



"Together We Build Tomorrow in God's Love"

Neil M Ross Catholic School Handbook

www.nmr.gsacrd.ab.ca

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St. Albert, AB T8N3X3

780-459-1244

Catch us on Social Media:

Facebook: Neil M Ross Catholic School

Instagram: nmr_gsacrd

TikTok: @nmr_gscard

School Mission Statement

With Christ We Inspire Excellence & Lifelong Learning

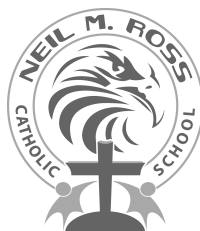
Motto

Building tomorrow in God's love!

Our School Prayer

Neil M Ross is a special place
Bless our school. Bless the people in it
Let Neil M. Ross be a place of peace
Let each of us see God,
in every person that we meet
Let us treat each other with understanding and
respect
As we celebrate the joy of learning
Guide us to be the best that we can be, while...
Together we build tomorrow in God's love.

Our School Mascot: The Eagle

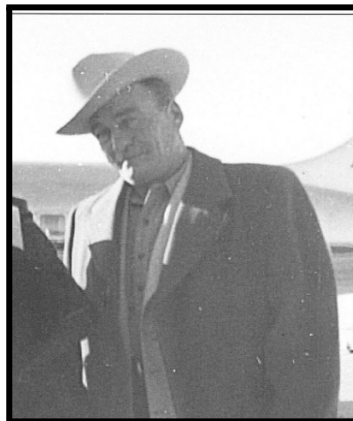


Love, as one of the fundamental Grandfather Teachings, permeates all other aspects of life's lessons. It is the EAGLE that serves as a powerful symbol, reflecting these teachings back to us. With its strength to carry the weight of all teachings and its ability to soar to great heights, the EAGLE gains a comprehensive perspective of the entire creation. As we embody these teachings and adopt the eagle's viewpoint, we embrace and love our authentic selves. Once we achieve this harmonious state within, we are then able to extend love and compassion to our family and community. It is for this profound reason that the EAGLE feather holds immense sacredness, reserved only for those who have earned it through their actions and commitment.

Neil McKinnon Ross was born in Edmonton on April 17, 1909. After several years of working in California and building the Jasper-Banff highway, he returned to St. Albert. In 1937 he married the former Sadie Stanton and together they raised six children. He started "Ross Truck Service" which he continued to expand until his retirement in 1967.

Neil Ross was very active in the community life of St. Albert. He served as Mayor of St. Albert for three years and trustee for our school district for six years. One of his labors of love was helping with the building of the Grotto at St. Albert Parish and his subsequent donation of the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary that still stands there today. The naming of this school after Neil Ross stands as a reminder of his contribution of love for his family, community and church.

Neil M Ross **Our School's** **Namesake**



Message from Administration

Welcome to the start of another enriching academic journey at Neil M Ross Catholic School! We extend a warm welcome to all as we embark on what promises to be a remarkable year ahead. Our School Handbook serves as a guide, detailing our School Code of Conduct, which encapsulates the educational, moral, and ethical standards we uphold. These principles, alongside our established practices and procedures, form the bedrock of our commitment to fostering a safe and nurturing learning environment for every student.

Neil M Ross School stands as a beacon of Christ-centered education, where every individual's unique talents are cherished and celebrated. Our devoted faculty members cultivate an atmosphere of active engagement, working collaboratively with our valued parents and our partners at Holy Family Parish to equip our students with the skills and resilience needed to thrive in an ever-changing world.

Central to our mission is the cultivation of our Catholic faith. Through a blend of compassion and academic rigor, we encourage students to explore their strengths while embracing the spirit of service towards others.

At NMR, we cultivate a positive and focused environment, where respect for God, self, and others is paramount. We empower all students to embrace their roles as disciples of God and soar to new heights as NMR Eagles.

As we embark on this journey together, we eagerly anticipate the opportunity to support each of our families throughout the upcoming year. We offer our prayers for your continued confidence and collaboration, trusting in our shared commitment to nurturing the whole child.

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." ~Romans 8:26

Sincerely,

Colin Loiselle and Rob Rawcliffe

Faith Education

Our School's Patron Saint – St Joseph



St. Joseph is the patron saint for Neil M. Ross. St. Joseph, according to Christian tradition, was not the biological father of Jesus; he served as his foster-father and as head of the Holy Family. The gospels describe Joseph as a “tekton” (τεκτων); traditionally the word has been taken to mean “carpenter”. In Roman Catholic traditions, Joseph is the patron saint of workers and we celebrate his Feast day on March 19th. He was declared to be the patron saint and protector of the Catholic Church. (Pope Pius IX in 1870). Parents play a vital role as their child's first educators, ensuring the sharing of faith and celebration of sacraments. We encourage families to attend Parish weekend Masses and events together. Students receive religious education, engage in daily prayer, and celebrate faith during school hours. Guided by teachers, they actively participate in seasonal liturgical celebrations and lead prayers. All students are expected to participate and show reverence as part of our school community.

