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October 2025

ADMIN TEAM MESSAGE

As we enjoy the beginning of Autumn we can see God's beauty in the falling leaves, feel his love in the warmth of the sun and hear his grace in the sounds of joy in our children. It has been an eventful start to the new school year. Our Curriculum Evening and family BBQ was a great opportunity for our school community to meet the teachers and learn about the exciting teaching and learning plans for this school year. Thank you for taking the time to join us!

October 1 brings a new month and a new message from Chief Superintendent Lynnette Anderson. You can find her monthly messages at ecsd.net/chief-superintendents-message.

We ended the month of September with reflection during the Truth and Reconciliation week and the honoring of Orange Shirt Day. We begin the month of October with Read In Week from October 6 through 10 and look forward to many guest readers visiting our school throughout the week.

As we look to the season of Thanksgiving we thank God for all of the gifts that he has given us. In this spirit, our students will take part in a Food Drive from October 1 through 10 to aid a school in need with Edmonton Catholic. We thank God especially for the gift of your children and your continued support as we strive to provide the best learning environment possible.

Thanksgiving Prayer

We thank you, Father, for the gift of Jesus your Son who came to our earth and lived in a simple home. We have a greater appreciation of the value and dignity of the human family because he loved and was loved within its shelter. Bless us this day; may we grow in love for each other in our family and so give thanks to you who are the maker of all human families and our abiding peace.

STAY CONNECTED and follow us on:

Website: <https://www.ecsd.net/schools/8237>

Instagram: @st_mary_elementary

https://www.instagram.com/st_mary_elementary/?hl=en

Important Dates

September 30

Truth and Reconciliation Day - NO SCHOOL

October

Hispanic Canadian Heritage Month

October 2

Custodian Appreciation Day

October 3

Community Nurse Immunization Presentation to Gr 6

October 1-10

ECSD Snack Programs Food Drive

October 5

World Teacher Day

October 6

School Council Fundraising Association Meeting @ 6:00 p.m.

October 6-10

Read-in-Week

Please contact your teacher if you would like to read to your child's class

October 8

Thanksgiving Day Celebration in the School Gym at 1:00 p.m. - All are Welcome!

October 9

St. Mary Professional Development Day - NO CLASSES

October 13

Thanksgiving Day - NO SCHOOL

October 14-15

St. Mary Fundraising Association Casino

October 15

Lifetouch Individual Photos

October 16

Grade 1/2A and 2A to St. Thomas More for Church Tour

October 18-24

Catholic Education Week

October 19

Catholic Education Sunday

October 20

Municipal Election Day - St. Mary is a polling station 7:00 am - 1:00 am

October 22

Take Me Outside Day - Learning outdoors

October 23

Alberta Musical Theatre - Pinocchio 9:30 a.m.

October 27

Grade 6 Immunizations in the a.m.

October 30

Grade 1A and 4A Visit Riverbend Library 8:45 - 10:30 a.m.

October 31

Halloween Activities - Come in your costume - parade at 1:00 p.m.

(Please do not send food or candy to be distributed)

November 1

All Saints Day

November 2

All Souls Day

November 2

Daylight Savings Time Ends - FALL BACK! - Turn your clock BACK on hour!

November 3

Grade 4/5A and 5A Junior Achievement Presentation

November 5

Gr 5 to No Stone Left Alone Ceremony in the a.m.

November 6

Remembrance Day Celebration at 10:45 am - All are Welcome!

November 6

Fall Parent/Teacher/Student Led Conferences

Book Fair

November 7

Book Fair ends

November 8-12

Remembrance Day Weekend/Fall Break - NO CLASSES

November 17-25

Alien In-line Skating Residency Grades Kindergarten-6

November 19

4A Wild North Virtual Presentation 1-2 pm

International Men's Day

November 26

Lifetouch Picture Retake Day

November 28

Schools Observe Holodomor Memorial Day



VOLUNTEERING IN THE SCHOOL

Edmonton Catholic Schools appreciates the services of all its volunteers. In order to ensure your safety and the safety of all our students, all volunteers must complete a Volunteer registration form. Forms were sent home with your child in the first days of school and are also available in the office.

Along with completion of the registration form, **all visitors to the school MUST identify themselves before entry into the building, sign in at the office and wear a visitor badge while in the building.**

We appreciate this may be an inconvenience, however it is required to ensure the safety of all students, staff, visitors and volunteers.

