

A Newcomers' Guide to High School Education in Edmonton Catholic Schools



Information and Suggestions for your Child's Success in School





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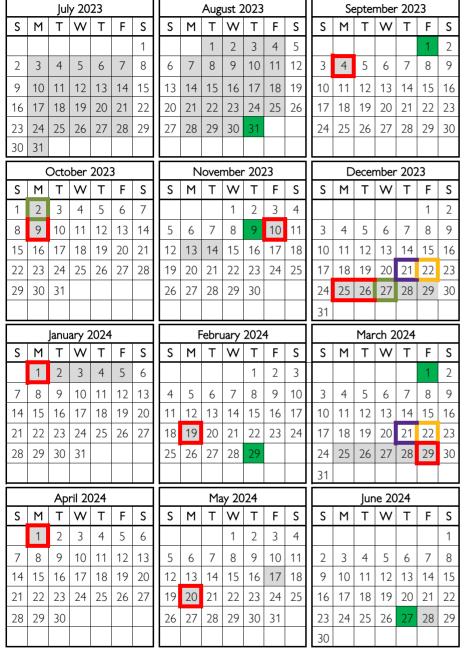
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New to Canada?

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ECSD SCHOOL CALENDAR 2023-2024



Non-instructional days

Non-operational days



First Day of Operation
August 31, 2023
First Day of Instruction
September 5, 2023
Last Day of Instruction
June 26, 2024
Last Day of Operation
June 27, 2024

Labour Day	Sept 4
Truth & Reconciliation Day	Oct 2
Thanksgiving Day	Oct 9
Faith Development Day/PD	Nov 9
Remembrance Day Weekend	Nov 10-14
Christmas Vacation	Dec 25 to Jan 5
Family Day	Feb 19
Teachers' Convention	Feb 29 to Mar 1
Spring Break	Mar 25 to 29
Good Friday	Mar 29
/	1 101 27
Easter Monday	April 1

MONTH	Operational Days	Instructional Days
August	1	0
September	20	19
October	20	20
November	19	18
December	16	16
January	18	18
February	20	19
March	16	15
April	21	21
May	21	21
June	19	18
Total	191	185

Early dismissal
Statutory Holiday - Office/School Closed
Named Holiday - Office/School Closed

Cancellation of early dismissal

ecsd.net JANUARY 2023



Bringing Catholic Education to Life

Edmonton Catholic Schools provides a Catholic education that inspires students to learn and that prepares them to live fully and to serve God in one another.

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Parent Guide Sections Index:

The first few years in Canada can be very difficult for newcomers. Parents are busy finding a job and establishing a new home. Children are making new friends, and everyone is adjusting to a new life.

For parents of students in high school, each year you are expected to help your son or daughter choose courses. This is not easy because there are many different types of courses. The choices can greatly affect his or her opportunities after graduation.

This Guide provides general information for English Language Learners (ELLs) parents. Specific information about programming at the high school your child attends can be requested directly from the school.

The Guide is available in nine(9) languages: Amharic, Croatian, English, Filipino/Tagalog, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Tigrinya, and Ukrainian. It will be translated into more languages as needed.

The word 'parent' in the text also includes guardians, caregivers, and other family members.

For more information about high school education in Edmonton Catholic Schools, see www.ecsd.net.

PARENT GUIDE - SECTION 1

Starting School

Contents Summary

- 1. Kinds of High Schools in Alberta
- 2. How Catholic Schools Are Unique
- 3. Registering for School
- Reception of ELL Families/Intake Protocol
- 5. Intercultural Services/Liaison Workers
- 6. School Boundaries
- 7. Age-Appropriate Grade Placement
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- 9. Students' Course Placement in the First Year
- 10. Students Who are 18 Years of Age or Older
- 11. Credits for Previous School Learning
- 12. Secondary School Graduates from Other Countries

Most students start school as soon as they arrive in Canada. These pages describe what you can expect when your son or daughter starts school and suggest some ways to prepare for their education.

1. Kinds of High Schools in Alberta

Choice is one of the important principles of Alberta's education system. When it comes to selecting a school, parents and students can choose from a wide range of publicly funded options: Public, Separate, Francophone Private, and Charter Schools. In each system, district school boards supervise the schools.

For more information about school choices in Alberta see: Choosing a School in Alberta or Education Options.

2. How Catholic Schools are Unique



Catholic schools offer the same core program as Public Schools and students also graduate with the Alberta High School Diploma. However, Catholic schools are unique in several ways:

- All subjects are taught from a Catholic perspective and Catholic values are part of everything that students learn.
- All students study Religion as an academic subject in each year of school.
 Students participate in daily prayer, reflection and other activities that develop their Catholic faith.
- The mission of Edmonton Catholic Schools is to provide a Catholic education that inspires students to learn and prepares them to live fully and to serve God in one another.



3. Reception of ELL Families/Intake Protocol



Registration and intake of newcomer students in Edmonton Catholic School Division are conducted at One World...One Centre. At the time of registration, all newcomer students whose first language is not English will be assessed to determine their proficiency and level of support for EAL programming. At the same time, the Intercultural Liaisons will assist the family in the completion of admission documents and will provide information on the variety of resources and support that are available to newcomer students and their families. Authorization to sign is indicated on the Parent Signature portion of the following provisions:

- Student Registration Form
- Parents' permission to test their children's English proficiency Information Resources
 Responsible Use Agreement Edmonton Catholic School Division information resources are
 provided to support student learning in a 21st-century Catholic learning environment. Students are
 provided with Division-approved accounts to access Office 365 and a subset of Google G-Suite
 services in support of their instructional needs. All students granted access to ECSD Information
 Resources must follow the acceptable use rules stated in this agreement.
- Collecting, Using and Disclosing Personal Information

In accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act and as outlined in the Division's Administrative Procedures, Edmonton Catholic Schools is authorized and required under the provisions of the School Act and its regulations to collect, use, and disclose personal information when that information relates directly to and is necessary for providing educational programming and ensuring student and staff safety. Please note that consent is not required for these purposes.

When Edmonton Catholic Schools uses and/or discloses personal information for reasons not directly related to delivering educational programming or ensuring student and staff safety, written consent is required. For more information on how Edmonton Catholic Schools handles your or your child's personal information, please refer to Administrative Procedures 180 and/or speak with your school principal.

Consent for Use of Student Information

Edmonton Catholic Schools is requesting your permission for the following uses of your child's personal information:

- For use by the division
- For use by outside organizations

Please note that consent is not a requirement. You may choose whether to grant your consent. Once given, consent can be revoked prior to any such use or disclosure by notifying the school principal in writing.



Consent to Communicate Through Electronic Means

Edmonton Catholic Schools requires your consent to use email as an option for communicating school or general Division information, events, and announcements through electronic communications such as email and newsletters from your child's school and/or the Edmonton Catholic School Division. Some of these communications may include information about offers, advertisements or promotions related to school activities such as yearbooks, field trips, lunch programs, photos, or similar related school activities. Consent is required to receive these types of communications. If you choose not to consent, you will only receive attendance messages and emergency messages.

Declaration by Parent, Legal Guardian, or Independent Student

The information provided in this online form is true, correct, and complete. I have identified all parents and legal guardians for this student. The individuals identified in the "parent or guardian" sections have the right to view student information and make educational decisions for this child unless otherwise indicated here and supported with legal documentation. Further, I recognize that it is my responsibility to notify my child's school should the above information change.

You need to provide the following information to register your child for school:

- 1. Proof of student's immigration status either one of:
 - student's Permanent Resident Card or Confirmation of Permanent Residency
 - parent's Work or Study Permit and child's/children's Visitor Record or Study Permit(s) if available
 - parent and student's Refugee Protection Claimant Document or Notice of Decision for Convention Refugees
 - student's Study Permit (International Students)
- 2. Student's Birth Certificate
- 3. Baptismal Certificate if the student is Catholic and if the certificate is available.
- 4. Proof of guardianship required if the student is under 18 years of age and is not living with a parent.
- 5. Document to verify home address either one of the following: driver's license, utility bill, lease agreement or any other document with your name and address.

SACRAMENTALITY



"God saw everything that was made; indeed, it was very good."
(Genesis 1: 31)

All of creation is the ordinary medium of God's outreach to the human family. God communicates to humans...through everything and anything in our world. Everything created is good because it is of God. A Catholic attitude to the world affirms the world as so good as to be sacramental. That is, it is made holy and is sacred.



5. Intercultural Services



Educational success for immigrant students is enhanced when connections between the school, students' families, and communities are established and reinforced. Edmonton Catholic Schools Intercultural Services plays a significant role in facilitating this. The Intercultural Services staff welcomes and supports newcomer students and their families in Edmonton Catholic Schools.

Seven Intercultural Liaisons, under the direction of the One World...One Centre Manager provides support services in these different languages: Amharic, Croatian, Filipino/Tagalog, Serbian,

Spanish, Russian, Tigrinya, and Ukrainian. If the language that you speak is not listed above, please let your child's teacher know and the school will provide the interpreter you require. The Intercultural Services staff likewise provide the same services to the English-speaking newcomer families in ECSD.

