

Pēwāsēnākwān Primary School



Parent and Student
Handbook
2024-2025

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Parents and Community

Please feel free to come to the school and visit the school at any time.

We believe that the school belongs to the community.

Coffee is always on.

Should you wish to volunteer to help in the school,
feel free to come in and talk to any staff member.

Mission Statement

Our mission at Pēwāsēnākwan Primary School is to provide a caring environment developing the qualities of self-esteem, identity, creative thinking, a love for learning and respect for self and others realizing that quality education is an individual life-long process involving physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and social development to produce happy, responsible citizens.

School Pledge

I will do my best because education is for me, my Family, my Community and my First Nation. I am proud of my culture and my teachings.

Nika-akamēyimon tahto-kīsikaw osam ni-kiskinwāmāsowin oma oci niya ni-nīkihikwak,
nīcisanak, ni-taskisnan ēkwa ni-nīci-nēhiyawak. Nika-kihēcēyitēn nēhiyawēwin ēkwa
ni-kiskinahawātowina.

School Morning Song

(By Irene Carter)

Pewasenakwan oma Miyo kisikanisitan.

Pewasenakwan ekwa Kwayas pimotetan

Kwayas atosketan Miyowicetotan

Pewasenakwan oma

A new dawn is here. Let's have a good day. A new day is here. Let's take the right path. Let's make the day worthwhile. Let's get along. A new day is here.

Message from School Administration

Tānisi kahkiyaw.

Parents, Guardians and Students, welcome to another school year at Pēwāsēnākwān Primary School. Lianna MacDonald nitisīkāson. I am a proud member of Onion Lake Cree Nation and have taught in Onion Lake for the past 18 years. All but one (1) year has been at Pēwāsēnākwān. My administration partner this year is Ms. Tamara Pahtayken. We are very excited to start this school year as we head into our 4th year of administration together. Although we just opened a 5th school on our great Cree Nation last year, it feels as though we are bursting at the seams already. We are so excited to announce that we will be adding an “Early Years Center” addition to the southeast wing of our school. Be prepared for a sod-turning event. This building is said to be finished in 2026.

This year, we will house students from HeadStart to grade 1. Our philosophy is to treat every child in our care the way we want our own children to be treated. We believe that our young people are merely lent to us from the Creator and that they deserve the same dignity and respect as adults. Your child’s mental, physical, spiritual and emotional safety is our top priority.

Remember that we want to work with you, parents and guardians, as a team in your child’s education. Please feel free to reach out anytime for any of your child’s needs. Thank you for trusting us with your little ones. We promise to love them just as much as you do.

Ms. Lianna MacDonald
Principal

School's General Objectives

1. To teach children social skills and VIRTUES such as respect for self and others, cooperation with others, responsibility for their actions (accountability) and positive leadership skills.
2. To help students develop positive self- esteem by instilling the teachings of who they are and where they come from.
3. To instil a love of learning, risk-taking, critical thinking, and independent learning skills, that will continue throughout their lives.
4. To encourage the parents and other community members to become involved in school activities.

School's Specific Objectives

1. To improve students' achievement in the core subjects with an emphasis on Language Arts and Mathematics.
2. Create a climate that challenges students to achieve at their maximum potential.
3. To further develop the Cree Language Curriculum using nēhiyaw pimātsiwin as a path to lead us.
4. A thorough understanding of Treaty Rights and their implications.
5. Centre all teachings around themes that revolve around Critical and Creative Thinking, Problem-solving and Conflict Resolution.
6. To infuse nēhiyaw pimātsiwin into the school by practicing our language, our songs, our dances and our ceremonies.

