



**Handbook**  
**2019 – 2020**



Create.

Achieve.

Succeed.

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## **Greetings from the Principal:**

Welcome to The Learning Connection! You have come to the right place if you hope to gain a few more high school credits, need to repeat a course, want to learn in a flexible self-paced environment, or simply wish to have a fresh start.

We are excited for the 2019-20 school year. Our staff is working hard to prepare engaging and rewarding learning experiences for all students. We consider it a privilege to work with students in order to help them be their very best. We believe that every student has a gift to share with the world, and that our role is to assist in unlocking their highest potential.

Our Centres aim to encourage students by promoting and fostering the following learning behaviours:

- Taking positive risks
- Viewing errors as opportunities
- Working to recover from a mistake
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Asking questions
- Collaborating with staff and peers
- Setting goals, planning with a purpose, and tracking progress

If you have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. You can reach me at [kevibiss@gypsd.ca](mailto:kevibiss@gypsd.ca). On behalf of all Learning Connection teachers and support staff, I wish you success and best wishes in your learning journey. Together, let's create, achieve, and succeed!

Sincerely,

Kevin Bissoon

Principal

The Learning Connection

## **Division Vision, Mission, and Beliefs:**

### Vision

Our school division endeavors to provide each student with the opportunity to fulfill their potential and pursue their dreams, so that they can succeed in the global community.

### Mission

We nurture each student's education and well being within an inclusive rural learning community.

### Beliefs

We believe that the parent is the primary advocate of the child and that every individual has the right to a welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and inclusive learning environment. Learning is a shared responsibility between students, parents, schools, and communities, and all students can develop a passion for life-long learning, innovation, and excellence.

## **Division Priorities:**

### **1. Student Learning**

We believe that all students learn best when they believe they can learn and when classrooms and the school environment support their emotional, social, cultural and educational needs.

- Review assessment practices with a focus on academic excellence in every subject
- Integrate technology effectively into the learning environment
- Align learning with a focus on literacy and numeracy
- Offer opportunities for all staff and students to learn about Indigenous culture and perspectives

### **2. Teaching and Leadership Excellence**

We believe that teacher and leadership excellence is foundational to student success.

- Target professional development for instructional leaders around new quality standards
- Promote excellence in teaching practices
- Engage in data-driven conversations to improve learning

### **3. Community Engagement**

We believe that input from the community contributes to sound, intentional, informed and sustainable decision-making that supports our students.

- Host community engagement activities to solicit feedback and provide information on division key initiatives and projects
- Host parent/guardian information nights in each community to share information on division technologies used to communicate between home and school
- Create opportunities for students, staff, and community to contribute input on educational matters that will assist in the board's decision-making processes

### **The Learning Connection Mission Statement:**

Our mission is to create a learning environment where students can develop confidence, citizenship, creativity, intellectual curiosity, and resiliency. Through collaboration with students, families, and community, we foster individualized programming for student success.

### **Educational Direction:**

Collectively, the staff, students, and parents/guardians work hard to make the Learning Connection a positive, enriching educational environment. We strive to keep abreast of new learning innovations and incorporate these into educational programs that will help our students achieve success. We are planning for the future, confident that The Learning Connection will have a continuing and significant role to play in the Grande Yellowhead School Division.

### **Statement of Beliefs:**

The Learning Connection staff believe that student learning is enhanced when we:

- Provide an educational setting which helps students to acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes for independent learning
- Program to meet the individual learning needs and interests of students
- Challenge students to strive for personal excellence
- Expect students to consistently demonstrate responsible citizenship

### **Purpose of this Handbook:**

This handbook has been developed to provide students and parents/guardians with helpful information and educational expectations of The Learning Connection. Our students continue to demonstrate that they are able to meet our academic and behavioural expectations and are challenged to give their best effort at all times. We look forward to students taking full advantage of the many learning opportunities that The Learning Connection offers. Please do not hesitate to contact a member of the administration team if you have any questions or concerns.

