

**BERTHA KENNEDY CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

**STUDENT AGENDA HANDBOOK  
2024 - 2025**



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Greater St. Albert Roman Catholic Separate School District No. 734

Loved by God....Nurtured by Community...Every Student a Success



**Greater St. Albert  
Catholic Schools**

## MESSAGE FROM THE ADMINISTRATORS

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to Bertha Kennedy Catholic School and the **2024-2025** school year. We are privileged to have such wonderful, caring families. In collaboration with parents and the community, we work to provide the best possible learning environment to meet the needs of each student. We believe that strong teacher-parent partnerships provide students with the support they need to be successful.

Our three year faith theme, "Growing the Trinity: Love, Mercy & Grace" will be promoted through our liturgies, permeated within teachable moments, and demonstrated through service to others and by celebrating our faith in God. We encourage you to join us at our celebrations and masses throughout the school year. Together, 'We are all God's Hands,' as we strive to demonstrate Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy throughout our daily lives.

Two-way communication among all stakeholders is critical for students' success. This handbook - together with our website, parent weekly updates, Facebook page, Instagram account, GSACRD website, and other means of communication - are part of our desire to forge strong partnerships with parents. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call the school or contact your child's teacher.

We also wish to continue the spirit of cooperation that has flourished between the school, home, and local parish. Working together, and being informed, provides our students with the best opportunities for success. Your efforts in remaining involved in the life of our school are very much encouraged and appreciated. We wish all of our students a successful and wonderful school year!

Lisa Giacobbo - Principal  
Leisa Michael - Vice-Principal

### SCHOOL DAY AND BELLS

8:55 a.m. - First Bell  
9:00 a.m. - Morning Classes Begin  
12:20 p.m. - Lunch Hour Begins  
3:30 p.m. - End of School Day



Kindergarten Morning: 8:55 a.m. – 11:47 a.m.  
Kindergarten Afternoon: 12:38 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.  
PRE-Kinder Morning: 8:55 a.m. – 11:47 a.m.

## PATRON SAINT of Bertha Kennedy Catholic Elementary School

ST. TERESA OF CALCUTTA Is the patron saint of our school; she shared a desire to serve and help others, similarly to our school namesake, Bertha Kennedy. Just as St. Teresa worked diligently to be God's Hands in the world, so we work to live our school motto: "**We Are All God's Hands.**" We celebrate her Feast Day on September 5.

### ST. TERESA LEGACY PRAYER

God, our Creator,  
We thank you for the gift of our sister, St. Teresa of Calcutta.  
Her hands were your hands, as she worked to serve the poorest of the poor.  
Help us follow her example of unselfish love,  
as we use our hands to build your Kingdom! Amen.

### **MRS. BERTHA KENNEDY**

March 11, 1909 – June 28, 2004

Mary Bertha Kennedy (Brennand) was born in Lancashire, England on March 11, 1909 and came to Canada in 1921. She attended St. Francis Elementary School in Edmonton and completed her high school education at St. Mary's. Mrs. Kennedy then studied at Normal School in Calgary for the 1926-1927 term. Her first teaching position was in Strome, Alberta. From there, she moved on to teach in Bruce, Guilbault, St. Albert, Volmer, and Dunvegan Yards. During those years, she taught Grades 1–9, often in a one-room schoolhouse.



In 1935, she married Andrew Kennedy and moved to St. Albert in 1938. In 1940, the Kennedys moved to a farm east of St. Albert. In 1953, Bertha began teaching in St. Albert in the old brick school. The Kennedys sold the farm in 1957 and moved back to St. Albert, where Bertha taught in Mission Park, Father Jan, and Albert Lacombe schools until her retirement in 1974.

Over the years, Bertha Kennedy was deeply committed and involved in many aspects of community life. Her choirs and music programs contributed much to the school and cultural life in St. Albert. We were very privileged to have had Mrs. Kennedy visit our school on many occasions. Mrs. Kennedy passed away on June 28, 2004, at age 95. May she rest in peace in God's loving arms.