DAILY MORNING PRAYER

The start of each day is reserved for prayer. This is an integral part of our day. We ask that once prayer begins whether in the classroom, within our school assembly or on a Google hangout, that everyone in the building stop their activity and conversations in order to allow everyone full participation in our prayer. If in the hallway, feel free to pop into a classroom or the office to share in our school prayer experience. This will serve to emphasize to our students that prayer is a sacred and valued part of who we are called to be.

SERVICE

As Christians, we are called to serve others. Students at NMR are encouraged to participate in service projects to heighten their awareness of the needs of others. Throughout the year, students are invited to participate in projects to support organizations such as St. Albert food bank, Holy Childhood Association and Catholic Social Services. The funds raised are used to help others both locally and globally. Our students are also encouraged to provide service and leadership within our school community as a way of life. Lunch monitors, cross-age buddies, safety patrol, peace patrol and recycle program are only a few of the ways that our students provide leadership to the school community.

Safe and Caring Schools

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS

Neil M. Ross School affirms the joint responsibility of home and school in guiding students to behave in acceptable, positive ways. Students are expected to demonstrate responsibility in meeting both individual and group expectations. In dealing with unexpected behavior, an attempt is always made to resolve the incident using restorative justice practices and logical consequences while maintaining the dignity of the person.

Within our school we work at building an inclusive community where respect for one another, our community and diversity are celebrated. We work on this throughout the year developing relationships, student leadership, & social justice projects and the promotion of a school wide Positive Behavior System.

Our Positive Behaviour Plan, which is reinforced throughout the school year, recognizes each child as a gift from God and outlines expected behaviour using the acronym SOAR. NMR Eagles **SOAR!** Students can receive “green tickets” if they are observed SOARing and be entered into a weekly prize draw at our assemblies.

<i>S -SAFETY</i>	<i>~ Protect self and others from harm</i>
<i>O -OWNERSHIP</i>	<i>~ Be Responsible for own learning and actions</i>
<i>A -ACCEPTANCE</i>	<i>~ Treat others as you would like to be treated</i>
<i>R -RESPECT</i>	<i>~ Yourself, others and the environment</i>

We will be focusing on developing each of these areas and talking about what they mean in various areas of the school. We will be celebrating the successes we see in our students as they strive to “earn their wings” by following these expectations.

Neil M Ross School will establish a culture of respect for the God given dignity of all who participate within it and pursue the common good of everyone, as we build a community of faith, hope, and love through the example of Jesus Christ.

Our priority is to ensure that all of our students are provided with a safe and caring school environment where they can excel and be healthy, productive learners. Collaboration among administration, staff, students and parents is key to helping achieve a safe and caring school environment, with a focus on positive relationships.

In order to assure that this culture will prevail, the school maintains the following expectations with respect to harassment and bullying:

Sustaining a Safe and Caring Learning Environment

Definitions:

1. Harassment refers to derogatory (e.g., excessively critical, insulting, belittling) or vexatious (e.g., aggressive, angry, antagonistic) conduct or comments that are known or ought reasonably to be known to be offensive or unwelcome. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a) any objectionable comment, act, or display that demeans, belittles, or causes personal humiliation or embarrassment, and any act of intimidation or threat;
 - b) conduct or comments involving any of the prohibited grounds of harassment and discrimination as defined in the *Alberta Human Rights Act*. Any form of harassment may be caused by a single incident or a series of events.
2. Sexual Harassment includes comments, gestures or physical conduct of a sexual nature where an individual knows or ought reasonably to know that the behaviour is unwelcome and personally offensive. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:
 - a) inappropriate or derogatory comments, humour, insults or behaviour based on gender and/or gender expression, gender identity;
 - b) inappropriate, lewd, or sexually offensive written, graphic or behavioural displays on school board property;
 - c) inappropriate, lewd, or sexually offensive slogans or graphics displayed on clothing worn on school board property or during school-related activities;
 - d) inappropriate conversation, physical touching, or leering that could be construed to be a sexual advance;
 - e) inappropriate conversation regarding an individual's sexual behaviour;
 - f) unsolicited and/or unwanted requests to engage in sexual activity;
 - g) reprisal or threat of reprisal against an individual for rejecting a sexual solicitation or advance.
3. Bullying refers to repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual where the behaviour is intended to cause harm, fear or distress to another individual in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to the individual's reputation. Bullying often occurs in circumstances where one party endeavors to maintain power and control over another based upon systemic inequalities within a social setting.

