

Administrators' Message

Welcome and welcome back! The staff of Good Shepherd extends a warm greeting to our new and returning students and their families. We are delighted to have you with us! We anticipate a joyful and productive school year ahead. As we embrace the Division theme of "People of Hope," we recognize that through hope, we can experience true joy and peace. "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:13)

As we begin a new school year, it's important to ground ourselves in the shared purpose and values that guide our work at Good Shepherd Catholic School.

Our Mission ~ At Good Shepherd, our mission is to provide a Catholic education that empowers students to grow in faith, achieve academic excellence, and become compassionate leaders who serve others.

Our Vision ~ Our students will thrive as valued members of a Christ-centered community, where they are supported to realize their full potential through acquired knowledge, skills, and positive attitudes.

Our Charism ~ Inspired by our Good Shepherd, Jesus, we are called to Love, Learn, and Lead.

As we move into the year ahead, these foundational statements will continue to shape our decisions, guide our actions, and remind us of the profound impact we have as a Catholic learning community.

For the 2025–2026 school year, our commitment to excellence in teaching and learning remains at the heart of all we do. At Good Shepherd, this means continuing to build on key instructional priorities, including teacher clarity, visible thinking routines, universal design for learning (UDL), collaborative response, and continued work in the area of inclusive environments.

Rooted in a growth mindset and guided by our Catholic values, we will continue to foster a school community where every student is known, valued, and supported. Our goal is to ensure that each individual is equipped to grow and thrive—not only academically, but also emotionally, socially, and spiritually. Together, we move forward with purpose, unity, and a shared vision for meaningful learning and growth for all.



The effective implementation of the new curriculum and our APPLE Schools goals to support the physical, mental, social, and emotional health of our students will also continue to be a focus at our site.

Our entire staff has been diligently preparing for your child's arrival, and research shows that students achieve greater success when parents are actively involved in their education. You are their most important teacher! By prioritizing education at home, you show your child its importance.

Good Shepherd Catholic School has a rich history and tradition of success. We are honored to work with your children and such a dedicated staff. As administrators, we are excited to be here. Together, we will continue to build on the school's legacy of success, always making decisions in the best interests of your child's education.

We are delighted to share the joyful news that Mrs. Melissa Melo was married at the beginning of July. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to her and her husband as they begin their life together. May God bless their marriage with love, joy, and faith, and may they continue to grow in His grace.

May God's blessings be upon you as we begin the 2025-2026 school year. We look forward to an excellent year with your children!



Jennifer Dimas
Principal



Beth Pecson
Assistant Principal



Sonia Schultz
Assistant Principal

Meet Our Staff

TEACHING STAFF	
Kindergarten A/B - Anne Mazer Kindergarten C - Tammy Nielson Grade 1A - Gracey Rich-Carifelle Grade 1B - Megan Huang Grade 1C - Sarah Platero/Ienai Kim Grade 2A – Tracy Chan Grade 2B - Carla Pond Grade 2C - Alethia Dunsmore Grade 3A - Lynn Gagnon Grade 3B - Kristine Werzun Grade 3C - Olubunmi Odediran Grade 3D - Melissa Melo	Grade 4A - Sabrina Deering/Anthony Korcaba Grade 4B - Lisa McCoy Grade 4C - Kristin Casebeer Grade 5A - Vernon Griebel Grade 5B - Chelsea Robinson Grade 5C - Emma Monton Grade 6A - Jeffrey Fernandes Grade 6B - Joshua St. Arnaud Grade 6C - Lauren Millar Music Teacher – Ienai Kim Instructional Coach - Kylie Tkalcic English as an Additional Language Designate - Sonia Schultz
EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS/THERAPEUTIC ASSISTANTS	
EA - Johana Aguilar Cruz EA - Syeda Akhter EA - Gabrielle Binst EA - Sharon McIntyre EA - Jody Murphy EA - Natalia Shouster EA - Chrystal Shupac EA - Liudmyla Stepanova	EA - Erin Strelkov EA - Monique Theroux EA - Debbie Wiggins EA - Qing Mei Xu ELLE - Monica Reyes Zanetti TABT - Megan Dykstra TAOT - Maysaa Mustafa TASL - Jennifer Gilliard
CUSTODIANS	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT/MEDIA RESOURCES
Head Custodian - Gary Gray Senior Custodian - Ronald Arenas	Administrative Assistant - Bonnie Gosche Clerk and Media Resources - Erin Strelkov
ADMINISTRATION	
Principal - Jennifer Dimas	Assistant Principal - Bethsaida Pecson Assistant Principal - Sonia Schultz

Chief Superintendent's September Message

The September message to families from our Chief Superintendent, Lynnette Anderson, can be found at the following link: <https://www.ecsd.net/29c53358-fc3a-4ea5-9f12-b89ac5ab2733>



Staff Opening Liturgy

Staff members from throughout Edmonton Catholic were privileged to begin the school year by attending mass together at seven different sites; Annunciation Parish, St. Charles Church, Corpus Christi Church, Resurrection Parish, St. Thomas More Church, Santa Maria Goretti, and St. Josaphat Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral. Board trustees, members of the Edmonton Archdiocese and the Ukrainian Eparchy along with all Edmonton Catholic staff members gathered as a community to celebrate the Opening School Liturgy at the four faith communities. Good Shepherd staff celebrated the Eucharistic Celebration with Father Paul at Annunciation. It was a truly beautiful and reverential celebration. During the mass, staff members were invited to renew their commitment to serving students in their school communities. When we gather as a community to recommit ourselves to our beautiful mission of Catholic education, and to nourish our faith through the Eucharist, we put Christ at the centre of all that we do.

