

SCHOOL HANDBOOK



Edited 2024

School Handbook – Guide de l'école

WELCOME! The staff of Gilbert Paterson Middle School (GPMS) extends a warm welcome to you.

“At Paterson, we promote humanity through empathy, connection, and resiliency”.

We hope this year is a pleasant one, filled with new experiences and friendships. Our hope is you get the most out of our school academically, physically and socially. We encourage you to get involved in the wide range of activities. Our handbook is designed to help you understand the operation, procedures and programs at Paterson. Please contact the school if you have any comments, questions or concerns. Phone: (403) 329-0125 or visit our website at [Home | Gilbert Paterson Middle School](#)

TIGER PRIDE - Notre Mascotte

GPMS is "Tiger Territory". We believe all our students are "TIGERS"; we want all of our students to feel part of our school community. We include our grade five "Tiger Cubs" as part of our school community. Our mascot "Snag", the tiger, is a proud, intelligent animal with a good sense of humour! Our school colours are gold and black. Watch for information on how to order "Tiger Gear" to show off your Tiger Pride!

OUR MIDDLE SCHOOL VISION - Notre vision de l'école intermédiaire

Lethbridge School Division Middle School students are ethical citizens and engaged learners who possess global competencies.

OUR MIDDLE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT- Notre mission

Lethbridge School Division Middle Schools are developmentally responsive communities that are connected and relational.

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY - Philosophie d'école

"Gilbert Paterson Middle School provides a learning experience that promotes the development of academic, social and emotional, physical, and artistic attributes unique to early adolescence. We are committed to a secure, positive, challenging and exploratory approach in cooperation with parents and community." We believe: ALL students are capable of learning. All students and staff have the right to learn and work in a safe, nurturing environment that supports their individual strengths and needs.

Our students and staff will recognize and appreciate the similarities as well as respect the differences among individuals and cultures. The school promotes academic excellence by meeting the goals and objectives prescribed by Alberta Education. Our school must foster the desire for life-long learning. Our students must have the opportunity to participate in physical activities and to explore the practical and fine arts. The integration of technology is valuable for teachers and learners. Parents, students, staff and community are all stakeholders in education and must be mutually supportive in order to ensure a satisfying, productive and affirming school environment.

Students must take ultimate responsibility for their behavior. Stakeholders must work together to support appropriate social behavior and to foster independent decision-making, problem-solving and responsible self-discipline. School staff should have the opportunity for collaborative decision-making and professional development.

THE SCHOOL - L'école

Gilbert Paterson Middle School was built in 1955 and serves a population of approximately 860 students. GPMS is a Grade 6 to Grade 8 school and is unique in a number of ways; GPMS is a dual track school; we offer English and French Immersion classes at each grade level.

GPMS offers a Grade 7/8 Knowledge and Employability class, and a variety of learning supports. All students will either be in a dyad class or a homeroom classroom. Students will also have multiple opportunities for option classes.

THE STUDENT - L'étudiant

All GPMS 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 themselves so as to reasonably comply with the following code of conduct: be diligent in pursuing their studies attend school regularly and punctually-operate fully with everyone authorized by the Board to provide education programs and other services comply with the rules of the school account to their teachers for their conduct respect the rights of others.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS AND BEHAVIOUR – Attentes et comportements des étudiants

Gilbert Paterson Middle School operates on the philosophy that all students

have the right to learn in a safe and productive learning environment, without the disruptive behavior of any student.

- Home and school share the responsibility for teaching appropriate, acceptable behavior. By working together, we can ensure positive student conduct. Discipline is essential in building accountability, responsibility and respect for others.
- Students must understand they are responsible for their own behavior. Students must recognize disruptive and distracting behavior is unacceptable. Any behavior that encroaches upon the rights of others is unacceptable. Students are expected to follow reasonable rules established for the benefit of all students and the community. During school hours, conduct should be governed accordingly.

