



April 2025

Supporting and Advancing a Staff of Lifelong Learners in our *Catholic Context*





Introduction

Edmonton Catholic School Division (ECSD) is dedicated to delivering an outstanding Catholic educational experience for all students. In the ever-evolving landscape of education, it is essential that all staff within the Division also have access to exceptional professional learning opportunities. This commitment ensures that our staff remain up-to-date and well-informed in their respective areas of expertise.

In our Division Plan for Continuous Growth 2023-2026, the Board of Trustees has identified **Learning Excellence** as one of its key priorities. Within this priority, we have established the following goal and key strategy:

Goal L3: Staff will build their capacity to meet student needs and to be collaborative contributors at their sites and beyond.

To achieve this goal, staff are encouraged to participate in ongoing professional learning at both the school and division levels. This professional development is specifically designed to support the achievement of both academic and non-academic programming within the schools.

As a learning organization, we recognize that professional learning for our staff is of utmost importance. Our division is incredibly diverse, and each department within the Division is committed to ensuring that their staff remain current in their fields. Each department, in turn, provides professional learning opportunities to Division staff across the many disciplines that impact the student learning experience.

Catholicity is at the heart of our educational mission. We strive to integrate Catholic values and teachings into all aspects of our professional learning programs. This ensures that our staff not only excel in their professional capacities but also embody and promote the Catholic faith in their interactions with students, colleagues, and the community. By fostering a strong sense of Catholic identity, we aim to create a nurturing and faith-filled environment that supports the holistic development of our students.

This report highlights the extensive range of professional learning that our staff both provide and engage in, ensuring that our students benefit from an excellent Catholic educational journey.

Table of Contents

04 Diversity of Professional Designations & Certifications

PART I: GROWING TOGETHER THROUGH PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

06 Leadership Development

16 Instructional & Curriculum Support

42 Wellness & Equity

47 Targeted Staff Development

50 Professional Learning Partnerships

PART II: BUILDING & SUSTAINING THOSE WHO SERVE ECSD

51 Recruitment & Retention Initiatives

54 Supporting a Diverse & Evolving Staff Community

56 Workplace Wellbeing & Safety

57 Conclusion

58 Appendix



Diversity of Professional Designations & Certifications

Our employees bring a diverse range of specialized experience, education, and knowledge to the Division. In addition to our teaching staff, Edmonton Catholic School Division has three other unique employee groups that help contribute to the daily operations and mission and vision of ECSD:

EMPLOYEE GROUP	DESCRIPTION OF POSITIONS
AUPE	Trades, Custodial, and Maintenance Employees
Out-of-Scope	Leadership and other professional positions
Unifor	Administrative and Support Staff

For the positions in these employee groups, in addition to post-secondary education in a variety of specializations, other specialized knowledge is needed. A few examples include:

Lived experience in, or understanding of, Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing.

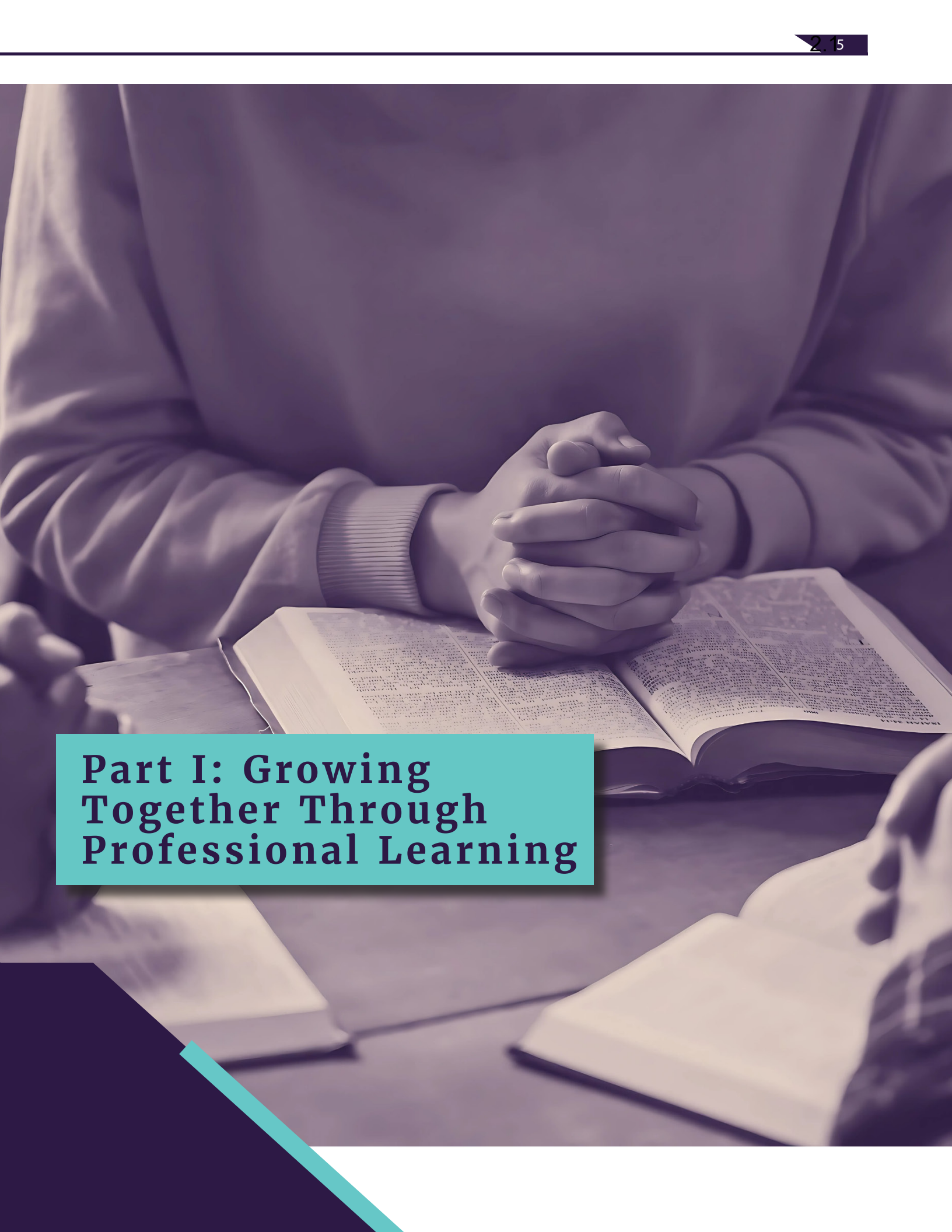
Familiarity with different cultures and/or fluency in an additional language (Cree, Tagalog, Malayalam, Amharic, Vietnamese, Spanish, Tigrinya, Ukrainian,

Understanding of assistive technology (AT) tools and augmentative and alternative communication systems.

Working knowledge of specialized tools and equipment including audiometers, tympanometers, hearing aid analyzers, hearing aids, cochlear implants, personal FM systems, classroom audio distribution systems, otoscopes, etc.



In addition to specialized knowledge and experience, many of our roles require additional certification or designations. While some of the certifications and designations are considered assets, some are required to be able to practice in their respective profession. Additionally, some certifications are obtained once, while others require the employee to renew regularly. In our appendix are examples of some of the specialized certifications and designations we require, or are preferred, when hiring to positions within ECSD. Whether it is specialized knowledge, experience, or additional certification, the diversity in our employees experience and education help support and serve the students and community of ECSD (**Appendix**).



Part I: Growing Together Through Professional Learning

Leadership Development

Department Leadership Meetings

Formally known as Manager and Supervisor PD Sessions, the rebranded Department Leadership Meetings are now better aligned with the needs and development of our department leadership team. These meetings, held bi-monthly include Superintendent Items, a keynote presentation sharing information relevant to all department leaders, and break-out sessions.

Based on feedback from last year's meetings, we have successfully tailored break out sessions on topics that directly apply to our leaders. To enhance engagement and cross-departmental collaboration, we introduced cross-departmental engagement teams that foster community building, drive innovation, and increase leadership capacity through problem-solving. Some of the topics covered so far during these sessions

are EDIAR, WCB Reporting, Common Leadership Styles, Strategies for Team Meetings, Finance Procurement and Payments, UDL, Mercer Job Description Writing, Let Co-Pilot be Your Co-Pilot in Leadership, Resilience in the Workplace, and Employee Health Services.

The use of the custom agenda builder, Sched, allows attendees to personalize their schedule by selecting breakout sessions tailored to their learning needs. Additionally, Sched provides recorded statistics and metrics to gauge participation, engagement, and trends.

As we continue with our Department Leadership Meetings, we will gather data to meet the needs of our leaders, ensuring we offer innovative and engaging development opportunities.

SHINE LEADER DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The SHINE Leader Development Framework was created last year to build leadership capacity across department-based staff in the Division. Grounded in research that highlights the importance of strategic development and aligned with the organization's strategy, we have implemented a cohorted program to enhance organizational performance, increase productivity, and decrease turnover of department-based staff.

Based on the developmental needs of ECSD department based staff, we launched three distinct leadership programs: Aspiring Leader (for those without formal leadership positions), Team Leader (for those leading a team and seeking to enhance their team-leading capacity), and Division Leader (for those focusing on organizational change management and strategic thinking). Each cohort is detailed in the following sections.

ASPIRING LEADER COHORT

The Aspiring Leader cohort includes 21 participants across 11 department areas. The program aims to enhance participants' understanding of personal leadership qualities to improve job performance through a leadership lens. Meeting every five to six weeks, the group focuses on one to two domains from the SHINE Leader Development Framework and their corresponding capabilities. We have delved into strengths-based leadership, where participants learned how to fully engage in their roles by leveraging their strengths. Additionally, we explored personal values to understand their pivotal role in leadership, addressing the question: How do you proceed in situations where your personal values conflict with those of the organization? Future sessions will cover effective communication, as well as servant and visionary leadership.



TEAM LEADER COHORT

The Team Leader cohort comprises seven participants across six department areas. The program aims to shift the focus from self-leadership to team leadership. Throughout the year, we have discussed what distinguishes a leader from a manager, taking specific notes from Simon Sinek's book, *Leaders Eat Last*. Applying concepts from the book, we have discussed what admired leaders' characteristics are, focused on empathy and how leaders need to be emotionally

resilient, and discussed how to create a safe, supportive culture within our teams. Each participant has been paired with a mentor (a nonschool-based division leader) from whom they can learn from and share their goals and progress with. Throughout the year, participants are building their own leadership vision related to their experiences and aspirations. Future sessions will focus on the Seek Challenges and Embody Visionary Leadership domains.

DIVISION LEADER COHORT

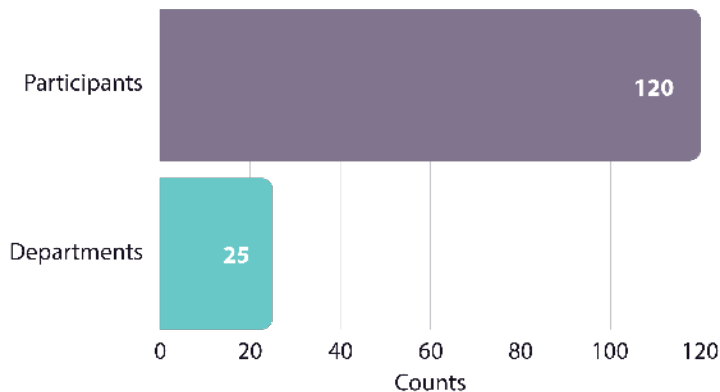
Unlike the previous two cohorts, the Division Leader cohort does not have a set agenda. Instead, the seven division leaders involved share their thoughts, insights, and best practices around organization-wide initiatives they are currently working on. As a working community of practice, they candidly discuss obstacles, and foster collaboration and knowledge-sharing among professionals dealing with organizational change.

The outcome of this cohort is a more cohesive and informed approach to managing change, leading to smoother transitions and higher success rates. By participating in such a community, our Division Leaders can achieve enhanced problem-solving skills, access to best practices, and a support network that helps them navigate challenges more effectively. This collective wisdom ultimately drives more effective and sustainable change initiatives within the organization.

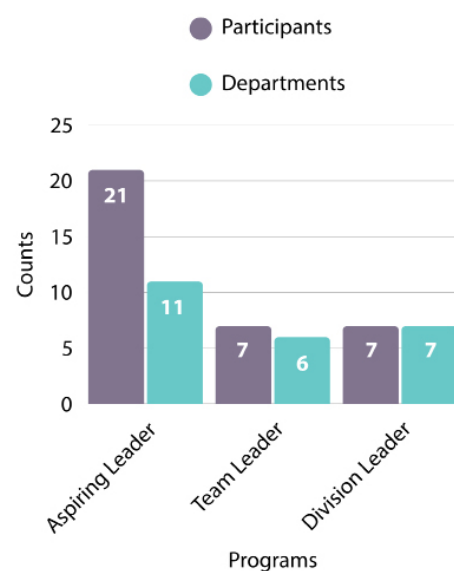
SHINE LEADERSHIP SESSIONS PARTICIPATION OVERVIEW

PROGRAM	TOTAL # OF PARTICIPANTS	DEPARTMENTS REPRESENTED
SHINE Professional Development Sessions	120	25
Aspiring Leader Program	21	11
Team Leader Program	7	6
Division Leader Program	7	7

PARTICIPANTS & DEPARTMENTS REACHED (SHINE PD)



PARTICIPANTS & DEPARTMENTS REACHED (LEADER PROGRAMS)



SHINE FRAMEWORK



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 ECSD. It fosters a collective understanding of what exemplary leadership looks, sounds, and feels like throughout the Division. It is closely tied to the priorities of the Division Plan for Continuous Growth in terms of Learning Excellence, Organizational Excellence, and Embracing Diversity. The framework contains five dimensions, each with six competencies.

FIVE DIMENSIONS

Seek Challenges

S

1. Seek challenging opportunities to test skills.
2. Challenge people to try innovative approaches.
3. Actively search for innovative and creative ways to continuously improve work performance.
4. Think critically, challenge the status quo, identify issues, solve problems, and design/implement effective processes.
5. Identify measurable milestones that keep projects moving forward.
6. Take initiative in anticipating and responding to change.

Honour Yourself

H

1. Emotionally resilient and aware of their own assumptions, values, principles, strengths, and limitations.
2. Actively seek opportunities and challenges for personal learning, character building, and growth.
3. Act with integrity to follow through on promises and commitments.
4. Ask for feedback on how their actions affect people's performance and take responsibility for their own performance.
5. Develop soft skills such as honesty, motivation, communication, resilience, team management, and confidence.
6. Exhibit personal mastery by creating a personal vision/philosophy of leadership based on personal values and principles.

Influence Others

I

1. Learn with others and encourage learning while working.
2. Contribute to the health and well-being of staff and self.
3. Recognize people for their contributions and express confidence in their abilities.
4. Encourage participation and find multiple ways for employees to use strengths.
5. Ensure people carry out their duties according to their job description.
6. Support and challenge others to achieve professional and personal goals.

Network

N

1. Develop effective, cooperative, and collaborative relationships.
2. Actively listen to diverse points of view and encourage open exchange of communication.
3. Treat people with fairness and respect, and view diversity and differences as assets.
4. Involve people in decisions directly impacting their job performance.
5. Give people choices about how to do their work and combine and develop resources to create new products/services.
6. Negotiate through conflict and gain support while demonstrating a commitment to customer service.

Embody Visionary Leadership

E

1. Make decisions based on future trends influencing work.
2. Describe a compelling image of the future by painting a "big picture" of group aspirations.
3. Inspire a vision by identifying, establishing, and communicating clear and meaningful expectations and outcomes.
4. Integrate organizational mission and values with reliable, valid evidence to make decisions in alignment with the Division Plan for Continuous Growth.
5. Understand the complexity of the context in which they are working with a focus on the Division Plan for Continuous Growth.
6. Measure and evaluate priorities, compare the results against established goals, and correct the course as appropriate.

