

West Ridge School

Student / Parent Handbook
2023-24



Welcome!

This handbook is intended to provide information about the processes, procedures and expectations at West Ridge School. It is important that students, parents and guardians read the following pages carefully. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

What does it mean to be a Raptor? At West Ridge School our goal is to have a school where students thrive.

- We aim to provide you with **engaging** instruction so that you can learn and do your very best.
- We will provide opportunities for you to **explore** a wealth of complementary courses, co-curricular activities, and extra-curricular opportunities that will make your middle school years great.
- We strive to provide this in a **safe, respectful learning environment** where all Raptors come together as a community.
- We look forward to developing strong **relationships** with our students, parents and the community that we serve.

We welcome you to our Raptors community! Read on to learn about the Raptor Way and the expectations we have for you, our students!

The Raptor Way

The Raptor Way:

- Respect yourself
- Respect each other
- Respect our community
- Be Responsible for your actions

Raptors are responsible and accountable for their behaviour and conduct:

- while they are involved in school-sponsored or related activities
- on school board property
- during any locker break or lunch periods on or off school board property
- while traveling to and from school
- on vehicles used for the transportation of students to and from school and school activities



- beyond the hours of school operation if the behavior or conduct detrimentally affects the welfare of individual students or the governance, climate or efficiency of the school.

Raptors respect:

- school authority
- others and their property
- ethnic, racial, religious and gender differences
- school board property, community property and property of other persons

Raptors are accountable for:

- school attendance and punctuality
- their work habits, assignments and homework
- complying with the code of conduct

West Ridge School code of conduct adheres to the [CBE Code of conduct](#).

Allergies

We have many students with severe allergies to peanuts and tree nuts. For this reason we strive for a nut-free environment. We ask that parents do not send foods containing nuts to school with their child. Students with severe allergies should complete the forms identified in the medical section.

We realize that on occasion parents may wish to send food items for class celebrations. In cases such as this we ask that parents give the classroom teacher two days notice, include all ingredients on the packaging, and purchase labeled, nut-free foods where possible.

We do our best to keep parents informed of activities involving food and ensuring that food is nut-safe. It is ultimately up to the student to not take any food they are not sure is nut-free.

Attendance

There is a direct relationship between achievement and regular student attendance. Every student is required to attend school regularly and punctually.

Excused Absences – Students will only be marked excused when they are ill, there is a family emergency, or if they have medical appointments. It is essential to let the school know of the absence. Please call the absence line any time of

day at (403) 817-3552 ext.1. To help our office run efficiently, please ensure you have called in before 8:45 a.m.

It is the student's responsibility to obtain and complete all work missed while absent and to make arrangements to write tests that may have been missed. Parents may want to request homework and arrange for someone to pick it up at the end of the school day.

Skipping – Class attendance is mandatory and students who skip classes will be required to make up the time with their teacher. Students who need to leave the building for a scheduled appointment or due to illness must check out through the office. Parental permission must be given by note, phone call, or by coming into the office.

Unexcused Absences – Students who are away from school without permission are considered truant and may face disciplinary action.

Extended Vacations - Each year families extend vacations or take time off during the school year. Students will be marked absent-unexcused during this time. When this type of absence is necessary, parents should provide the office with a note indicating the dates and reason for the proposed absences at least 5 days prior to leaving. Students are expected to inform each of their teachers of the absence. We will attempt to work with parents to accommodate the absence but we are unable to work as a distance learning center and will not provide work for students who are absent for extended periods.

PowerSchool Attendance – Our student information system will notify parents of lates and absences. This is done on a period basis so missing one day of school will show up as eight absences (homeroom + seven periods).

Backpacks, Bags, Purses

All backpacks, bags and purses are to be kept in the student locker during the school day.

Bullying

A bullying situation is defined as one in which:

- one person is the target, over time, of repeated negative actions



- one person has more power, so the person being victimized feels that they can't defend him/herself, and
- when one person, the target, feels embarrassed, hurt, scared, and/or angry.

Response to bullying:

Step 1: Student and staff member discuss the incident. Consequences are determined and expectations reviewed. The incident is documented.

Step 2: Student and staff member discuss the incident and review the discipline policy again. Consequences are determined and expectations reviewed. The incident is documented. Parents are contacted and informed of the behaviour and the consequence. Both student and parents are made aware of the next step.

Step 3: Student, administration and parents meet and discuss consequences and expectations. A final warning is issued. Police are included if behavior is severe. Incident is documented.

Step 4: Further school related consequences, possibly including recommendation for expulsion.