School Opening Celebration ~ September 11 @ 9:30 am

Our first celebration of the year will be held on Thursday, September 11 at 9:30 am in our gymnasium. Good Shepherd families are welcome to join us!

Enrollment at Good Shepherd

Although we expect a bit of change as some families move away and others move into the neighbourhood, we currently have 621 students registered with us, which is about 50 more students than last year. Enrollment numbers will be finalized on September 30.

Hours of Operation

Registration:	8:45 - 8:50 am
Instruction:	8:50 - 10:30 am
Recess:	10:30 - 10:45 am
Instruction:	10:45 am - 12:15 pm
Lunch:	12:15 - 12:50 pm
Instruction:	12:50 - 2:18 pm
Recess:	2:18 - 2:30 pm
Instruction:	2:30 - 3:30 pm



Thursday dismissal is at 12:12 pm

The Thursdays before major holidays, including Christmas, Spring Break, and summer, will be full days of instruction, with early dismissal on the Friday before the holiday.

Attendance and School Hours

Regular and punctual attendance is critical to student success.



It is of **critical importance** that students attend school regularly and on time. If a child is not here, they are missing curricular instruction, and their learning is being disrupted. Also, **arriving late interrupts the learning time of all students.**

Conscientious parents know the importance of getting their child to school each day before the bell rings. We take attendance very seriously, and we have a legal obligation to monitor attendance and to do what we can to enforce it. In those rare instances when attendance becomes a serious problem, administration will act accordingly, including making referrals to the Provincial Attendance Board.

Please note the first school bell rings at 8:44 am to start the day.

Morning/After-School Student Supervision

Morning supervision for students does not start before 8:35 am. **Please do not drop your child(ren) off before 8:35 am as we are not able to provide supervision, and they will not be able to come into the school.** After school supervision ends at 3:40 pm. Please ensure your child (ren) is picked up between 3:30 pm and 3:40 pm. Students cannot wait in the school as there is no supervision. Thank you for your continued support in ensuring that all our children are safe before and after school.

Designated Entrances/Exits

All grades have been assigned a designated entrance/exit they must use to enter and exit the building. Students are to refrain from using the front door due to the traffic that results, and it is just not possible to accommodate over 600 students to use the front door as an entrance at the start of the day or as an exit at the end of the day. We are asking parents to support their child(ren) in following this procedure by having a meeting point outside the front of the school whereby students exit through their own door and then meet their parents at the designated meeting point. If a student has a younger sibling to pick up at the end of the day, they may meet their younger sibling outside their door.

To maintain the safety of our students, all exterior doors are locked at all times. Although the front door is not normally a student entrance/exit (except for Kindergarten students), students who are late for school are asked to enter through the front door and stop at the office to get a late slip. Like all school entrances/exits, the front entrance of the school is also locked at all times; therefore, students and guests must ring the doorbell to gain entry.

Parents wanting to enter the building are requested not to enter the school through student entrances. Parents/Guardians need to enter through the front door and sign in. Parents who pick up their children after school are asked to wait outside student designated entrances. If a parent needs to come into the school to talk to a staff member, visitors to the school **MUST** sign in at the office and must obtain and wear a visitor's badge. As a staff, we kindly ask all parents to remain outside during drop-offs and pick-ups of their child(ren). For the safety of our students, we teach them never to open an outside door to an adult who is not a staff member and that there should never be adults in the building without visitor badges.

In addition, at the end of the day, it is exceedingly difficult for our younger students and their teachers to find parents/guardians when parents/guardians are attempting to come into the school while students are exiting. We are requesting family members to please refrain from entering the school and to stand back so that students can easily exit the building and find their parents/guardians. These aforementioned practices will not only ensure the safety of all students but also empower your child(ren) to become independent.

In addition, we are committed to honoring instructional time during the day and limiting disruptions to learning. Unless there are extraordinary circumstances, parents are asked not to enter the school before our dismissal times and walk through the hallways to pick-up their child(ren), but rather to arrange a meeting place outside the school where they can meet their child(ren) (outside their designated door would be best). Your cooperation will limit the disruptions to teaching and learning time, which is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Curriculum Information Evening ~ September 10 @ 6:30 pm

Mark your calendars for a particularly important evening. We will be hosting our annual *Curriculum Information Evening* on Wednesday, September 10 at 6:30 pm. This is a wonderful opportunity to

learn about our school, the staff, the curriculum for your child's grade, and to see the classroom your child will be learning in. It is also your opportunity to ask the teacher any questions you might have regarding your son or daughter's education.

This year, there will be no general presentation in the gymnasium, as we are unable to accommodate all families with over 600 students enrolled. Instead, parents are asked to go directly to their child's homeroom. The general presentation from administration will take place in homerooms during the first teacher session, followed by time with the teacher to share classroom-specific information and provide a glimpse into the learning environment your child will enjoy throughout the year.

It promises to be an informative evening, and we hope to see you there. The evening will end between 7:30 and 7:45 pm.

Tips for Parents



As the new school year begins, it is important to remember that students who experience success in school are diligent and conscientious in their approach to schoolwork. There are several ways that parents can help their children as they prepare for the start of the new school year:

- Talk with your children about the school day. Use questions such as “How was your day?” “Tell me all about it.” “Do you have homework?” “What is your homework?” “What was the best part of your day?” “Who did you sit with for lunch?”

If your children have recess, try these questions: “Who did you play with?” “What did you play?” These are just ideas for starting the conversation each day. Soon your children will start the conversation themselves. If you can initiate the conversation as soon as you see your children each day, it will become part of a daily, “scheduled” event.

