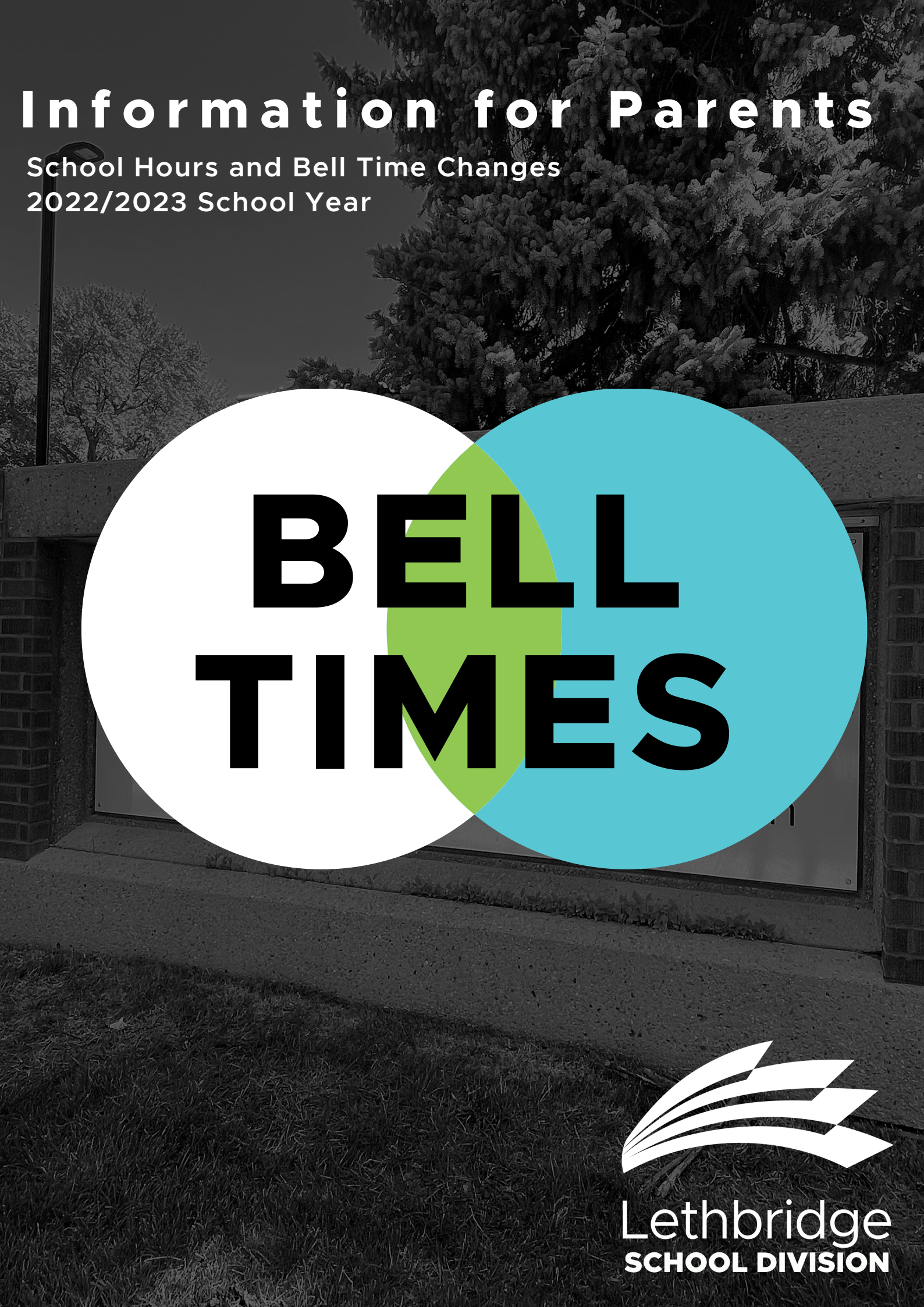
Information for Parents

School Hours and Bell Time Changes
2022/2023 School Year



BELL TIMES

Lethbridge
SCHOOL DIVISION

2022/2023 School Year

01

WHY DO THESE CHANGES NEED TO BE MADE?

Bell times are directly connected to transportation services. There were many challenges with school transportation in the 2021-2022 school year such as driver shortages and timing of bus routes. One of the most significant issues during the 2021-2022 school year was that there was not enough time between school runs. There needs to be sufficient time between bell times for the bus to travel between a previous run's end point, and a subsequent run's starting point as well as complete the subsequent run. Double routing reduces the overall cost of busing because fewer buses are required. Significant changes to bell times are being made in 2022-2023 to correct these timing issues so that students may arrive to school on time. Additional school buses were also added to support scheduling concerns within current provincial funding provided.

Lethbridge School Division's goal is to run an efficient and effective student transportation system and avoid having to charge bussing fees to families for student transportation. The cost of a yellow school bus is based on a block of time. The more routes a single bus can run during this block of time, the more cost-effective the transportation service is. Aligning bus times allows a bus to run two routes during each block of time.