Communication

A parent's first line of communication with the school is the classroom teacher. Please feel free to call or e-mail your teacher at any time. Teachers will provide their extension and e-mail address to you early in September and this is also available on our web-site. Our school website contains up to date information. Its address is <http://school.cbe.ab.ca/school/westridge/about-us/contact/staff/pages/default.aspx>.

Students will use google drive as their main area to access class content, assignments, submit work, and collaborate with peers.

Our student information system, PowerSchool, allows parents to see marks and assessments on an ongoing, real-time basis. This can be done through the PowerSchool application or on-line.

The office is also available to answer your questions. Our number is 403-817-3552. The office sends out School Messenger e-mail reminders throughout the

school year. You can also receive tweets from the school twitter account: [@West Ridge CBE](https://twitter.com/WestRidgeCBE).

We look forward to establishing a strong relationships with you to ensure our students have a successful year.

Digital Citizenship Plan (Use of School and Personal Laptops / Tablets)

Digital Citizenship is having the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to demonstrate responsible and respectful behaviour when using technology or participating in digital environments. Digital Citizenship encompasses: digital self, digital interactions, digital learning, digital rights & responsibilities, digital safety & security, and digital commerce.

Students are provided access to computers, other technology and the internet to assist them in their learning. Students may bring their own computers / i-pads / tablets to school and may use these devices in the classroom.

Students who bring their own devices to school will not have access to school servers or printers through the network. As such they will need to utilize Google Drive to transfer files to the school network. School classes may utilize software applications that the student does not have on their device. No software will be provided to students.

The following activities are prohibited and will be addressed on an individual basis as needed:

- Use of someone else's CBE account
- Sharing of usernames and passwords for other people to use
- Sending, posting displaying or using obscene language/messages or pictures or information about oneself or others
- Harassing, insulting or attacking another person or their reputation
- Viewing websites through a proxy server
- Plagiarism of online content
- Tampering with any computer accessories, hardware or software
- Use of technology or accessing sites not approved by staff
- Trespassing in other's folders, work areas or files
- Utilizing another student's device without permission

The following sites are prohibited from use:

- Vulgar or lewd depictions of the human body
- Any adult content

- Violent acts
- On-line gambling
- Social networking sites (such as Facebook, etc.)
- Sites that encourage the use of illicit or illegal substances
- Sites that advocate hatred or violence against an identifiable group
- Sites promoting criminal activity
- Non-educational games

Our expectation is that students become educated and responsible Digital Citizens. Students who breach any of the above points will be dealt with on an individual basis and may result in:

- Restriction or loss of technology privileges
- Restriction of use or confiscation of personal device
- School based disciplinary consequences: and/or
- Police intervention and/or legal action

It is important that parents/guardians and students remember the following:

- The school is not responsible for the loss, damage, or theft of student electronic devices.
- The school is not able to provide technical support for student devices.
- Devices can only be utilized when students are under the direct supervision of a teacher in an approved area of the school.
- Recording / photographing / filming of another person for an educational purpose can only be done with the other person's permission
- This recording / photo / film can only be used for the purpose stated and must be deleted when no longer needed
- Devices can only be utilized for educational purposes.
- Misuse will be determined by the staff and administration.

We view digital citizenship as a shared responsibility between students, parents and the school. We appreciate families supporting our work by discussing with their children their role as digital citizens.

Digital Device Policy – “Building Digital Citizens”

We know that our students are growing up in a digital age and with that in mind focusing on teaching them to become responsible digital citizen's will be our focus this year. Students will be able to use their devices as we will be using a

pro-active approach that helps them learn what a responsible digital citizen is. Each classroom teacher will use discretion in their own room around how & when these devices can support the learning.

When using their devices, students will be expected to use their devices in ways that align with our school's Student Code of Conduct & Digital Citizenship Policies.

Messages to and from Students:

- Urgent messages from parents should be called in to the main office. School office personnel will forward these to our students. We encourage all parents to ensure that after-school plans and early-dismissal pick-ups are well communicated to your child before the school day.
- Students who need to contact a parent during the day can do so from any phone in the school with teacher permission.

Music and Headphones:

- Students who have music as an accommodation specifically identified in their Individualized Program Plan will be exempt from this rule (for the playing of music only). These students will be asked to bring an i-pod for this purpose or, with teacher permission, to keep their device on airplane mode to negate incoming texts, e-mails and notifications.

Theft and Responsibility:

The school does not take responsibility for the theft of any digital devices brought to the school.

Digital No Use Zones:

At absolutely no time (including after school hours) are digital devices to be used in the washroom or change room areas.

