Building and Supporting a Strong Workforce Part 1:

Creating Conditions For Success



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Introduction



Human Resources is committed to creating the conditions that enable employees and the organization to thrive. Guided by the mission, values, and commitment to excellence at Edmonton Catholic Schools, the department focuses on supporting employees through meaningful professional learning, safe and healthy workplaces, responsive employee support, and the continuous improvement of practices, procedures, and policies. Through collaboration with departments across the Division, Human Resources helps ensure that employees have access to the training, resources, and guidance needed to perform their roles effectively and contribute to student success.

At the heart of the department's work is a commitment to developing people. Human Resources coordinates professional learning opportunities that support leadership growth, employee development, and continuous learning while fostering a culture where employees feel valued, empowered, and equipped to succeed. Equally important is the department's focus on occupational health and safety, employee well-being, and the creation of workplaces where individuals feel respected, supported, and safe.

Through ongoing review and enhancement of policies, procedures, and practices, Human Resources strives to ensure that services remain relevant, effective, and aligned with both legislative requirements and organizational priorities. Grounded in Catholic faith, service, respect, collaboration, and accountability, the Human Resources team works continuously to strengthen systems, support employees, and foster a culture of excellence that benefits staff, students, and the broader Edmonton Catholic Schools community.

"Consult not your fears but your hopes and your dreams."
— Pope John XXIII

The Human Resource Team

Together, the Human Resources team collaborates with employees, leaders, schools, and departments throughout Edmonton Catholic Schools to foster positive workplace experiences and meaningful opportunities for growth. Drawing on expertise across a broad range of Human Resources functions, the team works to build relationships, provide guidance, and create solutions that help employees and workplaces thrive.

Inspired by the Division's Catholic mission, the team is committed to serving others with compassion, integrity, and care. Through partnership and collaboration, they help create environments where employees feel valued, connected, and equipped to contribute to the success of students, families, and school communities.

Provides expertise in employee relations, occupational health and safety, payroll, benefits, wellness, leadership development, professional learning, staffing support, and policy interpretation.

Connects employees to wellness, accommodation, and support resources.

Continuously improves services to meet the evolving needs of employees and the organization.

Supports employees from their first day through every stage of their career.

Supports both proactive and responsive workplace needs, including coaching, conflict resolution, accommodations, wellness initiatives, and workplace restoration.





Progress in Motion

Human Resource Services continues to evolve its programs and services to meet changing workforce needs and support organizational priorities.

A number of new initiatives and enhancements have strengthened how we work, improved the employee experience, and supported a more sustainable workforce for the future.

Highlights

Continued to strengthen learning and employee development opportunities through initiatives such as Commit to Kids and Respect in the Workplace training

Continued growth of the SHINE Leadership Development programs

Expanded mental health and wellness supports through The Working Mind psychological health and safety training. Throughout the year, managers, supervisors, and staff participated in training, with schools and departments reaching out to arrange sessions and pursue certification.

New future digital learning pathways will be available through online platform

Expanded professional learning opportunities

Purpose and Strategic Alignment

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) training strengthens employees' knowledge and confidence to identify, prevent, and respond to workplace hazards while promoting consistent safety practices across schools and operational departments. It supports employee wellbeing, safe learning and working environments, and ensures Division compliance with Alberta OHS legislative requirements.

