School Plan for Continuous Growth

2014-2017 Information Package

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him. Isaiah 11:1–2
**District Mission Statement**

Inspired by
- Love of the Father
- Faith in Jesus Christ
- Hope from the Holy Spirit

We believe in God and we believe
- that each person is created in the image and likeness of God
- that each child is a precious gift and sacred responsibility
- in the goodness, dignity and worth of each person
  - that Christ is our model and our teacher
  - in celebrating and witnessing our faith
  - in transforming the world through Catholic education
  - that Catholic education includes spiritual growth and fulfillment
  - that learning is a lifelong journey
  - that all can learn and develop their gifts
  - in building Christ-centred communities for service to one another
  - that all have rights, roles and responsibilities for which they are accountable
  - that Catholic education is a shared responsibility in which parents have a primary role

The mission of Edmonton Catholic Schools is to provide a Catholic education that inspires students to learn and that prepares them to live fully and to serve God in one another.

**District Vision**

Our students will learn together, work together and pray together in answering the call to a faith-filled life of service.

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**A Statement of 21st Century Learning in Edmonton Catholic Schools**

**Preparing our students for a world not yet realized**
In keeping with our Foundation Statement, the students and staff of Edmonton Catholic Schools commit to 21st century learning. In support of hopeful Christ-centred living, in a society transformed by globalization, technological innovation and human ingenuity, 21st century learning complements our commitment as a Catholic community of learners, leaders and educators.

Edmonton Catholic Schools fosters faith-based learning that deeply engages all staff and students in 21st century learning opportunities. All facets of the learning system—curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional learning, accountability and resource allocation—are in support of 21st century learning. Students will be creative, digitally aware, critical-thinking global citizens, analysts, communicators and producers engaged in learning that is conceptual and authentic within a faith-based environment.

Guided by our moral compass and focused on the common good, students and staff will be self-directed, adaptable, discerning and curious, as they engage individually and collaboratively in 21st century learning.

**Defining Statement of Inclusive Education for ECSD: Katholos-Education for Life for All**

In accordance with our District Foundation Statement, all resident* students and their parents/caregivers are welcomed into our schools. The Learning Team is committed to collaborating, identifying, applying and monitoring practices enabling all students to reach their potential, spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically and academically within the Programs of Study alongside their peers. (*as defined by the School Act).

**School Plan for Continuous Growth**
**Preamble:**
Each year school communities set targets for student achievement and for other areas that are germane to that community, and are linked to the District’s Goals and Priorities. This is done within the context of a three year plan for continuous growth. After a review of their plan for continuous growth from the previous year, schools determine the direction of the school for the next three years. It is also recommended that you look at your goals through the lens of the Alberta Education documents *Inspiring Education* and the *Ministerial Order on Student Learning*.

**Task:**
Choose **two** or **three** of the five goals identified in the Edmonton Catholic Schools’ District Plan for Continuous Growth for 2014-2017 to focus on in your school community. You are strongly encouraged to have a Catholicity goal as an acknowledgement that we are continually growing in our Catholic identity. Determine strategies that will facilitate continuous growth in your school community. As each District goal has numerous detailed sub-goals, school strategies need to be linked to one of the sub-goals. Please remember that the intention of a School Plan for Continuous Growth is that it be a three year plan. You may choose to extend previous goals as part of this process if they still require further action and are clearly linked to the District goals.

Please refer to the *ECS District Plan for Continuous Growth 2014-2017* for goals and sub-goals.

**Methodology:**
The process which each site is to use to develop its goals is of their choice. Goals are intended to be decided upon with input from the staff and parent community (school council).
The format of the Plan is your choice; however, you are asked to generate a print based report for submission and for posting to your website. A limited but not exhaustive variety of format samples can be accessed by clicking *here*.

**Elements for Inclusion:**
Please include the following elements in your plan:
Ø School Name, Mission and Vision - schools should review their mission and vision each year to ensure that they remain current and relevant to the context of the community. Planning for the school’s growth should flow from the mission and vision. Resources on Mission and Vision

Ø School Context - describe school details and demographics. Only use data that has the greatest impact on your programming. This may include
   o Special philosophical focus
   o Pedagogical shift (Transform!) 
   o School population
   o Focus programs
   o District Special Education programs
   o ELL and FNMI statistics
   o Number and severity of special needs students
   o High school completion rates
   o Any other factors that are relevant to programming
School Plan For Continuous Growth Plan

St Gerard School

Foundation Statements

St Gerard Vision Statement:

All students will find success at their level of ability in a safe and caring environment.

St. Gerard Catholic School Mission Statement:
The mission statement of St. Gerard Catholic School is to provide a Catholic education that inspires all students to learn and experience academic growth in a safe, nurturing, and accepting environment based on Gospel values.

