

WELCOME

A warm welcome to Senator Joyce Fairbairn Middle School. We hope that your year is an enjoyable and productive one, filled with memorable experiences and meaningful friendships. This handbook is intended to give you information and guidelines to help you have a very successful school year. We encourage you to read the following information and familiarize yourself with the guidelines. Our hope is that each student will flourish within our school community, academically, socially, emotionally, creatively and physically. We look forward to working with you and your family this year. Please contact the school office at 403-381-2977 if you have any comments, questions or concerns.

OUR MIDDLE SCHOOL VISION

Lethbridge School Division Middle School students are ethical citizens and engaged learners who possess global competencies. (We will work with our community to define our vision over the course of the year.)

OUR MIDDLE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Lethbridge School Division Middle Schools are developmentally responsive learning communities that are connected and relational. (We will work with our community to define our mission over the course of the year.)

MASCOT

We are the Fairbairn Falcons.

STUDENTS

All Senator Joyce Fairbairn Middle School students are under the jurisdiction of the Alberta Government. The School Act governs schools in the province. In accordance with the School Act a student shall conduct him/herself so as to reasonably comply with the following code of conduct:

- be diligent in pursuing his/her studies
- attend school regularly and punctually
- co-operate fully with everyone authorized by the Board to provide education programs and other services
- comply with the rules of the school
- account to his/her teachers for their conduct
- respect the rights of others

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS AND BEHAVIOUR

Senator Joyce Fairbairn Middle School operates on the belief that every student should have access to a safe, secure and orderly school that is conducive to learning. Creating a positive and supportive school climate is the privilege and responsibility of all members of the SJFMS community. We are here to help and learn from one another, without the disruptive behaviour of others.

- The home, the school and the students share the responsibility for appropriate and acceptable behaviour. By working together, we can ensure positive student conduct. Discipline is essential in building accountability, responsibility and respect for others.
- Students have the responsibility of recognizing that they are responsible for their own behaviour and that disruptive and distractive behavior is unacceptable. Any behaviour that encroaches upon the rights and human dignity of fellow students and staff is unacceptable. Students are expected to demonstrate care and kindness towards one another and to follow reasonable rules established for the benefit of all.

A. SCHOOL-WIDE BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS

Senator Joyce Fairbairn Middle School students are required to behave in a reasonable, responsible and positive manner guided by the following expectations:

- Students are to demonstrate respect, consideration, courtesy to others.
 - In doing so students will:
 - behave in law-abiding ways.
 - walk in an orderly, quiet and safe manner while in the school and during all school related activities. Common sense and safety are our guidelines.
 - dress appropriately for the environment by adhering to our SJFMS guidelines.
 - use appropriate and respectful words and gestures while participating in school activities on or off campus, or in the immediate vicinity of the school's property.
 - not to use or be in possession of illegal or harmful substances. Such substances will be confiscated from students who choose to bring them on the school property and the school resource officer will be informed.
 - use school equipment appropriately and avoid activities that will harm or potentially endanger oneself or others.
 - arrive at school on time but no earlier than 8:30 am and to leave the school property within 15 minutes after the dismissal unless involved in a staff supervised activity.
 - treat the property and the environment of self, others and the school with care and respect.
 - handle disagreements in a respectful manner.
 - allow others to have differing opinions.
 - clean up after themselves.
 - adhere to the Lethbridge School Division. Acceptable Use of Computers & Technology guidelines.
 - be polite to other students and staff members.
 - come to class on time and prepared to work.
 - do their very best.
 - hand in assignments on time except under exceptional circumstances. Students are to respect classroom property and the property of their classmates.
 - follow all other "classroom rules" as adopted by the staff or individual teacher.

C. FAIR NOTICE OF RISK ASSESSMENT

Our School District believes in creating safe and caring environments for students and staff. Any incident where a student engages in behaviours which threatens or appears to threaten the safety of themselves or others will be investigated. Administrators can implement a Risk Assessment for behaviours that are worrisome including writing or drawings with violent themes; references to or involvement in violent activity at school; or an increased interest in activities that are deemed as dangerous to the safety of themselves or others. A Threat Assessment is implemented when a student threatens to kill or injure others, brings a weapon to school, or makes direct verbal or written violent threats to others. The Threat/Risk Assessment regulations are outline in Policy 504.9 available in the School District Policy Handbook available at www.lethsd.ab.ca

ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERS & TECHNOLOGY

Lethbridge School District No.51 strongly believes in the value of educational technology. These technologies include but are not limited to computers, software, Internet access, email, telephones, course management systems, etc. Their potential is in promoting educational excellence by facilitating sharing of resources, access to information, innovation, global communication and collaboration. Extending education beyond the classroom enhances the ability of teachers and students to meet the challenges of the future.