Harassment and Bullying Codes of Conduct

The school does not support Harassment and Bullying in any of its schools and / or sites or at all. To this end, the Greater St. Albert Catholic School Division has implemented (and revised) the following Administrative Procedures which will serve as the basis for addressing matters pertaining to Harassment and Bullying:

- a) Student Discipline Framework, Administrative Procedure 350
- b) Harassment Administrative Procedure 460 (Employees)
- c) Harassment Administrative Procedure 358 (Division Students)
- d) Safe and Caring Learning Environments Administrative Procedure 359

- e) Code of Conduct Review to Address Bullying Behaviour Adm Procedure 360
- f) Accommodating & Respecting Gender Identity & Expression AdmProc 361
- g) Use of Technology Administrative Procedure 140
- h) Social Media Administrative Procedure 149

Expectations

1. No action toward another student, regardless of the intent of that action, will or is intended to cause harm, fear, or distress to that student.
2. No action toward another student within the school community will or intend to diminish the student's reputation within the school community.
3. Any action that contributes to a perception of Bullying, whether it occurs during school time, or after school hours, or whether by electronic or other means, will be addressed by the school if it is determined that the actions impact the well-being of the alleged victim within the school community.
4. Any action that humiliates or contributes to diminishing the reputation of a student because of race, religious beliefs, colour, gender identification, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, ancestry, age, place of origin, marital status of parents, source of income of parents, family circumstances, or gender expression, or gender identity of a student.
5. No report by a student that he / or she is being "harassed" or "bullied" will be ignored by a school official. The official will report the incident to the school principal who shall investigate the matter and act in accordance with Harassment Administrative Procedure 358 (Students) as required.
6. In establishing consequences for bullying, teachers and principals will use corrective interventions that consider the context of the circumstance, the behavioural history of the students involved, and the age / stage of development of the student.
7. If in the opinion of the teacher or principal an act of Bullying has occurred, interventions will be applied dedicated to stopping the behaviour in the future, and supporting the victimized student. Those disciplined for their involvement in bullying will be communicated what to "stop" doing, and "start" doing in order to further a safe and caring culture within the school.
8. Incidences of Bullying that adversely impact the safety of individuals or are an affront to the common good of the school community may be addressed through application of applicable administrative procedures and practices, including Harassment Admin Procedures 358 (Division Students) and 460 (Employees).
9. Students will not be discriminated against according to the application that the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms has to the School Board as a Catholic Separate School Division.
10. All actions by students that impact the safety and well-being of students or staff will be addressed through the Student Discipline Framework AP 350 and the Harassment AP 358 (Division Students) as appropriate.
11. The expectation for students in all their school-related interactions that pertain to the School Division is that they:

- A. conduct themselves in a manner which upholds the dignity and worth of all members of the school community;
 - B. be aware of and adhere to their school's code of conduct; and
 - C. be aware that these expectations form the school's and division's standards for creating a safe and caring school.
12. Appropriate interventions and supports will be provided to the student who has engaged in wrongdoing to ensure that the student establishes productive, positive behaviors in the future.

A specific Code of Conduct for Students to support these expectations is as follows:

Neil M Ross School's Expectations:

- Students are expected to respect and respond to the request of another student in terms of how that student requests to be treated.
- No action toward another student within the school community will diminish the student's reputation within the school community.
- Any action that contributes to a perception of bullying, whether it occurs during school time, or after school hours, or whether by electronic or other means, will be addressed by the school if it is determined that the actions impact the wellbeing of the alleged victim within the school community.
- No report by a student that they are being "bullied" will be ignored by a staff member.
- Any form of physical aggression or bullying will not be tolerated and will result in immediate consequences. Silence gives the bully power. Please inform us immediately if you believe your child is experiencing difficulty.
- Students have a responsibility to treat others in our school community so that they will be fully accepted and valued by all other students.
- Justification by the instigator of harmful behaviour to others (ie. I was just joking) does not justify the harmful behaviour done to others.
- Behaviours that are harmful to others, or result in marginalizing others because of who they are, where they have come from, who they like and associate with, and where they live, are considered to be acts of bullying.
- Students have a responsibility to report to an adult within the school, any act that is known to be planned, is about to take place, or has happened by a student or students that would create harm to others.
- No action toward another student, regardless of the intent of that action, will cause harm, fear, or distress to that student.
- No action toward another student within the school community will diminish the student's reputation within the school community.

This code will be reviewed for its effectiveness in meeting Division expectations annually.

