



# **Parent Handbook 2017 – 2018**



## NEW HORIZONS CHARTER SCHOOL CALENDAR 2017-2018

<b>VACATION PERIODS &amp; SPECIAL DATES</b>	
Labour Day	September 4
Professional Development Day	October 6
Thanksgiving Day	October 9
Alberta Charter Schools Conference	October 27
Fall Break	November 10 - 17
Christmas Break	December 25 – January 5
Teachers' Convention	February 8 & 9
Professional Development Day	February 16
Family Day	February 19
Intake Day	March 2
Spring Break	March 23 – April 2
Professional Development Day	April 27
School Closure	May 18
Victoria Day	May 21
Final Day For Students	June 28
Organizational Day (Staff)	June 29

### **Welcome to New Horizons Charter School and the New School Year**

*To all the returning parents, welcome back!*

*To the parents new to our school, we are excited to have you as a part of this unique and special learning community.*

*This handbook is intended to be a quick reference guide to our school. Should you require more information, please feel free to contact the office. A handbook such as this is continually a work in progress. If you have suggestions for improvements, we would be glad to hear them.*

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**Can't Find What You Are looking for? [Email us](#) and let us know so we can include that information in this handbook.**

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## A. Our Social Contract

New Horizons School, we are fortunate to have a student body, staff, and parent community who maintain a positive school atmosphere. However, a school is a human environment, and conflicts will and do arise. As we work and learn together – students, staff, parents, and guests – we are expected to do so within the bounds of our social contract below.

We believe that ...

*Our school is a place of learning.*

*It is a place where we all treat each other with respect and honesty.*

*We learn and play in a way that is safe and fair.*

We hope that you feel welcome in our school and contribute to the positive atmosphere by honoring our social contract.

## **B. About New Horizons Charter School**

### **1. New Horizons School – A Public Charter School**

New Horizons School was established in 1995 as Canada's first public Charter School. Our school operates as a public, government funded, charter school for gifted children.

Programs are currently offered for children in Grades K to 9. The school is governed by the Board of the New Horizons Charter School Society, a non-profit charitable society made up of parents, teachers, and interested community members. The society operates the school under a charter with the Minister of Education for the Province of Alberta.

### **2. School Mission Statement**

The mission of New Horizons School is to meet the special academic needs of gifted students in a congregated setting in an environment that is low-anxiety, positive, and supportive of the individual. Gifted students need opportunities to be challenged, to think alternatively, and to pursue learning according to their own learning styles.

### **3. School Philosophy**

Our program recognizes that gifted children tend to be very intense and focused. The school is on a continuous journey to seek and use a range of techniques identified by research as appropriate for meeting the unique needs of gifted children. The school embraces and enhances the Alberta Program of Studies from K to grade 9.

New Horizons is structured upon the appropriateness and characteristics of the students, determined by initial application information and assessments performed early in the school year. Timetabling will allow for some flexibility in grouping for instruction and activities. At times students will be streamed to work with those with similar achievement levels. The possibility also exists to group students with different levels of skill mastery to allow students to develop leadership, and to ensure that students can work with a range of individuals at various levels of ability.

The overarching principle of the program is to facilitate student growth and development academically, emotionally, and socially. In accordance with Alberta Education's mandate related to student learning and in meeting the needs of gifted students, the outcomes in this plan have been established to address the three goal areas mentioned above.

#### **4. Charter Goals**

Our charter is the document upon which our school is established, and it identifies the goals of our school.

Charter Goal 1: Student Learning is Improved.

- Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate mastery of learner outcomes mandated by the Alberta programs of study.
- Outcome 2: Students will become creative risk takers academically.

Charter Goal 2: Students will benefit from opportunities for positive social interaction.

- Outcome 1: Students will develop positive interdependence skills.
- Outcome 2: Students will become creative risk takers socially.

Charter Goal 3: Students' emotional needs are supported.

1. Outcome 1: Students will develop independence, self-direction and self-discipline in learning.
2. Outcome 2: Students will become creative risk takers emotionally.

