



WE ARE CALLED...

TO BE LEADERS OF HOPE AND MERCY

November 2016

Whatever house you enter, first say, "Peace to this house!"

~Luke 10:5~

This scripture comes from a passage known as *The Mission of the Seventy*. Jesus is giving instructions to his disciples, whom he is sending forth in pairs to all of the nations to prepare the way for him. Imagine the importance of establishing peaceful intentions as they were venturing out into unknown and perhaps hostile environments, making new acquaintances and establishing relationships. This message is just as imperative for our world today. The month of November, which focuses our attentions on the impact of war and oppression as we commemorate Remembrance Day and Holodomor, reminds us that a culture of peace starts at the level of the individual. Each of us has the ability and calling to be a peacemaker. These two events also draw our eyes to the global forum and help us to understand the impact that any abuse of political power has on the world.

Our Board of Trustees held their organizational meeting on October 18. Trustee Laura Thibert from Ward 77 was elected as Chair and Trustee Marilyn Bergstra from Ward 76 was elected as Vice-Chair. Visit our website at <https://www.ecsd.net/BoardofTrustees/Pages/default.aspx> to learn more about our Board and its governance.

Catholic education is very vibrant in the province of Alberta. On November 6, parishes across the province will celebrate the richness of experiences that our students receive through Catholic education. The Bishops of Alberta and the Northwest Territories have written a letter for us. It can be found at <https://www.ecsd.net/AboutUs/catholic-identity/what-is-catholic-education/catholic-education-sunday/Pages/default.aspx>. As stakeholders in Catholic education, it is extremely important that your voice be heard by the Government of Alberta as they move forward with a massive overhaul of the K-12 Curriculum in all grades across the subject areas of Language Arts (English, Français, French), Math, Social Studies, Sciences, Arts and Wellness education. Parents, students, teachers, school staff members, education system leaders and community members are all invited to offer meaningful input into the curriculum development process through online survey responses.

Part A of the survey, which takes about seven minutes to complete, gives the opportunity to share thoughts about the Government's general direction for the development of all new curriculum. Once Part A is completed, there is the option to move to Part B, to indicate what you see as the strengths and gaps in subject areas of interest in our current curriculum, which may take upwards of 15 minutes depending on the number of subjects and grade-specific questions you choose to answer. The online survey will run from October 18 – November 18. Make sure that your voice is heard by completing the survey at <http://curriculumsurvey.alberta.ca>. The survey results will be used by Expert Working Groups made up of teachers and post-secondary educators in concert with Alberta Education staff as information to help develop new provincial curriculum over the next six years.

We are continually looking at different measures of our success to refine our practice as we move forward. This ensures that our students have the best possible educational experiences. This data analysis happens at both the District and school level. Two of those measures from Alberta Education, the Accountability Pillar and Provincial Achievement and Diploma Exam results, were released in October. You can find those results and other important reports on our public website at https://www.ecsd.net/AboutUs/annual_reports/Pages/default.aspx.

Another measure that we use to assess our performance in many areas and to set targets for growth is our own District Satisfaction Survey. This vital survey gathers opinions from students, parents, and staff on individual schools and on district operations. Every student from grade 4-12 will complete the survey, as will all staff. Every household will receive one parent survey per child enrolled in an Edmonton Catholic School. Please respond to each survey separately from the point of view of each child's educational experience. It is so important that you let your voice be heard. You can either return your parent survey directly to your child's school or use the postage paid envelope and use Canada Post. The District Satisfaction Survey will run from November 1-18. Thank you in advance for your participation.

I would like to leave you with a Tweet from Pope Francis. "Dialogue with others, prayers for all: these are our means to give rise to love where there is hatred, forgiveness where there is offence." These are the first steps on a pathway to peace.

Sincerely,

Joan Carr
Superintendent