

STONY CREEK PROGRAM



September 2010

Location

Connections for Learning
4300-43 Street
Stony Plain, Alberta
(780) 963-0507

Students have access to a large open playground area for outdoor activities.

Stony Creek Program

Mission Statement

Through a collaborative partnership between students, parents, and staff, Stony Creek provides a safe, trusting learning environment extending family values to foster student growth intellectually, emotionally, socially, culturally and physically.

Vision Statement

Upon completing the Stony Creek Program we envision our students will be life-long learners, compassionate, productive, and contributing citizens, who celebrate their uniqueness and possess a strong moral compass.

Program Overview

The Stony Creek program is an alternative choice for parents to provide an enriched education to their children. The program provides an opportunity for parents and their children to participate in an alternative educational program based upon *Programs of Study* where, under the supervision of a certificated teacher, parents share the responsibilities of program delivery both onsite and at home.

The Stony Creek Program consists of:

- A home education component where a home educator, under the guidance and direction of the certificated teacher and within the Alberta Education *Home School Regulations*, and Parkland School Division (PSD) *Administrative Procedure 220: Alternative Programs* delivers home learning opportunities. Support and assistance are provided to the home educators by the certified teachers through home visits, workshops, and classroom tutorials.
- A school education component where group learning opportunities are provided in a classroom setting by certified teachers two days per week for Grades 1-9. In addition, students in Grades 7-9 attend classes two additional days per month. The instruction of core subjects is shared between teachers and parents in the classroom and at home, and non-core courses are taught at school.

Program History

Parents looking for an alternate to home education and regular school based programs initiated the Stony Creek Program. The first school year was 1995-96 with 18 grade 1-6 students housed at the P.E.R.C. building in Stony Plain. Over time the program grew to include grades 1-7 and a second teacher was added. In 2000, the program expanded to include junior high and another teacher, housed at Muir

Lake Community School. The elementary program changed location to Muir Lake Community School in 2004. The entire grade 1-9 program moved to its present location at Sunrise Centre Building in Stony Plain in 2008. The 2009-10 school year had 72 students enrolled. In 2010-2011, enrollment grew to 82 students and the program was brought under the umbrella of Connections For Learning programming.

Our Shared Values

- **Personal integrity:** We believe the students of Stony Creek will develop personal integrity through the unique delivery and style of the program. Both the collaborative nature of the program and the multi graded, integrated classrooms promote acceptance and tolerance, and help ensure the development of a solid moral compass. To help foster the development of personal integrity, it is expected that the students, staff and parents all demonstrate personal integrity while enrolled in the Stony Creek program.
- **Collaboration:** We believe in the spirit of collaboration. A triangle represents the partnership between staff, students and parents to ensure quality programming for students. This level of collaboration results in a significant sense of ownership and engagement which in turn provides a common sense of responsibility for everyone involved in the program, building a sense of community and successful student learning.
- **Community:** We believe that having the teachers in the home, and having parents in the classroom develops a sense of community and of belonging for the child. This helps foster feelings of security and acceptance, and promotes healthy self esteem. Because of the degree of involvement of parents, a network of support is developed. This results in a “community” based style of education.
- **Excellence in teaching and learning:** We believe that children should be expected to work to their potential and strive to achieve their personal best in their work through personalized learning opportunities and programming. Each child’s achievements and personal successes are celebrated.
- **Fostering an awareness of human rights and development of global citizenship:** The children are involved yearly with a social justice project. The collaborative nature of the program offers increased opportunity for the children to become involved on a more personal level.
- **Creating a consistent and familiar learning environment:** We believe in providing a learning environment which is consistent and familiar over the years, which encourages the students to develop a healthy self esteem and their natural curiosity. They then feel comfortable to take risks in their learning so they may become life-long learners and critical thinkers.
- **Promoting mentoring through multi-level classrooms:** We believe in multi-graded classrooms to promote the mentoring of younger students by the older students. We believe that having multi-graded classrooms fosters a personal responsibility and respect of both the younger and older students. It also provides ample opportunity for cross-graded learning.
- **Fostering self-directed learning through active participation:** Each child should be and is responsible for his own learning and is encouraged to explore learning in areas of personal interest.

- **Ongoing information about student progress:** The close collaborative relationship between teachers and parents provides ongoing and in-depth information about student progress. Comprehensive reporting is enhanced through this relationship, resulting in parents having a greater understanding of the student's strengths and weaknesses and facilitates greater support for the home program. The collaboration of the teachers, parents, students and make this process more successful for everyone.

