



PARKLAND SCHOOL DIVISION

Parkland School Division Christian Program Handbook

Brookwood School: Kindergarten - Grade 4
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Woodhaven Middle School: Grade 5 - Grade 9
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This document of the Parkland School Division is intended for use by School Administrators, Teachers, Parents, Guardians and Students in the Parkland Christian Program

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Table of Contents

Overview	3
Belief Statements	3
Mission Statement	3
Christian Learning Environment	4
Teaching Practice with a Christian Perspective.....	4
Devotions.....	5
Service Opportunities	5
Chapel.....	5
Student Commitment	6
Staff Commitment	6
Guardian Commitment	7
Student Transportation & Fees	7
Frequently Asked Questions	7
Family Commitment	9

1. OVERVIEW

The Parkland School Division (PSD) Christian Program is a program of choice available to all families in Parkland School Division who want their Kindergarten to Grade 9 child(ren) taught in a non-denominational and spiritually nurturing environment.

Students enrolled in the PSD Christian Program learn alongside students enrolled in the mainstream program in a community school. Being non-denominational, the PSD Christian Program does not subscribe to a specific Christian denomination. All programming follows the Alberta Education curriculum, with core subjects being taught from a faith-based perspective, in a learning environment designed to enhance students' understanding of God's love.



Formerly known as the Maranatha Christian Program (MCP), the PSD Christian Program was founded in 1998, beginning at Queen Street School in Spruce Grove. Today, the PSD Christian Program is offered at neighboring schools in Spruce Grove; Brookwood School (Kindergarten - Grade 4) and Woodhaven Middle School (Grade 5 - Grade 9).

Belief Statements

1. We believe the Bible is the inspired, infallible, authoritative Word of God.
(2 Timothy 3:16)
2. We believe that God has revealed himself through creation, Scripture, His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.
(Romans 1:16-17)
3. We believe there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: God the Father, the Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.
(Matthew 28:19)
4. We believe that all individuals, having been created in the image of God, have equal intrinsic worth.
(Psalm 139:14)
5. We believe salvation is a gift from God; coming in the form of his life, death, and resurrection. Only when we believe in Christ as our Lord and Saviour is our salvation assured.
(John 3:16)

Mission Statement

The PSD Christian Program supports Christian spiritual values by involving students in daily prayer, Bible reading, songs, and assemblies with a Biblical perspective. Sustained by Christ's teachings and God's love, students in the program are encouraged to develop commitments to

their families, neighbors, country, and global community, while leading moral, healthy, and productive lives.

2. CHRISTIAN LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

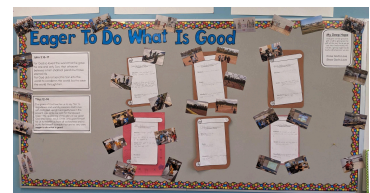
Housed in multi-track public schools, the PSD Christian Program:

- Is non-denominational
- Follows the mandated Alberta Education curriculum
- Has a strong expectation that students strive for excellence
- Focuses on loving God and loving one another, and a commitment to Christ's teachings
- Promotes Biblical viewpoints and responses in discussions, activities, and interactions
- Integrates Christian principles and faith-based perspectives throughout its core courses and daily activities
- Provides opportunities for enrolled students to participate and interact with other students in the school through Music, Physical Education, Career and Technology Foundations, field trips, school celebrations, and extracurricular activities
- Ultimately provides a Christian learning environment that sustains, nurtures, and reinforces faith, by combining teaching practices with a Christian perspective, daily devotions, and encouraging service opportunities
- Is proud to be a Christian program of choice within a public school setting that is ultimately guided by Parkland School Division's Mission, Vision, Values, and Priorities.

Teaching Practice with a Christian Perspective

Teaching practices in the PSD Christian Program include integrating Biblical connections and Christian worldview into instruction delivery. Some examples of what this may look like in classrooms include:

- Studying the Psalms in a Language Arts Poetry Unit
- Novel studies that bring out principles of Christianity
- Reflecting on the Creation Story when studying various elements of Science
- Considering scripture and the role of believers in Reconciliation throughout Social Studies
- Learning to play and sing worship songs in Music
- Using Art as part of worship and reflecting who God is
- Practicing properly caring for and nurturing our mental and physical health in Physical Education and Wellness
- Exploring opportunities to use our God-given gifts and talents to serve within the classroom and greater school community



Devotions, service opportunities, and chapel are also important extensions of the teaching practice. These elements are often supported by supplementary faith-based resources and materials that align with the program's mission, beliefs, and values.

Devotions

Daily devotions are an integral part of the PSD Christian Program classes and include prayer, reading of scripture, and opportunities for reflection and application. These activities are often teacher-led but sometimes student-led. Worship songs, videos, journal reflections, discussions, acts of service, and artistic responses may be included.

Praying Parents consists of PSD Christian Program parents/guardians who meet several times throughout the year to pray for the program, students, teachers, and identified needs. All parents/guardians are welcome to join, which typically meets following student chapels at each school site. Those interested in joining *Praying Parents* may contact the schools for more information.

Service Opportunities

PSD Christian Program students are encouraged to take part in community service. Individuals, small groups, classes, grade levels, whole schools, or families may engage in community service which may be aimed at serving the school, neighborhood, or specific groups or projects. Community service will vary according to ages and grade levels and may include activities such as:



- School and community clean-up
- Random Acts of Kindness events for the school community
- Visiting a seniors' home
- Making cards for members of the Canadian Armed Forces
- Collecting donations for the Food Bank
- Donating clothing to a shelter
- Raising money or collecting items to support a specific cause



Chapel

Chapels are intended to be spiritually nurturing and often focus on a biblical theme of a non-denominational nature. Students in the PSD Christian Program participate in chapels throughout the year at their individual school sites. Classroom and site-based chapels include songs of praise, prayer, and scripture, and may include opportunities for student leadership through worship and presentations.