Central Office

Director of Education

Assistant Director of Education

Superintendent of Education

Mr. Fred Dillon

Mr. Terry Clarke

Ms. Delia Harper

Mr. Mark Pelly

Staff Placement at Pewasenkwan Primary School –2024-2025

Room	Teacher
HeadStart	Mrs. Amanda Cardinal
Pre-Kindergarten 01	Mrs. Adrienne Naistus
Pre-Kindergarten 02	Miss Davalynne Whitstone
Pre-Kindergarten 03	Ms. Sandra Moochewenies
Pre-Kindergarten 04	Miss Grace Fluney
K01	Ms. Eileen Chocan
K02	Miss Renee Lewis
K03	Mrs. Vivian Dufraine
K04	Mrs. Nicole Brinklow
101	Ms. Pam Bonaise
102	Mrs. Penny Chief
103	Ms. Madeline Nayneecassum
104	Mrs. Jasmine Amaghu
Physical Education	Miss Taylor Fineday
Cree Instructor	Mrs. Sarah Waskewitch
Early Years Catalyst	Mrs. Penny Settee
Inclusion Catalyst	Miss Roxy Boyer
ELA Catalyst	Mr. Jonathan Whitstone
Math Catalyst	Mr. Waylon Whitstone
Library	Mrs. Eleanor Sparvier
Instructional Support	Mrs. Leslie Lewis
Instructional Support	Ms. Delma Cook
Instructional Support	Miss Courtney Heathen
Instructional Support	Miss Cassandra Lewis
Instructional Support	Miss Kashia Lewis
Instructional Support	Mrs. Teneille Naistus-Stick
Instructional Support	Ms. Serena Pahtayken
Instructional Support	Miss Reanna Opissinow
Instructional Support	Miss Leila Pahtayken
Instructional Support	Mrs. Noella Thompson
Instructional Support	Mrs. Terree Whitstone
Guidance Counsellor	Mrs. Vivian Chief
Occupational Therapist Aide	Miss Sheniya Fineblanket
Speech & Language Aide	Ms. Trissin Worm
Speech & Language Aide	Ms. Trina Waskewitch
Principal	Ms. Lianna MacDonald
Vice- Principal	Ms. Tamara Pahtayken
Administrative Assistant	Mrs. Ruby Whitstone
Chef	Ms. Leona Lewis
Chef's Assistant	Ms. Cheryl Lewis
Home-School Liaison	Mr. Colby Whitstone

Oskapewis
 Janitor
 Maintenance

Mr. Cyril Stick
 Mr. Darwin Dillon
 Mr. Kerry Stanley

Important Dates to Remember:

September 2- Labor Day
 September 3-First Day of School
 September 16-HeadStart and Pre-Kindergarten students start
 September 19-Meet The Teacher Night
 September 30-Truth & Reconciliation Day-No School
 October 9-Early Dismissal-2 pm
 October 12-Early Release-2 pm
 October 14-Thanksgiving Holiday-No School
 November 1-Professional Development-No School
 November 11-Remembrance Day-No School
 November 12-First Nations Unity Day-No School
 November 18-21-Celebration of Learning
 Dec 23-January 5-Christmas Break
 January 6-School reopens
 January 29-SMART goals/PGP's Professional Development-No School
 February 12-Early Dismissal-2 pm
 February 17-21-Winter Break
 February 24-Back to School
 March 12-Early Release
 March 17-20-Celebration of Learning
 March 28-Professional Development-No School
 April 18-Good Friday
 April 21-25-Easter Holidays
 April 28-Back to School
 May 7-Early Dismissal-2 pm
 May 19-Victoria Day-No School
 May 28-Professional Development-No School
 June 20-Treaty Day (tentative)
 June 26-Last day for students
 June 27-Last day for staff (Admin)

Onion Lake School Health Policy:

The school supports educating the whole child to ensure that s/he receives all the conditions necessary for her/him to achieve their best in all aspects of school. In doing so; the school offers breakfast, hot meals for lunch and an afternoon snack to our students. The education system does its best to educate the students in making healthy lifestyle choices. This includes physical well-being, emotional well-being and mental

well-being of the child. As part of our health curriculum we educate the student to choose healthy foods for their diet. Thus, in our schools we are trying to offer the students healthy alternatives for their lunch. In doing this we would like to request that the parents cooperate by helping your child bring healthy/nutritious food in their lunch. Your child's lunch should reflect the suggestions from the Canada Food Guide. Sending foods such as pop, chips, candy and warm ups should be avoided. We also have some peanut and egg allergies in the school. We are asking for your cooperation in helping us make the school peanut, peanut butter and egg free to ensure the safety for all students.