Schedule

- School days are Tuesday & Thursday for grades 1 through 9. Grades 7, 8 & 9 alternate Mondays as well.
- Classes: 8:45 - 3:10 p.m.
- Home visits occur Monday, Wednesday and Friday for elementary. There are Grade 7, 8 & 9 tutorials in the classroom on Wednesdays.
- The teachers are reached by telephone between 8:00am and 3:30 pm Monday through Friday.

Program Components

Home Component: Through the home component, under the supervision of a certificated teacher, parents are responsible for the instruction of English Language Arts, Mathematics, part of the Health and Information and Communication Technology programs for grades 1-6. Mathematics and a second language (if parents choose) are taught at home for grades 7-9. Curriculum resources are chosen by parents along with the teachers to ensure it meets Alberta Education standards. Student assessment is the responsibility of the teacher.

Home Visits: Teachers oversee the home education component, assisting the parents through regularly scheduled home visits and extra meetings as requested by the parents or the teacher.

Multi-Level Classroom: Two days per week, Stony Creek teachers are responsible for science, social studies, physical education, art, part of the health program, and Information and Communication Technology for grades 1-6. In addition, Grades 7-9 also attend two Mondays per month and are also taught language arts, and complimentary courses..

Parents as Co-Educators: At least one-time per month, parents are required to be a part of an educational team in the classroom that includes teachers, parents, students, and support staff. Parents will be given a comprehensive lesson-plan to teach (usually to their own child's class), and may also be required to do photocopying and other tasks that assist the teachers. Parents are also required to do lunch-time supervision on the playground.

Field Trips: From time to time, field trips are provided on school days to enhance the learning outcomes.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students:

1. The students demonstrate responsibility for their learning.
2. Students are responsible for participating in goal setting for their learning
3. Students shall conduct themselves in the following manner:
 - a. Be diligent in pursuing their studies
 - b. Attend school regularly and punctually
 - c. Cooperate fully with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services
 - d. Comply with the rules of the school
 - e. Account to the student's teachers for their conduct
 - f. Respect the rights of others

Teachers:

1. It is essential that teachers in the Stony Creek program be philosophically aligned with the program, and the hiring processes should ensure that teacher candidates have a full understanding of the nature of the program and the expectations placed on its staff.
2. The teachers are expected to be able to communicate the mission, vision and philosophy of the program and be comfortable working within that philosophy. Teachers must be able to work well with parents and the Stony Creek Advisory Committee, and work in consultation with staff in the program.
3. They must participate in the implementation and development of initiatives to help the program grow and succeed.
4. Some specific responsibilities include: being welcome and open to parent participation in an active and advisory role, completing home visits to each of their students approximately once a month, and being accepting of the partnership between parent, school and student for the educational benefit of the student.
5. Due to the unique collaborative nature of Stony Creek Program the teachers will make home visits to each family in the program on a monthly basis. These visits will allow the teacher to work on an individual basis with their students and offer advice and guidance to the parents in any areas of curriculum or testing. The parent will also use this time to share the student's progress and to provide the teacher with grades and progress for the subjects done at home.
6. The teacher is responsible for guidance, support and assessment and reporting through regular home visits, workshops, written communication, email and telephone contact.

Principal:

1. Supports the mission, vision, and values of the Stony Creek Program. He must have a clear vision of the program through provision of administrative services, including (but not limited to) budget management and supervision of the teachers and act as liaison between the School Board and the program.
2. Must be able to communicate the mission, vision and values to others and to turn the vision into

action plans.

3. Will promote and make decisions, with the advice of the advisory board, that are the best for the program.
4. Must publicize and facilitate interest in the program.
5. Must maintain a cooperative and harmonious environment in the school and among various programs in the school. Some strategies to achieve this include: ensuring representation from all programs on the school Committee, encouraging students from all programs to interact via assemblies, teams, intramurals, etc. and having staff meet and work together to exchange information and ideas.
6. Could establish or join a network among Principals of other schools with alternative programs to share ideas, strategies and resources.
7. Ensure that the teaching in the program meets the standards outlined in the *Teaching Quality Standards*.