SUMMARY

The SHINE Leader Development Framework is based on research that emphasizes the importance of strategic development specific to the organization's strategy, and how a leadership development program can improve organizational performance, increase productivity, and decrease turnover.

NONSCHOOL-BASED STAFF PD

This year, professional development sessions were developed and implemented for nonschool-based staff to further develop their leadership capacity. The development of these sessions encompassed various capabilities across all five domains of the SHINE Leader Development Framework (attached), addressing key skills, behaviours, abilities, and knowledge required to lead from all levels of nonschool-based roles at ECSD.

Adult learning, also known as andragogy, refers to the practice of teaching and educating adults. It emphasizes self-directed learning, practical application, and leveraging the experiences that adults bring to the learning environment. In professional development, adult learning is crucial as it helps employees acquire new skills, adapt to changes, and stay competitive in their fields. By offering tailored learning opportunities, ECSD can enhance employee performance, boost

morale, and foster a culture of continuous improvement. This ultimately leads to increased productivity and innovation within the organization.

Each month, September through June, a different session is offered where staff can register and participate in hands-on, active learning with practical applications while leveraging the experiences they bring to the learning environment. The sessions offered this year were Psychological Health, Crucial Communication, Mental Health Awareness, Time Management, and Emotional Intelligence. Upcoming sessions include: Service Excellence, Personality Dimensions Awareness Workshop, and Conflict Resolution.

Out of the seven PD sessions offered so far this year, 120 people have participated (63 unique participants) across 25 department areas.

DEPARTMENTAL SUPPORT

This year, we proactively enhanced departmental support by offering tailored training sessions aimed at fostering continuous professional development and addressing specific areas for growth. These initiatives, aligned with departmental goals, promoted cross-departmental collaboration and knowledge sharing, thereby enhancing overall organizational performance and innovation.

Through coaching and feedback, employees were empowered to apply new skills effectively, cultivating a culture of continuous improvement. Topics covered across departments included resilience in the workplace, time management, personality dimensions, dealing with difficult people, and emotional intelligence.



Administrative Placement & Training Statistics

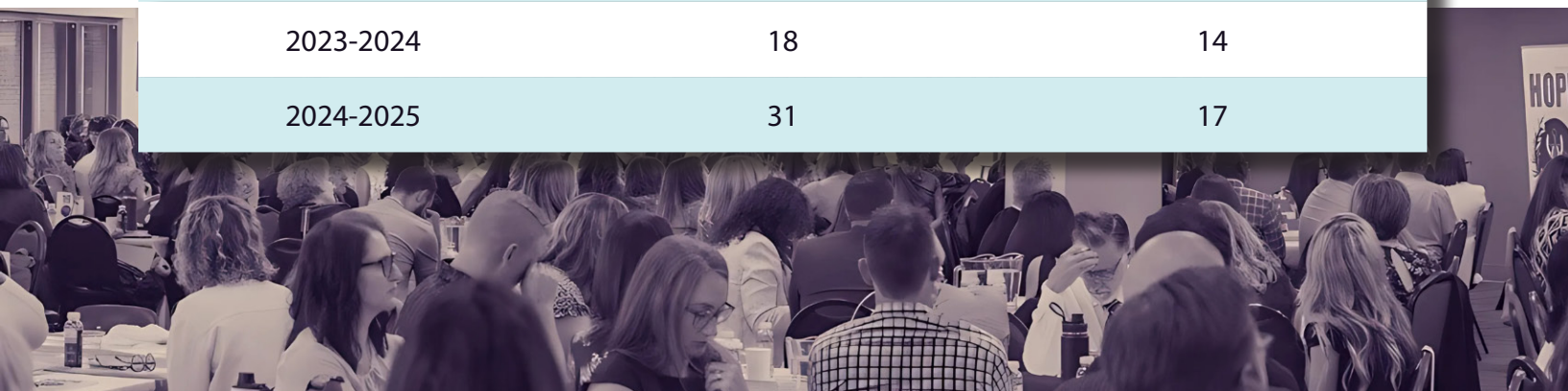
Edmonton Catholic Schools acknowledges the significant impact that school-based administrators have on student achievement. Leadership is second only to classroom instruction among school-related factors that affect student learning. The Administrator Placement Committee, which includes the Chief Superintendent and other Superintendents, is supported by a web application developed by Technology Services called the Administrator Profile. This application collects various details from school-based administrators, such as their strengths, languages they speak, levels they have taught, preferred assignments, and other relevant data. 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, including 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. In the last five years, 101 new Assistant Principals have been placed in schools, representing a 71 percent change in available positions. Additionally, 60 new Principals have been placed in schools, which is a 64 percent change for our schools. This significant amount of change has increased the demand for leadership support and training, creating an increased emphasis on mentorship and coaching by all departments within Edmonton Catholic Schools, especially by Leadership Services.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL COHORTS

SCHOOL YEAR	NEW ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS	SECOND-YEAR ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS
2015-2016	24	N/A
2016-2017	25	N/A
2017-2018	18	N/A
2018-2019	10	N/A
2019-2020	15	N/A
2020-2021	13	N/A
2021-2022	22	10
2022-2023	17	21
2023-2024	18	14
2024-2025	31	17



PRINCIPAL COHORTS

SCHOOL YEAR	NEW ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS	SECOND-YEAR ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS
2015-2016	9	N/A
2016-2017	14	N/A
2017-2018	14	N/A
2018-2019	6	13
2019-2020	6	6
2020-2021	8	5
2021-2022	17	8
2022-2023	8	16
2023-2024	13	7
2024-2025	14	11

These cohorts serve as the basis for our mentorship and development programs for the school year. They play a crucial role in developing leadership capacity within the Division during a particularly challenging time for succession management. The Principal and Assistant Principal provide a critical service in ensuring that our school-based administrators are well-formed as Catholic educational leaders. Mentorship and support help prepare for the future of our Division, as these individuals are charged with guiding our schools and growing a future of excellence in Edmonton Catholic Schools.

In addition to helping prepare our current school leaders for a future in school-based leadership, we are also continually seeking new applicants to join our

talented school-based administration team. Recognizing the ongoing need to attract skilled administrator candidates to serve our students, families, and staff, we actively recruit new administrators both internally and externally. Through online postings and LinkedIn, we search for candidates who meet specific criteria set by Edmonton Catholic Schools. Ideal external applicants are practicing Catholics with at least five years of teaching experience and a proven track record as a Principal or Assistant Principal for a minimum of three years. For immediate placement in our schools, external administrator applicants must hold a continuous designation as a Principal with their current employing Board and have made significant progress towards a Master's degree, with at least one year of study completed.



Administrator Training

NEW ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL & SECOND-YEAR MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS

The New Assistant Principal Mentorship program is designed to support newly appointed Assistant Principals in developing the relevant knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for their role. This year our 31 new Assistant Principals were required to attend nine two-hour sessions, which are aligned with Alberta Education's Leadership Quality Standards and the Catholic leadership competency, Embodying Catholic Leadership. With the support of a mentor, the sessions address emergent needs identified by both mentors and new Assistant Principals. The program includes professional reading, reflection, and dialogue, and participants are placed in a cohort and assigned a mentor who is an experienced Assistant Principal within the Division. Each month, the focus is on one of the leadership competencies, and guest presenters from various departments within the Division are invited to complement the topics covered.

The Second-Year Assistant Principal Support program is designed to further support new Assistant Principals in their leadership journey as they work towards their final evaluation in their third year. All 17 of our second-year Assistant Principals were required to attend this program, which follows a community practice model. The program reflects the needs of the group, identifying areas for growth and utilizing the collective wisdom of the group, as well as experts from the Division, to support these new leaders. The focus is on developing the ability to manage conflict effectively through critical conversations.

These mentorship and support programs play a crucial role in developing leadership capacity within Edmonton Catholic Schools, ensuring that our school-based administrators are well-prepared to lead and support their school communities.

NEW PRINCIPAL & SECOND-YEAR MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS

The New Principal Mentorship program is designed to equip the 14 newly appointed Principals with the essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for their role within Edmonton Catholic Schools. All new Principals are required to participate in this program, which consists of ten three-hour sessions. These sessions are aligned with Alberta Education's Leadership Quality Standards and the Catholic leadership competency, Embodying Catholic Leadership. With the guidance of a mentor, the sessions address emergent needs identified by both mentors and new Principals. The program emphasizes professional reading, reflection, and dialogue, and involves collaboration with various departments within Edmonton Catholic Schools to provide comprehensive support and guidance.

To further support new Principals, the Superintendent of Facility Services visits each school by the end of September in the Principal's first year. During this visit, the Superintendent explains the services provided by the department, how to access these services and the responsibilities of the school.

This visit also allows the Principal to ask questions and highlight areas of concern. Additionally, new Principals attend a half-day tour and orientation of the Facility Services building in November to gain a deeper understanding of the department's operations and support for schools. This acquired knowledge enhances the capacity of school-based leaders to manage their sites.

The Second-Year Principal Mentorship program, which had 11 participants, aims to further develop the leadership skills of new principals as they progress toward their final evaluation in their third year. All second-year Principals are required to attend this program, which follows a community of practice model. The program is tailored to the group's needs, identifying areas for growth and leveraging the collective wisdom of the group, as well as experts from the Division, to support these new leaders. The process began with the development of a formative feedback tool, Principal 360, which participants use with their staff to receive feedback. This feedback drives the discussions and work during their time together.



New Initiatives & Innovations

A NEW LOOK AT OUR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL TRAINING PROGRAM

Ensuring that assistant principals get off to a good start in administration is crucial for the future leadership of our school division. As emerging leaders, assistant principals play a pivotal role in shaping the educational environment and fostering a positive school culture. By providing them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes, we are investing in the long-term success of our schools. The program designed for second-year assistant principals focuses on developing leadership competencies as outlined in Alberta Education's Leadership Quality Standard, with an emphasis on faith-based values. Through professional reading, reflection, and dialogue, participants engage in self-assessment and critical analysis of their leadership abilities, preparing them to lead learning communities effectively.

The mentorship program for assistant principals is designed to provide comprehensive support and professional development, ensuring their success in their new roles. It includes formal mentorship and job-embedded professional support for both first and second-year assistant principals. This mentorship is tailored to meet the individual needs of each assistant principal, providing personalized guidance and resources. Participants engage in self-reflection, professional reading, and dialogue, and participate in group work and guest presentations.

The program also includes on-site visits and mentorship, which are anchored in the individual context of each school community. This targeted support helps assistant principals navigate the challenges of their new roles, fostering effective relationships and instructional leadership. Additionally, the program logistics include four two-and-a-half-hour sessions provided to second-year assistant principals, focusing on the role of a Catholic assistant principal. Sessions take place weekly at St. Anthony Meeting and Archive Centre on Monday afternoons; any changes in dates or location will be communicated in advance, and participants are expected to attend all sessions and notify their mentor if they are unable to attend.

With the addition of a new position in Leadership Services last year, we have been able to enhance our support for first-year assistant principals by incorporating on-site visits and mentorship. This targeted support is anchored in the individual context of each school community, ensuring that assistant principals receive personalized guidance and resources. By fostering effective relationships and providing instructional leadership, we are committed to developing the leadership capacity of our assistant principals, ultimately benefiting the entire school Division.

Catholic Formation in Leadership Training

This year, the leadership training programs for principals, assistant principals, and other leaders within the school division have emphasized Catholic educational leadership formation. The training sessions have incorporated several explicit examples of Catholic formation aspects, ensuring that leaders are well-equipped to integrate faith into their educational practices.

For Principal Training, the program has focused on the Five Marks of an Excellent Catholic Leader. These marks serve as guiding principles for professional development and are discussed in detail during the sessions. Principals are taught to embrace the dignity of all as created in the image of God, advocating for Catholic education within and beyond the school community, and making decisions rooted in Gospel teachings. They are also encouraged to intentionally direct and foster the development of Catholic education through faith permeation, being witnesses and agents of hope, and ensuring a communal vision that recognizes God in each other. These principles help principals appreciate the supernatural destiny of students and perfect them in all dimensions as images of God. In addition to the Five Marks, the People of Hope theme has been a focal point in principal training meetings. Division Chaplains have delivered comprehensive faith formation sessions to principals, cultivating a sense of Catholic vision. These sessions include topics such as Saint Kateri and pilgrimage, Our Lady of Guadalupe and faith sharing, and the message of reconciliation. These examples highlight the integration of Catholic values and teachings into leadership training, fostering a strong foundation for Catholic educational leadership.



For Assistant Principal Training, the program has similarly emphasized the Five Marks of an Excellent Catholic Leader, ensuring that assistant principals are well-versed in these guiding principles. The training sessions for assistant principals also include the People of Hope theme, with Division Chaplains delivering faith formation sessions that cultivate a sense of Catholic vision. Topics covered in these sessions include Saint Kateri and pilgrimage, Our Lady of Guadalupe and faith sharing, and the message of reconciliation. These sessions help assistant principals integrate Catholic values into their leadership roles, fostering a strong foundation for Catholic educational leadership. The training also includes practical applications of these principles. For instance, leaders are encouraged to integrate Catholic teachings into their decision-making processes, ensuring that their actions reflect the values of compassion, justice, and service. They are also provided with resources and strategies to create a school environment that promotes spiritual growth, such as organizing school-wide liturgies, retreats, and service projects.

In embedding these Catholic focuses and practices into their leadership training, principals and assistant principals can effectively guide their schools in living out the Catholic mission.



Instructional & Curriculum Support

Instructional Coaching

Instructional coaching plays a crucial role in supporting the professional capacity of teachers in Edmonton Catholic Schools. Focusing on Instructional Coaching is a division priority that aligns with the Division Plan for Continuous Growth 2023-2026, where the Board of Trustees has established the priority of learning excellence. Superintendents, division leaders, administrators, as well as instructional coaches are actively engaged in this work, ensuring that staff build their capacity to meet student needs. The key strategy involves engaging in intentional professional learning to promote growth, leading to optimal learning for all. This work is focused on building collective efficacy, which has a direct impact on student learning. This involves professional development focused on enabling conditions and building teacher networks, breaking down the isolation of the classroom, and increasing teachers' feelings of effectiveness and satisfaction through relationships built through collaboration.

The shift towards the Instructional Coaching model has been centered around ensuring a strong foundation in educational leaders understanding of effective coaching models. This has included a full day professional learning session for division leaders and school administrators provided by Jim Knight.

IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

Guided by Jim Knight's framework, the Instructional Coach Implementation Committee plays a pivotal role in enhancing instructional practices within the school division. This committee is composed of a diverse group of members, including instructional coaches, administrators, consultants, and managers, all working collaboratively to ensure the successful integration of the coaching model. The primary goals of the Implementation Committee are to focus on the shift from Learning Coach to Instructional Coach, growing the model, and providing a plan that involves continuous support for instructional coaches and teachers. The committee aims to create a cohesive and effective framework that will support schools in establishing a strong and supportive coaching culture.

Over a three-year period, the committee is dedicated to fostering sustainable growth, teacher development, and system alignment. This approach ensures that the instructional coaching model is not only implemented effectively but also becomes an integral part of the division's educational practices and vision.

Each member of the Implementation Committee has a specific role that contributes to the overall success:

Instructional Coaches

Usually, teachers who work directly with their teacher colleagues to improve instructional practices. They provide personalized support, model effective teaching strategies, and help teachers reflect on and refine their practices. Their insights from working with teachers are invaluable to the committee.

Administrators

School principals support and facilitate the work of instructional coaches. They ensure that the necessary resources and conditions are in place for successful coaching and ensure that coaching aligns with broader school and district goals.

Consultants

Experts in instructional coaching and professional development offer specialized knowledge and guidance. They assist in designing and delivering professional development sessions and evaluating the effectiveness of the coaching model.