Rights and Responsibilities of Students:

1. Every student has the right to an education designed to meet his/her particular needs.
2. Every student has the right to be respected as an individual.
3. Every student has the right to be listened to.
4. Every student has the right to a safe, protected and interesting learning environment.
5. Students have a responsibility to listen to instruction and perform their learning task diligently.
6. Students have a responsibility to treat staff with respect.
7. Students have a responsibility to listen to the opinions of others and not interfere with the learning of other students.
8. Students have a responsibility to ensure that their conduct does not present any danger to the safety of other students.
9. Students have a responsibility to use their facilities and resources in a careful and conscientious manner.

School Day:

Classes begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 11:45 a.m. for lunch.

Recess in the morning will be from 10:30 – 10:45 a.m.

Afternoon classes begin at 12:30 p.m. and end at 3:10 p.m.

In the afternoon, the afternoon recess is at 2:00 – 2:15 p.m.

The last bell rings at 3:10 and the students load the buses at 3:15 p.m.

Dress Code:

- Students are to wear clothing which is presentable, comfortable and non-offensive. Hats are not to be worn in the schools. **Running shoes are required footwear for activities in the Gym.** It is suggested that students have

a pair of inside shoes if possible. Students are also required to bring an extra pair of clothes in case of any sort of accidents. "Heely" shoes are strictly prohibited from being worn at Pewasenakwan Primary School.

Leaving the classroom:

Students may leave the classroom only with the permission of the teacher. Students can be walking the hallways as a form of self-regulation. However, it has to be approved by the teacher. Students are encouraged to use the washroom before school, at lunch and at recess time. All students will use the water coolers from the classrooms.

Illness and Injury:

If a student becomes ill or injured while at school, every effort will be made to contact the parents/guardians. If in the event that the child has sustained a serious injury, and we cannot contact the parents/guardians, the school administrator will use his/her own discretion as regards to medical attention. **The school is not responsible for taking students to medical appointments at the Health Center.**

Extra-Curricular Activities:

Pewasenakwan Primary School provides students with a broad range of extra-curricular activities emphasizing healthy competition, personal, social and cultural enrichment, participation, sportsmanship and leadership.

Attendance:

Children must attend school until they reach the age of sixteen. Parents are legally obligated to ensure that their child maintains regular attendance until that time. In addition, students who attend school regularly tend to achieve much higher in school. Therefore, the school will follow this procedure:

1. The parents of these students will be contacted if the school has not been notified, in order to determine the reason for the absences. If the child is absent for three days in a row with unexcused absences, the home-school liaison will visit the child's home to identify any challenges.
2. Students must be in school before 10:00 a.m. or they will be marked absent for the morning. If they leave school before 2:00 p.m. they will be marked absent for the afternoon.
3. Doctor's notes will be accepted to use as an excused absence. **Excused absences are considered for Cultural Leave, Bereavement and sick (accompanied with a**

Dr's note). It is up to the parents to inform teachers if such events occur.

4. The students who miss zero (0) days in a month will be eligible to accompany the Principal and Vice Principal on a monthly trip.

Homework Policy:

1. Students in Kindergarten and Grade 1 will receive homework every Wednesday evening.
2. Students who are behind in certain subjects or who have transferred in, etc., may need extra help. In addition to such help as may be given at school, the teacher may suggest certain forms of work which may be done at home and request the cooperation of the parents or guardians.
3. Pupils should be encouraged to read and study at home. At no time will the child be assigned more than 30 minutes of homework.

Student Promotion Policy:

Recent research indicates that there are advantages in retaining a student in a grade early in their educational program. To be considered for promotion to the next grade, **all students** must achieve the Minimum Grade Level Standards for their respective grade. The teachers at each grade level have developed the standards and assessment tools. These will be reviewed on an annual basis and it is expected that these standards will be raised as we implement strategies to improve student achievement levels. Exceptions to these standards will only be made for designated students and their progress will be monitored through their respective IEP's. The bottom line is that students need to acquire the requisite skills at a particular grade level in order to proceed successfully the following school year. The following procedures will apply within Pewasenkwan Primary School.

