

# G.S. LAKIE MIDDLE SCHOOL

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## STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK



50 Blackfoot Blvd. West  
Lethbridge, AB  
T1K 7N7

Telephone: (403) 327-3465  
Fax: (403) 327-3450  
Website: <http://gslakie.lethsd.ab.ca>

**"HOME OF THE GATORS"**

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE ADMINISTRATION**

The staff of G.S. Lakie Middle School considers itself a partner with you and the community in providing an education to meet the needs of your child for now, as well as in the future. We are committed to your child. Our focus is, and shall always be, what is in the best interest of the students we serve.

We appreciate that children learn in different ways and at varying speeds and this is reflected in the planning, preparation, classroom organization, management and differentiation of instruction used by our professional staff. We are sensitive to the total developmental needs of young adolescents. We emphasize the social and physical well-being, as well as the intellectual development of our students.

We understand that a child must learn responsibility and therefore we provide various opportunities and experiences that enable our students to develop a sense of individual and community responsibility. We set high, and realistic expectations for our students.

We request your support and anticipate a harmonious relationship as, together, we strive towards the development of healthy, happy, responsible, and intelligent citizens. Our entire staff keeps an open-door policy and is most willing to work with you in meeting the needs of your child. Please feel free to schedule an appointment or give us a call if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Mr. Brad Dersch, Principal  
Mrs. Aimee Dewacht, Vice Principal  
Mr. Matthew Brunner, Vice Principal

## **WHAT DO WE BELIEVE AT G.S. LAKIE MIDDLE SCHOOL?**

G.S. Lakie Middle School is a responsive school that promotes high expectations of success. Our school is committed to the understanding that young adolescents are capable of far more than adults often assume. We at G.S. Lakie feel that attaining positive educational and individual success is dependent on the flexibility and quality of the programs provided for young adolescents.

We believe that middle school teachers make conscious choices to work with young adolescents. They will understand the developmental uniqueness of this age demographic and are knowledgeable about the subject matter they teach. We believe that a safe, inviting, and caring school promotes a sense of community and encourages learning. As a result, both students and teachers will engage in positive risk-taking, initiative and the development of relationships.

### **G. S. LAKIE STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- ☐ I have a RIGHT to learn in this school. It is my RESPONSIBILITY to listen to instructions and respect the rights of others to learn as well.
- ☐ I have the RIGHT to hear and be heard. It is my RESPONSIBILITY to not talk while others are listening and to hear what they are saying.
- ☐ I have a RIGHT to be respected in this school. It is my RESPONSIBILITY to not tease, bully or harass other people.
- ☐ I have a RIGHT to be safe in this school. It is my RESPONSIBILITY to not physically harm or threaten anyone else.
- ☐ I have a RIGHT to privacy and my own personal space. It is my RESPONSIBILITY to respect the personal property of others and accept their right to privacy.

### **SCHOOL INFORMATION**

Staff at G.S. Lakie will use many different platforms in our endeavour to communicate upcoming events, special days, parent/teacher interviews, etc. Employing a variety of communication strategies allows us to reach as many people as possible and keep families informed. In addition to this handbook, we also send out a weekly “Gator Gab” newsletter, we run a school website (which includes grade level pages), and maintain social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram). Please watch for regular updates on any, or all, of these platforms!

## **SCHOOL FEES 2023-2024**

The following fees are charged by G.S. Lakie Middle School in accordance with the provisions of Lethbridge School Division Policy.

ALL STUDENTS MUST PAY THE FOLLOWING FEES:

Co-curricular Fee	\$15.00
Options Fees	Varies option to option
Extra-curricular Fees	Varies according to the activity
YEARBOOK IS (OPTIONAL)	\$32.00 each

**School fees need to be paid online.** For safety and efficiency reasons, we would like to reduce the amount of cash & cheques coming into the school. It takes less than 5 minutes to register and is very convenient! To register for School Cash Online, please go to <http://lethbridge.schoolcashonline.com> and select “get started today” to begin the easy set up process. Please contact the school if you have any questions at 403-327-3465.