Division Leaders

Directors and other senior leaders oversee the overall implementation process, ensuring alignment with the division's goals. They provide leadership and direction.

The committee has established a three-year timeline to support the implementation of Jim Knight's instructional coaching model.



YEAR

1

Establish foundational elements, including forming the committee, setting goals, and defining the roles and responsibilities of the Instructional Coach.

YEAR

2

Expand and deepen the implementation, focusing on refining coaching practices and increasing the impact on teacher development.

YEAR

3

Achieve sustainable growth and systems alignment, ensuring that instructional coaching is fully integrated into the school division's framework.

The committee has been actively engaged in various activities to support the implementation process.



Sept. 2024

Jim Knight presented to administrators, managers, instructional coaches, consultants, and assistant principals, emphasizing the importance of instructional coaching in achieving the division goal of optimal learning for all.

Oct. 2024 + Mar. 2025

the committee reviewed the role of instructional coaches, discussed learning conditions, and explored how instructional coaching, learning conditions, and success criteria contribute to optimal learning for all.

Through focused meetings, the Implementation Committee will ensure that the instructional coaching model is effectively integrated and aligned with the division's goals. The collaborative efforts of the committee members, guided by Jim Knight's framework, are instrumental in improving instructional practices and student outcomes across the school division.



INSTRUCTIONAL COACH CALL-BACKS

In 2024-2025, instructional coaches engaged in various learning opportunities at four callbacks, which included the understanding of their role at the school site. Instructional coaches are foundational in enhancing the quality and effectiveness of classroom instruction within the division. Instructional coaches effectiveness is based on their skills in fostering effective relationships, demonstrating professional knowledge, supporting optimal learning conditions, creating inclusive educational environments, and providing continuous professional development.

Instructional coaches bring a wealth of knowledge to their roles. They possess an understanding of the competencies required for optimal learning within a Catholic learning environment. This includes expertise in planning, instruction, and assessment. They are instrumental in integrating learning conditions that

promote critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and deeper learning into instructional practices. By modeling high-impact, universal practices, instructional coaches help teachers to refine their instructional strategies and enhance student learning outcomes.

In addition, the callbacks provide professional learning on the following:

- Session with Jim Knight on Monday, September 16, 2024.
- Diving into Jim Knight's definitive guide to instructional coaching, *The 7 Factors for Success*.
- Learning how to apply partnership principles to foster collaborative and effective coaching relationships.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND THE INSTRUCTIONAL COACH

Professional development is a cornerstone of the instructional coach's role. They provide individualized professional learning that is most relevant to teachers' needs, supporting them in their journey to improve instruction and student achievement. Instructional coaches facilitate workshops and training sessions that emphasize high-impact instructional strategies and the integration of learning conditions into classroom practices. Their efforts ensure that teachers are equipped with the latest knowledge and skills to enhance their instructional practices.

The implementation of instructional coaches is directly aligned with the Alberta Teaching Quality Standard (TQS), particularly TQS 2 (Engaging in Career-Long Learning) and TQS 3 (Demonstrating a Professional Body of Knowledge). Instructional coaches embody the principles of career-long learning by providing teachers with ongoing professional development opportunities. This alignment ensures that the instructional coaching model supports the broader goals of the school division and contributes to the overall improvement of instructional practices and student outcomes.



Collaborative Response

As part of our work with Kurtis Hewson, he has worked with the Senior Team in developing our vision of Optimal Learning and Learning Conditions. In examining the Learning Conditions together, Kurtis has led the group in creating a continuum to determine school's successes in meeting the conditions. Further, Kurtis has modeled the collaborative response structure with the Senior Team. This has allowed each senior team member to lead their stewardship groups in solution-oriented conversations. The goal is that all levels of the organization will be able to use the Collaborative Response process. This provides structure and purpose to meetings as we work together for the benefit of all students.

At the school level, Edmonton Catholic Schools is in year two of the implementation of Collaborative Response. In the ongoing effort to enhance instructional practices and student outcomes, the Collaborative Response (CR) has been a cornerstone for both Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 schools. Kurtis Hewson has played a pivotal role in guiding these schools through their respective stages of implementation and development.

Cohort 1 Schools:

For Cohort 1 schools, the second year is all about deepening the implementation of the Collaborative Response. Having laid the groundwork in the first year, these schools are now focusing on refining and enhancing the structures and processes that support CR. The goal is to build on the foundational work and ensure that the collaborative practices are effectively embedded within the school culture.

An aspect of this phase involves providing ongoing support and professional development for school leaders and staff. Each school in Cohort 1 has been allocated six hours of support from Kurtis Hewson to address specific needs such as implementation plans, team observations, leadership planning, and professional learning. This tailored support is crucial for addressing the unique challenges and opportunities each school faces.

Data-driven decision-making is another critical focus for Cohort 1 schools. By regularly reviewing and analyzing student data, these schools aim to identify needs and measure the impact of interventions. This approach ensures that instructional practices are informed by evidence and that interventions are targeted and effective.

Cohort 2 Schools:

For Cohort 2 schools, the first year is dedicated to introducing and establishing the foundational elements of the Collaborative Response. This initial phase is crucial for building understanding and capacity among school leaders and staff. Professional learning sessions, led by Kurtis Hewson, play a key role in this process, helping to lay the groundwork for effective collaboration and data-driven practices.

Building collaborative structures is a primary goal for Cohort 2 schools. This involves developing and implementing collaborative team meeting cycles, where teams examine individual student needs and appropriate responses. At the start of the year, teams establish norms, priorities, and SMART goals to guide their work. These structured meetings ensure that all team members are aligned and focused on common objectives.

Professional development is also a significant focus for Cohort 2 schools. Targeted professional development opportunities are provided to support the initial implementation of CR. Additionally, participation in events like the Collaborative Response in Lamonte, Alberta offers valuable learning experiences that deepen understanding and practice.

Kurtis Hewson's Role and Activities

Kurtis Hewson has been instrumental in supporting both cohorts through various activities and engagements. For Cohort 1 schools, he has been involved in leadership sessions, providing feedback on collaborative team meetings, and offering tailored support to address specific needs. For Cohort 2 schools, he has led professional learning sessions and helped establish the foundational elements of CR.

Moreover, Kurtis Hewson has been actively visiting schools to observe collaborative team meetings and provide feedback. This hands-on approach ensures

that schools receive practical and actionable insights to enhance their collaborative practices.

The Collaborative Response initiative, guided by Kurtis Hewson, aims to foster a culture of collaboration, data-driven decision-making, and continuous professional development in both Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 schools. Through structured support and targeted interventions, these schools are working towards improving instructional practices and student outcomes.

Reframing Curriculum

Inspired by the Autism Working Group, we launched the “Reframing Curriculum: Planning for Neurodiversity in the Classroom” Community of Practice (COP), involving six schools and multiple teams. This initiative empowers teachers to plan universally designed instruction with a focus on neurodivergent and autistic students. Unlike traditional strategy sessions that are often removed from the context of the classroom, this unique community of practice experience showcases curriculum planning with neurodiversity in mind from the start.

The purpose of this professional learning series is to cultivate an inclusive professional learning community that empowers teachers to plan and deliver universally designed instruction for all learners. Recognizing the increasing diversity in classrooms, we emphasize making the Alberta curriculum accessible to all. In these collaborative sessions, participants engage in curriculum-focused effective planning and observe model lessons in real classrooms. By fostering continuous learning and collaboration, we aim to ensure every student thrives in an inclusive educational environment.

The COP sessions cover a range of topics, starting with an introduction to neurodiversity and practical, neuro-affirming practices. Subsequent sessions focus on effective planning for all students using the UDL 3.0 framework, with specific attention to English Language Arts and Literacy (ELAL), Math, Science, and the new Social Studies curriculum. Participants work together to create learning goals and success criteria,



ensuring entry points for autistic students that can be used immediately in their classrooms.

Building on the success of this initiative, we are developing a Reframing Curriculum Kit to provide essential tools for teachers and plan to expand the COP to more schools in the upcoming academic year. This kit will include mentor texts, teacher resources, manipulatives, and hands-on materials recommended by curriculum consultants. By actively engaging in this community of practice, we support our educators in delivering inclusive, engaging, and effective learning experiences that contribute to the holistic development of all students.



New Curriculum

In alignment with our division's commitment to excellence, the Elementary Curriculum Team has focused on enhancing teacher practice and pedagogy while learning the new curriculum. Guided by our faith, we aim to nurture every student in mind, body, and spirit. Our approach integrates cross-curricular strategies and Universal Design for Learning (UDL), making our curriculum inclusive and reflective of our diverse student body. This commitment to excellence fosters environments where every child's potential is recognized and cultivated.

We have been deeply focused on supporting the implementation of the New Alberta Curriculum, which spans five subject areas across seven grade levels. At the heart of this planning is our commitment to teacher professional development (PD) and providing high-quality student resources. Our PD approach enhances pedagogical practices and equips educators with the tools necessary for success in diverse classroom environments. Our approach aligns with the Alberta Teaching Quality Standard (TQS) Indicators, particularly TQS2 and TQS3. Our professional development opportunities foster career-long learning, ensuring educators are updated with the latest pedagogical practices relevant to the new curriculum. Additionally, our commitment to inclusive learning environments is evident in our UDL approach, addressing diverse student needs, including cultural, linguistic, and ability backgrounds.

We prioritize data-informed planning and building meaningful relationships to refine and implement a curriculum that meets the holistic needs of every learner. By fostering collaborative and responsive instruction, grounded in comprehensive assessment practices, we aim to address individual growth areas and empower students to achieve personal and academic success. We can better plan for and deliver curriculum experiences that evolve based on the needs and growth of students.

This can be further supported with insights gained from ongoing professional development and feedback mechanisms. Our efforts in curriculum planning, professional development, and implementation are rooted in inclusivity, respect, and understanding.

We strive to ensure that our curriculum and teaching practices reflect our faith values and celebrate the unique identities and talents of all students. By continuously improving our curriculum, we support our educators in delivering culturally responsive and academically rigorous learning experiences that contribute to the holistic development of our students and the achievement of our division's goals.

Our professional learning model includes school administrators, instructional coaches and teachers across all grade levels K-6, who are pivotal in bringing this new curriculum to life. Through various formats like conference-style learning days, Communities of Practice, and teacher working groups, we ensure that our educators are active participants in shaping the educational landscape.

Our professional learning model is a cornerstone of our commitment to educational excellence. By equipping our educators with the latest knowledge, resources, and support, we are fostering a culture of innovation and inclusivity. This approach not only enhances the teaching and learning experience but also strengthens our entire school community. As we continue to invest in our teachers' professional growth, we are paving the way for a brighter future where every student can thrive in a dynamic and supportive learning environment. This ongoing dedication to professional development ensures that we remain at the forefront of educational best practices, benefiting both our educators and students alike.



SUMMER SUMMIT

To kick off the new school year, we hosted the ECSD Summer Summit at the Lumen Christi Catholic Education Centre. This event, themed “Cultivating Excellence: Growing Together,” brought together over 300 educators for a day filled with ideas, lessons, resources, and fun. The summit featured over 40 sessions, each providing powerful, classroom-ready learning combined with student resources to take back to the school. Teachers, administrators, and instructional coaches had the opportunity to choose from a variety of sessions tailored to their professional growth plan goals and specific classroom needs.

The sessions covered a wide range of elementary topics, such as integrating coding into the science curriculum, dynamic learning experiences with UDL and digital tools, and exploring visual art. Other sessions focused on concrete understanding in math, indigenous education opportunities, language learning supports, and a deeper dive into optimizing

our new curriculum. There were also sessions dedicated to new teachers, providing essential information and resources to help them succeed in their roles.

The Summer Summit not only supported the implementation of the new curriculum but also reinforced our commitment to enhancing teacher practice and pedagogy. Essential teachings from this event are planned throughout the rest of the year at school sites and through school teams. This professional learning model ensures that our educators are well-equipped to create engaging, inclusive, and effective learning environments for all students.

As we gathered to share knowledge, spark new ideas, and connect as a community, we carried with us the spirit of hope. This year, we are not just people of hope—we are people who take that hope and turn it into action.

SCHOOL TEAMS

This year, we have continued our tradition of offering immersive, hands-on professional learning through our School Teams days. These conference-style events are held five times a year, providing school teams with the opportunity to engage deeply with the new curriculum and enhance their teaching practices. Each school team, consisting of an administrator and up to two additional teachers, participates in a full day of learning that supports all five new subject areas across seven grade levels.

Our School Teams days have been organized around key themes such as: “Creating the Conditions for Growth in Optimal Learning,” “UDL 3.0 and Planning Optimal Learning for ALL,” and “Coaching for Excellence.” Each theme is designed to ensure the highest quality of approach in implementing the new curriculum. Participants can choose from a variety of breakout sessions that cover curriculum, assessment, technology, languages, and inclusive supports. These sessions are focused on providing practical experiences and resources that can be immediately utilized in the classroom.

The sessions offered this year have included topics such as “Focus on Fluency,” “Talk Like a Scientist,” “Reframing Autism,” and “Building Bridges: Fostering Peer Relationships with Listening Circles.”

Each session is designed to address specific needs and provide educators with the tools and strategies necessary to support their students effectively. Additionally, sessions like “Hot to Glow: Light As A Pop of Play” and “Making Learning Visible - A Book Creator Workbee” offer innovative approaches to engaging students and enhancing their learning experiences.

By participating in these School Teams days, educators act as implementation experts, bringing the information, resources, and experiences back to their school sites. This professional learning model not only supports the immediate needs of educators but also fosters a culture of continuous improvement and collaboration within our division. As we continue to invest in our teachers’ professional growth, we are ensuring that our educators are well-equipped to create dynamic, inclusive, and effective learning environments for all students.

You can preview these high-quality sessions by visiting our event sites:

- [School Teams Round 1](#)
- [School Teams Round 2](#)
- [School Teams Round 3](#)

**Cultivating excellence:
Growing together.**



TEACHER WORKING GROUPS

Our teacher working groups serve a dual purpose. Firstly, self-nominated teachers from grades K-6 join us three-five times a year to work closely with curriculum consultants to co-construct critical classroom supports. These supports come in the form of pacing guides, which are cross-curricular scope and sequence documents with resources, and curriculum crates, which include lesson plans and materials for both teachers and students. We have developed 220 pacing guides for every subject area and grade level for each month. This year, we have expanded our resources to over 550 curriculum crates and continue to update our pacing guides and other learning materials monthly to ensure they represent the most current understanding and practices of new curriculum implementation.

Secondly, these teachers get the afternoon of these days to plan with fellow grade-level educators with the assistance and support of curriculum consultants. This collaborative approach not only enhances the quality of the resources but also ensures that the materials are practical and immediately usable in the classroom. We have 80 teachers participating in the teacher working group, and the incredible resources they help create are shared and used by many school divisions around the province, showcasing ECSD as educational leaders.

A significant focus of our teacher working groups this year has been the preparation for the new Social Studies curriculum, set to be implemented in Fall 2025. Our division has committed to piloting and providing

feedback on the entirety of the draft Social Studies curriculum. As part of this effort, our teacher working groups have been instrumental in curating and creating resources that support educators in delivering a curriculum that reflects the diversity and complexity of Alberta's history and culture.

Through these combined efforts, our teacher working groups are developing a strong understanding of the new Social Studies curriculum and preparing classroom materials and professional learning experiences to support educators prior to its implementation. These initiatives ensure that all students experience meaningful and inclusive learning opportunities.



