counseling: older students are trained to help other students solve problems
- Student leadership opportunities: students provide service to the school, for example, helping in the school store, office monitors, primary classroom monitors
- Restorative Practices: program being taught to some intermediate classes, emphasizes building relationships and nurturing a positive school climate

Positive behaviour is recognized in a number of ways, depending on the situation and the child:

- Verbal compliment by a staff member
- Note to student
- Note to parent in planner
- SHARP recognition slip, entered in monthly SHARP behaviour draw at assembly
- Extra Recess twice a month for all students who have demonstrated positive SHARP behaviour for the previous two weeks

Consequences for Inappropriate Behaviour

Our emphasis is on teaching appropriate behaviour, and consequences include opportunities for students to reflect, learn, and “give back” to the community by apologizing and/or providing some form of service to the school. When students display inappropriate behaviour, staff will respond in a manner that is appropriate to the particular student and behaviour. Counseling services are recommended in some situations. Minor misbehaviours, such as running in the hallway, may be dealt with immediately with a verbal warning. Consequences for wearing hats in school, or inappropriate use of toys or other personal possessions, including ipods and cell phones, may involve confiscation of the item. Records of behaviour referrals are kept at the office. Misbehaviour that is repeated after verbal warnings and more significant misbehaviour such as disrespect, disobedience, and physical aggression will be followed with an immediate consequence. Consequences for more serious misbehaviours or patterns of poor behaviour choices include, but are not limited to:

- Notifying the student’s parents
- Removing the student from the playground at recess and lunch time and assigning service to the school, such as litter clean up, or reflection time at the office
- Time out from the classroom, to complete reflection and assignments in a separate supervised area (office or a different classroom)

For chronic inappropriate behaviour or for more extreme misbehaviour such as fighting, bullying, insolence, etc. there are clearly defined consequences outlined in Mission School District Administration Procedure # 114 (Student Conduct Standards and Behaviour Management) These consequences include restorative practices and suspension, ranging from 1 to 9 days.

CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Dear Parents,

This is a reminder of school policy about cell phones and electronic devices. Electronic devices such as, I-pods and portable gaming systems are not permitted at school. These items are often expensive, can be easily lost or stolen, can cause distraction and disruption in classrooms and can be used to share inappropriate material. If students choose to bring these items to school, the items will be confiscated, and parents will need to contact school administration to discuss arrangements for collecting the items.

We strongly discourage students from bringing cell phones to school, for the same reasons that other small electronic devices are not allowed. We do understand that there may be some parents who wish to have their children bring a cell phone for safety and/or communication before and after school. All telephone communication during the school day should be through the school office. As you are aware a phone is available for student use, with a teacher's permission.

Please complete the attached form if you wish to have your child bring a cell phone to school.

I require my child, _____, Division: _____ to carry a cell phone to and from school, for safety/communications requirements before and after school.

- I understand that there is a risk that the cell phone may go missing and that the school will not take responsibility for a missing, lost, or stolen cell phone.
 - I also understand that my child is not permitted to use the cell phone on school property before, during, or after school, with the exception of contacting parents or care-givers after school.
 - I understand that if my child chooses not to follow these guidelines, the cell phone will be confiscated.
-
- My child will be handing in the phone to the office each morning, and collecting it after school each day. (We recommend this as the most secure method of storage of cell phones at school.)
 - My child will keep the cell phone in his/her backpack, turned off, during the school day.

Parent Signature

Telephone Number

