



Prairie Christian Academy

www.pca3hills.ca

Secondary School Handbook

Contact Us

School (403) 443-4220

pca.admissions@ghsd75.ca

PRAIRIE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint you as parents and students with the policies and procedures that govern Prairie Christian Academy School. By reading the following pages carefully, many of your questions will be answered and you will become familiar with the PCA community. If you have questions, please contact the school office and we will assist you.

We welcome all students and parents! We trust this will be a successful school year - a year in which you grow in understanding of God the Creator, His creation, and your role in that creation.

Education is more than classes, homework, and extra-curricular activities. It also includes learning to live together and to accept that we are individuals, each with our own God-given talents and abilities. As we work together for the glory of God, we will grow as individuals and as a community.

May God give you a clearer sense of His purpose for you as you draw closer to Him and to those you will be working with over the coming year.

Prairie Christian Academy Mission, Motto, Verse and Values

Mission Statement:

Inspiring learners to discover, discern, and defend Truth.

Motto:

Transforming Lives – Latin for crest/coat of arms: - Transfigurates Vitae

Verse:

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Romans 12:2 NIV

Values:

We believe in and value...

- Strong Partnerships with Parents
 - We are committed to PCA and parents working together to educate students to know Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, and to pursue Godly character and life-long service.

- The Word of God
 - We believe the Bible as the authoritative Word of God, inerrant in all that it affirms, and is the standard for belief and practice.
- A Christian World View
 - We are committed to teaching our students a biblically grounded worldview within Alberta Learning's Program of Studies and selected Christian curricula.
- Lifelong Learning
 - We endeavour to develop critical thinking skills in our students so that they may apply biblical knowledge and wisdom to life-long learning.
- High Expectations
 - We believe students and staff of PCA should honour God by striving to put their best efforts into academics, co-curricular activities, and Christian outreach ventures.

Exemplary Staff

- We are committed to attracting and developing highly qualified Christian teachers and support staff who are mature and devout in their faith, are biblically literate, and exemplify Christlikeness.
 - We believe all our teachers should display and stimulate in their students' intellectual curiosity, a love of learning, and a desire to integrate faith and learning.
- Strong Relationships
 - We foster God-honouring relationships among faculty, students, the home and the community.
- Character Development
 - We strive to develop godly character in both staff and students and are committed to developing leadership potential in our students.
- Individual Worth
 - We believe all students have intrinsic worth being created by and in the image of God.
 - We believe all students can be inspired to discover and use their gifts and talents in service for Christ's Kingdom.
- Biblical Stewardship
 - We value biblical stewardship of time, talents, and resources.
- Good Citizenship
 - We are committed to assisting students to become wise and exemplary citizens, characterized by participation and promotion of family, church, government, and community.

Prairie Christian Academy

STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Scriptures

We believe in the plenary, verbal inspiration of the Old and New Testament Scriptures as originally given. These Scriptures are inerrant in all that they affirm and are our final authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

The Godhead

We believe there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who are the same in essence and co-equal in power and glory.

Jesus Christ

We believe Jesus Christ is fully God and fully Man in one Person. Prior to His incarnation He eternally existed with the Father. Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary. Though tempted by Satan, He lived a sinless life on this earth. He paid the penalty for the sins of all men with His own blood on the cross. He arose bodily from the grave and ascended into Heaven, where He now intercedes for His own as their great High Priest.

The Holy Spirit

We believe in the personality of the Holy Spirit. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. At conversion He regenerates, indwells, seals, and baptizes the believer into the body of Christ. The Holy Spirit fills and conforms the yielded believer increasingly to the body image of Christ. He enables the believer to live a life of Christian Victory through faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to the Word of God. As He will, the Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts and empowerment for spiritual service.

Creation

We believe in the direct creative acts of God as recorded in Genesis.

Satan

We believe in the personality of Satan, a fallen angel, who, with other angelic beings rebelled against God and was cast out of Heaven. Although he was defeated at the cross and his final destiny shall be the lake of fire, he continues to be the Archenemy of God, angels, and man.

Man and Sin

We believe man was created in the image of God. In Adam he fell because of disobedience and rebellion against God and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which is separation from God. Therefore, all mankind is declared by God to be totally depraved, having inherited a sinful nature and having become sinners in thought word and deed.

Salvation

We believe the grace of God provides salvation from sin for all men only through personal repentance and faith in Jesus Christ and His atoning work.