Access to Electronic Communication

Lethbridge School Division believes that electronic communication is a tool for life-long learning, and that access to technology is one of the resources that promote educational and organizational excellence. We believe the responsible use of technology is essential in supporting students and staff to significantly expand their knowledge by accessing and using information resources, and by analyzing and publishing information.

Use of Internet

Internet access is made available to further the educational goals and objectives of the district and Alberta Learning. Lethbridge School Division believes that the benefits of the availability of the Internet to students and staff, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, far exceed any disadvantages.

It should be understood that the Internet provides access to computers, people and information from all over the world. However, the information is neither verified, edited nor regulated and, as such, materials may be available that may be illegal, inappropriate, or lacking in educational value. The District has taken steps to limit access to inappropriate content on the Internet. Nevertheless, on a global network, it is impossible to control all materials that a user may access. Thus, it should be understood, that some of this content may still be accessible.

The district continues to educate teachers and students about how to safely and responsibly use the Internet. To further reduce the chance of students accessing inappropriate material on the Internet, the school district has chosen to implement Internet filters from Grades Kindergarten to Twelve. It is recognized that Internet filtering is only one component of many that need to be followed to ensure student safety while accessing the Internet.

Use of Electronic Communication

Students and staff are expected to demonstrate the same kind of responsible behavior while communicating in an electronic learning environment, as would be expected in any district environment. Communications in the electronic medium are frequently public in nature, and, therefore, district and school policies for behavior and communication will apply. Be aware that electronic communication, such as e-mail, is not guaranteed to be private.

Acceptable use includes but is not limited to:

- Using district electronic communication for educational reasons
- Being polite
- Using appropriate language. Refraining from swearing, the use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language.
- Refraining from illegal activities. Such activities are strictly forbidden and will be reported to the appropriate Authority.
- Refraining from the release of personal information (address, phone number or other information) that may allow you or others to be identified.

Our expectation is our students will become educated and responsible digital citizens. There are no expectations that a student must have their own mobile device; students have access to the school's technologies. With the ability to bring a personal device comes a new level of responsibility. Our students' safety in an online environment is of utmost importance. Learning to be a responsible digital citizen will increase and awareness of the power of the Internet and will enhance their learning opportunities.

The use of personal devices in our school will be at the discretion of our staff members.

Digital Etiquette

Cell phones are powerful devices and are the responsibility of the student. Students are encouraged to use any digital device respectfully. We encourage parents/guardians to monitor personal devices. Teachers decide how cell

phones/digital devices are to be managed in their individual class, and encourage ongoing digital etiquette. Continued lack of digital etiquette will be handled as non-compliance. The consequences for non-compliance and repetitive non-compliance are determined on an individualized basis.

Here are examples of positive and appropriate digital etiquette for students in middle school:

- Cell phones should be turned to silent mode during class time to avoid distracting others.
- Texting is not appropriate during class. If a student is sick or needs to contact home immediately, to demonstrate courtesy we recommend informing the teacher prior to contacting home.
- Cell phones may be used before classes begin, at lunch and after school. We discourage cell phones to be used between classes; we believe being punctual for class is a priority.

Students are not allowed to take pictures, audio or video of any other person, including staff or students, without permission. This is against the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (FOIP).

For further clarification about technology, please refer to Lethbridge School's ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERS & TECHNOLOGY.

A.L.E.R.T. PROGRAM (Assisted Learning Environment Response Team)

The Chinook Health Region, the Lethbridge Police Service and the Lethbridge School Division have created the A.L.E.R.T. (Assisted Learning Environment Response Team) program that has a proactive approach to working with children and their families. The A.L.E.R.T. program provides students, parents and support staff with information, instruction and intervention related to the promotion of health and well-being and aims to help students and their families to choose and practice a healthy, safe lifestyle. A public health nurse and a police officer work together with the students, parents, staff, and community agencies to address health issues. The public health nurse and the police officer can be reached via the school office, or you can contact the nurse at the CHR Health Office (403-382-6666) or the police officer at the Lethbridge Police Service (403-327-2210.)

