

W. G. MURDOCH SCHOOL

“Together We Make a Difference”
“Universi Refert Retuli”



Policies and Procedures

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Crossfield, AB

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MR. RYAN REED

Principal

MS. GLADYS BROWN

Assistant Principal

MRS. MELISSA HARDY

Counsellor

HOME OF THE TROJANS

School Colors: Dark Blue and Grey

Changes to this handbook may occur throughout the year. It is parents and students responsibility to check the handbook periodically for any updates.

WELCOME TO W. G. MURDOCH SCHOOL

This document can be an important link to W. G. Murdoch School when questions' arise. It provides information that will assist students and parents/guardians in understanding the programs, operations and mandates of our school community. For questions regarding School Board Policy, please consult the Rocky View Schools web page. For questions regarding specific classroom or course expectations, please consult with the subject teachers or the teacher web page.

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY AND MOTTO

"Together We Make a Difference"
"Universi Refert Retuli"

Passion, Belonging, Success

At W.G. Murdoch, these three words represent how we approach everything we do.

We believe that passionate people make W.G. Murdoch a place where students and staff want to come to learn everyday. Passion is on display all around the school, from teachers taking risks in their classrooms to engage students in a different way to our students going the extra mile both inside and outside the classroom. As Simon Sinek says, "Working hard for something we don't care about is called stress. Working hard for something we love is called passion". Being people that passionately approach our day to day work at WGM is what we want to be about.

In order to learn, students and staff must feel a sense of belonging, where they are cared for and safe. Whether it's a teacher noticing a student isn't themselves one day to our terrific student support team working more intentionally with kids, we want our students to feel that WGM is a place they belong. Our school intentionally does large school events run by our students to ensure that all students feel a sense of belonging at WGM.

We desire to see all of our students have success. We also are aware success looks different for each student. Working collaboratively with students, parents, and staff, we aim to personalize learning for each student to ensure their needs are being met. Being a community of 340 kids, this allows us to get to know our kids and what they need. Whether it is working with our students in off campus education, giving them more time in our active learning support environment, or helping them access online courses that we do not offer, learning at WGM is personalized and engaging. In the end, our students' success is paramount to what we do at WGM.

The Murdoch Motto

- involving myself in positive and constructive activities.
- requesting assistance for a problem.
- helping those in need.

I am committed to the safety of myself & others by...

- reporting to a staff member any hazardous conditions that I observe.
- seeking assistance when I see students at risk to themselves or others.
- keeping the school safe by not bringing weapons, drugs, alcohol and tobacco products onto school property, or to school sponsored events.

I am committed to respecting myself and others by...

- showing consideration, courtesy and respect toward others at school and school sponsored events.
- demonstrating respect for other's property, including the reporting of vandalism, theft, mischief and the return of found items.
- using language and gestures which are socially acceptable.
- earning my marks honestly.
- being a good example to all students.
- dressing appropriately as outlined in the W.G. Murdoch school dress policy.

I am committed to respecting the learning environment by...

- demonstrating that I am at school to learn, showing commitment and responsibility.
- supporting others in their learning.
- being on time for class and to ensure any absences are reported to the office by a parent/guardian.
- being in the halls only by permission; and to observe quiet in the halls during class time.

I am committed to respecting the school by....

- treating all school property with care and consideration.
- cleaning up any messes for which I am responsible.
- cleaning and/or drying my footwear as I enter the school.
- eating in designated areas.
- reporting vandalism, with the assurance that it will be dealt with in confidence.

COMMUNICATION

W. G. Murdoch School strives to be honest, open and timely in communication with parents. Parents become partners when communication is two-way, solution oriented, and child centered. Please do not hesitate to call for information or clarification. The answers to your questions are often acquired through the teacher closest to your child (e.g. the subject teacher). If you have a concern, intervene early; and call the appropriate teacher for an interview, whenever necessary.

Our website is both an important communication tool and source of information.