**NOTE:** A variable fee will be assessed for textbook damage according to guidelines set by the school.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field Trips are an important part of our school year! We strive to come up with field trips that are educational in nature and engaging for students. We also work together to ensure field trips are different from year to year in their time at Lakie. Field trips are not included in school fees and usually carry an additional cost to them. These additional costs will be communicated when necessary with the expectation for them to be paid on SchoolCashOnline PRIOR to the trip. If fees are not paid in advance and special arrangements have not been made, your child will likely not be able to attend.

## **LAKIE SCHOOL COUNCIL INFORMATION**

G.S. Lakie Middle School Council occurs on the last Tuesday of each month. We invite all parents to come out and learn more about our school, how it functions, and our School Division. Please refer to the Gator Gab or our website for specific dates and times of each meeting.

## **DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY**

At G.S. Lakie, we believe the following:

- The goal of discipline is to create a safe, and productive educational environment.
- Discipline is based on the principles of respect, fairness, and consistency.

- Discipline procedures are best facilitated through the cooperative efforts of home and school.
- Discipline procedures must be sensitive to the individual needs of the student and attempt to be both consistent and flexible.

### **DISCIPLINE DELIVERY**

At G.S. Lakie, we believe that each student is an important individual who deserves the best education possible. This means that students must be prepared to adhere to the following expectations:

- ☐ Be diligent in pursuing your studies.
- ☐ Attend school regularly and punctually.
- ☐ Cooperate fully with members of school staff.
- ☐ Respect the rights of others as listed on the previous page.

We believe our students will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with these expectations. When students behave in ways which are contrary to the above expectations, they will be dealt with according to the G.S. Lakie pyramid of intervention protocol. The goal of all disciplinary interventions is to assist students in recognizing their responsibility in the issue and to hopefully learn from them and make better choices in the future. Discipline will be dealt with on the following two levels:

### **CLASSROOM**

Classroom teachers will deal with minor incidents of discipline through discussion, problem solving, parental contact, counselling referral, and/or detentions. In the event behaviour is not corrected, teachers will refer a student to administration. All referrals will be tracked and dealt with according to the situation. This can take place through further discussion, parent contact, detentions, loss of extra-curricular privileges and/or suspensions.

### **MAJOR DISCIPLINE**

Administration will deal directly with any incidents that fall under the following categories:

- ☐ Fighting
- ☐ Bullying, Harassment, Threats
- ☐ Weapons
- ☐ Tobacco and Drugs
- ☐ Truancy

When it is deemed necessary, administration will involve our School Resource Officer, Division Student Engagement Consultant, or other appropriate agencies. Consequences could range from detentions and suspensions to expulsion. G.S. Lakie administration is adamant about keeping the students

and staff on our campus safe. Parents are encouraged to phone the school regarding any safety concerns they may have.

### **FAIR NOTICE OF THREAT/RISK ASSESSMENT**

Our School Division believes in creating safe and caring environments for students and staff. Any incident where a student engages in behaviour which threatens or appears to threaten the safety of others will be investigated. Administrators can implement a Risk Assessment for behaviours that are worrisome including writing or drawings with violent themes; references to or involvement in violent activity at school; or an increased interest in activities that are deemed as dangerous to the safety of others. A Threat Assessment is implemented when a student threatens to kill or injure others, brings a weapon to school, or makes direct verbal or written violent threats to others. The Threat/Risk Assessment regulations are outlined in Policy 504.9 available in the School Division Policy Handbook available at [www.lethsd.ab.ca/download/187467](http://www.lethsd.ab.ca/download/187467).

### **STUDENT DRESS**

G.S. Lakie strives to ensure an environment that is accepting of our diverse community. Therefore, we will not accept students wearing clothing that reinforces marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income or body type or size.

