

Greentree Elementary School

Accountability Pillar Survey Parent Handbook



Planting the Seeds for Life.

Dear Grade 4 Parents:

This handbook has been designed to give you additional information about our school. Please feel free to look through this handbook as you work through the Accountability Pillar Survey. The Accountability Pillar Survey is designed to find out how satisfied parents, teachers and students are in the following areas:

- i. Safe and Caring School Environment**
- ii. Access to a Broad Program of Studies**
- iii. Educational Quality**
- iv. Student Preparation for the World of Work**
- v. Building of Citizenship in Students**
- vi. Level of Parental Involvement in Child's Education**
- vii. School Improvement Processes**

Safe and Caring School Environment:

The Accountability Pillar surveys issued by Alberta Education ask the question:

Do you feel students are safe at school, are learning the importance of caring for others, are learning respect for others and are treated fairly in school?

Student perception of our school being a safe and caring place is very important to us all. Greentree Elementary School staff work very hard to ensure there is a strong sense of family in our school. Our goals in ensuring a safe and caring school environment with parents and children are:

- Reducing number of students on playground at lunch by splitting grade level groups: k-2 & 3-6.
- Reducing student/staff ratio for supervision.
- Utilizing community resources for programs such as Roots of Empathy (Gr. 5).
- School-wide virtues program.
- Continue to have students participate in programs that promote a safe and caring environment in our school such as the Take the Time anti-bullying program.
- Utilize strategies from the ATA Safe and Caring School and Dare-to-Care bully-proofing.
- Anti-Bullying Committee consisting of staff, parents and students.
- Teaching social skills and conflict resolution in daily classroom work.
- First-Aid trained staff available.
- Students with medical needs are well documented and communicated to staff.
- Trained peer mediators on playground.
- Grade 4 Recycling program.
- Grade 6 Leadership program (Student Council).
- Buddy Reading Program.
- Participating in service learning projects (Terry Fox Run, Jump Rope for Heart and Hoops for Heart, UNICEF, Operation Christmas Child, involvement with Continuing Care).

- Maintain OH&S component of monthly staff meetings and provide necessary equipment for staff to safely do their jobs (e.g. step ladders, carts for transporting heavy items, etc.).
- Regular practice of school fire and lockdown procedures.

Program of Studies

The Accountability Pillar surveys issued by Alberta Education attempt to encompass the concept of “Program of Studies” through a series of questions such as:

1. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities students have to learn about the following topics at school:

- a. Another Language?**
- b. Art?**
- c. Computers?**
- d. Drama?**
- e. Health?**
- f. Music?**

2. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities students have to participate in physical education at school?

3. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the variety of subjects available to students at school?

Here at Greentree Elementary students are provided a broad range of programming and maintain a high quality of basic education in the following ways:

- Cultural presentations every year.
- Character education program.
- We offer our Grade 6 students 120 minutes of Fine Arts - Band, Drama, and Art - per week.
- We offer our ECS - grade 6 students 60 minutes of music instruction per week.
- We offer our grade 1-5 students 90 minutes of art education per week.
- We offer our students 30 minutes of daily physical education, in addition to the 42 minutes of daily recess time.
- We offer grade 4-6 students lunch time intramurals and after school sports.
- We offer all students swimming lessons and in-line skating.
- We have 60 laptops for classroom use in the instruction of computer use, and as support for other instruction.
- Classrooms have an Activeboard for interactive lessons.

While attending school from kindergarten to grade 6, students' should be provided an opportunity to participate in a variety of course offerings, as well as build memorable experiences at school. Sometimes providing students with support mechanism is also vital to the successful experiences students have at our school. At Greentree Elementary we offer support mechanisms for students in the following ways:

- We have implemented and maintained a “Healthy Breakfast Program” which provides any student in our school with access to quality breakfast foods before class.
- We coordinate services for special needs students with the Big Country Outreach Program
- Health Authorities through dental programming and HB shots.
- Maintain guidance and counseling programs through FCSS & Alberta Health Services
- Provide opportunities for Greentree Elementary Staff to receive professional development in areas that will improve student learning and achievement.
- Speech and Language programming.
- Occupational Therapy programming.
- Program Unit Funding for ECS and Pre-ECS students through Alberta Education.
- Grade 6 transition meetings with Drumheller Valley Secondary School.
- Kindergarten Screening and Orientation Fair

