



## École Père Kenneth Kearns Catholic School

*With Christ as our ever-present teacher, in an environment rich in French Language and culture, we ensure every child succeeds: personally, spiritually, academically.*

8 Sandpiper Drive

Sherwood Park, Alberta T8A 0B6

PH: 780-467-7135

[epk.eics.ab.ca](http://epk.eics.ab.ca)

# Kindergarten Orientation Package

**YOU'VE MADE A GREAT CHOICE!**

Welcome to the École Père Kenneth Kearns Catholic School French Immersion Program for 2022-2023. We are so glad that you chose to join the ÉPK family and to be part of the Catholic French Immersion Advantage! We are looking forward to working with you this year, and celebrating the many successes your child will experience throughout their learning career!

This orientation package contains very important information to help you and your child join the ÉPK family with ease. It also provides you with information relevant for the entire year.

Further newsletters will be published regularly to keep you informed of school activities and news. These are often sent via email and we encourage you to subscribe to receive these emails. Another fantastic resource for class and school events is the school website [epk.eics.ab.ca](http://epk.eics.ab.ca). We recommend that you to visit it often as we update it regularly.

We look forward to working with you throughout the year!

*École Père Kenneth Kearns Catholic School Kindergarten Teachers and School Leadership Team*



## YES, YOU CAN HELP!

The French Immersion program is designed for all families: families who do not speak French at home, families who speak some French at home, and families who speak primarily French at home.

Many times, parents are concerned they will not be able to help their child because they themselves do not speak French. Allow us to set your minds and hearts at peace. There is so much you can do to support your child's French Immersion learning!

We invite you to reference the following links as they will share with you the many ways you can support your child's learning in French Immersion without knowing the language. Learning is learning, numeracy is numeracy and literacy is literacy....no matter what language!

- ✓ **Canadian Parents for French: Yes, You Can Help** is a great document filled with exceptional information for parents of children in French Immersion. It is full of examples on how to support your child in French Immersion, and much, much more.

<https://education.alberta.ca/media/563591/yesyoucanhelp.pdf>

- ✓ **French Immersion Kindergarten in Alberta: A Handbook for Parents** is another excellent document that outlines what you can expect your child to learn in the French Immersion program, your child's personal progress and more ways to participate in your child's learning.

<https://education.alberta.ca/media/1477200/handbookfrimmkindergarten.pdf>

## GETTING INVOLVED

Parent involvement and partnerships between home and school is vital to ensuring your child's success. There are many ways you can become involved in your child's learning! Thank you in advance for sharing your time and your gifts with your child, the class and the school as a whole. Your participation truly enriches your child's learning experiences. Parents and volunteers are always welcome with open arms.



Ways to become involved:

- **Help in Class**
  - You will be invited to visit the classroom and help several times during the year. A calendar of volunteers will be prepared after you advise the teacher of the days you will be available.

- Volunteer for Special Events and Activities
  - Just to name a few, parents are welcome to volunteer for L'épluchette (A French Canadian Harvest celebration), Carnaval, ÉPK Family Fun Night, National Indigenous Peoples Day, Sports Day, Faith Day along with many classroom specific field trips and activities. A great time to sign up is during our Meet the Staff event.
- Be a classroom representative
  - Participate in School Council and work closely with the Principal to learn all the ins and outs of what is going on in the school
  - Be a voice for your child's class and provide information and feedback about decisions affecting ÉPK
- Loom Les ceintures fléchées Carnaval Belts
  - Our amazing ÉPK School Council in collaboration with ÉPK school wants to ensure every child has a Carnaval belt of school colours to wear during ÉPK and French Canadian celebrations. Take time to loom and network with fellow Kindergarten parents.
- Support ÉPK from home
  - There are many ways to support your child's class and school by helping with projects or special events from home.
- Attend ÉPK School Council Meetings
  - This is a great opportunity to meet other ÉPK parents, learn about the amazing events happening at ÉPK, get involved in whole school activities and be a voice for School Council and ÉPK School leadership regarding ÉPK's bright future. Visit <https://epk.eics.ab.ca/parents/school-council> for more information and once a month meeting dates.



What is ÉPK School Council?

