

SCHOOL DISTRICT 60 PEACE RIVER NORTH

International Student Handbook



Welcome!

The International Education Office welcomes you to the Peace River North School District. This handbook will provide you with important information and general guidelines concerning your program. Please read this handbook carefully as it addresses many questions commonly asked.

We wish you an enjoyable and successful experience in our district.



Brian Campbell

District Principal of International Education



<https://www.prn.bc.ca>

<http://www.study.inthepeace.com>



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[PeaceRiverNorthDeutschland](#)

[peacrivernorthlatam](#)

International Education Office

The International Office is located at North Peace Secondary School (NPSS) as well as the Homestay Coordinators office. The District Principal's office is located at our school district office. These three offices collaboratively manage the International Student Department. Our international staff provide a support system for students. They process applications, determine school placement, assist with course selections and provide additional support as needs arise to international students and their families.

If you need assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the International Education Office as follows:

Brian Campbell

District Principal of International Education

Cell: 250-261-8203

Email: bcampbell@prn.bc.ca

Dania Pimm

Coordinator for International Education & Careers

Cell: 250-224-7461 Office: 250-785-4429 Ext 337

Email: dpimm@prn.bc.ca

Jodi Hickey

Homestay Coordinator

Cell: 250-789-9263 Office: 250-785-4429 Ext 335

Email: jhickey@prn.bc.ca

Addresses:

Boardoffice:

10112 105 Ave, Fort St. John, B.C., V1J 4S4

North Peace Secondary School (NPSS):

9304 86 St., Fort St. John, B.C., V1J 6L9

CLOTHING SUGGESTED FOR A YEAR IN PEACE RIVE NORTH

SPRING

(MARCH - MAY)

- Light coat
- Vest
- Light Sweaters
- Hoodies, Jeans
- Long and Short sleeved shirts



SUMMER

(JUNE-SEPTEMBER)

- Shorts, Skirts
- Tshirts, Light Jeans
- Bathing Supplies
- Sunglasses, Sun hat
- Slight Coat, Sweater
- Sandals, Sneakers



FALL

(OCTOBER - NOVEMBER)

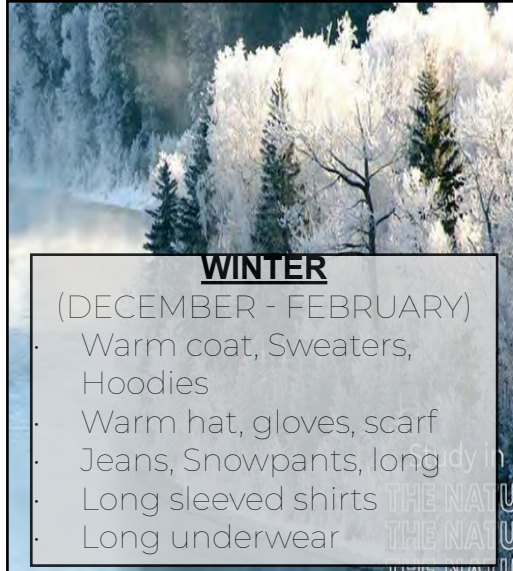
- Warm coat
- Vest
- Light Sweaters
- Hoodies, Jeans, Sweaters
- Long sleeved shirts
- Waterproof shoes, Boots



WINTER

(DECEMBER - FEBRUARY)

- Warm coat, Sweaters, Hoodies
- Warm hat, gloves, scarf
- Jeans, Snowpants, long underwear
- Long sleeved shirts
- Long underwear



Climate & Clothing

Temperatures will typically range between +30 and -30 C. The spring months (March to May) are pleasant with temperatures averaging about 20 C.

Although it is warm early in the Fall, it can also get cooler. You will need to have a warm jacket, especially for the winter months of December to February.

Dressing in layers is the key for a comfortable experience all year round!

Since there are many interesting mountains and trails nearby, you may also wish to bring clothing appropriate for outdoor activities such as hiking. If you like to ski or would like to try skiing, bring suitable clothing, as there are mountains which are located a short distance away with skiing facilities. There are also many options to purchase winter clothing locally.



Your School

SCHOOL HOURS

Students attend school from Monday to Friday for approximately seven hours per day, generally 8:45 AM to 3:10 PM. Students receive a brief nutrition break in the morning and then a lunch break around 11:30 AM.

FACILITIES

Each of our secondary schools are equipped with art studios, cafeteria, computer labs, dance studio, two gymnasiums, home economics labs, information technology labs, industrial technology labs, library, music room, science labs and weight room.

CLUBS AND SPORTS

International Students are encouraged to take advantage of offered activities, as they are an excellent way to develop English language skills while making new friends. Please view our Activity Brochure for more detailed information.

LOCKERS

You will be assigned a locker during your first week of

school. You are expected to keep your lockers clean. You must clean out your locker and return all your textbooks at the end of the school year.