Consequences for Inappropriate Use:

First Offence

- The digital device will be sent to the main office where it will be logged and securely held until the end of the school day. The student is allowed to pick up the device at the end of the school day (not at lunch).

Second Offence

- The digital device will be sent to the main office where it will be logged and securely held until the end of the school day. The student and/or administration

will call a parent before releasing the device to the student at the end of the school day.

Third Offence

- The digital device will be sent to the main office where it will be logged and securely held until the end of the school day. A parent will be required to pick up the device from administration.

Further Offences

- Any further offence will result in increasing disciplinary action due to defiance with regards to CBE and school policies, rules and regulations.

Discipline Process

The staff of West Ridge is committed to the development and maintenance of a positive learning environment. We strive for an environment that is safe, secure and conducive to effective teaching and learning.

The CBE has a standard code of conduct that all students are expected to abide by. Administrative Regulation 6005 identifies the expectations and responsibilities for all students.

<https://www.cbe.ab.ca/GovernancePolicies/AR6005-Student-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>

Administrative Regulation 6006, Progressive Student Discipline, identifies a process for responding to incidents that detract from the learning environment.

<https://www.cbe.ab.ca/GovernancePolicies/AR6006-Progressive-Student-Discipline.pdf>

It is our belief that all students make mistakes as they navigate through adolescence. Our discipline strategy strives to help students learn from their mistakes, allow for the restoration of relationships, and ensure all students leave West Ridge School understanding how to respect themselves, others, and their community.

Dress Code

The Calgary Board of Education has established standards for dress at school. All students are required to adhere to Administrative Regulation 6010 which encourages:

- a) cleanliness, neatness, and generally positive attitudes
- b) appropriateness for the particular activity
- c) safety in all activities

Administrative Regulation 6010 also includes the following guidelines:

- a) clothing which is suitable for indoors (no outdoor jackets worn inside)
- b) suitable footwear (closed toe shoes in PE and in shop areas)
- c) different clothing for physical education (gym strip, running shoes)
- d) protective clothing in shops as required (safety glasses, aprons, ear protection)
- e) hair that is neat and well groomed
- f) appropriate make-up

Emergency Procedures

Lockdown and evacuation procedures are reviewed and practiced every year to ensure student and staff safety. Lockdown drills are done twice a year to prepare students and staff to deal with situations in which the safety of our school community is threatened. Six fire drills are also held to prepare students and staff to deal with situations where evacuation of the building is necessary.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of school activities. Trips/events that take place during the school day are chosen because they enhance the curriculum. Attendance at these field trips is strongly encouraged.

Permission forms and payment for field trips must be submitted by the due date to allow teachers to make final arrangements for transportation, class coverage, and payments to the service provider. Students are reminded that it is their responsibility to take the form home, have it read and signed by a parent/guardian and to return the form and payment to the school by the due date. Students not returning forms by the due date will not be permitted to attend the field trip. In some cases, trips may need to be cancelled if sufficient numbers of forms are not returned.

Students who do not attend scheduled trips will be expected to attend school as usual. Teachers will provide alternate assignments for students unable to go on a particular trip.

If a school trip is cost-prohibitive, please call the teacher in charge and the school will work with the parent to ensure no student misses out!

Hallways and Class Changes

During class changes, students must move immediately to their next class. Students should not need to go to their lockers between classes except for the scheduled morning locker break and before and after Physical Education classes. Students should have the books necessary for periods 1 and 2 to start and then 3 and 4 when they finish locker break. After lunch they should be prepared for periods 5, 6, 7, and 8.

While in the hallways, respect for your fellow students is expected. Running, horseplay, and blocking the halls is not acceptable.

Homework

The Calgary Board of Education is desirous of promoting the development of good study habits. We believe that home study can contribute to this objective as well as to the reinforcement of learning. Two kinds of study are recognized, the completion of written or "hand-in" assignments, and the informal study of material related to the subjects under study in school. While the Board promotes the supportive role of the home in the child's education, we also support students' pursuit of other non-school interests of educational, cultural, or recreational value.

The CBE recommends no more than 20 minutes per night of homework for grade 5 and 6 students, and 30-60 minutes for grade 7 to 9 students. When no specific homework has been assigned by a teacher, reading or review is always encouraged at home in support of student learning.

Human Sexuality

Human sexuality is part of the Health curriculum in all middle school grades. At the beginning of the year a form will be sent home which gives parents the option to have their child opt out of the human sexuality component of the Health program. If the form is not returned, then the student will be expected to participate in these classes. Students who opt out will be given alternate Health-related instruction.