Information items include RVS Fees, School Education and Annual Results Report, Daily Announcements, WG Murdoch You Tube Channel, Athletic Schedules and the Trojan Times. Published online weekly, the Trojan Times provides upcoming important dates, the Murdoch Minute, thanks and congratulations to various school members and offers classroom news and updates. Communications involve Power School, Teacher Pages including email addresses, Meet the Teacher and Parent/Teacher Interview evenings, School Calendar and Bell Times. For all of this information and more, go to:

Web Page: <http://murdoch.rockyview.ab.ca>

ATTENDANCE

Regular and punctual attendance is important for the success of students. We urge parents to ensure that their child is only absent when necessary, and that they develop habits of punctuality. Minimum attendance requirements are set by Alberta Education. It is important that parents make a phone call when their child is absent. **All absences must be excused by a phone call from the parent/guardian within 24 hours of the absence.** Students are expected to arrive to class on time and prepared. If a student misses more than half the class due to lateness it is considered an absence. Phone calls can be made at anytime, day or night. Please call 403-946-5665. An automated phone system will call daily to inform parents if students are inexcusably absent.

ETHICAL USE OF DIGITAL DEVICES

1. Students need a signed permission form to use the Internet, or the school computer, or a personal digital device in the school.
2. Students are not allowed to eat or drink (water is acceptable) in the computer lab.
3. Students are not to tamper with equipment or touch the cables at the back of the computers.
4. Students are to act safely in the multi media labs.
5. Students are to log off properly, leave their workstation in an orderly manner and push chairs in at the end of a session. Sign out entails responsible use/liable for damage.

Students will lose computer privileges, may be suspended or may be recommended for expulsion for any one of the following violations:

- Damaging computers, computer components, computer systems or the network through physical means or through the use of software.
- Installing or uninstalling any programs, add-ins, plugins, or updates.
- Bypassing any Rocky View Schools Internet Security Measures.
- Intentionally wasting limited resources such as the school's internet connection by downloading for personal files unrelated to course work.
- Viewing, sharing, sending, or posting any violent or obscene messages, pictures or web sites.
- Downloading any illegal or offensive material.
- Using someone else's password or trespassing in another person's folders, work or files.
- Violating copyright laws.

NOTE: The computers at W. G. Murdoch School are maintained by network administrators, therefore THERE IS NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY ON A SCHOOL COMPUTER. Files and communications of students are reviewed periodically to maintain system integrity and to ensure that users are using the system responsibly. Personal devices in use at school can be subject to a search of contents by school administration.

CONTACTING THE OFFICE/CELL PHONE USE

Cell phones need to be turned off and should only be used in class under the teacher's instruction. People needing to contact students during the school day should contact the office. The office staff will inform the students in the conventional way. Students using cell phones inappropriately during instructional time (both in and out of the classroom) will be expected to give them to the school staff if asked. If this policy is contravened then a student's cell phone can be confiscated. The phone will remain in the office until the end of the day and returned to the student. A third occurrence will result in a parent conference and the phone will be returned to the parent or guardian. If cell phone use by a student continues to be an issue consequences can escalate in consultation with the administration. Cell phones and other digital devices are not permitted on the bus during field trips and are not encouraged in the lunchroom in order to promote social interaction with peers and to have some natural "disconnect" time that is in keeping with best practices suggested by current literature.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of school closure due to inclement weather, parents and students should listen to these radio stations between 6:00 and 8:00 a.m.

**QR77-AM/ FAN 960 – AM / Q91 – AM / CHFM Lite 96 – FM / CJAY 92 – FM / Jack FM
Country 105 – FM / CKMX 1060 / Q 107 / CBC / Global News Morning Show.**

Parents can check the school web page for updates, as well as bus information can be found on the Rocky View Schools website.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND DRILLS

Students are informed as to the quickest and safest routes from the school. Practice drills are carried out throughout the year. Exit maps are available in each classroom. W. G. Murdoch incorporates Hour Zero practices in its emergency planning.

BEHAVIOUR

W. G. Murdoch's first approach to behaviour is to foster self-discipline. Students are taught and encouraged to accept the responsibilities associated with individual rights. Students are expected to deal with problems that result from poor choices. Parents are notified of school-based consequences.