SCHOOL WIDE BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS – Attentes comportementales à l'échelle de l'école

GPMS students should behave in a reasonable, responsible and positive way and understand the following expectations: Demonstrate consideration, courtesy and respect to others and their property. 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. Avoid the use of profane language and inappropriate gestures while participating in school activities on or off campus, or in the immediate vicinity of the school's property. Cigarettes, Vapes, and other prohibited 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 no earlier than 7:45 am and to leave the school property within 15 minutes after the dismissal unless involved in a staff supervised activity. Treat all school property with care and respect. Behave in law-abiding ways. Adhere to Lethbridge School Division Acceptable Use of Computers & Technology.

A. CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS - Attentes de classe

Classroom expectations incorporate elements of our school philosophy. These are discussed with students in every classroom. The rules include the following concepts:

- Students are to be polite to other students and the staff.
- Students are to go to class prepared to work.
- Students are to hand in assignments on time except under exceptional circumstances.

- Students are to respect the school's property and the property of their classmates and themselves.
- Students are to follow all other "school rules" as adopted by the staff or individual teacher.

B. FAIR NOTICE OF RISK ASSESSMENT – Avis équitable d'évaluation des risques

Our School Division believes in creating safe and caring environments for students and staff. Any incident where a student engages in behavior which threatens or appears to threaten the safety of themselves, or others will be investigated. Administrators can implement a Risk Assessment for behaviors 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.

The 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

ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES - Présences et absences

Regular attendance is the responsibility of the student and parent. Students are expected to be punctual for school every day, unless they are ill, celebrating a religious holiday, or are absent for some other unavoidable cause. Students are responsible for learning concepts and completing assignments when they are absent. Class assignments are posted on the GPMS website.

Due to the nature of differentiated and collaborative instruction, teachers are not always able to provide homework packages for students. If the student becomes ill during the school day, the student should seek permission from the classroom teacher to report to the office. Poor attendance has a direct, negative effect on achievement. Regular attendance is required, by law, until the age of 16. Click here to report an absence, [SchoolMessenger](#)

CONTACTING STUDENTS AT SCHOOL - Communiquer avec les étudiants à l'école

In order to deliver the message that obtaining education is valuable, we ask that you not call or text your child during instructional hours. Contacting your adolescent not only interferes with their learning, but potentially the learning of other students. If a phone call or text message is necessary, please understand we are teaching digital etiquette and will

ask students to check their voice mails and text messages at lunch time only.

LATE ARRIVALS– Arrivées tardives

Students are expected to be punctual for all their classes. Students arriving late, after 8:15, must report to the main office to check in, otherwise they are marked absent, and an automated phone call home may result. It is the student's responsibility to catch up on missed work.

LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS BEFORE DISMISSAL - Départ sans permission

Under no condition is a student to leave the school during school hours without the approval of the parent/guardian/caregiver and office staff. Leaving the grounds without permission is considered truancy. If a student leaves early, a parent/guardian/caregiver must notify the school. The student must check out at the office.

STUDENT HEALTH – La de vos élèves

If a student is sick, after they have let their teacher know, they 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 parent/guardian/caregiver for pick up.

School Board Policy prohibits the school from sending a student home unless a parent/guardian/caregiver is notified. If contact with parents/guardians/caregivers 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/caregivers cannot be contacted, the student will be transported to the hospital. The hospital then assumes the responsibility to contact the parents/guardians/caregivers for treatment permission.

MEDICATION - Les médicament

All medication needing to be administered by staff to students must be stored in the office in the original container. For on-going medication support, a Medication/Personal Care Request Authorization (form 504.1.3.1) must complete including physician's signature. Medication/Personal Care Request Authorization (form 504.1.3.1) can be found at www.lethsd.ab.ca or are available at the office.

DRESS CODE GUIDELINES – Guide de la tenue vestimentaire

Students' dress should be clean and allow them to participate in all aspects of their school day. Clothing should not have language or symbols that make others feel unsafe. These guidelines apply to all school activities including extracurricular activities and physical education classes. The final determination about the appropriateness of student dress lies with school staff. Students are encouraged to dress in accordance with the following Dress Code Guidelines:

- Clothing designated as underwear must be kept unseen and undercover.
- Appropriate non-scuffing shoes are encouraged in all areas of the school.
- Slogans on clothing are positive and appropriate for the school setting.