We understand that families and students may have varying levels of comfort with their attire. However, at G.S. Lakie, we also have guidelines in place to ensure consistency in expectations regarding dress:

- Clothing should not contain logos or advertisements for drugs, alcohol, contain messages with sexual innuendo, or appear to promote racism, discrimination or illegal activities.
- Undergarments such as bras, bralettes and underwear should not be worn as the main article of clothing. These items should be worn as undergarments only.
- Tank tops and crop tops that show a small amount of midriff are acceptable and should be made of opaque (non-see through) fabric.
- Shorts should not reveal undergarments due to length or rips in the fabric
- Hats are allowed but we ask that students remove their hoods when inside the building.

Both staff and students are expected to dress in a manner that reflects a place of professionalism and learning. It is our hope that these guidelines will promote a safe environment for all learners at Lakie. Students that choose not to follow these guidelines will be asked to change or cover-up their outfit.

Please reach out to our administration if you or your student need further clarification.

### **Electronic Devices**

Please note that as of spring of 2023, students are not permitted to have personal devices in the classroom under any condition. Students are to either leave them at home or store in their lockers if they wish to have them for lunch hour use. Cell phones and/or devices will be confiscated and returned by the classroom teacher if used during class time. Our device policy can be viewed in its entirety on our website at [Device Policy | G.S. Lakie Middle School \(lethsd.ab.ca\)](https://lethsd.ab.ca/DevicePolicy).

More than anything, we wish to work together with families and students to teach our youth “responsible digital citizenship”. ***We strongly encourage parents/guardians to be aware of what your child is doing on their devices at home.*** What happens on devices at home, that adults are not aware of, often falls on schools to deal with. These situations are highly stressful for all involved and take a great deal of time. They are often avoidable if adults at home monitor usage. Thanks in advance!

## **ATTENDANCE – IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

We believe there is a direct correlation between the habit of regular attendance, and academic achievement. This must be developed by the home, reflecting a joint responsibility of parents and students. It must be supported and reinforced by the school. When attendance is unsatisfactory, appropriate steps will be taken by the school and the parents to remedy problems and to maximize opportunities for success.

### **ENTRY TO THE SCHOOL**

School will start at 8:00 a.m. Monday-Friday. Students from all three grade levels will enter and exit the building through the front main doors. Doors to the school will be unlocked approximately 15 minutes before the first bell. Students arriving any earlier than 7:40 a.m. may have to wait outside until doors open.

Parents wishing to enter the school will be required to either make an appointment or ring the bell outside of the office to request entry to the building. This is in the best interest of our student body in order to keep staff and students safe.

### **SAFE ARRIVAL – ABSENCE REPORTING**

G.S. Lakie uses the “Safe Arrival” reporting system for parents or guardians to report their child’s absence quickly and conveniently. It is a substitution for the

old system where we asked parents to call the school to excuse their child's absence. To register, parents go to <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca> and create an account. The Safe Arrival "app" then needs to be downloaded to your smartphone and you're ready to go! Alternatively, parent/guardians can call the toll free **1-866-879-1041** to report an absence. Please call the office if you require assistance.

### **LEAVING SCHOOL DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

All students leaving the school for any reason during school hours must check out at the main office. We ask parents to please use the Safe Arrival app for all student absences or early departures. In case of illness at school, parents will be contacted, and students sent home; if parents cannot be contacted, students must remain at the school. Appropriate consequences will be assigned to students who leave the school without following the above procedures. Students taking part in scheduled field trips are required to have parental permission if required by Division Policy; teachers will contact parents and provide them with all necessary information.

### **TRANSFERS**

Students who transfer out of G.S. Lakie Middle School during the school year should inform the school at least two days prior to leaving. Detailed instructions regarding check-out procedures will be given to the student at that time. After the student has registered in a new school, G.S. Lakie Middle School will send the student's educational records directly to the school.