Division Wide Training

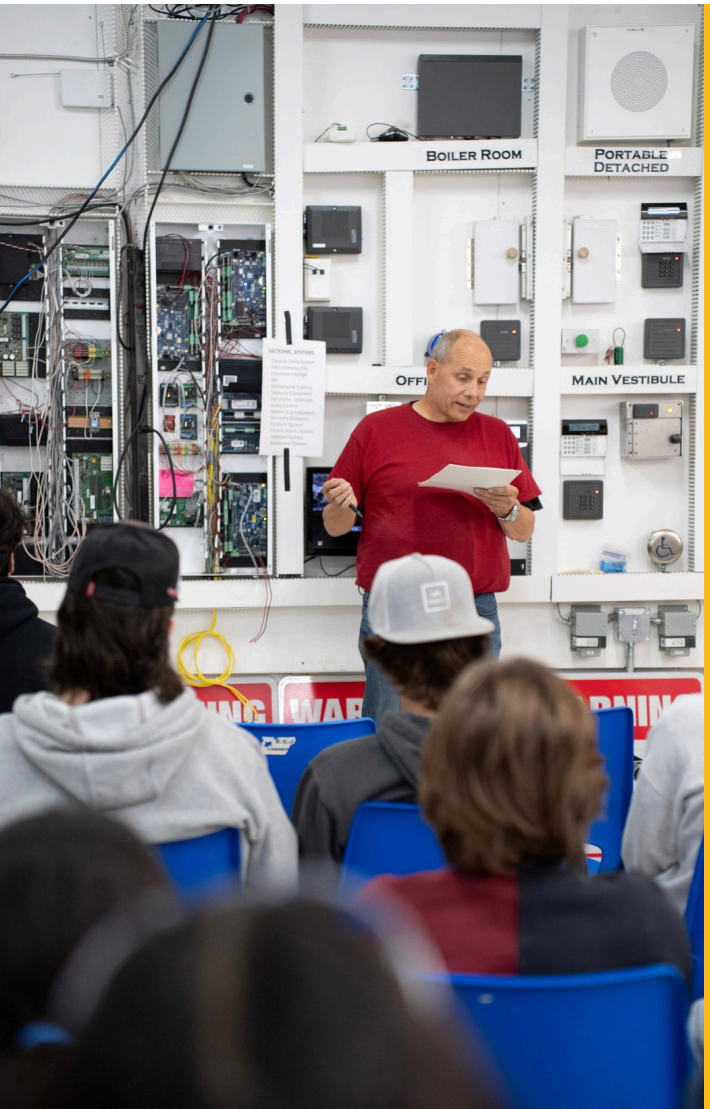
Division wide mandatory safety training establishes a consistent baseline of knowledge so that all employees can recognize hazards, understand their responsibilities for health and safety, and respond appropriately to incidents and emergencies.

Core learning includes new employee health and safety orientation; emergency preparedness and response; incident, injury, and hazard reporting; violence and harassment prevention, referred to within the division as Respect in the Workplace; psychological health and safety awareness; anaphylaxis and emergency medication awareness; and reviews of relevant administrative procedures and safety responsibilities.



Role Specific and Risk Based Training

Role specific and risk based training is tailored to employees' responsibilities and the hazards they may encounter. Division leaders receive instruction on OHS responsibilities, hazard assessment and control, incident investigation, emergency preparedness and response, and psychological safety. Facility Services staff receive task- and equipment-specific training to ensure that jobs are performed safely. Additional training includes hazard assessments, working alone, personal protective equipment, first aid and AED awareness, WHMIS and CSTS training, and safe vehicle or equipment operation. School-based employees receive training on emergency procedures, student-specific health and safety needs, anaphylaxis response, training to support safe environments in specialized programs such as CTF/S, Respect in the Workplace, and Non-Violent Crisis Intervention. This targeted approach ensures that training is meaningful and reflects actual work activities and risk exposure.



Leadership Capacity and Administrator Support

OHS training equips principals, managers, and supervisors to fulfill their workplace health and safety responsibilities by clarifying accountability, strengthening their ability to recognize and address emerging risks, and supporting consistent implementation of Division procedures.

Training also builds leadership capacity for emergency preparedness and incident response, while practical tools, including templates, checklists, and ongoing consultation help leaders apply safety requirements effectively within their schools and departments.

Training Delivery and Accessibility

OHS training is delivered through flexible and accessible formats, including online learning modules, in-person workshops, annual site-based orientation, professional development sessions, toolbox talks, and team-based safety discussions. Targeted instruction is also provided following incidents, procedural changes, or the identification of new hazards, with refresher training offered for higher-risk activities. This blended approach supports consistent access across the Division while allowing training to respond to changing operational needs.

Participation and Measurable Results

Participation and outcomes are monitored through our online OHS management software (Public School Works). In addition to participation, metrics may include the number of sessions offered; employee completion rates; and participation by administrators, supervisors, and specialized employee groups.

Additional indicators such as recurring safety gaps identified through inspections, investigations, or audits, as well as COR Audit observations related to training and competency help assess whether learning is improving workplace health and safety practices.





Certificate of Recognition (COR)

ECSD has maintained its Certificate of Recognition (COR) for many years, reflecting a strong and sustained commitment to occupational health and safety. The OHS team continues to strengthen this foundation through ongoing improvements in ergonomics, comprehensive job hazard assessments, staff safety education, and practical resources that support safe workplaces across the Division.