NOON HOUR LUNCH FACILITIES - Dîner à l'école – Commodités

Gilbert Paterson Middle School a closed-campus policy, students are expected to remain on school property during the lunch hour and eat in designated lunch areas; this ensures adequate supervision and safety for our students. Students may go home for lunch, providing parents sign a contract with the school.

Students misbehaving during the noon hour will not be permitted to stay for lunch. Parents/guardians/caregivers will be contacted in these cases and alternative arrangements must be made (see also Intramurals).

ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERS & TECHNOLOGY - L'utilisation appropriée des ordinateurs et de l'équipement technologique

Lethbridge School Division 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 will propel today's schools into the information age allowing

students and staff to significantly expand their knowledge by accessing and using information resources, and by analyzing and publishing information.

We firmly believe that the valuable information and interaction available through the use of technology far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with educational goals.

USE OF THE INTERNET – Utilisation de l'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 Division 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 behaviour 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 behaviour 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 of 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 to us and learning to be a responsible digital citizen will increase and awareness of the power of the Internet but will enhance their learning opportunities. The use of personal devices in our school will be at the discretion of our staff members.

CELL PHONES - L'étiquette des portables

Personal mobile devices are an integral part of our daily lives. However, they can also be a distraction to learning and facilitate other issues around responsible social media use and negative peer interactions. Research has also shown a variety of negative effects of increased screen time and social media exposure on middle school aged children. The government of Alberta has recently released Ministerial Order #014/2024 regarding personal devices use and we wanted to share Paterson's plan for responsible use.

Our school's procedure will follow the new Lethbridge School Division regulations that can be seen on their website under [Personal Mobile Device and Social Media Use in Schools procedure and information documents | Lethbridge School Division](#) (607.4.2)

Personal Mobile Device: Any personal electronic device capable of communicating or accessing the internet, including but not limited to cellphones, tablets, laptops, and smartwatches. The school is a partner with parents/guardians/caregivers when it comes to personal devices. Students are expected to keep their devices in their lockers during instructional time at school. If they must carry it in their backpacks or pockets, devices must be turned off.

- Devices may be used at lunch and after school. If used during lunch, they must return to the student's locker when classes resume.
- There should be absolutely no cellphone use in bathrooms or change rooms at any time.

- The Division will determine what platforms students can access through our WIFI and desktop computers.
- Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (FOIP). 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 Division ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERS & TECHNOLOGY.

We understand that some students require their devices for health monitoring or exceptional learning needs. These circumstances will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and exceptions will be made for these circumstances.

If students are misusing their devices, a call or email will come first from their teachers. If the problem continues, administration will become involved and may result in the student not being able to bring their phone to school or leaving it in the office. Please know that the consequence will be proportional to the conduct of the student.

Staff are also committed to modeling this practice for students. Personal devices are still needed by staff to take classroom attendance remotely, call or text information to the office and other areas of communication within the school. There may also be a specific class activity where students need to use a phone for an application such as pictures or video for an assignment. In these cases, the classroom teachers will facilitate the opportunity to obtain and return devices from lockers. We also realize that parents may need to be in contact with students during the day and that can be done through the school office. We believe that the positives of a device free classroom outweigh any inconveniences.

We are also committed to continue to teach digital citizenship through guest speakers, classroom presentations from our Tech teachers, Wellness team and health class lessons. These learning opportunities of proper technology use, combined with reduced screen time, are important in creating a positive and healthy balance for our students.

We thank you for your support and we welcome any questions or inquiries.

REPORTING PROCEDURES - Les bulletins

Report Cards at GPMS are issued in November, March and June. Report Card dates are determined at the beginning of the school year and are posted on our website calendar.

