

GRANDE PRAIRIE PUBLIC SCHOOL DIVISION  
**INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Pre-Departure  
Booklet

2021/2022



**Grande Prairie  
Public School  
Division**

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Grande Prairie, Alberta,  
Canada T8V 8H8

[www.gppsd.ab.ca](http://www.gppsd.ab.ca)

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# Welcome to Grande Prairie

The International Education Office welcomes you to The Grande Prairie Public School Division.

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 by international students coming from overseas.

We wish you an enjoyable and successful experience in Grande Prairie.

# The Grande Prairie Public School Division

It is one of the largest school districts in Northern Alberta, with two secondary schools (the most recent of which opened in September 2014) as well as 16 elementary/junior high schools which provide a wide range of programs and possibilities.

All Grande Prairie School Division's schools are accredited by the Government of Alberta Ministry of Education and are led by highly qualified teachers and administrators. Small class sizes and numerous support services make for the best possible learning environment. An extensive number of programs and facilities give students the opportunity to explore a multitude of interests.

Grande Prairie's focus on academic excellence and what is best for the student creates involvement beyond the classroom which is reflected in our student's success. Many Grande Prairie students have gone on in life to achieve professions in highly academic fields as well as competitive sports. Many of Grande Prairie School Division's students earn scholarships and successfully enter and complete university.

## International Program

The International Student Program facilitates the enrollment and support of international students in a Grande Prairie school. It is not a separate educational program, as international students are integrated into regular classes alongside Canadian students. In addition, international students receive English language training. As international students are integrated into the regular school environment, they will truly have a Canadian educational experience.

## International Education Office

The International Education Office is located at the Division's Board Office. The International Education Office manages the International Student Program. It processes applications, places students within a Grande Prairie school, and provides added support to international students and their families.

If you need assistance, please do not hesitate to the International Education Office at:

Telephone: 780-532-4491 (ask for Shera Crichton) or 780-532-4491 ext. 1041  
Fax: 780-539-4265  
Address: 10127 – 120 Avenue T8V 8H8  
Grande Prairie, Alberta

# Getting Ready



Once you receive a letter of acceptance from the Grande Prairie Public School Division, there are many things that you need to do to prepare yourself for a rewarding experience. The following is short list of things to consider. We have also included a checklist at the back of this handbook.

1. Learn more about where you are going: It is very important to invest time into researching and reading about Canada and Alberta. Learn about the culture, geography, economy, education, and political systems. The more you learn about Grande Prairie and the surrounding area, the more you will appreciate the experience and the faster you will adjust to your new surroundings. [City of Grande Prairie](#)
2. Learn more about your school: Each Grande Prairie School has a website [Grande Prairie Public School Division](#) . Review your appointed school's website to learn about all the opportunities your school offers. Note the address and contact numbers for your arrival in Grande Prairie.
3. Make sure your passport is in order: You will need your passport to enter Canada, as well as for other things like banking. It sometimes takes quite a while to obtain a passport, so be sure to apply early.
4. Obtain a Study Permit: You will need a Study Permit to live and study in Canada for more than six months. This process can take a few weeks, so apply as early as you can. To apply for a Study Permit, you must take the letter of acceptance received from the Grande Prairie Public School Division to the nearest Canadian embassy, consulate or high commission. The Canadian representative will ask for proof of financial support and in some countries, the completion of a medical examination. <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/study.asp>
5. Book your flight: Investing time into booking a flight is worthwhile. If you begin your search early enough, you are more likely to find a special seat sale.
6. Buy additional health insurance: The International Education Office will organize health insurance for you, which comes into effect the first day of orientation.
7. Confirm your accommodation or homestay.

# Pre-departure Information

Grande Prairie Public School Division is looking forward to welcoming you to Grande Prairie.

Before you leave home, it is important to read through this section and be sure that you are well prepared for your journey. We have included some important information that will help you get the most out of your time in Canada.

## Applying for Travel Documents

Depending on where you are from and how long you are planning to stay in Canada, you will require different documents. Please be sure to obtain the correct documents. Your agent should be able to assist with this process, as can the nearest Canadian embassy, consulate, or high commission. Also feel free to contact our office should more information be needed.

*Study Permit:* This is a document issued by the Canadian government that allows you to study in Canada. It is only required for students who are pursuing a program of study longer than 180 days (six months). Those studying for less than 180 days do not need a Study Permit.