SCHOOL FEES

Government approved school fees charged are used in student programming and/or services throughout the school year. Your child's school fees were made active for payment on September 15 in the parent Powerschool Portal

<https://powerschool.ecsd.net>. Payment of fees was requested by the end of September 2025. Bus fees are available for payment through the parent portal on a monthly or yearly basis.

GETTING TO and FROM SCHOOL SAFELY

Please review this resource from Alberta Health on getting to and from school safely.

<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Alberta/Pages/getting-to-and-from-school-safely.aspx>

Drop Off & Pick Up

Please do not park in the bus lane at any time.

The church across the street allows parents to use their lot before and after school.

You are welcome to use the DROP & GO lane if you are stopping to let out students only – this is not for parents who wish to get out of their vehicle.

Please follow the link <https://arcg.is/1H4ieS1> or use the QR code to view the map explaining which zones are for parking and which are for driving through only. Parking is available in the church lot during pick up and drop off.



LUNCHES

We encourage children to bring their lunch with them as they arrive to school in the morning as to limit disruption to learning and work flow. **Noon drop offs of fast food items are discouraged. All essentials for eating their lunch should be packed as the school does not provide disposable supplies - cutlery etc. for student use.** Healthy lunches are encouraged together with reducing disposable waste.

STAY HOME WHEN SICK



As students and staff return for another exciting school year the health, safety and well-being of all students and staff remains a top priority.

Parents are asked to please continue to monitor your child for symptoms daily before coming to school. This is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of illness. **Anyone who is exhibiting symptoms of illness, including fever, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, new or worsening cough, or shortness of breath, should remain at home until their symptoms have improved and they have been free of fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication, and they feel well**

enough to resume normal activities. If your child becomes sick at school, parents/guardians will be called to pick them up. If your child is away from school for any reason, please call the school office to let us know.

At our school we are,

- Encouraging students to wash and/or sanitize their hands regularly. Hand sanitizer is available at our school.
- Prioritizing frequent cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces.
- Ensuring proper ventilation is extremely important to us. We have installed the ASHRAE-recommended MERV 13 filters in our school, and our HVAC systems are running for extended periods of time. We continue to reference and implement ASHRAE guidance where practicable within the limitations of existing infrastructure across the Division.
- Respecting individual choice regarding masks. Our priority is supporting a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment.
- Reporting illness to Alberta Health Services when school-wide student absentee rates are over 10% due to illness so they can investigate and advise. This has always been our division practice.

The health, safety, and well-being of our students and staff remain our top priority.

REPORTING YOUR CHILD'S ABSENCE

Need to report a student absence? #ECSD uses the SchoolMessenger SafeArrival system. Download the app, visit the website, or call in anytime. It's a quick and convenient way to keep your school informed. Find all the details at <https://www.ecsd.net/reporting-absences>. In this app you can also view messages sent out from your school which can help you stay informed.

BUSSING 2025-2026



All NEW applications, changes to bussing addresses, cancellations or replacement bus pass requests **must** be completed online through the following link

<https://ecsd.mybusplanner.ca/>

Parents are asked to monitor their Powerschool Parent portal weekly to obtain their child's route information and check for any changes to the schedule. Bus pass fees for 2025-26 are all \$50.00 for both Yellow bus and ETS, with no additional family plan discount. Eligibility for bussing this school year, as changed by the Alberta Government, requires access for bussing to be at least 1.6 kilometers from the school.

Bus Passes This school year there will be no bus passes issued to students. Bus drivers will take attendance of their passengers according to their updated running boards.

Bus Delays Bus delays are posted on the division website through the BusPlanner website

<https://ecsd.mybusplanner.ca/Alerts> or can be accessed through the bus delay app [BusPlanner Delays App](#) on your mobile phone. Students are encouraged to be at their stop at least 5 minutes before their pick up time. If a bus **does not arrive within 10 minutes** of its scheduled time, please ensure your child knows to notify an adult. No matter how late a bus runs behind schedule, the driver finishes the route. But we do recommend that after 20 minutes, you make other arrangements.

Any questions on bussing can be directed to our Transportation Department directly at 780-441-6078.

BIRTHDAYS & Healthy Food Choices at School

Edmonton Catholic Schools is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's well-being, and the ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Any food and beverages served at school for special celebrations will be from the "Choose Most Often" or "Choose Sometime" categories as outlined in the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth (2008). Along with this, parents will be notified in advance so they may inform the teacher if they would not like their child to consume the food provided. To respect and support parents in their role as providers for their children and in consideration of severe allergies, we ask that **NO food be sent to school for birthdays or to be shared with other students at any time.** The office and teachers will acknowledge birthdays in their own way and we will leave the birthday parties for home. Thank you for your support with this.