At GPMS, we use Live Reporting on PowerSchool. This means you can access grades and comments throughout a term. Grades are also cumulative and are shared at the end of each term. Access to PowerSchool can be found here, [PowerSchool Login | Gilbert Paterson Middle School](#)

STUDENT RECOGNITION - Reconnaissance étudiant

Recognition assemblies will be held for each grade level following each reporting period. In addition, students and citizens will be recognized throughout the year. Year-end awards will be presented based on criteria established by GPMS. Academic Excellence Awards at GPMS are marks over 85% in core subjects.

HOMEWORK - Devoirs

Homework/study is an integral part of Middle School. We encourage students and parents to consistently check PowerSchool to ensure assignments are completed on time. Most assignments should be completed within the school day; however incomplete work should be finished for homework.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL LEARNING - Caractéristiques d'un apprentissage réussi

Comments will focus on the following:

- Assignment Completion - completes assignments on time.
- Attendance- Attends school regularly and punctually.
- *ISP (Instructional Support Plan) - Program with Accommodations (student is working on grade level outcomes with accommodations) Percentage.
- *ISP with Goal - Program with Modifications (student is not working on grade level outcomes) No percentage.
- *EAL (English Additional Language) - Student is working on grade level outcomes with ESL accommodations. Percentage.
- *EAL- Student is not working on grade level outcomes. No percentage. Please see EAL benchmarks.

PROGRAMS AND COURSE CHANGES - Programmes et changements de cours

All students are required to take the following academic programs: Mathematics, Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, Health and Physical Education and French Language Arts for French Immersion students. In

addition, option courses are offered at each grade level. Option course choices should be made carefully.

Generally, students are expected to remain in the classes chosen. Changes will be considered in extenuating circumstances, only after the parent/guardian/caregiver requests a change (in writing) providing reasons for the change. Following receipt of requests, grade level teachers and administrators will consider and rule on these requests.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION - Éducation physique

All students are required to take Physical Education. This program requires that students dress in gym strip and participate in every scheduled class. The following regulations must be followed:

- All students are to wear shorts (no cut-offs), a t-shirt, sweat socks and non-marking shoes.
- The student's name is to be written on all components of the gym strip.
- Gym clothing should be taken home and laundered, at least once a week.

Change rooms are provided for both boys and girls. We also have gender neutral options available upon student request. These rooms are kept locked while classes are in progress, but due to the large numbers of students using them, security can be a problem. Students should not leave money or items of value in the change room. These articles should be given to the gym teacher for safekeeping. The school cannot be held responsible for articles lost or stolen from the change rooms.

INTRAMURALS - Intra-muros

Students have the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of noon-hour intramural activities.

ATHLETICS PROGRAM- Programme sportif

Here at Gilbert Paterson, we embrace, "Athletics for All" philosophy. We believe being part of team is important to the development of the early adolescent. The way we accomplish that is by offering levelled teams and clubs based on the abilities of our students. In addition to these programs, we offer intramurals at lunch and students will get experience in the below sports through their Physical Education classes. Our school is a member of the Lethbridge Schools Athletic Association (LSAA). We offer 5 sports at Gilbert Paterson Middle School:

- Cross-Country
- Volleyball
- Basketball
- Badminton
- Track & Field

Here is a breakdown of our program by sport:

Cross-Country – All students participate in running through Physical Education classes. From our classes we select a group of students based on age and gender to represent Gilbert Paterson at the LSAA Cross-Country Meet.

Volleyball – All students participate in the sport of volleyball through Physical Education classes. Tryouts are held for our volleyball teams. For each gender we offer the following teams:

- Dev: focus is on developing skills and basic strategy. This team will play exhibition matches against other schools.
- Rep: focus is on developing skills and more complex strategies. This team participates in the LSAA League structure.

Basketball - All students participate in the sport of basketball through Physical Education classes. Tryouts are held for our basketball teams. For each gender we offer the following teams:

- Dev: focus is on developing skills and basic strategy. This team will play exhibition matches against other schools.
- Rep: focus is on developing skills and more complex strategies. This team participates in the LSAA League structure.

Badminton – All students participate in the sport of badminton through Physical Education classes. Tryouts are held for our badminton teams. We offer a badminton team that consists of 8 players only (16 per grade level), as outlined by LSAA Badminton Policy, for each grade level and gender. Since we are limited by the number of students who play on a badminton team, we also offer a badminton club for all students wanting to participate in badminton after school.