The Intercultural Services staff do not just act as interpreters. They too have moved to Canada from different countries and therefore have personal knowledge of the community they belong to, the ethnic lifestyles, and the educational system of their home country. The Intercultural Services staff that belong to your ethnic community will also be able to understand your needs, fears, and expectations. They will be able to provide you and your child with plenty of support.

The Intercultural Services staff will:

- provide you with information about school systems in Alberta, school procedures and events, and school expectations, as well as general information about Canadian life and culture,
- provide teachers and school personnel with information about your home country's educational system, its culture, your expectations, and needs,
- provide interpretation services for you when you need to communicate with your child's teachers, school administrators and other personnel involved in your child's education during school registration, parent-teacher conferences, open houses, and other school events,
- translate documents, report cards, immunization records, letters, newsletters, and all other materials requested by schools,
- connect you to various local settlements and community agencies.

For more information about the services provided by the Intercultural Services staff, please call (780) 441-6060. If you have difficulties communicating in English, please leave a message in your own language.



6. School Boundaries



6060 or email info@ecsd.net.

Usually, your home address determines where the student will go to school. Each school has a boundary of streets and homes that belong to that school.

Students may be able to attend a school that is outside their zone if the program being offered at that school is more appropriate for the student. These schools accept students from within their school area first, and when space is available, they accept students who live beyond it.

To locate the school in your area, fill in the requested information on the following link: **School Directory - Senior High Schools.** If your search doesn't generate any results or you have further questions, please call 780 441-

7. Age-Appropriate Grade Placement

When students register at school, their grade placement is determined by their age, not by the grade they completed in their country of origin. Edmonton Catholic School District policy is age-appropriate grade placement with grade-appropriate instruction.

8. School Orientation for New Students

At the beginning of the school year high schools typically hold orientation days in the week prior to the first day of class. At that time, the school will provide the new students with a tour of the school, show them where rooms are located, introduce them to the school personnel and tell them the important rules and regulations of the school. At the same time, they may also provide you with the following:

- Textbooks In Canada, you don't need to buy textbooks for your son or daughter. They will be
 given to the students in schools. Textbooks are the property of the school and must be returned
 in good condition. You must pay for lost or damaged books.
- Student Handbooks / School Agendas These handbooks describe school programs, rules, policies, important dates, and other information. They are also designed for students to record their homework and plan their work. Some schools charge a fee for the handbooks.
- Student ID Cards Student photos will be taken, and photo ID cards will be issued to each
 student in schools. For security purposes, student I.D. cards must be always carried. The I.D.
 card must be presented to access books and equipment from the Learning Resource Centre,
 for all transactions through the Business Administration Office, and to write final exams (schoolbased and diploma).



- Lockers Students will be given a locker for storing his or her school supplies and clothing. They
 are properties of the school and are usually cleaned out at the end of the term or semester. Lockers
 should not be used to store valuables and the school is not responsible for damage or theft of locker
 contents. Schools usually sell the lock they want students to use.
- Student Timetables and Periods Each student is given a personal timetable of classes at the beginning of each school year or semester. There may be different classmates in each class. Schools divide the day into blocks of time called periods. Depending on the school, a period may be 40 to 90 minutes long.
- Information about School Supplies Teachers will explain what supplies are needed for each course. For most subjects, students will need a notebook or binder. Other necessary supplies include lined paper, pencils, and pens.

ELLs who may arrive in their home schools throughout the year will be provided with the same services.

9. Students' Course Placement in the First Year

When newcomer students start school, the school staff will talk to them about their previous schooling, interests, and goals after graduation. The school staff will then help them choose the appropriate courses.



The school will consider:

- the match between what has already been learned and what the student is expected to learn in high school in Alberta.
- the student's skills, abilities, and interests,
- report cards and other documents you provide that describe what the student learned previously,
- the results of the mathematics and language assessments, if available,
- the number of years the student has been in school,
- the student's age.

The school will place the student in various courses. Then, when the student has shown what he or she knows and can do, the school may change the placement, if necessary. Later in the school year, usually in March, students choose courses for the next school year. The information you get from the report cards, parent-teacher interviews and discussions with your son or daughter will help you and your son or daughter choose the courses.

It is very important that you work together with your son or daughter to develop an education plan for his or her education. A plan will ensure that your son or daughter meets the requirements for the future that you and the student want (university, community college, apprenticeship or directly to work). The teachers and the school staff can help you.

10. Students Who are 18 Years of Age or Older

Students who are 18 or older are legally adults. This means that information about their schoolwork is given to the student, not the parents. For parents to receive information from the school, such as a report card or a phone call from a teacher, students must sign a permission form in the school office.

11. Credits for Previous School Learning



The school system is based on credits. Students earn credits for each course they have successfully completed, and they must earn at least one hundred (100) credits to graduate. Some courses are compulsory and must be taken, while others are optional. Students who are new to Canada may be given some credits for their previous learning in their home country if they provide the school with a copy of their report cards or transcripts. Please note that differences in school systems may make it difficult for the school to give them many credits for their previous learning.

Usually, the school waits to confirm how many credits to give for previous learning so that students have a chance to demonstrate what they know.

For more information please see: Guide to Education, **Graduation requirements, credentials and credits** or speak to the school counsellor.

Suggestions

- Bring report cards, textbooks and other information that will help the school understand what your son or daughter has already learned.
- Help your son or daughter prepare to discuss with the teacher what he or she has already learned, and his or her plans after graduation.
- Call the school counsellor or school staff member if you have any questions.

HOSPITALITY



Whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me." (Mark 9:37)

Being Catholic entails an abiding love for all people with a commitment to their welfare, rights, and justice. The Catholic community is inclusive of diverse peoples and perspectives free of discrimination and sectarianism and welcomes all peoples especially those most in need.

12. Secondary School Graduates from Other Countries

Some students who have already graduated from high school in their home country may wish to continue their studies in Canada. ECSD offers an academic upgrading program for 4th and 5th-year high school students who are new residents of Canada. Students are offered to take full-time English as a Second Language classes, additional courses to complete high school requirements or to further their education for acceptance into post-secondary institutions. Educational services are delivered in many forms - classroom environment, self-paced and online.

For more information, please see: **Evaluation of out-of-province/out-of-country educational documents**

Suggestions

- Talk with a member of the school staff to find out approximately how many credits your son or daughter will get for his or her previous education and what courses must be taken to graduate with an Alberta High School diploma.
- Find out if the student's previous studies make him or her eligible for admission to community college or university programs and if ESL support is offered.
- A student who qualifies to enter post-secondary education may choose to complete TOEFL test requirements.

SCHOOL WORDS

- **School Board** a regional office that supervises a group of schools.
- Board of Trustees elected officials who are responsible for the education of the students in school districts.
- Chief Superintendent's Office responsible for supervising a number of schools in a community.
- **Chaplain** a member of school staff who helps students with spiritual and personal problems.
- **Confidentiality** refers to the understanding that teachers will not share information about a student's schoolwork or family situation with other parents or community members.
- **Age-Appropriate Grade Placement -** grade placement determined by students' age, not by the grade they completed in their country of origin.
- Assessment the process of determining a student's skills. Many school boards require students to have their mathematics and English language skills assessed before they start high school.
- Credits for Previous Schooling Students who are new to Canada may be given some credits for their previous learning in their home country. (Provided they can show proof of their studies. (E.g., Report card or transcripts).

PARENT GUIDE - SECTION 2

Learning English and Other Subjects

Contents Summary

- 1. Learning English
- 2. ESL Courses
- 3. Programs of Study
- 4. How Students Are Taught
- 5. Flex Time in High Schools
- 6. Focus Schools and Alternate Programs
- 7. Religious Education Program
- 8. Retreats
- 9.. Inclusive Education
- 10. Reporting Student Progress
- 11. Individual Program Plan (IPP)
- 12. Homework
- 13. Summer and Evening Programs
- 14. After-school and Lunch-time Programs
- 15. Computer Access
- International Students Students with Study Permits

In their first few weeks and months, most newcomer students have two difficulties: getting used to a different school system and learning English. This can be very challenging.

This section explains how students are taught English and other subjects. It describes some of the possible differences in the ways they are taught and gives some suggestions for parents to help their son or daughter.



1. Learning English

People learn English (or a new language) at different paces, even two children in the same family. Usually, students learn to speak English much more quickly than they learn to read or write. Most can speak English in daily life for one or two years. However, they may take **five to seven years** - or more - to read, write and understand complex school subjects as well as their English-speaking classmates.

When they come to Canada, most students can read and write in their first language but may have limited English skills. **English as an Additional Language - ECSD**, **English as Additional Language (ESL) - Alberta** courses help these students catch up with their English-speaking classmates.



Some students may have missed a considerable amount of time in school and have not learned the basic rules of reading and writing. These students will receive additional instructional support.

For more information on learning English, see: Learning English as an Additional Language.

There are many ways that parents can help their children learn English.

Suggestions •

- Encourage your son or daughter to join in group activities where he or she will be speaking English. Lunchtime and after-school activities such as sports, clubs and music programs give students a chance to practice their English and to make new friends.
- ♦ Continue to help your son or daughter develop his or her first language skills. A strong foundation in their first language helps students learn English as well.
- Get community newspapers in your language and discuss the stories together.
- Go to community events where your first language is spoken. Enroll your son or daughter in an International Languages Program in your language if one is available.
 Some public libraries have books in many languages. For more information visit: www.epl.ca - World Languages.
- ◆ Get your children involved in summer activities which would help them further develop their spoken English. To find such opportunities explore One World...One Centre List of Summer Programs for ELLs which are updated on an annual basis.
- ◆ Encourage the student to participate in class discussions. This may be hard or confusing at first, but it will help the student learn English quickly.

