

| Edmonton Catholic Schools |

# LEADERSHIP AND STAFF RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND DEVELOPMENT

| February 2024 |



## INTRODUCTION

Edmonton Catholic Schools, named one of Alberta's Top Employers each year since 2016, has over 4400 staff members who form a vibrant Catholic educational community. In the highly competitive job market serving school divisions across the province, our Division focuses significant energy on recruiting, developing and retaining staff and leadership. This work ensures that the services we provide to students and families are continuous and of exceptionally high quality. We know that once staff have joined Edmonton Catholic Schools, they are more likely to remain with us and seek advancement in their discipline if we provide appropriate and high-quality onboarding, support, training and opportunities for advancement within the Division.

In our Division Plan for Continuous Growth 2023-2026, the Board of Trustees established the priority of learning excellence. Goal three in that priority is that staff will build their capacity to meet student needs and be collaborative contributors at their sites and beyond. The key strategy - Engage in intentional professional learning to maximize efficacy and promote growth in your role with respect to Division expectations and relevant standards to your role, is intended to encourage the advancement of current ECSD staff within our organization. This is of critical importance when succession management is vital to ensuring continuity of service.

This report provides an overview of our Human Resource Services work to ensure that we have a full complement of staff to fill the many roles contributing to an excellent Catholic education. It also highlights the work of all departments in ensuring that our leaders participate in ongoing development of their competencies.

# RECRUITMENT

## DIVISION

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### ECSD: TOP EMPLOYER

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Edmonton Catholic Schools has proudly been named one of Alberta's Top Employers for the ninth consecutive year. This recognition reflects our ongoing commitment to creating a positive and supportive work environment. Employers are assessed across various domains such as workplace atmosphere, health and family benefits, performance management, and community involvement. The efforts and dedication of ECSD staff have been instrumental in creating a working environment that supports not only their professional growth but also their personal well-being. This, in turn, directly translates into the quality of education and care provided to our students.



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### RECRUITMENT SPECIALIST

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Since its inception in April 2022, the Recruitment Specialist role at Edmonton Catholic Schools has become integral in enhancing our recruitment process. This role serves as the primary contact for potential candidates, providing personalized and thoughtful responses to their inquiries, significantly improving their experience and perception of the Division. The focus on relationship-building has made candidates feel more at ease and well-informed from the beginning.

Strategically, the Recruitment Specialist has been crucial in identifying and fulfilling the Division's staffing needs, efficiently addressing both immediate vacancies and long-term recruitment goals. The specialist's deep understanding of the Division's requirements has led to a more effective tracking and staffing system. This not only streamlines the process for filling teacher vacancies but also improves service delivery to hiring managers, minimizing disruptions in our schools and sites. Ultimately, the Recruitment Specialist role reflects our commitment to a positive, relationship-centered recruitment experience, aligning with the immediate and future needs of our Division.

Moving forward, the staffing team is reorganizing to allow an HR Coordinator to join the Recruitment Specialist, forming a team who will continue to focus on attracting and recruiting strong candidates to the Division and explore further strategies to meet the needs of our growing Division and everchanging workforce.



## PARTNERSHIPS



Human Resource Services relies heavily on our partnerships with post-secondary institutions as well as career and recruitment support agencies to connect with potential candidates for all positions within our Division. Our strong partnership with the University of Alberta (including the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program, Campus St. Jean, and the Internationally Educated Teacher Program), Concordia University of Edmonton, and the King's University allows us to meet and connect with highly qualified potential teacher applicants. In addition, University of Alberta, MacEwan University, Norquest College, Bredin Centre for Career Advancement, and BGS Career Ventures are partners, who allow us to access qualified candidates who to fill AUPE, OOS, and Unifor positions.

Edmonton Catholic Schools actively engages with numerous post-secondary and career support agencies, participating in various events to connect with potential candidates. Our involvement in career fairs provides opportunities to meet soon-to-be graduates, fostering informal discussions about the diverse career prospects within our Division. Additionally, we regularly present to students and clients, sharing insights into our range of career opportunities, recruitment processes, and the numerous benefits of working with the Edmonton Catholic School Division. Our commitment extends to participating in mock interviews, conducting resumé review sessions, and contributing to special events like Frosty Fest, a networking event for Education students at the University of Alberta, and Admitted Student Day, an information session for newly admitted education students at the University of Alberta. Through these engagements, we aim to actively connect with and support emerging talent in the education sector.





## PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS AND PRACTICUMS

Our primary avenue for recruiting employees across all categories in our Division is hosting post-secondary students for their practicums. In the Fall 2023 term, 157 pre-service teachers from the University of Alberta and Concordia University of Edmonton successfully completed their practicums with us. The importance of ensuring a positive experience for these pre-service teachers in our schools during their practicums cannot be overstated, as it significantly influences their decision to seek employment within our Division after graduation. Human Resource Services frequently receives feedback attesting to the fact that candidates are often motivated to apply to our Division as a result of the positive experiences gained during their practicum placements.

Undoubtedly, the success of hosting pre-service teachers relies heavily on the commitment of our mentor teachers. Without their dedication, these valuable recruitment opportunities would not materialize. Recognizing this pivotal role, Human Resource Services has initiated an effort to acknowledge not only our student teachers but also their mentor teachers. This initiative aims to express gratitude for the mentor teachers' valuable time, leadership, and guidance. At the conclusion of each practicum period, both mentor and student teachers receive a token of appreciation from Human Resource Services, accompanied by a heartfelt card conveying our thanks.

Human Resource Services also accepts practicum placements in other positions throughout the Division, including, but not limited to, Education Assistants, Administrative Supports, Therapeutic Assistants, Social Workers, Early Childhood Educators, and Psychologists. Much like pre-service teachers, after having a positive experience with the Division during these placements, students are encouraged to apply to the Division as they begin their careers. This benefits our Division, as we are hiring qualified candidates, who already understand our processes and operations.



## EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND ANTI-RACISM (EDIAR)

Human Resource Services is committed to maintaining a recruitment process that is equitable and inclusive which, in return, will contribute to the diversification of our Division. To adhere to this commitment, we have adjusted our recruitment process to welcome candidates with an open work permit to our Division. Prior to this change, only candidate with permanent resident or Canadian citizen status were considered. We have now broadened our ability to recruit individuals from a wider range of diverse cultures, backgrounds, and experiences.

Our relationship with the Bredin Centre for Career Advancement, has been successful in helping us connect with newcomers to Canada through their *1-Step Employment for Newcomers* program. This recruitment connection

allows us to meet highly qualified candidates who are able to fill various positions in our Division. Candidates recruited to the Division through this program are now working in wide range of positions including Educational Assistants, Custodial team members, Therapeutic Assistants, Technology Services staff, Human Resources professionals, Administrative Support professionals, English Language Learner Educators, and Teachers.

Human Resource Services is actively enhancing our recruitment process to be more inclusive and effective. A recent improvement in our interview process includes providing written copies of questions to candidates, to follow along as the interview panel reads the questions out loud. This inclusive approach accommodates diverse learning styles, language proficiencies, and eases interview anxiety, allowing candidates to better demonstrate their true potential. This simple yet impactful change underscores our commitment to a fair and supportive recruitment environment, setting up every candidate for success.

The Alberta Immigrant Teacher Collective (AITC) and ECSD have developed a successful collaboration, with the goal of supporting internationally educated teachers integrating into the Alberta education system. We were thankful for their participation in our ECSD Education Networking Events, where ECSD staff members who are members of the AITC collective shared their experiences with education students. These same staff members will be collaborating with Learning Services and Human Resources to develop a pilot project to mentor internationally educated beginning teachers in our French Immersion programs.

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## RECRUITMENT OF INDIGENOUS STAFF

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Indigenous Learning Services (ILS) makes ongoing efforts to support Human Resource Services in recruiting and retaining Indigenous staff across the Division. Through the existing relationships that ILS staff have with Indigenous organizations and professionals, Human Resource Services has had the opportunity to develop a partnership with the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program at the University of Alberta. Informally, Indigenous Learning Services staff maintain connections with Indigenous staff that are new to the Division to foster a sense of belonging and support.

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## COMMUNICATIONS

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Our Communications department plays an integral role in enhancing the Human Resource Services (HRS) department's efforts in recruiting new employees and recognizing current staff's hard work and achievements. This collaboration is important in shaping the Division's image as an attractive employer and fostering a positive, engaging workplace culture.

The team has become more involved in supporting the recruitment efforts of Human Resource Services. Most recently, the team's Communication Specialist and Graphic Artist worked with HRS to rebrand and refresh ECSD's recruitment materials. From new pull-up banners to take-home materials, they worked to redesign the job fair booth to be more modern and approachable for potential applicants.



Additionally, Communications supports recruitment efforts by leveraging ECSD social media platforms to expand the reach of specific job postings. This strategy is beneficial when there are few qualified applicants. As part of a new Social Media Strategy for Edmonton Catholic Schools, Communications is considering potential employees as part of its target audience. This ensures all posts show the Division and our schools as a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe Catholic environment for staff and students. Employee recognition is vital to workplace culture, significantly impacting recruitment and staff development.

The 2024-2025 Division Marketing Plan, created by Communications and approved by the Chief Superintendent, includes a dedicated budget allocation specifically aimed at supporting the recruitment of new staff across all positions. This strategic investment recognizes the importance of attracting top talent, which directly benefits the 47,000 students served in Edmonton Catholic Schools. The budget will be utilized in various innovative and targeted recruitment campaigns leveraging digital and traditional marketing channels. These campaigns will emphasize Edmonton Catholic Schools and the diverse career opportunities available.

Communications contributes to the effectiveness and reach of staff recruitment, development, and retention.

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#### **TOTAL COMPENSATION**

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Edmonton Catholic School Division's total rewards strategy exemplifies a commendable level of competitiveness, particularly with 100% employer-paid benefit and defined benefit pension plan offerings. The recent inclusion of benefit coverage for temporary Out of Scope and Unifor roles further underscores its commitment to comprehensive employee care.

Such initiatives significantly enhance the organization's attractiveness to prospective talent and enhance retention rates among existing staff. Moreover, by extending benefits to some temporary roles, ECSD demonstrates an inclusive approach to workforce management, fostering a sense of belonging and employee engagement.

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#### **DIVISION HYBRID WORK ARRANGEMENT (HWA)**

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The Division is dedicated to maintaining supportive, flexible, and fair workplaces for all our staff. In consideration of the ways in which many other organizations provide employees with flexibility, and to adapt to the modern work environment, the Division implemented a Hybrid Workplace Schedule for employees who do not require regular on-site work. This arrangement was implemented in June 2023 and continues to be an option for eligible employees. Providing a flexible work arrangement has helped attract, recruit, and retain team members who can fulfill their job responsibilities without needing to work on-site regularly. With the systems and software available to Division employees, teams and departments have continued to offer strategic and responsive service to our client groups with this model. Currently, we have 134 employees who are participating in an HWA.



## TEACHER RECRUITMENT

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### ECSD EXCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT EVENTS

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Human Resource Services has implemented three main ECSD exclusive recruitment events that aid in the recruitment of new teachers. Throughout the school year, HRS welcomes pre-service teachers to Lumen Christi Catholic Education for a presentation about our Division and our recruitment process. This is typically the first in-person meeting we have with many of the pre-service teachers who attend and allows them to get to know our recruitment team before the recruitment process begins.

The second ECSD exclusive recruitment event introduced last year is our one-on-one application drop-in sessions. Scheduled in half-hour intervals, this is an opportunity for pre-service teachers to meet with our recruitment team regarding their application. The session is catered to candidate need but is generally used to review and provide feedback on the candidate's resumé, cover letter, references, and Faith Formation Plan. Through these sessions, Human Resource Services has developed many positive connections with candidates to ensure they feel supported and comfortable with the application and recruitment process.

The third, and final ECSD exclusive recruitment event, is our Education Student Information and Networking Event. This event is open to all Education students in and around the Edmonton area. With Human Resource Services, Learning Services, Indigenous Learning Services, and Religious Education Services participating, this event is intended to showcase Edmonton Catholic Schools and the different supports available to teachers with our Division. The Education Student Information and Networking Event affords pre-service teachers the opportunity to meet Division administrators, consultants, teachers, and other professionals from the Division in an informal, yet professional, environment. Last year, this event attracted over 120 pre-service teachers from across the city and was deemed to be a success by participating departments and student participants. Human Resource Service is, once again, hosting this event on March 13, 2024 at Lumen Christi Catholic Education Centre.