EFFECTIVE TEACHER PLANNING DAYS

Effective Teacher Planning Days were designed to transition from curriculum implementation to curriculum optimization, empowering teachers to act as the architects of learning. These sessions support educators in selecting essential resources aligned with Knowledge, Understanding, Skills, and Procedures (KUSPs), crafting meaningful progressions of learning across entire Learning Outcomes, and creating inclusive,

well-scaffolded plans that address diverse learner needs. Using a Backwards by Design approach within UDL 3.0 guidelines, teachers develop assessment plans that triangulate learning through observations, conversations, and products. The initiative aims to reduce reliance on pre-made online resources, fostering teacher agency in crafting pedagogically sound, student-centered plans aligned with TQS3.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF EFFECTIVE TEACHER PLANNING DAYS

- **Curriculum Optimization:** These sessions focus on deepening teacher understanding of curriculum architecture and guiding frameworks to progress from implementation to optimization.
- **Empowering Teachers as Architects of Learning:** Teachers are supported in taking ownership of planning by equipping them with strategies to align KUSPs with student needs, learning outcomes, and evidence-based practices.
- **Backwards by Design Approach:** This approach is used to plan learning progressions that span entire Learning Outcomes, integrating resources purposefully and inclusively.
- **UDL 3.0 Guidelines:** Emphasizing Universal Design for Learning ensures all students are supported, regardless of their unique learning profiles.
- **Assessment Strategies:** Teachers craft assessment plans focused on triangulating evidence of learning through observations, conversations, and products, emphasizing a balance between formative and summative assessments.
- **Reducing Over-Reliance on Pre-Made Resources:** The initiative prioritizes professional autonomy and critical decision-making over ready-made resources, aligning with the Alberta Teaching Quality Standard (TQS3).
- **Collaborative Learning and Planning:** Teachers work alongside curriculum consultants and colleagues to co-construct effective, student-centered plans tailored to their specific classrooms.
- **Resource Alignment and Selection:** Teachers are guided in identifying and utilizing essential resources that align closely with curriculum expectations and the Provincial Resource Review Guide, minimizing resource inefficiencies.

Three rounds of planning days were hosted in June, August, and September 2024, helping teachers feel empowered and prepared for the new school year. This targeted approach ensures teachers are well-equipped to design learning experiences that reflect

best practices, prioritize student growth, and cultivate excellence in every classroom. By fostering engaging, purposeful, and inclusive learning environments, effective teacher planning enhances student success and supports the overall goals of our division.

CUP OF CURRICULUM

The Cup of Curriculum is a focused monthly guide designed to support instructional leaders by providing deep dives into specific themes that align with key curriculum areas. The purpose of this newsletter-style learning resource is to offer actionable insights and foster collaborative reflection and professional growth.

and practical strategies that instructional leaders can use to enhance both student learning and teacher development. Each edition is structured to help instructional leaders and teachers recognize effective practices, integrate best practices into their classrooms,

COMPONENTS OF THE CUP OF CURRICULUM

1.

Evidence in Practice: Formerly known as Classroom Look Fors, this section highlights practical, visible examples of how the month's focus can be brought to life in the classroom. These "look fors" help instructional leaders and teachers recognize effective practices that support student learning.

2.

Lessons & Resources: Curated, high-quality resources and lessons aligned with the monthly focus, providing teachers with the tools they need to integrate best practices into their classrooms. This section is designed to equip instructional leaders with concrete strategies to guide teachers in implementing new ideas effectively.

3.

High-Impact Conversations: Thought-provoking questions designed to spark meaningful discussions between teachers and administrators, fostering collaborative reflection and professional growth.

Topics Covered this Year:

Throughout the year, the Cup of Curriculum has covered a variety of topics to support instructional leaders and teachers. Some of the topics include:

- **Early Years Assessment Framework:** Setting up for success with the new mandatory Early Years Assessment Framework for K-3.
- **Reframing Autism:** Shifting from Autism Awareness to acceptance, embedding neuro-affirming language and practices in classrooms.
- **Permeation in Math:** Integrating Catholic identity into mathematics classrooms.
- **Launching Into Science:** Hands-on learning with ECSD Science bins.
- **Social-Emotional Learning (SEL):** Understanding the importance of SEL and its implementation.
- **Technology in the Curriculum:** Leveraging digital tools to enhance learning.
- **CTF within the Curriculum:** Exploring Career and Technology Foundations (CTF) integration.
- **Social Studies Launch K-3:** Preparing for the new Social Studies curriculum.
- **Nurturing Kindergarten Environments:** Creating engaging and supportive learning spaces for young learners.
- **Supporting EAL Learners with Benchmarks 2.0 Data:** Using data to inform instruction and support EAL learners.

Upcoming editions will continue to provide timely, practical insights to enhance both student learning and teacher development, ensuring that instructional

leaders are well-equipped to support their educators and students effectively. You can [click here](#) to explore all of our Cup of Curriculum Editions.

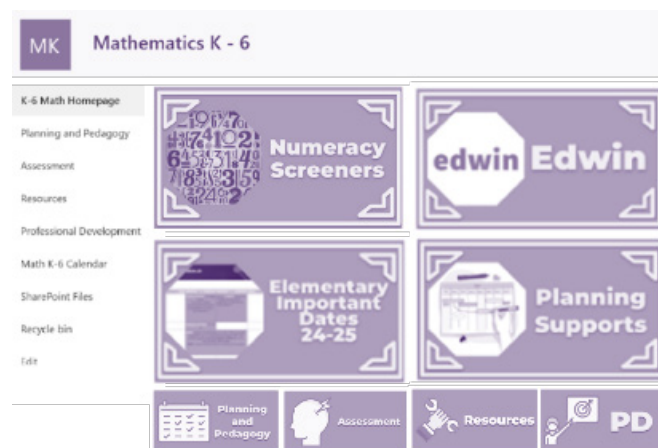
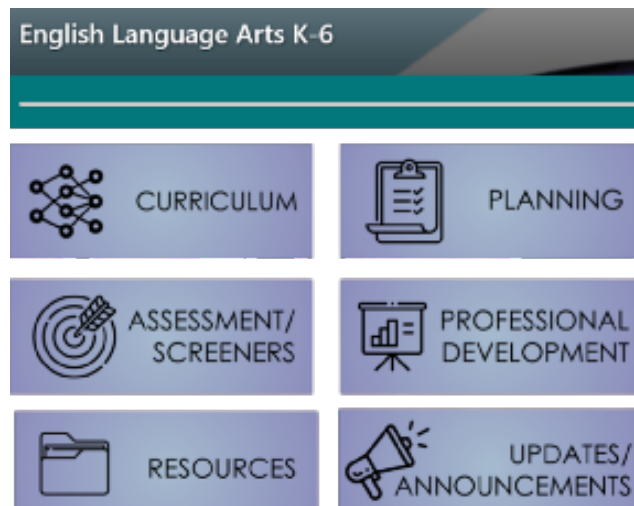
SHAREPOINT REDESIGN FOR ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING

We have completely revamped our SharePoint pages for elementary curriculum to create a comprehensive, user-friendly platform that serves as a one-stop shop for all your educational needs. Our goal was to transform these pages into an asynchronous learning space that provides easy access to professional learning materials, planning resources, student learning materials, and other important documents and resources.

Our redesigned SharePoint pages are structured to ensure that educators and instructional leaders can find what they need quickly and efficiently. With a focus on accessibility, we have organized the content so that it can be accessed in less than three clicks, three scrolls, or three minutes. This streamlined approach allows users to spend more time engaging with the content and less time searching for it.

Key features of our revamped SharePoint pages include:

- 1. Professional Learning Materials:** A dedicated space for accessing high-quality professional development resources, including videos, podcasts, and articles created by our department. These materials are designed to support ongoing learning and growth for educators and instructional leaders.
- 2. Planning Resources:** Comprehensive planning tools and guides that help teachers design effective and inclusive lesson plans. These resources are aligned with the latest curriculum standards and best practices.
- 3. Student Learning Materials:** A wide range of student resources, including lesson plans, activities, and assessments, that can be easily integrated into the classroom. These materials are designed to support diverse learning needs and promote student engagement.
- 4. Asynchronous Learning Space:** Key spaces for educators and instructional leaders to watch videos, listen to department-created podcasts, and engage in important learning experiences at their own pace. This flexible approach to professional development ensures that all educators have access to the resources they need, regardless of their schedules.
- 5. Curriculum-Specific Areas:** Dedicated sections for each of our new curriculum subject areas, providing targeted resources and support for teachers. These areas include subject-specific guides, lesson plans, and instructional materials that are regularly updated to reflect the latest developments in the curriculum.



By revamping our SharePoint pages, we have created a dynamic and interactive platform that supports the professional growth of our educators and enhances the learning experiences of our students.

This transformation ensures that all members of our educational community have the tools and resources they need to succeed.

Secondary Curriculum

The Secondary Curriculum Team has focused on ongoing understanding of curricular outcomes through the lens of Universal Design for Learning. Meeting the needs of a wide range of learners in secondary classrooms, including those presenting with inclusive or language needs, is an area of growth for our Division. By integrating UDL and language learning as threads woven throughout all of our professional learning offerings, teachers learn that considering all learners from the beginning in their planning means excellent instruction for everyone.

This is a representative overview of some of the learning our teachers have been able to access in Secondary Curriculum:

High School Professional Learning:

Three times during the year, we gather Department Heads from all high schools for key professional learning around curriculum topics. There are common threads amongst all subject areas. High school assistant principals also have the opportunity to gather to discuss their instructional leadership and then join their DHs to discuss how they can concentrate their efforts at their school sites. As one example, DHs and APs reviewed Division and school-based data and discussed strategies to address the Standard of Excellence in School Awarded Marks. Gathering as a community has contributed to our overall collective efficacy as we consider the complexity of student learning at our individual sites.

Humanities Essential Academic Terms and Skills:

As a collaboration between Social Studies, English Language Arts, and French Immersion, consultants have identified terms and skills common to the Humanities. These are supported by visible thinking routines that promote student engagement and higher-level cognitive strategies. Consultants have built a robust sharepoint site, complete with visuals and teacher supports. Sessions have been offered at a variety of school sites as well as GETCA and DWPD.

Career and Technology Studies:

Safety has been one area in which we have been working with teachers so that we can ensure all students have access to hands-on learning opportunities. We have a group of teachers participating in a working group focused on how to teach safety skills. Our goal is to build teacher confidence in addressing safety in the classroom and reducing barriers to careers education.

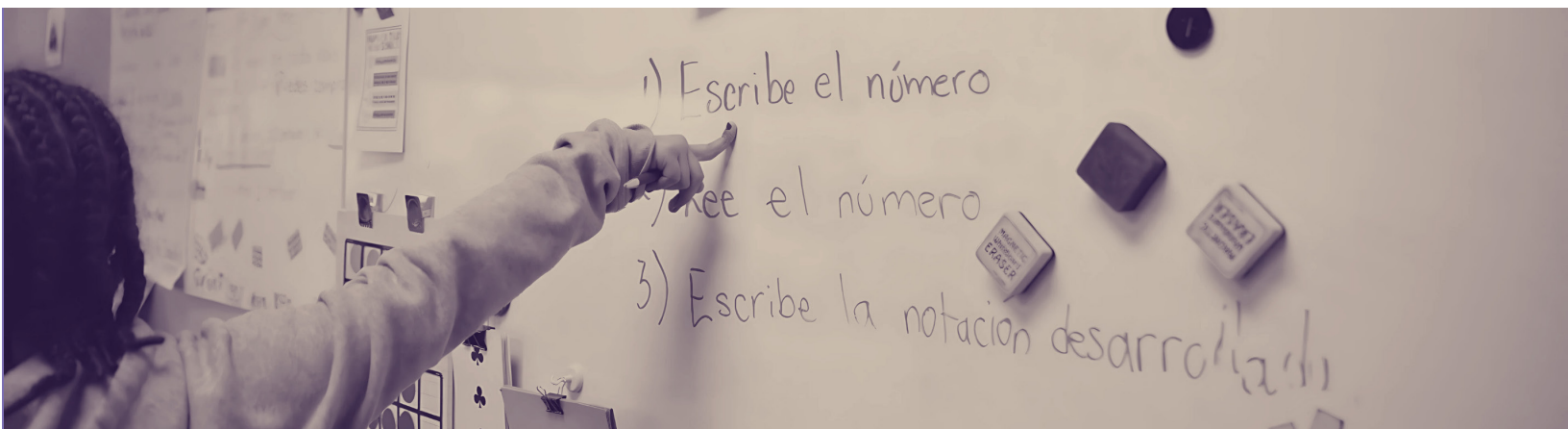
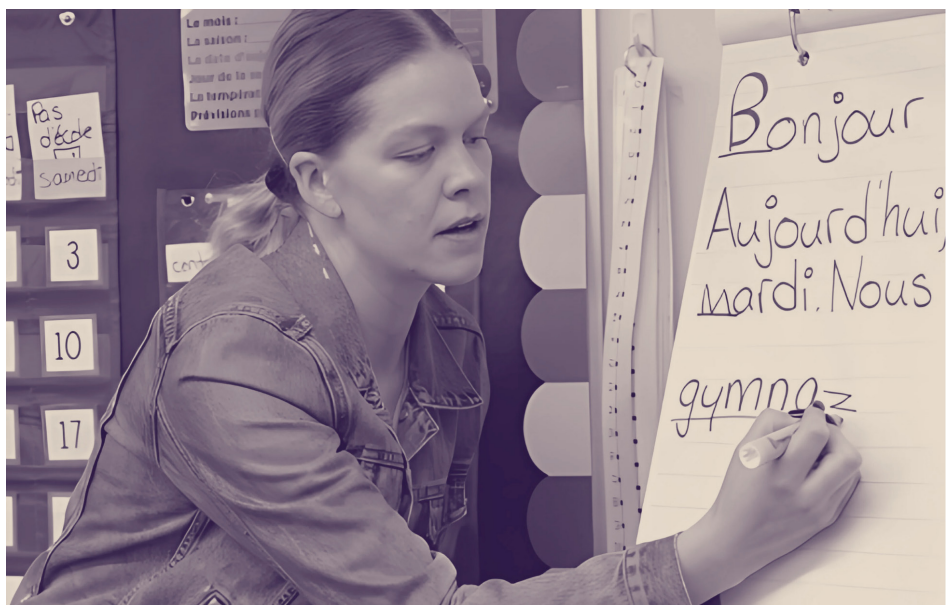
Science Residencies:

Continuing with visible thinking routines, science consultants have been working with teachers in their schools on hands-on, experiential science activities designed to elicit improvement in student skills in science. In junior high, our consultant organized a science showcase at which students demonstrated those skills and celebrated their learning with one another. We are very pleased to report that teacher learning and participation in science investigations has improved drastically; two years ago we had only one student participating at the Edmonton Regional Science Fair and this year we had twenty-four entries! Our science consultant has been working at the elbow with teachers on learning activities that build to this culminating event.



Languages Programming

Whether it be immersion or bilingual programs, Language and Culture courses, or English as an Additional Language (EAL), we provide professional development to ensure that administrators, teachers, and English Language Learner Educators (ELLEs) are well-equipped to support the diverse needs of both teachers and students, promoting excellence in language education. This dedication to professional development not only promotes individual professional growth but also strengthens our collective ability to provide high-quality language learning support to our students. In the following paragraphs, examples of professional learning for those working in language programs will be highlighted.



ADMINISTRATOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Edmonton Catholic Schools proudly offers French immersion and Spanish and Ukrainian bilingual programs. Due to the uniqueness of these programs, it is vital that administrators receive targeted professional development (PD) to gain foundational knowledge of research, pedagogy, inclusion, program pathways, and other relevant topics that directly impact the success of the programs. To this end, immersion and bilingual principals and assistant principals participate in five meetings each year. The structure of this PD is unique: all language principals participate in an All-Together portion to learn about current pedagogies and research and how to translate them into practice. Administrators then break out into meetings specific to their language programs. These meetings are crucial professional learning

opportunities for our language administrators as they build their capacity to meet student and staff needs and create cohesion among schools offering the programs.