Students Retention (Repeating) Guidelines: Parents must be informed at every step

1. Only under highly exceptional circumstances should a student spend more than four years in one Division and more than two years in one grade.
2. *When considering retaining a student the main criteria used should be what would be of the best interest of the child.* Achievement of Minimum Grade Level Standards and student attendance will be an important component of this step.
3. *When there is a possibility a child might be retained the following will occur:*
 - *The parent will be notified as soon as possible that their child is having academic difficulty.*
 - *The Inclusion Catalyst will be asked for recommendations.*
 - *If there continues to be a concern, a meeting will be set up with the parents to discuss the concerns and develop a recovery plan before the end of January.*

School Rules:

1. During bus time and recess, students will enter and leave the school through the assigned door.
2. Students are to remove his/her outside shoes when entering the school. It is highly recommended that students bring a pair of inside shoes for the gym and for emergencies.
3. It is recommended that students bring an extra pair of clothes to school for any accidents that happen on the playground or in the classroom.
4. The following things are **NOT** to be brought to school: cell phones, I-pods, I-pads, tablets, hand-held electronic games, sunflower seeds, toys and make-up items.
5. Students must remain inside the school areas as defined by the outside perimeter fence.
6. Students are not to leave the school area during the day unless arrangements are made with the parents. At no point in time is a student ever allowed to walk off school property alone. Each student is to stay at school for lunch.
7. All new students are required to be assessed by our Speech and Language Pathologist. This will ensure that we are offering proper programming for each and every student. This will also allow us to understand if there is a need for any other testing with our Occupational Therapist and/or Educational Psychologist. All parents must sign a Speech and Language assessment form at the time of registration.
8. All students who require an IIP will not start regular programming until the school team (Inclusion Catalyst, Administration, SLP, OT, Teacher, EA, Parent) meet to develop a plan. This must happen so that each child is able to experience success at Pwasenakwan.

Bussing:

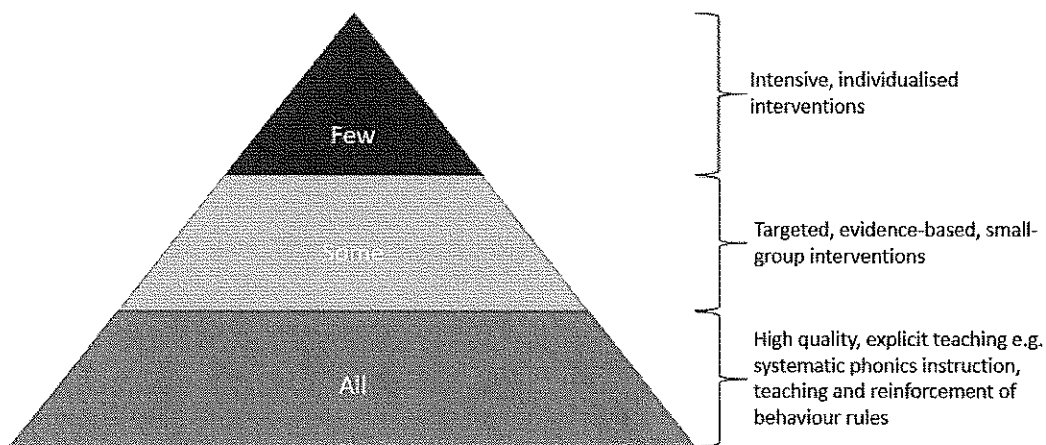
1. Everyone is to ride the same bus home that they came to school on.
2. **Any different bussing arrangements must be made through AL WHITSTONE AT ONION LAKE TRANSPORTATION, TRAINING AND CAREERS @ 344-4961. Transportation MUST be called FIRST when alternate drop offs are being arranged. Transportation will then inform the school of those changes. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL AS THE ARRANGEMENTS CANNOT BE HONOURED.**
3. Students should remain seated when the bus is moving.
4. Do not distract the driver during the trip.
5. Do not throw things around in the bus or from the windows of the bus.
6. Show respect to your driver and other bus riders.