The Church

We believe the Universal Church is comprised of all true believers. With Christ as her head, she exists in local expression to glorify Him by edifying believers and evangelizing lost men everywhere.

The Second Coming of Christ

We believe in the literal and physical second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ

Future State of the Dead

We believe that at death all men continue in conscious existence, the just in the presence of Christ, the unjust in torment in Hades. The just await their bodily resurrection, at the rapture of the Church, to the reward of everlasting life and blessedness. The unjust await their bodily resurrection at the Great White Throne, to judgment and everlasting punishment of conscious torment in the lake of fire.

Brief History

Now under the new name of Prairie Christian Academy, Prairie General Education has been operating since 1938 as an extension of Prairie Bible Institute. Back then, Prairie's founder, J. Fergus Kirk was concerned that his children and others in the community had a Christ centered education. Growing from the original class of 11, PCA now has over 350 students in its Kindergarten to Grade 12 programs. Students have come from all over the world to study in these halls and graduate into hundreds of vocations and careers.

In September 2003 steps were made to form Prairie Christian Academy, an alternate school under the Golden Hills School District. This decision not only increased resources for our educational system, but also gave the primary stakeholders – the parents – more of a governing position in their children's education. The distinctive of teaching and discipling from a Biblical worldview is still at the cornerstone of Prairie Christian Academy. We embrace the godly heritage that is ours and look forward to the future of continuing to provide quality education that is fully integrated with God's word and Christian principles.

Outreach

Jesus calls us to reach out to each other, to the larger community and to the world. Students are involved in various projects including Christmas shoe boxes, donations for food bank, carol singing, sponsoring several Third World children and missionaries and visiting and helping seniors. Students are encouraged to bring a donation at each weekly chapel to support these projects.

Working Together

As with all organizations, clear lines of communication are crucial. The staff of Prairie Christian Academy seek to communicate through emails, texts, information meetings, parent/teacher interviews, personal interaction, report cards and newsletters. In the case of individual concerns or conflicts, we are committed to the Matthew 18 principles as outlined below.

1. The family directly involved with the conflict or concern should go to the staff member involved and seek to resolve it at that level.
2. If the matter remains unresolved, the parent should refer it to the associate principal or principal.

All communication should take place with care, sensitivity, and respect for each of the parties involved.

Hours of Operation

School Building

The school doors are unlocked by 8:00 a.m. and normally locked at 4:00 p.m. For special functions, the staff in charge will open and close the building as necessary.

Office Hours

8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. weekdays when school is in session

Daily Bell Schedule

Please see page 13

Academic

Computer access

All students will have a username and password. It is strongly emphasized that these passwords are not shared with anyone. Our GHSD Tech department monitors the school computers and blocks out inappropriate sites and keeps track of any attempts to enter inappropriate sites.

Course Selection

Prairie Christian Academy seeks to offer subjects that will meet the needs of as wide a range of student abilities and interests as possible. Each spring, students in grades 9-11 meet with the principal individually to plan courses for the following year, keeping in mind graduation requirements, post-secondary aspirations, and student interest. Further assistance is also available throughout the school year. All students are expected to pursue academic excellence in all courses. Students should always attempt to be diligent and organized. If a problem begins to develop, students should not hesitate to speak to their teacher or counselor.

Grade 10, 11, 12

The senior years of high school are extremely important for several reasons. Graduation requirements are calculated based on courses taken at the grade ten, eleven and twelve levels. Courses need to be carefully considered with post-secondary goals and requirements in mind. All students completing core grade twelve courses are required to write Provincial Examinations. Admission competition for university faculties is high, so excellent grades are essential. Scholarships and other forms of financial assistance are available to those who have demonstrated strong initiative and ability. Considering this, we would like to make the following suggestions to students as they enter their last three years at Prairie Christian Academy.

- **Choose your courses wisely:** Keep your options open by meeting general requirements. It is wise to take more than just the minimal required courses.
- **Balance your workload,** in consultation with the principal, so that you do not have one very light semester and one very heavy semester.
- **Take at least one course in the first semester that you find very difficult.** This will then give you the possibility of re-doing the class in the second semester or taking it by correspondence.
- **Make your studies the focus of your energies in grade twelve.** Be careful how you manage your time and how many other activities you commit yourself to during the year.
- **If you must have employment, limit your hours** to a manageable schedule. We strongly recommend that a student not be employed more than ten to fifteen hours a week.
- **Be prepared to spend an average of at least two hours a day on homework.** Some days will be heavier than others. Budget your time and work ahead on projects and review.
- **Be diligent in attending all classes.** Outside of sickness and compassionate reasons, you should NOT be away from school.
- **Make the most of class time.** Learn to use the small portions of time wisely; five or ten minutes here and there can make a big difference. This is also a great time to seek clarification from the teacher.