DOGS ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

While we are a dog loving community, there are some safety considerations during drop off and pick up at school. If you are bringing your dog during these times, please ensure that you are in control of the dog and maintaining a safe distance from the students. Please [click here](#) to see the Edmonton City Bylaw regarding No dogs allowed on school grounds and some other public locations. Consider determining a meeting spot with your child/children if you will be bringing your dog to pick up or drop off. Although we know you may have a friendly dog, sometimes a situation can cause an unpredictable response from the pet. Please pass this message along to anyone who may be picking up students. You may at times see our Wellness dog, Olive, at the school. She is approved and certified to be on school property.

WELLNESS FOCUS - "Olive" from CAAWLS

Dear Parent or Guardian,

As part of our Wellness focus this year, we will again be having a [CAAWLS](#) registered "Wellness Dog", Olive, work once a week with individual or groups of students. Olive is a 7 year old hypo-allergenic Labradoodle, who also visits the Stollery 2-4 times a month. She has been a therapy dog for 4 years now. We are fortunate that one of our staff members, Mrs. Kothari, is the owner and handler of Olive, the Wellness Dog.

Some of the benefits from working or visiting with a wellness dog include reduced stress, improved physical and emotional well-being, affection, lower blood pressure, decreased anxiety, and improved self-esteem which all can contribute to student success in school. Examples of activities that students may engage in with a wellness dog include: petting or reading to the dog, giving the dog simple commands that the dog is trained to respond to, and whole class lessons about animals. Mrs. Kothari will not bring Olive to the classrooms of students or staff who suffer from allergies or aversions.

YMCA CHILD CARE at ST. MARY for 2025-2026 (Before & After, Kindercare & 4 Year Olds)

St. Mary continues to have YMCA Before and After School Child Care as well as Kindercare morning and afternoon programs for the upcoming school year along with a 4-year-old program. As the daycare operates independently from the school, for more information please visit <https://ymcanab.ca/programs/child-care> or contact their director, Beth Pede at 587-710-7815 or by email at beth.pede@northernalberta.ymca.ca or northernalberta.ymca.ca.

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

School Council and Parent Advisory Council meeting minutes are posted on the St. Mary website www.stmary@ecsd.net within days of the meeting. Please visit the website link

<https://stmary.ecsd.net/search?search-term=school+council+minutes&file-type=&exclude-search-term=>

to review. The next school council meeting date is Monday, October 6 @ 6:00 p.m.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION at ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH

Registration information for Sacramental preparation is posted on the St. Thomas More Parish website. Please see the following link <https://stm.caedm.ca/sacraments/> for calendar of dates and registration forms.

PARTNERSHIPS - EDMONTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Do you want a free Edmonton Public Library Card? Signing up is very easy and is found under PowerSchool under School Engage. Please click on this [link](#) to find out more information or to watch a video on how to sign up.

EDMONTON CATHOLIC Translation Services

Did you know Edmonton Catholic Schools offers translation services through our One World...One Centre Intercultural Staff? These services are available in multiple languages, including Amharic, Arabic, Bosnian, Croatian, French, Tagalog, Russian, Spanish, Serbian, Tigrinya, and Ukrainian. If needs language assistance is needed for important school interactions, such as parent-teacher meetings or help translating Division messages, please contact One World...One Centre @ 780-441-6060. Intercultural Staff helps bridge communication between families and school staff. Learn more: ecsd.net/languagesupport.

NEED LANGUAGE SUPPORT?

Our Intercultural Staff can help with translation

Russian

Bosnian

Spanish

Tigrinya

Tagalog

Amharic

Serbian

Arabic

French

Ukrainian

Croatian

Contact your school for assistance



Food Drive

in support of

ECSD SCHOOL
SNACK PROGRAMS

ITEMS NEEDED:

- Snack Pack Size Crackers
Goldfish, Ritz, etc.
- Granola Bars
- Fruit Bars
- Apple Sauce/Fruit Sauce
- Fruit Cups
- Fruit Snacks

DONATIONS
ACCEPTED UNTIL
OCTOBER 10, 2025

Join us for READ IN Week - October 6-10, 2025!



The theme for 2025 is Books to Bytes.

