



École Okotoks Junior High School
"It's A Great Day To Be An Ocelot!"

100 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE
1912 - 2012

Parent/Student Handbook

**Where, each learner, entrusted to our
care, has unique gifts and abilities. It is
our mission to find out what these
are....explore them...develop
them...and celebrate them!**

Foothills School Division #38

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Welcome to École Okotoks Junior High School!



IN PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

École Okotoks Junior High School has been providing excellent educational opportunities for students for the past 100 years. ÉOJHS strives to offer students the benefit of a well-rounded, enjoyable and rewarding junior high school experience; the result of which is a successful period in our students' lives. This allows them to grow academically, physically, and socially. For the 2012-2013 school year, we will have approximately 560 students enrolled in grades 7 through 9.

It is important to us that parents and students see themselves as valued, contributing members of our school community. We welcome their involvement and encourage open, ongoing communication between home and school. We would be happy to discuss any aspect of your child's school career with you at any time. We hope you find the following information helpful and please call if you have any questions.

ÉCOLE OKOTOKS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL

The School Council meets once a month (except for December and June) to offer support and advice regarding the operation of our school.

Mission: To support enhanced student learning through commitment and active involvement of parents, staff and community.

Vision: Together we can make great things happen.

THE PAWPRINTS

Our school newsletter will be posted on our school website <http://okotoksjr.fsd38.ab.ca> at the beginning of each month and mailed to those families with no computer access. This newsletter contains information about upcoming events and special days.

PILLARS FOR SUCCESS

The work that is done at ÉOJHS is based upon our THREE PILLARS FOR SUCCESS. They are RESPECT / RESPONSIBILITY / COMMITMENT.

Staff and students are committed to the "Pursuit of Excellence" using these pillars which support learning, behaviour and professional development at ÉOJHS. These pillars are also the foundation for a Pyramid of Interventions which is a "hierarchy of interventions that are implemented to meet the needs of students." (Howell, Patton, Deiotte – 2008)

Tier 1 supports include everything that we do in our classrooms and our school to ensure that students can be successful. They include all aspects of differentiated learning, behaviour management and intervention.

Tier 2 supports continue to include everything that we do in our classrooms in Tier 1 but they also target about 10% to 15% of our students whose academic performance or behaviour lag behind the norm for proficiency in their grade and educational setting.

Tier 3 supports continue to include everything that we do in our classrooms in Tier 1 and Tier 2 and target about 5% to 10% of our students who have insufficient responses to the work that has been done to make them successful in the first two tiers.

ENRICHMENT TIME / INTERVENTIONS

All students will sign up for Enrichment Activities which are non graded, homework free and are intended to bring forth positive engagement in school for the students. Activities are based upon staff ability to “teach” the activity and student requests and interest in the activities provided. Enrichment Activities are based upon a quarter system, each lasting about 2 months.

Within each quarter of Enrichment, there is time allotted for two, 4 week Intervention programs. The Interventions are focused on specific skill enhancement required by students who have been recommended to program. Generally Math, Science, Social and LA Interventions are offered as well as a program for Non Intentional Learners who are capable of doing the work but chose not to do the work, for various reasons.

All students complete A Level Tests three times per year to aid staff in targeting support for their learning. Staff also refer students for Intervention work when needed.

So what does this mean? As an example, let’s say Tommy or Tina (we’ll call them T) sign up for “Cross Stitch!” T will attend Cross Stitch throughout the quarter. Half way through the quarter, T is identified by their teacher as to having troubles with a concept in Science. During the next INTERVENTION interval, T will start going to the Science Intervention where they get targeted help with their Science learning. They have missed nothing in their Enrichment class, there is no homework to get caught up on, etc. . . . when T is done with their Intervention, they go back to Cross Stitch and pick up where they left off.

HOMEWORK

To achieve personal excellence, students should expect to do homework. Parents can be most helpful in reinforcing this by checking on homework. **Staff will be committed to regularly communicate with parents regarding homework, school activities and academic progress.** This can be done via phone calls, e-mails (teacher E-mail addresses are *last name, first initial @fsd38.ab.ca* e.g. *smitht@fsd38.ab.ca*) or **regular postings to individual teacher web pages.** Please check our web for individual teacher sites.