Please note that Section 32 of the *Education Act*, specifies the following reminder for parents:

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

- a) act as the primary guide and decision-maker with respect to the child's education,
- b) take an active role in the child's educational success, including assisting the child in complying with section 31,
- c) ensure that the child attends school regularly,
- d) ensure that the parent's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment,
- e) co-operate and collaborate with school staff to support the delivery of supports and services to the child,
- f) encourage, foster and advance collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with teachers, principals, other school staff and professionals providing supports and services in the school, and
- g) engage in the child's school community. The School values your participation within our school community to support the safety, well-being, and success of all our students. Any form of physical aggression or bullying will not be tolerated and will result in immediate consequences. Silence gives the perpetrator power. Please inform us immediately if you believe your child is experiencing difficulty.

STUDENT DIVERSITY GROUPS



Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools is committed to using its LIFE (Lived Inclusion for Everyone) Framework as a guideline for the creation and operation of student groups that are comprehensive in their approach to inclusion and open to the exploration, in a Catholic context, of a variety of issues including bullying, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, gender identity, justice, and respectful relationships and language.

This Framework is a component of the District's Safe and Caring Learning Environment Administrative Procedure, and is the result of a provincial collaboration of Catholic school jurisdictions. Each of our schools may be organizing LIFE Framework / Diversity Groups. The school will keep you informed as these groups are established by placing notices within our ongoing news notifications.

SCHOOL OPERATIONS

Daily Bell Schedule:

8:15am	Staff are available, busses begin to arrive, students wait outside or quietly inside their assigned boot-room as weather permits.
8:23am	First Bell - Students proceed to classrooms
8:27am	Morning Song
8:30am-8:35am	Announcements & Morning Prayer
8:35am-9:53am	Instruction
9:53am-10:13am	Recess
10:13am-12:10pm	Instruction
12:10pm-12:38pm	Lunch recess
12:38pm-1:06pm	Eat Lunch
1:06pm-3:03pm	Instruction
3:03pm-3:08pm	Transition time
3:18pm	Busses depart

STAFF MEETINGS / PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Division-wide PD days are held throughout the year. As all staff will be engaged in Professional Development training and staff meetings, there will be **NO Classes** for students on the following days due to PD.



Professional Development Days:

Sept 20, Oct 11, Nov. 1, Nov. 29, Jan. 30, Feb 6-7(Teacher's Convention) Mar 14, April 11, May 16, June 9.

EARLY DISMISSAL: Feb. 14 *dismissal @11:51 am*

OTHER BREAKS: Sept. 30 (Truth & Reconciliation), Nov 11-15 (Fall Break), Dec 23-Jan 3 (Christmas Break), Mar. 21-28 (Spring Break) Apr. 18-21 Easter

ENTRANCES AND EXITS

For the safety of all, entrances and exits are assigned to specific grades to alleviate congestion and facilitate order during arrival and dismissal times. When the bell rings, staff will let students in at their designated entrances. Outer footwear will be stored on the boot racks at their entrance.

We ask that students always use their designated entrance when arriving and leaving the school. With the exception of students arriving or leaving outside of regular start and end times, we would ask you to use our front entrance to be checked in/out at the office. Please note that all exterior doors are locked during the school day. We have a doorbell at the front entrance for students and parents to utilize when needing to use the front entrance. We also ask that all parents/visitors report to the office upon arrival.

ABSENTEE /LATE REPORTING

If your child will be **late or absent**, we ask that you download the **GSACRD App** and **communicate through the SafeArrival button**. **It will prompt you to register for a free account if you haven't already done so**. This is a very mobile friendly and simple way to communicate your child's absences, appointments or vacation schedules. These absences can be reported in advance and you will receive immediate email confirmation of your submission. Alternatively, you can call their toll free number at 1-844-818-9908 to report an absence using the automated phone system. You will be contacted



if your child is absent without notification. It is important that you keep the office informed of any changes of address, phone numbers and emergency contacts. Students who arrive late are required to check in at the office upon arrival and prior to proceeding to their classroom. If you are taking your child out of school for any reason during the school day, we require that you sign them out at the front office. Office hours are from 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

PARKING Our parking lot at the school is limited and reserved for school staff, substitutes, Treehouse and SIGIS staff. Parking is available on the west side of Woodlands Rd. or in the Church parking lot across from the school. Please do NOT use the reserved spots at the church NOR any of the spots in the condo complex beside the school.

DROPPING OFF OR PICKING UP YOUR CHILD We have numerous busses and we have many students walking to and from school. For the safety of all of our students **please refrain from entering our parking lot between 8:00am – 4:00pm** You may drop off your child at the Willoughby ice rink; a paved pathway leads to the school. You may also use the Church parking lot across the street for student drop-off and pick-up. When crossing the street please ensure that you and your child/ren use the sidewalk and crosswalks. Student patrols are assigned to assist children with the safe crossing of Woodlands Road. As adults, please work with us to set a good example for your children.