Section 12 of the School Act state a student shall conduct himself or herself so as to reasonably comply with the following code of conduct:

- a) be diligent in pursuing the student's studies;
- b) attend school regularly and punctually;
- c) co-operate fully with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services;
- d) comply with the rules of the school;
- e) account to the student's teachers for the student's conduct;
- f) respect the rights of others;
- g) 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;
- h) refrain from, report and not tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour directed toward others in the school, whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means;
- i) positively contribute to the student's school and community.

For further info RVS AP 350 Student Discipline:

http://www.rockyview.ab.ca/board_policies/admin_procedures/300-students/ap350-student-discipline/view

VANDALISM

Students are encouraged to take pride in, and care for, their school. Every effort will be made to discourage vandalism, however, when vandalism can be attributed to specific individuals, recovery of costs will be pursued.

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT AND CASH

The school will take no responsibility for lost or stolen electronic equipment such as phones, personal computers, laptops, etc.

Digital devices such as phones are encouraged to be kept in lockers unless instructed by a teacher to use them in class. Students are reminded to never bring digital devices, money, or valuables into the change rooms.

SCHOOL DRESS

W.G. Murdoch is a learning and business environment. As such, all members of the school community are expected to meet reasonable standards of dress in keeping with the atmosphere of the school, teachers as professionals and assisting students to prepare for the world of work. The following dress code was made in consultation and collaboration with W.G. Murdoch students who had a fair and representative voice in the establishment of this policy. As such, clothing should meet the following criteria:

- Clothing should be clean and be in good repair; excessive rips or tears are inappropriate.
- Shoes must be worn at all times in order to meet safety criteria.
- Should not expose undergarments, backs, buttocks, breasts, bellies or rib cages.
- Have straps that are at least a finger-width wide (no spaghetti straps).
- Should not display suggestive, inappropriate, or offensive language, slogans, messages or signs including, but not limited to, promotion of violence, drugs, alcohol, racism, sexism or any form of intolerance.
- Shorts, skirts, dresses, etc. should be of modest length.
- Pajama pants should only be worn on pajama-theme days.
- Hats in hallways and common areas are permitted. Hats are not permitted during assemblies. Classroom expectations with hats will be set by the classroom teacher.
- Sheer/mesh shirts are not permitted without a shirt underneath.
- Special clothing requirements are needed during gym (gym strip), lab experiments, shop, mechanics and other specialized programs.

The office keeps a selection of clean attire for the convenience of the student, should they need to change. Students will be permitted to change in between classes rather than during a class, depending on the level of dress code violation and at the discretion of the teacher and/or administration.

It is recommended that students have a hoodie or other clothing in their locker to prevent having to go home to change and to assist with unanticipated weather, spills, etc.

GYM STRIP

Gym strip is required for physical education classes. Trojan gym strip is available for purchase. We also offer hoodies and sweatpants to the students and staff at W.G.M. at an additional cost and can be purchased online.

SMOKING

In view of the proven harmful effects of smoking and other tobacco products, and in recognition of Alberta Law and Rocky View Schools policy, the use of all tobacco products **are banned in W. G. Murdoch School, and on or near W. G. Murdoch School** property.

Guidelines:

- “Cigarettes, cigarette packages, smokeless tobacco products and other smoking related materials such as e-cigarettes, matches, lighters, cigarette papers, and so on, are not to be in the school building, **or on the school property nor should activities take place within visible line of sight from the building.**”
- Field Trips, Physical Education classes held away from the school, school buses, ski trips, extra-curricular trips and so on, are all considered to be an extension of the school program, and are therefore subject to all policies listed above.
- For the purpose of this policy, the school property includes all areas up to and including: the sidewalk to the south of the building, the tree line on the east side of Saskatchewan Street (including all of Crossfield Elementary School property), the fence line on Whitfield Avenue, and all grassed areas to the east of the school. “Near the school property” will include any areas visible from the school or school property.