MAPLEWOOD / STUDENT'S ACHIEVE – ONGOING REPORTING

At the beginning of the year you will receive a login and password so that you and your child can go online and check on your child's progress. Assessments of student work are entered on a regular basis so you are encouraged to check on this information in an ongoing manner. If you forget your password or it does not work you can contact Tracy Thorbjornsen to have it reset. thorbjornsent@fsd38.ab.ca.

The Learner Profile for Grade 7 students will be reported out using the Student's Achieve reporting program. Grade 8 and 9 students will have their achievements reported to parents using the Maplewood reporting program.

STUDY HUB

Students can attend Study Hub Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday to work on any additional work that they need to complete. Study Hub runs from 3:15 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. and is staffed by two staff members each day. One day is also staffed by one of the French Immersion teachers. Students have access to many resources including school computers. Students must sign in and sign out of "The Hub". In some instances, students may be required to attend Study Hub, based upon agreements between students, parents and teaching staff.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Athletics: Students compete on school teams in league play and/or drop-in clubs at all three grade levels in the following sports:

September ~ Cross-Country Running, Flag Football (Gr. 7/8), Soccer (Gr. 9)
Sept.- Nov ~ Volleyball, Cheer Team
Dec. - Mar ~ Basketball
March - May ~ Badminton
April - June ~ Track & Field

Clubs/Activities: Intramurals, Peer Support, Student Council, Spring Musical, etc.

PURSES/BACKPACKS/COATS

Purses, backpacks and outdoor jackets are not to be carried to class with students; they should be kept in their lockers.

TELEPHONES/IPODS/MP3 PLAYERS/TABLETS/ETC

There are more cell phones in the world than toothbrushes! Cisco also reports that growth in cell phone ownership will have a compound increase in the Middle East and Africa by 104% and in Asia by 84%. The way we view cell phone, Smart phone and tablet ownership and use in our classrooms is changing exponentially. The way we teach and work with this technology is going to change the way our classes operate. Teaching the etiquette, function and capability of these devices will evolve over time but for now, OJ is going to begin the task of building the "motherboards" (rules) for these new tools in our classrooms.

Technology use at ÉOJHS is designed to improve student learning, moving them from consumer to creator, co-creator and collaborator with the overall goal of allowing students to communicate the understanding of their learning. Rather than just a tool to type notes, surf the web or play games, students will be encouraged to dig deeper and create new learning opportunities for themselves. As the access and affordability of technology improves, it has become more commonplace for students to "BYOD – Bring Your Own Device". When students use their own devices within Foothills School Division, they will have access to the web using a filtered guest wireless system to support their learning. *Parents are reminded that any device with 3G capacity can bypass this system and have unfiltered access to Internet resources.*

We encourage students to use the office phone if they are sick or injured. This ensures that office staff are aware of students that have contacted their parents. If a student has called (texted, Twittered, Facebooked) their parent, it is his/her responsibility to notify his/her homeroom teacher and/or the office staff. Calls can also be made, with teacher/staff approval, from the student phone located in the West Entrance.

- Students are responsible for the safe storage and transport of all electronic devices.
- Cellphone, Smart phone, Tablet or other electronic device usage is **not permitted** during the instructional times of the school day, unless directed by the classroom teacher. Teachers should have very clear rules within their classrooms, for cell phone use and these rules should be posted in the classroom for other staff and Guest Teachers to see.
- Cell phone use **is permitted** in the building before 8:30am, during morning break, at lunchtime and at the end of the school day.

Any student using a cell phone during class time or within the school building, other than the above specified times, will have the cell phone taken away. Parents may be required to meet with the principal prior to the return of the cell phone. MP3 and other music devices may be used before the morning bell, at lunchtime and after homeroom at the end of the day. During the school day, students are asked to only wear one ear bud or headphone so that they can hear announcements or other directions from friends, students and staff. **Individual classroom teachers will decide on the appropriate use for their classrooms.**

We remind students and their families that electronic devices are the property of the student and that the school will not be held responsible for any that are lost or stolen.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

Students are under supervision from 8:15 am until 3:40 pm. Students in the building before or after these hours will not be under the direct supervision of a staff member (unless involved in an extra-curricular activity or working directly with a teacher). It is expected that students arriving at school early or staying late will behave in a respectful, responsible manner.