## **BICYCLE/ROLLERBLADE/SKATEBOARD/ SCOOTER SAFETY**

Parents are asked to review bicycle, rollerblade, skateboard, and scooter safety with their children. In compliance with City by-laws, all students must wear helmets when using any of these items. None are to be ridden during the school day; they should only be used to travel to and from school. To ensure the safety of all students, students must not ride on school property. For security reasons, we suggest students use a good-quality bike lock to secure bicycles to the provided bike rack. We cannot guarantee the safety of any personal items from vandalism or theft.



## **SCHOOL ENTRY**

Students will enter the building, through their assigned doors, at the first bell at 8:55 a.m. Staff will greet and supervise students. If a student is late, they should enter the front doors of the school and report to the office first. We cannot, unless under special circumstances, be responsible for students dropped off at school prior to 8:45 a.m. Such special circumstances could include sports practices, other events, or field trips organized by school staff. Please report your child's absence online through PowerSchool Parent Portal.

## **LUNCH**

Students go outside for lunch recess at 12:20 p.m. and will eat their lunches at 12:45 p.m. They will remain in their classroom while eating their lunches. If you want to pick up your child for lunch, please report to the office first.

## **FOOTWEAR POLICY**

All students must have two pairs of footwear: one for indoor use and one for outdoor use. This policy helps us keep our school clean and neat. **Students are required to wear footwear at all times.** In warm weather, please ensure that your child's footwear is safe for active play.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION POLICY**

All students will participate in physical education classes and are required to wear non-skid runners. Grades 4-6 students are requested to change into a T-shirt and a pair of shorts/sweatpants for P.E. class.



## **HEALTHY BOBKATS**

At Bertha Kennedy Catholic School, we are committed to supporting our students as they make choices to live healthy, active, and positive lifestyles. Health and education are interdependent, and healthy students are better learners.

As a School Community, we:

- recognize that healthy young people learn better and achieve more;
- understand that schools can directly influence students' health and behaviours;
- encourage healthy lifestyle choices and promote students' health and well-being;
- incorporate health into all aspects of school and learning;
- link health and education issues and systems; and
- need the participation and support of families and the community at large.

We also recognize that making healthy choices is a lifelong process.

## **SUPPLIES AND TEXTBOOKS**

All students are responsible for providing their basic school supplies, as requested on the supply list. In addition, as students use textbooks during the year; we ask that these books be treated with care.



Parents/guardians will be charged for any textbooks that are damaged or not returned. GSACRD encourages students in Grades 4-6 to bring their own robust device such as a Chromebook.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Frequently, personal items, especially clothing, become misplaced. If items are **labeled** with names, it greatly assists in their speedy return. Every individual item must be **labeled**, as students are not allowed to share items.

## **CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS**

The teachers at Bertha Kennedy Catholic School believe in the success of every student. To that end, each teacher develops an appropriate learning climate according to the needs of their students. Classroom agreements and routines will be developed by the teacher and students.

## **PLAYGROUND SAFETY**

1. Sand is necessary for good drainage and is not to be picked up or thrown. Snow is also to remain on the ground; no snowballs.
2. Rough play and play fighting are not allowed. Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself.
3. Follow all instructions given by supervisors.
4. Take control of your outdoor play problems by following these steps:
  - a. Speak personally to the person(s) involved.
  - b. Report to a supervisor if the person(s) involved does not co-operate.

## **LUNCH ROUTINE EXPECTATIONS**

1. Wash your hands BEFORE you get your lunch.
2. Eat your lunch while seated at your OWN desk.
3. Use a quiet voice to have appropriate conversations with others near you.
4. Eat your OWN food. For safety reasons, do not ask for other people's food or exchange food with others.
5. On dismissal, clear your desk and area of all garbage, and put away your lunch container.

## **BERTHA KENNEDY SCHOOL AGREEMENTS**

At Bertha Kennedy, we provide a safe and caring environment for our students to learn and play effectively. We have developed school agreements and will model behaviour expectations for the benefit of all. We will strive to be the best "BKATS" (**B**elieve **K**indness **A**ttitude **T**eamwork **S**afety) we can be. We try to help students learn from their choices and behaviours and to plan for appropriate decisions and behaviours in the future. We also work with them to practice appropriate behaviour and responses and to repair damaged relationships.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### Safe and Caring Schools

Our philosophy is to live in the spirit of Jesus; therefore, we believe that every member of our school community should foster dignity, respect, and service through their actions, and that every individual should be treated with dignity and respect. Our practice is guided by this philosophy; we encourage appropriate interactions. Parents play an integral role in supporting positive behaviour, which promotes and nurtures a safe and caring school environment.

