

THE PATHWAY

The Edmonton Society for Christian Education partners with Edmonton Public Schools to operate Edmonton Christian Schools.

June 2017

A New Chapter in the Old Story

(Peter Buisman, Executive Director)

It was quite a spectacle at West School that spring of 1988. Though we had seen the gym walls go up over the winter, there was no structure at all where the new classroom wing was supposed to be. A new school year would begin in four months and students who had been using St. Greg's would again join the main school. But those of us who watched weren't sure how that was going to happen when all we saw was concrete pilings in a lake of spring mud.

Then one day the crane showed up and one after another pre-fabbed classrooms were lifted delicately onto the pilings. Like giant Lego blocks the units were put in place and in a few short weeks an entire classroom wing materialized. By September that classroom wing was ready, shiny and new for the excited students. It was surely one of the quickest, most budget-conscious school builds ever done!

We have been called anew to participate, to look forward in faith and to write a new chapter in this old story.

We knew at the time that there were trade-offs. This type of building was not expected to last longer than twenty years. Now, thirty years later we can see the joints between sections, the roof needs to be replaced, the plumbing is failing and the energy efficiency does not come close to today's standards. Time is ticking.

The old and worn building at West School is a sure sign of God's faithfulness to Edmonton Christian Schools just as surely as was the worn out Fort Road campus of our Northeast School in 2004. We have been called anew to participate, to look forward in faith and to write a new chapter in this old story. It is an opportunity!

The West School Building Project

This calling and opportunity come at a perfect time, because education is changing as well. Gone are the days of long hallways with doors into individual square classrooms filled with rigid lines of desks. Coming are the days of collaboration spaces, digital resource centres, maker spaces, learning commons, CTS Labs and flexible student furniture. We *need* to build... we have an *opportunity* to write a new chapter that will help our students find their role in

God's story in the twenty first century and beyond.

And you know, it is our generation's turn!

I think of my parents.

They had two jars on the fridge, each with a collection of coins and tattered bills. When my father and mother emigrated from Holland they earned \$1.01 per hour. But on their fridge were the two jars that were paid first: one jar for the church; one jar for the Christian School.

And, even though the jars already represented a significant commitment, my dad also volunteered as treasurer for the school, a position he held with unwavering devotion for 35 years.

I'm not sure when the jars disappeared, but I know that my parents continued to support Christian education with regular donations. Christian education wasn't just important for their children; it was vital for the whole community. They knew that Christian education changes lives and that it shapes the hearts and minds of students to live for renewal in God's story.

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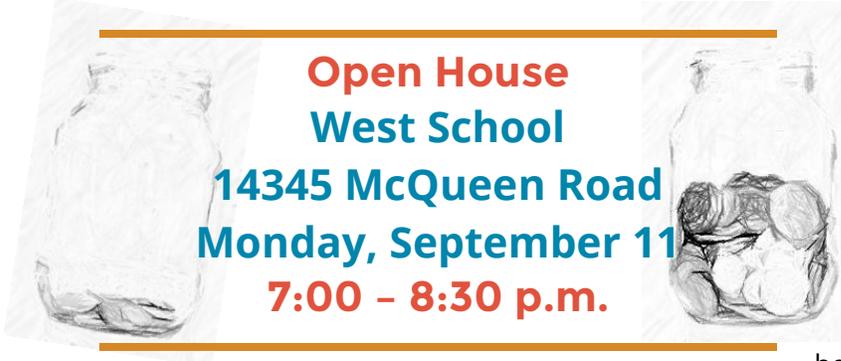


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The story of my parents' unquestioned dedication to Christian education has been retold and relived in many faithful households across Canada and worldwide. And God's story is lived out today in the commitment of those who choose to serve the Lord with two jars on their fridge.

An Open House Invitation

We invite you to dream a little bit with us as we ponder the next chapter in God's story at Edmonton Christian West School:



We have developed a concept as a starting point for a conversation with our supporting community. [Go to our website to view](#) several concept drawings; they will give you a solid idea of what we are hoping to accomplish. At the Open House you are invited to contribute your ideas, thoughts and concerns.

Join us!

Proposed Timeline

- **September 11:** Open House at West School (see details in left column)
- **October:** a feasibility study will be done to determine how much money we might be able to raise. **Please participate in the study if requested; we appreciate your help!**
- **November:** we will call the community together to vote on approval for the project
- **2018:** in anticipation of a positive vote we will take the year to finalize plans and have a capital campaign
- **Spring of 2019:** begin construction and wrap up capital campaign
- **September of 2020:** the building is completed and students move in!

Cost and Financing

We estimate the cost of this project to be about \$15 million. Our fundraising campaign goal would be about \$4 million and we are considering partnering with a church which would contribute about \$1 million. This would leave us with a mortgage of about \$10 million.

Please call the Society office or send us an email if you have any ideas, questions or concerns you would like to share with us.

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Calendar of Events

- Sept 5** **First day of classes for K-12**
Tuesday *Preschool begins later in September*
- Sept 9** **Golf Tournament**
Saturday Noon – 8:30 p.m. at Sandpiper
See www.edmchristian.org for event details
- Sept 11** **West School Building Project**
Monday Open House: 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
- Sept 23** **Waterpark Fun night**
Saturday 7:30 – 10:00 p.m. at WEM
Buy tickets until June 23 at school offices!