SCHOOL DANCES

School dances are held periodically throughout the year for the enjoyment of EOJHS students. **Guests are not permitted.** EOJHS students and chaperones are welcome to attend and enjoy the dances. Dance privileges may be suspended for:

- 1. Students who have had their privileges suspended for disciplinary reasons.**
- 2. Students with an inexcusable absence at school anytime during the week of the dance.**

Each homeroom is requested at least one parent chaperone per dance. Any student who will arrive late or will be leaving early at the dance must make advance arrangements.

- 1. School dress code applies at all dances. The year-end dance is semi-formal.**

LOCKERS

All students are required to use a school lock; personal locks are not permitted. Homeroom lockers and Physical Education lockers will be assigned to every student during the first week of school. Students who lose a school lock will be required to pay an additional \$3.00 fee. The fact that you are issued with lockers and locks does not relieve you of personal responsibility for the safekeeping of books or valuable items.

- Lockers are to be kept locked at all times.
- Lock combinations should not be shared with others.
- On the rare occasion when a student has to bring an item of value or a large sum of money, please leave it at the office for safekeeping.
- Identify all personal property by clearly marking it with your name.

School lockers are the property of the Foothills School Division #38 and may be subject to periodic checks by school personnel.

STUDENT SERVICE INFORMATION

Being a teenager can be difficult at times. If you or someone you know is in need of support, here are some numbers you can call:

AADAC Youth Services:	403-297-4664
24 Hour Crisis and Suicide Help Line:	403-266-1605
Teen Line:	403-264-8336
Alberta Mental Health Crisis Line:	1 800-779-1557
Public Health Nurse:	403-335-2600

DRESS CODE

Come to school dressed “ready for work” in a way that will not distract from nor interfere with the learning of self and/or others. **Although some clothes are “in style” or “fashionable” they are not always appropriate in our school.** Please adhere to the following dress code at ÉOJHS:



DRESS CODE

TOPS

- Can be sleeveless but **NO** tank-tops and high enough to cover cleavage
- Muscle/basketball shirts must have a t-shirt with sleeves underneath
- **NO** tube tops, backless tops, spaghetti straps, halter tops or bikini tops

BOTTOMS

- Skirts and shorts must have a **minimum 5 inch inseam**
- Ripped or distressed jeans that are too revealing are not permitted
- Boxers or other underwear must be covered at all times.

OTHER

- Bellies must be covered
- **No** inappropriate slogans, graphics and other decorative items on clothing, including meanings and images, words i.e., FCUK

SCHOOL UNIFORMS

Physical Education: For participation, a school uniform is required. The uniform for students includes rubber soled gym shoes, an École Okotoks Junior High P.E. T-shirt and school gym shorts. Students **may wear their own sweat pants** or can purchase a pair of ÉOJHS sweat pants, which can be purchased in the main office. The Physical Education Department will issue shorts and T-shirts upon payment of fees. New uniforms are \$25.00 for shorts (\$15) and T-shirt (\$10). Used PE clothing is available from the PE Teachers for a reduced fee {shorts (\$10) and T-shirt (\$5)}.

Band: All Grade 7, 8 and 9 Band students must purchase a black ÉOJHS Band shirt for \$25.00 and have black pants or skirt (newer black jeans that are not faded are fine) as well as black socks and shoes.

Choral: All Choir members are required to purchase (\$25.00) an ÉOJHS choral shirt which they must wear for all performances. Students must provide for themselves a pair of black pants/skirt and black shoes or socks to complete the performance uniform.

STUDENT EVALUATION

At the beginning of the year, teachers will send home a course outline for each of the courses that the students are registered in. This course outline will provide a detailed description of how students will be evaluated in the course. In order to arrive at an accurate assessment of the students' abilities, a wide range of tools will be used (e.g. projects, self-evaluation, assignments, quizzes, performances, observations etc.). All students will write final examinations in the four core subjects (LA, Math, Social Studies, and Science) and some complementary courses. Grade 9 students will write Provincial Achievement Exams in the core subjects in May/June of each school year.