- **Seek extra help immediately if you are struggling.** Don't allow yourself to fall behind.
- **Maintain an active devotional life.** You will find a great deal of peace and renewal of strength if you learn to abide in Him. Remember -- "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and ALL these things shall be added to you." Matt. 6:33

Course Changes

Course changes for option classes may be made during the first two weeks of classes in each semester. Core subject changes will be considered beyond this time on a case-by-case basis. All requests for course changes must be approved by the principal. A student who drops a course must have parental/guardian approval.

Textbooks

Texts will be provided by the school as needed. Students are responsible for all textbooks issued to them. All books are numbered, and a record of books issued, and their condition will be kept by the librarian. Students will be charged for lost or damaged books. Refunds will not be given if textbooks are returned after the end of the school year.

Bible Requirement:

Prairie Christian Academy requires all students to take the Bible course offered at each grade level. Bible is considered a significant part of the student's education. Since the course tends to have a variety of assignments that focus on class participation, personal reflection and biblical contemplation, students normally excel. Students in grade 12 who do not pass their Bible course will not have fulfilled the requirements for a PCA graduation certificate.

Distance Learning:

PCA offers a Distance Learning Program (DLP) that allows students to take select courses which are not in our timetable, or which are, but do not fit into the students' schedule. DLP courses are an enhanced form of correspondence with supports such as access to tutor/marks, planning/scheduling assistance, rapid delivery and return of assignments as well as instructional assistance within the school.

Grade System

Grades will be reported as a percentage grade. Honour Roll status will be granted based upon the Prairie Christian Academy awards criteria.

Attendance and Tardiness

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students get to class on time and that all students enjoy uninterrupted learning. This policy applies to all students.

For the first unexcused absence the teacher will call the parent(s), guardian, or dean.

For the second unexcused absence the teacher will call the parent(s), guardian or dean and notify the office. The administration will follow up with the parents/dean and the student.

For the third unexcused absence the teacher will refer the student to the office. The student will be given a one day in-school suspension.

For the fourth and fifth unexcused absences the student will be referred to the office and given three- and five-day suspensions. Parents and students will meet with the principal to discuss conditions for continued enrollment.

Three lates for class will be considered an unexcused absence and will be handled according to the policy for unexcused absences.

Excused absence: The parent (or guardian) must contact either the office or the teacher noting the reason for the absence for it to be considered excused.

Planned absence: Any student planning to be away from school for any reason, must have a parent contact the office to confirm the absence. Students are responsible for making up any missed work.

Early Dismissal: Students who need to leave during the day must sign out at the school office. They should have a note from a parent/guardian, or the parent/guardian should phone in, authorizing the sign out. Students who leave early must also inform teachers of the classes they will miss. Students who leave early are responsible for work missed.

Conduct

You will be encouraged to demonstrate a Christian work ethic. We not only want you to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, but we want you to enjoy a life of spiritual fullness, holiness, and service. Prairie Christian Academy functions as a body of Christian believers joined together for the specific purpose of training students how to live, not just how to make a living; how to be leaders, not just followers. To facilitate this process, it is essential that students, faculty and parents seek to promote Christian behavior.

The school cannot isolate its students from the constant sensual bombardment of this society, but it can create an environment where right conduct is encouraged. A positive peer culture helps to stem the tide against the pressures encountered.

We recognize that the observance of standards does not make one spiritual; however, one's willingness to adhere to school regulations demonstrates maturity and a level of spiritual desire. The apostle Paul wrote to a young Timothy, "discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness" (1 Tim. 4:7).

Prairie Christian Academy is a community comprised of staff and students from a wide range of cultural, denominational, and social backgrounds. We look to the person of Jesus Christ to define our common values and unity. We seek to honor Him by integrating faith and learning, while our hearts and lives reflect the process of maturing in Christ. We believe that the Bible articulates those principles and values expected of all believers.