## ***Sustaining a Safe and Caring Learning Environment in Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools***

### *Definitions:*

1. Harassment refers to derogatory (e.g. excessively critical, insulting, belittling) or vexatious (e.g., aggressive, angry, antagonistic) conduct or comments that are known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be offensive or unwelcome. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following:
  - a. any objectionable comment, act, or display that demeans, belittles, or causes personal humiliation or embarrassment, and any act of intimidation or threat;
  - b. conduct or comments involving any of the prohibited grounds of harassment and discrimination as defined in the *Alberta Human Rights Act*.

Any form of harassment may be caused by a single incident or a series of events.

2. Sexual Harassment includes comments, gestures, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, where an individual knows, or ought reasonably to know, that the behaviour is unwelcome and personally offensive. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- a. inappropriate or derogatory comments, humour, insults, or behaviour based on gender and/or gender expression and/or gender identity;
- b. inappropriate, lewd, or sexually offensive written, graphic, or behavioural displays on school property;
- c. inappropriate, lewd, or sexually offensive slogans or graphics displayed on clothing worn on school property or during school-related activities;
- d. inappropriate conversation, physical touching, or leering that could be construed to be a sexual advance;
- e. inappropriate conversation regarding an individual's sexual behaviour;
- f. unsolicited and/or unwanted requests to engage in sexual activity;
- g. reprisal, or threat of reprisal, against an individual for rejecting a sexual solicitation or advance.

3. Bullying refers to repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by an individual where the behaviour is intended to cause harm, fear, or distress to another individual in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to the individual's reputation. Bullying often occurs in circumstances where one party endeavours to maintain power and control over another based upon systemic inequalities within a social setting.

### **Harassment and Bullying Codes of Conduct**

Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools does not tolerate harassment and bullying in any of its schools and/or sites or at all. To this end, the Division has implemented (and revised) the following Administrative Procedures, which will serve as the basis for addressing matters pertaining to harassment and bullying:

- a. Student Discipline Framework, Administrative Procedure 350
- b. Harassment Administrative Procedure 460 (Employees)
- c. Harassment Administrative Procedure 358 (Division Students)
- d. Safe and Caring Learning Environments Administrative Procedure 359
- e. Code of Conduct Review to Address Bullying Behaviour Administrative Procedure 360
- f. Accommodating and Respecting Gender Identity and Expression Administrative Procedure 361
- g. Use of Technology Administrative Procedure 140
- h. Social Media Administrative Procedure 149

### **Expectations**

1. No action toward another student, regardless of the intent of that action, will, or is intended to, cause harm, fear, or distress to that student.
2. No action toward another student within the school community will, or intend to, diminish the student's reputation within the school community.
3. Any action that contributes to a perception of Bullying, whether it occurs during school time, or after school hours, or whether by electronic or other means, will be addressed by the school, if it is determined that the actions impact the well-being of the alleged victim within the school community.
4. Any action that humiliates, or contributes to diminishing the reputation of a student because of race, religious beliefs, colour, gender identification, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, ancestry, age, place of origin, marital status of parents, source of income of parents,

family circumstances, gender expression, or gender identity of a student.