ATTENDANCE

As per the Alberta School Act, school attendance is compulsory and necessary for student success. Regular attendance is the responsibility of the student and of the parent. Students are expected to be in attendance every school day, unless they are ill, celebrating a religious holiday, or are absent for some other unavoidable cause. Appointments and extra-curricular activities should be made out of school hours whenever possible.

Absences

It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to notify the school when their student is going to be absent. Whenever a parent/guardian anticipates that a student will be absent for a prolonged period of time for reasons other than illness, we request that the office be notified prior to the absence.

Lates

Students are expected to be punctual for all classes. Students arriving late, after the bell, must report to the main office for an admit slip, otherwise they are marked absent and an automated phone call home may result. It is the student's responsibility to catch up on any missed work.

Leaving School Grounds Prior to Dismissal

If a student must leave school early, the student **must** be signed out at the school office by a parent, guardian or **designee located on student information sheet**. Under no circumstance is a student to leave the school during school hours without the approval of his/her parent/guardian and office staff. Leaving the grounds

without permission is considered truancy. Phone calls WILL NOT be accepted to allow students to leave school. No student will be allowed to walk home alone during the instructional day.

BICYCLES, SKATEBOARDS, SCOOTERS and IN-LINE SKATES

Skateboards, scooters, in-line skates and biking are all great ways to stay fit and travel to school. To ensure everyone's safety, we ask that students wear a helmet, it's the law. Students are not allowed to use their skateboards, scooters, skates or bikes inside the school. Bicycles and scooters should be parked in the bicycle racks and scooter racks immediately upon arrival at school. It is recommended that bicycles and scooters be locked to the bike rack or scooter rack as a precaution against theft. In-line skates are to be stored in the student's locker. Locking skateboard racks will be installed in the fall for students.

BUSSING

Alberta Education sets the distance a student must live from the school, in order to qualify for bussing. Students living in the Senator Joyce Fairbairn Middle School boundary who live more than 2.4 km from the school, as determined by school district maps, will have access to bussing and will be provided with a school-specific bus pass. A link to bussing information is available on the school website @ <http://sjf.lethsd.ab.ca/>

COLD WEATHER, BUS SERVICE CANCELLATION and INDOOR RECESS

During extreme cold (-20C) or rainy weather, the students will be given the opportunity to remain indoors. Students are urged to arrive close to the school starting time of 8:50 a.m. on days when the weather is poor. Parents are asked to ensure their children come appropriately dressed for the weather (i.e. coats, gloves, boots, hats, etc.) The Superintendent will only close schools (in the case of inclement weather) if the school bus transportation system is non-operational. If schools are "closed", they are considered non-operational for instruction. Communication to this effect will be via radio, and school and district websites.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/TELEPHONE NUMBERS/EMAIL ADDRESS

Please notify the office of any change of address, telephone number and/or email address. It is also very important to notify the office as early as possible if a student is moving or transferring to a different school.

COMMUNICATION

For students to develop to their maximum potential, it is vital that there be effective communication between home and school. We have found that if all the stakeholders involved in the education of children are communicating with each other, many problems or concerns are soon solved or prevented. Please let us know if you have a question or a concern. Contact can be made via email, a telephone call or by booking an appointment. Parents and students are also encouraged to log in frequently to www.senatorjoycefairbairn.ca to view homework, newsletters and school information. Teachers will update homework pages as assignments change throughout each term.

As much as possible, communication will be handled electronically. If you do not have an email address or access to the internet, please inform the office so alternate arrangements may be made.

Communication regarding academic achievement is always important. All parents and students have online access to attendance and grades via Power School. If you require assistance in setting this up, please contact the school office. Report cards will be available electronically each reporting period.

COUNSELLING

A teacher counselor, A Family School Liaison Counsellor, a Child and Youth Care Worker (CYCW), a FNMI support worker and a Making Connections worker are available to all students. Their primary function is to provide support to those students and to their families who may be experiencing difficulties as a result of social, emotional, behavioral and academic problems. Students are encouraged to contact the counselor if they are having academic or personal problems. Parents should also feel free to contact our counselling team with concerns or requests at 403-329-0125.