*Visa:* A Visa is a document issued by the Canadian government that allows you to enter Canada. Not all students will need a Visa; this is determined on a country-by-country basis. Ask when you contact the Canadian diplomatic mission and they can confirm whether you need a Visa. You can also find the information online at [www.cic.gc.ca](http://www.cic.gc.ca).

You are responsible for ensuring your travel documents are valid and appropriate. Please note that GPPSD International Student Programs office is available to provide guidance should you have any questions about this process.

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*Be sure to keep a copy of all documents you mail to the Canada Immigration office in Alberta.*

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## When to Arrive in Canada

Students should book their travel plans to arrive 1-2 days prior to their first official school day (see calendar on p. 7). In Canada, the first Monday of September is a national holiday (Labour Day) and normally marks the first week of school. Please insure you plan accordingly as this is a very busy time for travel in North America. It is recommended that students arrive earlier rather than miss any of the first week of school; this week is vital in the smooth transition into the program.

Once you have scheduled your travels, please inform the International Student Program office, and provide them with a copy of your travel itinerary. It is also recommended to notify your accommodations or homestay of your arrival date and to arrange pick-up.

Students who are not able to schedule their arrival for this date should contact the International Student Program office immediately to inform them of the nature of the problems.

## What to Bring

When you are packing to travel to Canada, there are a few important things to keep in mind. First, consider the length of your program and what season you will be experiencing during your program. Also take into consideration what you can buy in Canada to save the stress of carrying it with you. For example, if you are from a tropical country that does not experience winter weather, you may want to budget for the purchase of a warm coat and boots and buy these items in Canada when you arrive. Additionally, airlines will have strict regulations about how much you can bring with you. Be sure to check on the luggage restrictions before arriving at the airport!

In your carry-on bag (do not check the following items), you should have:

- Passport
- Plane tickets
- Travel documents (study permit or letter from Canadian government)
- Letters of admission from GPPSD
- Emergency phone numbers including your homestay family, International Student Programs office, and your family back home
- Photocopies of all above documents in a secondary location (and be sure to leave a third copy of all documents with your parents)
- Copies of any necessary medical information (for example, prescriptions)
- Small amount of currency (Canadian, US, or your own)
- Bank card (that is accessible via the Interac or Cirrus networks), or credit card (Visa, Amex or MasterCard)

We recommend that in order to make your transition as smooth as possible, you bring some of the following items:

- Pictures of family and friends from home
- Favorite music, books, magazines, or newspapers
- A Camera
- Recipes of favorite foods to share with your homestay family and friends
- Official or attested copies of academic documents from your education in your home country (especially important for students who wish to apply to Canadian universities)
- Items to share your culture and home country with others (flags, traditional dress, posters, etc.)

It is also recommended that you have small amount of Canadian currency with you when you travel. You can change currency upon your arrival in Canada, but if you wish to purchase snacks or reading material in the airport, it would be easier to have money with you. Please note it is not recommended for students to carry large amounts of currency with them to Canada. For more information on banking and money, see the International Student Orientation Manual.

## Climate & Clothing

Winter (October – March): Temperatures will range from -30°C to 10°C. Bring a heavy winter jacket with a hood, winter boots, mittens scarf and head cover.

Summer (June – August): Temperature up to 30°C. Bring a swimsuit, light clothing, and summer shoes.

Spring (April – May): Temperatures ranging from 15°C to 25°C. Bring a light jacket, sweater, raincoat, hiking shoes/boots.

Fall (September – October): Although Grande Prairie can have very warm fall weather from (Sept to October) there can be periods of unexpected rain and snow. Spring clothing is recommended as well as rain attire.

No matter the season, you should take with you: warm coat, raincoat, comfortable walking shoes, comfortable clothes, umbrella, and a backpack. You will be able to purchase winter and rain clothing in Grande Prairie if not available in your home country.

Students dress casually for school and when going out with friends (for example, jeans, a casual shirt, and runners). You will also want to bring one dressy outfit with you for special school events.

## Calendar and Important Dates

There are several important dates to keep in mind when you make your plans to travel to Canada. Please take the following calendar into consideration if you are making plans to travel away from GPPSD during your stay in Canada. Every effort should be made to ensure you do not miss any class time!