2. EAL Courses

Students who are learning English as an additional language may take EAL courses and Locally Developed Courses in addition to regular courses. EAL Programming is offered at every High School but is different at each school. They will be placed in classes with their English-speaking peers according to course selection; however, based on their language proficiency and academic backgrounds, they may have specific timetabled requirements.

Some English language learners of lower proficiencies or with limited formal

schooling experiences may have sheltered instruction for part of the day and are placed in grade-level courses when appropriate.

A school might offer up to five levels of EAL, each one at a different skill level.

Schools offer courses that have been specially designed for EAL students in areas of English Language Arts, Science, Math, or Social Studies (Locally Acquired Courses). These courses are intended to help students prepare linguistically for the demands of the Alberta high school curricula.

Course Code	Course Name	Intended EAL Level	Credits
1513/2513	Expository English 15/25	EAL Levels 1-3	5
1212/2212	EAL Canadian Studies 15/25	EAL Levels 1-3	5
1350	EAL Introduction to Mathematics 15	EAL Levels 1-3	5
1213	EAL Introduction to Science 15	EAL Levels 1-3	5

Students who successfully complete EAL courses earn up to five credits.

3. Programs of Study

In Alberta, all publicly funded schools follow the curriculum outlined in the Programs of Study. They describe what students are expected to know and do in each subject by the end of each course. The curriculum is designed to help students achieve their individual potential and create a positive future for themselves, their families, and their communities.

Alberta Education publishes curriculum documents for each subject. Teachers use the curriculum documents to plan learning activities. The documents are posted at: **Programs of Study**. To see what students are expected to learn in each grade, including overviews of subjects and topics go to Curriculum Handbooks for Parents at **My Child's Learning - High School**. These documents contain information for parents on subjects, programs, and courses available in Alberta schools. They are updated every year as changes are made to the curriculum.

Teachers realize English language learners are learning English and try to adapt the programs to the student's English language proficiency level.



4. How Students are Taught

Teachers use many ways to help students learn in class: lectures, discussions, question and answer sessions, research assignments, field trips, projects, and team assignments with other students. Some of these methods may be unfamiliar to newcomer students.

Teachers may give students problems to discuss and solve, rather than facts to memorize. In every subject, students are encouraged to learn how to think critically. This means that they learn how to decide what is true and what is false. Students learn how to interpret, analyze, and evaluate information. They also learn to think logically, ask questions, form opinions and express ideas to their whole class.



Students are expected to participate in classroom discussions and speak to the whole class or to groups of other students. For example, in mathematics, a student might be asked to explain how an answer was calculated.

Students are expected to be able to research a topic in the library or on the Internet, write about what they have learned and give their point of view. Students summarize their work in a project.

We live in a global community. Teachers plan learning activities to help students appreciate the experiences and contributions of people of all cultures and backgrounds.

Suggestions

- Talk to your son or daughter about the differences in teaching styles and methods between the schools in Alberta and in their home country. Explain that it may take time to adjust.
- Encourage your son or daughter to talk to the teachers about how he or she is doing. It will show the teacher that he or she is eager to learn.
- Tell your son or daughter that it is appropriate to ask for help from teachers. Students are expected to ask questions when they don't understand something or need help.
- Encourage your son or daughter to tell you about his or her opinions and to explain them. It is good practice for classroom discussions and written assignments.
- Find out about after-school activities like sports, clubs, and music programs. They are usually open to all students and are supervised by a teacher. After-school programs are a great way for students to practice their English.

5. Flex Time in High Schools

All High Schools will offer Flex Time or Flex Time Programming. Flex Time is part of the school day. It is a program that offers additional instructional time for students. This instruction is designed to meet the needs of individual students and is appropriate for both remedial and enriched learning.



6. Focus Schools and Alternate Programs

Students attending Edmonton Catholic Schools have a choice of a variety of focus programs. These include Accelerated Math and Science Programs, Academic and College Education Programs, International Languages Programs, International Baccalaureate Programs, and more. There are focus schools that have Fine Arts, Sports, Science and Technology Academies. These varied programming options accommodate a broad range of strengths and interests within the diverse group of gifted and talented students.

For more information about focus schools and alternate programs, you can see: Focus Schools and Alternate Programs

7. Religious Education in Edmonton Catholic Schools

All students in Catholic schools are required to choose one Religious Education course each year or to successfully complete three courses prior to graduation. Religious Education helps students develop an awareness of the principles of the Church and how to apply them to their daily lives. It helps students develop attitudes and values founded on Catholicism and promotes social responsibility, human solidarity and the common good.

The Religious Education High School Program is designed to teach Religion 15, 25, and 35 and is offered in grades 10, 11, and 12. The credits earned from courses in religious studies may be applied toward an Alberta High School Diploma or a Certificate of Achievement.

8. Retreats

Retreatment is an important learning activity that is part of the Religious Education Program. It is held away from the school, usually for the entire school day. In some cases, there may be overnight programs.

Retreats help students deepen their understanding of and commitment to the Catholic faith. For example, students may spend time at a community charity.

The school requires written permission from parents for students under the age of 18 to participate in a retreat. Please sign the letter and return it as soon as possible.



9. Inclusive Education

Inclusive Education programs provide extra support to help students with significant learning difficulties or special needs within their community schools. Some students need short-term help and others have complex learning and health needs.

Students may need help because of physical, intellectual, emotional, behavioural, speech, language, vision or hearing difficulties, or because of serious problems interacting with other people. The model is based on full inclusion, with support at the classroom/school level, specialized classes integrated into regular schools, or placement in district programs. Programming at the community school is considered the first option.

A lack of English language skills is not an indication of the need for Inclusive Education. However, if your son or daughter is having difficulty with his or her schoolwork or relating to other students, it may be a sign of a significant learning difficulty. Sometimes problems are a normal part of adjusting to a new language and school. Information about a student's academic skills in his or her first language, like a previous report card, often helps teachers identify the source of the student's difficulties.

If you are concerned that your son or daughter may have significant learning difficulties, talk to your child's teacher. The teacher has several informal ways to assess your child. If necessary, you or the teacher can request a formal assessment of your child.

The school is required to follow Inclusive Education procedures to assess and determine if your son or daughter qualifies for Special Education support. You will be asked to provide written permission indicating your agreement for your child's assessments. You will be obligated to attend consultation meetings related to the assessment process. Qualified personnel who conduct assessments will interpret the results for parents, teachers and others who are involved with the student's program. They will make program planning recommendations. If you require translation assistance for these assessments, please contact One World... One Centre at (780) 441-6060 and ask to speak to the Intercultural Liaison in your first language.

For more information about the education of students with special needs and Inclusive Education see: **Inclusive Education**.

10. Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism

Edmonton Catholic Schools recognizes that we are all created in the image and likeness of God. As such, all human beings are inherently sacred and must be treated with dignity and respect. All efforts to support the inclusive, safe, and caring learning and working communities within our Division must be in accordance with the teaching of the Catholic Church and shall be grounded in the understanding of the person as a whole.

A nurturing, inclusive community is one in which each person is welcomed, accepted, and supported as a child of God; therefore, any discrimination is unacceptable and will be addressed. All students, staff, and families of Edmonton Catholic School Division will be provided with an inclusive, welcoming, caring, respectful, safe, and Catholic environment that promotes the well-being of all and fosters community support for achieving this goal.

The resources in this section support students, families, and staff who are looking for more information **EDIAR Resources.**

11. Individual Program Plan (IPP) Meetings



copy of the IPP. (IPP Parent Handbook)

All students identified as having special education needs, with one of them being second language learning, require an Individual Program Plan (IPP). This plan is a summary of goals, objectives, strategies, and accommodations aimed at enhancing student learning. Parents of English language learners are encouraged to take an active role in the IPP process. Ongoing review and revision are important parts of the IPP process. Review IPP meetings are opportunities for parents to discuss their child's programming and consider possible revisions. At the meeting, parents will be asked to sign the IPP report and will be provided with a



12. Homework



Homework is one good way parents can see how their son or daughter is doing in school. You should expect the student to have homework almost every night. The amount of homework depends on the grade.

Students should expect at least one hour of homework. By grade 12, they should expect up to two hours of homework per night. All students are expected to read each night. Your child's teachers can explain what homework they expect to be done.

To get help with your homework through multimedia learning resources please see: LearnAlberta.ca.

No Homework?

Suggestions

- Ask your son or daughter to show you what he or she did at school.
- Talk to the teacher if there is often no homework.
- Encourage your son or daughter to spend time reviewing what has been covered in the past few days and to plan ahead for future assignments and tests.
- Ensure that your son or daughter takes responsibility for nightly reading in English or first language.

13. Summer and Evening Programs

Most school boards offer summer and evening courses. It is for students who were not successful during the year, or who are changing between different types of programs. Summer school usually runs in the month of July. Edmonton Catholic Summer Schools offer two different methods of learning opportunities: Classroom - Based Summer High School and Self-Placed Summer High School.