DRESS CODE GUIDELINES

Our staff believes that coming to middle school is where students begin to prepare for the working world. Part of that preparation is dressing appropriately. Follow these guidelines to look your best at school:

- “Business casual” is encouraged.
- If your clothing is appropriate for working in a mall store, it will likely be great for school.
- If students continually fail to wear “business casual” clothing, appropriate actions will be taken by teachers and administrators.

Here are some descriptions for “business casual” attire:

- Slogans on all clothing should be positive and appropriate for the school setting.
- Tops and shirts need to cover the waist band of pants, skirts or shorts. They need to cover the midriff and have a modest, well-fitting neckline. Bra straps need to be covered by something wider than spaghetti straps. Tank tops with spaghetti straps are to be covered with a sweater or shirt.
- Shorts and skirts are to be mid-thigh in length.
- Hats and hoods are to be worn outside of the school. Head covers may be worn for medical or religious reasons.
- Students need to wear shoes or sandals on school property.

FIRE DRILLS/SCHOOL LOCK-DOWN DRILLS

Safety is our primary reason to practice drills. Drills are completed at regular intervals throughout the year. During a fire drill, every person in the school is expected to leave the building. Fire drills are very important exercises in ensuring the safety of our students by providing practice in safely exiting the building. Each teacher will inform all classes of proper evacuation routes and procedures early in the school year. Students will also be informed of where they are to go in the event of an emergency that would prevent them from returning to the school building during inclement weather. Students are expected to remain familiar with these routes and procedures and are expected to behave in an orderly manner during all fire drills. Lock down drills will be conducted twice a year. Each teacher will inform students of the procedures and expectations prior to a lock down drill.

HOME PRACTICE

Throughout the year, students may bring work home that is designed to reinforce curriculum concepts. This home practice is carefully designed to connect with what they are learning at school and serves one of the following purposes:

- To support classroom learning through the practice of skill already taught.
- To help students build the background knowledge needed for a more in--depth lesson (such as watching an online video prior to a discussion).
- To allow students to reflect on or apply concepts learned in class to a 'real world' project. These projects are often larger in scope and are worked on at school and home.

The intent of home practice is to reinforce concepts students are learning about in class and it should be presented in a clear format that students can complete on their own with little, or no, parent assistance. Class assignments are posted on sjf.lethsd.ab.ca. We encourage students and parents to consistently check the website to ensure assignments are completed on time.

LOCKERS

Lockers are issued to students at the beginning of September. Students must use the combination locks provided by the school office with the combination being recorded at the office. Students should keep their locker combinations confidential, and should not leave sums of money or valuables in the lockers. The school cannot be held responsible for articles lost or missing from lockers. Students are not permitted to place stickers on the outside of lockers. Lockers must be kept clean and undamaged throughout the year.

Please Note: The administration reserves the right to enter lockers if there is a suspicion that lockers are being used for purposes other than storage of school supplies and personal clothing. The lockers and locks remain the property of the school.

LOST & FOUND

The school is not responsible for lost or stolen articles but does attempt to help in their recovery. Students can protect their belongings by making sure that their lockers are locked at all times, that they keep their combinations secret, and by labeling all of their belongings. Students should avoid bringing valuables and excessive amounts of cash to school. Thefts should be reported immediately. Students and parents are encouraged to check the lost & found located in the Atrium on a monthly basis. Unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity organization at year's end.

MEDICATION

All medication needing to be administered by staff to students must be stored in the main office in the original container. For on-going medication support pertinent Authorization and care plan forms must be completed. These forms are available at www.lethsd.ab.ca or are available at the office. Aspirin and other over the counter medication will NOT be provided to students.

SCHOOL ILLNESS

If a student is sick, he/ she should report to the office. In less serious cases, the student may remain in the office. If the illness is more serious, the office will contact a parent/guardian. School Board Policy prohibits the school from sending a student home unless a parent or guardian is notified. If contact with parents/guardians cannot be made, students will be kept at the school. School Board policy also prohibits schools from administering medication of any

sort to students unless special circumstances prevail. (See Medication information below) If hospital treatment is necessary and if parents/ guardians cannot be contacted, the student will be transported to the hospital. The hospital then assumes the responsibility to contact the parents/ guardians for treatment permission.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Parents are encouraged to become involved in our school. We require parent volunteers for parent council, classroom assistance, track and field events, field trips, outdoor activities, learning commons and co-curricular programming. Please contact your classroom teacher or a member of the Administration team if you wish to get involved.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education is a core course, just like Language Arts, Social, Math, and Science. Students are expected to come dressed and ready to participate in each class. If the student is not able to participate, a parental note or a medical note is required for verifying the reason they are not able to participate in class and modified or alternate activities will be provided.