Track and Field – All students participate in Track and Field through Physical Education classes. We select students through Physical Education classes to compete in the Gilbert Paterson Track and Field Meet. Further, we select the Track and Field team that will represent Gilbert Paterson at the LSAA Track and Field meet from the results of our School Track and Field meet.

FINE ARTS PROGRAM - Programme des beaux-arts

A rich history of fine arts and performing arts exists at Gilbert Paterson. We believe The Arts promote creativity and humanity in the learning environment and in life. Participation in The Arts improves self-esteem and fosters positive relationships. The Arts develop innovative thinkers in demand for the 21st century.

There are many ways in which students can become involved in the arts at our school. We offer instrumental music (band), handbells, choir and dramatic arts as well as a visual arts program.

Band 6, 7, and 8: At Paterson, students have the opportunity to experience instrumental music in a challenging environment. The band program maintains a high-performance standard always. In the program, the band director strives for musical excellence through an early development of the love of the art of music making.

Band 6 - Students will have the opportunity near the end of grade 5 to try out the various wind instruments that are in the concert band program at Paterson. The instrument they receive is based on their top three instrument choices they provide the band director. There is no previous musical experience required to join Band 6. At home practice and in school rehearsals assist in a positive musical experience.

Band 7 and 8 - Band 6 is required to join Band 7 and Band 7 is required to join Band 8. In Band 7 and 8 we participate in a retreat (number of days varies by grade level), concerts throughout the school year, the Kiwanis Music Festival and school assemblies. At home practice and in school rehearsals assist in a positive musical experience.

Choir 6, 7, and 8: Our department has a strong tradition of fine choral music in Lethbridge and within the province. We strive for an overall perception of the performer, the listener, the evaluator and the composer while developing musical skills and knowledge. Choral music allows one to express their inner self. Blend, harmony, intonation, vowel formation and theory are some of the skills students will develop through the year. Sharing music with others will be accomplished through performances held in our local community and in the province.

DANCES - Danses

Students may be offered between 1-2 dances per year. Dances are scheduled for afternoons for about 2 hours. Dances are open to GPMS students only.

GRADE EIGHT FAREWELL - Adieu des 8ièmes

Each June, a year-end festivity is planned for all Grade 8 students. This activity will be held at a location determined by the school. There may be a cost to cover expenses. The event is restricted to Grade 8 students and their parents.

FRENCH IMMERSION - Immersion française

Students in French Immersion will receive instruction in Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies and Physical Education/Health in the French language. Students will be enrolled in English classes for Language Arts and two option courses.

LOST AND FOUND - Objets perdus et trouvés

All lost articles are placed in a Lost and Found bin located in three areas within the school. Across the stairwell by the band room, outside the changerooms by the large gym and in the Grade 6 wing. Students should check these containers as well as contact the office for all lost articles.

TELEPHONES – Téléphones

In the case of an emergency during the school day, students may use the classroom phone or report to the office and have an admin assistant assist them in making a call.

LOCKS AND LOCKERS - Serrures et casiers

Each student will be assigned a hall locker. The lockers will be used to store books, supplies, coats and gym equipment. Each locker will require a combination lock that will be provided by the school. 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.

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.

SAIC (STUDENT ACADEMIC INTERVENTION CENTRE) - Centre d'intervention académique pour l'étudiant

Students may be referred by the homeroom teacher, in collaboration with the consultative team, to receive help through a unique program called SAIC. The SAIC is a flexible learning commons area designed to support students who need more targeted or specialized supports, accommodations or program modifications. SAIC is dependent on funding and is reviewed on an annual basis.

LEARNING COMMONS - Lieu d'apprentissage

Our students are fortunate to have a large learning commons area. Materials, other than books, can be signed out for one period. Books are loaned for one week at a time. Parents are asked to supervise the use of the books at home and to encourage their child to return the books on time. Students will be charged to replace lost books.

This is also a space for our lunchtime Makerspace program and our after-school Esports program.