Reading fuels our ability to grow, connect, and imagine, whether flipping through the pages of a book, exploring ideas on a screen, or listening to a story. Books to Bytes, this year's READ IN Week theme, celebrates how reading takes many forms and how technology has become one of many tools to fuel our learning. No matter how we experience stories, the power of reading remains timeless

If you are interested in sharing your love of reading with your child(ren)'s class, please contact their classroom teacher(s) to arrange a time.

Book Exchange during Read In Week - donate a book, take book

Read In Week

Monday Oct. 6	Tuesday Oct. 7	Wednesday Oct. 8	Thursday Oct. 9	Friday Oct. 10
Dress as a book character day!	Read in Nature Rakhi Pancholi - 12:45PM Grades and specific times TBD	Join Chief Superintendent Lynnette Anderson for a virtual read-aloud of <i>Buffalo Fluffalo</i> via TEAMS at 1:00PM REGISTER HERE Books & Blankets 2:15PM	No School - PD Day	Read a T-Shirt Day Book Swap



*Please bring donations for the book swap throughout the week to either the office or to your classroom teacher. Feel free to donate as many books as you would like. Each student will only get to choose one new book so that every child will have the opportunity to receive a "new to them" book.

THANKSGIVING DAY CELEBRATION - October 8 @ 1:00 p.m. School Gym

Please join us on Wednesday, October 8 at 1:00 p.m. in the school gym for our Thanksgiving Day Celebration. All are Welcome!

STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY - Thursday, October 9, 2025 NO CLASSES

THANKSGIVING DAY - MONDAY, October 13 - NO CLASSES

PICTURE DAY - October 15



Lifetouch Photography will be at St. Mary on Wednesday, October 15 to take individual student photos. If you are able to assist, please leave your name at the school office.

Individual picture retakes will be on Wednesday, November 26.

HALLOWEEN ACTIVITIES - October 31 - Grades K-6



We look forward to our Halloween parade which will take place on

Friday, October 31 @ 1:00 p.m.



Halloween gives us the opportunity to dress up as our favourite character or things! It is also important to remember that Halloween is for everyone and that means being inclusive so that everyone feels welcome and comfortable. Here are some things to keep in mind when picking out your costumes:

- **Respect Everyone:** Choose costumes that do not make fun of someone's religion, race, culture, gender, abilities or other aspect of their identity.
- **Avoid Stereotypes:** Focus on costumes that celebrate the uniqueness and diversity of our world without relying on stereotypes or exaggerations of certain groups of people.
- **Be sensitive:** How will your costume make others feel?
- **Get Creative:** Halloween is a chance to be creative!
- **Include Everyone:** Encourage your friends to choose inclusive costumes too!

Remember, we want to be kind, celebrate diversity and make everyone feel welcome! Please come and witness the creative costumes! **Just a reminder, we ask that students not wear full face masks which hinder vision and are a safety risk or carry incorporate replica weapons. Replica weapons are never allowed at school.**

In keeping with our procedures, please DO NOT send food or treats to distribute.

SCHOOL COUNCIL CASINO - VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

URGENT: Volunteers Still Needed for St. Mary Casino - October 14 & 15 at Grand Villa Casino

We are still in need of volunteers for our upcoming St. Mary Casino. This is hands down our **largest and most critical fundraiser of the year.**

Without enough help, we risk losing our AGLC placement, which would have a serious impact on our ability to provide essential resources for our children. With a potential teacher strike on the horizon, it's more important than ever to fill these positions before October 6th.

We need your help!

If you haven't signed up yet, please consider doing so here: volunteersignup.org/F89RT and if you've already signed up or plan to, please **contact Brittany** with your name and contact info so we can keep you in the loop:

Email: brittcor@hotmail.com

Text or Call: 780.264.2748

This is a team effort and we can't do it without you. Let's come together to support our kids and keep our school strong. Thank you!

Casino Volunteer Positions

There is a professional casino advisor who will provide training and support. No experience or specific knowledge is expected.

General Manager:

- Works in the cash cage with the banker and cashiers.
- Supervises all volunteers – checks in volunteers, orders snacks, deals with schedule, problem solves.
- General Manager must be in the casino at all times.
- Controls drop box keys.
- Does not actually manage the casino, just the volunteers!

Banker:

- Controls the main cash cage chip and cash floats.
- Responsible for documentation of all cash/chip transfers from the main float. This information is recorded on the computer, therefore computer skills are an asset.
- Some administrative experience and/or math skills are helpful in this position.