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### EDUCATION STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

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Human Resource Services is now actively encouraging pre-service teachers to join our Casual Educational Assistant roster while they complete their studies. This opportunity offers a range of benefits that align well with their career development. Firstly, serving as a Casual Educational Assistant allows pre-service teachers to begin establishing valuable networks within Edmonton Catholic Schools, particularly with principals, who play a crucial role in future hiring for contract positions. Secondly, this role provides them with hands-on classroom experience, an invaluable asset that enhances their candidacy during the recruitment process. Lastly, it offers a unique chance to observe and learn from experienced teachers, aiding in the development of their own teaching practice.

The opportunity to work in our schools as casual Educational Assistants before completing their degree enables pre-service teachers to become acquainted with the culture and values of our schools, fostering a sense of belonging and commitment that often inspires them to choose our Division as their preferred place of employment after completing their education. This approach not only supports their professional growth but also strengthens our educational community with dedicated and familiar future teachers.

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### CATHOLICISM 101

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This year, for the first time, ECSD is offering our teachers the opportunity to participate in an in-house Catholicism 101 class. There are currently 60 teachers registered, and the classes are progressing well, with teachers interested in the content and actively participating in the class discussions.

Successful completion of Catholicism 101 provides participants with equivalency for CHRTC 250 and CHRTC 380-381, the two required Religion courses to be considered for a continuous contract. The course topics include the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Principles of Faith and Faith Growth, Knowing God, Faith: Its Meaning and Practice, the Old and New Testaments, Jesus of Nazareth, the Church, the Sacraments, Mary the Mother of God, Prayer, Morality, Sin and Reconciliation, Social Justice, discussion of Vatican Religious education documents, as well as review of the Religious Education Curriculum resources for all grades.

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## SCHOOL-BASED LEADER RECRUITMENT

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### RECRUITING FOR SCHOOL-BASED ADMINISTRATION

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"Leadership is second only to classroom instruction among school-related factors that affect student learning in school." ("The School Principal as Leader: Guiding Schools to Better Teaching and Learning," *The Wallace Foundation*, 2013, p. 5). Edmonton Catholic Schools acknowledges the important role school-based administrators play in impacting student achievement; thus, each year, Leadership Support Services works to seek potential candidates for the role of principal and assistant principal.

In the last five years, 79 new Assistant Principals have been placed in schools – this is an 84 percent change for our schools. Also in the last five years, 51 new Principals have been placed in schools – which is a 54 percent change for our schools.

This amount of change has increased the demand for Leadership support and training and created an increased emphasis on mentorship and coaching by all departments within Edmonton Catholic Schools, but especially by Leadership Services.

As you can see, these training and development programs play an integral role in the development of leadership capacity within the Division in a very demanding time for succession management. They also provide a critical service in ensuring that our school-based administrators are well-formed as Catholic educational leaders. This holds great promise for the future of our Division, as these individuals are the future of Edmonton Catholic Schools.

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### "SO YOU WANT TO BE AN ADMINISTRATOR"

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The "So You Want to be an Administrator" is a new combined Human Resource Services and Leadership Services engagement and recruitment event taking place in May this year. This event is for certificated staff who are considering a career in school-based administration and are looking for more information before taking the leap and applying for our Leadership Training Program. The event consists of a presentation of our robust leadership training and support as well as a question-and-answer session.

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## SCHOOL-BASED ADMINISTRATION APPLICATION PROCESS

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### PRINCIPAL APPLICATIONS

Certificated staff with a continuous designation as an Assistant Principal are eligible to apply for a Principal appointment. All applicants must have a minimum of four years of Assistant Principal experience. It is expected that prior to being granted continuous designation, a minimum of one year of graduate studies will have been completed. As of the fall of 2018, successful completion of the ECSD Principal Leadership course is required prior to gaining a Principal assignment. This was put into place to ensure that all school leaders had a base level of understanding of the leadership practices expected in our Division and a beginning understanding of the role and its demands. External applicants must have continuous designation as a Principal with their employing Board to apply and are required to meet with the Superintendent of Leadership Services prior to applying.

Applications are rigorous to ensure that the candidates are the best possible leaders for advancing the success of our schools. To ensure that the hiring and promotion practices support the Catholic aspects of our Division's mission, each application requires that the candidate submit eight staff references, a Principal reference, and a pastoral reference, as well as complete a reflective application process.

Applications are submitted electronically to Human Resource Services and reviewed by an interview team comprised of the Superintendent of Leadership Services, Division Principal of Leadership Services, two school-based Principals, one Assistant Principal and one teacher. The committee members review each of the submitted application packages, and each is graded on a rubric scale. Successful applicants move forward to the interview stage, and from there, a list of successful applicants is created for future placement. This pool of successful candidates is used to place administrators in school sites. Individuals may stay in the pool for three years, at which time, if they have not received a placement, they will continue in their current position. Candidates who are removed from the pool after the three-year timeline expires would then need to reapply for Principalship to regain entry to the pool.

Unsuccessful candidates are provided an opportunity for a full debrief by the Superintendent of Leadership Services or the Division Principal of Leadership Services and given opportunities where they can develop. These candidates can apply again in 13 months.

### ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL APPLICATIONS

Certificated staff with continuous designation as a teacher are eligible to apply for an Assistant Principal appointment. All applicants must have a minimum of five years of teaching experience. It is expected that prior to being granted continuous designation, a minimum of two graduate-level courses will have been completed. As of the fall of 2018, successful completion of the ECSD Leadership Training course is required prior to gaining an Assistant Principal assignment. This was put into place to ensure that all school leaders had a base level of understanding of the leadership practices expected in our Division and a beginning understanding of the role and its demands. External applicants must have continuous designation as a teacher with their employing Board to apply and are required to meet with the Superintendent of Leadership Services prior to applying. Applicants adhere to the same application procedures outlined above for Principal applicants.

Unsuccessful candidates are provided an opportunity for a full debrief by the Superintendent of Leadership Services or the Division Principal of Leadership Services and given opportunities where they can develop. These candidates can apply again in 13 months.



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### SCHOOL-BASED LEADERSHIP PLACEMENTS

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The Administrator Placement Committee, which is comprised of the Chief Superintendent and other Superintendents, is supported by a program developed by Technology Services. The Administrator Profile is a web application which collects various details from school-based administrators, such as their strengths, languages they speak, levels they have taught, preferred assignments, and other relevant data. All this strengths-based data enables an informed recommendation process to support the placement of administrators across schools in the Division.

The placement process is guided by several key principles. These include considering the needs of students and staff at both the school the administrator is leaving and the one they are joining, the Division's succession management needs, the development of leadership capacity at both school sites and the Division as a whole, and the administrator's personal requests. The Division Administrator Placement Committee oversees placements for the subsequent year in March and will meet on an as needed basis for emergent placement needs.

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### EXTERNAL ADMINISTRATOR RECRUITMENT

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With the ever-present need to attract talented administrator candidates to serve our students, families, and staff, we are actively looking to recruit new administrators both internally and externally. Through postings online as well as on LinkedIn we are searching for new administrators who meet specific ECSD criteria. The ideal external applicants for school-based administration are practicing Catholics with at least five years of teaching experience and have a successful record of accomplishment as a Principal or Assistant Principal for a minimum of three years. For immediate placement in our schools, we require that external administrator applicants currently hold a continuous designation as a Principal with their current employing Board and should have made significant progress towards a Master's degree, with at least one year of study completed. Last year and throughout the summer, external recruiting efforts resulted in three new administrators being added to our Division and are currently serving in our schools.

## RETENTION

### ONBOARDING

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#### NEW EMPLOYEE ONBOARDING

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Human Resource Services is reintroducing in-person onboarding for new employees, enhancing their initial experience within our Division. This approach promotes the building of meaningful connections with Human Resource staff, colleagues, administrators, and support staff, fostering a strong sense of belonging from the start. By facilitating face-to-face interactions during onboarding, we aim to boost engagement and retention, ensuring new employees feel immediately integrated and aligned with the Division's mission, vision, culture and core values. Additionally, this method allows for a more effective communication of Administrative Procedures

and system training, minimizing potential misunderstandings and streamlining the integration process for both the employees and their respective schools or departments.

The primary objective of this revamped process is to immerse new employees in our organizational culture, values, and norms, facilitating quicker adaptation and integration. Hands-on support during onboarding will allow for immediate inquiries, clarifications, and interactive training, enhancing understanding and compliance with our policies and regulations. Moreover, these sessions offer valuable networking opportunities, setting the stage for long-term professional support and growth. With the comprehensive overview provided by HRS, Principals and Managers can then focus on specific job and departmental intricacies, streamlining the learning process and saving time overall.

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## BEGINNING TEACHERS

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### BEGINNING TEACHER CONFERENCE

The Beginning Teacher Conference, "Planting Seeds of Success: Cultivating Growth in the Classroom," supports teachers new to Edmonton Catholic Schools. This year, there were 77 teachers in their first year of teaching who participated in 1.5 days of action-packed learning, collaboration and relationship-building. The goal of this conference is to set our beginning teachers up for success as they embark upon their teaching journey. Through multi-department collaboration, our priority is to provide specific and targeted support to teachers in their first years in the profession. Leaders from Learning Services, Human Resources, Indigenous Learning Services, and Edmonton Catholic School Local 54 and Religious Education Services provided sessions, resources, and opportunities for individual mentorship through this structure. The days were organized to engage participants through a meet-and-greet carousel format at which consultants were available to answer questions and share resources specifically tailored to their disciplines. All participants attended a general session: "Welcome to the Profession," followed by various breakout sessions. Throughout the 1.5 days, teachers had a choice of 29 sessions addressing topics such as positive behaviour supports, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-racism in Edmonton Catholic Schools, Indigenous education resources, planning and creating assessments, engaging math environments, effective reading and writing instruction, writing meaningful IPPs, and English as an Additional Language.

The support of beginning teachers extends beyond our conference day to include more comprehensive supports. Through the purposeful curation of resources and asynchronous learning on SharePoint, beginning teachers can find assistance in all areas of the Teaching Quality Standard. Some examples include a video series in how to utilize PowerTeacherPro, pacing guides that demonstrate long range planning from Kindergarten-9, and a host of resources on supporting English language learners in the classroom. In addition, beginning teachers can access individual supports by connecting with inclusive, curriculum, religion, or Indigenous

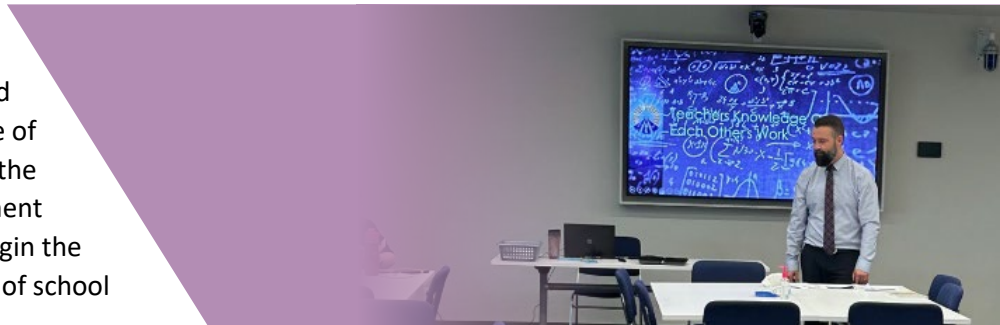


education consultants. With the support of school Principals, beginning teachers are welcome to join communities of practice or other professional learning sessions. School sites also offer beginning teacher supports through formal and informal mentorship opportunities.

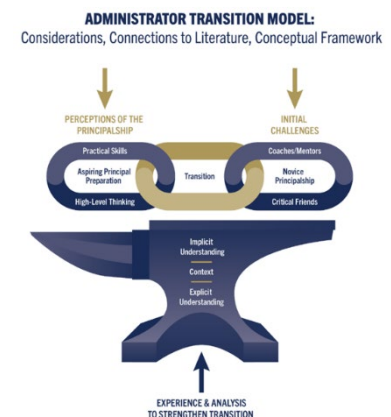
## SCHOOL-BASED LEADERS

### NEW PRINCIPAL ORIENTATION

Each spring, during administrator placements, new Principals are designated to school communities; some of these individuals are new to the role. This is a time of excitement and apprehension as they begin the journey of taking on the role of school leader.