Event	Date
First day of class	September 1, 2021
Thanksgiving (schools closed)	October 11, 2021
Remembrance Day (schools closed)	November 11, 2021
Schools close for winter vacation	December 24, 2021
Schools reopen after winter vacation	January 10, 2022
Second semester begins	January 31, 2022
Family Day (schools closed)	February 21, 2022
Teachers' Convention (schools closed)	March 10,11, 2022
Easter/Spring Break (schools closed)	March 26-31, 2022
Good Friday	April 15, 2022
Easter Monday	April 18, 2022
Victoria Day	May 23, 2022
Last day of classes for academic year except for student with diploma examinations.	June 28, 2022

There are additional single day school closures for holidays and special events. Student travel during those dates is not recommended.

# School Calendar



## Grande Prairie Public School Division 2021-2022 CALENDAR-Approved 2021-01-12

AUGUST 2021								
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28		
29	30	31						

**27** Professional Learning Day  
**30** Professional Learning Day  
**31** Professional Learning Day

**3/0**

FEBRUARY 2022								
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
		1	2	3	4	5		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26		
27	28							

**4** Professional Learning Day  
**21** Family Day

**19/18**

SEPTEMBER 2021								
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
			1	2	3	4		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25		
26	27	28	29	30				

**1** First Day of School  
**6** Labour Day  
**17** Professional Learning Day

**21/20**

MARCH 2022								
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
		1	2	3	4	5		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26		
27	28	29	30	31				

**10/11** Teachers' Convention  
**18** Professional Learning Day  
**26-31** Spring Break

**19/16**

OCTOBER 2021								
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
					1	2		
3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
31								

**11** Thanksgiving  
**22** Professional Learning Day

**20/19**

APRIL 2022								
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
					1	2		
3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30		

**1-3** Spring Break  
**4** First Day Back  
**15** Good Friday  
**18** Day in Lieu  
**29** Professional Learning Day

**18/17**

NOVEMBER 2021								
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27		
28	29	30						

**11** Remembrance Day  
**12** Day in Lieu  
**26** Professional Learning Day

**20/19**

MAY 2022								
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
8	9	10	11	12	13	14		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28		
29	30	31						

**20** Professional Learning Day  
**23** Victoria Day

**21/20**

DECEMBER 2021								
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
			1	2	3	4		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25		
26	27	28	29	30	31			

**17** Professional Learning Day  
**24-31** Christmas Break

**17/16**

JUNE 2022								
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
			1	2	3	4		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25		
26	27	28	29	30				

**10** Professional Learning Day  
**28** Last Day for Students  
**29** Last Day for Staff

**21/19**

JANUARY 2022								
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		
						1		
2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
9	10	11	12	13	14	15		
16	17	18	19	20	21	22		
23	24	25	26	27	28	29		
30	31							

**1-9** Christmas Break  
**10** First Day Back  
**14** Professional Learning Day  
**31** Start of Semester 2

**15/14**  
**1/1**

Day off for Students & Staff  
 Full Day off for Students

1<sup>st</sup> Semester 96 Staff/88 Student  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester 99 Staff/91 Student  
 Total number of days  
 195 Staff / 179 Students

# Arrival in Canada

When you fly to Canada, you will arrive at one of the major Canadian airports prior to traveling to Grande Prairie. Most people will fly into Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton or Toronto as they are the main airports in Canada, and then connect to Grande Prairie Airport.

It is recommended that you arrange to fly to Vancouver International Airport (airport code: YVR) and then arrange a connecting flight to Edmonton/Calgary and then to Grande Prairie. The Grande Prairie Airport is a short 10-minute drive from the city. Air Canada and West Jet Airlines both fly numerous direct flights between Edmonton/Calgary. Other connections are possible, and your travel agent will have access to the best routing.

Should you be delayed, please do your best to inform those who will be meeting you at the airport. Your homestay family will check the flight schedule, but it is not always possible to obtain current information. Should you miss a connection or if your flight is delayed, do your best to call or send an email to inform your family of the delay.

You will clear Canadian immigration and customs at the first point of entry into Canada. When you get off your plane, you will proceed to the immigration officers who will want to know why you are entering Canada.