Procedures:

1. A first violation will be addressed by an administrator.
2. A second violation will be handled by an administrator, and will result in a 2-day out of school suspension.
3. A third violation will be handled by an administrator, and may result in a 5-day out of school suspension, with a parent/guardian re-entry interview required.
4. Any subsequent violations will make the student subject to a 5-day out of school suspension, with a possible recommendation for expulsion. Should the student enroll in a smoking cessation program, the recommendation for expulsion would be set aside, pending completion of the program.

**USE OF ANY TOBACCO PRODUCT INSIDE THE SCHOOL BUILDING
(WHICH INCLUDES CLASSES HELD AWAY FROM THE SCHOOL BUILDING, OR DURING A
STUDENT’S SCHEDULED CLASS TIME), WILL PLACE THE STUDENT AUTOMATICALLY AT
STEP 2 (2 DAY OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSION)**

ACADEMICS

COURSE ACCELERATION POLICY

- Students wishing to accelerate a course must have a minimum mark of 80% in the prerequisite course in order to be considered for acceleration. For example, students must have achieved a mark of 80% in Science 10, before they would be eligible to take Chemistry 20 in semester two of their grade 10 year.
- Students wishing to accelerate a course must meet with the Principal and include an educational rationale that must be signed by the parent/guardian and the teacher of the prerequisite course.
- Students will be granted permission to accelerate only if there is space in the course in which they wish to accelerate.
- Those grade 12 students who have accelerated courses will still be expected to enroll in 30 credits in their grade 12 year.

COURSE LOAD

Alberta Education states that in order to be eligible to receive an Alberta High School Diploma, a student must earn 100 credits. WGM School expects students in grades 10 and 11 to carry a course load that will earn them a minimum of 40 credits in each of these years and 30 credits in grade 12. Students in grades 10 and 11 will not be eligible for spares in the regular timetable. Students who choose to enroll in a summer school program should not do this with the expectation that they will be eligible for a spare during the school year.

HIGH SCHOOL EXEMPTION GUIDELINES

- Exemptions apply to all high school students in all courses, **except those involving a grade 12 Diploma, or grade 9 Achievement exam.**
- Students who exempt from Science 10 must write at least one 20 level Science final examination in the next school year.
- Students must achieve a minimum of 90% to be exempted.
- All exemptions from previous school terms will be considered in determining exemptions for this year.
- Students may have their exemption revoked after submitting an application if their mark falls below 90%.

COURSE OUTLINES

Course outlines will be provided to students in all courses and are posted on our website. Please contact the subject teacher if any questions arise that are not addressed through the outline.

OFF CAMPUS EDUCATION

Off campus education is designed to provide high school students with on-the-job training or experience at various business sites within the community. A student may earn credits while working on the farm through the Green Certificate program, at a trade through the Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) or on a job site through the Work Experience Program.

GRADUATION GUIDELINES

In order to be placed on the W. G. Murdoch High School graduation list, you must be a student in good standing and meet the conditions listed:

- You are responsible to check the accuracy of your high school record of courses, marks and credits. Any questions regarding your high school record should be discussed with the counselor.
- You must ensure that you are registered in the necessary credits and courses to fulfill high school diploma requirements. Grade 12 students are expected to register in a minimum of 15 credits each semester.
- Students must be on track for successful completion of all courses of the first reporting period of the second semester required for graduation. This mark must be maintained for the remainder of the semester. Students not meeting this condition will meet with the Principal to determine eligibility for participation in the graduation program.
- All school fees and grad fees must be paid in full by the deadline at the end of April (last school day of the month) in order to participate in the graduation ceremony. Arrangements for fee payments can be made with the school and should be in place early in the school year. Please contact our office for assistance.
- The School Act states that students must attend school regularly and punctually. Attendance records will be reviewed by school administration on a monthly basis or as needed. If attendance is not satisfactory, participation in the graduation ceremony and banquet could be at risk.

Parents will be informed of attendance concerns as they emerge.

- Absences must be excused the morning of a major test or exam.
- Medical documents may be required for missed assessments, tests, and exams.