The entire charter can be found on our website at [www.newhorizons.ab.ca](http://www.newhorizons.ab.ca)

## C. General Information

### 1. Contact Information

Office Number: 780-416-2353

Fax Number: 780-467-0274

Website: [www.newhorizons.ca](http://www.newhorizons.ca)

Email: [administration@newhorizons.ca](mailto:administration@newhorizons.ca)

School office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please leave a message if your call is not answered by our school secretary.

Every attempt will be made to pass messages on to your child, but please limit them to emergencies if possible.

#### Other Numbers

Student Transportation (Elk Island Public Schools): 780-417-8151

#### Staff E-Mail

To e-mail your teacher or another staff member, use the following format: **first initial and last name @newhorizons.ab.ca**

Example: Jane Smith would have this email address: [jsmith@newhorizons.ab.ca](mailto:jsmith@newhorizons.ab.ca)

### 2. Start and Dismissal Times

All students other than bused students should arrive/be dropped off **no earlier** than 8:15 a.m. unless otherwise arranged with the Principal.

#### Elementary (K-6) Times:

Morning Warning Bell: 8:30 a.m.

School Starts: 8:35 a.m.

Morning Recess: 10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Lunch: 11:56 – 12:41 p.m.

Afternoon Recess: 1:41 p.m. – 1:56 p.m.

School Ends 3:14 p.m.

#### Jr. High (7-9) Times:

Morning Warning Bell: 8:30 a.m.

School Starts: 8:35 a.m.

Lunch: 11:56 – 12:41 p.m.

School Ends 3:14 p.m.

*Afternoon and morning breaks vary. Please check your child's individual schedule.*

#### Early Dismissal Days:

Early dismissal occurs every **first Wednesday** of the month at **2:14** for all grades.



## 5. Parking

### Staff Parking

- Staff parking is behind the school along Broadmoor Blvd. Please do not park here. The doors adjacent to this parking lot remain locked at all times.
- Handicap parking is at the rear of the school. Please contact the school if you require handicap parking.

### Drop Off/Pick-Up Zone & Visitor Parking

- Because of the modernization, parking will likely undergo changes as the year progresses.
- Handicap Parking is located in front of the school
- Please view our Parking and [Traffic Management Plan](#) from our website or the most recent plan.

*Thank you for your cooperation in keeping the roadways and parking lot safe for our students*

## 5. School Communication

- **Newsletters**

We do not publish a traditional monthly school newsletter. Rather, we make regular posts on our website.

- News Notification: Parents may subscribe to receive email notifications for our news posts by clicking on the “Sign Up For Emails” section below the news feed on the bottom left of our [Home Page](#).
- To view the monthly news as you might do with a traditional email, click in the “View All” button beneath the news feed section.

- **FaceBook**

- Our Facebook is located at <https://www.facebook.com/New-Horizons-School-for-Gifted-Learners>
- Notices and links about news updates on our website will be posted on FaceBook.

- **School Emails**

At times, the school will send emails to all parents regarding timely notices and other announcements. These emails are typically not posted on our website or other social media. In order to receive these emails, please ensure that the office has your current email address.

- **Classroom Communication**

Your child’s teacher will familiarize you with his or her communication procedures.

## 6. Fees & Charges

**NOTE: Last Year the Alberta Government passed *Bill 1* which eliminated school fees from public and Catholic Boards. Funding was provided to help offset the costs.**

***Bill 1* did not apply to charter schools. While we did not receive extra funding, the Board has still decided to cut our basic school fees by 50% from last year.**

*School Fees are due Sept. 30 and can be paid by cash, cheque, debit or major credit cards (VISA & Master Card).*

### Basic School Fees

K-9 students supply all personal use items (pens, pencils, paper, etc.).

- Kindergarten \$27.50 for materials & resources
- Gr. 1-6 \$52.50 \$32.50 materials & resources, \$20 textbook rental
- Gr. 7 - 9 \$92.50 \$42.50 materials & resources, \$30 textbook rental, \$20 options

### Lunch Supervision Fees

- Kindergarten (only child) \$50.00
- Gr. 1-9 (first child) \$95.00
- Gr. K-9 (each additional child) \$30.00

### Field Trip Fees

- Basic Field Trip Fee: \$35.00; (\$17.50 Kindergarten)
- Other fees may be collected through the year if the \$35.00 is exhausted before the year ends.
- The field trip fees cover entry fees of curricular trips. The school covers the transportation costs.

