

West Coulee Station Elementary School Handbook 2025 - 2026



Kindergarten - Grade 5

West Coulee Station Elementary School
1340 Abitibi Road West
Lethbridge, AB T1J 8J3

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WELCOME MESSAGE

2025-2026

Welcome to West Coulee Station Elementary School!

We are privileged to serve our community of learners and eager to collaborate with our committed staff, students, parents, and community members. In the upcoming year, we will continue to provide engaging learning opportunities and implement innovative practices that enhance all areas of instruction. We look forward to building strong partnerships with each child and their family, which will enrich your child's educational experience at West Coulee Station Elementary School.

Dean Hawkins - Principal

Aimee Dewacht - Vice Principal



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Bell Times

2025-26 Bell Schedule – Kindergarten to Grade 5

Instruction & Breaks	Monday - Thursday	Friday
Warning Bell	8:30	8:30
III Instruction	8:35 - 10:15	8:35 - 10:10
Recess	10:15 - 10:30	10:10 - 10:25
III Instruction	10:35 - 12:00	10:25 - 11:55
Lunch #1 Lunch #2	12:00 - 12:20 12:20 - 12:40	
III Instruction	12:40 - 2:10	
Recess	2:10 - 2:25	
Dismissal III Instruction	2:25 - 3:40	
Dismissal	3:40	
		11:55

WEST COULEE STAFF

ADMINISTRATION

Principal:

- Dean Hawkins

Vice Principal:

- Aimee Dewacht

TEACHING STAFF

Kindergarten Teacher:

- Tara Bomhof
- Anj Leger

Grade 1 Teachers:

- Jennifer Craven
- Marie Lowe
- Candelaria Fernandez

Grade 2 Teachers:

- Charlotte Kim
- Brittney Petkau
- Jared Hunt

Grade 3 Teachers:

- Ahmad Ayedi
- Michaela Demers
- Crystal Niven
- Maria Larroy Gonzalez

Grade 4 Teachers:

- Sierra Bennett
- Kelsey Huculak
- McKenna Shigemi

Grade 5 Teachers:

- Wayne Filipenko
- Ana Rebolone Morrison
- Aja Thompson

Learning Support Teacher:

- Angie Smith

Music Teacher:

- Nicola Colman



SUPPORT STAFF

Administrative Assistant:

- Glenna Stengler

Learning Commons Facilitator:

- Sarah Baker

Educational Assistants:

- Tracey Pepin
- Libby Gresel
- Catherine Bergeron
- Kinsey Smith
- Lachlan MacFadden
- Leilani McCutcheon
- Joelle Strang

Student Support Worker:

- Kevin Taylor

PSIII Students:

- Jace Bradley
- Victoria Other

CARETAKING

Head Caretaker:

- Regi Rocha

Caretakers:

- Kevin Gordon
- Lyon MacKay
- Kuol Gai

WEST COULEE STATION

VISION

Our vision at West Coulee Station Elementary School is to achieve academic success within a nurturing and respectful learning environment. By embracing 'The PRIDE' we unite parents, students, and staff to foster a culture of academic excellence and a caring attitude towards each other.

MISSION

At West Coulee Station Elementary School, we embrace 'The PRIDE' by focusing on the unique contributions of every member of our school community:

- **Parents:**

We encourage parents to be active partners in their child's education, supporting their learning journey and engaging with school activities to strengthen the home to school connection.

- **Students:**

We inspire students to take pride in their learning, exhibit responsibility and strive for academic and personal excellence while fostering a sense of belonging and collaboration.

- **Staff:**

We are dedicated to providing a supportive and dynamic learning environment, guiding and empowering each student with commitment and passion to help them achieve their highest potential.



ABOUT WEST COULEE STATION

Q&A:

Question: How did we come up with West Coulee Station Cubs?