St. Gerard Belief Statements:

WE BELIEVE:
- each child is a precious gift and sacred responsibility
- in the goodness, dignity, and worth of each child
- all can learn and develop their gifts
- Christ-centered communities for service to one another
- celebrating and witnessing our faith
- all have rights, roles and responsibilities for which they are accountable
- education is a shared responsibility in which parents have a primary role
- See more at:

School Context

Total Enrollment-164

100 Voices, All Day Kindergarten

St. Gerard School is a city center school with a variety of high needs with varying backgrounds. We have many newcomers to our country with a varying degree of ELL needs and abilities. In fact, our ELL makes up more than a quarter of our population.

Number and severity of special needs students

In early learning we have 8 code 30s and 2 code 40s, two of which are autistic. We currently have 10 code 40 students, in our grades two to six. The severity of the needs is extremely high.
**Review of the school’s three-year plan-Definition of what is required in developing the School Plan for Continuous Growth for 2014 – 2015**

Teachers and support staff met to review and the following data and formulate the 2015-2016 school goals:

- PAT results/regression analysis
- Tell It From Me Survey
- Previous Growth Plans
- Satisfaction Survey Results
- Five Marks of a Catholic documentation
- Safe and Caring School Survey Results

**Process used**

- This year we met as a staff on two occasions and reviewed the School Growth Plan along with accompanying data
- Fountas and Pinnell reading scores and data were analyzed as well as much anecdotal data was shared and reflected on
- Our successes were celebrated and areas of growth highlighted
- From this data and process our growth plan was tweaked, adjusted and updated

**Data Analysis**

Due to the extremely small sample, our PAT regression may not be considered valid. However, the students that did write were well within the acceptable range. Keeping this in mind, the three-year analysis shows steady and positive improvement on the PATs.
The Thought Exchange brought to our attention that there is a need for new Physical Education equipment and that our technology could use some ever greening. There were also some concerns about follow up communication from the school when staff are contacted by parents and a need for paper copies of the monthly newsletter. On the bright side, our school cleanliness and positive atmosphere were positively highlighted. Furthermore, comments such as “nice, small and personal” were used to describe us.

*The Tell It From Me* survey results were fairly positive as well. In most areas we are near or at the district averages.

The areas of concerns are as follows:

- We are above in areas such as our students spending more time on computers
- Other significant results identified that we have higher than district rates in respect to bullying. The staff believe that this could be skewed due to the students’ interpretation of the word bullying and the fact that we had a Positive Development Program at our school last year. Many of the students in the program were physically aggressive to all students and our students were witness to many physical altercations towards both students and staff. As well, we had similar issues with a handful of grade six students. These students no longer attend our school.
• Students did not have a positive sense of belonging.
• Parents had concerns about the lack of homework that was being assigned.

Areas of positive feedback are as follows:

• Our Religious Celebrations and Prayer are viewed as being very important
• Our healthy snack program
• Our students are interested and motivated in acquiring an education
• Students feel that they put in a great amount of effort in their learning
• Students feel that staff emphasizes academic skills and hold high expectations for them to succeed

Attendance: In the past there were some issues with attendance, however, it currently is not a concern. In the case of any concerns, they are dealt with immediately via email, phone calls, and conferences.

Enrolment Data:

Our enrolment had a small increase from the previous year. We went from 148 students to 164 students

• 100 Voices-19
• Kindergarten-23
• Grade 1-6 115
• ELL-45-28%
• FNMI-26-16%
• Coded students (all coding from 100 Voices to grade 6)-37-23%

Data on the Number of discipline referrals, suspensions, and expulsions

The number of out of school suspensions has decreased significantly from last year. In fact, as of November 10th, there were absolutely no suspensions of students. Much of this is attributable to the fact that the PDP class is no longer being housed at our site. Furthermore, we have been working closely with our FSLW and a behavior specialist. In addition, we have implemented a Ross Greene approach to student discipline called Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS). Most of the staff, including educational assistants were afforded copies of Dr. Greene’s book, Lost at School and our assistant principal has obtained certification with the author and is well versed in the approaches. We have time built into his schedule in order to work with our behaviorally challenged students. Additionally, we have experienced educational assistants working closely with our students which has a very positive effect.
Informal staff and parent feedback

• Communication is consistent and clear between school and parents, though follow through was often inconsistent
• Updated website-latest version of district school website-this is an area where there is much improvement as the principal is much more confident in how to use the technology
• The use of SynerVoice is positively embraced by our community
• Parents want agendas to be better utilized
• Phone calls from teachers to parents are welcome
• Unfortunately, it is difficult to get many of our parents in to the school for parent events such as our SAC and Demonstration of Learning as many families either have both parents working and/or are single parent families and work. Having said this, there has been an obvious increase in the number of parents attending these events