### Other Fees

- Cost of Ski field trip for Gr. 4-9 (optional)
- Junior High Adventure Trips (Gr. 7 – 9)
  - Grade 7 (approximately \$250)
  - Grade 8 (approximately \$500)
  - Grade 9 (approximately \$2500)
- Jr. High Option Fees (some option courses that use specialized materials or involve field trips have an extra fee)

## 7. Fundraising

### Fundraising Association of New Horizons School (FANHS)

- The bulk of the school's fundraising is coordinated by the FANHS. The Association has various fundraisers throughout the year. Participation in fundraising events is always optional.
- Please see the [FANHS Page](#) on our website for more information about the role FANHS plays in our school.

### **Junior High Adventure Trip**

- Near the end of the year, our junior high classes go on extended field trips and have associated costs.
  - Grade 7 : Southern Alberta (approximately \$250)
  - Grade 8 : Jasper (approximately \$500)
  - Grade 9 : Ottawa/Montreal/Quebec (approximately \$2500)
- A parent-run fundraising body coordinates fundraising activities. Student who participate earn “credits” that can be used of offset or even completely pay for the cost of the adventure trips.

### **8. Hot Lunch**

- FANHS coordinates a hot lunch program. A hot lunch is offered on Tuesdays and Wednesdays throughout the year.
- For more information, visit the [Hot Lunch Program Page](#).

### **9. Lost and Found**

- To assist with identification of lost and found items, students should have all personal items identified with their name.
- The lost and found receptacle is in the foyer by the office.
- All items remaining at the end of the school year are donated to a local charitable organization. Parents are encouraged to look through the lost and found regularly.

### **10. School Entry**

- All visitors, including parents must use the main entrance.
- Doors open in the morning at 8:15 a.m.
- For the first week of school, parents who wish may escort their child to the classroom. After the first week, please remain in the foyer and allow your child to make his or her way to the classroom independently.
- After school, we are asking parents to wait for their children outside. We have only one exit and all 320 of our students will be using the same hallway and exit. To alleviate congestion and maintain a safe exit, please remain outside to greet your child.

### **10. Signing In**

- When entering the school during school hours, please report to the office.
- If you are volunteering at the school, please sign in at the office and pick up a lanyard to indicate you have signed in.

## 11. Transportation

### Questions and Concerns

- Elk Island Public Transportation (EIPT) is our bus service provider. Students living within the Elk Island Public School jurisdiction are eligible to access EIPT.
- Information regarding your child's transportation to and from school is organized and communicated by Elk Island Public Transportation.
- Should you have a concern regarding your child's transportation arrangements, please call 780-417-8151.
- If you have a safety concern regarding your child's trip, please contact your bus driver or the school administration.
- Currently there is no transportation service to students living outside Elk Island Public Schools' catchment area.

### Transportation Subsidy (Out-Of-County Students)

- If you are out of Elk Island Public Transportation's service area and drive your child to school, you may apply for a transportation subsidy from Alberta Education. Information regarding this subsidy will be sent home to out-of-area parents in the first few days of school. If you do not receive it, please contact the school.

## 12. The School Website

- Our school's website ([www.newhorizons.ca](http://www.newhorizons.ca)) is updated regularly.
- Please note that there are two menus on the home page
  - Main Menu located at the top of the page
  - Quick-Links menu on the right side of the page that provides information to many aspects of our school including documents such as our Education Plan.

## 13. Out-of-School-Care

- Out-of-school care is available for school aged children (4/5- 12 years old).
- The service is provided by a private contractor, Friend Club Child Care.
- For more information, contact Kasia Spanialska:
  - Phone: 780-707-4481
  - Email: [kspace@shaw.ca](mailto:kspace@shaw.ca)
  - Website: <http://www.newhorizons.ca/out-of-school-care/>

## D. Expectations for Students

### 1. Student Code of Conduct

Parents are encouraged to review the complete **Student Code of Conduct** that can be found on our website (<http://www.newhorizons.ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Code-of-Conduct-2016.pdf>)

### 2. Use of School Phone

The phones in the school are for staff use. However, it is understood that on occasion it is crucial that a student contact a parent. At those times, students may have use of the school phone only after obtaining permission from the office staff or teacher. The office phone is not to be used to make play/homework dates.