- Get to know your child's teachers and stay connected. Children notice when their parents communicate with their teachers.
- Check on the academic progress of your child. Start early! All progress is documented in PowerSchool; please make sure you are habitually logging in. Parents may use the Student Agenda Book to check for homework and assignments; the Student Agenda is also a key communication tool between parents and teachers. Parents are urged to check their child's agenda regularly.
- Read the monthly newsletter. The newsletter includes information that can answer many questions you may have, and it will alert you to upcoming events. The newsletter is posted online on the first few days of each month. An email message is sent to parents indicating that the newsletter has been posted. We look forward to communicating to you the school's activities through these monthly newsletters on our website. Please take the time to read each newsletter online at <http://www.good shepherd.ecsd.net> so you are kept informed. Please feel free to contact the school if you require clarification about anything.

- Attend school events such as our Curriculum Information Evening, Student-led Conferences, celebrations, music concerts and cultural events when they take place. If your child is on a sports team, be a fan.
- Consider attending the school council meetings and becoming part of the parent team that assists the staff with the education of your children. Our first meeting of the school year will be held on Wednesday, September 24 at 6:30 pm at the school.
- **Read with your child at least 10-20 minutes each day. Reading is one of the most important activities you can do with your child.**
- Establish a nightly homework routine. Have a firm bedtime and limit TV watching and video game playing.
- Expect your child to do their best and have high, but realistic, expectations of them.

Edmonton Catholic School District ~ Assessment and Reporting

We will continue to concentrate on increased ongoing assessment and an emphasis on communicating and understanding key learner outcomes and the criteria for success to support next steps in learning. Student-led Conferences will take place in November and March, and discussion will focus on student achievement with evidence of learning from work completed to that point.



Teachers enter marks and comments for each assessment directly into the PowerSchool gradebook. For parents, this is like having access to their child's progress report at any point in time. Teachers will follow up via email with parents who do not attend Student-led Conferences, as this communication is especially important for student success.

Student-led Conferences and printed reports for this school year are scheduled for:

Student-led Conferences: November 27, 2025

Student-led Conferences: March 19, 2026

Printed reports available to parents on January 31, 2026, and on June 23, 2026

If you wish to discuss your child's progress or marks, please feel free to call or email your child's homeroom teacher.

Information on their child's progress is available online to parents/guardians via the PowerSchool parent portal. Parents who are new to ECSD have been provided with their own PowerSchool account login information which will allow them to view their child's progress online. PowerSchool not only

gives parents access to their child's progress, but also access to other school and classroom information. PowerSchool accounts remain in effect from year to year, so parents only need to create an account once.

As always, if you have any questions or require any additional information, please contact the school office and we will be happy to assist you.



Office Hours

Our school office is open from 8:15 am to 4:00 pm. Parents who call the school after these hours are asked to leave a clear message and we will return your call as soon as we are able to.

Please ensure your child is aware of any changes to after-school pick-up or transportation before school begins each day. Write these changes in your child's agenda so their homeroom teacher is informed. **If no instructions are provided by the parent/guardian, students will be directed to follow their regular routine.**

As our school has only one administrative assistant, a large number of last-minute phone calls at the end of the day makes it challenging to relay messages to students and teachers, and interrupts valuable instructional time. To avoid this, please share any changes in the morning whenever possible by writing them in your child's agenda and speaking with your child. We appreciate your understanding and support in protecting learning time for all students.

If a change arises during the day and you must contact the school, please call the office directly rather than sending an email, as emails may not be seen in time.

School Fees ~ Posted in PowerSchool

The Supplemental Education Fee for the 2025-2026 school year is \$50.00 for Grades 1-6 and \$30.00 for Kindergarten. School fees are posted in PowerSchool.

Good Shepherd will continue to collect additional funds on a strictly cost recovery basis for optional supplemental educational activities in the following categories: Extra-curricular teams/clubs, field trips, activity costs (special activities, residencies), and costs for extra-ordinary consumables. These fees offset the cost of mandatory, non-curricular or co-curricular activities and resources that enhance the educational experience.



All payments (school fees, field trips, school resources, etc.) will need to be made online through your PowerSchool account using your credit or debit card. **The school does not accept any cash payments.** Just log-in (with the parent log-in) and click on the School Fees tab on the left-hand side of

the screen. If you are having trouble, please call the school office to make an appointment to come in and receive a tutorial.

Textbook/Library Books Information

Students are not charged a textbook or a library book rental fee; however, they are responsible for the books they are assigned or that they sign out of the library.

Print resources are bar-coded and are issued to students as needed. This allows us to keep track of books issued to students. The condition of print resources is also monitored. Since replacement costs for some print resources are over \$100.00, students are urged to take very good care of them.

Bussing/Bus Passes



Children who are registered to use ECS bussing receive the Guide to Using Charter (Yellow) Bus Service, which provides detailed information regarding all aspects of Edmonton Catholic Schools' student transportation services. Parents are asked to carefully review and discuss this information with their children. It is important that children clearly understand the Safety Rules and Procedures for riding the bus, such as what stop to get off at; what to do if the bus doesn't come; how to behave near the danger zone. Please see [Student Transportation: A Guide to Using Charter \(Yellow\) Bus Service](#).

Yellow bus service is available for students living within our boundary area and outside of the 2 km "walk zone." The Edmonton Transit System is available for other students. For consistency, eligibility is determined using distances calculated through Google Maps.

The transportation fee schedule for the 2025-2026 school year is as follows:

	Yellow/ETS
Elementary	\$50.00/\$60.00
Junior High	\$50.00/\$60.00
Senior High	\$50.00/\$60.00

Payments for bus passes are made through PowerSchool. **Students whose monthly transportation fee has not been paid will not be permitted to ride the school bus.**

If your child usually takes the yellow bus but will not be riding it home on a particular day, please notify the school. If the school is not notified, your child will be directed to take the bus.