*Long term students (longer than 6 months):* Present them with the collected documentation you have showing your permission to enter Canada (your Visa and or Study Permit letters, where required) and receive your Study Permit! It is very important that you do not leave the immigration officer without obtaining your Study Permit.

*Short term students (less than six months):* You are not required to obtain a Study Permit as you may study in Canada for up to 180 days without this document. The immigration officer will stamp your passport, indicating you are permitted to enter the country.

Once you have cleared immigration, you will then need to clear customs. This is where they will check to see that the items you are bringing into Canada are permitted. It is possible that the customs officers will want to search your luggage and ask you questions about the items you are importing. For more information what you are allowed to bring into Canada, please consult the Canadian government website: <https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/menu-eng.html>

After you have cleared all arrivals processes, you will then need to visit the transit desk in the arrivals area to drop off your luggage and, if necessary, obtain a boarding pass for your next flight. The signage in all airports is very good and if you are not sure, there are many employees available to provide direction. Just ask!

Once you arrive in Grande Prairie you will be met by your guardian.

# Services for International Students

Grande Prairie schools offer a number of services, including:

- Student Counselors: Counselors help student adapt to a new school and assist in planning their education program.
- Youth Workers: Youth Workers help students adapt to their school environment as well as resolve any possible student issues.
- Community Health Nurse: Nurses help students with health concerns.
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) School Liaison Officer (secondary only): In Canada, an RCMP officer is appointed to secondary schools to ensure the well-being of students and to provide guidance.
- Career Preparation and Work Experience Office (secondary only): This office assists students in exploring their career goals and coordinating volunteer work experience opportunities.
- Student Services: Normally in each school you will have access to counselors, youth workers, community health nurses, career preparation and work experience counselors (secondary only), peer mentoring programs, after school tutoring and homework clubs and pre-school childcare (at select elementary schools).
- Facilities: Each of our secondary schools are equipped with art studios, cafeteria, computer labs, dance studio, gymnasiums, home economics labs, information technology labs, industrial technology labs, library, music room, photography studio, science labs and weight room. Elementary schools are normally equipped with gymnasiums, library, music and art rooms, and computer labs. Some elementary schools offer a Hot Lunch Program.

## About Your School

School Hours: Students from grades 1-12 attend school from Monday to Friday for approximately six hours per day. Kindergarten students attend for half a day (either morning or afternoons depending on the school).

Students are supervised during both school hours and organized school activities (for example, sports, art or choir) occurring before and after regular school hours. Students who are not involved in organized school activities should come to school no earlier than 30 minutes before school begins and leave no later than 30 minutes after school has ended for the day.

Semester (Secondary), Trimester and full year programs (Elementary/Jr. High) In Grande Prairie we have two different school calendars. Most of our schools run on a linear calendar, which means students take eight courses, starting in September and ending in June. Our two high schools run on a semester calendar, wherein students take four courses from September to January and then another four from February to June (total of eight courses).

Each elementary school's timetable will vary. Normally students attend school from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Students receive a brief nutrition/transition break in the morning and then a lunch break around 12:00 p.m.

## Services, Facilities, Sports and Clubs

After each block, students normally move to a different classroom and teacher.

**Student Services:** In addition to the services for international students that are mentioned above, normally in each school you will have access to: counselors, youth workers, community health nurses, career preparation and work experience counselors (secondary only), peer mentoring programs, after school tutoring and homework clubs and pre-school childcare (at select elementary schools).

**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, photography studio, school stores, science labs and weight room. Elementary schools are normally equipped with gymnasiums, library, music and art rooms, and computer labs. Some elementary schools offer a Hot Lunch Program.

**Clubs and Sports:** Grande Prairie schools offer several extracurricular activities. Your school's Principal/Vice-Principal can provide you with advice on joining an extracurricular activity. Examples of extracurricular activities at the secondary level include:

Sports	Clubs	Academic Competitions
Badminton	Creative Writing	Envirothon
Basketball	Warrior Drama	Eco Junkies
Cheer	Multicultural Club	PISA
Cross Country Running	SADD(students against drunk driving)	
Curling	Travel Club	
Football	First Responders	
Golf	Anime	
Rugby	Japanese	
Track & Field	Gamers Club	
Volleyball	Grad Council	
Wrestling	Christians in Action (CIA)	
	Yearbook	
	Interact/Rotary	
	Students without Borders	
	Mandarin	

## School Policies and Procedures

**Lockers:** You will be assigned a locker during your first week of school. You are expected to keep your lockers clean.