COMMUNICATION

Parents are our partners in education and it is important for there to be open and honest communication between home and school. If you wish to express concerns about your child's learning or need clarification of classroom expectations, your first contact is with your child's teacher. Through open communication, concerns can be understood and addressed. For other queries or further assistance please feel free to call the office.

"GET THE SCOOP" This is an opportunity for parents to meet the entire staff as well as meet your child's homeroom teacher. Teachers will provide an overview of the year's program, classroom expectations and provide you with the opportunity to engage in questions. This year our parent orientation will be held on Tuesday **AUG 27 @ 6:00pm**.

PARENT-STUDENT-TEACHER INTERVIEWS Interviews are held in November and March. Scheduled interviews are intended to provide additional information, which support the assessment

information on powerschool. We encourage you **NOT** to wait for interview times should you have any questions or concerns or pertinent information to share about your child's learning needs. Together we will help your child(ren) achieve their potential.

WEEK AT A GLANCE Every Sunday morning you can expect to receive email communication to keep you informed of our regular events happening at the school. We publish our "Week at a Glance" each week along with a short message from the office. We will also use email for any additional communication that may arise during the week. We endeavor to provide as much timely information as possible to our families. Please ensure we have a current email address so we can keep you informed. Our WAAG's are also posted on our website www.nmr.gsacrd.ab.ca/calendar/week-at-a-glance

STUDENT AGENDAS/FRIDAY ENVELOPES Students in Gr 1-3 will be issued a Daily Agenda for daily parent and teacher communication which includes the School Handbook that provides the year calendar and student expectations. Our Kindergarten-Gr 3's will receive communication home either via Friday envelopes or by utilizing the Agenda pouch packet. Grades 4-6 will receive this information to take home in their backpacks. Grades 4-6 can also access Google Classroom or their teacher's website for homework and announcements. Daily communication methods between classroom teachers will be outlined by your child's teacher at our "Get The Scoop Night" (agenda, class website, Google classroom, SeeSaw). **Please note: Any school hard copy mail outs will be sent with the youngest child attending the school.**

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

SCHOOL COUNCIL School council is an excellent way to become involved in the life of NMR. We hope that you will take this opportunity to stay informed, provide input and get to know other parents. Our first meeting will be held on **September 24th** at 7:00pm. **Please watch your email and our WAAG for updates. Agendas for the meetings are sent out the Monday before by email and minutes from the meeting can be found on our website.**

FRIENDS OF NEIL M ROSS SOCIETY This charitable organization has been founded by our parents with the goal to support Neil M Ross by raising funds to enhance learning and extra curricular for our students. We encourage you to volunteer your expertise and support the fundraising endeavours whenever you can. Any funds

raised will be directed towards identified projects, which will benefit all students. Each year, we will inform you of our goals and projects. The AGM is set for Thursday, September 19th @ 7pm at the school. **Please watch your email and our school newsletter for further information regarding meeting dates and times.**

VOLUNTEERS are an extremely valuable resource to our school. Requests for volunteers will be made through email, school newsletters and classroom teachers as needed. Some volunteer positions are required to complete a Criminal Record check and/or Vulnerable Sector Check prior to volunteering. Information and a request letter can be found on our website nmr.gsacrd.ab.ca/parents to avoid associated fees. **VISITORS!** For the safety of students, to adhere to our emergency protocols and to better assist you, we require **all visitors to report to the office to sign in.**

SPECIAL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

WEEKLY ASSEMBLIES To nurture a strong sense of community at Neil M. Ross School, we prioritize coming together as a school family. Every Monday morning, we gather in the gym for a special assembly. During this time, we unite in prayer, sing the national anthem, showcase achievements and talents, and discuss school-wide initiatives and behavioural standards. This assembly serves as a cherished opportunity for us to bond as a community, celebrate our faith, and recognize accomplishments. We extend a warm invitation to parents and guests to join us for this meaningful gathering, which begins at 8:40 a.m. and typically lasts for 30 minutes.

CULTURAL PERFORMANCES In order to complement the Literacy and Fine Arts component of the curriculum, artists are brought in periodically to perform for our students and introduce them to a variety of artistic genres. These may include the arts of drama, dance, music and cultural presentations. The fee charged as part of your child's school registration, offsets the cost of these performances.

CROSS-GRADED ACTIVITIES To further enhance our sense of community, we organize cross-graded leadership activities where students from different classes collaborate, with older students mentoring younger ones. Through these partnerships, students not only recognize and appreciate each other's strengths but also cultivate acceptance of their individual differences as they collaborate.