The illustration to the right depicts a chain-link image which contains the significant stages/themes that connect the experience of the school-based leader to that of a seasoned Principal. Successful transition connects the knowledge of an aspiring Principal to the experiences. The link of the aspiring Principal has been reinforced with practical skills and high-level thinking in the Division training programs. The link of the novice Principal is also supported by Division mentorship programs and critical friends. Without an intentional transition process, the center link would lack reinforcement, and so it is set above the anvil to be reformed and imbued with the strengthening aspects developed through not only the simpler explicit understandings of budget and staffing but also the implicit understandings of site context.



To develop a better understanding of site context, a two-day Principal orientation is offered for all new Principals. These two days are a focused time to build relationships and understanding for both the new Principal and the outgoing Principal about the school and the role of each person in the effective transition. We know that effective transition is the building block for the continued success of the school. This is also the initial opportunity to meet with various Division departments to understand how they support this transition.

While this two-day model is primarily in place to support incoming Principals, the Division has a detailed document that is shared with outgoing Principals to support their incoming and outgoing transition dialogue.

### NEW PRINCIPAL MENTORSHIP

This training is designed to support new Principals in the development of relevant knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for the role of an Edmonton Catholic School Principal. All newly appointed Principals are required to attend the sessions.

Ten three-hour sessions aligned with Alberta Education's *Leadership Quality Standards* and our Catholic leadership competency, *Embodying Catholic Leadership*, are provided to first-year Principals with a focus on the role of a

Catholic Principal. With the support of a mentor, the sessions also address emergent needs as identified by mentors and new Principals. Professional reading, reflection and professional dialogue are integral parts of the program. These sessions are very job-focused and engage with the many other departments within Edmonton Catholic to provide guidance and support for our new Principals. See Table 1 below for participation statistics.

New Principals are also provided with significant support from all Division departments to help develop their understanding of the role the various departments play in supporting of school-based leadership. For example, the Superintendent of Facility Services makes a personal visit to the school of each beginning Principal by the end of September in their initial year to explain the various services the department provides, how to access those services, what aspects of school infrastructure are supported by Facility Services, and which are the responsibility of the school, among others. This visit also affords the Principal the opportunity to ask questions and to take the Superintendent on a school tour to highlight areas of concern that the principal wishes to address. In addition to this visit, all beginning Principals will attend a half-day tour and orientation of the Facility Services building in November to gain first-hand insight into the breadth and depth of the department's operations in support of schools. In so doing, this acquired knowledge increases the capacity of school-based leaders in the management of their sites.

## SECOND-YEAR PRINCIPAL SUPPORT

This training is designed to support new Principals further within their second year. This program's aim is to support these Principals further in their leadership journey as they work toward their final evaluation in year three. All second-year Principals are required to attend this program.

This program follows a community of practice model and is very reflective of the needs of the group. We identify areas of growth for the group and utilize the group wisdom as well as experts from the Division to support these new leaders in their growth. This process began with the development of a formative feedback tool (Principal 360) that each participant is using with their staff to receive feedback and will help drive the discussions and work in their time together. See Table 1 below for participation statistics.

**Table 1: Principal Training and Mentorship Cohorts**

| School Year | New Principals | Second-Year Principals |
|-------------|----------------|------------------------|
| 2014-2015   | 11             |                        |
| 2015-2016   | 9              |                        |
| 2016-2017   | 14             |                        |
| 2017-2018   | 14             |                        |
| 2018-2019   | 6              | 13                     |
| 2019-2020   | 6              | 6                      |
| 2020-2021   | 8              | 5                      |
| 2021-2022   | 17             | 8                      |
| 2022-2023   | 8              | 16                     |
| 2023-2024   | 13             | 7                      |



### NEW ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL MENTORSHIP

This training is designed to support new Assistant Principals in the development of relevant knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for the role of an Edmonton Catholic School administrator. All newly appointed Assistant Principals are required to attend the sessions.

Nine two-hour sessions aligned with Alberta Education's *Leadership Quality Standards* and our Catholic leadership competency, *Embodying Catholic Leadership*, are provided to first-year Assistant Principals with a focus on the role of a Catholic Assistant Principal. With the support of a mentor, the sessions also address emergent needs as identified by mentors and the new Assistant Principals. Professional reading, reflection and professional dialogue are integral parts of the program.

Newly appointed Assistant Principals are placed in a cohort and assigned a mentor who is an Assistant Principal in our Division. Each month, there is a focus on one of the leadership competencies; participants engage in professional reading, reflection, and dialogue that is aligned with each of the leadership competencies. Guest presenters from the various departments in our Division are invited throughout the year to complement the topics covered. See Table 2 below for participation statistics.

### SECOND-YEAR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SUPPORT

This training is designed to support new Assistant Principals further within their second year. This program's aim is to support these Assistant Principals further in their leadership journey as they work toward their final evaluation in year three. All second-year Assistant Principals are required to attend this program.

This program follows a community practice model and reflects the group's needs. We identify growth areas for the group and utilize the group wisdom and experts from the Division to support these new leaders in their growth. We focus on the practice of having critical conversations so that our administrators are able to manage conflict effectively. See Table 2 below for participation statistics.

**Table 2: Assistant Principal Training and Mentorship Cohorts**

| School Year | New Assistant Principals | Second-Year Assistant Principals |
|-------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2014-2015   | 18                       |                                  |
| 2015-2016   | 24                       |                                  |
| 2016-2017   | 25                       |                                  |
| 2017-2018   | 18                       |                                  |
| 2018-2019   | 10                       |                                  |
| 2019-2020   | 15                       |                                  |
| 2020-2021   | 13                       |                                  |
| 2021-2022   | 22                       | 10                               |
| 2022-2023   | 17                       | 21                               |
| 2023-2024   | 18                       | 14                               |

## CAREER PROGRESSION

### CAREER PATHWAYS

By virtue of the size of our Division, there are many career pathways open to our employees, allowing them to progress in their career while staying with Edmonton Catholic Schools. Although there are many different career pathways at ECSD, three of the most common pathways are highlighted below.

#### TEACHER

With 94 schools and multiple programs, teachers can move from one program or school to another, allowing them to grow in their careers and gain experience. Teachers gain leadership experience through Lead Teacher, Department Head, Chaplain, Learning Coach, or Consultant roles. These roles are part of the typical pathway to school-based or Division leadership.

#### CUSTODIAL

Custodial Services has implemented a Custodial Trainee program that all employees looking to work as a heavy-duty custodian (not light duty) must complete. The program consists of new employees to the Division, so they can learn the processes and procedures specific to ECSD, as well as current light duty custodians that are interested in progressing into a heavy-duty custodian position. The training program is three months in duration and takes place at an ECSD site. Participants are provided with hands-on training from the head and senior custodians at the site, as well as receiving constant support and follow-up from the Custodial Services' Manager and Supervisors.

Custodial Services advertises for Trainee positions at least twice a year, which allows for career advancement both externally as well as internally.

#### SUPPORT STAFF

Some typical career pathways undertaken by our support staff include:

- Therapeutic Assistants in Behavioural Therapy moving into Emotional Behavioural Specialist roles;
- Educational Assistants moving into Administrative Support roles
- Administrative Support staff moving into more senior roles, either within schools or at the Division level.

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### CREDENTIALS AND MEMBERSHIPS

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At ECSD, we recognize that supporting professional credentialing and membership in professional organizations positively impacts employee retention. By empowering our employees to pursue and achieve their professional goals, whether in traditional professions such as accounting, project management, human resources, or in trade fields through apprenticeships, we not only enhance job satisfaction, but foster a sense of loyalty and dedication to our Division.

Facility Services maintains its membership in AEFAA (Alberta Education Facility Administrators Association). This body provides professional development and leadership training in collaboration with professionals in parallel jurisdictions for the enhancement of the collective efficacy among leaders in the trades. Managers and Supervisors will be able to attend, learn, and liaise with colleagues outside ECSD, increasing their knowledge and leadership acumen as a result.

ECSD Human Resource Services professionals hold various designations and certifications. These professionals are required to maintain their designations by meeting the designating body's renewal and experience requirements in addition to upholding the professional bodies' code of conduct and ethics. Designations held, and aspired to, by ECSD HRS professionals include:

- Chartered Professional in Human Resources (CPHR)
- Payroll Compliance Professional (CPC)
- Board of Canada Registered Safety Professionals (BCRSP)
- Certified Disability Management Professional (CDMP)

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### BRIDGING PROGRAM

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Human Resource Services works closely with Learning Services to hire and support Career and Technology Studies (CTS) Bridge to Teacher candidates to become certified teachers in Alberta. In December 2023, Human Resource Services submitted applications to Alberta Education to sponsor four CTS Bridge to Teacher candidates for the 2024/2025 school year. Three of the candidates currently work for the Division in an Instructor role and one candidate was an external applicant to the Division. As CTS positions are difficult to recruit for, Human Resource Services is utilizing this program as a strategy to retain the successful candidates once they have completed their program and become certified teachers in Alberta.

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### TEACHER CONTINUOUS CONTRACTS AWARDED

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In response to feedback from our beginning teachers, ECSD has made it a priority to reduce the time required for a teacher to receive continuing contract designation. Changes to our processes have resulted in positive outcomes. 230 teachers obtained their continuing contract designation for the 2023-2024 school year. This was a record year for awarding teacher continuing contracts, as ECSD moves towards a new process for Teacher Evaluations.

### NEWMAN M.R.E. PROGRAM

Edmonton Catholic Schools has a strong partnership with Newman Theological College. The Master of Religious Education (M.R.E.) is a graduate-level professional degree designed for the theological and spiritual development of Catholic educators. The program offers students instruction in the major areas of Catholic theology and the discipline of religious education. One focus of the MRE program at Newman is to foster the capacity to discern and engage the cultural context as it impacts Catholic education by offering students opportunities to grow in their spiritual life, their vocations as Catholic educators and as witnesses to the Gospel.

The M.R.E. program at Newman Theological College offers integration of theological knowledge and religious education formation in the professional work of Catholic education. Since the 1970s when the partnership first began, our Division has sponsored and graduated hundreds of its teachers and administrators from the M.R.E. Program. We currently have two ECSD Cohorts enrolled in the program: Cohort Eleven – 20 teachers and Cohort Twelve – 22 Teachers. Through the years, the number of teachers and administrators attending the M.R.E. has remained relatively consistent. With every Cohort, we accept about 25 teachers into the program. To date, our M.R.E. graduates are serving as classroom teachers, Chaplains, Consultants, Assistant Principals, Principals, Division Principals, and Superintendents. Some of our retired alumni are serving the Archdiocese, local Catholic parishes, and many of their partners in various ways.

## WORKPLACE CULTURE

### CELEBRATING CATHOLIC EDUCATION

#### STAFF RECOGNITION



ECSD staff are recognized through employee recognition days, long service milestones, the Board Retirement Gala, and by recognizing department awards and accomplishments at Public Board Meetings and publicly through social media and our website. These events and recognitions publicly celebrate staff's dedication, hard work, and achievements. They not only boost employee morale and motivation but also play a role in attracting new talent. Prospective employees are often attracted to organizations that visibly appreciate and value their staff. Recognition practices contribute to higher staff retention, foster a culture of excellence, and encourage professional growth, collectively enhancing the overall productivity and reputation of Edmonton Catholic Schools.



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## STAFF AND STUDENT WELLNESS

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Human Resource Services and Learning Services are collaborating to provide a comprehensive approach to staff and student wellness. This shared work is backed by evidence-based research and support from our Alberta Health Services Health Promotion partners. Our approach prioritizes the wellness of both educators and learners, recognizing the interconnectedness between their mental, emotional, and physical health. By placing wellness at the core of the educational experience, our collaborative approach aims to enhance productivity, resilience, and a sense of belonging, ultimately contributing to a healthier and more successful academic community.

Our work is led by multiple departments and leaders on both the staff and student sides. We began our journey at the 2023 opening Catholic Educational Leadership meeting with our leaders, where our key partner, Alberta Health Services, introduced the concept of the "ripple effect" which highlights the relationship between the wellness of those working in education and the wellness of our students. The aim is to provide our staff with strategies that support not only their wellness, but also that of their students.