Formal communication with respect to your son/daughter's achievement will be ongoing. Parents and students in Grade 7 are asked to use the Students Achieve / Learner Profile system for ongoing, online information about achievement. Parents and students in Grades 7 & 8 are asked to use the Maplewood Student Information System for ongoing, online, information about achievement and attendance. Please contact the school for your individual access password. Parent/teacher conference dates are published in newsletters and on the website.

ATTENDANCE

*****THE BELL RINGS AT 8:30...GO TO YOUR HOMEROOM*****

REPORTING STUDENT ABSENCES & LATES

All students are expected to be in school and to attend all classes. The school will attempt to contact parents by Synervoice, the ÉOJHS automatic phone system and will E-mail to follow-up on inexcusable student absences on a daily basis. **It is the parent(s') responsibility to confirm with the school whether or not these absences are excusable or inexcusable. The attendance number is 403-938-4426, press 1. Alternatively, you may email us at ojattendance@fsd38.ab.ca and provide the student's name, homeroom and reason for and approximate length of absence/lateness. Any student absences not reported to the office will be recorded by the office as inexcusable.**

Absences/Truancy

- Students will be considered inexcusably absent until such a time as the parents contact the school or the school receives information from home. Inexcused absences will be followed up by the school through the Synervoice automatic phone system and E-mails home and/or to the parent(s') workplace.
- Problems with attendance will result in a two-step process:
 1. Initially a student-parent –teacher conference will determine a plan of action and future consequences.
 2. If the problem persists a student-parent-administrator conference will be held to determine a plan of action and future consequences.
- If the pattern of inexcusable absences/truancy continues, a warning letter will be sent home to the parents indicating that an “absenteeism” problem exists and needs to be attended to.
- If the problem continues, consequences will be determined in accordance with the Alberta School Act and in consultation with the Foothills School Division Attendance Officer.

Leaving School Premises During School Hours

- If students leave the school during class time, they are expected to have their parents' permission (either a note or phone call or E-mail message) and **MUST** sign out at the office.
- If they leave without their parents' permission it will be considered “truancy.”

LUNCH

- ÉOJHS is a closed campus, which means that students are expected to be on the school campus during the lunch period. Grade 7 & 8 students eat their lunch in their homerooms. Grade 9 students eat their food in the Irvine Gym.
- Students who live close to the school (walk to and from home or get picked up by a parent and eat lunch in the 30 minute lunch break) can sign a permission form to go home at lunch to eat. These forms are available from their homeroom teacher and will be kept on file by both the office and the homeroom teacher. This form is intended to support individual students who wish to go home for lunch. It is not intended to allow for students to travel to food retailers (Macs, Rec Centre, Downtown, etc), to their friend's homes or have friends over to their home during the lunch period.

Lates

Students are expected to be at school and in class on time. Lateness causes interruptions within the classroom and loss of valuable teaching/learning time. If a student is late, parents are to send a note with the student, E-mail or call the attendance line 403-938-4426 and press 1; otherwise, they will be registered as inexcusably late.

*****STUDENTS ARE DISMISSED AT 3:15 P.M.*****

Discipline with Dignity

At École Okotoks Junior High School, we believe that “Kids Do Well If They Can”! As part of our Division wide work with Dr. Ross Greene’s approach to dealing with behaviour issues (author of “Lost at School” and the “Explosive Child”) we are integrating more of a collaborative problem solving approach to our discipline model.

We believe that if students have the skills to exhibit adaptive (“good”) behaviour, they wouldn’t be exhibiting challenging behaviour. Challenging behaviour occurs *when the demands of the environment exceed a kid’s capacity to respond adaptively*. That’s because doing well is always preferable to not doing well. We also believe that students who are challenging are acting in this manner because of lagging skills and unsolved problems. Because of this fact, reward and punishment techniques, traditional behaviour interventions, may not be the ideal approach. Solving those problems and teaching behaviour skills which are more appropriate would make perfect sense.