Check with your teacher or Learning Coach if Summer and Evening Programs offered in ECSD or visit **Summer School**, or **PASS (Part-Time Alternative Self-Paced School)** for more information.

14. After-School and Lunch-Time Programs

Each secondary school has after-school and/or lunchtime activities such as sports, student council, clubs, and music programs. The programs are usually open to all students and are supervised by a teacher.

These programs are an excellent way for newcomer students to make new friends and to practice their English. The programs are usually one day a week for one hour after school or at lunchtime. For more information, speak to the ESL teacher, Learning Coach or the school counsellor.

15. Computer Access

Using a computer is an important part of going to high school. All schools have computers (usually in a computer lab) that students can use during the day and just before and after school.

Public libraries and some community centers have computers that are free to use. For more information about Edmonton Public Library locations and the services they provide see: **Newcomers**.

SPIRITUALITY



"You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy."

(Leviticus 19: 2)

Catholic spirituality is rooted in the life of the Trinity and is lived "according to the Spirit". Spirituality has to do with the way Catholics live their beliefs. Spirituality consists of letting God be present in each moment of the day and becoming attuned to God's presence in the ups and downs of life. Prayer and a commitment to the moral and ethical values of the gospel provide the opening to God's presence.

16. International Students - Students with Study Permits

International students who pay a fee to attend secondary school are called international students or *foreign-born fee-paying students*. Parents who are not with them must name an official guardian who lives in the school community. The guardian is expected to assume the responsibilities of the student's parents.

For more information about international student programs and fees, please contact the Edmonton Catholic School District International Program at 780-441-6080 or visit our website at International Services.

SCHOOL WORDS

- English Language Learners (ELLs) is used for students who are multilingual and/or speak some English but have not mastered full English proficiency.
- **EAL Courses** additional courses for students who are learning English as a new language.
- Parent Guide to Assessment and Reporting Understanding Assessment and Reporting
- **Report Card** the official summary of a student's progress in school. Written by the teacher of each subject, it is for the parent and student to review.
- **Individual Program Plans (IPP)** A summary of goals, objectives, strategies, and accommodations aimed at enhancing student learning.
- **Alberta High School Diploma** the certificate that is given to students who graduate from high school with 100 credits.
- Inclusive Education unique programs designed for students with diverse needs.

PARENT GUIDE - SECTION 3

Choosing Courses and Education Plan

Contents Summary

- 1. Why an Education Plan is Important
- 2. How Teachers Help Students Develop a Plan
- 3. Learning Responsibilities for School Work
- 4. How Parents Can Help Students Plan
- 5. The First Year in Canada
- 6. The Alberta High School Diploma
- 7. Earning One Hundred Credits
- 8. Alberta High School Diploma/Certificate of Achievement Graduation Requirement
- English Requirements for University and College Admission
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- 17. After High School Getting into Post-Secondary Institutions in Alberta
- a) Publicly Funded Colleges
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- d) Private Colleges Accredited to Grant Degrees
- 17. How Students are Chosen
- 18. Scholarships, Bursaries and Loans

This section gives you general information that will make it easier for you to help your son or daughter choose courses wisely. It suggests that together, you develop an education plan to guide the choice of courses.

It will also provide you with information about the requirements for Alberta High School Diploma and/or post–secondary programs admitting.



1. Why an Education Plan is Important

You need to help your son or daughter develop an education plan because there are so many different kinds of courses to choose from. Some lead directly to work, others to university or college and others lead to apprenticeships. For some university or college courses, students need to take secondary school courses. A plan will help you and your son or daughter choose the courses that match his or her interest abilities and ambitions.

After graduation, students might go to work, or go to work for a few years and then return to school. Students might go directly to university, college, or training programs. A plan helps students choose the courses that they need to reach their goals and will ensure that they meet admission requirements for college, university, apprenticeship, or other training programs requirements.

The plan often changes as students go through school. This reflects new interests, skills, and abilities. Teachers and the counsellor can tell you about many careers, learning and training opportunities.

A plan is particularly important for students who are also learning English. Their plans need to include a way to develop their reading, writing and spoken English skills in addition to all the other courses they must take to reach their goals.

How Teachers Help Students Develop a Plan



All students take the CALM (Career and Life Management) course, usually in grade 10 or 11. In this course, the teacher guides students through a planning process to help them think about their plans. Teachers will not choose courses for students or tell them what they should do after graduation. Teachers will, however, help them make decisions to reach their goals.

One of the benefits of this approach is that students begin to take responsibility for their own decisions and develop self-reliance. Students who learn these skills are better prepared for apprenticeship, university, and college where they are completely

responsible for their own work. However, without the involvement of their parents, students sometimes make poor choices and have limited options after graduation.

3. Learning Responsibility for School Work

High school students are young adults and within a few years, many will be making decisions on their own, starting to work and assuming adult responsibilities.

Teachers help prepare students for the future by giving them opportunities to learn self-discipline and take responsibility for school assignments and homework. For example, students are expected to do their homework, but teachers don't always check students' notebooks to see if it is completed. As students move through the grades, teachers expect them to be more self-reliant.

Students who learn these skills are better prepared for university, community college and other programs where they are completely responsible for their own work.

4. How Parents Can Help Students Plan

Parents can also guide students through the planning process. Here are some things that you can do with your son or daughter to develop a plan:

Suggestions

- Discuss your son or daughter's interests, abilities, and plans after graduation. Ask about the kinds of careers that he or she finds interesting. Don't worry if plans change many times. That is a normal part of the process of making choices.
- Review the courses needed now for their career plans, and what education or training is needed after graduation. The counsellor can help.
- Consider the school's after-school or lunchtime activities. They can help your son or daughter discover their true interests and learn about other careers. This is also a good place to make friends and practice English.
- Attend career information events at the school to learn about various career options.
- Consider what courses and after-school activities help students learn English (reading, writing, and speaking) and adjust to school as quickly as possible.
 Choose courses that put emphasis on speaking in the class. In drama for example, students learn how to speak comfortably to groups of people.
- Consult with the counsellor at the school. Parents often talk with the counsellor about the student's career and education plans.
- Discuss the report cards and teacher's comments in the parent-teacher interviews.
- Talk to other parents and students about their plans and about career opportunities after graduation.

Check the websites with career information, such as: **Plan Your Career**. You can access a list of post-secondary institutions, including colleges, on the Alberta Learning website at **Explore Education and Training**.



Ranji's Plan

Ranji is 15 and in her second year in Canada. She studied English in her home country for two years and is taking ESL level 3 in high school. Although her spoken English is getting better, she finds writing difficult. Ranji loves Math and Science and with her parents has chosen academic courses in those subjects and an applied course in History. She is planning to go to university to study Engineering. Ranji plans to take an extra year to complete high school so she can concentrate on fewer courses and improve her English writing skills. To boost her English-speaking skills, she joined the after-school drama club and is volunteering on the weekend at the Community Centre.

5. The First Year in Canada

In the first year, it can be hard to plan for the future. Many students need time to adjust and consider what to do. During the first year, you will get a lot of important information.



- a) Students will have a better sense of the programs and courses that are most interesting. Parents will also get information from teachers about the student's English reading, writing, and speaking skills and how well he or she is doing in other courses and adjusting to school life.
- b) You will also have a chance to talk to other parents about the choice of courses and opportunities after graduation.
- c) The school will confirm how many credits the student will be given for previous learning.

6. The Alberta High School Diploma

Students who graduate from secondary school with 100 credits receive an Alberta High School Diploma. The diploma is usually one of several requirements for further education or training. Apprenticeship, community college and university programs each have their own entrance requirements. Speak to the school counsellor for more information.



7. Earning One Hundred Credits

- a) The secondary school system is based on earning credits. One hundred (100) credits are required to graduate with a high school diploma. Most courses have a 3-credit or 5-credit value.
 One credit is defined as being equal to 25 hours of instruction. A student earns credit when he or she completes a course with a final mark of 50% or more.
- b) Of the 100 credits students need to earn a diploma, approximately 50 credits will be earned through courses in core subjects they are required to take: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education and Career and Life Management (CALM). Students will choose additional core and/or optional courses needed to earn the remaining credits.
- c) Students who successfully complete EAL courses earn up to five (5) credits. Their abilities in English also determine what courses other than EAL, they will enroll in.
- d) Although an average course load is 40 credits per year and students may complete secondary school in three years, many students take an extra year or semester. Extending their studies this way allows them to take fewer courses each year or explore their interest in other school subjects. Some students take more courses than necessary. Students can continue in regular high school until the year they turn 20 as of September 1.
- e) In some situations, a student may be allowed to substitute one compulsory course for another compulsory course. For example, a student may be allowed to take an additional English credit in place of a French credit. In these situations, a student may substitute up to three compulsory credits.
- f) If a student fails a course, the student must repeat that course while taking other subjects at the next grade level.

8. Alberta High School Diploma/Certificate of Achievement

This chart describes the combinations of courses that a student must take to graduate and receive an Alberta High School Diploma. Your school will explain the religious courses that the student must also complete.

ALBERTA HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA: GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (ENGLISH)

The requirements indicated in this chart are the <u>minimum</u> requirements for a student to attain an Alberta High School Diploma. The requirements for entry into post-secondary institutions and workplaces may require additional and/or specific courses.