Our work is carried out through leadership, action and communication working groups. The leadership committee provides strategic oversight for Division wellness programming and direction. The action committee is tasked with developing specific strategies and support for both staff and students. The communications committee works on developing a monthly newsletter, and other wellness resources.

Another key element to the wellness approach is the work with Division staff wellness representatives. The wellness representatives act as conduit between Human Resource Services and staff to provide resources and support.

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## RESPECT IN THE WORKPLACE

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In 2022-23, Human Resource Services revamped the Division's Respect in the Workplace training. All new employees receive this training as part of the onboarding process to ensure that Division employees they are aware of respectful and disrespectful behaviours, responsibilities, definitions of harassment, violence, bullying, and informal and formal resolution processes. This training is intended to be a proactive measure to mitigate disrespectful workplace situations.

A Respect in the Workplace Leadership Guide was developed and provided to Division leaders as a resource to support in facilitating staff discussion around Respect in the Workplace scenarios. This guide provides a training format, discussion questions, and key observations and takeaways for leaders to share with their staff during scenario debriefs.

An excerpt from the Respect in the Workplace Leadership Guide:

### **DELIVERY OF SCENARIOS**

*Depending on the size of your staff, you may wish to have employees work in small groups to discuss the following scenarios. Once they have had approximately 5-10 minutes to review and discuss the scenario, it's time to discuss all together. Take the time that is needed – ideally, another 5-10 minutes - to debrief each scenario as a group.*

***All scenarios are fiction.***

***Any resemblance to actual persons or actual events is purely coincidental.***

***Our Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP) exists to support our employees going through any situation. It can be offered at any time. More information can be found by visiting <https://org.inkblottherapy.com/asebpo> or by telephone at 1-855-933-0103***

- *This Leadership Guide is for Principals, Managers and Supervisors only and is to guide leaders in facilitating the discussion of scenarios. The accompanying scenario slide deck can be shared so that staff can follow along and read through the covered scenarios.*
- *The scenarios are intended to cover a wide range of issues. There is no particular order.*
- *Depending on time, 1 or 2 scenarios could be reviewed and discussed at each staff meeting, until they are all covered by the end of the school year.*
- *It is recommended that leaders follow the suggested delivery by having staff work in small groups to discuss the scenario using the guiding questions and then debrief as a group.*
- *The observations and takeaways are not exhaustive, but the main points should be covered as they are intended to provide staff with guidance and strategies to navigate these situations in the workplace, if needed.*
- *Moving forward, all new employees will receive Respect in the Workplace training as part of their new hire orientation/training on Public School Works. The scenario slide deck will be posted on the portal for their review; however, reviewing scenarios as a group is a key component of this training. If a new employee asks to speak with you about a scenario, please support them with this.*

*As part of this training, we hope that staff will engage in authentic discussion and ask questions to recognize disrespectful behaviors and to expand their understanding of the Respect in the Workplace Guide and how to navigate workplace conflict.*

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## CULTURAL ASSESSMENTS

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As part of the Division's commitment to maintaining psychologically safe workplaces for everyone, Human Resource Services supports leaders in the facilitation and implementation of workplace assessments to evaluate, protect, and promote psychological health and safety in the workplace. Various tools, including assessments found on the Workplace Strategies for Mental Health website, are administered in consultation with Human Resource Services to help identify and address issues related to psychological health and safety in the workplace and develop action plans for positive incremental change.

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## CONFLICT RESOLUTION

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Human Resource Services provides services and support to Division leaders and employees in navigating workplace issues and concerns. Early intervention is highly recommended so that workplace issues and concerns can be addressed effectively and so that issues do not become more complex over time. In the interest of resolving workplace conflict at a low level and maintaining working relationships, employees are encouraged to resolve conflict by engaging in respectful and honest conversations. Human Resource Services provides guidance, input, another perspective, and feedback where needed.

In cases where low-level resolution is not successful, Human Resource Services provides more formal support, including mediation and alternative dispute resolution. This is a supportive measure and is intended to develop a plan to move forward in a positive and productive manner. Strategies to support staff in conflict resolution include facilitating discussion that seeks to understand, moving from judgement to curiosity, identifying interests, and problem-solving with an interest-based focus.

In certain circumstances, following an incident or conclusion of a formal complaint under the Division's Respect in the Workplace Guide, Human Resource Services may become involved in supporting staff through a restorative practice lens. These practices, under the right circumstances, can be used to repair harm and work towards resolving conflict and rebuilding relationships.

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## DISCIPLINE

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Employees whose conduct, performance or suitability does not satisfy the objectives or standards established for Division employees may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Formal disciplinary procedures are not intended to penalize employees; rather, they are intended to improve behaviour. Human Resource Services is involved throughout disciplinary processes, ensuring corrective action is applied fairly and reasonably, measurable with the conduct and in consideration of mitigating and aggravating factors. Additionally, Human Resource Services ensures that corrective action and relevant processes are applied in accordance with Division Administrative Procedures and bargaining unit employee collective agreements. Human Resource Services' involvement includes investigating allegations of misconduct, attending meetings with employees and union representatives, consulting on appropriate and reasonable corrective actions and next steps, and advising leaders from a risk management perspective.

As needed, Human Resource Services consults with senior leadership regarding disciplinary action, the Division's obligation to report teacher and teacher leader conduct or performance concerns to the appropriate body, and recommendations for termination in accordance with the Education Act as it applies to teachers and teacher leaders.

Revisions and updates to the Out-of-Scope Terms and Conditions of Employment are currently in progress, and as part of this, the addition of disciplinary action is currently under review by our Human Resource Services team. This addition will provide Out-of-Scope staff with information on when disciplinary action may occur, the purpose of progressive discipline, and outline possible actions that may be taken up to and including termination of employment.

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## EMPLOYEE GROUP-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS

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Strong working relationships with our Employee Groups (ATA, AUPE, Unifor and OOS) remain a focus for Human Resource Services. We regularly meet with representatives and members in liaison meetings and engage in discussions as needed. Even though we strive to better understand each other's interests and perspectives, sometimes, grievances or complaints are filed as a right to recourse. Human Resource Services supports management to clarify and work through the grievance or complaint issue(s) and suggest ideas for resolution, as appropriate.

# DEVELOPMENT

## JOB-EMBEDDED SUPPORT

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### HUMAN RESOURCE SERVICES

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Human Resource Services is a strategic partner, providing short-term and long-term strategic support with operational needs, effective employee performance and development, and achievement of Division objectives. Human Resource Services strives to foster effective relationships with leaders to provide ongoing support and guidance in various matters, including having difficult conversations, attendance management, workforce planning, collective agreement interpretation and application, employee performance management, misconduct, workplace investigations, discipline, employer obligations and legislated requirements, and leadership practices.

The ECSD Human Resources Business Partner (HRBP) model is instrumental in aligning HRS strategies with our Division goals, creating a safe, fair, and equitable work environment. Serving as the primary point of contact, the team adeptly triages essential support and provides consistent, accurate, and streamlined advice to Principals, Managers, and Supervisors. This dedicated support ensures that our Division's leadership teams effectively meet staffing needs while adhering to legislation and Collective Agreements.

Leadership Services works alongside Human Resource Services in complex, sensitive matters, including investigations, workplace accommodations, and conflict resolution. Through these processes, Human Resource Services staff inform leaders of employer obligations and the rationale behind recommended courses of action, instilling an understanding and awareness of Human Resources practices and procedures for future application.

Additionally, Human Resource Services offers a variety of planned professional development sessions with a targeted focus.

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### LEADERSHIP SERVICES

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#### SCHOOL OPERATION SERVICES (SOS)

SOS provides support and guidance to school-based administration on operational responsibilities that include General Administration, Instructional Programming, Students, Personnel and Employee Relations, and Business Administration. SOS Division Principals assist school-based administrators with the interpretation and application of the Administrative Procedures that guide these areas to ensure system adherence to the procedures and compliance with legislation and Alberta Education mandates. This support happens in many ways, ranging from presentations at Catholic Educational Leadership and various Leadership Services training sessions to one-to-one dialogue with school-based administrators. Each SOS Principal has a cohort of schools that they work with throughout the year. This builds trusting relationships that foster growth and development.

SOS offers specific training opportunities to administrators to develop their Leadership Quality Standards (LQS) competencies and foster principal efficacy. They host training sessions on School Safety/ Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA Level 1, 2), Field Trip Planning, Instructional Time Calculator, Hours of Operation and Bell



Scheduling, and Financial Support sessions that include Questica workbook and School Fee Schedule workshops. Each of these sessions addresses highly specialized areas of operations that impact the organization, financial well-being, and/or safety of a school. The training and mentorship that SOS offers in these areas provide a key piece of ECSD-specific administrator development.

Effective conflict management is one of the specializations of School Operation Services. SOS Principals support site-based administrators in the management of Student Conduct concerns, including the suspension and expulsion process. Their aim is to ensure that administrators effectively resolve concerns and issues in a respective and constructive manner. The team also provides support to Division families through these processes, including ensuring that students' needs are met through the disciplinary process. They work with Principals and caregivers in family/school/Division mediation and provide coaching and consultation opportunities to administrators to facilitate appropriate and applicable responses on school matters.

The SOS team provides a weekly review of relevant Administrative Procedures in Division messaging and shares this review with administrative teams to build leadership capacity, highlight specific Division guidelines, and ensure systems adherence to policies and procedures. The team is also a regular presenter in all the Leadership Services training classes/programs. Recent presentations include the important topics of Search/ Seizure, Reporting of Children in Need of Intervention Services, Student Attendance and Re-Engagement, and Administering Medication and Medical Treatment to Students, all of which are complex as they are guided by multiple legislative frameworks.

SOS provides ongoing mentorship, coaching, and support to school-based leaders as a key tool in their development. Beginning this school year, SOS reorganized portfolios have taken the lead in Questica training and continued implementation, thereby ensuring consistency in the budget process. SOS has worked closely with Financial Services to identify efficiencies in Questica and has allowed these efficiencies to be communicated to and implemented with school principals. Some of these efficiencies have included the rollover of staff information, confirmation of school to pay inclusive supports, and clarification of school council expenditures and revenues; these, and other efficiencies, have created consistency and clarity in reporting budgetary revenues and expenses, which assists principals as financial managers. SOS works closely with principals on the budgeting process through one-to-one meetings, division-wide PD sessions designed for principal leaders, and the availability of SOS to answer queries regarding school budgets.

In addition to supporting the implementation and management of Questica, SOS work with principals and Financial Services to ensure school-based funds are monitored to ensure appropriate expenditures. This includes ongoing discussions with principals regarding budgetary decisions (staffing, class configurations, operational expenses and purchasing), as well as being involved with purchase card monitoring and approvals; a key part of these ongoing conversations and reviews is to ensure principals understand the division rationale that guides budgetary decisions. As principals gain more experience with the Questica budget platform, they are able to use the budgeting tool to guide their decisions to ensure they are acting as effective and efficient custodians of Division allocated funds.

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## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION SERVICES

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Religious Education (RE) Services shares advice and consultations about Religious Education, provides PD sessions on the RE Curriculum for all grades, supports the liturgical and prayer life of our schools and departments, helps and guides the school Chaplains, facilitates an annual virtual Faith Development Day for all staff, , and delivers faith formation opportunities and/or presentations on any theme, to any school, department, or staff.

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## INDIGENOUS LEARNING SERVICES

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Indigenous Learning Services Professional Development (LQS): Indigenous Learning Services provides support to school leaders in addressing the Indigenous-specific competencies and indicators of the Leadership Quality Standard. Our Indigenous Education Consultant is offering Indigenous Education for School Leaders during Division Wide Professional Development afternoons. This series is focused on delving more deeply into the pedagogy of Indigenous Education, culturally responsive practices, and anti-racism. Participants have engaged in sessions on racism in education and how to practice allyship with Indigenous peoples. In future sessions, school leaders will explore how to meaningfully engage with Indigenous students and families, as well as how to respectfully weave Indigenous knowledge into their professional practice. A cohort of Division staff, including school leaders, is currently studying Wayi Wah! Indigenous Pedagogies: An Act for Reconciliation and Anti-Racist Education.

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## DIVISION MONITORING

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Division Monitoring is part of the Leadership Services department and is comprised of four areas: Applied Research, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP), Records Management, and Student Records. The work of Division Monitoring aligns with the *Division Plan for Continuous Growth*, the *Alberta Education Assurance Framework*, the *Funding Manual for School Authorities*, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, as well as the other acts, regulations, and administrative procedures that apply within the Division.