École Père Kenneth Kearns Catholic School also has a fantastic School Council. Each month they meet to help guide the direction of the school, assist in decision making that affect all ÉPK students and keep up to date on the amazing opportunities for students. They also plan and coordinate special events, as well as establish

fundraising opportunities to support Faith experiences at school, and many Cultural events. It is also an excellent way to get to know other parents in the school, and develop lasting relationships. As a parent of a child(ren) attending ÉPK, you are encouraged to attend meetings as well as participate in the planning and volunteering for events. Ensuring we have Kindergarten parent voices is vital. All meeting dates are posted on the school website at [epk.eics.ab.ca](http://epk.eics.ab.ca) under Parents.

## STARTING KINDERGARTEN WITH EASE

### **Small Group Orientation: Reserve Yours Today!**

We are so excited to welcome your child to their first year at Ecole Pere Kenneth Kearns. It is a privilege to be part of their learning journey and I can't wait to get started.

Recognizing that coming to school for the first time may be a little stressful on young children {and parents too} I am planning a slight deviation from a typical day. On your child's first day of school, either September 1st for the M/W alternating Friday group or September 02 for the T/Th alternating Friday group, he/she will attend for half a day only. Smaller groups have been organized allowing for a less busy and a more gentle beginning. For your assigned day your child will either attend from 9:00 - 11:00 am or 12:30 - 2:30 pm. Please verify the date and start time at the bottom of this letter. On your child's next scheduled day, classes will resume to regular hours, drop off can begin @ 8:30 and dismissal is at 3:11. They will also be able to access the bus if that is what your family has planned. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Please see attached letter for your child's Staggered Entry Appointment.

If you have any questions, please contact us. ÉPK school office will remain open until Tuesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022. After this day, if you prefer to call, please leave a voicemail as the office will re-open August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022. We will respond to all emails and voicemail messages received throughout the summer during the week of August 22 – August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

On the day of your child's small group orientation, parents will be responsible for their child's transportation both to and from school.

We invite you to visit our website at [epk.eics.ab.ca](http://epk.eics.ab.ca) to learn more about the exciting opportunities your child will experience and the caring compassionate staff who are looking forward to joyfully welcoming your child to the ÉPK family!

If you coordinated bussing through EICS, it will officially begin Thursday, September 1st, 2022.



## GETTING STARTED

### First Day of School – After your staggered entry

Morning Classes: Thursday, September 1st, 2022

M-F Full Day Program: Thursday, September 1st, 2022

Tues/Thursday Full Day Program: Thursday, September 1st, 2022

On the first day of school you are invited to meet fellow Kindergarten parents and share in the first-day-of-school joys and jitters. We open our library to you and Kindergarten parents to help celebrate with you. There will be complimentary refreshments available for you to enjoy. We look forward to meeting with you.

### Class Times

Morning & Full Day (M-F) Kindergarten Class:

- 8:30AM to 11:45AM for the AM student
- 8:30AM to 3:10PM for the full day students
- Monday through Friday throughout the year
- 



Tuesday/Thursday Full Day Program:

- 8:42AM to 3:10PM on Tuesday and Thursdays.
- 8:42AM to 3:10PM on the following Fridays: Sept 2, 16, Oct 21, Nov 18, Dec 2, 16, Jan 6, 20, Feb 3, 17, Mar 10, Apr. 21, May 12, Jun 2.

Last day of School for AM Kindergarten class is: Wed, June 21, 2023.

Last day for Full Day Kindergarten class is: Wed, June 21, 2023

Last day of School for T/Th Kindergarten class is: Tuesday, June 20 2023.



Please visit the school website at [epk.eics.ab.ca](http://epk.eics.ab.ca) for a complete timetable.



Attached to the orientation package email is the EICS District Calendar. It can also be accessed at <https://www.eics.ab.ca/schools/calendar> or at <https://epk.eics.ab.ca/calendar>.

## WHERE TO PARK

You are welcome to park:

- Visitor parking is available in any stall in front of the school
- Back parking lot
- On Flamingo Drive.

We thank you in advance for being courteous to our neighbors by keeping their driveways available for access.

We have a very safe and efficient morning student drop-off and afterschool student pick-up process. For your convenience, the pick-up and drop-off procedures are attached to this email, and can also be found on our website at <https://epk.eics.ab.ca/parents/faq>. To ensure safety at the front of the school during our drop-off and after school student pick-up, the front parking area directly in front of the school is reserved for staff parking.



## WHAT TO BRING

We ask that your child brings the following personal items:

- A pair of runners with white soles, preferably with Velcro closure (to be kept at school)





- Backpack & Lunch Kit
- Water Bottle
- A set of spare clothing for your child (pants, shirt, socks and underwear in a labeled Ziploc bag)



Please label these items with your child's name so they can easily be identified and returned if misplaced.