When it comes to lion behavior, there's something truly captivating about the way these majestic creatures interact with each other in the wild. Lions are the only cats that live in groups, known as prides, and their behaviour patterns are both fascinating and complex.

We want our students to be able to learn the following traits while attending West Coulee Station Elementary School.

P - Patience

Encourages students to stay calm and keep trying, even when things are challenging

R - Respect

Teaches students to show consideration and kindness to others and their environment.

I - Integrity

Emphasizes being honest and doing the right thing, even when no one is watching.

D - Determination

Inspires students to keep trying and not give up, even when things are tough.

E - Empathy

Encourages understanding and sharing the feelings of others, promoting kindness and support.



These words not only promote positive behaviour but also help in building a strong foundation for character development in young students.

SUPERVISION

In accordance with Lethbridge School Division Policy, students will be supervised 10 minutes prior to the **8:30** a.m. start bell (**8:20 - 8:30 am**). A minimum supervision ratio of one supervisor per 120 students shall be maintained 10 minutes prior to start time and during all recesses. Orderly dismissal and supervision of students loading and unloading the school bus will also occur.

MOVING OR CHANGE OF ADDRESS

To keep our records up to date and the lines of communication open, we appreciate being notified about any change of your address, email, or telephone number. If a student moves out of the West Coulee Station attendance area, but remains in the city limits, it may be necessary to transfer to another school unless arrangements are made with the Principal. Should you be moving from West Coulee Station, please advise the office as soon as possible in order for us to have transfer requirements ready.

EMERGENCY CONTACT

Please ensure that an Emergency Contact has been identified for your child in case of injury, illness, or other emergencies. If your emergency contact changes, please inform office staff so it can be updated in our system.



COMMUNICATION

At West Coulee Station we are committed to providing and fostering open communication/collaboration with all of our families.

Please refer to the [Communication Plan](#) on our website for more detailed information in regard to communication. Some specifics outlined in this plan are:

- Communication about school events and information will occur through our school website ([Home | West Coulee Station Elementary School \(lethsd.ab.ca\)](#)), Instagram, Facebook, email, and School Messenger.
- Classroom information will be sent from your child's teacher (s). Generally, this information includes updates on learning occurring in the classroom and may include how parents can support this learning at home.
- A newsletter is distributed digitally every Friday to the parent/guardian email. The newsletter is also posted on our school website. Parents can make a request to have a paper copy sent home with their child.

STUDENT DRESS

All students are to wear shoes when in the school. This is especially important should it be necessary to evacuate the school. As well, students are to wear running shoes for Physical Education class.



RELEASING CHILDREN DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Students are not permitted to leave school grounds without permission from the principal or office staff. Students will be released only to parents, guardians or emergency contacts. In the unusual event that someone other than those listed on the contact list will be picking up your child, you will need to contact office staff and the individual picking up the child will need to provide identification prior to the child's release.

FAIR NOTICE OF THREAT/RISK ASSESSMENT

Our School District believes in creating safe and caring environments for students and staff. Any incident where a student engages in behaviour which threatens or appears to threaten the safety of others is investigated. Administrators 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 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 outlined in Policy 502.1.1 of the School District Policy handbook which is available at www.new.lethsd.ab.ca.



ABSENCES

We use an absence reporting system called School Messenger. Parents/Guardians are asked to report their child's absence in advance using any of these 3 convenient methods:

1. Using your mobile device, download and install the School Messenger app from the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store (or from the links at <https://go.schoolmessenger.com>). The first time you use the app, select Sign Up to create your account. Select Attendance then Report an Absence.

2. Use the Safe Arrival website, <https://go.schoolmessenger.com>. The first time you use the website, select Sign Up to create your account. Select Attendance then Report an Absence.

3. Call the toll-free number 866-879-1041 to report an absence using the automated phone system.

These options are available 24 hours/day, 7 days a week. Future absences can be reported at any time. Do not call/email the school with absences as absences now need to be entered by the parent/guardian.