Education Quality

The Accountability Pillar surveys issued by Alberta Education attempt to encompass the concept of “Education Quality” through a series of questions such as:

- 1. Your child clearly understands what he or she is expected to learn at school?**
- 2. Your child finds school work challenging?**
- 3. You child finds school work interesting?**
- 4. Your child is learning what he or she needs to know?**
- 5. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of education your child is receiving at school?**
- 6. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of teaching at your child’s school?**

Greentree Elementary School addresses improvements in education quality in the following ways:

- School-wide participation with AISI Assessment of Learning project using strategies such as stating learning outcomes to students, using prioritized curriculum, and using teacher, peer, and self assessments using criteria and rubrics.
- Continue to look for opportunities to integrate technology into our teaching.
- Continue the optimal utilization of existing technology resources in the school and plan for the addition of additional technological resources that positive influence and enhance student learning.
- Continue our involvement in ongoing relevant Professional Development for Greentree School staff

- Continue to provide enriching educational programs outside of the classroom (Grade 5 Outdoor Education Trip, After-School Sports Program, Inline Skating, Swimming lessons, Local Field Trips, DARE, Junior Achievement)
- Staff will continue with early identification of students with special needs so that appropriate programming and modifications can be made to ensure student success.
- Include support staff in applicable professional development so that they use similar strategies to the teachers when working with students to help with reinforcement of concepts.
- Maintain professional learning opportunities for teachers.
- Reducing teacher to student ratios in classrooms.
- Both full-time and part-time ECS programs taught by certified teachers.
- Teachers continue to be given 4 half days of Professional Learning Community meeting time throughout the year. Teachers spend this time planning and implementing Assessment for Learning, as well as discussing curriculum and pedagogy with their grade partners.
- Early Literacy reading intervention program.
- Grade 3 and 6 teachers analyze Provincial Achievement Test Results Reports. These results reports are then used by teachers to guide their teaching and student learning.
- Ensure that teachers have the necessary resources to successfully implement curriculum in all subject areas.
- Support teachers in their Personal Professional Development Plans.
- Continue to implement the Early Literacy Initiative for grades K – 2.
- Understanding by Design projects for grade 1-6 teachers surrounding inquiry based learning.
- Coordinate services amongst outside agencies for special needs students with in the school.
- Year plans, unit plans and curriculum mapping process ensure that students are being taught the curriculum and are submitted annually to the Principal for review.
- Education Week Open House
- Community Partnerships

The quality of education which students receive at Greentree Elementary School is at a very high standard and all parents are invited to visit the school to observe firsthand the level of education being provided to the students.

Work Preparation

The Accountability Pillar surveys issued by Alberta Education attempt to encompass the concept of “Work Preparation” through the following question:

Are students taught attitudes and behaviors that will make them successful at work when they leave school?

At Greentree Elementary School, we emphasize and encourage appropriate work related attitudes and behaviors in the following methods and expectations:

- Cooperation – developing the ability to work with others.
- Punctuality – developing the ability to be on time and have work completed on time.
- Respect – for each other and for persons in authority (Student Leaders and School Staff).
- Responsibility - taking ownership for their own actions.

- Leadership – providing opportunities for students to develop their leadership skills.
- Appreciation for learning – fostering students’ willingness to learn new things.
- Application of learned skills – providing our students with opportunities to apply the skills they learn.
- Pride in their work – recognizing and showcasing the quality work our students do.
- Correspondence preparation – i.e. letters, emails, special requests, flyers, advertisements, promotional articles, etc.
- Continue with implementation of new technology into classrooms so that students are learning current and applicable skills.
- Continued differentiation of instruction will enable students to learn to the best of their abilities so that they can be contributing members of society.

Citizenship

One area of success, in which we all can agree, is that when a student completes high school, the student should be able to model characteristics of active citizenship. The Accountability Pillar surveys issued by Alberta Education attempt to encompass the concept of citizenship through a series of questions which ask parents how satisfied they are that:

- 1. Students at your child’s school follow the rules.**
- 2. Students at your child’s school help each other they can.**
- 3. Students at your child’s school respect each other.**
- 4. Students at school are you encouraged to try their best.**
- 5. Students are encouraged at your school to be involved in activities that help the community.**

All aspects of what we do impact the shaping of citizenship qualities within our students. The concepts of fair play, helping one another, following the rules and treating others around us with respect are common on the bus, playground, in the gymnasium, hallways, on field trips, in extracurricular activities and especially in our classrooms. Although there are many factors which assist or detract in the building of citizenship in our students, the educational environment is a significant contributor.