SCHOOL FEES

School fees are levied for option courses, extracurricular activities, yearbook, and field trips. All fees must be approved prior to the year by Alberta Education. Fees are not charged for general instruction or required courses. The fee schedule is posted on our website.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities which help the individual develop social skills, and make the school experience more fulfilling. Extracurricular activities involving competition with other schools, occur mainly after school and on weekends. Students will be charged a participation fee. Students may discuss payment alternatives with administration.

EXTRACURRICULAR ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible, a student must be in good standing which includes:

Receive course grades of 50% or higher, satisfactory attendance, no outstanding assignments or courses, no previous suspensions (especially drugs, alcohol or weapon related offences). Any of the above may deem the student ineligible to participate in any or all extra-curricular activities.

IF A STUDENT IS INEXCUSABLY ABSENT ON THE DAY OF AN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY, HE/SHE IS INELIGIBLE FOR THAT ACTIVITY.

RVS SPORT COMMITTEE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PLAYERS AND SPECTATORS

Students, parents/guardians, and coaches are required to sign a Code of Conduct form outlining expectations and responsibilities prior to involvement in RVS activities.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP

We take pride in our student leadership program where students earn credits while also learning valuable skills in leadership and coordinating and managing events designed to enhance school culture.

COUNSELLING

The School Counselor is available to both students and parents. Information and consultation regarding the following is offered:

1. Career Planning and Information
2. Financial Aid/Scholarships
3. Educational Issues
4. Personal Issues

FAMILY/SCHOOL LIAISON WORKER

W. G. Murdoch has a Family School Liaison Worker. The worker provides individual counseling of students at school and family counseling in the home. For more information, or to access this service, you can contact the school.

SCHOOL NURSE

W. G. Murdoch has a school nurse who is available one morning a week to answer questions and provide immunization and information to both students and parents regarding health related issues.

INFIRMARY

An infirmary is available for those students who become ill during school hours. Every attempt will be made to contact the parents of ill students. Under normal circumstances, medication cannot legally be provided or administered by the staff. Special medication or medical information must be provided to the school administration, supported by written doctor's directions and parental permission.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC (BAND)

Instrumental Music is available in Grades 6-12 at W. G. Murdoch. A variety of performance based programs including Concert Band, Jazz Band and Percussion Ensemble, at the various levels are offered.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Individual photographs will be taken in September. Retakes will be taken in October.

CONCESSION

The school offers a selection of healthy items: one hot entrée per day as well as hot and cold snack foods.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The Parent Council is comprised of parents, community members, administrators, at least one teacher and one Students' Union member. School Council executive members usually are elected from the community.

SCHOOL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Parents and community members are invited to share their expertise and interests by becoming volunteers in a variety of ways. Rocky View Schools requires all volunteers to submit acceptable Criminal Record Checks (CRC) prior to engaging in volunteer activities at schools. Further information is available in the school office.

STUDENT DRIVING PARKING

The parking of student vehicles on W.G. Murdoch School property is a privilege and students are asked to comply with the guidelines in the interest of public safety and security. The student parking area at W.G. Murdoch School covers the entire East parking lot. This parking lot is owned by Rocky View Schools and as such, are subject to school policy. Students who do not follow the rules and directives may be suspended from school, lose parking privileges, and have the vehicle towed at owner's expense.

RURAL TRANSPORTATION

Rural students requiring busing must complete a Transportation Form and mail it to Rocky View Schools. The forms are available on the web page, at the school office, or you may contact the Transportation Department at Rocky View Schools office @ 945-4000. School bus policy will be implemented by the bus driver. Parents are advised to phone the driver to discuss concerns.

LOCKERS

Each student is assigned a locker at the beginning of the year. It is the student's responsibility to keep his/her combination number confidential. It is also his/her responsibility to keep the locker clean and tidy and to report any damage immediately to the home room teacher. Students must use a school lock. We ask that students AVOID bringing valuables to school since lockers are not necessarily a secure place. It is important to note that lockers are the property of the school, and therefore, are subject to search if reasonable cause exists. A locker search will be performed in the presence of the student whenever possible.