At ÉOJHS we understand that we have a wide variety of students coming from a diverse range of situations and we need to be *responsive to the students as they are*. *This does not mean that we will be* “treating every kid exactly the same” but the end result is to move the students to a common understanding of the way we want all students and staff to be.

Statement of Purpose

- Develop a community of responsible leaders who are empathetic, care and respect themselves, others and our environment;
- Establish a consistent set of behavioural expectations that will promote the development of self-disciplined citizens; and,
- Provide for a safe, positive and stimulating learning environment conducive to academic and social growth.

Code of Conduct

We believe that all students and staff do well if they can. They have the right to learn and work in a safe and caring environment – free from incidents of bullying, aggression and disruptive behaviour.

Our Plan (Student’s behaviours are assessed on the Characteristics of a Learner which includes Confidence, Respect, Leadership, Independence and Work Habits)

We value: **RESPECT, SAFETY, VIGILANCE AND PRAISE.**

- We will demonstrate **RESPECT** by: treating others as they would like to be treated themselves, listening carefully to any person who is speaking, and caring for personal and school property.
- We will demonstrate **SAFETY** by: walking quietly in the hallways, keeping hands, feet and other body parts to ourselves, organizing and picking up our materials, and keeping our space tidy.
- We will demonstrate **VIGILANCE** by: acting as a caring majority in this school community, aiding those who are in need of help, and reporting incidents of unacceptable behavior to a staff member.
- We will demonstrate **PRAISE** by: celebrating our own and other's successes.

Unacceptable Behaviours

Unacceptable behaviors are those that interfere with the values of **RESPECT, SAFETY, VIGILANCE, AND PRAISE**.

Physical Aggression: Pushing, grabbing, hitting, pinching, spitting, tripping, etc.

Disrespect: Defiance towards a staff member, littering, ignoring rules, refusal to cooperate in class, inappropriate hallway/assembly behaviour or language, etc.

Social Alienation: Gossiping, ethnic slurs, exclusion, etc.

Cyberbullying : "Cyberbullying" is when a child, preteen or teen is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen or teen using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. A person may be considered a Cyberbully one moment and may become the victim the next. Students often change roles, going from victim to bully and back again. ÉOJHS may discipline the student for actions taken off-campus if they are intended to have an effect on a student or they adversely affect the safety and well-being of student while in school.

NEW!

Verbal/Written Aggression: Mocking, put-downs, swearing, cyber harassment, name calling, etc.

Intimidation: Threatening others to do something, threatening with a weapon, etc.

Sexual Harassment: Any remarks, gestures, or actions of an unwanted sexual nature.



NOTE!

Communicating about OR spectating at fights or events deemed “Unacceptable”:

Students who participate in unacceptable actions (example: fighting) or encourage unacceptable actions to occur, either by setting up (example: fights) via word of mouth, texting or the internet, as well as those who act as spectators (watching, taking pictures or taking videos) without attempting to gain assistance from adults in the building

Bullying is:

- When a person is the target, over time, of repeated negative actions.
- When one person has more power, so the person being victimized feels that they can't defend themselves.
- When a person, who is the target, may feel embarrassed, hurt, scared, and/or angry.

Procedure

1. All incidents will be documented.
2. For Minor Infractions, it is the responsibility of the “adult in charge” (most often a staff member, although a chaperone may also be given this designation) to intervene and determine what lagging skills or unsolved problems are apparent. The goal is to achieve the clearest possible understanding of a student's concern or perspective on a given unsolved problem. And while kids are usually happy that adults are finally interested in their concerns, it's not always easy for them to provide adults with sufficient information. If this is the case then the “adult in charge” will continue to “drill” for more information with the end result being a collaboratively resolved situation and assignment of consequence(s). If it is not the homeroom teacher who initially intervenes, the subsequent solution and/or consequences will be communicated to the homeroom teacher. (Parent(s) may or may not be notified of Minor Infractions.)
3. For Major Infractions, an administrator will be involved in the process using the methods outlined above. (Parent(s) will be notified.)

Definition of Terms:

Infraction: any inappropriate behaviour that interferes with a person's (student or staff member) safety for self and others.