**Staff:**

Administrative Team

Kevin Bissoon	Principal
Barbara Shepherd	Assistant Principal
Donna Funk	Administrative Assistant

Teachers

Tina Kozyra	Math/Science Evansburg
Liam McLennan	Humanities Evansburg
Jennifer Albrecht	Humanities Edson
Dwayne Shepherd	Math/Science Edson
Carmelle McPherson	Humanities Hinton
Amanada Yaworski	Math/Science Hinton
Kristen Stockfish	Humanities Jasper
Linda Rowbotham	Humanities Grande Cache

Support Team

Robin Verbeek	Secretary Evansburg
Estellita Maurer	Secretary Edson
Janice Driedger	Secretary Hinton
April Pankiewich	Educational Assistant Hinton

**Hours of Operation:**

Evansburg	Monday to Friday 8:30 – 4:00
Edson	Monday to Friday 8:30 – 4:00
Hinton	Monday to Friday 8:30 – 4:00
Jasper	Monday to Thursday 8:30 – 4:00
Grande Cache	Tuesday to Thursday 8:30 – 4:00

## **Alberta High School Diploma:**

A student must earn at least 100 credits to graduate from high school with an Alberta High School Diploma. Some workplaces or post-secondary institutions may require additional credits and/or specific courses.

Diploma exams are required in English 30-1 and 30-2, Social Studies 30-1 and 30-2, Mathematics 30-1 and 30-2, Biology 30, Chemistry 30, Physics 30, Science 30, Français 30-1 and French Language Arts 30-1. Final marks in these courses represent a blend of school and provincial exam marks. Talk to your teacher for more information about diploma requirements.

## **Alberta High School Diploma Requirements:**

*Earn at least 100 credits by taking required courses and others, which help you, achieve your goals.*

Required Courses:

- English 30-1 or 30-2
- Social Studies 30-1 or 30-2
- Mathematics 20-1 or 20-2 or 20-3
- Science 20 or 24 or Biology 20 or Chemistry 20 or Physics 20\*
- Physical Education 10
- Career and Life Management (CALM)

Earn 10 Credits, in any combination, from:

- Career and Technology Studies (CTS)
- Fine Arts
- Second Languages
- Physical Education 20 and/or 30
- Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) courses
- Knowledge and Employability courses; and

Earn 10 credits in any 30-level course (in addition to English and Social Studies), in any combination from:

- 30-level Mathematics, Science, Fine Arts, Second Languages, CTS, or Physical Education
- 30-level Locally Developed Course (learn more about these course options through your teacher)
- 30-level Work Experience
- 30-level Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP)
- 30-level Knowledge and Employability courses
- Advanced level (3000 series) in CTS courses
- 30-level Green Certificate Specialization courses
- Special Projects 30

\*The Science requirement may also be met with a 10-credit combination of Science 14 and Science 10

### **Graduation Ceremony Requirements:**

In order to participate in Graduation Commencement exercises students must:

- Have at least 90 credits by Spring Break or have the permission of school administration who will base their decision on the student's commitment to their education
- Have paid all school fees

### **Progress Reporting and Parent/Teacher Student Interviews:**

Students receive progress reports at the end of each course they complete and upon request at any other time throughout their course. In addition to these course reports, parents/guardians are encouraged to contact their child's teacher if they have questions or concerns about their child's progress.

Note: diploma exam results will be posted to MyPass in late February and July.

A parent/teacher/student interview may be held at any time during the school day. If this presents a concern, please contact school administration to schedule a pre-arranged time.

### **Administrative Support Staff:**

Students go to The Learning Connection administrative support staff if they want to:

- Indicate a change in address or telephone number
- Pay fees
- Receive assistance for other school related matters

### **Administration Team:**

Students and parents/guardians are always welcome to seek assistance from the school administration team:

- Principal – Kevin Bissoon (kevbiss@gypsd.ca)
- Assistant Principal – Barbara Shepherd (barbshep@gypsd.ca)
- Administrative Assistant – Donna Funk (donnfunk@gypsd.ca)

## **Community Resources and Services:**

### Abuse

- Alberta Health Services Help Line 1-866-332-2322
- Addictions and Mental Health Dial 211
- Child Abuse Hot Line 1-800-387-5437
- Sexual Assault Centre (SACE) 1-866-403-8000
- Kids Help Line 1-800-668-6868

### Counselling Support Services

- Alberta Mental Health Dial 211

### Crisis

- Child Welfare Crisis Unit (24 hr.) Dial 211
- AHS Intake 1-844-817-5009

### Pregnancy

- Planned Parenthood Dial 211
- Pregnancy Counselling Centre Dial 211

### Sexually Transmitted Diseases

- STD/HIV Infoline 1-800-772-2437

### Suicide/Distress

- Distress Line 1-800-668-6868
- Suicide Bereavement Program Dial 211

**Custodial Staff:**

Our custodians do an excellent job of keeping all of our different sites clean and safe. To help them in their work, we ask our students to avoid littering and remove dirty footwear before entering their learning centre.