Here at Greentree Elementary we teach and model citizenship in the following ways:

- Continue to engage our students in programming that teaches them and reinforces with them the elements of good citizenship (Bully proofing presentations such as Take the Time)
- Provide learning opportunities that help build responsible citizens.
- Recognize and celebrate citizenship activities and accomplishments.
- School / Community / Clean-up
- Guest Speakers (i.e. Lisa Dixon Wells and Dwayne Peace)
- Donating to Charities (Terry Fox Run, UNICEF, Hoops and Jump Rope for Heart, and Operation Christmas Child).
- Recycling Program.
- Student Lead Special Ceremonies (Remembrance Day).

- Annual Christmas Concerts
- Advertising of the citizenship events in our school through our Newsletter, web page and local newspaper.
- Citizenship program.
- Environment Week
- Student Leadership (student council, and student lead clubs)

Parental Involvement

The Accountability Pillar surveys issued by Alberta Education attempt to encompass the concept of “Parental Involvement” through a series of questions such as:

- 1. To what extent are you involved in decisions about your child’s education?**
- 2. To what extent are you involved in decisions at your child’s schools?**
- 3. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your input into decisions at your child’s school is considered?**
- 4. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunity to be involved in decisions about your child’s education?**
- 5. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunity to be involved in decisions at your child’s school?**

Parents are encouraged to be involved in decisions about their children and the school in the following ways:

- Review the annual division and school results reports.
- Review board meetings highlights and provide for public input at board meetings
- Access information on our website or in our monthly newsletter
- Volunteer in the school.
- Attend Parent Teacher Interviews
- IPP or IEPT process (Developing individual program plans for students with special needs)
- Completing surveys such as this Accountability Pillar Survey
- Attend Christmas Concerts, regular or special School Assemblies and Presentations.
- School – parent partnerships (Guest presentations in the classrooms by parents)
- Read and sign student agendas on a daily basis.
- Phoning the school and making appointments when concerns arise to talk to the teaching staff or administration.
- Getting involved in the School Council and attending monthly meetings.
- Sitting on School Council to provide the school with meaningful input on issues surrounding PAT Results, Budget, Staffing, School Improvement Plan and School Policy Development.
- Inform and advocate our unique school needs to Central Office Administration and the School Board.
- Maintain a positive working relationship with School Council.
- Pursue opportunities for our school to collaborate with the community at large (Swimming, Tyrell Museum, Local Field Trips)

- Promote Volunteerism and our School Council through our newsletters, web page and local paper.
- Filling out school-based surveys

School Improvement

The Accountability Pillar surveys issued by Alberta Education attempt to encompass the concept of “School Improvement” through the following question:

In your opinion, has the quality of education that your child experienced at a school improved, stayed the same, or declined in the past three years?

Over the past few years the quality of education at Greentree Elementary School has improved in the following ways:

- Seek stakeholder input into policy development and the planning process at the school division and school levels.
- Communicate funding concerns to stakeholders.
- Lobby the government to maintain inter-departmental partnership.
- Work with the Calgary Regional Learning Consortium to fulfill our staffs professional development needs.
- Communicate AISI best practices to stakeholders.
- Lobby the government on matters that impact the quality of educational services in our classroom.
- Celebrate accomplishments.
- Review the design of school-based funding and decision making.
- Meet once a year with all school councils from GHSD #75.

The pursuit of school improvement will be an aim of the school staff and administration each and every year. As teachers we want to instill in our students a desire to be lifelong learners and we realize that in school we as educators must do the same.

We sincerely hope that this handbook has been a useful tool for you to use as you completed the Accountability Pillar Survey. We appreciate your efforts and your feedback on our school. This feedback is valuable to us as a school community so that we can continue to fine tune our programming to ensure that Greentree Elementary School can continue to “Plant the Seeds for Life.”