SCHOOL START-UP – SEPTEMBER 2025

The following safety measures are in place for all Edmonton Catholic Schools yellow bus routes:

Code RED – All carriers have agreed to implement a code red system that requires dispatch to answer a Code RED call from a bus driver as a priority. Code RED is defined as, “any time a situation arises and a driver’s ability to safely drive is compromised.”

Oversize Items – Oversize items on a school bus can become a safety hazard if the bus has to stop suddenly or is involved in a collision. To ensure student safety, the division has implemented the following guidelines:

Maximum size limit for large items: 13” wide x 13” deep x 30” high or 33cm (about 1.08 ft) wide x 33cm (about 1.08 ft) deep x 76cm (about 2.49 ft) high

Guidelines:

1. The item must be in a backpack, closed bag or carrying case.
2. The item must fit on the child’s lap or between their legs on the floor of the school bus.
3. Items placed on the floor must not extend past the child’s chest area.
4. Items cannot block aisles or emergency exits.

Notices – Information on oversize items is on large easy-to-read stickers that are clearly displayed on yellow school buses. Bus drivers will also retain a copy of these guidelines on the bus and the information has been posted on the district website.

Drivers have been instructed that they cannot refuse transportation to a child even if the child shows up at the bus stop with an oversize item that exceeds the maximum limits. In this situation, drivers will stow the item as safely as possible. Once the bus arrives at the school, the driver will advise the school supervisor that the student has an oversize item and remind the school that the driver will not allow the oversize item back on the bus. The school must make arrangements with parents to transport the oversize item.

Driver Expectations – Edmonton Catholic Schools’ transportation staff attended orientation sessions for yellow bus drivers where they presented information on these new guidelines as well as outlined driver expectations. Driver expectations include:

- ◆ Develop seating plans and assign students to specific seats.
- ◆ Follow the route as designed - no courtesy stops.
- ◆ Complete child check to ensure that children are not left sleeping on the bus, and
- ◆ A reminder that Kindergarten and Grade 1 students are to be met at their stop by a parent or guardian.

Camera Surveillance Equipment

Edmonton Catholic Schools operates video surveillance equipment in approximately 45% of our bus routes. The equipment will be assigned to longer bus routes and bus routes that have had a history of issues. If, at any time throughout the year, principals want a particular bus route to have video surveillance equipment, they may contact Transportation Services and arrangements can be made to have the video surveillance equipment available for that route.

Bus passes can only be purchased online through PowerSchool. Bus passes will not be issued to students unless payment has been received. Please be advised that the deadline to purchase yellow bus passes is the 4th day of every month. **If your child has not purchased his/her bus pass by that time, they will no longer be able to take the bus.** Parents/Guardians will be notified that they will need to find alternate transportation for their child.

Bus schedules are NO LONGER POSTED on the Edmonton Catholic Schools website. Bus schedules are only available on PowerSchool. Therefore, it is imperative that all families set up and have access to their PowerSchool account.



The BusPlanner Delays App

Please stay up to date with your children's transportation. The BusPlanner Delays mobile app is free and easy to use. It helps mobile users view notifications more quickly and easily.

Just like the BusPlanner Web Delays & Cancellations page, the app will display:

- Delay and cancellation notices for specific routes or runs
- General notices for all subscribers.

Users can download and access the BusPlanner Delays App via the [Apple](#) or [Android](#) app stores.

For instructions on how to download the app, please access the following ECSD link:

<https://www.ecsd.net/page/34228/transportation-services-bus-delay-notifications>

Please note that our school office will not be emailing or sending text messages to families regarding bus delays since the school receives the same notifications as parents through the BusPlanner App.

School Website

Our website can be accessed by using either www.goodshepherd.ecsd.net or <http://www.ecsd.net/8061>. Content on the website has been organized into four broad categories: About, Programs, Student Life and News. Menus and submenus can be found by clicking on these categories along the top menu bar. A great deal of information is posted to our school website. Please check the website frequently for updates regarding news and school events, calendar dates, activities, division events and school council updates.

PowerSchool/SchoolMessenger



Parents/Guardians at Good Shepherd are encouraged to use PowerSchool to monitor their child(ren)'s daily progress at school. PowerSchool is also the vehicle used for payment of school fees, field trips and miscellaneous purchases.

Note: PARENTS MUST HAVE A POWERSCHOOL ACCOUNT TO ACCESS STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS AND PAY SCHOOL FEES.

Messages to families from the division and school will be sent through the SchoolMessenger app.

School Emergencies

In the Edmonton Catholic School Division, the safety of our students is always our first priority and students are well supervised when they are on school property. When situations occur that warrant emergency procedures to ensure the safety of all students, we will provide parents with accurate and up to date information. One way to keep parents informed about an emergency and the safety procedures that have been put into place is by posting the information on the school website. Information will be posted and updated as required when a school is experiencing an emergency.



If there is an emergency at the school where your child(ren) attend, check the school website to stay informed and receive timely information. We also need to keep phone lines available at the school during an emergency, so we ask that you do not call the school. This will enable staff at the school to stay connected with emergency providers and division personnel.

Thank you for your support and help in ensuring our students remain safe.

Medical Alerts

Upon occasion, parents request that staff members administer medication to students who are not sufficiently mature or reliable enough to care for their own needs. To administer medication to a student, we require a “Request for Administration of Medication/Medical Treatment Form” be completed and on file in the office. A copy of this form may be obtained from the school office. It is the parents’ responsibility to keep us informed of medical conditions and to provide correct information regarding treatment and emergency contact information. Staff members administering medications will be required to maintain hand hygiene and to wear Personal Protective Equipment, including gloves.