As chapels are considered a place of worship; students are expected to come prepared to listen, participate fully, and behave responsibly and respectfully.

Four times annually, students from the PSD Christian Programs at both school sites come together for Chapel (October, December, March/April, and June). Parents/guardians are welcome to attend Chapels, and on occasion may be involved in planning and assisting with the preparation of shared materials. The Principal must approve all chapels and the involvement of outside guests.

3. STUDENT COMMITMENT

In addition to the behavior expectations outlined in the school handbook and student code of conduct, PSD Christian program students are expected to:

- Treat others with respect by contributing to a welcoming, inclusive, safe learning environment for all, with a focus on loving God and loving one another
- Be respectful of the differences that exist among Christian faiths
- Participate in all activities specific to the PSD Christian program, such as devotions, chapel, assigned service activities, etc.
- Value their own spiritual growth, and use their gifts to honor and serve God

When challenges arise, staff and parents will:

- Work together with students to restore relationships
- Help students understand consequences, and their coexistence with forgiveness
- Use prayer and Christian perspectives to guide and reinforce positive conflict resolution

4. STAFF COMMITMENT

The hiring of staff for the PSD Christian Program is the responsibility of the school principal, in consultation with Parkland School Division's Human Resources department.

Staff commitment to the Program Belief Statements and Mission Statement (Section 1), and the Christian Learning Environment (Section 2) is essential to the success of the PSD Christian Program. As such, staff within the PSD Christian Program agree to model Christian faith and are expected to bring a Christian viewpoint to issues and topics from core curricular areas.

Teachers chosen for the program are those who:

- Support the mission of the program
- Apply Christian beliefs and integrate Biblical perspectives to programming
- Model faith-based restorative practices when working through challenges or conflicts, emphasizing the importance of forgiveness and a desire to be Christlike
- Instill in students an understanding that they have been fearfully and wonderfully made by our Lord with purpose
- Encourage students to take pride in what they do, and use their gifts to honor and serve God
- Value their own spiritual growth, and use their gifts to honor and serve God

5. GUARDIAN COMMITMENT

Parents and/or guardians with students enrolled in the PSD Christian Program will:

- Demonstrate a commitment to the program, its values, and to the school
- Work cooperatively with all school staff
- Encourage their children to adhere to all behavioral expectations as outlined in the school handbook, student code of conduct, and those outlined specifically in Section 3.

6. STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Students attending a Program of Choice, including the Parkland Christian Program are not guaranteed the availability of transportation services. Parents may request transportation to a program of choice with an understanding that:

- Transportation services may be unavailable between your residence and a program of choice.
- The provision for transportation services, if available, may be delayed until after the commencement of the school term and only after all the eligible students are assigned to busing.
- Transportation services may be provided if there is room on an established transportation route, but they are not guaranteed year after year.
- Transportation services will not divert from a regular route to provide a program of choice registration service.

7. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does non-denominational mean?

Many Christian denominations share a belief in the fundamentals of Christianity (Hebrews 6:1-2), but differ slightly in doctrinal practices. The PSD Christian Program is intended to focus on nurturing spiritual growth through the foundations of the Christian faith, as opposed to doctrinal beliefs and practices that are specific to a denomination.

Is the Alberta Education curriculum taught in the Christian Program?

Yes. All instruction in this program of choice follows Alberta Education's programs of study, with Christian principles and biblical worldviews integrated in core curricular areas.

Is religion taught as a formal subject in the Christian Program?

Religion is not a separate course that is taught and assessed in the PSD Christian Program. Christian principles, biblical worldviews, and supporting resources are woven into the curriculum whenever possible. Additional faith-based practices are incorporated into classrooms and year schedules, including devotional time, prayer, scripture reading, and chapel. Section 2 describes this environment in detail.

Are students in the Christian Program segregated from other students in the school?

Christian Program classrooms are interspersed throughout the school. Students in the Christian Program are a valuable part of the school community, and community spirit is highly encouraged through shared activities such as assemblies, field trips, and extracurricular activities, and through shared classes such as Physical Education and Career and Technology Foundations courses (grades 7-9). Activities such as chapel, will involve students registered in the PSD Christian Program only.

Is learning assistance provided and can students with diverse learning needs access this program?

All Parkland School Division schools are inclusive and as such, so is the PSD Christian Program. All Christian Program students are valued equally. Learning assistance is provided to the same extent as in a mainstream classroom program.

Do Christian Program students participate along with students in mainstream programming in various holidays and celebrations?

Holiday celebrations include the entire school. This encourages and fosters a community atmosphere. Where applicable, Christian Program classes will focus on the Biblical understanding of such holidays. As a program of choice, we support the Education Act's call to create a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging.

FAMILY COMMITMENT

Parkland School Division's Christian Program Annual Family Commitment

Students agree to:

- Adhere to Brookwood/Woodhaven's Student Code of Conduct
- Support the PSD Christian Program's Belief Statements and Mission Statement
- Actively participate in the Christian Learning Environment as outlined in Section 2 of the PSD Christian Program Handbook
- Uphold the Student Commitment as outlined in Section 3 of the PSD Christian Program Handbook

Parents and/or Guardians agree to:

- Support the PSD Christian Program's Belief Statements, Mission Statement, and Christian Learning Environment
- Ensure their child(ren) work(s) to achieve their commitment to the PSD Christian Program
- Uphold the Parent/Guardian Commitment as outlined in Section 5 of the PSD Christian Program Handbook
- Raise any concerns first with the PSD Christian Program homeroom teacher

Student Name (Printed)

Student Signature

Guardian Name (Printed)

Guardian Signature

Date

School