100 CREDITS

including the following:

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS – 30-LEVEL (English Language Arts 30-1 or 30-2)

SOCIAL STUDIES – 30 LEVEL (Social Studies 30-1 or 30-2)

MATHEMATICS - 20 LEVEL

(Mathematics 20-1, Mathematics 20-2 or Mathematics 20-3)

SCIENCE - 20 LEVEL●

(Science 20, Science 24, Biology 20, Chemistry 20 or Physics 20)

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 10 (3 CREDITS) 2

CAREER AND LIFE MANAGEMENT (3 CREDITS) •

10 CREDITS IN ANY COMBINATION FROM:

- · Career and Technology Studies (CTS) courses
- Fine Arts courses
- · Second Language courses
- · Physical Education 20 and/or 30
- · Knowledge and Employability courses
- Registered Apprenticeship Program courses
- Locally developed/acquired and authorized courses in CTS, fine arts, second languages or Knowledge and Employability occupational courses

10 CREDITS IN ANY 30-LEVEL COURSE
(IN ADDITION TO A 30-LEVEL ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
A 30-LEVEL SOCIAL STUDIES COURSE AS SPECIFIED ABOVE)

These courses may include

- · 30-level locally developed courses
- Advanced level (3000 series) in Career and Technology Studies courses
- 30-level Work Experience courses 9
- 30-level Knowledge and Employability courses
- 30-level Registered Apprenticeship Program courses
- 30-level Green Certificate Specialization courses
- Special Projects 30

- The science requirement—Science 20 or 24, Biology 20, Chemistry 20, or Physics 20—may also be met with the 10-credit combination of Science 14 and Science 10.
- See information on exemption from the physical education requirement, PE Exemptions
- See information on exemption from the CALM requirement, Exemption from CALM
- 30-level English language arts or 30-level social studies courses from a different course sequence may not be used to meet the 30-level course requirement.
- Students may earn a maximum of 30 credits in Work Experience, but only 15 credits may be used to meet the 100-credit requirement for the Alberta High School Diploma.

Students may also complete senior high school with a Certificate of Achievement or a Certificate of High School Achievement according to the requirements outlined in the charts below.

CERTIFICATE OF HIGH SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT REQUIREMENTS (ENGLISH)

The requirements indicated in this chart are the <u>minimum</u> requirements for a student to attain a Certificate of High School Achievement. The requirements for entry into post-secondary institutions and workplaces may require additional and/or specific courses.

80 CREDITS **1**

including the following:

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 20-2 OR 30-4

MATHEMATICS 10-3 OR 20-4

SCIENCE 14 OR 20-4

SOCIAL STUDIES 10-2 OR 20-4

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 10 (3 CREDITS) 2

CAREER AND LIFE MANAGEMENT (3 CREDITS) 6

5 CREDITS IN

- · 30-level Knowledge and Employability occupational course, or
- Advanced level (3000 series) in Career and Technology Studies courses 4,
- 30-level locally developed course with an occupational focus

AND

5 CREDITS IN

- 30-level Knowledge and Employability Workplace Practicum course, or
- 30-level Work Experience course 6 or
- 30-level Green Certificate course 6, or
- Special Projects 30

OR

5 CREDITS IN

• 30-level Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) course **9**



- To qualify for a Certificate of High School Achievement, students must successfully complete a minimum of one academic Knowledge and Employability course or be identified as a Knowledge and Employability student (710 code) within the 12 months before the awarding of the Certificate.
- **2** See information on exemption from the physical education requirement.
- 3 See information on exemption from CALM,
- Courses that are identified using a post-secondary institution (PSI) course code may be used to meet the certificate requirement of "5 credits in Advanced level (3000 series) in Career and Technology Studies courses."
- Refer to the Off-campus Education for additional information.
- **6** Refer to Alberta.ca for additional **Green Certificate Program** information.
- Refer to the Off-campus Education Handbook for additional information

Students in Francophone programs should consult the Alberta High School Diploma Requirements (Francophone). Please see: **Guide de l'éducation.**

Mature students should consult the **Mature Students** section of the Guide to Education for applicable requirements.

Students are responsible for checking their credit status to ensure that necessary courses and credits will be completed.

9. English Requirements for University and College Admission

Universities and some colleges require students who have been in Canada for less than three years to take the **TOEFL** English test (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or similar language tests (**IELTS**, **CELPIP**, etc.). Most university programs also require students to take specific English courses in secondary school before admission. For more information, check the admission requirements of what is needed to enter each university or community college. Some universities and community colleges offer support programs for ESL students. For more information, see the website of each college or university.

RATIONALITY



"Know how you ought to answer everyone."

(Colossians 4:6)

Throughout Catholic history, reason has played an important role in the search for truth. The critical and speculative powers of reason allow for an active and open stance in relation to the truth. Catholics seek truth rationally and critically as well as through appreciation and respect. Rationality encourages faith to seek understanding.

10. Leaving School Before Graduation - High School Completion

Finishing high school is an important step for young people to create a positive future for themselves, their families, and their communities. However, some students drop out of school because of personal and/or behavioral problems. **Diploma Preparation Sessions** offer in-person high school students tutorial sessions with skilled and knowledgeable teachers to help students prepare for Grade 12 diploma exams. Resources are developed by certified teachers to enhance the study session.

11. Different Types of High School Courses



Some students who are new to Canada may find it hard to decide which courses to take. Their English skills are developing, and they need time to consider their interests and career plans. It is important to choose courses that keep their options open as much as possible but are also realistic. The EAL teacher and the school counsellor can help you and your son or daughter choose wisely.

When planning, parents and students need to consider the different types of courses. Students learn different things in each course or program. All lead to a diploma but the choice of courses can greatly affect the student's opportunities after graduation.

High schools in Alberta offer many different choices:

- academic courses for university admission,
- career and technology studies courses to broaden learning experience,
- Registered Apprenticeship Program for students who are 15 years of age or older, in which they spend part of their time in school and part of their time in industry as registered apprentices in one of Alberta's designated trades,
- off-campus education courses for students who want specialized business, industrial or work experience training,
- fine arts courses for students who have a special interest in music, art, or drama,
- knowledge and employability courses for students who wish to enhance their academic and occupational competencies and gain a successful transition into employment and continuing education and training opportunities.

Programs vary by district and school. Parents and students should bear students' future career and study plans in mind when choosing courses. School counsellors can be helpful in this matter.

Post-secondary education (colleges, universities, technical institutions, and trade schools) is the responsibility of the Ministry of Advanced Education and Technology.

The following are some points to consider when planning a senior high school program.

- Some core courses are designed for different purposes and are available in two or more levels of difficulty.
- It is usually necessary to complete courses in a sequence, so students should determine which courses they wish to graduate with, then work back through the prerequisites.
- Students should make sure that they select optional courses that contribute to their career plans: e.g., post-secondary requirements, employment, and/or further study.

12. Course Codes

On school documents, each course has a code that indicates the name, grade level and type.

Courses within each category are listed in the sequential numerical order of the course codes. Prerequisite courses are indicated by their linear arrangement across the page, or by the line symbol used to indicate a prerequisite that leads to more than one course. Course credits are shown in parentheses.

For example: **English Language Arts**

EAL1125 English as an Additional Language 10–Level 5no credits •



Grade 10 Grade 11 Grade 12

English Language Arts

A1105 English Language Arts 10-1(5) ELA2105 English Language Arts 20-1(5) ELA310 glish Language Arts 30-1 (5)
A1104 English Language Arts 10-2(5) ELA2104 English Language Arts 20-2(5) ELA310- glish Language Arts 30-2 (5)
L1120 English as an Additional nguage 10–Level 1 no credits
L1121 English as an Additional nguage 10–Level 2(5)
L1122 English as an Additional nguage 10–Level 3(5)
L1123 English as an Additional nguage 10–Level 4(5)

More information about course codes can be found at: **Provincially Authorized Senior High School Courses and Course Codes.**

13. The Course Registration Form

In March, students and their parents choose courses for the next school year. The choices are made on a form called a Registration Form. The form must be signed by the student and a parent (if the student is under the age of 18). A parent's signature indicates your approval of the courses selected.

14. Off-Campus Education



Off-campus Education includes Work
Experience courses, the Registered
Apprenticeship Program (RAP), and other
workplace learning such as mentoring (one-onone contacts between students and business,
trade, or professional people) and field trips. In
these programs, students spend all or part of the
school day in a workplace that is related to their
career goals. Students earn credits while they
have a real-life work experience.

Diploma Preparation Sessions: Edmonton Catholic School of Alternative Education offers diploma preparation sessions with skilled and

knowledgeable teachers to help students prepare for grade 12 diploma exams. Resources are provided and developed by qualified teachers. **Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP):** The school places the student with an employer for portions of the school day. RAP lets students practice their skills and knowledge in real-life situations. For example, a student who is interested in working as an electrician might spend several half days a week in an electrical shop.

Students begin apprenticing for a trade while still in high school. These students earn further credits, to complete their high school diploma, while starting their apprenticeship training. Check with your child's schoolteacher or school chancellor about programs available in school.