Division Monitoring also assists with staff and leadership development in the Edmonton Catholic School Division. In November 2023, the Director of Division Monitoring conducted a leadership training session for the new Assistant Principals. The session covered the administration of the new ECSD Annual Surveys and the preparation for the Provincial Testing Program (i.e., Provincial Achievement Tests, Diploma Examinations). Also in November, a session was provided for leadership training at the Elementary Principals Meeting for the move towards Alberta Education's new Digital Assessment Platform, the Provincial Achievement Tests, and the new ECSD Annual Survey. At the February 2024 Catholic Education Leadership (CEL) session, Principals received "Looking at our Division Data – Alberta Education Assurance Framework" data interpretation training. During the April 2024 CEL session, Principals will receive "Looking at our Division Data – Division Surveys" data interpretation training, followed by a data interpretation training to the new Principals in May which will focus on training Principals and Assistant Principals in interpreting data to enable them to target areas for celebration and areas requiring focus. The results also assist teachers in informing classroom instruction which benefits students. Principals can also contact the Director to review their results one-on-one and small school group sessions will also be offered in the Spring. Overall, the training assists in building professional capacity and expertise in the Division that informs school practice and enables success for all students.

In addition to leadership development sessions, Division Monitoring also provides professional development, communications, and resources to schools and departments throughout the school year. This year, the focus has been on the move towards Alberta Education's new Digital Assessment Platform. Principals, Assistant Principals, Learning Coaches, and departments will receive training and/or communications regarding the Provincial Testing Program and the transition to the new Provincial Digital Assessment Platform. The Director shares school results with the Principals and Assistant Principals to guide the work of the teachers, with the Learning Services department to guide the work of the subject area consultants. She then provides support to facilitate the understanding of the Provincial Testing Program, the Alberta Education Assurance Framework, and applied research projects in Edmonton Catholic Schools. Capacity building and understanding the methodology and rigor required in the administration of these measures is important at all levels to ensure valid results that represent our schools and Division.

## PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

### AUPE/OUT OF SCOPE/UNIFOR

Human Resource Services continues to provide Division leaders with guidance on effective practices to support professional growth and improvement for all employee groups. Advice and guidance are provided on the evaluation process for non-permanent contract staff, developing and managing Performance Improvement Plans (PIP) for permanent contract staff, corrective action, professional development and training to demonstrate supportive measures, and coaching and mentoring. Human Resource Services and Division leaders work through these processes as needed and in the interest of supporting employees in achieving performance expectations and ongoing professional growth.

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### TEACHER SUPERVISION AND EVALUATION

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A revision of the Supervision and Evaluation Administrative Procedures applicable to continuing contract teachers and teacher leaders (Administrative Procedure 422 Appendices A to F and Administrative Procedure 425) is in progress. These Administrative Procedures guide the processes for teacher professional growth plans, supervision, evaluation, and performance related termination of employment. While these processes are guided by legislation, including the Education Act and the Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy, the Division Administrative Procedures provide further direction and guidance.

Upon review and approval of suggested revisions, Human Resource Services intends to develop training for teacher leaders on the supervision and evaluation process for delivery during the 2024-2025 school year. This training will inform teacher leaders about legislated requirements, Division Administrative Procedures, processes, and Human Resource best practices. This will, in turn, support the professional growth and development of teachers and teacher leaders while conducting a thorough and rigorous evaluation process.

Currently, ongoing support is provided to Division teacher leaders on the development of continuing contract teachers through the supervision and evaluation process. Human Resource Services provides responsive support by advising on processes, providing input and guidance on communications and formal documentation, ensuring that employer obligations and best practices are met throughout the process, and communicating with Employee Group representatives. The objective of the supervision and evaluation process is ultimately to support teachers and teacher leaders and remedy any teaching or leadership practices toward successfully meeting the Teaching Quality Standard (TQS) and/or the Leadership Quality Standard (LQS).

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## TEACHER PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

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Teacher evaluations and teaching quality standards play a crucial role in ensuring our educators meet the needs of students and contribute collaboratively to their schools' environments. The TQS outlines the expectations and criteria for effective teaching in the province. Our updated teacher evaluations for temporary, probationary, and interim teachers align with these standards, aiming to enhance teaching practices, support professional growth, and improve student learning outcomes.

The ECSD Framework for Evaluation is centered around the Teacher Quality Standard (TQS), which serves as a comprehensive guide for conducting teacher evaluations. This framework delineates the competencies, knowledge, and attributes that educators are expected to exhibit. The evaluations, in turn, concentrate on the assessment of teachers' proficiency in various areas specified within the TQS. These areas encompass a range of aspects, including the commitment to embodying Gospel values, cultivating effective relationships, Demonstrating a professional body of knowledge, participating in continuous career-long learning, applying foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, and creating inclusive learning environments. The focus of the assessment is on ensuring that educators meet the established standards and contribute to a well-rounded educational environment.

Professional growth and development are integral components of the evaluation process. Evaluations play a crucial role in assisting teachers by offering clear and constructive feedback on their strengths and pinpointing areas that require growth. This feedback serves as a valuable guide for teachers to establish their professional development goals. Furthermore, evaluations help identify specific areas where teachers may benefit from additional training or support, fostering a culture of continuous learning. To facilitate this, HRS collaborates with Learning Services to provide targeted professional learning opportunities aligned with the specific areas identified during the evaluation process, ensuring a purposeful and supportive approach to ongoing professional development.

Our updated teacher evaluations also help educators refine their teaching methods and approaches to better meet the diverse student needs in the classroom. The feedback from evaluations assists teachers in adapting instructional strategies to accommodate different learning styles and abilities, ultimately benefiting student learning.

Our *Observation and Reflection* document serves as a catalyst for rich conversations and the identification of clear, tangible evidence in practice and areas for growth. Through collaborative reflection during evaluations, both teachers and administrators benefit from enhanced professional growth, improved teaching practices, and the establishment of a positive school culture centered around student success. Moreover, identifying teachers' strengths through evaluations can open avenues for them to assume leadership roles within their schools and the broader Division, contributing significantly to the promotion of a positive and thriving school division. Teachers collaboratively engage in reflective practice by critically examining their teaching methods, making adjustments based on clear evaluation feedback, promoting continuous improvement, and ongoing professional growth and development.



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### PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL EVALUATION

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Each new Principal undergoes a three-year evaluation term. The first year of the evaluation term is formative, as learning the role of the Principal is a huge task, and it is with this understanding that continual support is provided. The process continues to be formative at the beginning of the second year, where Principals reach out to their staff through a Formative 360 (feedback from staff) to get a read on successes and areas on which to focus. This process culminates with community input through staff surveys, individual interviews with key staff members, visits to staff meetings and School Council meetings, and a comprehensive conference with Superintendents regarding the Leadership Quality Standards. It is the responsibility of Leadership Services to perform these supervisory and evaluative roles.

Each new Assistant Principal is also evaluated by their Principal during their first three years. These evaluations are also submitted to Leadership Services. The process for an Assistant Principal is similar to that of Principal evaluation in the first year in that this is a time of learning of the role, between the mentorship they get at their schools as well as the mentorship and guidance provided by the training programs offered by the Division Principal of leadership services and their colleague mentors. Each year, the new Assistant Principal has a minimum of three formal meetings with their Principal to discuss their progress. The culmination of the three years is a written evaluation indicating the success or lack thereof of the Assistant Principal to meet the Leadership Quality Standards.

Both evaluations are reviewed and sent to Human Resource Services for recommendation for continuous designation.



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### ALBERTA TEACHING PROFESSION COMMISSION

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Due to changes to the Education Act, the Alberta Teaching Profession Commission (ATPC) assumed responsibility for handling complaints of unprofessional conduct and professional incompetence involving certificated teachers and teacher leaders, effective January 1, 2023. The Alberta Teachers Association (ATA) was previously responsible for overseeing professional conduct and competency matters involving their members.

Along with establishing the ATPC, changes were made to the Education Act regarding school jurisdictions' duty to report the conduct of a teacher or teacher leader to the Registrar.

As a result of these changes, Human Resource Services is currently developing an internal resource guide for teacher leaders to provide guidance and direction on matters that would require the Division to report to the Registrar, the process for executing the Division's duty to report, and roles and responsibilities throughout this process. Employee FAQs will also be developed as part of this guide.

## LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

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### LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAMS (ATA)

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#### LEADERSHIP TRAINING

The Leadership Training Program is designed for certificated staff who are considering a career in school-based administration or other leadership roles at the Division-level and/or school site.

Participants are selected through an application process. To be eligible, applicants must have continuous contract designation with the Division; it is also recommended they have a minimum of four years of teaching experience following their continuous designation.

Ten two-hour sessions that focus on the role of a Catholic leader are provided and framed around the *Leadership Quality Standards* along with the addition of our Catholic leadership dimension, *Embodying Catholic Leadership*. Participants are grouped into cohorts and work with a mentor who is an Assistant Principal in our Division.

Participants who complete the course are awarded a certificate of completion. Successful participants also have the option of obtaining course credit from the University of Alberta's Education Policy Department. Interested participants enroll at the University of Alberta and fulfill the requirements as outlined by the Education Policy Department. See Table 3 below for participation statistics.

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#### PRINCIPAL TRAINING

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The Principal Training Program is designed for Assistant Principals who are interested in applying for a school-based Principal position. Participants are selected through an application process. To be eligible, participants must have continuous designation as an Assistant Principal with the Division; it is also recommended that applicants have a minimum of three years as an Assistant Principal following their continuous designation.

Ten two-hour sessions aligned with Alberta Education's *Leadership Quality Standards* and our Catholic leadership competency, *Embodying Catholic Leadership*, are provided with a focus on the role of the Catholic Principal. In addition to the ten sessions, four technology sessions are offered that introduce the various programs/software used within the Division. Throughout the year, monthly tasks are assigned, and applicants begin to build their *School Entry Plan*, which is submitted to the mentor and the program facilitator.

Each session focuses on at least one of the Leadership Quality Standards, and representatives from many of the other departments are invited to present and engage in meaningful dialogue about the role of the Principal. This includes Human Resource Services, Financial Services, Learning Services, Indigenous Learning Services and Religious Education Services. Participants who complete the course are awarded a certificate of completion. Successful participants also have the option of obtaining course credit from the University of Alberta's Education Policy Department. Interested participants enroll at the University of Alberta and fulfill the requirements as outlined by the Education Policy Department.

76 % of all participants in the last five years who have taken Principal training are currently serving as a Principal in a school. See Table 3 below for participation statistics.

**Table 3: Assistant Principal Training and Mentorship Cohorts**

| School Year | Leadership Training | Principal Training |
|-------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 2014-2015   | 30                  | 9                  |
| 2015-2016   | 56                  | 17                 |
| 2016-2017   | 56                  | 9                  |
| 2017-2018   | 50                  | 11                 |
| 2018-2019   | 37                  | 11                 |
| 2019-2020   | 56                  | 10                 |
| 2020-2021   | 35                  | 14                 |
| 2021-2022   | 61                  | 19                 |
| 2022-2023   | 37                  | 6                  |
| 2023-2024   | 52                  | 12                 |

### SHINE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

In collaboration with Human Resource Services (HRS), the Division's Learning and Development Specialist created a leadership framework to implement leading-edge learning and development opportunities focusing on leadership development. This framework, called SHINE: Leader Development Framework, is the foundation for four different training and professional improvement opportunities:

- Manager and Supervisor Professional Development (PD) Sessions
- Non-school-based staff PD courses
- Leader Development Cohort Programs
- Departmental Support based on specific need(s)

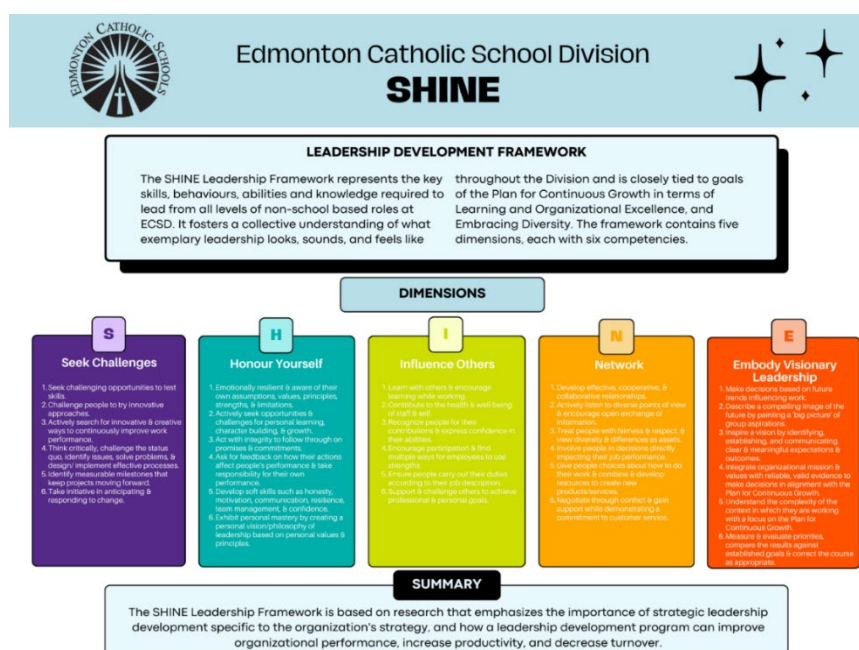
The SHINE: Leader Development Framework represents the key skills, behaviours, abilities, and knowledge required to lead from all levels of non-school-based roles at Edmonton Catholic School Division (ECSD). It fosters a collective understanding of what exemplary leadership looks, sounds, and feels like throughout the Division and is closely tied to the goals of the Division Plan for Continuous Growth in terms of Learning Excellence, Organizational Excellence, and Embracing Diversity.