Illegal Substances

Smoking and vaping is illegal for anyone under the age of 18. Students found smoking or vaping on school property will have smoking materials confiscated, and will be working with admin around consequences with a possibility of a warning or fine from the Calgary Police Service, along with school-based

consequences. Students found smoking within sight of the school are also breaking the law and may face similar consequences.

The use, possession, or sale of drugs and/or alcohol is against the law and prohibited. Students found to be in possession or under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be immediately suspended from school. Meetings with parents and the school resource officer will determine next steps in the disciplinary process.

Insurance

The CBE maintains an Accident Insurance Policy for all CBE. Coverage under this policy is for medical and dental expenses incurred as a direct result of an accident including accidental death and dismemberment. Ambulance costs are also covered by this insurance whether the need arises as a result of an accident or a health concern. If another insurance policy is also applicable (e.g. parent's supplemental health insurance), the other policy responds first to the claim.

Lates

Punctuality is an important attribute for future success. It is a matter of courtesy to your teachers and fellow students to arrive to school and your classes on time.

Students arriving late in the morning or at noon must sign in at the main office before going to class. Students late for class during class changes will have this monitored by their teachers. To address the issue of excessive "unexcused lates", students may face progressive disciplinary consequences.

Locks and Lockers

Each student is assigned a hall locker. Grade 7-9 will have the option of an additional assigned tote box locker in the Physical Education change rooms (grades 7-9).

- CBE locks are the only authorized locks for student use.
- Students are to keep their locker combinations confidential.
- Students are to only use their assigned lock and locker.
- Valuables should not be brought to school. The school cannot accept responsibility for the disappearance or destruction of locker belongings.
- Students should clearly mark all of their possessions such as books, physical education clothing, shoes, etc. This may discourage potential theft, and help considerably in the recovery of lost or stolen items.
- Locks are collected at the end of the year. There will be an assessment of
- \$10.00 for any lost lock.



- Lockers are the property of the Calgary Board of Education and may be subject to searches whenever deemed necessary by school officials.
- If a student feels their combination has been compromised, he/she should see their homeroom teacher to talk about a replacement lock.

Lost and Found

There are lost and found boxes located on each floor. Watches, glasses, jewelry, keys, etc. will be kept in the office. At certain times during the school year, unclaimed items will be given to charity or thrown in the garbage. Items will be put on display before this happens.

Lunchtime

Grade 7, 8 and 9 students are allowed off-campus during the lunch hour from Monday through Thursday. There is no supervision provided for students when they are off-campus. Students are expected to return to school on time and to maintain good relationships with the residents and business people in the area. Students who are late returning to school, or are inappropriate in the community will have this privilege revoked. Students returning to school from the community are expected to re-enter the school through the playing area doors behind the school. (The main doors are locked throughout the day for security).

Grade 5 and 6 students are to remain on school grounds during the school day with the exception of students who have permission to go home for lunch, or when leaving with parents. Grade 5 and 6 students will eat under the supervision of lunch room supervisors in the designated lunchroom area. Grade 7 to 9 students may eat in the designated gathering area locations.

After twenty minutes, a bell will ring notifying students that they should now go outside or to a teacher sponsored activity. All students are expected to go outside unless they are involved in a teacher-sponsored activity. If the temperature outside is below -20 with the wind chill, then students will remain inside for the duration of the lunch break.

The West Springs School playground is out of bounds for West Ridge students. The soccer field closest to us is for our use as is the Sport Court. Please do not use the far soccer field as that is for use by West Springs School.

Mark Appeals

Final course marks will be made available to students at the end of the year. Students and parents have an opportunity to dispute the final course mark on

Appeals Day. A student and parent may appeal a school-based mark by directly discussing their concern with the teacher.

Should a resolution not occur following these discussions, the student and parent may then address their concerns in writing to the principal. The decision of the principal regarding school-based marks is deemed to be the final decision of the Calgary Board of Education (CBE Administrative Regulation 3018).

Medical

Students with a) medical issues that may have an effect on attendance, b) necessitate the need for medications to be taken at school, or c) require teachers to be aware of the condition, should complete the Student Health Plan and the Student Health Emergency Protocol forms.

Medications should be dropped off at the main office. Epi-pens should be dropped off at the main office and students requiring an Epi-pen should also have one on their person at all times.

Weekly Message

The weekly message is published and posted on our website at the end of each week. It is also sent home via School Messenger. We hope you take the time to read about what students are doing at West Ridge School. There will be important dates to make note of in the newsletter, student submissions, and notes from your School Council.