15. Dual Credit Program

Dual Credit opportunities allow students to get a head start on their future by exploring areas of interest in high school. Students can enroll in post-secondary courses, earning both high school and post-secondary credits at the same time. Courses will be offered in Veterinary / Animal Sciences, Health Fields & Nursing, Aviation, Police Studies, Graphic Design, Choral Ensemble, Business, Sciences, Administration and Accounting. Each of these courses/programs can be a stepping stone to exciting careers in multiple areas. Students in Edmonton Catholic will be able to reach their full



potential in becoming ethical citizens and engaged thinkers with an entrepreneurial spirit. For further information, please contact DualCredit@ecsd.net

16. After High School - Getting into Post-Secondary Education in Alberta

The school counsellor can give you information about what is required to enter each of these programs. More useful resources about career planning at: Plan Your Career or Explore Education & Training.

a) Publicly Funded Post-Secondary Institutions

Publicly funded adult learning providers offer Alberta students a quality, affordable education. There are 26 publicly funded post-secondary institutions in Alberta that offer academic upgrading, job readiness, apprenticeship programs, certificate, diploma, undergraduate degree completion opportunities (through partnerships with public universities). Specific information about a post-secondary program in Edmonton, residence fees at an institution, sports opportunities or more please see: Post Secondary Student Resources.

For most post-secondary programs, the student must have an Alberta High School Diploma. Admission to some programs is very competitive. When space is limited, students may need high marks to get into them.

b) University



All universities offer four-year undergraduate degree programs, although a few also offer three-year programs. Many universities offer graduate programs leading to master's and Doctoral degrees. Most university programs have specific course requirements for admission although the minimum requirement for applying for admission to university is a

combination of five (5) grade 12 academic courses. When spaces are limited, most universities will give preference to students who have high marks and other qualifications. You can find out which courses are needed for specific post-secondary programs and the marks required at: **Admission Requirements.**

c) Apprenticeship and Industry Training

Apprenticeship programs provide full-time on-the-job training for people who learn best by practicing what they learn. The training equips students for well-paying jobs that demand a high level of skill, judgment, and creativity. Apprentices are paid while they gain work experience, and their wages increase with their skills. About 90% of apprenticeship training is provided in the workplace by an employer. About 10% is classroom instruction on theory, usually at a local community college or another approved training organization. For more information about apprenticeships, see www.tradesecrets.com.

d) Private Colleges Accredited to Grant Degrees

Career training programs span a wide range of fields. Program options range from office administration, business management, massage therapy and health care. Training is designed to give students the skills they need to find a job after they graduate. Training programs are taught by private career colleges, which are also Alberta businesses. For more information, see **Private Career Colleges**.

17. How Students are Chosen

University, community college and private colleges have specific course requirements for admission. When spaces are limited, the students with higher marks and other qualifications are accepted first. To enter some university programs, students must have a high school average of 85 to 90%, for other university programs, 65 to 70% may be sufficient. Universities look primarily at grade 12 marks. In grade 12, when a student does not pass a course, it will be recorded on the student's transcript.

Many universities and community colleges offer help for students who are learning English. Specific information is listed on their individual websites.

You can learn more about the Alberta Post-Secondary Application and Admission Averages at: **Admission Requirements.**

18. Scholarships, Bursaries and Loans

Some students pay for the cost of university, community college or training with special scholarships, bursaries, grants, and loans. The school counsellor has information about who can apply and how to do it, but students and their parents are responsible for applying for this assistance. It is best to apply at the same time that the university or college application is made. Student loans are available from both the provincial and federal governments.

For more information about provincial and district scholarships and trust funds see: Alberta Scholarships, Pay for Your Education or Alberta Student Aid – Applications for student loans and grants and more.

TRADITION



"We must pay greater attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it."

(Hebrews 2:1)

Tradition is foundational to the formation of the Catholic community. Tradition means holding on to the life of the community, being open to the continuing action of the Holy Spirit and paying homage to the God who acts in the history of a people. The focus of tradition is clarified by a vision of the future in Christ.

SCHOOL WORDS

- **Academic Courses** courses in grades 10 through 12 that lead to university, community college, apprenticeship, training or directly to work.
- Applied Courses courses in grades 10 through 12 that lead to community college, apprenticeship training or directly to work.
- Fine Arts Courses credit courses teach general skills and knowledge such as Art, Music, and Drama
- **Knowledge and Employability Courses** designed for students who learn best through experiences that integrate essential and employability skills in occupational contexts.
- **Prerequisite** refers to a specific course or subject you must complete before you can take another course at the next grade level.
- Admission Requirements a description of what is required in order to enter university, community college or a training program.
- Graduation Requirements a description of what a student must successfully complete in order to qualify for an Alberta High School Diploma or a Certificate of High School Achievement.
- Career path the series of steps that must be taken to enter a particular career or occupation.
- Career and Technology Studies Prepares students for the job market or further studies.
- Off-Campus Education a program that places the student with an employer for portions of the day so that the student can practice their skills and knowledge in real-life situations.
- **Apprenticeship** a training program for people who want to work in a skilled trade and who learn by doing. Apprenticeship provides real-life work experience and training for students during school and/or after they graduate.
- Credits students earn credits when they have successfully completed a school subject or course. Most subjects earn three or five credits. Some credits are compulsory, and others are optional.
- Transcript the official record of a student's studies, courses and grades. It is sent to community colleges, universities and training programs when applying to enter those programs.

PARENT GUIDE - SECTION 4

School Policies and Procedures

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This section will give you and your son or daughter a good idea of what school life is about.

Alberta laws require all schools to have policies and procedures that protect students and help them succeed in school. Some policies are set by the individual school, some by the school board and some are set by Alberta Education.



1. Dealing with Concerns

If you have any concerns about whether your son or daughter is being treated equitably, it is very important to speak to school staff. Usually, the first step is to talk to the teacher involved and then the principal or vice-principal.

2. Reporting Possible Harm to Students

When a school staff member observes signs that someone may be abusing, mistreating, or neglecting a child, or if a student reports that something bad is happening to him or her, the law requires the teacher to inform the organization in your community that is responsible for protecting children (called Alberta Child & Family Services).

For more information see: **Edmonton Police Service - Family Protection** or visit Alberta Government's **Abuse & Bullying** site.

3. School Council

Every school has an advisory group of parents, community members, parish representatives and school staff called the School Council. The Council discusses school policies and plans with the principal. In most cases, the meetings are open to parents, and they are encouraged to attend meetings and participate in the discussion. All parents are eligible to be members of the School Council.

Suggestions

- Ask the school office to give you the name and phone number of the chairperson, who is also a parent at the school. Contact the chair of the School Council to discuss how you wish to become involved in the Council.
- Attending School Council meetings to learn how it works, ask questions, make suggestions, or give your opinions on matters which interest you about the school.
- Talk with the School Council chairperson or members about how to help the school staff and parents learn more about your community and the needs of newcomer students.
- Create a parent network for informing other parents about school events and for welcoming newcomer families.

JUSTICE



"He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor."

(Luke 4: 18)

Catholic social teaching establishes justice as a core commitment of faith and a sign of the Reign of God. Church statements capture the scriptural basis for justice, insisting that Catholics have a preferential option for the poor and marginalized. The dignity of the human person, the primacy of both the common good and of workers are the cornerstones of Catholic social justice

4. Code of Conduct

The school will not tolerate abuse, bullying, discrimination, intimidation, hateful words and actions or any form of physical violence. It has a Code of Conduct and encourages problem prevention and peaceful problem-solving techniques.

The school has rules to help students follow the Code of Conduct. The rules are explained to students and are usually posted in the school and printed in the school handbook.

Anyone taking part in a school activity (students, parents or guardians, volunteers, teachers, or other school staff) is expected to follow the Code of Conduct.

Suggestions

- Tell your son or daughter to become familiar with the school rules.
- Remind him or her that there are serious consequences to fighting or other bad behaviour.
- Tell teachers and the counsellor or administrator that you want to be told if there is any concern about your son or daughter's behaviour.
- Ask for a copy of the school's Code of Conduct.
- Speak to the teachers or the school administrator if you have any concerns about the Code of Conduct or school rules.

5. Mandatory Consequences

Schools will apply mandatory consequences when students commit certain kinds of inappropriate behaviour. The range of consequences includes verbal and written warnings, detentions, suspensions, and expulsions from school. For example, if a student assaults another student, the mandatory consequence is a suspension, and the Principal must call the police.

The principal determines the length of the suspension. Parents will be called when a student is suspended and will be well informed and given every opportunity to be involved in any expulsion process.



Behaviour that Can Result in Suspension or Expulsion and Police Involvement

- Fighting
- Threatening
- Swearing at the teacher
- Trafficking in drugs or weapons
- Robbery
- Use of a weapon to cause bodily harm or to threaten serious harm

- Physical assault causing bodily harm
- Vandalism
- Sexual assault
- Providing alcohol to minors
- Possession of alcohol

For more information about suspension and expulsion check Administrative Procedure 355 in **Student Suspension and Expulsion**.

6. Concerns About Another Student's Behaviour

When students feel another student has treated them in a way not permitted by the Code of Conduct, they should report it to a teacher. They should not try and solve the problem without a teacher. For example, a student who has been hit by another student should try and walk away rather than hit back. The student should immediately report the assault to a teacher.