Students who have cell phones will be requested to leave them in their lockers until break times when they may be used.

### 3. Electronic Devices

#### Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement

We are pleased to be able to offer fee free electronic learning devices to our students to make information that supports learning as accessible as possible.

With technology use comes responsibility. All of our Grade 4-9 students and parents are required to sign our *Student Acceptable Use Agreement For Technology* every three years.

#### Cell Phones

- Students from Grades K-6 are expected to keep their cell phones in a secure location and refrain from using them from arrival at school until after school dismissal. **Please use the office to contact your child during school hours.**
- Students from grades 7-9 are expected to **not** bring their cell phones to class unless approved by a teacher. Students from grades 7-9 may access and use their cell phones before school and during breaks.
- Students must be logged into the school wi-fi while using their own device at school to ensure that their content runs through our school filters.

#### b) Game Devices

Students are expected to put away their gaming devices when they arrive at school. Students may access their devices at the end-of -day dismissal.

### **c) Cameras and Photos**

Taking photos of other students or staff is prohibited unless the photography is approved by a teacher for an instructional or school promotion activity.

### **d) MP3 Players/ iPod's**

MP3 players may be used in class with the teacher's permission.

## **4. Personal Property**

- The responsibility for the safekeeping of personal property brought onto school premises rests with the owner of the property.
- The school is not responsible for the recovery of lost or stolen property. Staff will investigate reports of missing personal property.
- To assist the school, all personal property, including clothing, should be clearly labeled with the owner's name.
- School personnel may, at their discretion, hold a pupil's property for safekeeping.

## **5. Lockers**

- Lockers are provided to grades 4 – 9, and locks provided to students in grades 6-9. Students must use school-issued locks.
- Lockers are provided as a convenience for students and can be subject to a search. School administration must have "reasonable grounds" to conduct a search, and does not have to advise a student of any "legal" rights prior to a search. School administration does not require a warrant or police assistance to conduct a search on school property.

## **6. Homework**

The amount of homework assigned will vary at each grade level. Students may be assigned homework for the following reasons:

- to enable those who have been absent from school to catch up with the rest of the class,
- to develop a particular skill,
- to keep up with the rest of the class,
- to facilitate review,
- to foster deeper investigation and enrichment, and
- to develop good study habits.

## **7. Dress Code**

- Students are expected to dress appropriately for weather conditions.
- Halter tops, low cut tank tops, very short skirts and shorts, bathing attire and clothing with inappropriate words or images, etc. are not acceptable. As a guideline, the hemline of shorts and skirts should not be shorter than one's fingers when the arms are at one's side.
- Students who come to school dressed in a way that breaches the dress code will be given alternate cover-up clothing to wear for the duration of the day.
- Students are expected to take off their hats when they enter school.
- Students are expected to have and use indoor footwear.
-

## **8. Recess**

### Elementary Students

- All elementary students are expected to go outside for morning, lunch, and afternoon recess (see “In Days” in the next section.).
- Students may remain inside only by request from the parent for special circumstances, or by permission from a teacher.
- Students are expected to remain on school property and in view of supervisors.

### Junior High Students

- During lunch, junior high students are expected to go outside but may remain inside only by request from the parent for special circumstances, or by permission from a teacher.

## **9. Leaving School Grounds (Grades 7-9)**

Many junior high students wish to leave the school grounds and walk to the local store during lunch hour. In such case, parents must annually complete the *Leaving School Grounds Permission Form*. Students are expected to sign out and sign in upon return.

## **E. Opportunities for Parent Involvement**

### **1. New Horizons Charter School Society: Declaration of Understanding**

New Horizons Charter School Society (NHCSS) is a registered non-profit society, which is the decision making body of the School. All parents are eligible to become a NHCSS Member by signing a Declaration of Understanding. Please watch for a form to be sent to all parents at the beginning of each year.

### **2. New Horizons Charter School Society: Board of Directors**

Board members are elected from the society membership. The Board positions are two-year terms elected at a special general meeting in October. Any Society Member in good standing is eligible to run for a position on the Board.

Meetings are held approximately once a month and all parents of children in the school are encouraged to attend. For more information, please visit the [Governance Page](#) on our website.

