

God Calls Us



EACH BY NAME

*"I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord... plans to give you a future with hope."
Jeremiah 29:11*

September 2021

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year! Our theme for this year is "God calls us each by name" and is guided by scripture from Jeremiah. At its root, our theme is a message of hope. Catholic education is entirely about building a future with hope. When we serve the children of Edmonton Catholic Schools, our goal is to instill in them a sense of wonder in themselves as children of God so that they see themselves as members and builders of his Kingdom. There is nothing more hopeful than this.

We are filled with a renewed sense of hope as we return to school this year. We have created a [Back to School Plan](#) that is designed to support our schools in reducing the risk of transmission of illness and maintaining safe and healthy environments for our students and staff. Some procedures we introduced in our schools last year will continue because we know they are good practices in minimizing the transmission of respiratory infections, including COVID-19, influenza, and common colds. Many activities are returning to our schools this year, including local and provincial field trips, athletics and extracurricular activities, all fine arts and options classes, assemblies and special events, and graduation and school farewell activities.

At the beginning of September, teachers will be focusing on welcoming students back to their school communities, whether in-person or online. As part of getting to know students as individual learners, teachers in K - 6 will be screening students in numeracy and literacy. They will determine student knowledge and skill based on previous curricula and target instruction for any missed learning. In addition, the Division is preparing post-assessments to help teachers measure learning growth. In junior high and high school, subject-area teachers will also be targeting their instruction to support students in their transition back-to-school.

Our work for this year is directed by our [Division Plan for Continuous Growth](#), which has four priorities: Growing in Faith, Student Success, An Excellent Place to Work and Learn, and Building our Future Together. You can monitor our progress in these priorities by exploring our measures and results as represented in our [Assurance Dashboard](#). Results will be updated throughout the year as new ones become available. Each school also has its own School Plan for Continuous Growth to address its own needs and a school specific Assurance Dashboard for their results and measures. Visit your school's website; you will find the Assurance Dashboard with the school plan under About / School Information.

... 2



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We are very excited to add another school to our ECSD family this fall. Genesis Online School is opening its virtual doors and will serve over 1200 students from kindergarten to grade 9. Construction on the Ben Calf Robe replacement school and Joan Carr Catholic Elementary School is well underway, and we're getting ready to break ground for Father Michael McCaffery Catholic High School.

Pope Francis shared a catechesis on hope several years ago. There was much wisdom shared with us over many months... it's a deep examination of the nature of hope to the people of God who live in His abundant love. As we begin this school year and come together again in our Christ-centred school communities, I will leave you with a thought from our Holy Father. He says, "*... one does not learn to hope alone. No one learns to hope alone. It is impossible. Hope, to be nourished, necessarily needs a 'body', in which the various members support and revive each other. This means, then, that if we hope, it is because many of our brothers and sisters have taught us to hope and have kept our hope alive.*" (General Audience, February 8/17)

Have a wonderful school year!

Yours in Christ,

Robert Martin
Chief Superintendent



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