Cashier:

- This position requires concentration and accuracy.
- Players bring you their chips and you count the chips and give them cash.
- You have your own float and do not share your cash/chip float with anyone.
- Cash-handling skills and being a bit streetwise are definite assets.
- Not a job for colour-blind volunteers.

Chip Runner:

- You carry chips from the cash cage to the table games, accompanied by security.
- You must be able to move around the gaming floor and carry chips in their delivery racks.
- This position is busy at the opening and closing times of the casino, and much of the rest of the shift you will be in the lounge. Bring something to do.

Count Room:

- You sort and count cash from the table games drop boxes.
- Assisted by the Count Room Advisor you will keep records of the cash and chip counts.
- Bring something to do as you will be in the lounge between counting sessions.
- Volunteers should be good working with their hands.

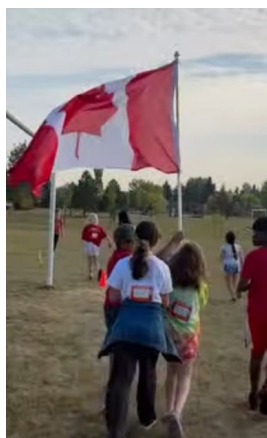
ACTIVITIES and CLUBS Available to St. Mary Students

At St. Mary Elementary, we are thrilled to offer a wide range of clubs, activities, and focus days, weeks and months throughout the school year to engage, grow, and inspire our students. Our small staff of dedicated teachers work hard to plan these engaging activities to enhance students' learning experiences beyond the classroom. From special focus weeks packed with extra learning opportunities, to artistic clubs and sports, we aim to nurture a love for learning, foster teamwork, and develop leadership skills in a fun, supportive environment. Below is a list of clubs, activities, and focus weeks your child(ren) can look forward to participating in this year:

Clubs and Activities	Focus Days (Whole School)	Focus Weeks & Months (Whole School)
• Cross Country Running Club (gr.4-6) • Recess Club (gr. 5-6) • Lunch Monitors (gr.5) • Patrols (gr. 5-6) • Office Monitors (gr.6) • Mental Health Champions (some gr. 4-6) • Mindful Makers (gr. 1-6) • Tabletop Hockey (gr.4-6) • Intramurals (gr.4-6) • Choir • GLOW Team (student leadership) (gr.5-6)	• Terry Fox Run • Orange Shirt Day • Winter Carnival • Pink Shirt Day • International Men's Day/ International Women's Day • Cultural Day • Hats On for Mental Health • St. Mary Feast Day • National Indigenous Peoples Day • Grade 6 Farewell	• Truth & Reconciliation Week • Read-In Week • November Month of Saints • Annual Metis Week • Black History Month • Random Acts of Kindness Week • Holy Week • Asian Heritage Month • National Indigenous Heritage Month

TERRY FOX RUN 2025 - September 12

On Friday, September 12, all students and staff at St. Mary took part in the Terry Fox Run for Cancer Research. We are thrilled to share that the **total of \$2199.85 was raised in both cash and online donations**. This incredible achievement would not have been possible without your generous donations and unwavering support. Thank you for coming together to honor Terry's legacy and for making a difference in the fight against cancer. Your contributions will help fund vital research and support for those affected by this disease. Together, we've made a meaningful impact. A special Thank you to our YMCA daycare staff who provided music during the run and helped cut up the oranges that were a treat for students after the run.



ECSD CROSS COUNTRY RUN - September 22

On Monday, September 22, 42 students in the St. Mary X-Country run team participated in the ECSD Cross Country Run event at Rundle Park. What a beautiful setting, running one to two kilometers through the tree lined route through the park! Congratulations to all the enthusiastic running club athletes for their excellent effort and results. We are so proud of everyone's efforts. Way to go St. Mary!



ORANGE SHIRT DAY - September 29

On Monday, September 29, students at St. Mary continued on their journey of learning leading up to the National Day for Truth & Reconciliation. Students have explored the questions: What is Truth & Reconciliation? Why do we wear orange in September? What is your commitment to Truth & Reconciliation? How will you continue your journey?

Students have participated in a variety of activities to deepen their understanding of what residential schools were, how the Indigenous children and their families felt, as well as what it means to apologize. They were challenged to think of ways that they can help to live in friendship with the Indigenous people of the land.



Every child matters!

September 30 National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

NO CLASSES are held on Tuesday, September 30
in Recognition of Truth and Reconciliation Day