Appropriate dress for PE consists of a clean t-shirt, shorts or sweatpants, socks and clean, non-marking running shoes. Each student should have two pairs of shoes: one for outdoor use and one exclusively for indoor use. This is important to prevent the finish on the gym floor from being removed because of dirt from outside. For hygiene and safety reasons, all students are required to have appropriate running shoes for PE classes.

REPORTING PERIODS

Term dates are determined at the beginning of the school year and are posted on our website calendar. Student marks are made available as assignments are completed throughout the year. We do not send home a traditional report card but rather have a “live format throughout the school year. Comments will be made specific to assigned work as the teachers deem appropriate to keep parents and students apprised of each student’s learning.

SCHOOL CASH ONLINE

For safety and efficiency reasons, we would like to minimize the amount of cash & cheques coming into our school. Please register and enjoy the convenience of paying online. It takes less than five minutes to register. Go to <https://lethbridge.schoolcashionline.com> to get started.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

Senator Joyce Fairbairn Middle School Council is a partnership of administration, teacher representatives, parents and community who meet once a month to discuss issues, concerns and topics of interest acting within the framework of their bylaws. Research clearly shows that if parents are actively involved in children’s learning, children will be more successful at school. The school council vision is that a collective association of parents, teachers, principals, staff and community work together to promote the well-being and effectiveness of all in the school community and thereby enhance student learning. This shared commitment will make the common goal a reality – better education.

The school council operates under a town hall model whereby all parents/guardians of children attending Senator Joyce Fairbairn Middle School are members of the school council. The agenda and minutes from each meeting can be accessed on the school website.

SERIOUS INJURY

In the event that a student suffers a serious injury while at school, the school will attempt to contact the parents or the listed emergency contact immediately and will also administer First Aid. If a parent is not available, school personnel will have the student transported to emergency services at the hospital. If the injury is minor, basic First Aid will be administered at the school. It is extremely important that parents keep the school office informed of their current telephone number, work number and an emergency contact number.

SPORTS: AFTER-SCHOOL ATHLETICS PROGRAMS

Senator Joyce Fairbairn Middle School is pleased to offer after-school club programs that allow all interested students the opportunity to participate in our five main sports: cross country, volleyball, basketball, badminton, and track and field.

At the beginning of each of these five seasons, students are encouraged to attend "ID camps" to place athletes on teams that most appropriately fit their level of skill. From these ID camps, athletes will be placed in one of three areas: Rep/Senior team; Junior team; or House-League Developmental teams. The Senior-Rep teams play in the LSAA league, and are composed primarily of grade 7's and 8's. The Junior teams play an exhibition schedule with the other city teams, and are composed primarily of grade 6's and 7's. The house-league developmental program is where all other interested athletes will attend to have a mixture of drills and games that will further develop their skills in that respective sport. All students have the opportunity to be placed into one of these three areas.

All of these programs take place after-school, and are run by teachers from SJFMS. Some of these programs carry an additional cost to the athlete. This money covers the costs of referees, tournament entries, shirts, equipment, uniforms, etc. Once a student has committed to a program, they are expected to attend all team functions for that season.

INTRAMURALS

Students have the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of intramural activities. Students are asked to sign up on the teams. There are also individual activities for those who prefer to compete on their own. Listen to announcements for more information regarding upcoming intramural activities.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT REPORTING

ACHIEVEMENT SCALE

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| 90 - 100% | Excellent achievement of grade level learner outcomes. |
| 75 - 89% | Approaching excellent achievement of grade level learner outcomes |
| 60 - 74% | Acceptable achievement of grade level learner outcomes |
| 40 - 59% | Approaching acceptable achievement of grade level learn outcomes |
| below 39% | Not meeting grade level learner outcomes |

VISITORS

Visitors, whether they are parents, guests, or people on official school business, are welcome in our school. We ask that all visitors report to the office and sign in prior to going anywhere else in the school. Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.



WEBSITE

Please refer to the school website for important forms and announcements.