Nadia's Story

In the hallway between classes, Nadia was bumped again and again by some boys. Although she wasn't hurt, she felt the boys were bothering her and she wanted them to stop. She told them so but that didn't work, so she asked her ESL teacher for advice. The teacher warned the boys to stop it or they would be disciplined. The boys did stop and although she heard the boys were mad at her,

she had made it clear she would stand up for herself.

7. The Role of Parents in Dealing with Behaviour Problems



Some changes in a student's behaviour may be a normal part of adjusting to a new school, language, and country. If a teacher is concerned about a student's behaviour or relationship with other students, the parents may be contacted.

The teacher will explain what the school is doing to help the student and may suggest what can be done at home. Working together, parents and teachers can give a clear message about what behaviour is expected at school.

If you have any concerns, do not hesitate to talk to a teacher or the school counselor. Useful information on a variety of topics concerning your

child's wellness and safety can be found on Positive Behavioral Supports.

8. School Attendance is Obligatory

The law requires students who are between six and 17 years of age to attend school. If a student has been away from school for a long period of time, the school board will investigate the reasons for the absence and may refer the matter to Alberta Learning's **Attendance Board**.

If your child is going to be out of school for a long time, tell the teacher ahead of time. Sometimes the teacher can suggest learning activities for your child while he or she is away from school. For more information about school attendance, see Guide to Education, School Act pg.10: **The Education Act**.

9. Absence from School or a Class



Students are expected to attend school each day and to arrive before school starts. Teachers keep a record of students who are absent and report them to the school office. If your son or daughter will be absent, please call the school before the start of school. Most schools have a message machine for recording absences. Please call again for each day that the student is away. When leaving a message, speak slowly.

Some schools use a recorded message to call parents. If you are not home and do not have a voice mail system, you

may not get the message. In addition to phone calls, many schools also require a signed note from parents when a student returns to school.

Students are **strongly** discouraged from missing school for family vacations during the school year. For the rare occasion when this is necessary, students and parents are expected to inform the school in advance and complete the appropriate form. It is the responsibility of the student to complete the work that was missed.

10. If the Student Gets Sick at School

If a student becomes sick or has an accident while at school, parents will be called at the phone numbers on the school records. If a parent cannot be reached, the school will call the emergency contact person that you named when you registered the student.

Sample telephone message:

This is (your name). My child (child's name) is sick today. My child's teacher is (teacher's name).

11. Allergies or Health Problems

Tell the school if your son or daughter has any health problems or allergies. If a student must take medicine while at school, your family doctor may have to fill out a form.

Suggestions

Call the school when:

- your son or daughter will be absent for any reason,
- you change your phone number or address,
- you have a question, concern, or suggestion.

12. Vision and Hearing

Vision and hearing problems make it harder for students to learn. Many students do not even know they have a vision or a hearing problem. They may think that everyone sees or hears the way they do. Vision and hearing may change as children grow. That is why regular check-ups are so important to students.

Suggestions

- eyes checked every two or three years. Alberta Health and Wellness pays for annual visits to an optometrist or ophthalmologist up to age 18.
- Encourage your son or daughter to wear glasses, contact lenses or hearing aids, if necessary. If the student is reluctant, meet with the school counsellor or one of the teachers and together you can help the student feel comfortable.
- Speak to a doctor about checking the student's hearing.



For more information about health care support provided to low-income families by Alberta Government, see: Alberta Child Health Benefit Program.

13. Immunization and Vaccines

Provide the school with your child's immunization record from your home country. Schools can provide translations of this document if necessary. Your child should be immunized according to the recommended immunization schedule in Alberta.

For more information, contact the Capital Health clinic in your community or visit the website: **Immunization and vaccines**.

14. Lunch

Students have a lunch break in the middle of the day. The time may vary from school to school. Most students bring lunch to school. However, some schools have cafeterias where full breakfast and lunch menus are available.

15. School Holidays

Schools usually run from the first Tuesday after Labour Day in September until the end of June. There is a Christmas vacation near the end of December and a Spring Break vacation at the end of March. At the beginning of school, students will be given the exact dates. Schools will also be closed during holidays and non-instructional days.

16. Field Trips

The school requires written permission from parents for students under the age of 18 to participate in a field trip. Your son or daughter will bring home a letter for you to sign. Please sign and return it as soon as possible. For some trips, a fee may be charged.

17. Cold Weather Policy

During winter, in the event of a heavy snowstorm, bus transportation may be delayed or cancelled. When there is bad weather, listen to local radio or television broadcasts for announcements of bus service cancellations.

18. Keeping Contact Information Up to-Date

When you register your son or daughter for school, you list your home and work phone numbers as well as the name and number of a friend or family member who can be contacted in case of an emergency. Teachers use these numbers to call you about school issues or in case of an emergency. If these numbers change, please notify the school.

19. Dress Code

All schools have a dress code. At registration, the school will provide each student with information about the dress code. This important information can be found in the Student Handbooks. Generally, all schools request students to dress appropriate and in a manner that demonstrates respect and modesty and is appropriate within a Catholic learning environment.

Students may be required to wear gym shorts in physical education classes. Each school has separate change rooms for boys and girls.

20. Alberta Student Record

As students go through school, their report cards, records of courses and other educational documents are stored in the student file. Teachers read the documents in the student's file to learn about students and to plan learning activities. The student file is confidential, but parents can request to see it. More information and form can be found on: **Student Records and Information**.

When students change schools within Alberta, the student files are sent to the new school once requested. For information from the student record of a former student of Edmonton Catholic Schools, please complete this **Student Records & Information – Request and Authorization**.

Click here for more information regarding Edmonton Catholic Schools' Procedures.

21. Alberta High School Transcript

The official record of the student's secondary school studies is called the Alberta High School Transcript. It is used by community colleges and universities to determine if your son or daughter has met the admission requirements. If a student transfers schools, the transcript is sent to the new school, so teachers can see what the student has already learned and record further progress.

You may find more information about High School Transcripts at: **Student information and high school transcripts**.

Suggestions

Parents can find information about courses, policies, and procedures by looking in:

- the school handbook (school agenda)
- the school website
- the school board's website and printed materials

SCHOOL WORDS

- Code of Conduct the description of the behavior that is expected of students.
- **Mandatory Consequences** actions that, by law, must happen usually in response to a student's bad behavior.
- **Detention** being detained or kept in school after classes are over. A minor consequence for unacceptable behavior.
- Suspension the policy of temporarily removing (suspending) a student from all classes for a number of days or weeks (maximum 21 days). In some cases, suspension is mandatory, and it is a serious consequence of unacceptable behaviour.
- **Expulsion** permanently removing (expelling) a student from school. Strictly regulated by Provincial laws, it requires the student to provide commitments (agree to certain things) before being allowed to return to school.

HUMANNESS



"And being found in human form, he humbles himself."

(Philippians 2: 8)

God affirms the essential goodness of the human condition in becoming human in Jesus. A Catholic attitude towards the human condition is decidedly positive and compassionate. Catholics embrace their humanness as a gift, celebrate the essential goodness of being human, take delight in the enjoyment of human living, tolerate human imperfections, and are merciful in the face of human sinfulness.

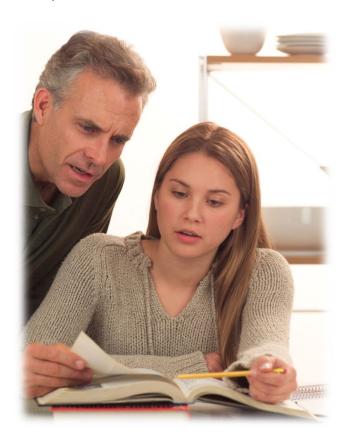
PARENT GUIDE - SECTION 5

Ways That Parents Can Help

Contents Summary

- 1. Talking with your Son or Daughter
- 2. Seven Ways to Help Your Son or Daughter
- 3. Talking with the Teacher
- 4. Questions to Ask the Teacher
- 5. How to Contact a Teacher or School Counsellor
- 6. Parent-Teacher Interviews
- 7. PowerSchool Parent Portal
- 8. Confidentiality
- 9. Letters from the School
- If You Don't Speak or Read English, You
 Can Still Help Your Son or Daughter
- 11. Helping with Homework
- 12. Solving Problems
- 13. Bullying and Harassment
- 14. School Resource Officer (SRO)

This section describes ways that parents can help their son or daughter be successful in school. It provides suggestions how to talk about school, contact teachers, be aware of homework and help solve problems.



1. Talking with your Son or Daughter

Frequent discussions with your son or daughter about school help you know how things are going at school and provide an opportunity to offer advice and support. The discussions help you know if he or she is having difficulty and whether a teacher or the guidance counsellor should be contacted.

Young people often find it hard to leave their friends and relatives and move to a new country. It is normal for them to feel a mix of excitement, anger, and sadness as they adjust to living in a new culture.



They may also find it very stressful to adjust to a new school. They may feel they have to dress or act in a way that will fit in with other young people who are different for them. This is when parents can help by simply talking about adjusting to a new life and offering advice.