In addition, we will use the SchoolMessenger Communicate automated notification system to contact parents whose child is absent when the absence was not reported in advance. The automated notification system will attempt to contact parents at multiple contact points until a reason is submitted for the absence.

If you report your child's absence in advance using the SafeArrival toll-free number, website, or mobile app, you will NOT receive these notifications.



CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION & DISPUTE RESOLUTION

If a parent/guardian disagrees with a school based decision, the proper appeal procedure is the following. This is based on District Policy 1003.1

- 1) Parent contacts the teacher or staff member the concern originated with.
- 2) Parent contacts the school principal or vice principal.
- 3) Parent contacts the associate or superintendent of schools.
- 4) Parent contacts the school board.

SCHOOL COUNCIL & SOCIETY

West Coulee Station School Council is a group of parents who work together to enhance the learning experience of all our students. School Council is also a place for parents to have opportunities to be involved in the planning of activities and to discuss important items concerning the school.

Our school society is a separate legal entity from the school and school council. The society is formed by a formal group of parents (or a membership) and is incorporated under the Societies Act for the purpose of raising funds for the school. These meeting will take place on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm.

To learn more about the council and society, see agenda items and read meeting minutes, please visit our school website - [West Coulee Station](#)



INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Our academic program is based on the Alberta Program of Studies, provincial curriculum. Students receive a planned instructional program in English Language Arts and Literature (ELAL), Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Physical education & wellness, and Fine Arts.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

In addition to our regular programs, West Coulee Station Elementary offers the following programs and services to help meet the needs of students and parents:

- Spanish Bilingual Program
- Sensory room access for students with individualized needs
- Speech/Language Assistants
- Outdoor facilities : 3 play areas, basketball courts and more
- Basketball, Volleyball, and Esports
- Clubs/leadership/Co-curricular activities
- Learning Support Teacher
- Student Leadership
- Counselling
- Learning Commons

STUDENT MEDICATION

Lethbridge School Division Policy states that schools are not to administer medication to students unless absolutely necessary. Before administering any medication, including over the counter or prescription drugs, a form must be completed by the student's parent/guardian and physician that provides information on the administration of the medication. If you require a form for the administration of medication, please contact from office staff for a paper copy.



WEATHER

Weather permitting , all students go outside during breaks. On days that the temperature is below -20 degrees Celcius (including wind chill), there will be a variety of indoor activities available to students.

BUSSING

For students to have a safe and pleasant ride on the bus, students must follow the rules of conduct. The bus is an extension of the classroom and school officials will deal with any misconduct. It is the primary responsibility of the driver to transport students safely to and from school. The driver's attention must be on the road and traffic conditions and not on students behavior. Busses may be equipped with video cameras and may be used for discipline and safety purposes only. Students may be suspended or expelled from riding the bus if they do not follow the rules of conduct.

SCHOOL FEES

Email notifications will be sent from the office in relation to school fees. Fees can be paid through School Cash Online, which can be found in the "Quick Links" tab on our website.

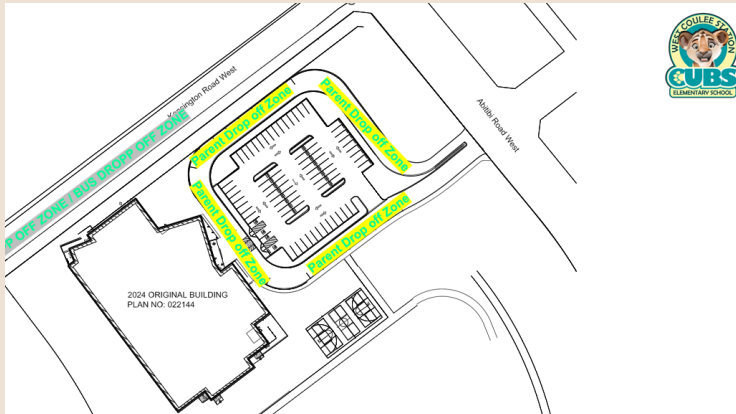
NUT AWARE

Each year we have students with severe nut allergies. Please DO NOT send foods with nuts to school. Every attempt will be made to help ensure the safety of these students. While West Coulee Station is a "nut aware" school, we cannot guarantee that it is nut free.