**Student Services Team:**

All staff members are prepared to provide advice and assistance to students. Students should not hesitate to seek help when it is required. All teachers are available to provide assistance if there are difficulties with program studies or fellow students. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact The Learning Connection for information and assistance.

**Counselling and Guidance:**

All teachers provide a variety of support services. Students and parents/guardians can schedule appointments with their child's teacher to discuss educational, career planning, or personal issues or concerns.

**Student Services:**

## 1. Educational Guidance

- Assist students with personal program planning and course selections, study skills, and exam preparation skills
- Provide up-to-date post-secondary information
- Provide post-secondary scholarship information/application
- Provide financial planning for post-secondary education
- Assesses academic difficulties, offering suggestions and alternative course routes
- Coordinate and support the development of individualized program plans

## 2. Career Guidance

- Assist students in exploring vocational interests, aptitudes, abilities and vocational opportunities
- Provide information on careers and training programs
- Coordinates/plans career and post-secondary fairs to meet the needs of all students
- Assist students in exploring scholarship information, colleges and universities
- Provide and supervise Work Experience placements

## 3. Personal/Social Guidance

- Liaison with parents/guardians, students and external agencies
- Help students deal with personal concerns and problems which interfere with personal wellbeing and school progress

- Refer students to community agencies depending upon student needs
- Consult with parents/guardians regarding family issues
- Monitor students ‘at-risk’
- Provide high school financial assistance information/planning

#### 4. Orientation and Registration

- Student and parent/guardian orientations to The Learning Connection
- High school student orientations to post-secondary institutions

#### **Attendance and Punctuality:**

Attendance and punctuality are two important life skills. We expect students to arrive to their Learning Connection site in accordance to their personalized learning schedule. If a student is going to be away from their site for a prolonged absence, we would appreciate having advance notification. This allows teachers time to gather any information and/or learning materials that would assist the student while they are away.

#### **Attendance:**

Our aim at the Learning Connection is to ensure that every student experiences success and it is our belief that following one’s attendance schedule is crucial for academic success. In order to maintain accurate attendance records, students are expected to ‘sign-in’ and ‘sign-out’ at their site. We encourage parents/guardians to monitor attendance by contacting The Learning Connection.

#### **Cell Phones:**

Although there are many legitimate reasons for students to have a cell phone at school, their unrestricted use can be a distraction to teaching and learning. Please note that the individual teacher determines student cell phone use.

#### **Change of Address and Telephone Numbers:**

Many students experience changes in their initial registration information during the school year. Any changes to telephone numbers, address, emergency contacts, and names should be reported to the site Administrative Assistant. To ensure student safety and communication, accurate student records need to be maintained.

**Child Welfare:**

Teachers have a responsibility, under the Child Welfare Act of Alberta (1985), to report cases of suspected child abuse and neglect to the proper authorities if it is believed that a child is in need of protective services.

**Communication:**

Communication between parents/guardians and school personnel is an important dimension of any school. It is our desire to establish excellent two-way communication. Your support and feedback are of great benefit in our joint effort to provide your child with a sound education. We encourage all parents/guardians to initiate contact with the school at any time with questions, concerns, or suggestions. The most efficient methodology to resolve a potential problem is to have everyone concerned aware of the issue. Please remember, we have the same goal: to provide a quality education for students in a supportive, positive, and safe environment.

**Community Relations and Responsibilities:**

Learning Connection students are expected to maintain good relations with our surrounding neighbours and community. We expect that students do not loiter in, or around, business establishments, nor trespass on or litter private property. Thank you for keeping our sites free of litter and for maintaining a positive image within our community.