Parents:

1. The parents play the primary teaching role for the home-based component of the program and work collaboratively with the teacher who is responsible for guidance, support, assessment and reporting through regular home visits, workshops, written communication, email and telephone contact.
2. Parents are responsible for arranging transportation for their child/children to the school on the two days the program occurs in the classroom. Transportation through Parkland School Division may be available.
3. At least one-time per month, parents are required to deliver an educational lesson. Parents will be given a comprehensive lesson-plan to teach (usually to their own child's class), and may also be required to do photocopying and other tasks that assist the teachers.
4. Parents are also required to do lunch-time supervision on the playground.
5. Parents are required to submit education plans that identify the educational objectives, resources used, and methods of assessment for the home based component of the program, by October 15.
6. Students in grade 3, grade 6 and grade 9 are expected to write the Provincial Achievement Tests in June and all students write standardized tests for language arts and mathematics in May and June.
7. Parents are expected to attend any general meetings and to elect the executive of the Parent Advisory Committee.

Parent Advisory Committee

Purpose

The Parent Advisory Committee will provide information, respond to questions and advise the Principal and teachers on the operations of the Stony Creek Program.

Membership

All parents or legal guardians of students enrolled in the Stony Creek Program are members of the Parent Advisory Committee. Executive members of the Committee have voting rights.

General Meetings

The first General Meeting of the year will be an organizational meeting and shall be held annually in September at which time all executive members will be elected or acclaimed. Other general meetings may be called if deemed necessary.

Executive

The executive may consist of the following officers and which may be shared positions:

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Secretary
- Field Trip Coordinator
- Roster Coordinator

In addition, the Advisory Committee also consists of:

- Principal
- Assistant Principal
- Teacher(s)
- Forest Green School Committee Representative
- Elected Members-at-Large (up to 9)

Duties of Elected Members

All elected members are expected to regularly attend meetings.

Chair:

- Call the organizational meeting, monthly meetings, special meetings and general meetings
- In collaboration with the Principal, set agendas for all meetings. Agendas will be shared with all committee members the week of the meetings.
- Chair meetings
- Represent Stony Creek program to third parties
- Handle the business of the committee
- The chairperson must have had a student in the program during the previous year.

Vice Chair:

- Take over duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair

Secretary:

- Record and maintain an accurate record of meetings
- Forward minutes of the meetings to the Principal
- Process correspondence as necessary

Field Trip Coordinators (3 maximum):

- Assist staff planning student field trip events

Roster Coordinator:

- Prepare a parent roster for classroom instruction

Members at Large (9 maximum):

- Members-at-large are to take an active role in planning or directly assisting with events.

Forest Green School Member-at-Large

- Parent representatives from the Parent Advisory Committee will attend Forest Green School Council meetings.

Voting

All the above listed Executive members shall have a vote at regular monthly meetings or other meetings called by the Chair.

Vacant Positions

Executive positions not filled at the September General Meeting may be filled by nomination and elected by the Executive Committee.

Executive positions that become vacant due to resignation of an elected member may be filled at the discretion of the Executive.

Quorum

A quorum shall consist of at least 50% of voting members. In the event of a tie, the chair is responsible for casting a vote to break the tie.

Sub-committees may from time to time be struck by the executive. Sub-committees will have a set purpose, time line and will report to Committee on a regular basis. The committee should have a chair or an appointed leader.

Representation

Parents are welcome at any Committee meetings. Motions must be placed through the Executive. Voting is limited to elected members.

Program Changes

As an advisory body to the Principal, the PAC may make recommended program changes to the Principal as follows:

1. Any member can suggest to the Executive the need for a change on a certain issue.
2. At the discretion of the Executive, a committee may be struck to review suggested changes.
3. Proposed changes will be submitted to Executive for editing approval.
4. Executive will take a recommended changes to next Annual General Meeting for approval by members.
5. The Executive, on behalf of the membership will make recommendations to the Principal for final approval and final consideration.

Program Procedures for the Stony Creek Program

The parents of the Stony Creek Program value the working relationship with the Board of Trustees and will continue to strive to foster a trusting and effective relationship in the years to come."For this reason we enter this agreement in a spirit of trust and a desire for this relationship to be. Both parties will endeavor to work with integrity to build and respect the Spirit of the program.

1. Definitions

Stony Creek is a collaborative union between parents and staff where in partnership, Stony Creek provides a safe, trusting learning environment extending family values to foster student growth intellectually, emotionally, socially, culturally and physically. Please see Appendix A for our Educational Philosophy.

2. Alternative Program

In accordance with section 21 of the School Act R.S.A, 2000, c. S-3, provincial *Alternative Program Regulation*, and the PSD *Administrative Procedure 220: Alternative Programs*, and subject to the terms of this agreement, the board has established a grade 1 to grade 9 programs of studies. Such program shall be called the Stony Creek Alternative Program. The Alternative Program will be under the governance of the Board.