This work has also evolved beyond a traditional safety program toward an integrated approach to employee well-being, incorporating psychological health and safety, mental health supports, wellness resources, and proactive communication. Through collaboration with senior leaders and departments across ECSD, the OHS team helps embed physical and psychological safety into the Division's culture while supporting employees in the important work they do for students and families.

Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement priorities include strengthening the tracking and reporting of training completion, expanding the reach of the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP), refreshing mandatory modules to reflect legislative and procedural changes, and expanding role specific learning for higher risk work.

The division will also continue to build the capacity of principals, managers, and supervisors; use incident trends, investigation findings, hazard assessments, and audit findings to identify emerging learning needs; and increase access to concise, practical resources such as checklists and short refresher modules.

Beginning Teachers

Supporting beginning teachers remains an important focus for Human Resources as Edmonton Catholic Schools continues to welcome new educators to the Division. Over the past three years, more than 800 teachers have been hired, representing approximately one-third of the teaching workforce. Human Resources supports beginning teachers from recruitment through onboarding and early career growth by providing networking opportunities, application support, individualized guidance, and ongoing connections that help build confidence and a sense of belonging.

Collaborative Approaches to Teacher Success

Feedback and insights are gathered from beginning teachers to better understand their experiences and evolving needs. In collaboration with Learning Services, Student Services, Religious Education, and school leaders, these insights help inform and strengthen supports that respond to the unique needs of beginning teachers.

Through intentional recruitment, meaningful relationships, and ongoing collaboration, Human Resources helps create a faith-filled community where beginning teachers can grow professionally, deepen their vocation as Catholic educators, and contribute to positive outcomes for students and school communities.



Today's beginning teacher may be tomorrow's mentor, consultant, assistant-principal, principal, or system leader.
Recruitment brings people to ECSD.
Retention allows their story to come full circle.

Expanding Access to Professional Learning

Over the last year, Human Resource Services delivered over 35 professional learning sessions supporting employees across all employee groups. Learning opportunities focused on high impact competencies including leadership, communication, facilitation, collaboration, critical thinking, conflict resolution, feedback, recognition, wellness, mental health, and personal effectiveness. Over 450 employees participated in professional learning opportunities, reflecting the division's commitment to ensuring staff have access to relevant, practical, and timely development experiences.

Professional learning was accessible through multiple delivery methods, including in-person workshops, virtual learning, and self-directed online modules. Employees also completed role specific and essential training programs, including onboarding and Catholic formation, in collaboration with departments such as Learning Services and Religious Education. Additional training included Commit to Kids, Respect in the Workplace, and Occupational Health and Safety training, ensuring all staff have access to the knowledge, resources, and support they need to feel confident and well equipped to perform their roles effectively.

A Culture of Continuous Learning

- 30+ hours of professional development delivered
- 200+ total participants across SHINE professional development sessions
- 20+ hours of dedicated leadership development program sessions
- 8 new mentor-mentee relationships established
- 50+ hours configuring new online learning platform



SHINE - Building Leadership Capacity

Human Resource Services continued to strengthen leadership capacity through the SHINE Leadership Development Framework, providing structured learning pathways for department employees at different stages of their leadership journey. The SHINE Aspiring Leader and SHINE Team Leader programs engaged over 20 participants in cohort-based learning focused on self-awareness, communication, emotional intelligence, collaboration, strategic thinking, and servant leadership. These programs support succession planning by developing future leaders while strengthening leadership effectiveness across the division.

In addition to formal leadership programming, department leaders participated in targeted professional learning designed to enhance their ability to lead teams, navigate change, support employee development, and foster high-performing workplace cultures. Through these initiatives, Human Resource Services is building a sustainable leadership pipeline and equipping leaders with the skills necessary to meet both current and future organizational needs.



"I particularly liked how [the aspiring leader program] exposed me to a long-term vision. Instead of focusing only on immediate deliverables, those help to facilitate a vision-alignment collaboration with the team, analyze and anticipate risks, and connect the work to broader organizational goals"

- Aspiring Leader graduate

"Through the leadership program and professional development opportunities, I became more intentional in how I communicate and engage with colleagues and stakeholders . . . I was able to adapt my approach to better connect with others, build stronger working relationships, and gain support for initiatives and projects."

- Aspiring Leader graduate

"I believe each of the 5 elements of the SHINE framework are very important as a leader. Being a supervisor, I found Honor Yourself the most valuable attribute to learn and grow. Showing appreciation, empathy and compassion at day to day work to team members and to ALL of them is vital to success."

