



## Ethel M Johnson School

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# Newsletter | September 2017

## New Beginnings

That is what learning is. You suddenly understand something you've understood all your life, but in a new way.

**Doris Lessing**

To the families of Ethel M Johnson School,

I am both honored and excited to be joining the learning community at Ethel M Johnson School. I have been with the Calgary Board of Education for a number of years, including roles as an elementary teacher, an assistant principal, and most recently as a principal at Braeside School. I am absolutely thrilled to begin the 2017-18 learning journey with all of you.

September is a time of new beginnings in many ways. For returning students, it is a chance to reconnect with staff and peers, and start a new learning journey. For new students, it is a chance to develop new friendships with a new peer group, and a chance to get to know new staff members.

The feeling in the building has been electric over the past couple of weeks. Teachers are meeting, planning, and talking about teaching and learning. There is an excitement in the air every day. The building truly comes alive as the students arrive each day, filling the air with discussions of their various adventures and excitement.

There are a number of changes in the school since last year, as we are no longer the designated school for the community of Silverado, a number of staff have moved on to different positions. We have registered over 20 new students this year, and we currently have 315 students across the school.

Although I have only known the staff at Ethel M Johnson for a short period of time, they are a dedicated, hardworking group of people that are very excited to work with both you and your children. I look forward to getting to know you and your children over the course of the upcoming year!

Chris Radu  
Principal, Ethel M Johnson School  
[crradu@cbe.ab.ca](mailto:crradu@cbe.ab.ca)



### Important Dates

**September 5**-First day of classes

**September 13**-School Council 6:30 pm

**September 15**-No school for kindergarten students

**September 21**- Half day for students (regular dismissal for kindergarten, 12:15 dismissal for grades 1-6); Conferences 4:00 pm – 8. pm

**September 22**- Conferences 8 am-1 pm (no school for students)

**September 28**-Terry Fox Run & presentation; Fun Lunch

## School News

### **Welcome to New Faces**

We wish to warmly welcome newcomers to EMJ School. We have new students in most classes, and we want them and their families to feel very welcome here. We welcome all new (and continuing) families to be actively involved in the life of the school. We also wish all our returning families and staff a hearty welcome back. We are looking forward to a fabulous year.

### **Supplies at School**

Classroom purchases are paid for at the school, so students do not need to bring additional supplies from home. We ask that students not bring in toys from home, as we cannot be responsible for items that are broken or lost.

We do ask that every child have an indoor pair of shoes for the gym. When a child is at school, shoes must be worn at all times for safe movement and in the event of a fire drill.

### **Terry Fox Run September 28**

This year EMJ School's annual Terry Fox Run will be held on September 28<sup>th</sup>. During this week students will be learning about this national hero and the spirit of caring and generosity, which he bravely demonstrated. As well, during this week each classroom will be collecting donations for the Terry Fox Association. It is hoped that each student will bring in a "Toonie for Terry Fox", but, of course, larger donations will be gratefully accepted. To conclude and celebrate Terry Fox Week there will be a short assembly and field run on Sept 28<sup>th</sup>. The assembly will begin at 10:30 with a guest speaker, and after a short presentation everyone will move outside to walk/run around the school field. Parents are welcome to join us for this special event and show their support for Terry's dream to end the suffering people and families experience due to cancer.

### **School Pictures**

The photographer is scheduled for October 10<sup>th</sup>. Details to follow.

### **Attendance reporting**

If your child will not be in school, please remember to give the school a call. We welcome short messages left on our answering machine (403-777-8500). An absence not reported means time spent by our office staff to call out to your home. Thank you for your cooperation.

### **Lunchroom Routines**

Hot lunches are a great break from sandwiches, however we are asking that parents please make use of thermoses instead, since hot water and microwaves are not available.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Our Meet the Teacher Conferences will be held on Thursday, September 21 (from 4:00 – 8:00 pm) and Friday, September 22 (from 8:00 am – 1:00 pm). These meetings are intended to provide opportunities to share information with teachers and see what activities

your children have started in school. It is too early to provide achievement reports at this time. Please watch the school website for online booking information.

NOTE: Thursday, September 21 is a half day (Friday schedule) and students will be out at 12:15 (regular dismissal for kindergarten). There will be no classes on Friday, September 22.

## **Volunteering at EMJ School**

The support that volunteers play in the life of this school is enormous and their presence very visibly links the connectedness between the home and school. Whether you have the time to volunteer once or on a regular basis, your presence is always welcome.

Volunteering is a two step process – make sure that you have your police clearance in place by filling out a form available in the office (good for five years) and then complete your CBE Annual Volunteer Form (also available in the office). The police clearance will take close to one month to process and until this is complete, parents are unfortunately not able to volunteer.