EpiPens – Capital Health recommends that children with severe allergies and require an EpiPen carry these EpiPens with them. **All children needing an EpiPen will need to carry it with them in a “fanny pack” at all times.** Doing this will ensure that should a severe allergic reaction take place in any area (classroom/park/field/bus), there would be no time wasted trying to locate the EpiPen.

Illness and Recess



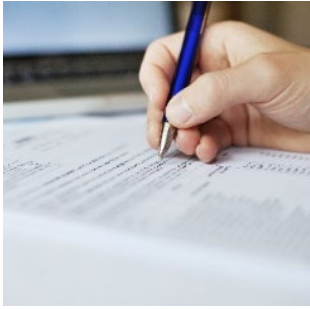
We have always taken the position that students who are ill should not be at school. We understand that in the past, it may have been easier to send a child to school if he or she exhibited mild symptoms rather than arranging for child-care. Unfortunately, in our current climate, this is no longer acceptable. We must do everything we can to make sure that everyone is safe.

Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms of common cold, influenza, or other infectious respiratory diseases before sending them to school. Staff will also assess themselves daily for symptoms of illness prior to entering the school.

Signs will continue to be posted reminding people not to enter if they have influenza symptoms, even if symptoms resemble a mild cold.

If a student shows any signs of illness at school, parents/caregivers will be contacted and asked to pick up their child. This ensures the child receives the rest and care they need, while also helping protect the health of all students and staff. Please make sure your child’s emergency contact information is up to date in case parents cannot be reached.

Updating Registration Information



ECSD has moved to digitized student records. Parents can view registration information and update it online. Parents are asked to check this information carefully and make any necessary changes. We also ask that parents of students who are of First Nations, Metis or Inuit descent identify this on the registration forms. In some cases, this enables us to access additional support for students. It is important that we have accurate information about our students in an emergency.

Agenda Books

As a communication tool, our students use the student agenda books which account for a portion of school fees for Grades 1-6. The Agenda assists students in keeping their homework assignments well organized and can be an invaluable tool in developing effective time-management skills and communicating between home and school.

Please note: the first section of the Agenda contains a great deal of information about Good Shepherd School as well as our Student Conduct Policy. Please be sure to read the first section of the Agenda with your child. Parents are asked to sign the Awareness Confirmation on Page 24. Thank you!

Protocol for Parent Concerns



Edmonton Catholic Schools recognizes the freedom of all members of the school community (students, staff, parents, and neighbours) to voice their concerns in an appropriate manner to the appropriate school personnel. However, the principle of “**first contact**” needs to be followed. This means that the person(s) who has the concern has the responsibility to begin addressing the concern **directly** with those persons with whom they have the concern before taking their concern elsewhere. Parents who contact school administration prior to speaking with the person with whom they have a concern will be directed to that person first. If a resolution is not found, please then involve school administration as needed. All parties will deal with concerns in a manner that is consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Safety Drill Practices

In general, we will be practicing our evacuation drills in the fall and spring. We will practice lockdown and other emergency procedures all year. These valuable exercises are required so that the staff and students are aware of what the procedures are should one of these events occur. Both planned and surprise events will occur for all these practices. In all cases, the administration will make an announcement following the practice in order to provide students and staff with feedback. Families will be emailed as well. and email families regarding the drill. Our first evacuation drill will be held on Monday, September 8 (weather permitting), and our first lockdown drill will be held on Wednesday, September 17.



Safety Patrols



Our new and eager grade six crew of AMA safety patrollers will soon be ready to go! Our patrollers use the point, pause, and proceed technique. This technique models what every pedestrian should do when crossing the street and is a much simpler procedure for school patrollers.

The primary role of AMA School Safety Patrollers is to assist younger students to cross the street — not to direct traffic. Patrollers will extend their arm to indicate pedestrians want to cross the street and will only extend their stop sign when it is safe to cross their fellow classmates.

Please be a model for your children and use the crosswalk to safely cross the street. Jaywalking, especially in between parked cars and school buses, is extremely dangerous and not a habit that we want to instill in our children.

Thank you for your cooperation. Let us make this a safe and successful year for our children!

Slow Down for School Zones

At Edmonton Catholic Schools, the health and safety of students is always our first priority! School zones are in effect around elementary and junior high schools throughout Edmonton. Motorists are required by law to slow down to 30 km/h between 7:30 am and 9:30 pm where school zone signs are posted. Please slow down and ensure the safety of students near elementary schools.



Closed Campus Policy



Good Shepherd Catholic School has an on-campus policy for students over the noon hour. We are concerned with the safety of our students during the school day, and it is difficult to properly supervise them if they leave the school grounds. Also, the allotted time for students between morning and afternoon classes is short and unless your son or daughter lives very close to the school, he or she would not have time to get home and return to school for afternoon classes. A few reminders for parents:

1. For those who live within easy walking distance of the school, permission for your son/daughter to go home at lunch must be in writing and on file in the school office.
2. Parents who wish to take their children out for lunch must come to the school office and sign their children out.
3. Students will eat lunch with their cohort groups.
4. There will be intramural activities for students to take part in over the noon hour once the cold weather sets in.

Province of Alberta Ministerial Order Regarding Cell Phones and Personal Devices

Students at Good Shepherd are not permitted to use cell phones or any recording or transmission devices within the school building. This policy aligns with the Province of Alberta's ministerial order, which prohibits cellphones and personal devices for students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 in Alberta classrooms. Devices must be turned off and stored out of sight during class time. Exceptions are made for students who use phones for health-related purposes, such as monitoring blood sugar levels.

If students are found using their cell phones during the day, the phones will be confiscated. Students who need to contact their parents during school hours can use the phone in the office, but they must first obtain permission from a staff member.