In response to our evolving and diverse student population, principals in schools with an EAL population over 30% participated in a year-long Community of Practice (COP) focused on culturally responsive teaching practices, planning, instructional, and assessment strategies. This COP aimed to build principal capacity specifically in EAL. Providing principals with professional learning enables them, as instructional leaders, to support their teachers in meeting the diverse needs of their students.

FRENCH IMMERSION

French Immersion teachers (K-12) continue to receive professional learning related to the new French Immersion Language Arts and Literature curriculum (FILAL). Through ongoing revisions of the pacing guides and Teacher Working Groups, teachers can review and implement research-based inclusive strategies to support fundamental literacy skills by unpacking the new organizing ideas of FILAL, planning for optimal learning through comprehensive planning that includes authentic oral communication tasks, structured literacy, shared reading, and outcome-based planning, and creating curriculum crates

specific to FILAL outcomes. Because French immersion students learn language and content simultaneously, French immersion consultants also support language being taught across all subject areas. At the secondary level, consultants continue to offer professional learning that focuses on language learning across content areas. Through the process of collaborative correction of the HWAs, teachers continue to develop strategies that support increasing vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure in identified areas of need in the analysis of PATs and DIPs.

BILINGUAL PROGRAMS

Teachers in bilingual programs continue to follow the legacy Spanish and Ukrainian Language Arts programs. This presents a challenge and an opportunity to revisit legacy curriculum while making connections to new curriculum. In particular, bilingual teachers received professional learning that focused on creating pacing guides and bridging documents connecting the curriculums. Additionally, teachers participated in the creation of research-based literacy

routes rooted in oral language that will establish a solid foundation for future learning. At the secondary level, the consultant provided teachers with professional learning focused on the writing process. Teachers continue to develop strategies that support increasing vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure. Teachers also continue to learn about opportunities that provide students with authentic cultural experiences.

FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE & LANGUAGE & CULTURE COURSES

Teachers in grades 7-12 participated in a four-session Community of Practice (COP) that focused on effective teaching practices and task-based language learning. An additional six-part COP was offered for all grade levels to support a variety of pedagogical needs. Participants also explored the benefits of gamification

to increase student engagement and alternative assessment practices that authentically assess language competence. Consultants regularly model in classrooms and support teachers in planning research-based and engaging activities to make language and culture courses both fun and rigorous.





ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

Given the diversity of the EAL population, teachers participate in a variety of professional learning opportunities to develop their skills and support student language learning. A primary focus of all professional learning this year has been Benchmarks 2.0, as our school division has fully implemented this tool. Benchmarks 2.0 is both a tool to assess language proficiency and a guide to support increased language development. All professional learning is built around this tool. Recognizing that EAL learners are present in all classrooms, EAL Consultants regularly collaborate with curriculum consultants to integrate language learning strategies in all subject areas.

EAL Designates are site-based teachers who play an important role in supporting teachers with EAL learners. Designates participate in five professional learning sessions in which they develop their knowledge of research-based language learning best practices and Benchmarks 2.0.

We are entering the third and final year of our T-ELL Me More Chromebook project, aiming to further integrate technology into the learning experience of level 1s and 2s, effectively bridging the gap between their home language and English. Comprehensive professional development sessions assist teachers in leveraging Chromebook strategies with our EAL students.

At the secondary level, consultants have focused the professional learning on making content accessible to all levels of English language learners. Additionally, consultants are guiding high school teachers through the process of creating curriculum kits for Expository English. The creation of these kits will bring cohesion and rigor to this course and will ensure that EAL students are equipped to transition into English 10-2.

In addition to the professional learning offered, consultants regularly model effective strategies to teachers in their classrooms as well as residencies as requested.

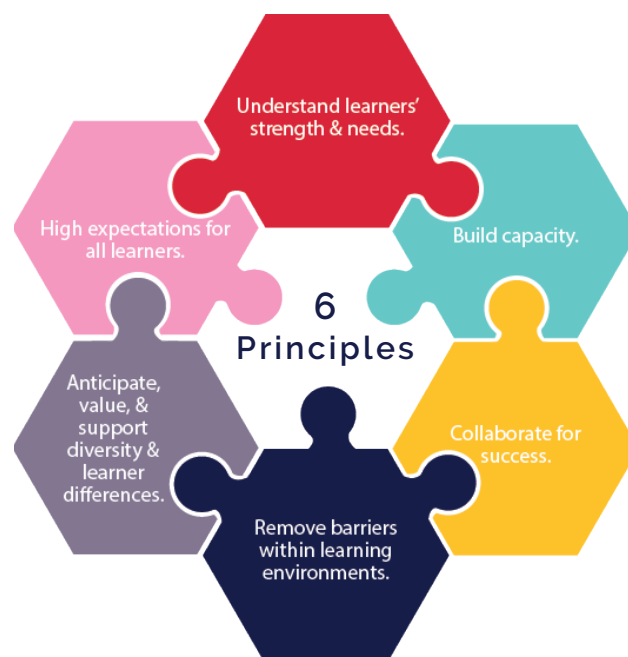
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER EDUCATORS

English Language Learner Educators (ELLEs) provide a range of educational support services to identified English as an Additional Language Learners (EALs). They work directly with teachers and/or EAL Designates to facilitate language learning and access to curriculum content. ELLEs support students through push-in or pull-out methods as appropriate.

To ensure purposeful and targeted instruction, ELLEs participate in callback days, where they learn about language acquisition, effective strategies in relation to the EAL benchmarks to develop skills for supporting EALs. Additionally, ELLEs can request guided intervisitations to observe and learn from other ELLEs, promoting cohesive practices across school sites.

Junior High Enhanced Academic Program

The Junior High Enhanced Academic Program (EAP) is offered at nine junior high schools and prepares students for high intellectual engagement through the development of skills and acquisition of knowledge to engage in higher levels of learning. EAP courses are designed to extend and enrich the Alberta Education curriculum in Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science, and deepen their learning through the Alberta Education Competencies. Edmonton Catholic School Consultants collaborated with the Language Arts, Science, Math, Social Studies, and French Language Arts EAP teachers through a Community of Practice to share promising practices and co-plan EAP resources within a UDL framework to support teaching and learning. Consultants have created a SharePoint site, which teachers access to support their pedagogical practices.



Inclusive Programming Supports

Throughout the 2024/2025 school year, the inclusive team has been supporting school staff, including administrators, teachers, support staff, and multidisciplinary team members, by producing and sharing professional development sessions on a variety of topics. These topics include UDL, Individual Program Plan Creation and Implementation, Accommodations vs. Adaptations, and Programming Strategies and Supports. Administrators have the opportunity to request and access professional learning from their consultants throughout the year, tailoring the topics to fit their school's needs.

These professional development sessions vary in size but consistently provide opportunities for collaboration and professional growth within the school community. Many presentations include resources and supports that can be easily accessed during and after the sessions through SharePoint. Additionally, there have been instances where professional development sessions were presented jointly by inclusive consultants and other division professionals.

Foundational to the inclusive consultant position is a strong understanding of UDL principles. Inclusive consultants spend most of their time in classrooms, working elbow-to-elbow with teachers and students, building capacity by supporting the implementation of UDL practices to ensure the reduction of barriers and maximize learning opportunities for all students.

Additionally, inclusive consultants work in collaboration with curriculum and assessment consultants to deliver professional learning and maintain a close connection to best pedagogical practices to enhance classroom learning.

Inclusive consultants' role in working alongside school staff and multi-disciplinary team members is critical in ensuring access to a quality educational experience for all, which upholds values of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

The Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) team supports students with language, literacy, and communication needs. To achieve the Division goal of Learning Excellence to build staff capacity, we collaborate with educators to address unique learning challenges that arise from speech-language delays or disorders. We engage in professional development opportunities at department, division, and community levels to ensure staff have the knowledge and confidence to support students' communication and language learning skills throughout their educational journey.



STAFF CAPACITY FOCUS FOR THE SLP TEAM

Our professional learning initiatives are shaped by staff requests during professional growth discussions and surveys. These sessions are offered internally during callbacks and self-study, as well as through local and international conferences.

1.

Oral Language & Literacy Development:

We explore and use approaches to support struggling readers and writers, including Alberta Education's Reading Intervention Program.

2.

Supporting Learners with Complex Needs:

We stay updated on current approaches for non-speaking students and those with exceptionalities, including AAC and support for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students.

3.

Autism & Neurodiversity:

We focus on neurodiversity-affirming practices, sensory processing, regulation, executive functioning, and declarative language.

4.

Coaching & Collaborative Practices

We train on effective collaboration with educators and integrating curriculum with classroom practices during monthly SLP Callbacks and quarterly TASL Callbacks.



STAFF CAPACITY FOCUS FOR EDUCATIONAL PARTNERS & MDT SUPPORT STAFF

Professional learning initiatives identified through staff surveys include:



Virtual Learning Series:



Online PD over lunch hours covering topics such as dyslexia, comprehensive literacy, phonological and morphological awareness, language comprehension, narrative language development, support for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students, and Gestalt Language Learners.

Department-Level PD:



Autism Working Group sessions on neuro-affirming practices, All Together Meetings on complex communication needs, and Educational Assistant PD on supporting neurodiverse learners and AAC implementation.

Division-Wide PD:



Ongoing sessions on Story Champs®, a research-based multi-tiered language intervention curriculum for grades K-3.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY & MENTAL HEALTH TEAM

For the 2024-2025 school year, the Occupational Therapy and Mental Health team professional learning has focused on building division staff capacity to apply best practices across a wide range of student support needs. This includes engagement in academics, regulation, mental health, self-care, school accessibility, assistive technology, promoting neurodiversity-affirming practices, and more. For its therapists and support staff (TAOT, LPN), the OT-MH team has focused on strengthening team capacity in the areas of evidence-based professional practices, student & family relationships, community service navigation, suicide prevention, and supporting educators in planning for neurodiverse classrooms. This included hosting subject matter experts from Recovery Alberta, University of Lethbridge and within ECSD.



AREAS OF FOCUS: OT-MH TEAM THERAPISTS

Enhancing Best Practices:

- Building culturally responsive, trusting relationships with students and families through personal introductions and the consent process;
- *Suicide in Schools* book study: Suicide prevention, risk assessment and postvention;
- Strengthening standards of documentation, goals and service outcomes for students receiving mental health therapy.

Supporting Rapid Referrals:

- Enhancing knowledge of AHS services and Recovery Alberta mental health programs, criteria and referral pathways for students requiring more intensive supports.

Intersecting Curriculum with Neurodiversity:

- Neurodiversity-affirming UDL practices for neurodivergent students; Intersecting strategies with curriculum to support teachers in creating inclusive, supporting programming for all students.

AREAS OF FOCUS: SUPPORT STAFF (TAOTS, LPNS)

Best Practices for Medical Procedures at School:

- Such as G-Tube feeds, seizure care plans, medication administration, and more.

Supporting Students with High Support Needs:

- Personalizing AAC and modeling strategies;
- Promoting student self-advocacy, autonomy, and engagement in academics;
- Visual supports: Practical tips, apps and ready-made resources;
- Effective team planning: Creating sub plans and all about me profiles to promote relationship, student engagement and team consistency.



OTHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GROUPS

Division-Wide PD:

- Empowering Students' Learning and Mental Health in Diverse Classrooms;
- The *FOCUS On Self-Regulation* UDL Resource.

Department-Level PD:

- All Together Meetings on IPPs, neurodiversity-affirming language, supporting autistic learners and The Integrated Health & Well-Being Framework,
- Educational assistant PD and TASL callback on sensory processing, regulation, and neurodiversity-affirming practices with neurodivergent learners.

School-Based Presentations:

- Regulation, relationships, academic engagement, and neurodiversity-affirming strategies for autistic students;
- Indigenous and newcomer-focused mental health discussions;
- Best practices for supporting students with neurodivergent conditions.



In receiving and delivering professional learning, the OT-MH team aims to build capacity of staff to create school environments that promote accessibility, belonging, acceptance and inclusion of all students.

BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY TEAM

The Behavioural Therapy Team's professional learning focus for this school year is enhancing staff capacity to support students effectively while fostering collaboration. Training initiatives were shaped by staff requests during professional growth meetings, ensuring relevance and impact.

KEY PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AREAS

- **Coaching:** The team explored coaching principles to build capacity among teachers, support staff, and parents.
- **VTRA Level One:** Training in Violent Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) to identify and assess potential threats early.
- **Restorative Justice Conferencing:** Strategies to address harm, promote accountability, and foster healing.
- **De-escalation Techniques:** Training in Non-Violent Crisis Intervention to manage challenging situations effectively.
- **UDL:** Equipping staff with inclusive strategies to support diverse student needs.
- **Data Collection & Documentation:** Enhancing staff proficiency in tracking and evaluating student progress through structured methods.
- **Anxiety & UDL Integration:** Understanding anxiety and applying UDL strategies to create inclusive learning environments.
- **Indigenous Learning Services & Blanket Exercise:** Staff engaged in the Blanket Exercise, deepening understanding of Indigenous history, resilience, and reconciliation efforts.

DIVISION-WIDE PD

Coaching in Early Childhood:

Professional learning based on *The Early Childhood Coaching Handbook* to enhance mentoring skills.

Executive Functioning:

Understanding ADHD and providing universal and individualized student support.

Non-Violent Crisis Intervention:

Regular division-wide training to ensure staff can de-escalate crises and maintain a safe learning environment.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SUMMARY

Coaching in Early Childhood

(Rush & Sheldon) – focused on mentoring and feedback strategies.

Executive Functioning

Explored ADHD, brain development, and universal supports for self-regulation and executive skills.

The Behavioural Therapy Team remains committed to **lifelong learning**, ensuring staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to support students effectively.

FAMILY SCHOOL LIAISON WORKER TEAM

For the 2024-2025 school year, the Family School Liaison Worker (FSLW) team has prioritized professional learning initiatives aimed at strengthening staff capacity to support student well-being, engagement, and family connections. This includes fostering trauma-informed approaches, enhancing crisis intervention skills, expanding mental health support, and building strong partnerships between schools, families, and communities. Additionally, the FSLW team has focused on implementing restorative practices, improving student attendance strategies, and deepening collaboration with external agencies to provide comprehensive support for students and families.

Collaboration with ECSD Specialized Teams:

Presentations at FSLW Callbacks:

- **Indigenous Learning Services:** Presentation on lateral violence and its impact.
- **One World One Center:** Collaborative efforts with the intercultural team.
- **EDIAR:** Facilitating courageous conversations about race and equity.
- **Occupational Therapy:** Enhancing inclusive support for autistic students.

Community Resource Engagement:

The FSLW team has facilitated presentations from several community organizations to strengthen school-family partnerships, including:

- CIVIDA
- Catholic Social Services
- Kickstand
- First Nations Consortium
- Creating Hope Society
- Early Intervention Resource Centers

Department of Professional Development:

- Presented to the Emotional-Behavioural Specialists & Speech-Language Pathologists: How to Respond to a Student Disclosure.
- Presentation to Teacher-Counselors: On community resources student support strategies.