Personal Information (FOIP)

The Calgary Board of Education is bound by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act (FOIP) which has two purposes: 1) to provide individuals with greater access to information from public organizations, and 2) to protect individual privacy. In the case of the school, we will make available to parents/guardians information regarding their child's progress in school. We do not disclose information to other parties unless a specific request with signed authorization is made by parent/guardian. There are some routine school-related activities where personal information is collected about students that may be disclosed. Examples of these might be displaying student work in hallways or publishing achievements on the school website. For the security and safety of students we will not call students to the telephone nor will we give out information regarding students on the phone. We will take messages for students.

Physical Education

It is an established fact that participation in physical activity can provide individuals with many health benefits. One of our Physical Education goals is to help students recognize the importance of regular exercise in their lives and to encourage daily participation in physical activity. We hope that participation becomes a lifetime habit for our students.

It is our belief that students who are well enough to be at school are generally well enough to participate in modified Physical Education activities. In circumstances where a student has an illness (common cold, sore throat, stomach ache etc.) that reduces their ability to participate, we request that a note from the parent/guardian explaining the nature of the ailment and any modifications that can be made or ways in which the student can still participate be sent on the day(s) in question. On these days students will still be required to participate to the best of their ability. If they are too ill to do this then they should not be in school. A note from a parent/ guardian will excuse a student from class participation for a maximum of 3 days (a note is valid for one day unless otherwise stated in the note). Students will not be allowed to phone home during class time to be excused. If the injury/condition is likely to affect involvement in 4 or more successive P.E. classes then a doctor's letter will normally be required, specifying range of dates affected.

Physical Education clothing will be available for purchase throughout the school year if your child would like to have the school wear.

All Physical Education items are to be stored in the locker room locker (grade 6-9). Students are given a lock to use in the locker room. PE clothing and personal items are often lost when students: leave clothing/belongings on top of benches or floors, do not securely lock their lockers, tell other students their locker combination, or do not properly label their clothing. If something is lost, it is the student's responsibility to check daily with their teacher to see if it has been found. In the meantime, students may wear 'loaners,' but after a 5-day grace period, new regulation clothing must be purchased.

Students should place all school supplies in their hall locker before coming to Physical Education classes.

Plagiarism

In academic endeavours, it is expected that students will act in ways consistent with the principles of academic integrity and not take credit for the works and/or ideas generated by others.

Report Cards

Report cards are available electronically at the end of January and June. Parents may request a paper copy if they are unable to print at home.

School Hours

The school will be open a half hour before school begins (8:00 am). Students arriving earlier will need to wait outside the front entrance.

Students coming for morning practices or rehearsals will be let in by their sponsoring teacher. We ask that all students not involved in a teacher sponsored activity leave the school by 3:20 pm (12:50 pm on Fridays).

School Resource Officer

Our School Resource Officer is a police officer who has been assigned to our school. This officer supports our school administrators, and when possible, works in a proactive way educating students about the law.

Skateboards, Scooters, Bicycles and In-Line Skates

We encourage students to have a healthy lifestyle which may include biking, skateboarding, scooting, or skating to school. Please ensure a proper helmet and safety gear is worn and that these items are not used in front of the school, in the school, or on the sidewalk during bus loading time.

Bicycles, skateboards and scooters should be secured in the provided racks and properly locked. The school does not accept responsibility for lost or stolen articles but will assist students to the extent possible if losses occur. Students should not expect to leave their scooter or board in the school office.

Vandalism

It is expected that Raptors respect their school and treat it appropriately. The Calgary Board of Education may require the parent or guardian to replace or pay for any school property destroyed, broken or damaged by their child.

Visitors and Volunteers

For the safety of our children, West Ridge School is a closed campus during the school day. Any visitors or volunteers must check in at the main office and wear a visitor / volunteer lanyard during their time in the school.

Volunteers

West Ridge loves volunteers so we encourage parents to ensure all clearances and forms are in place at the beginning of the school year. (It is disappointing when a parent wants to volunteer but has not yet gone through the clearance process!)

In the CBE, volunteers require a valid Police Information Check, including a Vulnerable Sector Check. Volunteers also must complete the Annual Volunteer Registration form. Your PIC and Vulnerable Sector check is good for five years.

Yearbook

The yearbook is optional for students. Orders are placed and paid for online through our yearbook provider. More information will come when they online ordering opens to families. There may be a few additional yearbooks available for purchase in the fall but this is not guaranteed so please order yours early.

Have a great year! We're glad you are a Raptor!