DRESS CODE

Canadian public schools do not require students to wear a uniform. However, students are expected to dress appropriately.

REPORT CARDS

Students receive three or four formal report cards a year, normally in late November, January, April and June.

COURSES

We have a semester school calendar which means students take four courses from September to January and then another four from February to June, a total of eight courses.

NPSS Campus



School Calendar

2025-2026

SCHOOLS OPEN	SEPTEMBER 2, 2025
NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAY	SEPTEMBER 19, 2025
TRUTH & RECONCILIATION DAY	SEPTEMBER 30, 2025
THANKSGIVING DAY	OCTOBER 13, 2025
NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAY	OCTOBER 24, 2025
REMEMBRANCE DAY	NOVEMBER 11, 2025
EARLY DISMISSAL DAY	NOVEMBER 26 & 27, 2025
NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAY	NOVEMBER 28, 2025
CHRISTMAS VACATION PERIOD	DECEMBER 22 - JANUARY 2, 2026
NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAY	JANUARY 30, 2026
FAMILY DAY	FEBRUARY 16, 2026
NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAY	FEBRUARY 27, 2026
EARLY DISMISSAL DAY	MARCH 11 & 12, 2026
SPRING VACATION PERIOD	MARCH 16 - MARCH 27, 2026
GOOD FRIDAY	APRIL 3, 2026
EASTER MONDAY	APRIL 6, 2026
NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAY	APRIL 24, 2026
NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAY	MAY 8, 2026
VICTORIA DAY	MAY 18, 2026
LAST DAY OF SCHOOL / GRADUATION DAY	JUNE 19, 2026



Culture Shock & Adjustment

Coming to a new country and culture is an exciting adventure. You may also find that you have some ups and downs during your adjustment to live in Canada. Give yourself time to feel at home.

THE HONEYMOON STAGE

When you first arrive, the excitement and enthusiasm of being in a new place takes up most of your thoughts and time. The activity of settling in is also very time consuming.

THE HOMESICKNESS STAGE

The second stage can be a bit of a down time where the differences between your home and here become clear. You might also find yourself missing family, friends and some of your favourite food. Working on your English can also be a tiring aspect of getting started in Canada.

THE DISTRESS STAGE

The third stage can be a frustrating and restless time. At

this point you may feel angry with your new life, classmates and hosts. This is normal and will not last.

THE TRANSITION STAGE

This stage usually involves finding your sense of humour again, seeing this adventure in a new perspective, and appreciating both your home and Canada in new ways.

THE INTEGRATION STAGE

This is the time when you feel almost at home here and can meet the day to-day problems that come along. You're also starting to think about returning home again. This can be a time of mixed feelings – both excitement and anxiety.

It is important to remember that you may not experience all these stages in precisely this order. Adjusting to living overseas takes time but the rewards are well worth it.

Please contact a school counselor or the International Education Office if you're having any difficulty in your adjustment.

WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU!



PERSONAL SAFETY

The City of Fort St John offers a safe living environment. Violent crime is not common and not very likely to occur to a resident or student.

However, you still need to be careful, as with any other city. Please remember to always be aware of your surroundings and do not walk in the streets or parks alone after dark.

Never carry large sums of cash. Take care of your belongings at school. Do not leave your mobile devices, wallets, laptops, and other

items unattended. School lockers may not be completely safe from theft, so it is best to keep valuable items on you at all times. Don't tell anyone your locker combination.

Living in Peace River North

To learn more about the City of Fort St John visit the City's [website](#).

TRANSPORT

Public transportation in Fort St John is easily accessible. City bus passes are available at your school office which allows you to pay a discounted rate for public transportation.

Communications

Phone Cards

Phone cards in a variety of dollar amounts are available at various stores such as 7-Eleven or Walmart. They are a convenient way to keep in touch with friends and family.

POSTAL SERVICE

www.canadapost.ca

If you are expecting a parcel it will come to your home, but if you are not at home it may be redirected to the nearest postal station where you may pick it up. Be sure to take identification with you. A parcel or letter can also be posted at any postal outlet. There are a number of postal outlets located throughout Peace River North.

BANKING

There are a number of banks located throughout Peace River North in which you can open up a bank account. You will be required to bring appropriate identification with you to open an account. There are many types of accounts. You will find that interest rates vary between the type of account and between banks. Make sure you are aware what the charges and rates will be on any account that you open.

LIBRARIES

In addition to your school library, there is one public library located in Fort St John at the North Peace Cultural Centre.



Medical Coverage

You will receive your private medical insurance documents provided by guard.me upon arrival.

SEEING A DOCTOR

If you are feeling sick with cold or flu-like symptoms (runny or stuffy nose, sneezing, coughing, fever and chills), please visit a walk-in medical clinic, pharmacy or call an Online Doctor (also provided through Guard.Me)

HOW TO MAKE A CLAIM

If you see a doctor and are required to pay upfront, or if you receive a medical bill, please give all documents to the International Education Coordinator as soon as possible. She will submit the insurance claim on your behalf and ensure either you are reimbursed or the clinic is paid.