School-Based Training and Presentations:

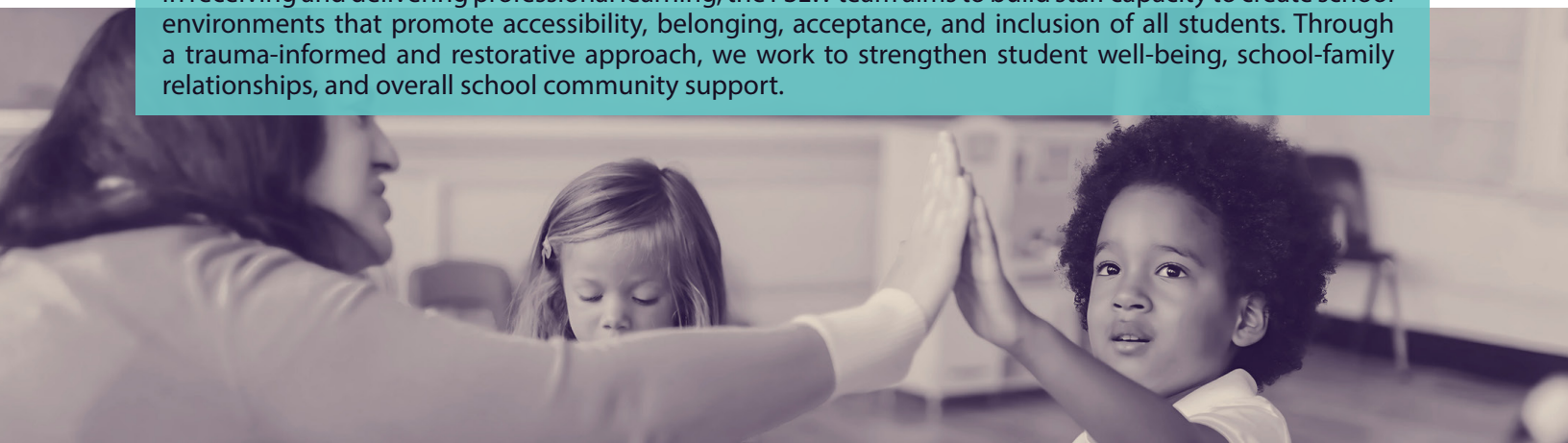
Introduction to Restorative Practices: Delivered at five school sites. Key topics presented to school staff:

- Relationship-building with families and students
- Understanding trauma-informed practices
- Supporting student attendance & engagement
- Recognizing & responding to child abuse
- Addressing the impact of poverty on learning
- Strategies for student self-regulation
- Defining the role of FSLWs within school communities

Division-Wide Professional Development:

- **Restorative Conference Training:** This is offered twice a year as a two-day training session.
- **DWPD:** Introduction to Restorative Practices.
- **Success in Schools Training:** Focused on best practices for supporting students in care.

In receiving and delivering professional learning, the FSLW team aims to build staff capacity to create school environments that promote accessibility, belonging, acceptance, and inclusion of all students. Through a trauma-informed and restorative approach, we work to strengthen student well-being, school-family relationships, and overall school community support.



SPECIALIZED PROGRAMS

WIN JR & SR STAFF PD

Professional Development for the WIN (Whatever is Necessary, Whenever it's Needed) program was designed to elevate teaching practices, enrich programming, and enhance student experiences within the WIN JR and SR levels. The sessions were meticulously crafted to address key areas such as numeracy, literacy, autism awareness, neurodiversity, and inclusive education pathways.

By focusing on numeracy, educators were equipped with innovative strategies to improve students' mathematical understanding and skills. Literacy sessions provided teachers with effective

techniques to foster reading and writing proficiency among students. Autism awareness and neurodiversity training offered valuable insights into supporting students with diverse learning needs, ensuring that all students feel understood and included.

The emphasis on inclusive education pathways aimed to create a learning environment where every student, regardless of their background or abilities, could thrive. These sessions not only provided theoretical knowledge but also practical strategies that teachers could implement in their classrooms.

Session Summaries This Year:

- **Numeracy Interview Kits:** Introduced Early and Middle Years Numeracy Interviews, highlighting AI's role in writing Individual Program Plans (IPP) goals.
- **Structured Literacy:** Presented on implementing structured literacy through the CC3 and the LENS.
- **Numeracy Interviews Continuation:** Numeracy interviews and introduced the "Do the Math" resource for addition and subtraction strategies.
- **Autism Awareness and Neurodiversity:** Explored lived experiences, research-based concepts, and the Classroom Reflection Tool.
- **Numeracy (WIN SR) & Life Skills:** Investigated numeracy assessments to enhance instructional strategies and student programming.
- **Inclusive Futures:** Focused on empowering teachers, students, and families with information on inclusive post-secondary and career opportunities.
- **Career & Bridging Fair:** ECS D hosted the 2nd annual Career & Bridging Fair, allowing students and parents to interact with various special programs and advocacy groups.
- **Literacy:** Developing structured literacy programs, covering diagnostic tools, strategies, and activities for reading and curriculum.
- **Bridging Success & Empowering Transitions:** Teachers receive comprehensive student profiles to ensure smooth transitions from junior high to high school.
- **Wrapping Up the School Year in Numeracy & Literacy:** Will review student achievements and plan for the next school year.

By participating in these initiatives, educators were empowered with new strategies and insights to better support their students, ensuring a positive and inclusive learning environment for the 2024-2025 school year.



GENERATIONS PD

The Generations Program is dedicated to enhancing professional development for educators who support students with multiple exceptionalities and medical needs through continuous callbacks throughout the year. Our professional development callbacks focus on equipping teachers with the latest resources and strategies to effectively address the diverse and high support needs of their students. By fostering continuous growth and development, the Generations Program empowers teachers to implement best practices, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes for students with exceptionalities.

We have concentrated on several key topics to further support our educators. One significant area of focus has been regulation, with our occupational therapist providing valuable insights and strategies on this topic, including up-regulation and down-regulation techniques. Furthermore, we have emphasized the importance of writing neuro-affirming goals for students, guiding teachers to use neuro-affirming language that respects and acknowledges the unique neurodiversity of each student.

Further callback sessions have been provided to focus on literacy and communication, supported by our Speech Language Pathologist. These sessions have centered on Alternative Augmentative Communication (AAC), providing strategies and resources to assist students using AAC. Among the resources shared were Chat Editor and Saltillo Planners, which serve as valuable tools for enhancing communication and literacy skills in students with exceptionalities. In addition, resources to support adapted physical education and numeracy were also explored with teachers.

Additionally, a callback session focusing on assessment practices for Generations students was provided. SpacesEDU, a platform to document learner progress, was explored, with a specific focus on showcasing the growth for our most complex learners. Also, a new literacy assessment tool was reviewed called Project VC: Monitoring Assessment Tool, which provides specific instructional levels for emerging literacy learners with complex communication needs.

100 VOICES (PRE-KINDERGARTEN) PD

Throughout the year, 100 Voices teachers participated in professional development sessions to improve their instructional practices and support student learning. These sessions, held both online and in-person, covered foundational knowledge of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit culture, intentional planning for play, and assessment and communication with children and families.

Additionally, teachers explored developmentally appropriate plans for liturgical seasons, and universal designs for learning for neurodiverse classrooms. Each session fostered inquiry, reflection, research, and action. Teachers used Spaces EDU for personal learning portfolios and group forums. A brief description of each session is provided on the following page.

100 Voices Callback Sessions in 2024/2025:



The opportunity to set learning intentions for the year, highlight where learning resources were located, and provide information on individual program plans. Resources and tutorial links were shared.



Teachers built foundational knowledge of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit culture by exploring the Cree perspective on neurodiversity through Dr. Grant Bruno's video, *The Gift of Being Different*, and reflected in SPACES EDU. They worked on the new curriculum, focusing on access points for 100 Voices learners, shared center play plans in SPACES EDU, and discussed UDL strategies effective in 100 Voices classrooms, including AAC, music, visual supports, sensory experiences, and relationships.



Teachers built foundational knowledge of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit culture by learning about Christmas traditions and how to share them with young learners. They reviewed the mathematics curriculum, focusing on skills and procedures to find access points for pre-kindergarten learners. They created and posted plans for math-focused Advent centers on SPACES EDU, and encouraged to provide quality feedback to practice the feedback cycle. Resources such as *Learning Trajectories.org*, *Early Math Collaborative*, and *Dreme Math* were shared to support an understanding of early mathematical development.



Teachers built foundational knowledge of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit culture, emphasizing storytelling for understanding the land, safety, and celebrations. Resources supported Indigenous storytelling with young learners. Using Harvard's "4C's" thinking routine they discussed music's importance in early learning and created play plans highlighting music and specific learning outcomes and skills and procedures. These plans were shared on SPACES EDU for feedback. They reflected on how music motivates children in 100 Voices and serves as a key learning strategy.



Teachers built foundational knowledge of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit culture, focusing on the cultural loss from the Indian Act's impact on music and song. Resources on nature sounds, Cree songs, and drumming were provided. Guest presenter Krista Hewson demonstrated how music and stories intertwine, offering tips on using instruments to build language and vocabulary. Teachers also received resources for writing progress reviews on IPPs and tips for having difficult conversations with families.



Teachers built foundational knowledge of First Nations, Metis and Inuit culture, exploring connections to local plants and animals. They used SPACES EDU to reflect on how to bring these understandings to young learners. They created plans for play focusing on hands-on science, technology, engineering, and math exploration that are grounded in curriculum and provide sensory-based access points for all learners.

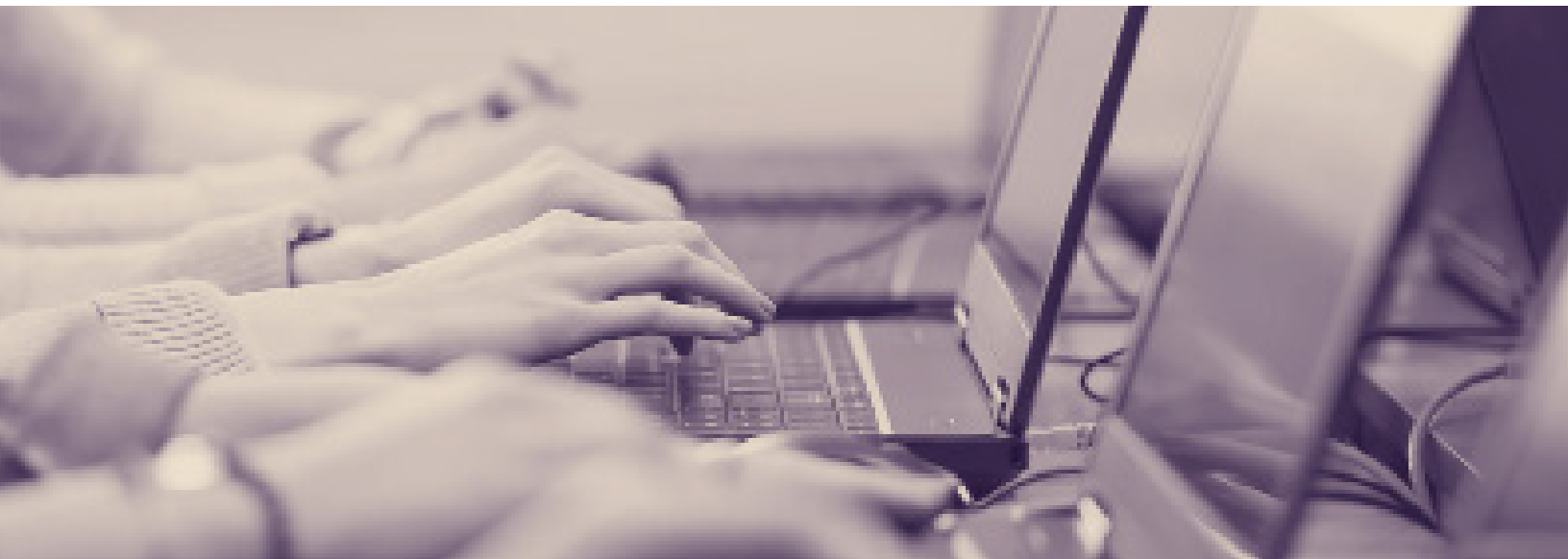
Professional development was also provided to teachers, educational assistants, speech language pathologists on the following topics to support building positive relationships with children and to create a common understanding at the site: student engagement in play, and proactive strategies to support routines in pre-kindergarten.

Digital Assessment Readiness

Emerging Technology consultants have provided comprehensive supports to ensure a smooth transition to the Digital Assessment Platform (Vretta) for PATs and Diplomas.

Supports include:

- Staff sessions for both Practice Exams and Field Tests,
- In-school “at-the-elbow” assistance during practice exam implementation and scheduled in-school support on Field Test days.
- Ongoing Teams meetings, primarily with administrators, to help clarify processes and responsibilities
- Checklists to guide set-up, scheduling, and administration, ensuring schools are “Field Test Ready” as well as an administrator checklist for Vretta DAP as it applies to division procedures for the 2024-2025 school year.
- Recorded sessions posted to SharePoint, alongside slides.
- Support resources (template for information for student log-in process), PowerSchool gathering information videos, “Are you field test ready” administrator videos
- Asynchronous bite-sized learning videos, and reference documents
- SWAG and LWAG entries to provide clear, structured guidance on key aspects of the secure exam process.



Wellness & Equity

Wellness-Centered PDs

ECSD offered two “Go-To” educator Professional Learning sessions this school year to enhance staff skills in supporting student wellbeing. These sessions empower educators to form strong, supportive relationships with students and identify, support, triage, and refer those with significant mental health issues. “Go-To” educators, Research shows this approach improves access to mental health care for students with severe needs and reduces referrals to specialized services.

WELLNESS CHAMPIONS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Wellness Champions and their student leadership teams came together for a day of learning at Lumen Christi Center. This year, the theme of the day was *Belonging and Inclusion*. Engaging activities helped students explore different ways to facilitate belonging in their schools. The day included six different sessions for students to choose from including a session from Religious Education Consultants, Indigenous Learning Services, and sessions from our partners at APPLE Schools. These sessions were powerful in helping our student leaders learn various skills in creating a community of belonging while valuing diversity.



While students attended two sessions each, the Wellness Champions participated in professional learning sessions where they reviewed and analyzed their site-specific mental health survey data. Each Wellness Champion identified areas of strength and areas for growth in their schools, a process also undertaken by their school principals. Support was provided through learning services consultants, Human Resources, and Alberta Health Services health promotion facilitators. Additionally, a resource Wayfinder tool was provided to pair resources with the school's areas requiring growth.

STUDENT VOICE

After attending sessions, student leaders and Wellness Champions collaborated to identify areas of their school they wanted to improve and plan ways to achieve this.

MINI CONFERENCES

ECSD is committed to fostering professional growth among its educators through two Mini Conferences offered to teachers during the 2024-2025 school year. These conferences are designed around the theme of Unity in Diversity, emphasizing the importance of solidarity and valuing diverse perspectives within the educational community. The theme underscores the principle of solidarity by promoting inclusive learning experiences that foster a sense of belonging. By integrating UDL and diversity into programming, schools create environments where students can learn from one another, appreciate unique identities, and grow holistically in mind, body, and spirit. Each mini conference features sessions that highlight Visible Thinking Routines, providing teachers with practical strategies to implement in their classrooms. The first mini conference, held on February 20th, was a success, equipping teachers with new pedagogical insights and ready-to-use thinking routines. The next mini conference is eagerly anticipated on April 17th.

PHYSICAL LITERACY FOR COMMUNITIES

Edmonton Catholic Schools has six schools participating in the Edmonton Physical Literacy for Communities Project, which supports growth in the physical literacy journeys with active partners through appropriate, inclusive, and holistic programming and services. Teachers from St. Boniface, St. Augustine, St. Teresa, St. Martha, St. Benedict, and Our Lady of the Prairies participated in a professional learning session, – Cultural Awareness hosted by Action for Healthy School Communities. In addition, Lead Teachers participated in two Community of Practice sessions that focused on building physical literacy skills with students through collaborative partnerships with the YMCA and the City of Edmonton.

APPLE SCHOOLS

APPLE Schools is an innovative, evidence-based, school-focused health promotion program that supports healthy school environments. ECSD has 6 Apple Schools (Annunciation, Holy Cross, Our Lady of Peace, St. Benedict, St. Kateri, St. Francis of Assisi) and 7 Apple School Allies (Good Shepherd, Blessed John Paul, Our Lady of the Prairies, St. Elizabeth Seton, St. Gerard, St. Pius X and St. Rose). Lead teachers participate in three Knowledge Exchange Professional Development sessions during the year that focus on providing teachers learning opportunities to support healthy eating, physical activity and mental health of our students. Apple School Lead teachers work in collaboration with a mentor from APPLE Schools, providing opportunities for shared dialogue about successes, challenges, strategies, and feedback.