**Internet:** Each school provides students with access to the internet.

**Code of Conduct:** Student must follow a specific Code of Conduct. You will be expected to conduct yourself in a respectful and responsible manner or you may be removed from the program.

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

### [Student Code of Conduct](#)

#### [Administrative Procedure 350.1 – Student Dress Code](#)

**Report Cards:** Students receive three report cards a year, normally in November March and June.

A copy of international student report cards is accessible to parents overseas if they are not living in Grande Prairie through a program called Powerschool. In addition, parent/teacher conference nights are held to discuss the student report cards twice a year.

Students also receive interim report cards throughout the year. Students are not given marks on their interim report card. Rather the interim report cards help students identify their strengths and give advice for improvement. They also provide a good indicator of the letter or percentage grade the student will achieve in the class on their next report if they are to continue at the same level

## English Language Learning Program (ELL )

As an international student, you will be integrated into regular classes along with local Canadian students. Most international students require additional English language training, which is referred to as the English Language Learning (ELL) program. The amount of time spent participating in this program widely varies as they are individualized to meet each student's unique needs. The following provides a typical course plan for students completing both ESL and regular academic courses.

Students in the ELL program are tested at points throughout the school year in order to provide them with the opportunity to move to the next level, if the teacher feels that they are ready. This is completed through proficiency benchmark assessments.

# Your Academic Program

## Elementary Program

The academic aim of our elementary schools is to begin developing students' intellectual and interpersonal capabilities, while instilling a lifelong love for learning.

In elementary school, students normally study; Language Arts (English), Social Studies, Sciences, Mathematics, Technology, Fine Arts (Art, Music, Drama) and Physical Education.

## Secondary Program

During orientation you will have an opportunity to visit your school and meet with a counselor to arrange your courses. Depending on your English language capabilities, you will be placed in courses alongside local students. You can choose from a range of core academic subjects and a growing number of specialized electives as you progress through your secondary studies. You can view a selection of courses normally offered at Grande Prairie schools by visiting our website [www.gppsd.ab.ca](http://www.gppsd.ab.ca).

For highly motivated students, Grande Prairie schools provide an extensive number of Honours Courses. At the Grande Prairie Composite High School, we offer the [International Baccalaureate Program](#). You must qualify for entrance into these courses. Students who complete this course may be eligible for year credit when entering university.

While many international students come to Canada with the primary goal of improving their English language skills, it is important to remember that you have enrolled in an international education program within a school setting. You are expected to comply with all academic requirements (attendance, handing in assignments, participating in classes, demonstrating positive behaviours etc....) while here.

## Registering for the Following Semester or Year

Students registered until the end of June- In late January, a notice will be sent to your custodial guardian asking if you wish to continue in the program. You will be required to pay the tuition fee in order to reserve your seat.

Students registered until end of December/January- In October, a notice will be sent to our custodial guardian asking if you wish to continue for the following school year. You will be required to pay your tuition fee by the middle of November in order to reserve your seat.

Letter of Acceptance- Once you have paid the school fees, the International Education Office will provide you with a formal letter of acceptance. You will require this letter in order to extend your Study Permit.

# Culture Shock and 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 life here in Canada. Give yourself time to feel at home.

Stage 1: When you first arrive, you typically go through the “honeymoon stage,” where 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.

Stage 2: The second stage can be a bit of a down time where the differences between your home and here becomes clear. You might also find yourself missing family, friends, and some of your favorite food. Working on your English can also be a tiring aspect of getting started in Canada.

Stage 3: The third stage can be a frustrating or a restless time. At this point you may feel angry with your new life, classmates, and hosts. This is normal and will not last.

Stage 4: The fourth stage usually involves finding your sense of humor again, seeing this adventure in a new perspective, and appreciating both your home and Canada in new ways.

Stage 5: The fifth stage is where you feel almost at home here and can meet the day-to-day problems that come along. You are also starting to think about returning home again. This can be a time of mixed feelings – both excitement and anxiety.

Stage 6: This sixth stage is called reverse culture shock and happens when you return home. You may find that your family and friends have a hard time understanding your experiences in Canada and that it takes time to settle back in. This very normal.