****Please note: riding the school bus is a privilege, it is not a right. Students are expected to show respect to the bus driver, fellow passengers and the school bus.**

Breaking of rules will be dealt with by the school Administration and the Bussing Coordinator. Continuous/Serious incidents may result in a suspension from the bus in which the parents/guardians are responsible to drop off/pick up their child from school.

Administration Intervention for Misbehaviours:

Generally; students do their best, but at times, they forget to use their **virtues**. At Pewasenkwan; in regards to classroom management, an RTI (Response to Intervention) model using the social emotional domain was adopted and developed by the administration team and the teachers.



The Response to Intervention model

The administration team encourages the teachers to use multiple strategies when dealing with misbehaviors. All homeroom teachers are required to use this model when making their discipline plans. The last resort to their discipline plan is sending students to the office. When students are sent to the office; it is because the teacher has used all of the strategies in their discipline plans and the strategies are not working and/or staff and students' safety is at risk.

When a child is continually repeating their misbehaviour, the parent will be informed so that we can find a solution to help the child become more successful. We will plan an in-depth safety plan to ensure the student can experience success in the classroom. This safety plan will be followed by the teacher, EA, Administration team, the student and the family.

***The school **will not tolerate** bullying, extreme disrespect, and fighting.

*****The Onion Lake School Board considers the following behaviour as resulting in

Immediate Suspension:

- Possession of illegal drugs, trafficking, or alcohol in school,
- Smoking or consumed illegal drugs or alcohol,
- Weapons, assaults and vandalism.

STUDENT AWARDS**MONTHLY AWARDS:**

To promote pride and a sense of belonging within our students, EVERY child will receive a personalized award EVERY month that is personalized by the teacher. These awards can be as fun, silly and unique as possible. It is up to the teacher to get thier list of awards to the **Monthly Awards Committee** ONE week before scheduled assemblies so that there is time to produce and distribute these awards. Some examples of awards are *Friendliest Student*, *Biggest Smile*, *Most Contagious Laugh*, *Best Hugger Award* and can be anything you can think of. Please make these awards as personalized and positive as you can for the students and families.

Perfect Attendance: Each student who has perfect attendance for that month shall receive a Perfect Attendance Certificate. They also go on a special field trip with the Principal and Vice Principal.

Cree Language: One child from each classroom will be chosen who displays the best attitude and tries to speak Cree in the Cree classes.

Cleanest Classroom of the Month: The classroom who displays the cleanest environment after every school day will be recognized.

Highest Attendance: The classroom with the highest overall attendance (without excused absences) wins the big gold medal. The second highest attendance will win the big silver medal. The third highest attendance will win the big bronze medal.

-Monthly attendance awards will be done by grade level in the rotunda for the 2024-2025 school year.

YEAR END AWARDS:

In keeping with the monthly award theme, the Year End awards will be the same. EVERY student will receive a personalized award (thought of by the teacher) at the end of the year along with a gift. These personalized year-end awards should distinguish from the monthly awards and be just that much more special to the students and families. Some examples could be *Homework Award*, *Math Whiz Award*, *Home Reader Award*, *Hard Worker Award*, etc. The following awards will also be distributed at the end of the year.

Year End Perfect Attendance: Zero (0) days absent throughout the year regardless of reason with the exception of funerals, buses not running due to weather and sick days (accompanied by a Doctor's note). Sick days without a DOCTOR'S NOTE WILL NOT BE HONOURED.

Year End Near Perfect Attendance: Three days or less absence throughout the year regardless of reason with the exception of funerals, buses not running due to weather and sick days (accompanied by a Doctor's note). Sick days without a DOCTOR'S NOTE WILL NOT BE HONOURED.

Cree Award: This award is given to the student who has made the greatest progress in Cree Language Development in Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and Grade One.

Gym Award: This award is given to the student who has made the greatest progress in Gym in Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and Grade One.

Nēhiyaw Pimātišiwīn Award: This award is given to the student who displays virtuous attitude and characteristics throughout the year in their everyday life. One child per classroom will win this award.