ROOTS OF EMPATHY

Roots of Empathy fosters empathy in children, reducing bullying and promoting children's positive mental health and well-being. The Roots of Empathy Program addresses the affective skills of students and is aligned to the Alberta Education curriculum. ECSD staff from 10 schools participated in comprehensive, two-day training to become certified facilitators. Professional Development has facilitated staff in supporting students in building connections and healthy relationships, which leads to inclusion and integration in the school environment.



Supporting Faith Integration for All Staff

ECSD STAFF FAITH FORMATION



In January, the Religious Education Services department provided an overview of the big event faith formation, focusing on key initiatives and events that foster spiritual growth within the school division. One of the highlights was Faith Development Day, which is celebrated each February and involves a full day of faith formation for all staff.

Faith Development Day is a significant event where staff gather in select locations across the city to listen to Catholic speakers or theologians and celebrate the Eucharist as a larger community. This year, the event was planned and implemented by a broader committee, including principals from each level and the Department of Religious Education. The day was celebrated in six churches: St. Thomas More, Corpus Christi, St. Charles, St. John Bosco, Santa Maria Goretti, and Resurrection. Each parish hosted a time for coffee and fellowship, followed by a keynote address from a local Catholic speaker. The context of Faith Development Day is that it provides Catholics with a formation experience while allowing non-Catholics to develop a better understanding of the Catholic context of the Division. By participating in this event, staff members, regardless of their faith background, gain insights into the Catholic values and teachings that underpin the Division's mission. This shared experience fosters a sense of unity and mutual respect, reinforcing the commitment to living out their vocation within the Catholic educational framework.

The keynote addresses during Faith Development Day cover various aspects of Catholic faith and practice, providing staff with a deeper understanding of the theological and spiritual foundations of their work. Topics may include the significance of the Eucharist, the role of prayer in daily life, and the importance of social justice in Catholic teaching. These sessions are designed to inspire and equip staff to integrate these principles into their professional roles, enhancing their ability to support students' spiritual and academic growth. Along with the keynote addresses, Faith Development Day included opportunities for staff to engage in reflective practices and discussions. These activities encourage staff to consider how their personal faith journeys intersect with their professional responsibilities, fostering a holistic approach to education that nurtures both the mind and spirit. By creating a space for communal worship and reflection, Faith Development Day strengthens the bonds between staff members and reinforces the spiritual development of our staff and brings to the forefront the emphasis that we need to continually place on our shared mission of Catholic education.



PERMEATION ACTIVITIES

In *The Five Marks of Catholic School Identity*, Mark Three states, “An excellent Catholic school has an academic curriculum that integrates a vision of faith within the learner outcomes and teaching strategies.” This year, we are looking at permeation through the lens of science curriculum. To facilitate staff learning, Religious Education Services and Learning Services collaborated on the creation of a series of three activities to be done at school sites, led by school staff. The first session was “What is Permeation” in which staff reviewed the overall understanding of what it means to integrate

faith within curriculum. The second session, “Stewards of God’s Creation” demonstrated how staff and students could integrate faith through a science lab in learning about God’s Creation and stewardship. In the third and final session, staff deepened their knowledge and understanding of permeation through an activity entitled “How We Are Wonderfully Made.” Activities were structured to provide engaging, practical strategies to provide provocation for thinking and learning about permeation.

Supporting Safe & Caring Schools

At ECSD it is believed that each person is created in the image and likeness of God and in the goodness, dignity and worth of each person. The individuals making up the Division honour the dignity of each person by treating one another with empathy, compassion, and respect. Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism (EDIAR) are guiding values consistent with Catholic Social Teaching, reaffirming dignity at every level. As an organization, embracing the values of equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism is paramount and made evident through the implementation of the priorities, key strategies and actions within the EDIAR Strategic Plan. The information below shares the vast array of work that is happening with staff and that truly demonstrates how the entirety of the Division is embracing diversity.

The EDIAR Team, comprising a Manager, Specialist, and Consultant, offers various training sessions focused on equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism for staff across our division. These sessions aim to foster understanding and promote meaningful conversations around equity, race and inclusivity among staff and students. The EDIAR professional development sessions cover a wide range of topics designed to foster inclusivity and understanding within the educational environment. Some of our key sessions include:

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY & MICROAGGRESSIONS

These sessions educate staff about the concept of psychological safety, which is the belief that one can speak up, share ideas, and express concerns without fear of negative consequences. These sessions highlight the detrimental impact of microaggressions—subtle, often unintentional, discriminatory comments or behaviors that can undermine an individual's sense of belonging and self-worth. By creating a supportive environment, staff members are encouraged to express their concerns and share their experiences without fear of humiliation or retaliation. This is crucial for fostering an inclusive atmosphere where everyone feels safe, respected, and valued, ultimately leading to a more collaborative and productive educational environment.



COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RACE

These sessions allow participants to engage in discussions centered on race. Utilizing Dr. Singleton's Four Agreements—Stay Engaged, Experience Discomfort, Speak Your Truth, and Expect and Accept Non-Closure—these sessions encourage reflection on personal beliefs and help connect these reflections to the curricula. By staying engaged, participants commit to being fully present in the conversation. Experiencing discomfort acknowledges that discussing race can be challenging but necessary for growth. Speaking your truth allows individuals to share their personal experiences and perspectives honestly. Finally, expecting and accepting non-closure recognizes that these conversations are ongoing and may not have immediate resolutions. Together, these agreements create a safe and supportive environment for meaningful dialogue about race in classrooms and workspaces.

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

These sessions equip school-based staff with strategies to address discriminatory language and ensure that all students feel valued and included. These sessions emphasize the importance of recognizing and respecting the diverse cultural backgrounds of students, and they provide practical techniques for integrating culturally relevant content into the curriculum. Staff members learn how to create an inclusive classroom environment by using teaching methods that reflect the cultural experiences of their students. Additionally, several sessions are dedicated to “Building Positive Relationships,” focusing on fostering positive interactions among staff and students. These sessions utilize restorative practices and frameworks to encourage inclusivity and understanding, ultimately contributing to a more harmonious educational environment. By promoting mutual respect and empathy, staff members are better equipped to address conflicts and build a supportive community where every student feels seen and heard.

In addition to the sessions listed above, the EDIAR Team conducts three staff EDIAR learning boosters during staff meetings across the division. These boosters are designed to reinforce key concepts and encourage ongoing dialogue among staff members. The boosters include Welcoming Newcomers and Embracing Diversity, which focuses on creating a welcoming environment for newcomers and embracing diversity within the team; Power and Privilege, which addresses the dynamics of power and privilege within the educational environment and encourages staff to reflect on their own positions of power and privilege; and the upcoming Mental Health and Stigma booster, which aims to educate staff about mental health issues and the stigma associated with them, promoting a supportive and understanding environment for those facing mental health challenges.

Targeted Staff Development

Educational Assistant Learning Opportunities

ECSD has organized a five-session series, to ensure all educational assistants (EAs) have access to learning opportunities. For each round of sessions, there are two dates available for EAs to choose from; one offered after-school and the other during school hours. This ensures that all EAs have the opportunity to attend each session in the series.

The goal of the series is to build capacity within the support staff group by providing evidence-based practices and up-to-date research that can be applied to the dynamic and diverse classroom environments they work in. To implement this, ECSD has brought in community partners, such as Diffabilities YEG, to present and share an out-of-scope perspective. Additionally, in-division specialists, including MDT managers, consultants, Indigenous Learning Services, and the Low Incidence Team, have been utilized to share information that aligns with the division’s goals and areas of focus.



EA SESSIONS & CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVES

Building Bridges: Connecting with Students Through Trust & Understanding:

The foundation of any effective learning environment is built on strong, supportive relationships with students. In this session, you'll explore strategies to foster meaningful connections with students. Delve into trauma-informed practices that prioritize empathy and resilience, ensuring you can provide a safe and nurturing space for every student. Learn to recognize triggers, respond with compassion, and build trust that empowers students to thrive academically and emotionally.

Positive Behaviour Supports: Exploring Intervention Strategies:

Supporting students in the classroom involves understanding and implementing a variety of positive behaviour supports. In this session you'll explore the pyramid of intervention and learn about a variety of behaviour support strategies.

Curriculum Connections: Enhancing Learning Through Innovative Support:

Supporting student learning goes beyond understanding the curriculum; it's about creating meaningful connections with the content. In this session, you'll explore ways to support academic achievement through accommodations, adaptive communication strategies (including AAC), and curriculum adaptations that meet the learning needs of students. By aligning your efforts with the teacher, you'll be better equipped to help students access and engage with material, fostering both their academic growth and enthusiasm for learning.

Collaboration Counts: Strengthening Bonds with Your School Team:

Effective education requires a cohesive and collaborative school team. This session focuses on cultivating strong working relationships with teachers and other multi-disciplinary team members. Learn how to integrate yourself into a multi-disciplinary team, enhance communication, and share insights that contribute to a holistic approach to student success. Discover the power of teamwork, mutual respect, and shared goals in creating a supportive environment that benefits both students and staff.

10 Things Your Autistic Student Wants You to Know:

Supporting autistic students in the classroom involves recognizing and valuing their unique strengths and perspectives while providing practical support. In this session, you'll explore strategies to enhance learning through tailored resources and hear about the experiences of an autistic student from Edmonton Catholic Schools.

Division-Wide Training:

These sessions support and grow our EAs experiences and development by providing hands on opportunities to build skills in supporting diverse student needs.

2025-2026 School Year

- Collegiate partnership with Norquest
- Educational Assistant Internship training program (EPSB)

Opportunities exist for Educational Assistants to be part of a community of practice. COP's focus on:

- Collaboration with teachers and other MDT members.
- Ways to support academic achievement through accommodations, adaptive communication strategies.
- Best practices and strategies for supporting student success.
- Strengthening the sense of community among EAs.

Pre-service teachers are encouraged to work as Educational Assistants, allowing them to:

- Gain valuable classroom experience.
- Develop a deeper understanding of student needs and school operations.
- Integrate into the ECSD community, fostering early connections.

Administrative Support Training

ECSD promotes lifelong learning for administrative support staff within the Learning Services department through monthly Professional Learning sessions. These sessions are meticulously planned to address the varied needs of support staff, ensuring that each training course is both relevant and beneficial.

The Excel and Power School Training Part 1 in October 2024, led by the Application Support Analyst, covered beginner to intermediate functions of Excel, including pivot tables. These skills are crucial for administrative tasks that require data analysis and reporting. This session was followed by Part 2 in November 2024, where participants practiced these skills using provided laptops and received printed materials for future reference.

In January 2025, the focus shifted to Word and PDF formatting. The session, led by our experienced Technical Writer, covered some Word techniques and the best practices for formatting and creating PDF documents. This was followed by a hands-on practice session in February where participants could apply what they learned and resolve any issues they encountered in their daily tasks.

DATE	SESSION
Oct. 3, 2024	Excel & Power School Training Part 1
Nov. 7, 2024	Excel & Power School Training Part 2
Jan. 9, 2025	Word & PDF Formatting Part 1
Feb. 6, 2025	Word & PDF Formatting Part 2
Mar. 6, 2025	SharePoint Site
Apr. 3, 2025	Building & Collecting Data with Microsoft Forms

The March 2025 session on SharePoint, led by EmTech consultants, addressed specific needs collected from the support team through a pre-session survey. Participants had the opportunity to work on their laptop while applying the concepts and tricks learned in real time.

Feedback from these sessions has been overwhelmingly positive, with participants particularly appreciating the practical utility of the Excel training, the detailed guidelines for Word and PDF formatting, and customized SharePoint solutions. To ensure continuous improvement and relevance, interests and input is gathered via a Microsoft Form and Teams, which highlights the team's interests and needs in topics such as Excel, PowerSchool, Word and PDF formatting, SharePoint, Microsoft Forms, Outlook Task management, and Teams.

Looking ahead, the session in April will cover building and collecting data with Microsoft Forms. This session aims to empower the administrative support staff with the skills to create surveys and analyze the data collected. These initiatives underscore our commitment to fostering a culture of continuous learning and professional development, with regular updates and adjustments based on the team's evolving needs and requests.

Such comprehensive training not only enhances the individual capabilities of our administrative support staff but also contributes significantly to the overall efficiency and productivity of our organization. By providing these learning opportunities, we aim to build a more knowledgeable, skilled, and confident workforce that can adapt to the ever-changing demands of the workplace.



Professional Learning Partnerships

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Edmonton Catholic Schools has partnered with the University of Alberta on a research project *Aligning Generative AI, Ethics and Teachers' Values*, which is funded through Alberta Education's Research Partnerships Program. This research explores how teachers use Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) technologies, such as ChatGPT and Co-Pilot, in their professional work, focusing on ethical and pedagogical implications. We seek to understand how these technologies align or misalign with teachers' values and professional responsibilities and how they subsequently impact ethical decision-making and pedagogical practices. Twenty teachers from Elementary / Junior High / High School participate in

two professional development sessions focusing on the need for ethical and effective GenAI deployment.

Within secondary curriculum, we have a partnership with the University of Alberta's Centre for Mathematics, Science and Technology in order to deliver graduate level professional learning to teachers. Within mathematics, consultants and professors have worked with grades 7-9 teachers to focus on math pedagogy. In science, consultants and professors are working this year with a focus on Biology. The overall goal of this partnership is to deepen teacher skills, knowledge, and understanding in research-based practices.



Part II: Building & Sustaining Those Who Serve ECSD

Recruitment & Retention Initiatives

Recruitment & Retention Strategy

RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES & OUTCOMES

ECSD has shifted from an exclusively HR-led recruitment model to a division-wide approach, grounded in the belief that recruitment and retention are shared responsibilities. We are all in this together, and this collective effort is essential to ensuring the long-term vitality of our teaching community. A key strategy in this work includes intentionally placing teachers in roles that align with their areas of specialization and strength, such as languages and specialized programs.

Our ongoing collaboration with post-secondary institutions aims to further this alignment. Together, we work to shape teacher preparation programs that reflect divisional needs, build pathways for educators in high-demand specializations, and provide pre-service teachers with classroom experiences that prepare them for the realities of modern education. These strategies have supported both recruitment and retention efforts across the division.

CURRENT TEACHER SHORTAGE & FILL RATES

As of January 24, 2025, ECSD's teacher fill rate sits at 83%, presenting a pressing challenge for the division. This ongoing shortage places additional pressure on existing staff, leading to increased workloads and impacts on wellness and morale. In response, the division is actively exploring ways to improve fill rates, ensuring that classrooms are adequately covered while alleviating the burden on current staff. Initiatives tied to staff well-being, such as the Mental Health Framework, and close monitoring of staff attrition are in place to address these challenges. Additionally, there is a renewed emphasis on the role of pre-service teacher preparation programs to ensure graduates are well-equipped to meet these demands and transition effectively into the teaching profession.

As a Catholic school division, 98% of our teachers are Catholic. Applicants are required to submit a Catholic Baptismal Certificate, if applicable, and participate in the Faith Formation Plan (FFP) at the point of application. Before receiving a continuous contract, teachers must complete a pastoral reference and two religious education courses (CHRTC 380/381 and CHRTC 250). For specialized areas where non-Catholic teachers may be considered, they are expected to support the teaching of the Catholic faith and provide a pastoral reference from their own faith community. Human Resource Services works in close partnership with Religious Education Services to ensure that all teachers meet our division's religious expectations.