MSP

If you are studying in B.C. for more than 6 months, you are required to register for the provincial health care system (MSP) after your first three

months in Canada. The International Education Coordinator will handle the registration process for you.

Your Guard.Me insurance will remain active and provide top-up coverage for services not included in MSP, such as visits to specialists (e.g., dentists) and other extended health services.

MENTAL HEALTH

If you are feeling mentally exhausted, homesick or have other problems you don't want to talk about with a counsellor or the International Student Program, Please download the Keep.Me.Safe App and touch base with a professional psychologist which you can also request to talk to in your first language. This service is included in your Guard.Me Health Insurance.

EMERGENCY

If you have a serious illness or injury, please go to the hospital or call 911. Please note, 911 is for immediate, emergency assistance, only for contacting police, fire or ambulance department.



Important Message to Parents

You will play an important role in supporting your child's studies in Peace River North, even if you are residing overseas. The following information is to help parents understand the Canadian education system and their role as a partner in their child's education.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

In Canada, we believe in developing well-rounded individuals. That is why our education system does not solely focus on traditional academic subjects, such as math and sciences, but also includes subjects within the arts, sports and technology. These subjects not only develop your child's intellect but help him/her explore a variety of interests and talents.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Teachers in Canada believe that students must participate in the learning process. Therefore, a typical Canadian classroom does not usually have a teacher lecturing at the front and students sitting quietly in their desks. Rather, normally you will see students working on their own or in groups as the teacher facilitates their learning. For an outsider, it may seem that the students are "playing around." But this is definitely not the case. Rather, students are actively engaging in his/her learning as well as developing skills to work independently or as part of a team - better preparing students for university.

In addition, Canadian schools, especially Peace River North, encourage students to participate in extracurricular activities after regular school hours. Students can join a number of activities that will further augment their intellectual, social and physical development. In learning English, we find that students who join clubs or teams acquire the language more rap-

idly than if they were to take numerous hours of after-school tutoring.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

International students face added challenges due to their being immersed in a new environment, culture and language. Initially, their grades in Canada may be lower in comparison to school grades from their home country. This is normal due to the added challenges international student face. Please encourage your child and let them know you understand the challenges they face and how proud you are of the work they are doing. Encourage them to try their best and to ask for help from their International Student Liaison, counselor and teachers. Give them time to acclimatize to their new environment as well as develop the language skills needed to fully excel.

We have noticed that students do not always inform their parents or custodians of any school or personal struggles, as they do not want to disappoint or worry their family. Please encourage your child to talk to you about their school and personal life. These students feel enormous amounts of pressure. Please encourage our child to do their very best and to work hard but also to enjoy their time here and to seek help when needed.

Keep in touch with your child and host parent(s): Even though a parent resides overseas, you still play an important role in ensuring your child is being properly cared for and supervised during their studies in Peace River North. We ask that you:

- regularly contact your child to ensure that they are thriving within their learning and home environment.
- immediately contact the International Education Office for assistance if you have any concerns about your child's well-being or academic progress.

Pre-Departure Checklist

- ◇ Confirmed accommodation arrangements.
- ◇ Obtained a passport and made sure that it is valid for at least six months beyond my return date.
- ◇ Obtained a Study Permit to study in Canada (if studying for more than 6 months).
- ◇ Obtained a multi-entry visa (if required).
- ◇ Purchased airline ticket.
- ◇ Documents to keep on you (not in your checked luggage). You will need these documents to present at your first Canadian Port of call to present to IRCC.
 - Passport
 - Letter of Acceptance
 - Custodian Declaration Document
 - Homestay Placement Information
 - ArriveCanApp: speeds up the customs process
 - Study permit Approval letter (if applicable)
- ◇ Have noted home, International Education Office, and school contact information.
- ◇ Photocopied all information (passport/birth certificate)
- ◇ Obtained a small amount of Canadian currency for use upon arrival and in the unlikely case of an emergency.
- ◇ Arranged appropriate transfer of funds (i.e. traveler cheques, etc)
- ◇ Learned about my appointed school, Peace River North and the surrounding area. Learned about Canadian culture.
- ◇ Packed clothing according to suggest guideline on Page 4 of this document.

THE CANADIAN NATIONAL ANTHEM

O CANADA!
OUR HOME AND NATIVE LAND!
TRUE PATRIOT LOVE IN ALL OF US COMMAND.
WITH GLOWING HEARTS WE SEE THEE RISE,
THE TRUE NORTH STRONG AND FREE!
FROM FAR AND WIDE,

O CANADA, WE STAND ON GUARD FOR THEE.
GOD KEEP OUR LAND GLORIOUS AND FREE!
O CANADA, WE STAND ON GUARD FOR THEE.
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