Suggestions •

- Talk regularly about school. Do not wait until there is a problem.
- Ask questions about what happens at school. Encourage your son or daughter to talk about school. Listen for what is going well and what might be difficult.
- Take time when the family is together to talk about making the change to a new culture. Explain that it is normal to be anxious when making big changes in your life.
- Talk about situations that used to be difficult but are easier now. Celebrate small successes like the completion of the first two months in Canada.
- Get to know your son or daughter's friends and make your home a welcome place for them.
- Encourage your son or daughter to tell you about and explain his or her opinions. It is good practice for classroom discussions and written assignments.

2. Seven Ways to Help Your Son or Daughter

- 1. Attend parent-teacher interviews.
- 2. Develop a plan and discuss the choice of courses.
- 3. Talk regularly with your son or daughter about school.
- 4. Attend school events.
- 5. Provide a good place for the student to do homework.
- 6. Help the student organize his or her time to do homework.
- 7. Contact the school if you have any questions or concerns.

rk.

3. Talking with the Teacher

When parents and teachers talk, parents hear what teachers expect from students and how to provide support at home. Good communication also helps teachers get to know the student better, so they can help make coming to a new school easier. In Alberta high schools, parents are expected to be actively involved in their son or daughter's education and to speak to the teachers when they have a question or concern.

4. Questions to Ask the Teacher

Here are some questions that parents often ask teachers:

- What are the student's strengths and weaknesses in English?
- How much time should the student spend on homework?
- Does the student show any special interests?
- How does the student relate to other students?
- How can I help the student at home?
- · What courses should the student consider for next year?

5. How to Contact a Teacher or School Counsellor

Teachers and school counsellors are accustomed to receiving calls from parents.

Suggestions

- Call the school office and leave a message for the teacher or school counsellor. Give your name and number, your son or daughter's name and the best time to call you back.
- Ask if the school can provide an interpreter, if you need one, to help you
 talk with the teacher or school counsellor or contact the Liaison Worker to
 assist you in setting up an appointment.
- Parents may also contact the administrators of the school.

6. Parent-Teacher Interviews



The interview is a conversation between the parent and each teacher about how the student is doing at school. The interviews last 5 to 10 minutes and are usually in the classroom, gym, or cafeteria. Many schools can provide an interpreter if you ask ahead of time or you can contact the Intercultural Services, One World...One Centre and request the services of the Liaison Worker who can interpret in your first language.

Interviews are held in the fall and in the spring. At the interview, the teacher will discuss the report card and how the mark was determined. The teacher can also discuss how he or she helps the student and how you can help at home.

At the interview, sometimes parents and teachers agree to meet again or talk on the phone. Stay in contact, even when things are going well. Tell the teacher that you want to be called if he or she has any concerns, or if your son or daughter has done especially well.

7. PowerSchool Parent Portal

PowerSchool Parent Portal is a web-based home-to-school collaboration system linking parents and schools via the internet. The program allows parents to login to the PowerSchool website and view their child's class assignments, grading information, attendance, teacher's comments, report cards and demographic information. Parents can easily communicate with teachers via e-mail or receive automatic notification of unexcused absences, missing assignments, or failing grades. School fees can be paid online as well. In addition, if your child takes the yellow school bus, you can access the bus schedule, including pick-up and drop-off times.

Parents or guardians may view their child's student information through the PowerSchool website only after they have registered with the school and received a user ID and password. The instructions on how to create an account, how to access your child's report card and how to add another student to the existing parent portal account are translated in many languages. Please visit **Translated PowerSchool Information** link if you need assistance in your language. If the language you require is not available, please contact Intercultural Services, One World...One Centre at 780-441-6060. A member of the Intercultural staff will assist in contacting an interpreter in your first language.

In addition, to maintain the integrity of student data, the PowerSchool application stores all student information in a "read only" system, so the information is protected from modification. For more information visit: **Parent Tools and Links**.

8. Confidentiality

All conversations with school staff are confidential. Without your permission, school staff will not share information about your son or daughter's schoolwork or family situation with non-staff, other parents, or community members.

9. Letters from the School

The school frequently sends home information

with students, such as newsletters, permission forms for field trips and other messages. Parents should make sure they see every message.



- Remind your son or daughter that you need to see school information.
- Create a special place in your home for all school information.
- Post important school notices in your home.
- Return forms as quickly as possible.
- Contact the school office staff, the teacher or the school counsellor, if you have a question.



10. If You Don't Speak or Read English, You Can Still Help Your Son or Daughter

- Develop a plan with the student for learning English, choosing courses and for after graduation.
- Talk to the student about what he or she is learning in your first language. Be an interested listener.
- Encourage your son or daughter to read regularly in English and in your first language.
- Speak to the school through an interpreter or ESL Liaison Worker.

11. Helping with Homework

- Set up a study area, with a good light, away from TV or other distractions. Provide pens, pencils, erasers, paper, and a dictionary.
- Set a regular homework time and help your son or daughter plan his or her work.
- Consider whether doing homework with another student would help. Some students
 do better when studying with a friend. On some school assignments, students are
 expected to work together.
- Ask your son or daughter what their homework is about, and discuss it when it is done, in English and or your first language.
- Be encouraged when the work is hard, and always praise his or her efforts to succeed. Praise from a parent is a powerful incentive.
- Contact the teacher if the homework is too hard, takes too long, or is too easy.
- Encourage your son or daughter to join a homework club in your school or community if one exists.
- Engage frequently in academic conversation in your first language.

COMMUNITY



"In one Spirit we were all baptized into one body."
(1 Corinthians 12:13)

Catholics approach God together and commit to living as a community, a people of God in the world. The Catholic community, which extends over time and space, finds its life source in the traditional belief that the church represents the mystical Body of Christ. The Catholic community serves the common good of society by integrating faith and culture, thereby transforming society.

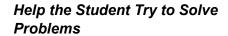
12. Solving Problems

If your son or daughter is having difficulty in a course, or if you have concerns or suggestions, talk to the teacher. If you want to know how your son or daughter is doing in many subjects, you can ask the school counsellor to speak to several teachers for you.

If the student is having problems with another student, speak to the school counsellor or the vice-principal.

The school tries to get students to solve their own problems, but there are times when parents and teachers should get involved. Here are some ways to solve problems:

- Ask questions to help you understand what is happening.
- Explain to the teacher or the school counsellor what your son or daughter has told you.
- Listen to the teacher or the school counsellor's point of view. For example, ask what the teacher would do at school and consider if this could work at home.



Parents can help their son or daughter by:

- Encouraging him or her to speak to the teacher or school counsellor about the problem.
- Helping him or her practice explaining the problem.
- Reminding him or her that school rules do not allow fighting or harsh language to solve problems.
- Reassuring him or her that you will get involved if the problem is not resolve.





- Develop a plan with the teacher so your son or daughter gets the same advice from you and the teacher.
- Agree to talk again to see if the solution is working.
- If the problem is not resolved, talk to the vice-principal or the principal.

13. Bullying or Harassment



community, see: Bullying Prevention.

If you suspect that your son or daughter is being bullied or harassed by another student, ask questions about what is happening at school.

Some students worry that the bully will try to get revenge if they tell the school. Talk to the school staff about how to make sure your son or daughter is safe. All schools have policies against bullying and harassment and want to know if a student is being bullied or harassed, even if it is happening away from school.

More information about the resources and support provided to students and staff in Edmonton Catholic Schools can be found at: **Health**, **Safety**, **Wellness**, **and Weather**.

To find out how to recognize and prevent bullying and how to promote healthy, respectful relationships in your school

14. School Resource Officers (SRO)

This unique partnership between Edmonton Police Services and Edmonton Catholic School Boards creates a police presence within Edmonton Catholic High Schools. The primary responsibility of the School Resource Officer is to work in collaboration with school administration, the school's multi-disciplinary team, and families to support student safety, growth, and well-being.

Find out the name of the police officer and where he is in your school. More information about the program, please see: **School Resource Officers Program (SRO)**.

SCHOOL WORDS

- **Bullying and Harassment** when a person or group tries to control or hurt another person.
- **PowerSchool Parent Portal** a web-based home-to-school collaboration system linking parents and schools via the internet.
- Parent-Teacher Interviews conversations between parents and teachers about how the student is doing at school. Usually, interviews take place in the fall and the spring but can be arranged at any time. Many schools can provide an interpreter if you ask ahead of time.
- School Resource Officers (SRO) Police officer(s) program builds a close bond of trust and understanding between the law and the student communities.

Helpful Links

If you are a new immigrant, you may need support with settling in Alberta. There are various settlement agencies that address the needs of new immigrants in our province. Listed below are websites that may give you access to information about the community, health, social services, and government services and agencies that provide settlement support for newcomers.

The Intercultural Services Liaison Workers are always available to assist you in connecting with local settlement, government, and community agencies. Through years of experience working with newcomers, they have developed numerous manuals that will guide you to educational journey at Edmonton Catholic Schools as well as your new life in Canada. They can be accessed at www.ecsd.net under New to Canada.

Government of Alberta and the City of Edmonton Links for Newcomers

Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)
Moving to Alberta
Life in Alberta
City of Edmonton - New Resident Programs

Immigrant Serving Agencies in Edmonton

Catholic Social Services
Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers
Edmonton Immigrant Service Association-EISA
ASSIST Community Services Centre



ONE WORLD...ONE CENTRE

9405 – 50 Street Edmonton, AB T5G 1R7

Phone: 780-441-6060