COLLABORATION WITH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

ECSD continues to foster strong connections with educational institutions to promote teaching careers within our division. This includes delivering formal presentations and participating in events such as the U of A Frosty Fest, our Division-hosted student teacher pizza night, and Recruitment and Career Fairs. Job opportunities are also promoted through institutional job boards, recruitment videos, and teacher testimonials that highlight the unique strengths of our division. To support Career and Technology Studies (CTS), ECSD promotes the Bridge to Teacher Certification program, enabling students to benefit from expert instructors with Journey person Certification. In May 2025, three of these teachers will return for their second year, while three new participants will begin their first year at the University of Alberta. International recruitment also plays an important role; each year, four or more teachers are typically hired through the

International Teachers Spanish Bilingual Program. Additionally, we are exploring the recruitment of international teachers to support the Ukrainian Bilingual Programs. Notably, ECSD has been invited to the 2025 Recruitment Week of Spanish Visiting Teachers by the Spanish Embassy. ECSD also collaborates with Bredin Centre for Career Advancement and BCG Career Ventures to share employment opportunities, and our recruitment team conducts mock interviews with education students to build early connections. Beyond teaching positions, we recruit for various specialized roles through industry-specific job boards, LinkedIn, and professional associations. Furthermore, we work with subject matter experts to attract and retain First Nations, Métis, and Inuit candidates, advancing our Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism initiatives.

PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

ECSD continues to build meaningful relationships with pre-service teachers through participation in university career fairs at institutions such as the University of Alberta, St. Joseph's College, Concordia, and King's University. These engagements have consistently drawn strong interest from education students, reflecting the division's reputation and mission-driven culture. In Fall 2024, ECSD welcomed just over 200 pre-service teachers, and we are anticipating 246 more in Spring 2025. Despite the ongoing teacher shortage, we remain steadfast in our commitment to hiring educators who embody the values and mission of Edmonton Catholic Schools.

Supporting mentor teachers has also been a priority, recognizing their critical role in guiding student

teachers. ECSD is exploring new strategies to honor and appreciate their contributions. One of our newest initiatives, the Career and Resource Networking Event: Begin Your Teaching Journey with ECSD, offered student teachers the opportunity to connect with division leaders, consultants, and staff from departments such as Human Resource Services, Curriculum, Indigenous Learning, Inclusive Education, and Religious Education. Held on March 6, 2025, the event welcomed over 100 participants and served as a vibrant space for community-building and discernment.

ECSD is also intentional in identifying outstanding student teachers through ongoing feedback from principals and mentor teachers, creating pathways for these individuals to grow within the division.

NEW GRAD TEACHER HIRES



ECSD's recruitment team is actively interviewing and hiring teachers graduating in December and April, contingent on successful completion of their Advanced Field Experience (AFX) and all necessary documentation. We are committed to ensuring a smooth transition from graduation to meaningful employment within ECSD, with intentional supports in place to retain new and beginning teachers. Early connection and guidance are emphasized to build a sense of belonging and purpose. Promissory letters have also been extended to graduating teachers who are seeking placement for the remainder of the 2024–2025 school year, reaffirming our commitment to supporting their entry into the profession and our faith-filled learning communities.

BEGINNING TEACHERS

Offering professional learning to our Beginning Teachers is an important part of our recruitment and retention process. This begins even prior to being hired to Edmonton Catholic Schools with information sessions offered that highlight the variety of supports provided in their professional learning journey. Religious Education Services provides guidance as to the courses they must complete prior to receiving their continuous contracts. Should they be hired prior to the school year starting, Beginning Teachers are specifically invited to our Summer Summit, with sessions deliberately designed to support them as they transition to full-time teaching. Through the onboarding process, Beginning Teachers are also

invited to four conference-style sessions throughout the year dedicated specifically to concerns most Beginning Teachers express as they are inducted into the profession. These conferences are organized by a committee of individuals from Human Resource Services, Learning Support Services, and Religious Education Services. Sessions designed specifically to support Catholic Education and faith formation are offered, with permeation highlighted as a key element of our faith-based classrooms. From the first interaction prior to hire to the time Catholic teachers receive their continuous contracts, consultants encourage ongoing communication and dialogue to answer questions and provide mentorship.

A Division-Wide Approach to Recruitment & Retention

ECSD is committed to HR data-driven recruitment strategies and embracing a collaborative, division-wide approach. We are all in this together—principals, teachers, consultants, and administrators play a role in attracting and retaining educators who align with our mission.

By fostering a strong sense of belonging, purpose, and professional growth rooted in faith and Catholic values, ECSD is establishing itself as a leader in teacher recruitment and retention. We are committed to listening, adapting, and providing educators with the resources they need to succeed, ensuring every teacher in our division feels supported, motivated, and empowered to make a meaningful impact in the lives of students and the broader faith community.

Strategic & Personalized Placement

The traditional mindset of assigning beginning teachers to a complex mix of courses or subjects simply because they are new to the profession must shift. Instead, ECSD prioritizes thoughtful teacher placements that align with their skills, interests, and long-term goals. By doing so, we empower our educators to feel confident and competent from the start, leading to increased job satisfaction, student success, and higher retention rates.

RECRUITMENT & RETENTION PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

DEC. 2024	JAN. 2025	JAN. & MAR. 2025	FEB. & MAR. 2025	MAR. 2025
Teacher Growth, Supervision & Evaluation	HR recruitment Updates	HR recruitment Updates	HR Addressing Staffing Needs	HR recruitment Updates
AP and Principal	ATA Liaison Meetings	Elementary & Secondary Curriculum Consultants	CEL & AP CEL	Unifor Meeting

TEACHER RECRUITMENT EVENTS

NOV. 2024	DEC. 2024	MAR. 2025
Student Teacher Meet and Greet	Elbow-to-Elbow application support with Student Teachers	ECSD Networking Event Begin Your Teaching Journey with ECSD: Career and Resource Event
Student Teachers had the opportunity to learn more about ECSD. HR did a presentation highlighting our support for teachers as well as hiring process.	HR recruitment team and business partners met with student teachers one on one, in person or virtually to support the application process with Apply to Education as well as answer any questions regarding ECSD and our hiring process.	Student Teachers and Teachers from outside our division had an opportunity to share in a networking event to showcase the incredible opportunities waiting for them at ECSD.
Approximately 70 attendees	22 participated	Approximately 100 attendees



Supporting a Diverse & Evolving Staff Community

Understanding the Generational Gap

Today's aspiring teachers seek purpose, connection, and a workplace where they feel valued, heard, and supported. ECSD is actively listening to Generation Z educators to ensure our division meets their expectations for professional growth, work-life balance, and meaningful impact. We acknowledge that a teacher is not just a teacher; they are mentors, leaders, and role models shaping the next generation. By recognizing their individual strengths and aspirations we can strategically place teachers in positions where they will learn, ensuring a fulfilling and sustainable teaching career within ECSD.



Out-of-Scope Job Review

In April 2024, Human Resource Services partnered with [Mercer Canada](#), a Human Resources consulting firm, to begin a project to review Edmonton Catholic School Division's total compensation program and all 210+ unique out-of-scope (OOS) positions. This review project will help ensure that ECSD remains competitive to job seekers, help retain and value our current employees, and ensure our pay practices are equitable.

In addition, this project will facilitate the transition to a new job evaluation system, [Mercer IPE](#), that will support a more robust job evaluation process by recognizing and measuring the unique needs of positions in a public-sector and educational context.

On the next page is an overview of project milestones within the scope of the OOS position review project:



OOS JOB REVIEW PROJECT MILESTONE OVERVIEW

MILESTONE	OVERVIEW	STATUS
Update and standardize job description template	Update job description templates to create consistency and capture the full scope, responsibilities, and qualifications associated with each job.	Complete
Present project and job description training to leaders at the Department Leadership meeting	Present OOS job review project to Division leadership, introduce new job description template, and provide training on how to write a thorough job description. FAQ's for Mercer	Complete
All OOS job descriptions to be updated by each department and submitted to Human Resource Services	Managers work with their employees to ensure job descriptions reflect current duties, responsibilities, and qualifications of the role, with final review by the respective Superintendent or senior leader.	Complete
All OOS positions to be reviewed and evaluated using Mercer IPE	Each OOS position to be evaluated with new Mercer IPE system and receive a total points rating based on the impact, communication, innovation, knowledge, and risk of a role. The points will then be used to assign a classification level within the organization.	In Progress
Job Architecture Review	A review of the current job architecture, including developing job families and sub-families, to ensure equity and consistency in jobs throughout ECSD. Job architecture will also provide clarity and transparency to employees around role excellence and career progression.	In Progress
Compensation Benchmarking - External Market Review	A review of salary databases from a selection of 1000 Canadian organizations that are of similar size and complexity to ECSD to help ensure we remain competitive.	Upcoming
Compensation Structure - Internal Review	Using the data from the job evaluation, job architecture, and external market review, the OOS salary structure will be reviewed to ensure it reflects ECSD objectives.	Upcoming
Final review of project findings and communication to stakeholders	A final overview of the project will be completed and the findings presented to applicable parties, as needed.	Upcoming

The estimated completion date of the review portion of this project is June 30, 2025, with any changes to position titles, classifications, etc. to be completed after consulting with the appropriate stakeholders. Once all the changes have been implemented, our goal will be to do periodic reviews of the positions and compensation to ensure we remain competitive and equitable.

Workplace Wellbeing & Safety

Occupational Health & Safety

In January 2025, a well-being framework was presented to the Board of Trustees. In April 2025, 25 employees are participating in the Working Minds Training, an evidence-based program developed by the Mental Health Commission of Canada to promote mental health in the workplace. The goal is to train leaders to become facilitators of this training for staff throughout the Division. Additionally, resources on the 13 factors of psychological health and safety in the workplace were provided, offering tools and support for principals, managers, and employees.

The role of wellness representative was restructured to merge with the school mental health champion, forming a cohesive and unified position. As a result, every site now has a wellness champion. In October 2024, Lumen Christi hosted its first Wellness Week, offering staff opportunities to book chair massages, participate in psychological safety sessions, and attend financial literacy workshops.

Staff working in Facility Services received training that included CSTS 2020, an interactive nine-module online course designed to provide a general construction site orientation for workers new to the construction

industry. Additionally, they were trained in incident reporting and investigation. Science Lab Technician training was also provided to ensure safety in science labs. Furthermore, the OHS team partnered with the CTF/S department to deliver “Safety in Shops” at the Division-Wide Professional Development series, equipping CTF/S teachers with strategies to implement inclusive safety practices and create secure learning environments for junior high and high school students.

The Division has joined the Eyesafe program, Alberta’s leading workplace eye safety initiative. This program, administered by the Alberta Association of Optometrists, provides employees with prescription safety eyewear tailored to their specific workplace hazards. The Eyesafe program is available to staff working in safety-sensitive work environments and is currently being piloted out of Facility Services. By participating in Eyesafe, the Division ensures that employees receive high-quality, compliant safety eyewear, enhancing both vision health and overall workplace safety.



An aerial photograph showing a large group of people standing on a paved street, forming a large cross shape. The people are densely packed along the arms of the cross. The street is wide and has some lane markings. To the left, there is a parking lot with several cars. To the right, there are trees and a sidewalk. The overall scene is captured from a high angle, looking down on the street.

Conclusion

Edmonton Catholic Schools remains persistent in its commitment to fostering a successful, faith-filled community where educators feel supported, valued, and inspired. Our human resources strategies in recruitment and retention reflect a holistic and collaborative approach, one that ensures we attract top talent, nurture their growth, and provide teachers with the necessary tools to succeed in an evolving educational landscape.

Additionally, our innovative recruitment strategies extend beyond the traditional model, embracing diverse talent pipelines, international teacher programs, and strategic partnerships with institutions like NorQuest College and the Bredin Centre for Career Advancement. Initiatives such as our Educational Assistant training and internship programs create additional pathways into teaching while strengthening the support available to students in our classrooms.

At ECSD, we understand that today's educators seek purpose, connection, and a meaningful role in shaping the future. By listening to their needs and ensuring thoughtful placements, professional development, and well-being, we are positioning ECSD as an employer of choice. Our competitive edge lies in our ability to adapt, innovate, and create a culture where every educator feels inspired to grow, lead, and contribute to the mission of Catholic education.

Through our continued efforts in recruitment and retention, we are not only filling positions, we are cultivating a community of lifelong learners who are dedicated to excellence in teaching and faith formation. ECSD is committed to fostering an environment where educators can grow and excel, ensuring student success for generations to come.

Appendix

TRADES & FACILITIES

- Facilities Management Certification
- Facilities Management Administrator designation
- Certified Engineering Technologist designation
- OHS Asbestos Awareness and Worker training
- 4th Class Power Engineering or Building Operator "A" certification.
- 5th Class Power Engineering or Building Operator "B" certification
- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) and Transportation of Dangerous Goods (TDG) certification
- Certification in safe food and food preparation
- Fire Alarm Verification Certificate
- Convergent Network Technologies (CCNT) Certificate
- Telecommunication certification
- Certification to operate vehicles with air brakes
- Alberta-certified journey person including:
 - » Auto Body Technician
 - » Automotive Service Technician
 - » Hairstylist
 - » Carpenter
 - » Cabinet Maker
 - » Culinary Arts or Food Science
 - » Glazier
 - » Locksmith
 - » Instrumentation and Control Technician
 - » HVAC Refrigeration
 - » Electrician
 - » Electronics Technician
 - » Communication Technician
 - » Painter
 - » Plumber

TECHNOLOGY

- Microsoft Certified Professional
 - » Microsoft Solutions Expert certification
 - » Microsoft Certified Application Development (MCTS)
 - » Microsoft Certified Configuration
 - » Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (MCSE)
 - » Microsoft Certified Database Administrator (MCDBA)
- Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)
- Certified Information Security Manager (CISM)
- Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH) certifications
- Master of Security & Assurance
- ISO 27001 Certification
- Certified Secure Software Lifecycle Professional
- Cisco Certification (Cisco Certified Network Associate)
- Mobile Device Management (MDM) certification and experience with enterprise systems
- Infrastructure Library Foundation (ITIL) certification and/or A+ certification

FINANCIAL, HUMAN RESOURCES, MANAGEMENT, & OTHER PROFESSIONAL GROUPS

- Chartered Professional Accountant
- Chartered Professional in Human Resources (CPHR) designation
- Certification through the Supply Chain Management Association of Canada
- Membership in the Canadian Institute of Planners
- Canadian Certified Playground Inspector
- International Association for Public Participation (CP3) Certificate
- Completion of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Foundations and Techniques
- Certified Disability Management Professional designation
- Certified Employee Benefits Specialist designation
- Payroll Compliance Practitioner (PCP)
- Canadian Payroll Association (CPA)
- Board of Canada Registered Safety Professionals (BCRSP) designation
- National Construction Safety Officer (NCSO) designation
- PeopleSoft Certified Professional certification
- Project Management Professional (PMP)
- Certified Training and Development Professional (CTDP)
- Facilities Management Certificate
- Certification in the Information Access and Privacy Program
- Certified Information Privacy Professional
- Canadian Institute of Access and Privacy Professionals designation
- Institute of Certified Records Management certificate
- Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM) certification

STUDENT SUPPORT

- Full registration with the Alberta College of Social Workers (General & Clinical Practice Permit)
- Registration with the Alberta College of Occupational Therapy
- Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA) credentials
- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVC) Facilitator Training certification
- Registration with the Alberta College of Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists
- Gender Based Analysis Plus training
- Restorative Practices and Conferences training
- Designation as registered and/or provisional psychologist with the College of Alberta Psychologists
- Canadian certified counsellor designation through the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association
- Registration with the College of Physiotherapists of Alberta
- CNIB Grade 2 Level Braille certification
- Deafblind Intervener Training
- Interpreter training in American Sign Language or Signed Exact English 2
- Membership in the Association of Sign Language Interpreters of Alberta (ASLIA)
- Certification through the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf
- Early Childhood Supervisor Certification
- Registration with the College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta
- Certified Member of the Therapy Assistant Association of Alberta
- Supportive Personnel Membership with the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and
- Audiologists (CASLPA)
- Certification in dance instruction for classical technique