



## Learning Is Our Central Purpose

Education has undergone numerous changes in the 125 years the Calgary Board of Education has been serving Calgary students and their families, but perhaps none more profound than the rapid changes occurring in the past number of years. Globalization, advances in digital technologies and ongoing brain research are critical factors for educators to consider as they develop strategies and actions to best meet the learning needs of today's student. No longer is it adequate for students to learn the 3 R's (reading, writing and 'rithmetic), but rather students are now required to display the 3 E's – demonstrating they are ethical, entrepreneurial and engaged.

Recognizing that the central purpose of the CBE is learning it is important to state that we believe *all* students can learn. This belief is evident in each one of our schools on any given day in the school year. With learning as our central purpose, our focus on personalizing learning ensures that each of our students gain the essentials for life, work and future learning. Every individual CBE student is valued for the strengths and understandings he/she brings to the learning environment. Students are guided in using their individual strengths and prior knowledge, in concert with understandings developed collaboratively, to support new learnings and promote further explorations. CBE staff members lead students in making connections between learnings, new and old, and the student's world outside the school environment. These connections form learning relevance, and it is this relevance that enables students to become fully engaged in the learning process. By engaging deeply in the learning process students develop greater confidence in their own abilities, higher levels of skill development, and greater learning autonomy – all leading to an increased desire for life-long learning.

Deep understandings are the goals of *learning* – the central purpose of our school jurisdiction. Our core purpose – learning -- supports our value that public education serves the common good. Educated citizens ensure the continuation of a vibrant, democratic society in that they use their knowledge and understandings to question, to understand other points of view and seek solutions to problems. By personalizing learning and helping students create their own learning relevance, we empower them in exploring and pursuing talents and interests; developing the skills, attitudes and knowledge necessary to succeed in life beyond high school. Personalization allows students to develop understandings that are meaningful to them, helping them to become more active and engaged participants on their learning journeys.

### The Tragedy in Haiti

When tragedy of the magnitude of the devastating earthquake in Haiti strikes, the fragility of life is put into stark perspective and the concept of a global village takes on a whole new meaning. We are all connected in more ways than ever before, which makes the events in Haiti all the more heartbreaking.

To those who have experienced loss as a result of this disaster, I would like to express my sincerest sympathies. Our system shares in your grief and we offer our full support to all staff, students and their families who are personally affected during this difficult time.

Naomi E. Johnson  
Chief Superintendent of Schools

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