The framework is comprised of five dimensions that represent the foundation of leadership development, encompassing insight from the Leadership Quality Standards (Government of Alberta), The Leadership Challenge (by James Kouzes & Barry Posner, the LEADS Framework (Canadian College of Health Leaders), and the Ontario Leadership Framework (Ontario Institute of Educational Leadership).

The foundation of this framework is SHINE: to stand out, to shine our light on others, setting us apart from other organizations and uniting us at ECSD. The SHINE: Leader Development Framework enables effective leaders to take responsibility for their own performance and continuous learning, inspire others, seek challenges, communicate effectively, and create a culture of continuous improvement by embodying visionary leadership. All leaders, regardless of their role, can use the SHINE: Leader Development Framework to guide their behaviour and actions.

The framework is based on the following principles:

- Quality leadership is fundamental to improving organizational performance.
- Learning needs to be specifically designed to support ECSD's strategy and facilitated to achieve ECSD's goals, attributing to productivity and performance.
- ECSD staff must have up-to-date knowledge and skills to enhance performance and successfully adapt to the changing environment.
- To be an exemplary leader, we must invest in ourselves; the more self-aware we become, the better leaders we will be, and the more our team members will feel seen, heard, and respected.
- We can strategically use the SHINE Leader Development Framework to decrease turnover and increase productivity and financial performance.

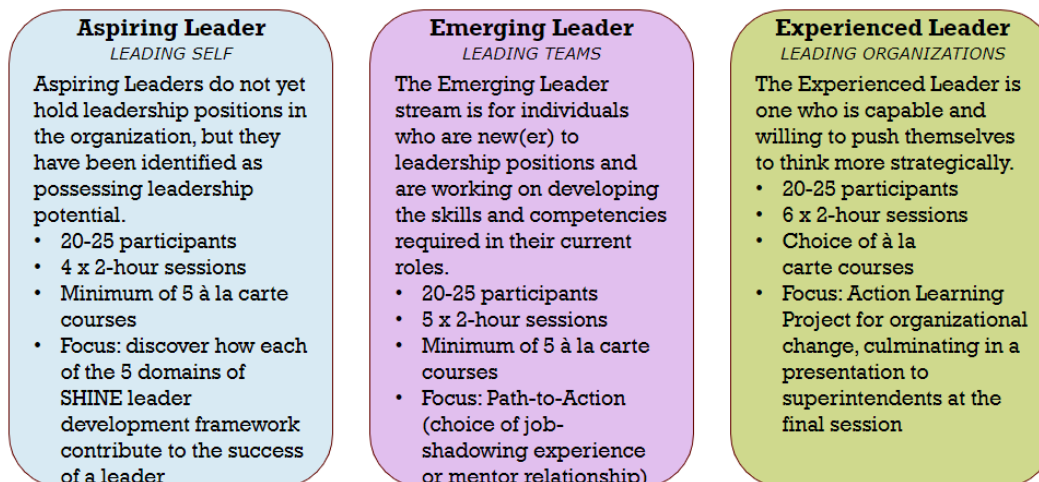


## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COHORTS (AUPE, OOS, UNIFOR)

To build highly successful leaders, three separate cohort programs will be implemented in September 2024: Aspiring Leaders Cohort, Emerging Leaders Cohort, and Experienced Leaders Cohort. Each cohort will have a focus, varying hours of instruction, and specific project(s) to meet the needs of those within the programs. Each cohort stream is built around the SHINE: Leader Development Framework competencies in relation to participants' job roles and ECSD values. The programs will include a collaboration between Division leadership to help facilitate various sections of the program to allow for the transfer of knowledge and best practices.



Each stream will take place over 10 months: September – June.



### MANAGER, SUPERVISOR, AND DIRECTOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES

The new format for Manager and Supervisor PD Sessions (implemented in October 2023) is grounded in the SHINE: Leader Development Framework, where participants are given a choice on what issues and topics are most relevant to their personal growth and development. Full-group segments of the PD sessions were determined by a needs analysis survey, focusing on topics of high interest and need. This new format is driven by feedback and suggestions of those participating caters to building highly successful teams. Breakout rooms provide managers and supervisors with a choice for their personal development.

### LUMEN CHRISTI PD SERIES FOR NON-SCHOOL BASED STAFF PD COURSES:

Professional Development courses and sessions will be offered throughout the year starting in January 2024 and are open to all non-classroom-based staff. These courses vary in length and time commitment (i.e., some involve pre-work, some are a series of courses, and some are a one-time, 2-hour course) and are offered based on need and interest. Each course is linked to at least one competency of the SHINE: Leader Development Framework and focuses on both professional and personal development.

## Professional Development: Potential Courses

### HIGHER-LEVEL THINKING

- Creating positive workplace culture
- How to manage staff
- Performance development
- Management essentials
- Change management
- Conflict management
- Crucial conversations
- Holding people accountable
- Performance management
- Providing feedback
- Big picture/strategic thinking
- Planning (short & long term)
- Project management

### PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Mental health first aid
- Psychological safety
- Powerful presentations
- Priority setting
- Resilience
- Building confidence
- Cognitive reframing
- Emotional intelligence
- Personality dimensions (MBTI)
- What is leadership?
- Personal development and wellness
- Service excellence/customer service
- Time management

## HR LEADERSHIP PD

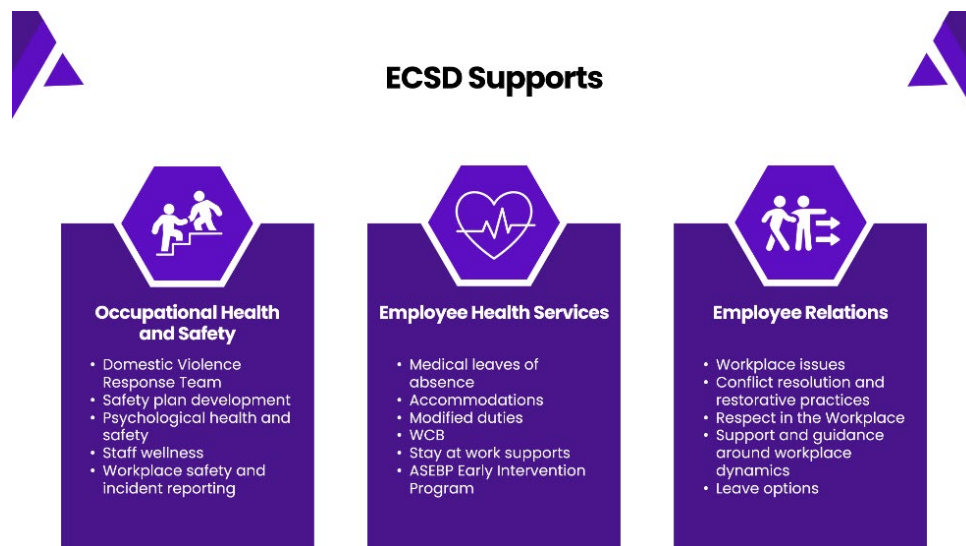
### 1. Is there an absenteeism issue?

Indicators of an issue may include:

- Higher than average absenteeism rate
- Pattern of absences, or the absences are frequently aligned with days off, vacation, or other types of leave.
- Inputting specific absence reasons ahead of time and/or for certain days
  - ex. personal illness or medical appointments on "heavier" work duty days
- Inability to meet deadlines or complete work due to number of absences.
- Absences following work-related incident(s).

11

Regular attendance at work is an important aspect of the Division's ability to provide the expected and valued level of service and support to all interested parties. Our view is that proactive and ongoing intervention with employees can assist in positively impacting an employee's attendance record. Human Resource Services provides support, guidance, and resources to leadership to address staff attendance concerns effectively. This year, Human Resource Services developed and facilitated a session on attendance management to provide Division leaders with the knowledge, skill, and guidance in dealing with non-culpable absences in a supportive way while recognizing operational needs and the individual needs of their staff.



With an ongoing increased focus on psychological health and wellness, Human Resource Services staff met with Division leaders to share resources, information, and strategies to provide them with the tools they need to support staff who may be in a crisis. This session provided advice on how leaders can have compassionate and supportive conversations with staff while maintaining professional boundaries and mitigating compassion fatigue. Human Resource Services will continue to develop resources and share relevant information with leaders on how they can support staff in specific crisis situations.

In support of leadership growth and development, Human Resource Services offers professional development on fostering effective relationships. This session's focus is on developing positive and meaningful connections with staff by establishing a foundation of trust. An overview is provided of actions that positively and negatively impact trust and cultivate meaningful connections. Fostering effective relationships with staff is an important leadership skill for all Division leaders and is reflected in the Leadership Quality Standards (LQS) competencies for teacher leaders.



## CULTIVATING MEANINGFUL CONNECTION

### Develop Grounded Confidence

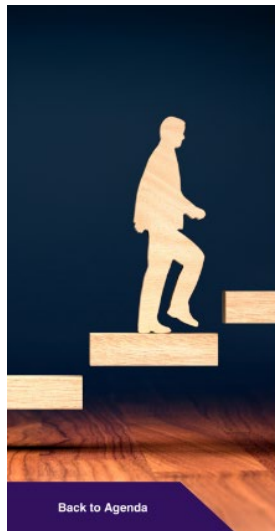
Driven by a commitment to curiosity, learning, and improving. How do we show up when we feel uncertain or fearful?

### Practice the Courage to Walk Alongside

A commitment to be with people - not pushing them from behind or leading them from the front but walking with them in solidarity.

### Practice Story Stewardship

Knowing that we have been entrusted with something valuable or that we have something valuable that we should treat with respect and care.



## Why should we address performance concerns?

If you don't address it, the message is that it is ok. This can cause more significant issues over time.

Impacts employee morale

Affects the larger work environment

Addressing workplace issues improves wellness

Impact on team dynamics

Growth mindset and a culture of accountability and continuous improvement

[Back to Agenda](#)

In support of effective supervisory and evaluation practices, Human Resource Services provides Division leaders with training on effectively monitoring, addressing, and managing employee performance concerns while meeting employer obligations and setting employees up for success.

The Interview Best Practices workshop is tailored to the nuances that can occur within the context of schools and our Division. This workshop provides Principal leaders with the essential skills to make informed and objective hiring decisions, ensure legal compliance and human rights impacts, foster effective communication, and contribute to a positive school and Division culture. This workshop not only enhances professional development but also streamlines the recruitment and hiring process, ultimately leading to better outcomes for our Division, schools and staff. In addition, Human Resource Services collaborates with other Division departments to support Division-wide initiatives, such as the New Principal and Assistant Principal training.



## HEAD CUSTODIAN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



In Custodial Services, two PD days are held each year. The first, held in late August, brings all head custodians together to review operational accountabilities, new equipment, materials and processes to improve their service, and to review their role as leaders of their custodial teams.