Stage 7: The last stage is readjustment to being home. This happens when you have integrated yourself back into your own culture with the knowledge and experiences that living away from home has given you.

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*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 your school's International Student Coordinator, a school counselor, or the International Education Office if you are having any difficulty in your adjustment. We are here to support you.*

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## Medical Insurance

As part of your participation in the International Student Program, you are covered by our private medical insurance. Study Insured will automatically register you for the insurance program and the coverage will begin one week prior to the start of your program. Therefore, you are eligible for coverage for September beginning with your arrival in August. Please note the coverage only begins when you have left your home country. (In your home country, you are covered by your family's traditional, local medical coverage.)

If you plan to arrive in Canada earlier than August 25, please inform the International Student Program Coordinator.

## Travel Emergency Contacts

If you are on your way to Canada and experience any problems, keep the following list of numbers close by. Multiple numbers have been provided but it is recommended that you contact your homestay coordinator first and then try others if you are not able to reach her. You may also want to have your guardian's contact information available.

Emergency Contacts	Phone number
Executive Assistant – Shera-Lea Crichton	780-532-4491 Ext. 1041
Director of Student Supports – Paul Therrien	780-532-4491 Ext. 1015

# Living in Grande Prairie

To learn more about the City of Grande Prairie, visit the City's website at [www.cityofgp.com](http://www.cityofgp.com)

## Transportation

Public Transit: Public transportation in Grande Prairie is easily accessible and reliable. Please refer to the following link. [Grande Prairie Public Transit Information](#). Students are advised to purchase a "monthly pass" to reduce the cost.

Effective June 6, 2016

Fare Category*	Dollar Fare	Ticket Book of 10	Ticket Book of 20	Monthly Pass	Pass Pak
Adult (age 18 - 64)	\$2.00	\$17.00	\$28.00	\$54.00	\$162.00
Student (age 12 -17 & GPRC Students)	\$1.50	\$13.60	\$22.40	\$43.00	\$129.00
Senior (age 65+)	\$1.50	\$8.50	\$14.00	\$27.00	\$81.00
Child (age 11 & under)	\$1.50	\$8.50	\$14.00	N/A	
School**	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$22.00	

\*Fare prices are subject to change without notice.

\*\***School Passes** are only permitted during school days, Monday through Friday, 7:00am to 6:00pm. Passes & Tickets are **non-refundable**. The City of Grande Prairie is not responsible for lost or stolen Transit passes or tickets. No GST. Our drivers do not carry change or handle money - please have the exact fare ready. Identification may be required by the Transit Operator as proof of fare category.

**Pass Pak Sales** - Pass Paks are sold 3 times a year. A Pak contains 4 passes, but you only pay for 3! **January/February/March/April - May/June/July/August - September/October/November/December**

Please note Pass Paks are only available until the last week of the first month in each Pass Pak Sale.

## Transit Pass & Ticket Sales Outlets

- [City Hall](#)
- [Eastlink Centre](#)
- [Grande Prairie Public Library](#)
- [GPRC, Bookstore](#)
- [New Horizon Co-op Marketplace](#)
- [Shoppers Drug Mart - Cobblestone](#)
- [Shoppers Drug Mart - Patterson](#)
- [Shoppers Drug Mart - Prairie Mall](#)
- [Shoppers Drug Mart - Wapiti Road](#)

Cycling: During the spring, summer and fall some students may choose to cycle to school because it is an inexpensive form of transportation. If you choose to cycle to and from school, please ensure to wear a helmet as it's the law here in Alberta. Make sure you use a strong bike lock, and always use it when you park your bike. Each school has a location to park your bike.

## Communications

### Long Distance Calls

To make a long-distance call within Alberta, Canada or the US, you must dial “1” then the city code.

To make a long-distance call to most overseas countries, you must dial “011”, then the country code, and the city code.

- Collect calls: dial 0+ country code + city code + local number
- Direct dialed calls: 011 + country code + city code + local number

See the first section of the phone book for country and city codes or call the operator “0” for information and help.

### Phone Cards

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

### Postal Service

[www.candapost.ca](http://www.candapost.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 Grande Prairie.