3. Parent Advisory Committee

The Parent Advisory Committee (hereto will be referred as PAC) structure is taken from the School Committees Handbook, Alberta Education based on its recommendation for the structure and operation of a School Committee, although the name has remained PAC. The model of the current Committee is termed a Representative model.

3.1 The advisory role of the PAC in ensuring that the philosophy of collaborative education of the Stony Creek Program is recognized and supported by the Board as an important and legitimate role.

3.2 The Board acknowledges the importance of the role of the PAC in helping ensure the integrity and intent of the Stony Creek Program are maintained. The PAC will exercise leadership in the following ways:

- a. Provide advice to the Principal about the school's program and operations.
- b. Ensure regular communications between staff, parents and the Board in order to foster cooperation.
- c. Provide support to teachers and administrators as necessary to support programming.
- d. The Principal will work with the PAC and teachers in developing an alternative program monitoring plan for Stony Creek Program including both academic and non-academic progress.

4. Admissions

- 4.1 The Stony Creek Program is open to all students, providing their educational needs and the objectives of the program can be met, given the space and resources available and time commitment from families.
- 4.2 Priority will be given to siblings of registered students.
- 4.3 Parents enrolled in this program must be in agreement with the Program Philosophy and Parent Commitments.

5. Parent Commitments

- 5.1 In keeping with the philosophy of collaborative education, there is a component of home education taught under the supervision of the certificated teachers. Even though the choice of resources used at home is under the discretion of the parent in collaboration with the teacher, Alberta *Programs of Study* must be met and reported by the teacher.
- 5.2 A classroom commitment of approximately one day a month per family is mandatory. At the start of every year a Roster Schedule will be given to the parents.
 - a. Parents are responsible for making alternate arrangements if they are unable to fulfill their commitment and informing the teacher of any changes.
 - b. The parent will be given a comprehensive lesson plan at the start of their roster day. The parent may also be asked to do photo copying, supervising young readers and lunch time supervision.
 - c. In keeping with the Board's policy of "Fostering Positive Student Development", discipline issues are approached with a positive outcome being desired. For procedures concerning Discipline please see appendix C.

6. Opening exercises may include:

- 6.1 "O Canada"
- 6.2 The Lord's Prayer
- 6.3 In respect for and recognition of other beliefs, participation is optional.

7. Fees and Reimbursements

- 7.1 The Board shall set fees as required in accordance with the School Act or the Board's policy and procedures.

8. Complimentary Course Program for Junior High Students

8.1 Stony Creek Program believes in encouraging lifelong learning skills through the exploration of various career choices.

8.2 The teacher will be instrumental in choosing and arranging school time for these activities. Members of the community at large will be invited to share their skills. There may be a small charge decided by the Principal and teacher, and agreed upon by the PAC.

8.3 The Administrative Procedure 260 Offsite Activities will be adhered to in all field trips and activities.

9. Conflict Resolution

9.1 When parents have a concern, they are encouraged to meet with the Principal or teacher (as appropriate).

9.2 When faced with a disagreement unable to be resolved, either party has the right to seek mediation. Parents are able to call Central Office personnel for assistance.

10. Curriculum Reimbursement

Stony Creek believes that a financial sum needs to be reimbursed to parents on an annual basis for purchase of materials for the home portion of the program.

The per pupil amount shall be set annually. No student withdrawn prior to October 1 of the school year shall receive any reimbursement.

Parents would purchase items and submit receipts to the teacher who would then forward the receipts for office staff to process.

Items or services purchased shall be directly related to the home portion of the program.

To avoid a draw on the program, to limit exposure to those starting and leaving and to recognize need for expenditures early in the program, the following payment schedule is in effect.

October 1-December 31	75% of the amount
January 1-June 30	25% of the amount

Submissions for the entire amount may be made early, however, payout will be according to the schedule.

It is understood that items can only be processed on school work days.

Persons accepted into the program after September 30 of any school year shall receive a maximum of 25% of the set reimbursement.

The cutoff date for the submission of receipts for rebate is June 1 of the current school year.

All payouts are at the discretion of the administrator.

Appendix A: Educational Philosophy

We believe Stony Creek provides a unique learning partnership and environment bringing the expertise, experience, and efforts of educators, parents, students, and diverse communities together. In these settings, students will prepare to be responsible, active, and respectful 21st century citizens. We believe within this collaborative framework, the cognitive, affective, social, and physical needs of each child are identified and met helping them grow into critical, compassionate, and socially aware members of an increasingly diverse global world.