DROPPING CHILDREN OFF AT SCHOOL

Please use the highlights rows on the map below to view parent and bus drop off zones.



PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Parent volunteers are an important component of the educational program at our school. We appreciate all the assistance that is provided by parents. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the school or your child's teacher and we will send a volunteer request form to complete. Please note that these forms are only valid for the current school year.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The staff at West Coulee Station strive to offer a wide variety of extra curricular activities for students before school starts, at lunch time and after school. Some of these activities will include esports, volleyball, basketball, and various leadership activities.



ASSESSMENT

Student assessment takes place on an ongoing basis throughout the school year. Students set goals, self-assess, and take ownership over their learning and growth. Fountas and Pinnell, a standardized reading assessment, is used in the fall and spring to inform instruction. In Math, the **MIPI (need to confirm)** is used to identify student strengths and areas to target instruction.

Student Assessment

The following procedures are to be followed in determining the academic standings of students in West Coulee Station.

1. Teachers ensure that course content and objectives are consistent with the requirements of the Program of Studies and Lethbridge School Division.
2. Teachers of the same grade level and subject assignment are responsible for determining consistent standards of student achievement and student expectations.
3. Teachers maintain records of student achievement in all subject areas.
4. Teachers inform the parents and the Principal as soon as possible of students having academic concerns.
- 5. There are three reporting periods per year – December, March, and June. (need to confirm)**
6. Teachers use universal (everyone), targeted (some), and individual supports to ensure equitable access to curriculum. Support plans are created collaboratively and are revised throughout the year. Documents are shared and reviewed formally during reporting periods.



RESPONSIBILITIES AND SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

School Responsibilities (Education Act, January 2019)

- (a) provide a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging,
- (b) maintain order and discipline in the school and on the school grounds and during activities sponsored or approved by the board,
- (c) promote co-operation between the school and the community that it serves,
- (d) provide instruction competently to students,
- (e) encourage and foster learning in students,
- (f) regularly assess students and periodically report the results of the assessment to the students, the students' parents, and the board.

Parent Responsibilities (Education Act, January 2019)

A parent has the prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be provided to the parent's child, and as a partner in education, has the responsibility to:

- (a) act as the primary guide and decision-maker with respect to the child's education,
- (b) take an active role in the child's educational success, including assisting the child in complying with section 31



- (c) ensure that the child attends school regularly,
- (d) ensure that the parent's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment,
- (e) co-operate and collaborate with school staff to support the delivery of supports and services to the child,
- (f) encourage, foster, and advance collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with teachers, principals, other school staff and professionals providing supports and services in the school.
- (g) engage in the child's school community.

Student Responsibilities (Education Act, January 2020)

A student, as a partner in education, has the responsibility to:

- (a) attend school regularly and punctually,
- (b) be ready to learn and actively engage in and diligently pursue the student's education,
- (c) ensure that the student's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging,
- (d) respect the rights of others in the school,



(e) refrain from, report, and not tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour directed toward others in the school, whether it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means,

(f) comply with the rules of the school and the policies of the board,

(g) cooperate with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services,

(h) be accountable to the student's teachers and other school staff for the student's conduct, and

(i) positively contribute to the student's school and community.

It is to be understood by each student that behaviour that is either disruptive or dangerous may result in suspension from class activities and/or school activities. After exhausting all interventions available, students who chose to continue to display inappropriate behaviours may be suspended from school. The length of the suspension is determined by the severity of the incident as well as the number of incidents. Should a suspension take place, the parents of that student may be required to accompany him/her to school to determine a course of action before the child returns to the class and/or activity.