### **CHANGES TO REGISTRATION DATA**

During each school year many students experience changes of address, phone number or name. It is important that the school be informed of such changes so the parent can be contacted should an emergency occur or to follow up on attendance.

### **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION**

Any student requiring medication administered to them during the school day needs to have *District Form 504.1.1 – Medication/Personal Care Request and Authorization* completed by a parent/guardian and Physician. The form can be requested through the office. Medication will be administered by a staff member at the times indicated on the form.



# **STUDENT SERVICES**

## **COUNSELLING SERVICES**

Counsellors are assigned special responsibilities for providing personal, social, academic and career counselling for all students. Students who believe they need guidance beyond what is available from teachers may see a counsellor by making an appointment. Besides day-to-day counselling, counsellors meet with students whose achievement is below acceptable standards. In addition, referrals are made to members of the Student Services Department of Lethbridge School Division and other outside agencies when it is deemed necessary to rely upon more specific assistance than what is available in the school. During their final term in grade eight students receive career/scholastic guidance. Considerable attention is paid to programs available at the Chinook High School, Lethbridge Collegiate Institute, Winston Churchill High School, and Victoria Park High School.

Parents are also encouraged to email teachers or phone the school at 403-327-3465 to make inquiries regarding student progress or to request help with a specific problem.

## **OFFICE HOURS**

GS Lakie Middle School office is open Monday – Thursday 8:00 am – 4:00 pm.  
Friday 8:00 am – 1:00 pm.

## **STAFF CONTACTS:**

### **Office Contacts:**

- **Cathy Widmer** [cathy.widmer@lethsd.ab.ca](mailto:cathy.widmer@lethsd.ab.ca)
- **Christine Schooten** [christine.maddaford@lethsd.ab.ca](mailto:christine.maddaford@lethsd.ab.ca)
  - for contacts related to:
    - Attendance (excusing absences and lates; SafeArrival)
    - School Cash Online or Payments

### **Grade Level Administrators:**

- Grade 6 → Aimee Dewacht - [aimee.dewacht@lethsd.ab.ca](mailto:aimee.dewacht@lethsd.ab.ca)
- Grade 7 → Matthew Brunner – [matthew.brunner@lethsd.ab.ca](mailto:matthew.brunner@lethsd.ab.ca)
- Grade 8 → Brad Dersch – [brad.dersch@lethsd.ab.ca](mailto:brad.dersch@lethsd.ab.ca)

### **Counselling and Family Supports:**

- Teacher Counsellor = Fay Coleby - [fay.coleby@lethsd.ab.ca](mailto:fay.coleby@lethsd.ab.ca)
- Family School Liaison Counsellor = Jennifer Melting Tallow  
[jennifer.meltingtallow@lethsd.ab.ca](mailto:jennifer.meltingtallow@lethsd.ab.ca)

**Each person can be reached by calling the school phone number (403) 327-3465 or email.**

## **LOCKS AND LOCKERS**

At the time of registration each student is assigned to a locker with a combination lock. All students MUST use a school issued lock and cannot bring their own from home. This service is provided to all students free of charge on the condition that the school administration reserves the right to search or repossess the locker at any time without notice. Students are cautioned that they should not tell anyone their combination to ensure that no one else can open their locker as well as to prevent the lock from being stolen. Please note: the school is not liable for theft from lockers and we reserve the right to remove any lock from a locker without notice if it is necessary to do so.

Each student is responsible for the care and maintenance of the lock and locker assigned. If the lock is lost or if the lock or locker is damaged by the student, the student must reimburse the school. While damage to lockers is assessed on a case-by-case basis, the usual charge for a lost or broken lock is \$7.00.

Students have locker breaks throughout the day, so they do not have to carry a heavy load of books and other materials with them all day. They will attempt to restrict their trips to their lockers to these breaks as well as the time before homeroom in the morning and at noon.

## **SECURITY IN THE PE CHANGE ROOM**

Students are expected to change out for Physical Education. When they do so they should make sure that they do not leave anything valuable in the change room because other classes may use the change room during their Physical Education period.