NEIL M ROSS AWARDS

At our year-end assemblies, we proudly present awards to honor students who have demonstrated excellence in various aspects of school life. These awards include:

Jake Joly Citizenship Award *(one Grade 6 student)*

- kind, considerate, helpful
- positive role model
- shows faith
- community service-in and outside the school
- follows the rules and has initiative
- good ambassador of the school

Neil M Ross Award of Inspiration *(one student, any grade level)*

- an inspiration to others
- positive attitude
- shows determination

Neil M Ross Eagle Award *(Grades 1-6)*

- encourage and recognize student activities that demonstrate social responsibility
- students making a difference in the lives of others
- shows a spirit of humbleness
- compassionate in their daily actions towards others particularly peers
- inspires themselves and others to make a positive difference
- bring out the good in others by their example
- demonstrates courage through their actions
- to stand alone even if by themselves

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES Throughout the year, students will be invited to participate in various activities to utilize their God given gifts and talents. These may include Art Club, Volleyball, Run Wild, Intramurals, Sports Club, Drama Club, Choir, Camera Club, Film Club, Fashion Club, Book Club, and Kindness Club. These activities will be dependent upon student interest as well as voluntary supervision and organization provided by staff and parents.

Field trips are an integral part of the educational programs at NMR. They provide children with unique experiences to enhance the curriculum being taught. Prior to each field trip, parents will be notified of the educational and safety assessments, and asked to provide informed consent for each field trip.

Please note: For each field trip, parents will receive an information letter. Informed consent requires that parents return the **School Copy of the parent/guardian letter with their signature of consent.** Fees for the field trips and

transportation if necessary, will be requested from parents at the beginning of the year.

<https://gsacrd.schoolcashionline.com>

No child will be refused the opportunity to participate in a field trip due to lack of funds. **If your child does not return a signed field trip form he/she will be required to remain at the school for the duration of the trip.**

Lunch & Recess Times at NMR Our students enjoy a reverse recess and lunch time to facilitate the opportunity for maximum play outside. We assign grades K-3 a specific playground each day on a rotational basis to allow students the opportunity to experience our variety of playgrounds. We hire lunchtime supervisors for the duration of the lunchtime allowing staff to have their lunch break. In addition, our grade six leadership students assist with supervision and help to monitor students in the K-3 classrooms.

HEALTHY HUNGER – HOT LUNCH PROGRAM Our weekly school hot lunch program is organized by parent volunteers and coordinated through Healthy Hunger. Orders are to be placed online at www.healthyhunger.ca and will be delivered directly to the class. Please see our agenda calendar or the newsletter for lunch dates.

ALLERGY AWARE

We have several children attending our school who have life threatening allergies to peanut butter or nut products. We require the assistance of ALL parents and students to create a safe environment for all students. Please **Do Not send any items containing peanut butter or nut products in your child's lunch or for classroom treats.** Children with allergies are asked to wear their Epi-Pen on their person at all times and inform the school of allergies to allow us to respond as quickly as possible.



EPI-Pens It is recommended that children with anaphylactic allergies wear their Epi-Pen on them at all times. In the event that they choose to not wear their Epi-Pen, it must be stored in a central location in our main office. All students who require an epi-pen will be required to have an individual care plan completed each year as per Administrative Procedure 313.

TECHNOLOGY / ELECTRONIC DEVICES

At NMR we find several ways to incorporate technology and we strive to provide all students access to Chromebooks & iPads. Kindergarten - Grade 3 students do not need to bring technology to

school. We recommend that Grades 4-6 students have their own robust device to access google drive and google classroom both at school and at home for learning purposes. We do provide technology during the school day for students who are not able to bring their own. Students will utilize their device outside of the school for homework and so it is beneficial for them to have their own, where possible. Other assistive technology devices are used as tools for learning as directed by the teacher. Devices (both personal and school owned) are not to be taken outside for morning or lunch recess. Any electronic device being used inappropriately will be temporarily confiscated. We ask that devices go home each day. The school is not liable for student owned devices that are lost, stolen, damaged or broken. Please be aware that we do teach digital citizenship lessons and promote digital responsibility. We are proud to share that our students have been very successful in taking great care and ownership of school and personal devices.

Cell Phones

Students have access to the office phone to contact parents throughout the day in the event of sickness or emergency. Cellular phones and wireless devices (such as Apple Watches) are an ever-increasing part of our society. However, they can be disruptive and distracting during instructional time. **Cell phones are not permitted in the classroom.** Phone devices may be used before school and after school. As well, for privacy reasons, cell phones with cameras must never be taken into washrooms. If brought to school, cell phones are required to be left in a student locker. A student choosing to not follow this school expectation will have to turn in the device to their teacher and/or administration along with parents being contacted.