ACTS OF AGRESSION OR DANGEROUS BEHAVIORS

On-going or extremely disruptive classroom behavior, acts of aggression, vandalism, and other dangerous behaviors will be dealt with at the administrative level and may involve suspension or expulsion according to Section 36 of the Education Act:

36 (1) A teacher or a principal may suspend a student in accordance with subsection (2) or (3) if in the opinion of the teacher or principal

- (a) the student has failed to comply with Section 31,
- (b) the student has failed to comply with the code of conduct established under section 33(2),
- (c) the student's conduct , whether or not the conduct occurs within the school building or during the school day, is injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school, or
- (d) the student has distributed an image of another person in the circumstances described in section 1 (1.1)

(2) A teacher may suspend a student from one class period.

(3) A principal may suspend a student

- (a) from school
- (b) from one or more class period or courses
- (c) from transportation provided under section 59, or
- (d) from any school-related activity



(4) When a student is suspended under subsection (3), the principal shall

- (a) immediately inform the student's parents of the suspension
- (b) report in writing to the student's parent all the circumstances respecting the suspension, and
- (c) provide an opportunity to meet with the student's parent.

(5) A suspension may not exceed 5 school days , except in accordance with a recommendation for expulsion made by the principal under Section 37.

After a suspension, the student, parents, and sometimes other professionals will engage in a processing and restorative session with the school administration. This will include exploring underlying issues and developing a plan for the future that includes short-and long-term expectations. Restoration for any harm done will be discussed. Individuals such as a School Counsellor, Psychologist or Learning Support Teacher may attend these meetings.



PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES AT SCHOOL

To help foster a focused and safe learning environment the Government of Alberta introduced new standards in June 2024 that limit the use of personal electronic devices (cell phone, tablets, smart watches, wireless headphones, etc.) and social media in schools - Ministerial Order. You can also view Policy 607.4 on the Lethbridge School Division Website.

For families and students at West Coulee, the following important points that have come from the new standards are:

- For Kindergarten to Grade 5 students, personal mobile devices are not permitted during the entirety of the school day, which includes instructional and non instructional time.
- Students are not permitted to access certain social media on school networks. Social media platforms and applications such as Snapchat, TikTok and Instagram will not be accessed on Division networks.
- The principal may grant limited use of personal mobile devices for educational programming. Exceptions will typically be part of a student instructional support plan (ISP).
- The school takes no responsibility for loss or damage of personal electronic devices that are brought to the school.

In the case that a student brings a personal device to school outside of the expectations listed above, school staff will remind the student of the school expectations and will follow up with communication home. If there is a repeat situation, the device will be taken to the office and secured away until a parent/guardian comes to school to pick up the device.



FUNDRAISING PHILOSOPHY

West Coulee Station acknowledges the importance of fundraising in order to provide a high-quality educational experience. However, fundraising will not be conducted merely for the sake of fundraising.

The school faces challenges in meeting the demands of advancing technology and other necessary resources. As a new school, we aim to maintain an active school environment, which will require fundraising to support ongoing access to playground equipment and the potential further development of our playground facilities.

We recognize that fundraising can be a burden for many families and students, therefore we will strive to organize only one major fundraiser at the beginning of the school year, accessible to all programs. This event will foster unity and create a dynamic atmosphere for learning and innovative practices.

WEST COULEE ELEMENTARY PARENT SOCIETY FUNDRAISING GUIDELINES

- **Large Fundraiser:** In partnership with school administration , we will host one major fundraiser at the start of the year, specifically targeting the needs of the school as agreed upon by staff, parents, and students.
- **Casino Fundraiser:** The West Coulee Elementary Parent Society will apply to be included on a list that allows us to participate in casino volunteering. This process may take 2-3 years, but we are committed to it to sustain our finances for essential purchases such as technology and playground upgrades.