### **3. New Horizons School Council**

The purpose of the Council is to:

- provide input to the school administration from the school community in areas relating to our children’s education, fundraising, discipline, school maintenance, organization, and programming;
- provide information to parents on topics about school programming and educational issues;
- develop special events that foster participation and well-being of the school community;
- communicate information to parents and the community; and
- promote pride in the school and community.

The New Horizons School Council is governed by specific bylaws, a copy of which is available from the Chairman upon request. Any parent of a student in the school may run for Council executive. Elections are held annually in June. Meetings are held as required, generally on a monthly basis, at the school. For more information, visit the [School Council Page](#).

#### **4. Fundraising Association of New Horizons School (FANHS)**

FANHS is the fundraising body for New Horizons School. Each year, the School Council and the school is supported in many ways through the work of FANHS. Any parent of a student enrolled in the school may be a part of this body. Meetings are held at various times to meet the schedules of the various members. Visit the [FANHS](#) page on our website for more information.

#### **5. Parent Volunteers**

- New Horizons School is fortunate to have an involved and supportive parent community. We strongly encourage parents to volunteer for Board or Council positions as well as become involved in the everyday life of their children at school. Volunteer services are usually coordinated through either the classroom teacher or the FANHS Volunteer Coordinator.
- Parents can become involved as special resource persons or volunteer to assist in the office, library, or in classrooms/field trips, or playing an active role under the supervision and direction of a teacher.
- Parents volunteering in any capacity must complete the *Volunteer Declaration Form* on an annual basis. These are available in the office.

#### **6. Lunch Hour Supervisors**

We are always in need of lunch hour supervisors. Please contact the office if you are interested in helping out.



## F. Parent Communication

### 1. Opportunities for Parent-Teacher Meetings

It is crucial that avenues of communication between family and school remain open and well used. We will stay in contact with news, questions, information, or concerns and ask that you do the same. This is in addition to these formal opportunities:

#### *Meet the Teacher Night*

We hold our Meet the Teacher Night in September, to enable the teachers to meet the parents, and to discuss the curriculum, along with expectations for work and behavior.

#### *Parent-Teacher Conferences*

The fall parent-teacher conferences are scheduled a few weeks in advance of the report cards so that parents and teachers can discuss any concerns before the report card is issued. Individual Program Plans (IPPs) are also discussed at this meeting (see IPP in the Student Learning section of this Handbook).

In the spring reporting period, student led conferences are held in the presence of the classroom teacher.

#### *Parent Initiated Meetings*

Parents are invited to contact their child's teacher to arrange a mutually agreeable time to discuss concerns or questions.

### 2. Communicating Concerns

Positive, clear and respectful communication within the school community is an essential ingredient to enhancing the educational experience of students, parents, teaching and administrative staff. Successful communications are more likely when there is a clear plan to guide all stakeholders through situations where potential conflict exists.

#### Communication Protocol

At every level of New Horizons' organization, clear, direct and respectful communication will be expected and encouraged. Concerns and grievances are to be addressed directly to the staff member with whom the grievance exists and shall only be elevated to the next level after there has been opportunity provided for the concern to be addressed and resolved.

1. Concerns and/or issues are to be addressed directly to the staff member with whom the grievance exists. *(To avoid bias in the case of an appeal, there is no need to cc school administration on emails.)*
2. An appointment should be made at a time agreeable to both parties. We encourage parents to briefly identify the concern as well.
3. Concerns should be clearly articulated and include specific requests for action.
4. If resolution is not reached, then the concern and the attempts at resolution are documented and the concern may be elevated to the next level: principal, superintendent, and then the Board.
5. If a complaint is elevated, the person to whom it is elevated shall ensure that the communication plan has been followed and that appropriate resolution was previously attempted. If the complainant has not followed the communication protocol they will be referred back to the appropriate level.

## Other Considerations

Please avoid coming to the school unannounced and requesting a meeting. While before and after school are often the times parents wish to meet with a staff member, such times are busy. Therefore, if you wish to have a successful discussion with your child's teacher, we urge that you arrange a meeting ahead of time to ensure that there is adequate time and attention to discuss your concerns. Please note that morning meetings must end when instructional time begins.