Students are encouraged to leave all unnecessary valuables at home.

## **BICYCLES/SCOOTERS**

Many students ride their bicycles/scooters to school. For the convenience of students, bike/scooter racks are provided outside of the school building. Since the school cannot accept responsibility for students' bicycles/scooters, it is essential that **bicycles/scooters are always stored and locked in the bike/scooter rack.**

## **FIRE DRILLS/LOCK DOWN DRILLS**

At least six fire drills are conducted by the school administration each school year. During a fire drill every person in the school is expected to leave the building. Fire drills are very important exercises in ensuring the safety of our students by providing practice in safely exiting the building. Each teacher will inform all classes of proper evacuation routes and procedures early in the school year. Students will also be informed of where they are to go in the event of an emergency that would prevent them from returning to the school building during inclement weather. Students are expected to remain familiar with these routes and procedures and are expected to behave in an orderly manner during all fire drills. Two lock down drills will be conducted each year. Each teacher will inform students of the procedures and expectations prior to a drill.

## **NUTRITION BREAKS**

Nutrition breaks are built into our daily bell schedule (see Bell Schedule). The intention of these breaks is to provide an opportunity for students and staff to eat and drink foods that support good health.

Students will remain at school for lunch. Students will be supervised by teachers and are strongly encouraged to participate in one of the lunch time co-curricular activities or to use the time for quiet study.

Students may bring their own lunch or pre-order from our canteen on SchoolCashOnline. Our canteen provider offers daily specials along with an assortment of sandwiches, pizzas, soup as well as snack items at reasonable prices. Vending machines are also on-site and stocked daily to allow for an opportunity to purchase drinks and snacks at a reasonable price.

## **STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY ON COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE**

G.S Lakie offers students access to a wide array of electronic resources to enhance teaching and learning. These resources include applications residing on the school's local area network as well as those available via the Internet. The purpose of this policy is to clarify student rights and responsibilities as they apply to the use of the G.S. Lakie network and ensure that computers are used in accordance with the Division's educational mission.

### **A. EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE**

The computer network (including wireless access) has been established solely for educational use. This includes classroom activities, and limited high-quality

self-discovery activities. It has not been established as a public access service or a public forum.

G.S. Lakie has the right to place reasonable restrictions on the material you access or post through the computer network. Students are expected to follow the rules set forth in our disciplinary code and the law in their use of the computer on a network system.

## **B. GUIDELINES**

### **Personal Safety**

Be advised that it is potentially dangerous to post personal contact information about yourself or other people. Personal contact information includes your address, telephone, school address, work address, etc.

Do not agree to meet with someone you have met online without your parent's approval. If you receive a message that is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable, report this immediately to a teacher or school administrator.

### **Online Behaviour (Netiquette)**

You are expected to behave in an appropriate and respectful manner while online. Do not use obscene, profane, vulgar, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language nor engage in personal attacks on anyone for any reason.

- ☐ Do not plagiarize nor engage in activities that violate copyrights laws.
- ☐ Do not use any unauthorized instant messaging.
- ☐ System Security and Unauthorized Use
- ☐ You are responsible for your individual account and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use your account. Under no conditions should you provide your password to another person.
- ☐ You may not install or download software (including shareware and freeware) on to network computers at any time.
- ☐ Deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system or destroy data is illegal.

## **C. YOUR RIGHTS**

You should expect only limited privacy in the contents of your personal files on the system. The situation is like the rights you have in the privacy of your locker.

Routine maintenance and monitoring of the computer and network system may lead to discovery that you have violated this Policy, the school's disciplinary code, or the law.

An individual search will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that you have violated this Policy, the school's disciplinary code or the law. The investigation will be reasonable and related to the suspected violation.

Your parents have the right at any time to request to see the contents of your files.

### **Due Process**

The school will cooperate fully with any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the computer and network system.