Discipline

Occasionally, some students have lapses of appropriate behavior. Minor offenses are dealt with immediately by teacher. Major offenses are channeled through the principal's office and are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. As a result of a meeting between the parties and gathering of information, the seriousness of the matter is determined. For serious or persistent violations of school rules and regulations and for display of attitudes which hinder the growth of other students, suspension and/or expulsion may result. Actions such as the use of tobacco, vaping, alcohol, and non-prescribed drugs are not acceptable behaviors for students in our school. Such actions will bring about penalties such as suspensions or even expulsions, depending on the severity of the situation and in accordance with GHSD Administrative Procedures.

Dress and Grooming

We expect our students to dress in a fashion that is appropriate for the setting. Therefore, tight pants and clothing such as revealing shirts, tank or halter tops, muscle shirts and pants with rips above the knee should not be worn. Photographs, designs and printing on shirts should be consistent with what is considered appropriate within the context of a Christian School. All clothing must be in keeping with the development of godly morals and character. Students may wear hats and hoods in the halls and common area, but not in classrooms.

General Information

Lockers and Locks

Students will be assigned lockers by the Librarian. If students wish to lock their lockers **ONLY SCHOOL LOCKS** are permitted on the lockers. If a lock is lost, a \$5.00 replacement fee is charged. Students are encouraged **NOT TO GIVE LOCKER COMBINATIONS TO OTHER STUDENTS. Students have no right to privacy in their lockers as the school conducts inspections from time to time.**

Cell Phones

Cell phones, or any other personal electronic device must not be used during classes unless the classroom teacher permits it. If used in class without permission, these items will be confiscated.

Use of School Phones (land lines)

A phone is available in the school office as well as in each classroom. **Students may ask permission to use a phone for a short call only.**

Lost and Found

Lost and found boxes are provided in the gym entry way (secondary) and by the west entry (elementary). Please check them periodically for articles which may have been lost or misplaced. Lost and found articles that are not claimed will periodically be donated to charities after 1 week notification to parents. Items in lost and found are not available for the taking.

Bicycles

Bicycles must be parked in the stands provided and we recommend that they always be securely locked. Students 16 years of age and under must wear a helmet by law but it is recommended that all students wear a helmet regardless of age.

Skateboards and Scooters

Skateboards and Scooters are allowed to be ridden to and from school. Riders must always wear a helmet while on school property. Skateboards and scooters must NOT be ridden during school hours on school property, only to and from school.

Fire Drills

Procedures for fire drills are posted in each classroom. Teachers will review these procedures with the student. During a fire alarm, please exit in a quiet, calm, and orderly manner, and obey all requests made by the supervisor.

Photocopier/Printers

Students may photocopy/print necessary materials for schoolwork in the Learning Commons. Black and white copies only. Color copies may be made by special permission only.

Field Trips

Students will have opportunities to go on various field trips throughout the year. If there is a cost to the field trip, the procedure will be as follows:

- An item will be created in School Cash Online and will be attached to all applicable students as an optional fee with the due date as the day of the event.
- Parents/Students will log into School Cash Online, pay for the trip and print off the receipt.
- Receipt needs to be brought into the office, then the field trip form (permission slip) will be given to the student to take home for a parent to fill out. (We can also run a report showing if the item has been paid)
- Completed field trip forms are to be given to the teacher in charge of the field trip.

Visitors

All visitors must report to the school office. Guests wishing to visit classes must obtain authorization from the principal. PRIOR TO THE DAY OF A VISIT, a student may sponsor a visit by seeking permission from all teachers involved.

SPORTS POLICY

Prairie Christian Academy Athletics provide:

- An opportunity for students to pursue their talents and abilities.
- A “showcase” representing our school within the community and the province.
- A program with which students can identify and support as part of their school.
- A program in which students can experience team spirit and accomplishment.

Philosophy/Mission

The mission of the Athletics program is to develop individual skills, discipline, excellence in performance, and Christian character.

Program Focus:

- To encourage students to be good stewards of their talents and abilities as unto the glory of God (EXCELLENCE, in character and performance).
- To provide our athletes the opportunity to compete in a healthy and controlled environment with structure and discipline, working from a Christ-centered perspective.
- To learn the principles of sacrifice, hard work, commitment, self-denial and unity in spirit and purpose for the accomplishment of something bigger than self.
- To teach students that they are AMBASSADORS for our school, our community, and most importantly, living testimonies of the grace of God.
- To help students learn how to transfer lessons that they learn in athletics to situations they may face later in life.
- To develop the full potential of the team; this based in individual development.