For more information, visit ecsd.net/devices.

Back to School Resources/Curriculum Info for Parents

Students, parents, and teachers can find a variety of resources in the Alberta Government's online Back to School Toolkit to help with preparing for the new school year:

<http://education.alberta.ca/resources/backtoschool/parents.aspx>

The Toolkit provides an overview of what is new in Alberta's Kindergarten to Grade 12 education system and provides many helpful tips for parents. In addition, **My Child's Learning** provided by

Alberta Education, gives parents an in-depth look at the subjects and programs available from kindergarten to senior high school. Click on the “Customize My Printout” button to access information about Catholic education. <http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/mychildslearning/customize.html>

School Council



The School Council is a collective association of parents, teachers, principal, staff, and community representative(s) whose purpose is to advise the principal and the board respecting matters relating to the school. It is a means for parents and community members to work together with the school to support and enhance student learning.

The primary role of school council members is to work together with school personnel to create a strong learning environment, within the context of our Catholic identity, for all students enrolled in the school. School council members typically advise the principal on areas such as school planning, budgeting, school fees, communications, community relations, programming, and the School Plan for Continuous Growth.

Parents who would like to be more involved in their child’s education are invited to attend the School Council meetings.

The first School Council meeting of the year will be held on Wednesday, September 24 at 6:30 PM at the school.

Subsequent meeting dates will be determined by the School Council at the first meeting. Typically, the School Council meets every month, with the exception of December and June. School Council information is posted to the School Council page of our website.

Good Shepherd Catholic School Traffic and Parking Guidelines

Good Shepherd Parents/Guardians:

With our large school population, ensuring student safety remains a top priority. Clear traffic guidelines are essential, and key areas are marked with street signage and pylons to guide drivers.

Please review the following information and follow the established guidelines to help maintain the highest level of safety for your child and all students. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. **Thank you, in advance, for choosing safety over convenience.**

Crosswalk

No parking within 5 m

Adjacent Alley: NO PARKING

**Staff Parking
No Entry**

AM/PM: Turn-around for buses ONLY

Crosswalk

No parking within 5 m

**AM: Drop-off Area
PM: No Parking Area**

No Entry

Crosswalk

No parking within 5 m

NO JAYWALKING (please choose safety over convenience and use the crosswalks)

2. **The bus zone on the main street in front of the school is a NO PARKING zone.** In the morning, parents are asked to keep traffic moving by using this area to STOP, DROP OFF and GO.
3. **The alley adjacent to the school is not a parking lot.** There is no parking in alleyways. People are driving into the alley, parking their cars, and then leaving them to go and pick up their children. There is also double parking that is occurring. This practice not only creates a traffic jam and is disruptive to our neighbours, but it is a huge safety issue in that it reduces the visibility of students walking through the alley.
4. **Parents are also asked not to drive into the staff parking lot to drop off or pick children up or to park.** The staff parking lot is completely full and there is no extra parking or room for cars to turn around.
5. **CROSSWALKS: Please use the crosswalks when crossing the street; if you are jaywalking with your children, you are reinforcing dangerous habits with them.** For your safety, please do not walk through the drive-through either, unless you are where the patrollers are stationed. It can be very busy with traffic. Patrollers are stationed there in the morning and after school and have the huge responsibility of crossing children safely. Please be a role-model for your children and only cross when the patrollers communicate to you that it is safe to do so.
6. **Parking in Crosswalk Zones: Cars cannot park in crosswalk zones. This includes the two crosswalks in front of the school and the one behind the school on Dechene Road.** This creates an extremely dangerous situation for pedestrians, which are your children, since it blocks the line of vision of oncoming traffic. **City of Edmonton bylaws state that there is no parking within 5 metres (16 feet) on either side of a marked crosswalk.**
7. **Neighborhood Parking:** Please respect our neighbourhood community and refrain from parking illegally, in front of driveways or creating parking spots in the middle of cul-de-sacs.
8. **There is absolutely no walking between school buses. Please use the main road crosswalks and front turn-around crosswalk.**

Proactive Habits:

- U-turns and jaywalking are both unsafe and illegal within the school zone.
- Families living nearby are encouraged to walk, bike, or carpool whenever possible to reduce traffic congestion.
- Avoid blocking driveways—consider parking a bit farther away and plan routes with safety and consideration in mind.
- To ease morning and dismissal traffic, parents of students in Grades 4-6 are encouraged to drop off and pick up their children a block away from the school.
- Reduce speed! The school zone speed limit is 30 km/h.

- Traffic is heaviest between 8:30 - 8:50 am and 3:20 - 3:40 pm. Arriving earlier may help avoid congestion. Supervision begins at 8:35 am, and during inclement weather (e.g., rain or temperatures below -20°C with windchill), students are welcome inside the school.

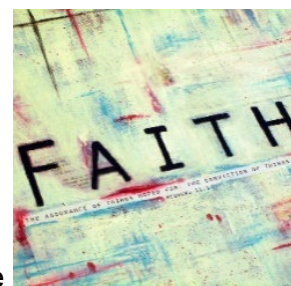
As parents/guardians, **we can all contribute** in some way to ensure safety and improve traffic flow around the school and surrounding area.

Safety is everyone's responsibility.

Information for Parents Regarding Permeation of Faith

As a result of Bill 44, *The Alberta Human Rights Act* requires all schools in the province of Alberta to give notice to a parent or guardian when courses of study, educational programs, institutional materials, instruction, or exercises include subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion.

The essential purpose of Edmonton Catholic Schools is to fully permeate Catholic theology, philosophy, practices and beliefs, the principles of the Gospel and teachings of the Catholic Church, in all aspects of school life, including in the curriculum of every subject taught, both in and outside of formal religion classes, celebrations and exercises. Every course of study and education program, all institutional materials, instruction, and exercises will always include subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion.