**Contraband:**

Contraband items including, but not restricted to, the following items are not permitted on The Learning Connection property: firearms, alcohol, legal, and illegal drugs. In addition, an item is considered contraband if it represents undue exploitation of sex, vulgarity, violence, etc. The Learning Connection has a zero-tolerance policy regarding drugs, alcohol, or any other illegal substance. Students shall not be in possession of, or under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or any other illegal substance in school, on school property, or at any other school sponsored activity. Violation of this policy will result in an appropriate consequence with the possibility of further disciplinary action in accordance with division policy.

**Dress Guidelines:**

Students are expected to conform to appropriate standards of dress as determined by The Learning Connection staff. We ask that students are clean and appropriately covered. Our staff expects that students' dress will not interfere in any way with teaching and learning. It will not be negative toward any group, promote illegal activities, be excessively attention seeking, distracting to others or offensive. Students who choose to disregard these guidelines will be

asked to change or cover up. We anticipate a positive partnership between school and home to ensure that student dress does not distract us from teaching and learning.

### **Early/Extended Leave:**

Students who take an extended leave should give adequate advance notification to their teacher. Students who leave their Outreach Programs prior to final exams will receive a final mark based on their achievement of each course's learning outcomes.

### **Fees:**

The only fee at The Learning Connection is a textbook rental/materials fee of \$75.00. If a student withdraws from school within 30 days of registration and has not successfully completed any course work for credit (and has returned all textbooks) they will receive a full refund. In instances of returned NSF cheques only payment by cash, certified cheque, or money order will be accepted and must include the bank service charge.

### **Textbook Rental Fee:**

Assigned textbooks become the responsibility of the student. If a book is damaged or lost the student will be charged the cost of the book. Any parent/guardian who require special arrangements regarding the payment of the \$75.00 fee should contact the Principal.

### **Homework:**

Research on improved student achievement clearly shows that students who do homework on a regular basis achieve better academic results. Research also indicates that student achievement increases when parents/guardians provide support by:

- Establishing a place free of distractions to concentrate on homework
- Helping to prepare a clear and systematic homework schedule
- Checking to ensure that the required homework is complete
- Contacting your child's teacher with any concerns

It is virtually impossible to have "no homework today" because a variety of activities are included as homework. Some of these activities are:

- Reading books, newspapers, magazines, and blogs
- Reviewing modules to reinforce major concepts learned at school
- Researching for long-term projects

- Studying for quizzes and exams
- Practicing new skills and processes
- Completing module work

We expect all students to accept responsibility for completing their modules and assignments in a timely manner. We also expect students to take pride in their completed work (quality, neatness, and timeliness).

### **The Learning Connection Property:**

Students are expected to treat The Learning Connection premises with a strong sense of school pride. Accepting this responsibility will help to maintain a clean, pleasant, and healthy environment. Any damage, accidental or intentional, should be reported to school staff. Depending on the circumstances of the damage the student may be liable for such damage.

### **Personal Property:**

Students are responsible for all personal property. Money and other valuables found on The Learning Connection premises are to be turned into the staff. Unclaimed articles will be forwarded to a charitable organization.

### **Physical Affection:**

Excessively overt displays of personal physical affection are not acceptable forms of public behaviour within an educational environment. Students are asked to exercise discretion while at The Learning Connection.

### **Planned Activities During School Hours (Celebrations, Events, etc.):**

All co-curricular and social events, which have been scheduled by The Learning Connection, during school hours, are designed to enhance the learning culture for our students. As co-curricular activities, they are a part of our programming for students.

### **Student Names – Custody Information:**

In some situations, if special agreements or restrictions exist concerning child custody, please notify the office of any visitation prior to the day for which they are scheduled.

**Student Records:**

Student records of attendance, achievement, program special services, promotion, and vital statistics are kept and maintained by the school. These records are maintained in the strictest confidence to respect the worth and dignity of each student. Parents/Guardians of students under the age of 18 have a right to be informed as to the content of the educational record and receive an interpretation of such records by qualified school staff. Student surnames may be changed on a student record only if the parent or guardian present evidence to the school that the name has been changed legally.