Smart Watches

We recognize that some parents will provide their children with smart watches for safety reasons for emergency communication purposes or location tracking. During the school day students are not permitted to use their watch for calling, messaging, texting, surfing the net or taking photos. Smart watches will not need to be turned in to the homeroom teacher except during testing. **Parents are needed to help us enforce this policy by not texting their children and calling or answering their calls during the day.** If a parent needs to contact their child they should phone the school office and the message will be relayed promptly. It is recommended that parents make sure that the watch is set on silent mode during the school day so that there will be no disruptions to the classroom. As with cell phones, a student choosing to not follow this school expectation will have to turn in the device to their teacher and/or administration along with parents being contacted.

BYORD (BRING YOUR OWN ROBUST DEVICE)

At Neil M Ross we are seeing first hand the power of technology to enhance learning for students. The use of technology is allowing students to engage in learning tasks that promote a greater understanding in ways that were previously inconceivable. Today, devices can be personalized for each individual adding special support to individual learning needs. With this in mind, we are developing plans across our school division to encourage students to BYORD. Our education on Digital Citizenship will also continue to be at the forefront as we work to educate our students on responsible and acceptable use.

Technology is promoted in all grades, however BYORD will be strongly promoted and encouraged in our school in Grades 4-6. We will be utilizing classroom Google accounts and student gmail accounts. Staff post study guides, notes, videos, reading tasks, assignments and assessments on their classroom Google accounts as well as through student school gmail accounts. This has worked well for students to have access to their material at home and to assist students to catch up on items they have missed while they are away.

Which is the best device for your child? Products like any iPad, Microsoft Surface, various Android tablets like the Nexus and the Galaxy, netbooks, Chromebooks, and laptops, are adding a lot of choices and confusion. Choosing the right device begins with the question "What tool will best support my child in achieving the learning outcomes that are presented in class?" What might be best for one student might not be best for another. When choosing a device we encourage you to consider one that features the following for best learning results.

- Wireless (NMR provides a free wifi service for students)
- A microphone
- An external keyboard for entering text
- An audio output for earbuds or headphones
- A minimum of 6 hours of use from one battery charge
- Chrome web-browser that will allow access to Google Apps for Education
- A sturdy carrying case that will protect the device
- An integrated camera that takes both still photos and live video
- Ability to run Flash software

SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Emergency Procedures

In order to provide an effective response to any school crisis, the District relies upon its Emergency Response Plan. This Plan works in

conjunction with other local emergency plans, since a school emergency could require the involvement of numerous agencies. The plans created for individual schools, along with the District Plan, are reviewed annually and after an emergency occurs. There is an on-site emergency response team at each school, along with a District-based Emergency Response Team that provides support and aid to schools at time of an emergency. All staff members are regularly trained in emergency protocols and drills are practiced at each school. Throughout the year, schools conduct training drills to help better prepare students and staff for possible emergency situations. These exercises prepare students and staff to act quickly and help to minimize a child's fear during a real emergency. When a school is confronted with an emergency, staff will assess the situation and then decide on a course of action. ***All staff and students and visitors are required to participate in these drills.***

Evacuation

An Evacuation requires all students and staff to leave the school and go to an alternate location. This may mean only going outside and away from the building until it is safe to re-enter the school. (eg. Fire drill) In other cases, students and staff may need to go to an evacuation center. Parents will be informed of the alternate location through the school's Crisis Notification Network. Under some circumstances it may be determined that it is best to dismiss students to their homes and families as expeditiously as possible. Should this be the case, every attempt will be made to alert the emergency contact for each student of the situation and to ensure young students are not left unsupervised.

Lock-Down

Used in response to acts or threats of violence to students and/or staff directly impacting the school. During a Lock-Down all doors in the school are locked. No one is permitted in or out of any area once it has been locked. Students and staff must respond very quickly to a Lock-Down command to get to a safe location before doors are locked. No one, other than law enforcement, is permitted access to the building until the Lockdown is over.

Hold and Secure

Used in response to security threats or criminal activity outside of the school. During a Hold and Secure, all entrance doors to the school are locked, with no one permitted in or out of the building. No one, other than law enforcement, is permitted access to the building until the Hold and Secure has been cleared.

Shelter-in Place

Used during an environmental emergency, such as severe storms, tornado or chemical spills. During a Shelter-in-Place, students and staff retreat to safe zones to seek shelter. This includes having

students or staff who are outdoors come back into the school. Each school's emergency response plan identifies the safest location for its occupants and how to seal a room from hazardous conditions. Students will not be released or dismissed until the situation has been resolved.

Drop-Cover Hold

Method of protecting vital body parts during some natural disasters, and conduct fire drills.

Emergency Closures

Schools are always OPEN. The Superintendent has the authority to close the schools in the event of mechanical failure in the school, unsafe road conditions, blizzards, or threat of major disaster. Neil M. Ross School does not close because of cold weather, however, parents should use discretion when sending young children to school under adverse conditions. Please inform your child that in severe weather they are to wait no longer than ten minutes for their bus. If the bus has not arrived they are to return home.