Good Shepherd Catholic Church ~ Sacramental Preparation

Instituted by Christ, in the sacraments we receive grace.

Preparation for the sacraments of **Reconciliation** (Penance) and **Eucharist** (Communion) is offered for children in Grade 2 and higher. Preparation for the sacrament of **Confirmation** is offered to children in Grade 6 and higher. Please visit <https://goodshep.caedm.ca/Sacraments> for schedules and registration forms. Deadline for registrations vary, please see the registration forms for details.



Rite of Christian Initiation of Children will be offered this year. If you wish to ask for **baptism** for your child, please contact the parish at 587.635.4309 for more information.

Vacations/Extended Absences



Please remember 21st century classrooms are dynamic learning environments that are fluid and constantly changing. Work assigned is often project-based and is designed to promote critical thinking and a deeper level of student engagement. Even though tools such as Google classrooms are useful in terms of staying connected with the classroom, they are not substitutes for face-to-face learning and participation in learning activities. Consequently, we recommend that families avoid booking vacation time during the school year. This is especially important for students in grade six, where students write provincial achievement tests. Frequent absences may impact their academic performance at school. If booking vacation time at natural breaks in the school year is not possible, or if a student must be away for profoundly momentous events or family emergencies, then parents are asked to contact the teacher to find out what general topics of study will be examined while the student is away. The student will be expected to read applicable textbook chapters and monitor work and material being posted to Google Classrooms, with the understanding that the student will have work to make up when he or she returns to school.

Teachers will not program for students leaving the country for extended periods of time.

It is the student's responsibility to see each of their teachers to find out what work was missed during an absence and to complete all the missed work, assignments, and/or exams.

Note: Teachers and administration will follow up with the families of students who are habitually late or chronically absent. Inconsistent attendance may be reported to the Attendance Board.

Personal Property

Students are responsible for all personal property, including electronic devices. All personal items should be clearly marked with the student's name. This makes it much easier to return items to students if they are misplaced and reduces the number of items collected - and often not claimed - in our Lost and Found bins. Students should never leave money and valuables unattended. The school cannot be responsible for damage or loss, and we do not investigate if these items go missing.



Milk Club

The Milk Club will start on Wednesday, September 3. Milk will be available to students on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at lunch. To participate, students must purchase a milk card for \$20.00, which will allow them to receive 20-250ml (about 8.45 oz) cartons of chocolate or white milk. \$10.00 milk cards are also available in which students will receive 10-250ml (about 8.45 oz) cartons of

milk. The purchasing of milk cards is done through PowerSchool accounts. Please note that milk cards will be issued no sooner than one week after payment has been received.

Peanut & Nut Allergies

We have some students with life-threatening allergies to peanuts and nut products at our school. In some cases, these allergies are so severe that just a trace of or even the smell of peanuts or nut products can send the child into anaphylactic shock. If this happens, the child's throat tightens, and swells and he or she may stop breathing. This type of severe allergic reaction can be fatal. The following website has a great deal of helpful information regarding anaphylaxis:

<http://www.anaphylaxis.org>.

We strive to keep each of our students safe during the school day. Even though your child may not be in the same class as one of our severely allergic children, there is still the possibility of cross-contamination. If, for example, a child has a peanut butter sandwich for lunch, then uses Chromebook after lunch, he or she might unknowingly leave trace amounts of peanut butter on the keyboard. If a severely allergic child used the keyboard during the next class, they could have a severe allergic reaction. Although we cannot absolutely guarantee that students will not come into contact with nut products, we do wish to limit the chances of such an occurrence. **Please help us by checking the labels, packages, and ingredients of all foods your children bring to school. Please don't let your child bring any food to school that contains even a trace amount of peanuts or nuts.**

We deeply appreciate your cooperation and help in this important matter.

Lunch Drop Offs



Parents are asked to make sure to send lunch with students in the mornings. Due to the substantial number of students at our school, and the volume of lunches that could be dropped off on any given day, we ask that parents refrain from dropping off lunches or ordering lunches from local delivery services for their children. This takes staff members away from their regular office duties. We do not disturb classes for lunch deliveries, and we do not have staff available to ensure that lunches are delivered to students. Please also ensure that your child has the appropriate cutlery included with their lunch as we do not have cutlery to distribute to students. Thank you for your cooperation.

School Picture Day ~ September 12

We will be using Lifetouch for our school pictures again this year. School pictures will be taken on Friday, September 12. Please mark your calendars!



Visitors and Volunteers



For the safety of our students, the doors to the school remain locked during the school day. In keeping with our district Occupational Health and Safety requirements, all visitors and volunteers must report to the office, sign in, review the safety guidelines for the school, and receive a visitor's badge.

This helps us to maintain a safe and secure environment for our students. Students are asked to report the presence of strangers to the principal or staff. If you are coming to see a teacher, please contact the teacher to arrange a convenient time for you to meet rather than simply dropping by the school.

We gladly welcome volunteers into our school and the following will be in place:

1. All volunteers shall be required to complete a "Volunteer Registration Form" annually and prior to commencing any volunteer activities in the school.
2. All volunteers who are to be assisting with school activities on any given day shall register at the school office upon arrival.
3. While engaged in volunteer activities, all volunteers should wear appropriate identification.

Note: Any parents or community members who supervise children in situations where a staff member will not be present, such as volunteering to coach a sports team on their own, must have a criminal record check and a child welfare check on file with the school. Police Information Checks and/or Intervention Record Checks may also be required at the sole discretion of the Principal, the Assistant Superintendent, District Operations and Information and Infrastructure Technology Services, School Operations Services, and/or the Superintendent in any circumstances where it is deemed appropriate.