If the violation also involves a violation of other provisions of the school's disciplinary code, it will be handled in a manner outlined in the school's disciplinary code.

## **STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

At G.S. Lakie Middle School, each grade level will be responsible for determining the particulars of student assessment within their program. We strive to be consistent in the expectations within our teams on our approach to assessment, homework, exams, and progress reports.

Progress is formally reported three times per year. Parent Teacher Interviews are not the only time to address concerns about academic progress. Parents are encouraged to phone or email teachers to discuss student progress at any time.

PowerSchool is used for reporting academic progress throughout the year and parents are STRONGLY encouraged to be actively involved in monitoring this throughout the school year.

### **POWERSCHOOL**

PowerSchool is a progress reporting system for teachers to keep parents/guardians current on their child's academics throughout the school year. Parents simply download the PowerSchool app to their smartphones, get your school and student access code from Cathy in the office and you are ready to go! This system nearly eliminates the need for report cards as progress can be viewed daily!

### **Co-Curricular:**

#### **Athletics, Intramurals, Clubs, Dances and Musicals**

Each year the staff at G.S. Lakie Middle School devotes countless hours outside of school time to the development and supervision of a wide variety of co-curricular activities for the students. Students can vastly enrich their years at G.S. Lakie by becoming involved in the co-curricular program. The school encourages all students to participate in as many activities as they can after taking into consideration homework assignments, community, and home commitments.

## **AFTER-SCHOOL ATHLETICS PROGRAMS**

G.S. Lakie is pleased to offer after-school club programs that allow all interested students the opportunity to participate in our five main sports: cross country, volleyball, basketball, badminton, and track and field.

At the beginning of each of these five seasons, students are encouraged to attend “ID camps” that place athletes on teams that most appropriately fit their level of skill. From these ID camps, athletes will be placed in one of three areas: Rep team; E-Club team; or House-League Developmental teams. The Rep teams compete in the LSAA city league, and are composed primarily of grade 7’s and 8’s. The E-Club teams play an exhibition schedule with other city teams, and are composed primarily of grade 6’s and 7’s. The house-league developmental program is where all other interested athletes will attend to have a mixture of drills and games that will further develop their skills in that respective sport. All participants will be placed into one of these three areas if they attend a sport’s respective ID camp.

All these programs take place after-school and are run by teachers from G.S. Lakie. Some of these programs carry an additional cost to the athlete. This money covers the costs of referees, tournament entries, shirts, equipment, uniforms, etc. Once a student has committed to a program, they are expected to attend all team functions for that season.

## **LUNCH BREAK INTRAMURALS AND CLUBS**

Students will be able to participate in a variety of intramural sports and activities during the nutrition breaks. These will range from fun advisor challenges to 3 on 3 basketball and floor hockey. Students will also have a variety of clubs to choose from which will be advertised on school announcements and weekly Gator Gab. A comprehensive list will be made available on our school website once completed.

## **Special Events**

G. S. Lakie Middle School offers a variety of activities throughout the year which are closed to our students only. Events will be communicated via school announcements, Gator Gab and will be posted on our website. All school-sponsored social activities are carried out under the supervision of the staff and administration. During any social activity sponsored by the school, students are expected to maintain reasonable standards of behaviour and must refrain from the possession or use of drugs and/or alcohol and smoking. Special events may include talent shows, dances, athletic tournaments, grade 8 farewell, special assemblies, concerts, and theme days.

## **FISH Philosophy**

G.S. Lakie has lived by the FISH Philosophy since the inception of our school.

We incorporate the philosophy into as many different areas of the school as possible, and encourage staff, students and families to live by it outside of school as well. The four pillars of the FISH Philosophy are to “Be There”, “Make Their Day”, “Choose Your Attitude” and to “Play”. We feel that living by this mantra makes the world a better place! More information can be found on our website at [FISH Philosophy | G.S. Lakie Middle School \(lethsd.ab.ca\)](https://lethsd.ab.ca/fish-philosophy).