5. No report by a student that he/she is being "harassed" or "bullied" will be ignored by a school official. The official will report the incident to the school principal who shall investigate the matter and act in accordance with *Harassment Administrative Procedure 358 (Students)*, as required.
6. In establishing consequences for bullying, teachers and principals will use corrective interventions that consider the context of the circumstance, the behavioural history of the students involved, and the age/stage of development of the student.
7. If in the opinion of the teacher or principal that an act of Bullying has occurred, interventions will be applied dedicated to stopping the behaviour in the future, and supporting the victimized student. Those disciplined for their involvement in bullying will be told what to "stop" doing and what to "start" doing in order to further a safe and caring culture within the school.
8. Incidences of Bullying that adversely impact the safety of individuals, or are an affront to the common good of the school community may be addressed through application of applicable administrative procedures and practices, including *Harassment Administrative Procedures 358 (Division Students)* and *460 (Employees)*.
9. Students will not be discriminated against according to the application that the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* has to the School Board as a Catholic Separate School Division.
10. All actions by students that impact the safety and well-being of students or staff will be addressed through the *Student Discipline Framework AP 350* and the *Harassment AP 358 (Division Students)* as appropriate.
11. The expectation for students in all their school-related interactions that pertain to the School Division is that they:
  - a. conduct themselves in a manner which upholds the dignity and worth of all members of the school community;
  - b. be aware of and adhere to their school's *Code of Conduct*; and
  - c. be aware of these expectations from the school's and division's standards for creating a safe and caring school.

12. Appropriate interventions and supports will be provided to the student who has engaged in wrongdoing to ensure that the student establishes productive, positive behaviours in the future.

A specific *Code of Conduct for Students* to support these expectations is as follows:

### **Our School's Expectations**

At Bertha Kennedy, we work to ensure that the dignity of each person is maintained. In all of our interactions, we uphold the virtues of the Catholic faith, as we serve with a Christ-like attitude, ensuring the gospel values are evident. We value and foster our relationships with parents-students-staff, as we work to show care for all.

1. Students are expected to respect and respond to the request of another student in terms of how that student requests to be treated.
2. Students have a responsibility to treat others in our school community in ways that they will be fully accepted and valued by all other students.
3. Justification by the instigator of harmful behaviour to others (e.g. "I was just joking") does not justify harmful behaviour to others.
4. Behaviours that are harmful to others, or result in marginalizing others, because of who they are, where they have come from, who they like and associate with, and where they live, are considered to be acts of bullying.
5. Students have a responsibility to report to an adult within the school any act that is known to be planned, is about to take place, or has happened, by a student or students that would create harm to others.

This code will be reviewed for its effectiveness in meeting Division expectations annually.

Please note that *Section 32* of the *Education Act*, specifies the following for parents:

A parent has the prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be provided to the parent's child, and as a partner in education, has the responsibility to:

- a) act as the primary guide and decision-maker with respect to the child's education;
- b) take an active role in the child's educational success, including assisting the child in complying with *section 31*;
- c) ensure that the child attends school regularly;
- d) ensure that the parent's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment;
- e) co-operate and collaborate with school staff to support the delivery of supports and services to the child;
- f) encourage, foster, and advance collaborative, positive, and respectful relationships with teachers, principals, other school staff and professionals providing supports and services in the school; and
- g) engage in the child's school community.

Bertha Kennedy Catholic School values your participation within our school community to support the safety, well-being, and success of all our students.

## Personal Mobile Devices

As a school community, we want to clearly articulate the expectations for students around personal mobile devices in our schools. As you may have heard, the Government of Alberta recently issued a Ministerial Order outlining new restrictions for personal mobile devices in schools. To comply with the Ministerial Order, Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools has implemented [Administrative Procedure 325 - Student Use of Personal Mobile Devices and Social Media](#), which outlines the expectations for students moving forward.

Bertha Kennedy has long believed that in order to prioritize teaching and learning, personal mobile devices require restrictions in schools.

Expectations for students around Personal Mobile Devices:

- Cell phones are not permitted to be used by students in the school and on school grounds for the duration of the school day from arrival to departure.
- Students who choose to bring cell phones to school must keep the device in the bin provided in their classroom at all times during the school day.
- Smartwatches are not to be used to connect to the internet or to communicate with others during school hours and notifications should be turned off to eliminate distractions.
- Tablets and laptops will continue to be used as instructional tools under the direction of the teacher. Students will be welcome to bring them to class as they have in the past.

Consequences:

- Students found using their phones in class or during school hours will be asked to hand their phones over to a teacher or to the administration. Parents will be notified and students will be expected to keep their phones at home

or turn them into the office each morning for five consecutive school days.

- Students found misusing their smartwatches will be asked to turn them off, hand them in to their teacher or leave them at home.
- In the event that students are in breach of these expectations, parents/guardians will be notified.