- Team Leader graduate

Demonstrating Impact and Organizational Readiness



Building a Stronger Organization

The Division's investment in employee learning and development contributes directly to workforce capability, employee engagement, and organizational sustainability. Learning opportunities support employees in achieving professional goals, adapting to changing workplace requirements, and developing the competencies needed to contribute effectively within their teams and school communities.

By providing equitable access to professional learning and leadership development opportunities, Human Resource Services continues to support succession planning, strengthen organizational capacity, and prepare employees to meet emerging challenges with confidence. This commitment to continuous learning ensures the Division remains well-positioned to support excellence in service, leadership, and student success.

When it comes to professional development, the Systems Excellence Survey overall results have increased in the following areas:

- My principal/supervisor provides me with feedback to help me improve my work.
- My school/department focuses on continuous improvement through evidence-based decision-making.
- School/department-provided professional learning or training opportunities are useful to me.

Building Confidence Through Consistency

Human Resource Services helps ensure the consistent application of collective agreements, terms and conditions of employment, administrative procedures, and legislative requirements across the Division. Employee Relations Advisors, Employee Health Services Advisors, and the Leave Coordinator provide guidance to staff and leaders that promotes fair, consistent, and process aligned decision making.

This work includes supporting the interpretation of collective agreement provisions, helping employees and leaders navigate leave processes, and clarifying roles, responsibilities, timelines, and communication expectations. Through this guidance, Human Resource Services helps foster confidence in Division processes and practices.

Encouraging Growth and Accountability

Human Resource Services also collaborates with leaders to clarify performance expectations and develop improvement plans that align with job responsibilities, administrative procedures, collective agreements, and established Division processes.



Partnering to Support Success

The Human Resource Services team plays an important role in ensuring that supports and services are in place to manage conflict effectively across the division. Employee Relations Advisors support respectful and healthy workplaces by providing guidance, coaching, and intervention when workplace issues arise or when conflict begins to affect relationships, communication, or day-to-day operations. Their work includes coaching leaders and employees through difficult conversations, mediating discussions, interpreting collective agreements and administrative procedures, working with unions on sensitive workplace matters, and supporting respectful problem-solving before concerns escalate.

When matters require a more formal response, Employee Relations supports investigations, grievances, and complaint processes to ensure that issues are addressed fairly, consistently, and in accordance with division procedures.

Through their work, Employee Relations Advisors support early resolution, reduce the likelihood that conflict will escalate, and help maintain positive working relationships. They also provide training, consultation, and ongoing support to administrators and supervisors so they are better equipped to manage workplace challenges in a respectful, consistent, and proactive manner.

Provides guidance on how to apply collective agreement provisions, particularly when interpretations differ.

Clarifying performance expectations and supporting the development of improvement plans that align with job descriptions, administrative procedures, collective agreements, and established processes.





Resolving Concerns with Care

Employee Health Services Advisors also support by helping to address conflict or concerns that may arise during illness, injury, disability, accommodation, medical leave, or return-to-work processes.

Employee Health Services Advisors work collaboratively with employees, supervisors, healthcare providers, Human Resources Business Partners, and Employee Relations to promote clear communication, shared understanding, and coordinated supports. Their work helps reduce misunderstandings, support employees through complex situations, and promote positive outcomes for employees and schools.

Provide clear guidance on medical leave processes, including roles, responsibilities, timelines, and expectations for ongoing communication throughout the leave period.

Guide employees through appropriate leave processes, ensuring compliance with applicable collective agreement provisions, terms and conditions of employment, and all applicable legislation.

Joy in the Journey Ahead



As we look ahead, Human Resources remains committed to supporting the people who bring the Division's mission to life each day. Guided by our Catholic faith and the values that shape Edmonton Catholic Schools, we will continue to invest in professional learning, workplace safety, employee well-being, and continuous improvement to ensure employees have the resources, knowledge, and support they need to succeed.

Through collaboration, responsive service, and the ongoing enhancement of policies, practices, and supports, the Human Resources team strives to foster a workplace culture where employees feel valued, empowered, and connected.

Together, we will continue building organizational capacity, supporting employee growth, and creating the conditions for success that enable staff, students, families, and school communities to flourish.

Core Values

Dignity and Respect
Honesty
Loyalty
Fairness
Personal and Communal Growth



"As each one has received a gift,
use it to serve one another."
1 Peter 4:10