02

WHO MADE THIS DECISION? WHO DECIDES BELL TIMES?

Lethbridge School Division and Holy Spirit Catholic Separate School Division collaborate to provide yellow school bus service to students in the city of Lethbridge. The decision to change the bell times for the 2022-2023 school year was made by leadership teams from Lethbridge School Division and Holy Spirit Catholic Separate School Division working with our service provider Southland Transportation. These bell times are communicated to school principals.

03

WHAT FACTORS WERE CONSIDERED WHEN CHANGING THE BELL TIMES?

When reviewing the bell times, many scenarios were reviewed to determine which schools could be transported on back-to-back runs and the time required to drop off/pick up at each location. Bell times also needed to factor in the appropriate amount of time for instructional programming hours as required by Alberta Education.

2022/2023 School Year

04

WILL BELL TIMES CHANGE AGAIN NEXT YEAR?

We expect that bell times for most schools will remain consistent year to year, however, bell times will be reviewed and may be adjusted annually based on enrolment or programming changes.

05

HOW WILL MY CHILD'S LUNCH HOUR BE AFFECTED?

A change in start and end times for a school can mean a change in the time set aside for lunch hour or nutrition breaks. The setting of lunch hour or nutrition break times is at the principal's discretion and reflects the unique circumstances of each school.

06

HOW WILL BELL TIME CHANGES AFFECT THE SCHEDULING OF CLASSES AT MY CHILD'S SCHOOL? WILL THE HOURS OF INSTRUCTION BE AFFECTED?

"Timetabling," or the scheduling of classes, is an activity completed by school administration and school staff annually. Timetables are developed for each division of students (K-5, 6-8 and 9-12) and specialized settings using the required hours of instruction. The mandatory hours of instruction are established by Alberta Education and bell time changes do not compromise these requirements. Each school is responsible for scheduling classes according to the legislated instructional minutes for each grade configuration and bell time changes do not affect this requirement.

07

WILL EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES BE IMPACTED IF MY SCHOOL EXPERIENCES A BELL TIME CHANGE?

The change in bell times should not affect extracurricular activities provided by the school. Extracurricular activities depend on staff availability, skill set and interest and may vary from year to year. These decisions are made by school staff at the beginning of the school year and once determined, will be communicated to each unique community. After school activities provided by independent providers are scheduled at their discretion.

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08

WHEN CAN I DROP MY CHILD OFF AT SCHOOL IN THE MORNING?

Supervision of students is provided 15 minutes prior to the start of school and 10 minutes after the afternoon bell. This means that students should arrive on school grounds no sooner than 10-15 minutes before school begins and must be supervised by their parent or caregiver if they arrive earlier.

09

DID LETHBRIDGE SCHOOL DIVISION TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE IMPACT OF BELL TIME CHANGES ON FAMILIES?

Lethbridge School Division understands that parents of elementary aged students have different work schedules and family circumstances. Each family will have a different perspective on whether an earlier start time/early end time or later start time/later end time works best given work schedules, older sibling support with before and after school care or ability to access or afford before and after school programming. We also understand that later end times may create concerns with access to after school activities that are provided by independent service providers. Due to the complexities and costs of the student transportation system it is not possible to have all schools start and end at the same time.

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HOW WILL BELL TIME CHANGES AFFECT BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAMS IN OUR SCHOOL?

Before and after school care programs that are housed within Lethbridge School Division schools may need to adjust their schedules to meet the earlier or later arrival or dismissal of students. In most cases, these changes should have minimal impact on these programs.



2022/2023 School Year

11

HOW WILL LETHBRIDGE SCHOOL DIVISION SUPPORT FAMILIES WITH INCREASED BEFORE-AND-AFTER-SCHOOL CARE NEEDS RESULTING FROM THESE CHANGES?

There are opportunities available for parents to access before-and-after-school care. Lethbridge School Division hosts – It's a Blast program in many of our elementary schools. See It's a BLAST Program Lethbridge Community Out of School Association (itsablastprogram.com) for details.

The Boys and Girls Club of Lethbridge provides before and after school care at the north location with transportation to north side elementary schools. Kinder Club is offered at the north side location and at their south location near Ecole Agnes Davidson. See Main North - BGC LETHBRIDGE for details.

The YMCA of Lethbridge, located in west Lethbridge provides Before and After School Care. See YMCA-BASC-FAQ.pdf for more details.

12

WHAT IS THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE START TIME AND LATEST POSSIBLE END TIME, AND HOW DO YOU DETERMINE WHAT IS APPROPRIATE?

Working within our guidelines, we aim to have most students begin busing at 7:00 a.m. or later. For bell times, the earliest start time is 7:55 a.m. and the latest end time is 3:50 p.m.

Please see your school's website for bell times and school schedules for the 2022/2023 School Year.