Consequence: a fair and logical action that addresses the inappropriate behaviour.

Lagging Skills: normally developing and maturing brains master skills automatically but in the case of lagging skills, these skills have not developed automatically

Unsolved Problems: Any problem that is perceived by the student, to be unresolved.

Minor Infractions (list does not include all possible)

Physical Aggression:

Pushing, grabbing, etc.

Disrespect:

Ignoring rules, inappropriate school behavior, language, classroom disruption, late for class, littering, and vandalism.

Social Alienation:

Gossiping, ethnic slurs, exclusion, etc.

Verbal/Written Aggression:

Mocking, put-downs, cyber harassment, name-calling.

Intimidation:

Coercion, threats, etc.

Planning / Spectating

Setting up unacceptable actions (example fights) via word of mouth, texting, internet or viewing, photographing or videoing the same

Possible Consequences

Verbal reminder/conversation
Student removed from situation
Confiscation of property
Conflict Resolution
Student phones home
Parent notified

Off property during non-school hours
Detention/Time-out
Mediation
Loss of Privileges
Note home

Caring Behaviors

Apology
Reflective Assignment
Acts of Social Restitution

Written Reflection
Teaching Opportunity
Project work

Major Infractions (list does not include all possible)

Physical Aggression:	Fighting, etc.
Disrespect:	Defiance, swearing, vandalism, graffiti, theft, etc.
Social Alienation:	Gossip, rumors, etc.
Verbal/Written Aggression:	Threats, etc.
Intimidation:	Coercion, threats, weapons, etc.
Sexual Harassment:	Any act that compromises safety of others or self of a sexual nature.
Illegal Substances:	Possession, use, etc.
Repetitive Minor Infractions:	Three times in a month
Planning / Spectating	Setting up unacceptable actions (example fights) via word of mouth, texting, internet or viewing, photographing or videoing the same

Possible Consequences

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| • Administrative Involvement | * Parents informed |
| • Off property during non-school hours | * In-school Suspension |
| • Out-of-school Suspension | * Police Involvement |
| • Consequences for Minor Infractions | * Loss of technology privileges |

Caring Behaviours

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| • Apology | * Written Reflection |
| • Reflective Assignment | * Teaching Opportunity |
| • Acts of Social Restitution | * Project Work |

Bullying Defined by ÉOJHS Students

We recognize that the types of bullying and the causes of bullying are varied. ÉOJHS students have grouped the types of “Bullying” into three groups:

1. Bullying – These are the bullying behaviours that we recognize as traditional in terms of how people treat each other. (Physical, Verbal, Social / Relational, Aggression, Cyber, Dating Abuse) It is usually abuse that is done repeatedly to a targeted individual or individuals.
2. Bullying Behaviour – These are actions or behaviours that may be mean, hurtful or disrespectful but are not done by an individual on an ongoing basis and it is not targeted at any one individual. The person who displays the “Bullying Behaviour” is usually not considered a bully by their peers nor do they consider themselves as a bully.

3. "Drama" – Students have recently stated that ÉOJHS has low incidents of bullying but that some students involved themselves in ongoing "drama" and label it as bullying. It is attention seeking and disruptive and usually involves the same students throughout the year (best of friends . . . worst of enemies scenario)

School, home and/or environment, individual temperament, and social context are factors that contribute to any bullying problem. Much bullying occurs without knowledge of teachers, and parents, and many victims are reluctant to tell adults of their problems with bullying. Thus, an anti-bullying program must address supervision of students; encouraging students to be involved; asking and listening to them; educating teachers and other staff members on the nature and seriousness of bullying on a student's physical, emotional, social, and academic well-being; training teachers and other staff members to effectively intervene when bullying occurs, providing strong advocacy and meaningful communication.

I have read the École Okotoks Junior High School Student Handbook and I am aware of its contents.

Student Signature _____

Date _____

Parent / Guardian Signature _____

Parents email contact: _____
(please forward a copy of your e-mail address to your homeroom teacher)

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the information contained within this document, please contact Administration . . . we would be happy to discuss 'The OJ Way' with you!