Good Shepherd Reading Superstars Program

As part of our efforts with building literacy in our students, we want to share information about our school-wide Reading Incentive Program. Both you and your child are invited to become part of this reading incentive program that will complement their current home reading. The program provides an opportunity to make reading a special time for you and your child.

HOW GOOD SHEPHERD READING SUPERSTARS PROGRAM WORKS:

📖 Each student at our school will receive an incentive sheet. The incentive sheet is a grid made up of perforated strips. In each strip, there are eight boxes each with a specific reading goal.

📖 After your child has read and met their specific goal each night, a parent or guardian must initial one box on the incentive sheet.

📖 When eight boxes, or one row, are complete, please tear off the strip and have your child return it to school.

📖 Your child will then place it in their homeroom's Good Shepherd's Reading Superstars jar located in

the atrium area.

At the end of every month, one name from each homeroom will be drawn and that child, along with the other children whose names are drawn, will be treated to a special lunch with our principal, Mrs. Dimas, and our assistant principals, Mrs. Pecson and Mrs. Schultz.

We are confident that this program will both encourage and motivate your child to read daily at home. Feel free to contact your child's classroom teacher if you need more information.

HAPPY READING!

Good Shepherd is an APPLE School

The goal of APPLE Schools is to focus on supporting the physical, mental, social, and emotional health of students. We will strive to:

- Improve nutritional habits
- Improve physical activity habits
- Increase knowledge about healthy living for parents, students, teachers, and the school community
- Implement and sustain comprehensive school health
- Sustain capacity for healthy environments in school communities.

Good Shepherd students benefit from additional resources, the leadership of a school health champion whose role in the school community is to make the healthy choice the easy choice by changing school environments, and opportunities to learn about healthy living. The easy choices for students are healthy lunches, nutritious snacks, daily physical activity and a school and home environment that supports healthy lifestyles. In APPLE healthy schools, everyone works together to improve a child's health. The champions in APPLE Schools engage with parents, students, staff, and community stakeholders to impact students' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviour.

Good Shepherd School Nutrition Guidelines

Our Vision

Good Shepherd fosters a supportive environment where students and staff are encouraged to make positive choices that promote a healthy, active lifestyle—nurturing the body, mind, and spirit.



Our Mission

Good Shepherd strives to ensure that all foods served on school premises are nutritious and align with the following guidelines:

- Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth
- Canada's Food Guide
- ECSD Administrative Procedure 164 and the ECSD Healthy Eating Food Guide.

Our Practices

At Good Shepherd, we are committed to creating a healthy school environment that supports the well-being of every student. As an APPLE Schools Ally, we aim to nurture lifelong habits of wellness by encouraging healthy choices for the body, mind, and spirit.

To support this, the foods offered at school follow the *“Choose Most Often”* and *“Choose Sometimes”* categories from the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth, Canada's Food Guide, and ECSD's Healthy Eating policies. Throughout the year, we share reminders with families about our nutrition practices to help minimize foods that fall outside these categories.

Our staff play an active role in promoting health and wellness by modelling healthy habits and incorporating them into lessons and school-wide activities.

In consideration of student dietary needs, allergies, and overall wellness, we kindly ask that **food not be sent for classroom sharing unless it's part of a planned celebration or cultural lunch organized by the homeroom teacher. When food is brought for such events, we ask that it follow our nutrition guidelines and be chosen from the *“Most Often”* or *“Choose Sometimes”* categories. Items in the *“Choose Least Often”* category will not be served at school**, as we want to model the kinds of choices that support students' health both now and in the future.

We understand and respect that what families pack for their child's personal lunches and snacks is a family choice. Food brought from home for individual consumption will not be monitored or restricted.

Why We Support *“Choose Most Often”* and *“Choose Sometimes”* Foods at School

As an APPLE Ally School, we are committed to creating a healthy, supportive environment where all students can thrive physically, mentally, and emotionally.

While we all enjoy *“Choose Least Often”* foods from time to time—like sugary treats, chips, or candy—the approach to limit these choices at school helps us to:

- Align with Canada's Food Guide recommendations
- Adhere to national, provincial and divisional nutrition guidelines
- Model healthy choices and habits in a consistent way

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- Create an inclusive environment where all students' dietary needs are considered
 - Promote lifelong well-being for all members of our community.

We know that special occasions matter, and we're committed to celebrating them in meaningful, inclusive, and healthy ways.

Thank you for partnering with us to support the health and well-being of every child.

A Bite of Health

As an APPLE school, we strive to build a healthy school community focusing on improving students' mental health, physical activity, and eating habits for life.

What is a Healthy School Community?

This month, students are taking part in a campaign called What is a Healthy School? Here is a summary of the learnings.

Healthy school communities promote wellness and strive to create environments that foster lifelong health and overall well-being. The approach used to create active, healthy school communities is an internationally recognized framework called **Comprehensive School Health**.

Healthy kids learn better and achieve more

Children with nutritious diets and recommended physical activity levels show better academic results. Healthy habits learned early in life often translate to a lifetime of healthy living.¹



Pillars of a healthy school community

The three pillars of an APPLE School focus on positive social behaviour, physical activity, and healthy eating. All three are infused into day-to-day life at school through various initiatives.

The World Health Organization identified these three pillars as qualities of the most effective school-based health promotion programs for changing behaviour.

What is APPLE Schools?

Our school works with APPLE Schools to build a healthy community. The organization strives to inspire and empower school communities to be leaders in their journey to health by recommending and supporting evidence-based, sustainable changes. Go to appleschools.ca to learn more.

¹ <http://www.jcsh-cces.ca/index.php/about/comprehensive-school-health>