## G. Technology at NHS

### 1. Acceptable Use of School Technology Agreement

- All students and parents are required to sign an *Acceptable Use of School Technology Agreement*.
- These agreements are renewed every three years.

### 2. Technology Availability

- Wi-Fi is available throughout the school.
- Students from kindergarten to grade 1 have generous access to iPads.
- Students in grades 2 to 3 have generous access to Chromebooks.
- Students from grades 4-9 are assigned individual laptops.
- Our technology is a “no-fee” resource. These laptops must remain in school.

### 3. School Google Account

Each student at New Horizons School has a school Google account.

- They are provided with a username and password upon registration to NHS.
- Each Google account is associated with an email account.
- Generally, students do not begin using their personal accounts and email until Grade 4. Parents will be informed when this occurs.

## H. Student Learning

### 1. Reporting Student Progress

- Grades K- 9 are issued three report cards during the school year: November and March and the last day of school in June. Students not present will have their report cards mailed to them unless reports are complete and ready before the student's departure.
- Report cards for the K-6 students are outcomes based. In other words, key learner outcomes for the term will be identified on the report card and a numerical level of achievement will be assigned to each outcome.

- Percentages and letter grades are used for reporting core subject progress at the junior high level. Levels of achievement are used for reporting on the option courses.

## **2. Individual Program Plans (IPPs)**

- An I.P.P. is a mandatory requirement of Alberta Education for each student identified as having special needs. This includes gifted and talented students. It is a plan of action designed to ensure the provision of appropriate programming for students with special needs.
- This plan is a collaborative effort between the parent of a student and the teacher. The teacher will contact parents in the fall for input on the I.P.P.
- An I.P.P. will be developed based on parent, student (if applicable) and teacher input. Parents will be given a copy of the IPP for review.
- Parents could choose to approve the IPP electronically or choose to meet with the teacher in person. The IPP remains in place from one year to the next until a revised one is completed.

## **3. Provincial Achievement Tests**

- Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs) are given to students in Grades 6, and 9. These tests are administered in May and June and results are returned to the students in the fall of the following year. Grade 6 and Grade 9 write Sa PAT in Social Studies, Science, Math, and Language Arts test.
- Alberta Education is in the process of replacing the Provincial Achievement Tests with Student Learning Assessments (SLAs). Grade 3 students will participate in these assessments when they are implemented.

## **4. Parent Portal**

We have just migrated to a new School Information System for students in grades. We will be implementing the system the 2017-2018 school year.

## **5. Student Awards**

### **Honour Awards-Junior High–Grades 7/8/9**

To qualify for an honors award a student must attain an overall average mark of at least 80% in each of the four core subjects of Mathematics, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies. They must also obtain a 70% mark in all other subjects.

### **Trevor Kuziw Award**

This award is given to a student (usually in junior high) who demonstrates a high level of service to the school.

### **Citizenship Award**

Awards are presented annually to grade 4-9 students who demonstrate outstanding citizenship in their class rooms. These students display a positive attitude and are well respected by their peers.

#### Service Award – Grade 4 - 9

Students that provide service to the school as a whole are recognized at our annual awards ceremony. There are a number and a variety of activities that students may get involved in to earn this award. These activities vary from year to year.

#### Academic Awards – Grade 7 -9

Students have the opportunity to receive academic awards for excellent achievement in the academic courses and French.

### **6. Math Acceleration**

- Some students in grades 1-9 may demonstrate outstanding math skills and require more challenge than what the regular program of study offers. Such students may be accelerated as a strategy to meet their high math learning needs.
- With parent consent, students are assessed with a grade-level assessment. Should students score in a range that is high enough, they are re-assessed with an above-grade-level assessment. If a student scores in a range that makes acceleration a viable strategy, parents may agree to having their child accelerated.
- The school teaches math at the same time. Therefore, a student is accelerated moves to the classroom to join other students at the same grade level in math. For example, a student in grade 3 who is accelerated to grade 4 math will join the grade 4 math class for math instruction.

### **7. In-depth Studies**

#### Elementary

An In-depth Studies opportunity is offered at all grade levels. These studies are designed to hone research and presentation skills as the students study their own areas of special interest. While there is time scheduled for this course at school, due to the nature of each student's individual project he/she may wish or be required to do some work on it at home.