Volunteers are welcome for specific roles in classrooms, as well as in support roles around the school.

## **Cell Phones**

Students are required to use EMJ School landlines during regular school hours. Cell phones should be stored in a safe place and turned off during that time. Parents should contact their children through the school office in the event of an emergency.

## **ADmazing coupon books for sale: back by popular demand**

The school is offering ADmazing books for sale starting this week. This \$20.00 purchase will provide you with hundreds of valuable coupons and \$10.00 from every book sold will go back to the school. The profits from this sale are used to support extracurricular activities for our students. Order forms will go home shortly.

## **Calgary Reads: a rewarding volunteer opportunity**

Calgary Reads is a formal program that trains adults to tutor children in reading. EMJ School has worked in partnership with this agency for many years and our students have been the winners. After a short formal training program, volunteer tutors work with our grade 2 students to support their reading practice. This individualized program generally runs for 33 lessons – half an hour twice a week for 16 weeks. This individualized support helps many of our grade 2 readers increase their reading proficiency and their confidence in handling text. If you are interested in this exciting opportunity, please let us know.

## **Illness at School**

When a child becomes ill at school, we immediately contact the parent and ask for pick-up. We know that it can be very hard for a parent to simply pick up and leave work. If you have another contact person who could help you out with an emergency, please make sure the office has that information.

Please ensure that you update your demographic and emergency contacts throughout the school year. A simple call to the office will ensure that changes are made.

## **Parents as Partners-School Council**

The first meeting of the school year is Wednesday, September 13 at 6:30. The EMJ School Council is key to organizing school wide events and is a primary 'sounding board' for school wide programs and events. Attendance at these meetings offers parents the opportunity to link with other parents and school administration in a very collegial manner. Whether you have the time to attend one meeting this year or want to book it into your calendar for a regular outing, your attendance is appreciated.

## **Special Thanks-Evergreen Starbucks**

We would like to say a special thanks to Evergreen Starbucks for providing the coffee for parents on opening day. It was much appreciated!

## **The door is open**

Communication with your child's teacher and administration helps to prevent small questions from becoming large issues. Throughout the school year, as questions emerge, stay in close contact with the teacher. Questions can often be answered over the phone, but if a meeting is required, please work to set a time to meet. Setting a time ensures that the teacher does not have conflicting appointments and that the teacher has time to reflect on your concerns or gather the necessary work samples.

At the administrative level, both Mr. Radu and Mr. Jones welcome meetings with parents; however setting a meeting time is very helpful. It ensures that we have had time to do classroom observations, meet with the teacher and set aside the time required.

Welcome to the 2017/18 school year! All the best to you and your family.

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 Calgary Board of Education

## Leadership Link



### Message from the Board of Trustees

September brings new faces to our schools, eager to start the year. Whether this is your first year with the CBE or your child's last "Back-to-School" season, September is an exciting time. As this Board completes our term and our city looks forward to a municipal election in October, it is a wonderful time to reflect on what we have achieved and to plan for a vibrant future.

As an elected Board of Trustees, we have had the privilege of meeting with many parents, families, community members and partners over the past four years. We value your voice, and we would like to thank each one of you for contributing to the success of our students and the CBE.

### Message from the Chief Superintendent

Every new school year is an exciting opportunity to set new goals and discover more about our children as learners.

This is a great time of year to talk to your child about their goals for the school year. Think about how you can support your child, and talk to your child's teachers about how you can work together.

I encourage you to also consider your own goals and dreams – do you want to get more involved in your child's classroom? Take a leadership role on School Council? Learn a skill or build confidence in an area of interest? Education is a lifelong journey, and it is our intention to spark a passion for learning in our students that will last a lifetime.

I look forward to growing and learning together as we work to make our students' goals and dreams a reality.

David Stevenson  
Chief Superintendent of Schools

### Get involved

We welcome the support of volunteers! Some activities or field trips would not be possible without the active participation of our volunteers.

All adult volunteers require a valid security clearance - no exceptions. Your school office has information about how to begin the security clearance process.

### Community Engagement Opportunities

We are committed to engaging stakeholders - students, staff, parents and community members - on decisions that affect them. Last year, feedback and input gathered from stakeholders helped inform a number of decisions on projects including:

- Area I, II and V schools impacted by new school openings
- Expressions of Interest for the Science and Mandarin Bilingual programs
- A single site for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing program
- Development of a K-12 Math Strategy

In the 2017-18 school year and beyond, we will continue our work to engage stakeholders.

Two significant projects upcoming this year include the sustainable use of learning space in schools in Areas 6 and 7 and in high schools across our system.

Through the engagement process we will seek to understand what is important to parents, students, staff and community members.

Watch for opportunities to provide input and feedback on our website.