

Shalom and welcome to Blog 4. Yesterday our staff reviewed District and Alberta Education priorities to put the final touches on our key focus areas for our 2017/18 School Education Plan. After that we reviewed our school achievement data. We were happy to identify that our PAT overall results continued to improve. Our staff discussed the start of our Marauder Excel Block Schedule in October and we did some work to prepare for the opening of our PowerSchool Portal. In the afternoon, we had a short presentation for staff related to supporting our students who are First Nation, Metis and Inuit and then we took care of our regular monthly business with our regular staff meeting.

We implemented an On Alert and Lock Down Procedure Drill last Wednesday. We will always notify students and staff when we are doing a drill. The drill went well. During the afternoon on the same day we evacuated our building when the Fire Bells were activated. This was not a drill, the fire department arrived and it was confirmed that it was a false alarm likely due to the construction happening with our modernization. Once the fire department gave the "all clear" we resumed normal classroom activities. Our grade seven students completed part of the CAT IV Achievement Tests on Monday morning. We use these tests to look at strengths and weaknesses of students. Teachers can use the information in their planning. On Thursday evening, we celebrated excellence and achievement in academics, sports, the arts, CTF, leadership and faith for the 2016/17 school year. Our parents and students packed the gymnasium at St. Albert Catholic High School. It was good to see many of our grade nine students. Our VJM kids achieve in so many ways. What a great event, we are so very proud of our students and their many accomplishments. Special thanks to some of our educational assistants and Mr. Pedersen who did so much work to prepare for our annual VJM Awards Night. Thursday morning about sixty of our students braved some very poor weather to participate in the District Cross Country Meet at Red Willow/Kingswood Park. They came back damp, cold but in good spirits. Congratulations to all the runners who participated.

This coming Friday students will be given time to register for Marauder Excel Blocks that will start the first week of October. All students will be able to choose from a menu of offerings from staff. There are a variety of sessions. Some are extra help, some are challenges, and some are designed to give extra time to complete homework and extra time for assignments. I am very fortunate to work with a staff that are willing to try new and exciting things in education that provide more choice and opportunities for kids. Students register for these offerings through Powerschool. This year we are happy to announce that students will have more excel block opportunities. Excel blocks will occur on Monday, Wednesday and most Fridays right before lunch. On Tuesday morning, the 81 and 82 class will walk over to St. Albert Parish for their annual Faith Retreat during the morning. On Thursday, the 83, 84 and 85 students will participate. The retreat's main focus areas include examining the mass and the rich tradition and heritage of St. Albert Parish. We are very thankful for the support of everyone at St. Albert Parish and the Criss Cross Ministry for their help and support in planning the Retreat. Volleyball practices and games will continue throughout the week. You should have received information about our Annual General Meeting and September School Council Meeting that will take place on Tuesday, September 26 at 6:30 pm in our school library. We are now taking nominations for School Council or you can join us at the meeting and nominate a person. All parents of students in our school are welcome to attend our meetings.

We near the end of September having managed to complete nearly all our tasks and normal student activities despite not having a school gymnasium and different parts of our school. Our hallways are definitely more crowded but there is an excitement and anticipation about the work being completed. Our staff and students are adapting and proving their flexibility. I have included a few pictures below that shows you the progress related to work being done in this phase of the project. We thank you for your continuing support and hope to see you on Tuesday evening.

Greg Lamer

*"Love God, serve God: everything is in that."*

*St. Francis of Assisi*



Two science rooms have received new flooring, paint, stainless steel counter tops. New ceiling tiles, electrical, heating and ventilation have been added to the rooms. Furniture and new technology for the rooms is due to arrive very soon.



Nearly all the demolition work between Room 125 and 126 has been done. Both of these rooms will become multi-purpose classrooms that can open to our learning commons area. These rooms are now scheduled for completion at the end of November or early December.



Work continues on the gymnasium. In this picture, you can see that a preliminary Top-Crete coating was added to the floor to smooth it. New holes for windows and doors have been cut. Heating, ventilation, electrical are all being upgraded. Sprinkler systems have been added. The floor has been delivered and is scheduled to be installed soon. Painting and additional deco coating are all due to be completed in the near future.