TEXTBOOKS - Manuels scolaires

Student textbooks will be assigned to students at the beginning of the school year. It is the student's responsibility to maintain the books in good condition. If books are damaged, lost or stolen the student and parent/guardian/caregiver are responsible for replacement cost of the books.

COUNSELLING – Conseillers

A teacher counsellor and a Child and Youth Care Worker (CYCW) are available to all students. Their primary function is to provide support to those students 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.

FIRE DRILLS/LOCKDOWNS - Routine de feu

Fire drill evacuations are practiced at least six times a year to ensure a quick, safe evacuation routine in case of fire. It is most important that students always wear proper footwear in order that they may proceed outdoors in any type of weather. Lockdown drills will be practiced at least twice during the year.

INCLEMENT WEATHER - Températures extrême

During extreme cold (-20C) or rainy weather, the students will be given the opportunity to stay indoors. Students are urged to arrive close to the school starting time of 8:00 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 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 the public will state "all schools are closed for the day".

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS – Suppléants

Substitute teachers are important employees in our school. As with all visitors and staff in our school, we expect students to treat substitute teachers with courtesy and respect. The responsibilities assigned to substitute teachers are very important to each student's education. We ask that all students assist substitute teachers whenever possible, so the best use of class time is made.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS - Parents bénévoles

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

SCHOOL COUNCIL - Conseil des parents

Gilbert Paterson School Council is a partnership of administration, 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/caregivers of children attending Gilbert Paterson are members of the school council. The agenda will be posted on the

website each month, [School Council | Gilbert Paterson Middle School](#). GPMS School Council strives to communicate with all of the parents of the school.

PARKING – Stationnement

We encourage students to “PARK AND WALK”. Drop your child off an appropriate distance from the school and have them walk some distance to school. Students are to enter the school through the FRONT door only. For safety reasons, please avoid "dropping off" or "picking up" students via the staff parking lot.

BICYCLES – Bicyclettes

Bicycles are not to be ridden on the school grounds. Students riding bicycles to school are to place them in the bike racks (which is in a locked gated area) and lock them with a high quality, sturdy lock. Similar rules apply with students riding skateboards/scooters to school: they are to be locked in student lockers. Helmets are mandatory by law. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen bicycles or accessories.

BUSES – Autobus

The distance a student must live from the school in order to qualify for bussing is set by Alberta Education. Students living in the GPMS boundary and more than 1 km for Grade 6 and 2 km for Grade 7 and 8 from the school, as determined by school district maps, will be issued a bus pass.

If a student lives the required distance from the school, they will ride a yellow bus or be issued a City Bus Pass each month, depending on the area of the city where they reside. Lost bus passes issued for the city bus will not be replaced.

NEWSLETTER - Bulletin d' information

A bi-weekly newsletter, The Paterson Press, will be available online at [Home | Gilbert Paterson Middle School](#). A calendar of upcoming events will be included in each newsletter. An email will be sent out to families with the newsletter as well.

WEBSITE - Site web

We encourage students and parents to stay informed by utilizing our Gilbert Paterson website, [Home | Gilbert Paterson Middle School](#). Class assignments, upcoming events, calendars and parent information are all

available online.

SCHOOLCASH ONLINE – Argent scolaire en ligne

SchoolCash OnLine is the method of payment for school fees in the Lethbridge School Division. Instructions for sign up are located on our GPMS website. The only other method of payment beside SchoolCash OnLine is cash, but exact change must be provided. We do not have a cash float in the school to provide change.

STUDENT SUPPLIES - Fourniture scolaire

Students are expected to have school supplies for all their academic programs and their option classes. Each teacher or team of teachers will provide a list of basic supplies to assist parents in their initial purchases. Additional supply fees will be added to the student's SchoolCash Online account. School supply lists can be found on our school website.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/TELEPHONE NUMBERS/EMAIL ADDRESS – Changement d'adresse/Numéros de téléphone/Adresse courriel

Please notify the office of any change of address, telephone number and/or email address. Please notify the office as early as possible if students are moving or transferring to a different school.