Independent studies fairs are held throughout the year to celebrate what has been learned independently.

#### Junior High Investigations

In-depth studies at the junior high level are called Investigations.

Twice a year, the junior high schedule will be rearranged to create an Investigations Week. Students will be given time to focus on their independently chosen project and present it on the last day of the Investigations Week.

## 8. Library Books

- Books may be signed out for a two (2) week period and may be renewed if not reserved. Reference books must be used in the library.
- Overdue library fines are not levied. However, if an item has not been returned after a reasonable number of overdue reminders, the student will be required to pay for the missing item or return it immediately. The student is responsible for any damages to items he/she has signed out.

## 9. Learn Alberta

- Learn Alberta is a wonderful site for supporting student learning. You must visit it especially the Online Reference Center.
- To get to the site, visit [www.learnalberta.ca](http://www.learnalberta.ca). Each school has a username and password shared by all members of a particular school. The username and password will be made available to all students and parents of New Horizons School.

## 10. Field Trips

- Field trips are provided for students throughout the year as a supplement to the school program. Parents will be notified in advance of trip plans. Children who are not able to participate in a field trip will be accommodated in another class during the time of the field trip. For each field trip, information and permission forms will be sent to parents. All students going on a field trip will be required to have a permission form signed by the parent. These forms will be kept in the school office.
- On field trips, students are expected to conduct themselves according to behavioral expectations set out in the “Code of Conduct”. In situations where the field trip involves an overnight stay or use of special equipment, rules of conduct will be outlined in a letter to parents and students.
- Please see the “Fees” section in this handbook for field trip costs.
- Our Junior High students participate in a yearly adventure trip which is *not funded* by the school. Students are given ample opportunity to fundraise to pay for their trip with the assistance from the Junior High Fundraising group should families decide to participate.
  - Grade 7 – Overnight in Kananaskis
  - Grade 8 – 3 day/2 night to Jasper
  - Grade 9 – 7 day/6 night to Quebec and Ottawa

## 11. Extracurricular Programs

Junior High Nighthawks

Junior high students have the following extracurricular sports opportunities

Cross Country

Volleyball

Basketball

Badminton

Grade 5/6 Nighthawks

Grade 5/6 students have the opportunity to join these sports and play against other schools.

Volleyball

Basketball

Reach For the Top

Students from Grade 6-9 are invited to join our School's Reach For the Top team.

Student Council

Each year students elect a Student Council. This leadership opportunity is open to students from grade 7-9.

Lunch Hour Clubs

A variety of lunch hour clubs are offered to students mainly during the cold winter months. Updates will be made as the year progresses.

### I. Student Safety

#### 1. Attendance/Late Procedures

Continuous attendance, by all students, is essential for learning to occur. Families are encouraged to arrange family vacations during the specified vacation times. Students and parents should be encouraged to schedule medical, dental and other appointments or engagements outside regular school hours. Students are responsible for the material covered during all absences.

Under no circumstances will students be allowed to leave school during class time without first obtaining permission from the school office. Students leaving the school for an appointment must present a note to the teacher and then leave the note at the office before signing out and leaving. Students who return to school part way through the school must report to the school secretary.

**Anyone taking their child out for lunch or an appointment is asked to sign in and out *at the office.***

Punctuality is very important; therefore we expect our students to be in school on time every day for morning and afternoon classes.

## **2. Lateness**

If you drive your child to school, please ensure you arrive before 8:35 a.m. when classes begin. Late arrivals are disruptive to your child's learning, and to the learning environment of other students.

After five late arrival in a month, the school administration will contact parents.

## **3. Absentee Check**

Parents are expected to notify the school office in writing, by phone or by email before the absence, or to leave a message on the school's answering machine before 8:45 a.m. of the day of the absence. If the school has not been advised of the child's absence, the secretary will call home shortly after classes begin, as a safety check.

## **3. Noon Hour Supervision**

New Horizons School retains adult lunch supervisors. While students are provided with a more relaxed atmosphere during the noon break, supervisors are to be considered by the students as persons of authority in the school, and are to be respected and obeyed accordingly. Serious offences will be referred to the school administration.

Noon hour supervision is paid for by the lunch fees provided by those who use this service.