### Grande Prairie Public Library/ Art Gallery

Address:	101, 9839 - 103 Avenue	Hours:	Mon-Thurs: 10:00am – 9:00pm
	Grande Prairie, AB		Friday: 10:00am – 6:00pm
	T8V 6M7		Saturday: 10:00am – 5:00pm
	Phone: (780) 532-3580		Sunday: 1:00pm – 5:00pm
	Fax: (780) 538-4983		
	<a href="mailto:gplib@gppl.ab.ca">gplib@gppl.ab.ca</a>		

[Map and Directions Grande Prairie Public Library](#)

# Important Message to Parents

## Personal Safety

You will play an important role in supporting your child's studies in Grande Prairie, 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 Grande Prairie, 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 rapidly than if they were to take numerous hours of after-school tutoring.

## Parent Expectations

English language development: On various occasions, parents have requested that the school advance their child's English as a Second Language (ESL) level. Please be patient with your child's English language acquisition. It takes time. The majority of students are planning to continue their studies at a university in Canada. Like a house's foundation, if it is not strong, the whole house will collapse. English is the student's foundation. Without a strong foundation in English, the student will not be successful in university.

## Medical Services

There are a number of doctor's office and walk-in medical clinics located in Grande Prairie. To locate an available doctor, we suggest you visit the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta website <http://www.cpsa.ca/>. The International Education Office can also direct you to the local clinics and multilingual doctors. The City houses a leading community hospital the Queen Elizabeth II Hospital, located at 10409 – 98 Street, Grande Prairie. In the unlikely case of a student feeling seriously ill or had an accident, we strongly recommend the student go directly to the Emergency Department at the Queen Elizabeth II Hospital.

## Personal Safety

The City of Grande Prairie offers a safe living environment by world standards. However, as with any other city please remember to always be aware of your surroundings. At orientation we will provide you with detailed safety tips in order to ensure your stay with us is a pleasant one.

China  
Suite 100, 1011-6<sup>th</sup> Ave., S.W.  
Calgary, AB, T2P 0W1  
Tel: 403-264-3315, 403-264-3322 Fax: 403-264-6656  
[Chinaconsul\\_cal\\_ca@mfa.gov.cn](mailto:Chinaconsul_cal_ca@mfa.gov.cn)

Madagascar  
8944 Bayridge Drive SW  
Calgary, AB T2V 3M8  
Tel: 1-403-262-5576 Fax: 1-403-262-3356  
[teknika@teknicaltd.com](mailto:teknika@teknicaltd.com)

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[rtcgen@gmail.com](mailto:rtcgen@gmail.com)

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1400 Canadian Western Bank Place, 10303 Jasper Ave.  
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[tbosse@ogilvielaw.com](mailto:tbosse@ogilvielaw.com)

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Tel: 1-780-440-2292 Fax: 1-780-440-1241  
[rtungland@ostrem.com](mailto:rtungland@ostrem.com)

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[Edmonton@hk-diplo.de](mailto:Edmonton@hk-diplo.de)

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11219 – Jasper Avenue  
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[nkorris@working-it-out.com](mailto:nkorris@working-it-out.com)

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12526 – 26 Avenue  
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Tel: 1-780-475-3399 Fax: 1-780-476-3311  
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Calgary, AB T2P 5H1  
Tel: 1-403-294-0782 Fax: 1-403-294-1645  
[infocul@conjapan.ab.ca](mailto:infocul@conjapan.ab.ca)

## Academic Performance

International students face added challenges due to their being immersed in a new environment, culture, and language. Encourage them to try their best and to ask for help from their International Student Coordinator, 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 your child to do his/her very best and to work hard but also to enjoy his/her time here and to seek help when needed.



**Grande Prairie  
Public School  
Division**

# Pre-Departure Checklist

- Confirmed accommodation arrangements.
- Obtained a passport and made sure that it is valid for a least six months beyond my return.
- Obtained a Study Permit to study in Canada.
- Obtained a multi-entry visa (if required).
- Obtained the appropriate visa if planning a trip as a visitor to the United States.
- Purchased airline ticket.
- Arranged out-of-country supplementary health insurance for the days prior to the orientation (if needed).
- Have noted home, International Education Office, and school contact information.
- Photocopied all information (passport/birth certificate), leaving a second copy at home.
- 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, Grande Prairie and the surrounding area. Learned about Canadian culture.
- Will pack this handbook along with the orientation information in luggage to bring to Canada for reference and have read it carefully.