**Technology Code of Conduct:**

The following code of conduct is intended to help students and parents/guardians of The Learning Connection understand the appropriate and inappropriate uses of the internet, e-mail, and the school network:

- The person in whose name the account is issued is responsible, at all times, for the proper use of that account.
- Our computer system is intended for the educational use of all our students and is available to support learning and enhance instruction.
- It is our policy that all computers will be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner.
- Failure to adhere to policies will result in the revocation of the user's access privilege by the school network administration and may result in other penalties.
- Students receive a copy of the Acceptable Use Policy when they complete the 'online registration' process.

**Transferring Out:**

As soon as you know that you are going to leave The Learning Connection and move to another educational program or school, please inform your teacher and the administrative assistant.

On the last day of attendance:

- All of The Learning Connection property, such as borrowed textbooks, must be returned.
- All debts, which are owed to the school for such things as lost books, have been paid.

**Valuables:**

Students are encouraged to leave valuables at home unless special arrangements have been made with The Learning Connection staff.

**Visitors:**

All visitors to The Learning Connection (including friends of the students and former students) must inform the administrative assistant when they first arrive in the building. Students are requested not to have out of school friends visit the building. To ensure the comfort and safety of our students while The Learning Connection is in regular session, students from neighbouring schools are not permitted to visit The Learning Connection without permission from a teacher or administration. This stipulation includes functions and other activities held throughout the school year.

**SAFETY AND HEALTH****Accidents:**

Any student injured at The Learning Connection or while participating in any sponsored activity must report the injury immediately to staff. First aid will be given to a student injured on the premises. An accident report is filled out, and if the accident is serious, parents/guardians are notified immediately. Every attempt will be made to contact parents/guardians or their designee listed on the registration document. If the injury requires professional attention, an ambulance will be called. In rare instances, when a child must be transported by ambulance to a hospital and parents/guardians cannot be contacted, a staff member will accompany the student until a parent/guardian arrives at the hospital.

**Emergency Building Evacuation:**

Emergency building evacuation in the event of an emergency is practiced during the school year. Students and staff are expected to know the proper exit and route from any place in the building:

**Illness at School:**

Students who become ill during the school day should notify their teacher or administrative assistant. If a student appears to be seriously ill, the parent/guardian will be notified, and the student will be allowed to go home accompanied by the parent emergency contact.

**Medical Conditions:**

Students with severe medical conditions or those who are on prescribed medication, which may affect their performance or safety at school, should notify their teacher or administrative assistant. A confidential record of student medical problems is kept on file with the administrative assistant.

## **STUDENT AWARDS**

### **Alexander Rutherford Scholarships:**

#### Grade 10 (\$400)

Average of 80% or higher in five subjects

- English 10-1, 10-2 or French 10
- At least two of the following:
  - Mathematics 10C or Mathematics 10-3
  - Science 10
  - Social studies 10
  - A language other than the one used above at the grade 10 level
- Any two other subjects at the grade 10 level (1000 series) including the above subjects and courses created by combining any three introductory level C.T.S. modules

#### Grade 11 (\$800)

Average of 80% or higher in five subjects

- English 20-1; 20-2 or French 20
- At least two of the following:
  - Mathematics 20-1; 20-2; or 20-3
  - Science 20
  - Biology 20
  - Chemistry 20
  - Physics 20
  - Social studies 20-1 or 20-2
  - A language other than the one used above at the grade 11 level
- Any two other subjects at the grade 11 level (2000 series) including the above subjects and courses created by combining any three intermediate level C.T.S. modules.

#### Grade 12 (\$1300)

Average of 80% or higher in five subjects

- English 30-1; 30-2 or French 30
- Any four of the following:
  - Mathematics 30-1; Mathematics 30-2; or 30-3
  - Mathematics 31
  - Science 30
  - Biology 30

- Chemistry 30
- Physics 30
- Social studies 30-1 or 30-2
- Grade 12 Language other than the one used above (3000 series)

Notes:

1. French and Français are not the same course, and are not interchangeable.
2. All courses used for scholarship purposes must have a minimum three-credit value.
3. Eligibility is restricted to grades obtained while a **resident of Alberta**.
4. Driver Education, Work Experience, and Special Projects will not be used.