School/Site Technology Plan

• We wish to integrate technology to support and enrich an inquiry-based environment
• Staff have embraced the use of iPads to better role model positive and productive use for their students
• Maintain electronics already installed in our schools such as our server, smart board projectors, installing a new sound system, and other electronic devices

Goals, strategies, and actions

Students and staff will embrace and will celebrate the distinctiveness of Catholic Education

District Alignment:

5.4 Demonstrate commitment to and excellence in Catholic education.
   A) Deliver our religious education programs to all students as the Spirit filled lived experience.
   B) Expect the same practice of excellence, professional preparation and quality resource materials for religious education construction as for other academic construction

Actions:
• Utilize the chaplain to further facilitate between home, school and parish
• Plan yearly calendar listing all of the whole school celebrations and the staff members designated to lead the celebrations
• Use template provided by Religious Education to make sure that religious celebrations have necessary components
• Include students as members of the planning team of celebrations, and as key members and components of the actual celebrations
• Do a conference (Mind, Body and Spirit) for the students,
• St. Gerard Day
• Encourage students to explore social justice issues in the world and participate locally
• Through identification, via the Five Marks of a Catholic, improve on Mark Two: An excellent Catholic school as a visible and tangible Catholic vision evident in its physical space, liturgical celebrations and prayer life

By June 2016, students will have demonstrated a marked increase on their reading skills (fluency, comprehension, accuracy) by a minimum of half a grade level based on the Fountas and Pinell Benchmark Assessment specific to their grade.

District Alignment:

1.3 Identify and implement best practices that align with excellent early learning pedagogy...

2. Ensure success for every student (ELL, FNMI, struggling learners...)

3.3 Increase academic achievements by promoting successful practices in teaching to support all students in the 21st century.

Actions:

• Staff will increase their understanding of Leveled Literacy Intervention and cross-graded flexible groupings.
• Teachers will assess students to establish the initial groupings
• Staff will lead LLI groups and monitor levels for grouping/re-groupings of students
• In 2015-2016 we will improve the implementation and delivery of balanced literacy in our classrooms
• Training of staff in the creation of literacy/inquiry centers
• Training for staff with various technology tools (Imagine Learning, Raz Kids, Etc)
• Collaboration of staff in order to plan and provide these opportunities to students
• More effective use of learning coach
• Implement weekly EPL Reading Rock Star Initiative
• Provide opportunities for parent involvement with student literacy development.

By June 2016, students will meet grade level indicators of achievement in math or in an adapted program according to their ability level.

District Alignment:

2.1 Ensure the educational experiences with the diverse needs of our learners and are available to all students
2.2 Ensure that every school department is committed to improving student learning and achievement within the context of the 21st-century learning community.

Actions:

• Staff will Implement guided math sessions into the classrooms as part of the math lessons
  o Invite Tammy Leslie
  o Creation of common resources
  o Teaching crossed level groups
• Staff will create math displays showcasing activities and language used in the classroom.
  o Use bulletin board by office to display math work utilizing “questions of the week” with the prizes for the correct answer
  o Math Fair
  o Post a math game in newsletter
  o Share successes students are having in math via newsletter, website etc.

By June 2016 students and staff will share a common language of the Student Learner Expectations on the report card. This will be measured by a series of qualitative observations and artifacts collected by staff, students, and parents throughout the year.

District Alignment:

Goal Two: Success for every student
2.1 Ensure the educational experiences with the diverse needs of our learners and are available to all students
2.2 Ensure that every school and department is committed to improving student learning and achievement within the context of the 21st-century learning community.
Actions:

- Teachers will teach and review on a regular basis the Student Learner outcomes
  - Mini lessons
  - Regular review
  - Student assemblies and recognition
  - Communication and collaboration within the school community and home

- Staff will use the language of our District Core Values to create a sense of family and instill the following values: community building, compassion, citizenship, truthfulness, and empathy

- Staff will use and model these principles when communicating with students, parents, and each other.
  - Regular assemblies focusing on one Core Value, explaining what it is and how it can be practiced during that time period presented by student leadership via skits, role play, etc.
  - Recognize students for positive behaviors or actions
  - Hold a Leadership Fair/Conference Fair for students (Transform)-project based learning
  - Creation of a Student Leadership Club

Linked Resources

Linked Foundation Statements:

**A Statement of 21st Century Learning in Edmonton Catholic Schools**
Preparing our students for a world not yet realized

**A Defining Statement of Inclusive Education in Our District – Katholos:**
Education for Life for All

Planning for School Improvement


**Links on how to develop Vision and Mission Statements:** “Vision and mission statements provide schools with an essential overview of where they want to go and what they want to be.” Gabriel and Farmer (2009)

Dufour and Eaker documents on mission and vision


http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/103019/chapters/Vision-as-the-Compass.aspx


http://www.uscsd.k12.pa.us/Page/33

**Links on Goal Setting**


http://topachievement.com/smart.html

References