You will be contacted via the automated notification system through text messaging and email to announce bus cancellations and other delays. In each instance, these announcements will be made the preceding evening or before 6:30 a.m. on the same day that bus services are to be suspended. **Up to date information will always be posted on our division website: www.gsacrd.ab.ca**

FIRST AID & MEDICATIONS

First aid is administered to any child experiencing an injury at school. If the injury warrants, parents will be notified by phone. Head injuries automatically require staff to call a parent. It is therefore extremely important that you provide the school office with current home and emergency phone numbers.

If your child is ill, we would appreciate that you keep them home to prevent the spread of germs and illness and of course notify the school via the GSACRD App-Safe Arrivals.

Please note that our district policy does not allow the staff of Neil M. Ross to administer any prescribed medication without proper consent as per Administrative Procedure 313.

Forms are available at the office for administration of prescribed medication. Two forms must be completed for every prescribed drug to be administered stating the name of the medication, prescription number (if available), Physician's name, dosage, directions for administration, and any possible reactions to be aware of. As per division practice, non-prescription drugs shall not be distributed to any student without filling out the forms.

DRESS EXPECTATIONS Neil M Ross Catholic School has a proud history and a culture that emphasizes faith values, academic excellence, social and athletic success. We believe our dress code is an important part of our school program and also helps prepare students for their future “world of work” with our dress code expectations. To help create optimal learning we encourage students to “dress for work” and we have established the following expectations to minimize distraction and prepare for optimal learning:

- Indoor footwear **must be worn** at all times.
 - Clothes are appropriate for the time of year and climate.
 - Students wearing flip-flops during warmer weather need to ensure they have proper footwear for phys-ed and outdoor recess times.
 - Slogans on all clothing need to be positive and appropriate for the Catholic school setting (i.e. depictions of substance abuse of any kind or derogatory and hurtful sayings are not within the realm of good taste (skulls may be frightening to young children as well.)
 - All items designated as underwear are kept covered.
 - Clothing should be at a length that covers the buttocks, even when sitting.
 - Jewelry and makeup should be limited and not distracting.
- Exceptions to the dress code for special events will be announced as needed. Students dressed inappropriately will be required to change to adhere to our dress code. Parents will be notified if attire is repeatedly inappropriate.

Student Lanyards Prohibited A lanyard is a cord or strap that is used to hold identification, information, keys, or personal possessions. Lanyards that are designed to be worn around the neck are deemed to be potentially dangerous to the safety of students. Monitoring for the effectiveness of lanyards worn around student's necks cannot be appropriately controlled in the school environment. For this reason, **use of a lanyard of any kind that involves placing a cord or strap around the neck area of a student is prohibited.** Students are expected to use other approaches to manage their personal possessions while at school. Lanyards are allowed to be attached on a backpack to attach the students bus pass to their backpack.

BUSSING

The school division will transport students outside of the walk boundary to and from school. Bus applications are available online through your GSACRD school division Bus portal transportation.gsacrd.ab.ca

There is a transportation fee for students in Grade K – 6. Lost bus passes may be replaced for a nominal charge. There is a processing period of up to 4 days to receive the pass. Items that can be transported on the bus are limited in size to 13x13x23 inches.

The following items **cannot** be transported on the bus:

1. Sports equipment such as skateboards, hockey sticks, baseball bats or any other objects that cannot fit into a gym bag.
2. Loose articles such as baseballs, golf balls or marbles must be securely contained in an athletic or book bag.
3. Pets
4. Firearms, lighters or knives.
5. Snow skis or snowboards. Ski programs are considered an extracurricular activity and therefore skis must be transported to and from school by the parent.
6. Musical instruments may not be transported on the bus unless they are smaller than a trumpet, and must be kept on the student's lap.

*****Students may only ride the bus assigned to them and must use their pass each day to scan on and off the bus.*****

Division Transportation Policy

- respect for the authority of the bus driver is crucial in maintaining a safe bus ride
- a student may be suspended from the bus for a specified amount of time should his/her behavior warrant it
- misbehavior will be reported by the driver to the administration of the school
- parents will be contacted by the administration to be made aware of the infraction
- a plan of action will be developed to encourage proper bus behavior
- continued infractions may lead to the suspension of bus privileges.

Division Office Transportation Department - 780-459-7711 ext. 113

OFFICE STAFF CONTACT

Colin Loiselle	Principal	cloiselle@gsacrd.ab.ca
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	Secretary	

Complete staff contact information and links to webpages,
are available on our school website

<https://www.nmr.gsacrd.ab.ca/staff2/staff-directory2>