In the spring, the entire custodial cohort assembles for a full-day PD, at which information is shared for their growth, including OHS (Occupational Health and Safety), absence management, and procedural matters.

## DEPARTMENTAL PD SERIES

To help develop high-performing teams, dedicated and focused training can be tailored for specific departmental needs. Based on consultation/department needs, resources can be shared to ensure proper learning and development are offered.

Below is an example of a professional development plan for Technology Services.

*Technology Services is a highly specialized team of professionals whose work supports every aspect of Division operations. As such, it is critical that they are always up to date on the ever-changing world of information technology and its management. Their professional development is constant in order for them to be effective in their roles. This is an overview of the professional development (PD) activities of seven teams in Technology Services: Information Services, Site Support Services, Software Development Services, Networking and Security Services, Infrastructure Services, and Cloud Services. This explains the main goals, methods, and outcomes of each team's professional development program. This also shows how Professional development benefits staff skills, knowledge, and performance.*

*Technology Services supports Edmonton Catholic Schools with technology-related services, such as student information systems, software development, network and security, infrastructure, and cloud computing. They ensure the smooth operation and innovation of ECSD's educational and administrative functions.*

*The main theme for the department is that technology never slows down, so neither should the team. They are all lifelong learners who seek new opportunities, skills, and knowledge to enhance their services and performance. Through professional development activities, they demonstrate their commitment to excellence, collaboration, and creativity.*

**Information Services** is student information and data. The team aims to equip staff with the applications that enable them to manage student data effectively and efficiently. The team bases its PD on various factors, such as:

- The time of the year and the specific tasks performed during that period, new staff, software versions, functionality, or systems, user experience improvement in student information programs and systems issues or areas where they see problems.

The team's scope is broad and diverse, covering different users who interact with student information at various levels, such as:

- Admin Supports, Principals and APs, Learning Services and Division Monitoring.
- The team works closely with other users and groups across the Division to understand ECSD's needs and how different departments collaborate and depend on each other. Well-trained users are more confident and capable of serving ECSD better.
- The team attends PowerSchool University every two years to keep up with changes in the Student Information System. They also participate in local working groups and conferences to stay updated with provincial changes and learn from other Divisions.

**Site Support Services** uses resources like Linked In Learning to keep site support staff current.

**Software Development Services** has focused on employee PD in two areas this year: employee training and vendor conferences.

The first area was employee training: The team facilitated a week-long training class for developers on the latest Microsoft web programming technologies. The training was customized for them, including sessions on writing secure apps and best practices for developing modern web applications. The training was held at the Lumin training centre with a live trainer from California.

The second area was vendor conferences: This year, developers attended the PowerSchool conference in the developer track, receiving pre-conference-specific training from vendors. The department manager attended the ATLE conference to learn about new ways technology can be used for education.

The team chooses these two areas to focus on PD as they need a unified approach to software development using best practices and specific vendor knowledge of integrating and extending the products they have purchased and support in the Division.

**The Network and Security team** attend multiple conferences over the school year, such as Cisco Networking events, Aruba Wireless Networking conferences, Fortinet Secure Networks, RSA conferences and Cybersecurity summits.

These are some of the leading professional developments in North America. As for Division-wide professional growth, they provide a cybersecurity awareness program and PD sessions to staff on cybersecurity awareness, trending threats, and how to protect against bad actors.

**The Infrastructure team** has various opportunities for professional development, such as Attending technical vendor conferences, such as Microsoft Ignite and Gartner Infrastructure, where they can learn about the latest trends and technologies, Network with other professionals and share best practices at ATLE biannual conferences, Accessing manager/supervisor PD sessions throughout the year, Taking web-based training courses on topics such as Bluecat and CrowdStrike and Cross-training for new team members to enhance their skills and knowledge.

*Additionally, they benefit from Vendor-led lunch and learn sessions, yearly vendor health audit sessions and professional services onboarding of new equipment knowledge transfers.*

*These activities help them stay updated on the infrastructure's current state and future direction.*

**The Cloud team** provides various PD for the organization, such as document scanning, Knowledge Lake, SDR management, Microsoft 365 Apps, Email, Teams, file management, form management, public website, School website delegates and Division department staff.

*The cloud team also offers training and support for the staff on how to use these services effectively. The staff uses this PD to manage their work processes and communicate with each other. The cloud team also helps organizations leverage AI to improve performance and efficiency. The cloud team works hard to achieve the organizational goals and objectives.*

*This overview summarized the professional development activities of seven teams in Technology Services. The summary has shown that each team has its own goals, methods, and outcomes for PD and its challenges and opportunities. The overview also shows that PD benefits staff skills, knowledge, performance, and ECSD's operation and innovation.*

## LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

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### COMMITTEE WORK

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ECSD believes that participation in Division level committees provides excellent opportunities for staff to contribute to the effective operation of the Division as a whole. Further, participation in Division committees builds leadership capacity for participants by allowing them to explore various areas of operations from a Division perspective.

#### STAFFING COMMITTEES

Human Resource Services has established multiple staffing committees specifically dedicated to school staffing, teacher evaluations, teacher recruitment, and interviews, which has offered our Division many advantages. We have benefited from efficient decision-making, ensuring quality assurance across multiple administrators and staff teams. We have benefited from a wide range of expertise and collaboration with our multi-disciplinary committees – involving consultants, Assistant Principals, and Principals. We have accounted for professional growth and development, accountability, and transparency, all while ensuring consistency and fairness.

Our dedicated committees have streamlined our processes involved in teacher staffing, interviews, and evaluations, ensuring consistency and efficiency in these critical processes. We have created standardized procedures that are followed during teacher recruitment, interviews, and evaluations, promoting fairness and equity.

Our committee members bring diverse experiences and expertise, allowing for comprehensive assessment and decision-making during the staffing, interview, and evaluation processes. Our sessions together have promoted collaboration among our committee members, which continually leads to well-informed decisions that consider various viewpoints, enhancing the quality of our teacher selection and evaluation.

For teacher recruitment, clear guidelines and procedures have been established by the committee to promote transparency in the selection process. We have ensured consistency in applying standards and criteria for teacher selection, avoiding potential biases or discrepancies.

The committees have focused on providing targeted support and development opportunities for teachers based on evaluation feedback, fostering their continuous growth in alignment with our partners in Learning Services. Through our updated evaluations, the committee can identify areas where teachers may benefit from specific training or resources, thereby improving overall teaching quality.

In utilizing our committees, we are establishing and developing feedback mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of staffing decisions, interview processes, and evaluation methods, allowing for ongoing and continuous improvement.

Through our dedicated committees, Human Resource Services can ensure a more structured, fair, and efficient approach to teacher staffing, interviews, and evaluations, ultimately benefiting teachers, administrators, and our entire Division.



The Inclusive Education Committee is a self-selected team consisting of Principals, Directors, Consultants, and Managers who are passionate about supporting students with exceptional needs. This committee meets monthly to lead the Division in inclusive education visioning, as well as improving procedures and practices for accessing specialized support and services. The actionable areas that have come from this group of leaders include emphasizing throughout the Division the belief that everyone has the capacity to learn and providing environments and tools in which all students can be successful. Learning Services staff is responding to this by providing professional learning for teachers and leaders that is centred upon empowering staff to develop their understanding of removing the barriers to learning for every child and recognize the value of this process. Members of this committee are leaders within our Division who are vital to building equity within our schools and providing feedback that influences the direction of inclusive education in our Division.

What does "being" inclusive mean to us?

Inclusion is an intentional process that is visible, individualized and meaningful to every member of the team. When being inclusive, everyone demonstrates a full commitment to the process.

## AUTISM WORKING GROUP

This year, in response to key learnings from the Autism in Canada report (Canadian Academy of Health Sciences, 2022) and the growing representation of autistic students in the Division, Learning Services established an autism working group. The Autism Working Group made up of therapy managers, inclusive consultants, curriculum consultants and Principals, is in its second year of a 3-year plan to support autistic students in their learning and building capacity with classroom and school teams.



Their work supports collaborative practice across many professional disciplines and builds staff capacity, especially within classroom teams.

#### Accomplishments:

- Reviewed resources to inform best practices with autistic students,
- Developed a draft Classroom Reflection Tool for piloting in the 2023-2024 school year,
- Developed a 3-year plan and SharePoint website to support Division staff in the above goals,
- Collaborated across departments within Learning Services
- Partnered with the University of Alberta associate professors Heather Brown (PhD, B.Ed) and Sandy Hodgetts (PhD, OT) to offer professional development to Principals, Learning Coaches and Therapeutic Assistants on supporting autistic students.

#### Reframing Autism: Supporting Autistic Students in the Classroom:

| Autism Working Group GOALS:<br>September 2023 to June 2024                                                  |                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>GOAL 1:</b><br><b>Reframing Autism:</b> Capacity building presentation for easy delivery to school teams | <b>GOAL 2:</b><br>Implementing the <b>Classroom Reflection Tool</b> in all classrooms to address neurodiversity and neurodivergence | <b>GOAL 3:</b><br><b>Research Project:</b> Peer Acceptance and Developing Authentic Relationships to start in January 2024 in partnership with the Univ of Alberta | <b>GOAL 4:</b><br><b>Focused DWPD:</b> Supporting Autistic Students in the Classroom<br>4 sessions anchored in using the <b>Classroom Reflection Tool</b> | <b>GOAL 5:</b><br><b>Community Partners within ECSD</b><br>1.Positive Deviance<br>2.School Needs<br>3.Challenges |

#### Community Partners within ECSD

Community Partners within the Division refers to a group of Principals, Assistant Principals and Learning Coaches who are interested in working more closely with the Autism Working Group. The purpose of this group is:

1. **Positive Deviance:** Identify examples of unique and or positive practices in ECSD schools;
2. **Classroom Reflection Tool:** Give feedback on the tool based on experience using it in schools;
3. **School Needs:** Discuss the school's needs and program planning.

Learning Services meets monthly with this group and has had great feedback from school teams about how they are supporting their teachers, school staff and students. Each school has a unique way of ensuring that students feel safe, are ready for the day and have time for intentional learning. This information is then summarized and will be shared with the wider school Division.



## **FACILITY SERVICES INTERVIEW PANELS**

When hiring, input is solicited from departmental counterparts, and hiring panels consist of cross-departmental membership for the purposes of objectivity. Human Resource Business Partners play an integral role in this process in collaboration with Facility Services management.

## **SCHOOL-BASED LEADERSHIP ACTING ROLES/ TEMPORARY ROLES**

### **ADMINISTRATIVE ACTING POSITIONS**

Throughout the course of the school year, there are times when an administrator may be off on leave. It is the responsibility of the Division Principal in Leadership Services to work with the school to appoint an acting administrator for the interim. This includes both the review of letters of interest as well as the interview process with the school and follow-up support. This is an opportunity to identify site-based leaders and give them opportunities to see the potential to pursue further site-based leadership.

## **EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PD**

### **CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP MEETINGS**

Each month throughout the year, school-based Principals, Senior Administration and Division level personnel gather for faith formation and meaningful discussion and engagement on a variety of topics. These meetings cover a wide range of topics that pertain to the day-to-day running of schools, professional dialogue, and future planning. This school year has included topics on Understanding by Design/Instructional Coaching, English as Additional Learners, the New Teacher Evaluation Process and EDIAR.

### **FAITH LEADERSHIP**

The engagement of School-based administration with our faith occurs through the Catholic Educational Leadership Structure and Organization. This includes;

- Ten 30-minute comprehensive presentations, facilitated by our Division Chaplain, using a journey through the Holy Land to help explain and discuss the important components of the Five Marks of Catholic Education
- Celebration of the Eucharist, Divine Liturgy, and Liturgies of the Word during Catholic Education Leadership Meetings and Budget Engagement sessions to acknowledge the communal nature of our faith
- Celebration of Liturgies with the Assistant Principals at their Catholic Educational Leadership Meetings.

### ARCHBISHOP JOSEPH MACNEIL (AJM) LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

The 2023 AJM Leadership Academy took place October 26-27, 2023. We focused on the Diffusing and Dealing with Difficult Situations as well as looking at the New Teacher Commission. The Academy is an immersive experience that focuses on a germane topic for the school year. This coming together of all school-based Principals, senior administration and Trustees allows for great discussion and understanding. This Academy was deemed a success and was a time of great learning where Division leaders discussed strategies and techniques to improve our abilities when dealing with difficult situations, including the opportunity to practice different strategies throughout the day. Principals and Division leaders also looked at the Teaching Commission and discussed various scenarios.

### ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Five-afternoon professional development sessions throughout the year are provided for all Assistant Principals to attend.

The Assistant Principal PD Planning Committee is comprised of Assistant Principals from all three levels: elementary, junior high and senior high, and topics to be covered are generated by Assistant Principals through yearly feedback surveys. The Leadership Quality Standard is used as a framework when selecting specific topics, and efforts to align with Division initiatives are always considered. Each session begins with prayer and song followed by a general assembly, levelled meetings to address specific Divisional needs and flex sessions where Assistant Principals can personalize their learning by selecting from a variety of Catholic educational leadership topics.

### DWPD LEADERSHIP SERIES

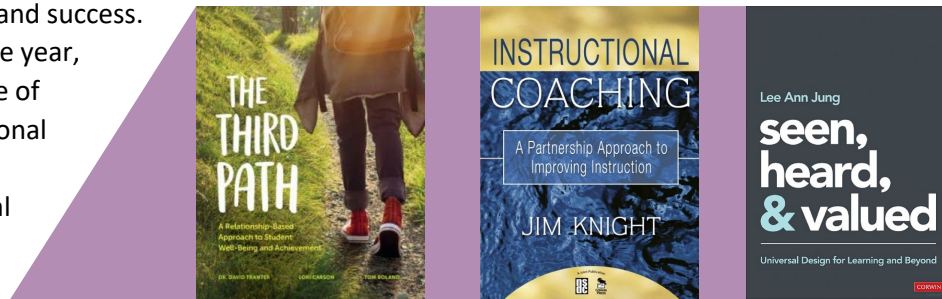


Additionally, Learning Services is excited to offer a specialized Leadership Edition for Principals, Assistant Principals, Managers, and Directors. This edition of the Division-Wide Professional Development series features specially curated sessions, each designed to address the unique challenges and opportunities in educational leadership today. These tailored sessions focus on sharpening skills and deepening impact, moving away from a one-size-fits-all approach to providing a more personalized and effective learning experience for administrative leaders. By offering this intricate series, Learning Services aims to support learning across all K-12 levels and leadership roles, seamlessly integrating into the broader spectrum of the Division's priorities and needs. This initiative not only fosters curriculum development but also bolsters other key areas of focus, ensuring a holistic approach to professional growth and student success. The DWPD guide as it applied to September's session is found in the appendix.

## PIL/ NEW CURRICULUM

### LEARNING SERVICES PRINCIPAL AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER SESSIONS

Learning Services hosts four Principal Sessions throughout the school year to support the development of leadership capacity in Leadership Quality Standard 6. LQS 6, *Providing Instructional Leadership*, focuses on ensuring that every student has access to quality teaching and optimum learning experiences. These sessions address emergent topics and also provide breakout sessions that allow for alignment with the Division Plan for Continuous Growth. Learning Service's Principal professional learning plan is centred on building leadership capacity in the understanding and implementation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), one of the key strategies for ensuring "Learning Excellence." UDL is woven into all our sessions as a way of reinforcing the principles that support student engagement and success. Principals have each chosen a pathway for the year, which will allow them to dive deeper into one of three topics that best supports their professional growth plan. Principals selected one of the following book studies to engage in: Universal Design for Learning, Instructional Coaching or Well-Being and Achievement.



### ADMINISTRATOR NEW CURRICULUM INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SUPPORTS

Administrators have a pivotal role in the successful implementation of a new curriculum. The Elementary Curriculum team has introduced targeted support specifically designed for the administrative teams. Firstly, on each school team day, administrator-specific sessions are provided. These sessions are crafted to offer a learning experience tailored to the unique needs and responsibilities of administrators, ensuring they are well-equipped to guide their teams. Additionally, the Elementary Curriculum team has launched 'Cup of Curriculum,' a monthly document that serves as a valuable resource for administrators. This document includes classroom observation guidance ('look-for'), innovative lesson ideas, and resources alongside high-impact questions to facilitate meaningful conversations with educators about the new curriculum areas and assessment strategies. These initiatives are aimed at acquainting administrators with curriculum changes and enhancing their capacity to be instructional leaders, fostering an environment in which teachers and students can excel under their guidance.

### ADMINISTRATOR LANGUAGE PROGRAMS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SUPPORTS

During the 2023-2024 academic year, the Division streamlined the Immersion and Bilingual Language Administrator Meetings. The primary focus of these consolidated meetings is to offer administrators in language programs professional development opportunities related to best practices and pedagogy in second language acquisition. Presentations covered topics such as dispelling language myths, marketing language programs, and sharing best practices in program implementation.

The purpose of these sessions is twofold. First, the aim is to equip language administrators with the latest research and practices in language learning. Second, these meetings seek to foster a shared and cohesive vision for all our language programs.

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## SUPERINTENDENT STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

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### SUPERINTENDENT QUALITY STANDARD (SLQS) DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

The Chief Superintendent is expected to meet the SLQS, Division Superintendents and school-based leaders are expected to meet the Leadership Quality Standard, and all teachers are expected to meet the Teacher Quality Standard throughout their careers. Multiple departments assist the Division in meeting Alberta Education's criteria by building professional capacities and expertise in the Division; supporting data-informed strategic planning and decision-making.

Leadership development is an integral part of building capacity in the Edmonton Catholic School Division with respect to the quality standards outlined above. This school year, the Edmonton Catholic School Division has a new Chief Superintendent as well as several new department Superintendents.

The Superintendent Strategic Leadership Council (SSLC) gathers weekly and reflects on dimensions and indicators of the SLQS. Time is deliberately set aside to share and identify best practices to better support our schools and departments. As life-long learners they are always challenging the status quo, drawing from each other's experiences, and looking at successes and improvements from a Division-wide lens.

Additionally, with a focus on data-informed decision-making, the Chief Superintendent engaged the Director of Division Monitoring to conduct a leadership development session for the SSLC. At the August SSLC session, the Director of Division Monitoring evaluated the most current results of key assurance measures of performance including the ECSD Annual Survey 2022/2023 results, the ECSD Mental Health Survey Fall 2022 results, the Alberta Education Assurance Framework Fall 2022 results, the Provincial Achievement Test 2021/2022 results, and Diploma Examination 2021/2022 results. This review served to establish an understanding with the SSLC members of the Division's starting point for the new school year.

The SSLC was also engaged in October, as part of the new 2023/2024 ECSD Annual Survey to evaluate the new survey items collaboratively. The Director will also review the final survey results with the SSLC to ensure there is a common understanding in interpreting the results and identifying areas of strength and for growth. School results will also be shared with the Principals and Assistant Principals. Engagement ensures that the Division moves forward with relevant and representative feedback to enhance data-informed decision-making within Edmonton Catholic Schools. The process empowers and connects our students, staff, and community to our Board of Trustees and Alberta Education.

Upon receipt of the updated assurance measures, the Chief Superintendent engaged Division Monitoring to conduct a follow-up leadership development session for the SSLC. At the November SSLC session, the Director evaluated the Division and school results for the new Provincial Achievement Test 2022/2023 results, the new Diploma Examination 2022/2023 results, as well as the new Alberta Education Assurance Framework Fall 2023 results. The review served to establish the final Division baseline results for the key measures of success from last school year as well as to establish areas requiring focus to ensure that Superintendents were addressing areas of concern with school administrations as part of their review of School Plans for Continuous Growth.



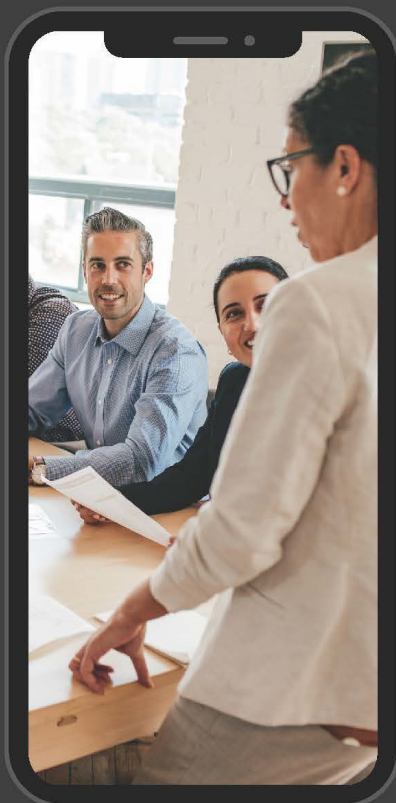
# DWPD

## Leadership Edition



## Sept 21, 2023

Are you a principal, assistant principal, manager, or director looking to sharpen your skills and deepen your impact? Join us for an exclusive "Leadership Edition" of our Division-Wide Professional Development series! This isn't a one-size-fits-all event. Choose from three specially curated sessions designed to target the most pressing challenges and opportunities facing educational leaders today.



### 1

#### Operational Excellence

Learn the ins and outs of school management, from budgeting to staff development.

### 2

#### Inclusive Leadership

Discover how to create a school environment that is inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of students and staff.

### 3

#### Immersive Learning

Each session provides an in-depth learning experience, fostering both personal and professional growth

### 4

#### Register for your session

Click the yellow register now link to claim your spot for the session.

[REGISTER NOW](#)



# DWPD

## Leadership Edition



### Cultivating Diversity & Data-Driven Student Success with Jigsaw Learning



Lumen Christi  
Leadership Hall

Join us for an interactive session focused on advancing diversity and leveraging data for improved student outcomes, featuring special guests Kurtis and Lorna Hewson from Jigsaw Learning. As industry leaders in educational capacity building, they will provide invaluable insights into effective strategies for enhancing teacher capacity and efficacy. This year, we have the unique opportunity to extend this enriching experience to 10 schools within our division. We invite all principals to an information session hosted by Kurtis Hewson to delve deeper into this transformative approach. Take part in this pivotal journey towards achieving a more inclusive, data-driven school environment and fortifying student success across our community.



*Presented By* Kurtis Hewson

REGISTER NOW



# DWPD

## Leadership Edition



## Mastering PowerSchool: Efficiency Hacks for Administrators



Lumen Christi  
Room 1

Are you an administrator looking to streamline your workflow within PowerSchool? Join Bobbi Pineau for a session jam-packed with tips and tricks that will save you both time and energy.

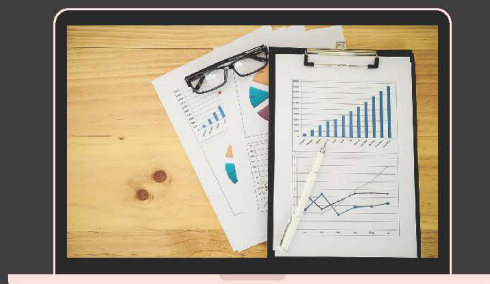
### What You'll Learn:

1. Quick Searches: Discover efficient search tactics for quickly locating student information, running reports, and more.
2. Contact Management: Get a walkthrough of the new "Contacts" feature to manage parent accounts effectively.
3. Essential Reports: Uncover hidden gems in the form of useful reports that may not be on your radar yet.

### Session Details:

Time: 1 Hour (includes 45 minutes of content and 15 minutes for Q&A)

Whether you're a PowerSchool novice or a seasoned user, this session will equip you with practical insights to optimize your administrative tasks. Don't miss out on this chance to take your PowerSchool mastery to the next level!



Presented By Bobbi Pineau

REGISTER NOW



# DWPD

## Leadership Edition



### Questica Clinic: A Collaborative Q&A Session for School Leaders



Lumen Christi  
Room 8

Unravel the complexities of the Questica workbook in this interactive drop-in session designed specifically for principals and assistant principals. Join SOS Principal Peter Meurs and your colleagues for an engaging discussion aimed at addressing your Questica-related questions and concerns.

📌 Session Highlights:

1. Collaborative Q&A: Work through your Questica questions in a supportive, group setting or seek personalized guidance.
2. Team Learning: Principals are encouraged to bring their assistant principals for a collaborative learning experience.
3. Hands-On: Please bring your laptops for real-time problem-solving and workbook navigation.

Step into this session with questions and walk out with actionable insights to make the most of your Questica workbook. It's a unique learning opportunity you won't want to miss!



Presented By Peter Meurs

REGISTER NOW









EDMONTON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

**LUMEN CHRISTI CATHOLIC EDUCATION CENTRE**

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