General Expectations:

- Relationships should be built on the Christian model.
- The TEAM takes priority over personal interests.
- A commitment to represent oneself, the team, and the school in a positive light is a standard expectation.
- All players are expected to abide by the general rules given in the Athletics Handbook including behavioral expectations and academic policies.
- Players who are absent from school are not permitted to play on that day.
- Players who are sick and miss school the day of a practice will not be able to practice but within reason (medically), are expected to be at practice and observe.
- Winning is important, but the ultimate measurement of a player's involvement is:
 - The character development of the individual
 - The spirit and unity of the team
 - The depth of relationships between the players, and between the players and coach
 - The reputation gained by the team in the school and the community

Our Christian witness is more important than winning. Our Christian standards and testimony must never be comprised for the sake of winning.

Realities of Prairie Christian Academy Athletics

- It is a privilege to be a member of the team, not a right
- Membership must be earned (based on character and ability).
- Individuals will have to compete with fellow members for positions and responsibilities.
- More gifted athletes will play more dominant roles.
- The team operates on an apprenticeship model (i.e., young and/or inexperienced players need to be groomed and learn from more seasoned players).
- The coach sets goals for the team after the talent base of the athletes has been assessed.
- We wish to compete at the appropriate level in leagues and tournaments.
- All athletes have equal value and worth as individuals created in the image of God. Therefore, we do not equate their role on the team as having special status (there is no room for prima donnas or selfish pride in these talents and abilities).

Harassment

Both the Ministry of Education and the Boards of Public and Independent Schools have, in recent years, tried to develop some very clear definitions and policies to eradicate harassment. Please read this section carefully. It is our intention to define what we mean by harassment and to outline very clearly the serious manner in which we will deal with incidences of harassment in our school.

What is Harassment?

Reduced to its simplest terms harassment is a continuous and repeated practice of annoyance. **This includes any unwelcome comments or conduct directed at another individual.** Recipient response is important. Repeated comments or behaviors which are meant to be humorous or playful, yet are disturbing to the recipient, fall into this category. How the person receiving the attention feels about it is the determining factor in its appropriateness.

It is important to know that the **Alberta Code of Human Rights** is a multi-page document that addresses the issue of harassment, and this legal document has ramifications for students in school, for individuals in the workplace and for society at large. Consequently, we will deal seriously with cases of harassment. The Code addresses, among others, the following areas that could be the subject of discriminatory comments or conduct:

race, color, ancestry, place of origin, political beliefs, religious beliefs, family status, physical/mental disability, and gender.

What kinds of things can fall under the category of harassment?

- Insulting, suggestive or derogatory language or gestures.
- Teasing - even when done in “fun”; recipient response is **important** to note.
- Unwelcome physical contact - includes things like bullying, fighting and sexual contact.
- Offensive remarks, racial/ethnic jokes, innuendo.
- Leering.
- Displaying of pornographic, racial, or other offensive material.
- Offensive or derogatory communication through notes, mail, e-mail, fax or any other medium.
- Persistent invitations which are unwelcome, or which are perceived to be unwelcome.

How should we act?

At Prairie Christian Academy, we want all students to feel safe, accepted, and welcome. Although issues of harassment may be issues of “law”, they are, at the root, issues of relationship. **We want our relationships to be founded on Scriptures that urge us to treat others as we would like to be treated and to esteem others better than ourselves.**

We **must** refrain from all of the above-mentioned activities.

We **must** always be aware of recipient response to what we say and do.

We **must** be quick to apologize and make amends when our words or actions are offensive or thoughtless.

Consequences for harassment

Depending on the severity of the incident, parents will be notified, and the offending student suspended. If this type of behavior is repeated, a student can expect to be expelled from the school.

The goal of all discipline is:

1. repentance (accept responsibility and determine to change)
2. resolution (find ways to keep it from happening again – self-discipline)
3. reconciliation (bring healing and restore relationship)

A wide range of methods and approaches are used at the discretion of the teachers, counselors, and administrators. Wherever appropriate, parents are kept informed and involved in the discipline process.

Postal Services

Dorm Student addresses will be as follows:

(Student’s Name)
C/O Prairie Christian Academy
P.O. Box 68
411 11th Ave NE
Three Hills, AB
T0M 2A0