Students in Grades 1 to 6 go outside for the first half of the lunch break, weather permitting. Supervisors then bring the students in where they eat lunch in their classrooms.

*All students leaving the premises must sign out at the office. This includes students leaving for lunch with a parent.*

## **4. After School Activities**

Students will not be kept after school without parental notification.

## **5. Student Illness at School**

If a student is too ill to remain in class, the school staff will contact a parent to take the child home. In the event that a parent cannot be contacted, is unable to collect the student, or if the illness is not of a serious nature, the student may rest at the office or in our infirmary. The emergency contact for the ill child is only made if the parents cannot be reached and the child is too ill to rest comfortably at school.

## **6. Accidents at School**

When minor accidents occur that do not appear to require medical attention, parents will be contacted by phone or email to make them aware of the incident. If the accident appears more serious, the parents will be contacted and requested to come to school so that they may seek medical attention for the child. If parents are unable to be reached, a staff member of the school will arrange for medical assistance as deemed necessary.

## **7. Administering Medicine to Students**

The Board recognizes that some students must have prescribed medication during school hours requiring the cooperation of school staff. At all times, final responsibility for such medical treatment rests with the parent/guardian, or in the case of independent students, with the student.

**The Parent must first complete the Medication Record requesting such service and giving full instruction on the procedure to be followed by the principal or designate. This form is available at the office.**

### Guidelines

Non-prescription drugs such as aspirins, cold remedies and inhalants will not be administered to students without the permission of the parents/guardians.

Parents/guardians requesting the administration of prescription medication shall provide a written request and instructions using the Medication Record Form.

The principal, in consultation with staff, shall make the decision whether to comply with a parent/ guardian's request to administer prescribed medication and/or personal care to a student.

### Procedures

Where procedures beyond a written prescription are required, written instructions shall be received from the physician concerned.

When the principal agrees to the parent/guardian request, he/she shall designate staff members who mutually agree to administer medication.

The principal shall immediately notify the parent/guardian if he/she disagrees with the request.

Any special equipment required to administer medication shall be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Signed medication/personal care forms and other related information shall be kept on file.

The principal shall designate safe, limited access storage for medication supplies.

Students bringing over-the-counter drugs such as aspirins/cold remedies or prescription drugs such as asthmatic inhalers to school require written authorization from their parent(s) and /or physician prior to bringing any form of drugs onto the school property or to any school related activity.



## 8. Inclement Weather/Extreme Weather Conditions

When the weather is inclement, students will remain inside during recess and lunch breaks.

Inclement is defined as heavy rain, temperatures below  $-23^{\circ}\text{C}$  or a wind chill of below  $-23^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

### Canceled Buses School

Elk Island Transportation Policy determines whether or not the buses will operate on days that are classified as “extreme weather conditions”. Announcements will be made on local radio stations beginning at 6:30 A.M. advising that the buses will not operate for that day. You will also receive an automated telephone call from Elk Island Transportation.

### School Closure: Inclement Weather:

**The School will remain open if bus transportation is cancelled.** *Under these conditions, however, parents ultimately decide whether or not they wish to send their children to school. If you are not sure, please call the school before sending your child.*

In the case where this school alone is closed for a reason unique to it in accordance with Board policy, the principal will make arrangements for early dismissal. Parents are encouraged to have a contingency plan in place for the care of their children if it becomes necessary to close the school.

Announcements will be posted on our website and announcements sent to local radio stations beginning at 6:30 a.m. or as early as possible.

## 9. Emergency Plan

### Evacuation Drills

At any given time, students must be prepared for immediate emergency evacuation of the school. Therefore students are to have footwear on at all times while in the school, to avoid the possibility of having to walk in the snow, rain or mud in stocking feet.

At the beginning of each school year, staff will review evacuation procedures with each class. Evacuation routes are posted near the entrance of each classroom. A minimum of three fire drills will be held a year.

### Severe Weather Drills

We conduct severe weather drills in late spring when severe weather such as tornados may occur.

### Lockdown Drills

In the event of an intruder or threat, the school will be locked down and the police contacted.

As a lockdown drill can sometimes increase student anxiety, parents will be advised of a lockdown drill via e-mail, letter home or phone message prior to the drill.