We believe the voice of children is expressed and heard both directly and indirectly. Parents, as the first and most natural caregivers of their children, speak for them and through them providing welcome insights into learning needs and gifts. This indirect voice provides a consistent and sustainably safe environment for children to gain their voice. We believe as the voices of children emerge and they feel more able to express their needs and gifts, they do increasingly direct learning, individually and collectively, through respectful dialogue acknowledging their time and presence as learners. We believe these critical conversations accept divergent views and beliefs, and an increasing willingness to embrace diversity within the classroom, school, communities, and the broader world. We believe students are affirmed as experts, in their own right, as they bring experiences and knowledge to individual and collective learning. They are asked to share their expertise with parents, other students, and educators in curricular areas, emerging technologies, and about their learning.

We believe parents are active members of the Stony Creek culture and their voices, as experts, are welcomed while their contributions as leaders, in the learning of all children, are acknowledged. Parental wisdom and moral values flourish as they meaningfully connect to the learning of children, other families and educators by sharing resources, knowledge, and community connections. We believe parents accept personal and shared responsibilities as lifelong learners. Through welcoming educators into their homes and learning together, they are able to model cooperation, community, and collaboration for students. This affords children a remarkable learning experience based on adult interactions. We believe parents commit to active, positive, and emerging roles in the learning of all Stony Creek members.

We believe staff members embrace the cooperative nature of Stony Creek by welcoming parents and students to in meaningful ways. Each child is respected and valued as an individual learner contributing to everyone's learning and each family is recognized as an important contributor to the learning of every member of Stony Creek. We believe at the heart of teaching and leading is the pursuit of meaningful life-long learning. This learning is enhanced through conversations with other professionals, parents, students, and members of the community. We believe our educators have the highest expectations of themselves before asking the same of those around them in Stony Creek.

These beliefs build a caring, comforting, challenging environment which creates choice and boundaries for each person entering Stony Creek.

Appendix B: Staffing

To protect the integrity of the Stony Creek Program and to ensure the greatest success for students within the program, it is essential that staff working within the program support its philosophy, foundations and values. Given the unique relationships developed between home and school and the level of involvement that teachers have in the homes of the Stony Creek families, parents have a keen interest in having input into the selection of staff. The following guidelines are provided to support the opportunity for parental input and to facilitate effective communication.

1. It is imperative to consult with key stakeholders of the Stony Creek program, including students, parents, along with the parent advisory committee to identify skills, abilities and attributes for staff working in our specialized programs. In conjunction with the School Principal (or designate) and through the Parent Advisory Committee, parents will have the opportunity
 - a. To assist in the preparation of a candidate profile which best describes the characteristics of a desirable teacher.
 - b. To help construct questions that may be used in the interview process.
 - c. To create question responses that they would find most desirable.
2. The Division is the employer and retains full responsibility and control for staff hiring. The hiring recommendation and final selection is the responsibility of the Principal as approved by the Human Resources Department.
3. All members on selection panels for Parkland School Division must be Division employees.
4. The Principal is responsible for the supervision and evaluation of teachers in accordance with Division Policies and Administrative Procedures.
5. When possible, parents will be provided with as much notice as possible when changes in staffing are necessary.

Appendix C: Student Conduct

In keeping with Parkland School Division 70 administrative guidelines of “Fostering positive character development in students”, discipline issues are approached with a positive outcome being the desired outcome.

Classroom and school rules will be established early in the school year by classroom teachers with student input. These rules will be posted and communicated to parents.

Classroom teachers shall determine and administer consequences for misconduct.

As parent helpers are involved on a regular basis in assisting students, the following procedure is recommended as a method to handle minor cases of misconduct:

- Request the student(s) come to you and privately ask “Why did I ask you to come here?”
- Listen actively to the student’s response without interrupting
- Ask what he/she could have done differently to make this a positive situation
- Ask students to act upon their response. Safety, courtesy, care and respect for self and others should be a part of the response.
- If the student is overly emotional, defiant, or otherwise unresponsive to the supervisor’s request, a teacher must be notified immediately. Do not, as a supervisor, leave the area if you feel safety of others may be compromised. Send another person with specific instructions to get help.

Continued, persistent misconduct by a student shall be dealt with through a progressive discipline process of consequences as outlined by Parkland School Division *Administrative Procedures 350 Developing and Maintaining a Healthy School Environment*.

Flagrant disregard of school conduct policy or excessive disrespect of others may lead to immediate action at the discretion of school administration as per Parkland School Division #70.