Your child's school supply list should accompany this orientation package however it is also available at <https://epk.eics.ab.ca/parents/school-supply-lists>.

Please bring all supplies to your Orientation Session.

### **Helping your child become independent is a fantastic gift!**

Please prepare your children to dress themselves by having them practice fastening their coat and shoes.

## **FIELD TRIPS AND ENHANCED PROGRAMMING**

ÉPK Kindergarten children will be participating in a number of field trips this year as well as engage in special activities to enhance their learning experience. Several of these field trips have associated costs and will be the responsibility of parents. We aim to keep the cost of field trips as low as possible.

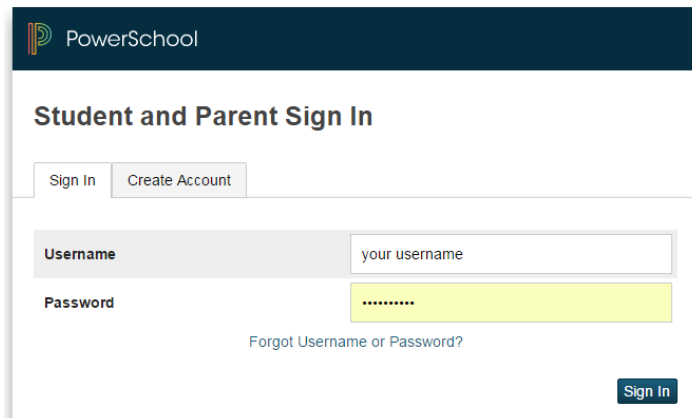
For ease of payment, we do our best to estimate the field trip costs at the beginning of the year, and charge one combined total to cover the year's trips. We anticipate a similar cost for field trips and enhanced programming as last year. Last year the total field trip/enhanced programming costs were \$210. Should there be money remaining at the end of the year, it will be used for the year end celebration. Should the estimate for the 2022-2023 field trips/enhanced programming costs be insufficient to cover the actual expenses, it will be communicated to you for payment.

New this year, and for your convenience, these field trip/enhanced programming costs will be available for payment by debit or credit card online under your PowerSchool Parent Portal Account.



## What is a Parent Portal Account?

This is an account that you will create for yourself in our school's software system called PowerSchool. Your account will give you access to your child's field trip costs, report cards, student forms and more! You can pay your field trip costs using debit or credit card online. **This program will be used every year at ÉPK.** Set up your account today!

The image shows the PowerSchool login interface. At the top is the PowerSchool logo. Below it is the heading "Student and Parent Sign In". There are two buttons: "Sign In" and "Create Account". Below these are input fields for "Username" (containing "your username") and "Password" (containing "\*\*\*\*\*"). A link "Forgot Username or Password?" is located below the password field. A "Sign In" button is at the bottom right.

If you have any questions, please call the school at 780-467-7135. Thank you for paying field trip fees prior to April 30th, 2023. Please note that fees not paid before May 1, 2023 will be sent to collections.

## SNACKS

**Every day**, the children will have snack time. Thank you for ensuring that your child has a snack. Please keep snacks small and nutritious. Adhering to the Canada Food Guidelines will help keep your child healthy and ready for learning. Throughout the year there will be themes that will align with children's learning. We encourage you to have fun with these themes and have snacks complimentary to the theme.

When students are in class the full day, students will need a lunch and a second snack.

Thank you for helping us keep École Père Kenneth Kearns Catholic School a **nut sensitive** school. Please remember to read ingredient labels carefully when packing your child's snack to help ensure food is nut free.





## SETTING YOUR CHILD UP FOR SUCCESS



The first day of school can bring a mix of emotions for students and families alike...excitement and jitters. This is very normal. With Christ as our guide, we assure you that your children are in caring and compassionate hands.

There are many things that can be done to help make the back-to-school transition easier. When you, as a parent or guardian, interact with and support your children, they are more likely to be successful.

### **You can help set your child up for success by helping them know:**

- Their name, address and phone number;
- How to put on and take off outer clothing independently;
- How to take care of their basic toilet needs on their own; and
- How to be patient and wait their turn.

### **Positive Talk and Routines at home also help set the stage for successful learning:**

- Establish a bed routine that ensures adequate rest;
- Help your child learn letters, numbers, colors and shapes;
- Read to them daily (Reading in English helps children make connections in French);
- Let them learn by trying new activities;
- Practice the route they will take to and from school;
- Talk about making new friends and doing new activities; and
- Invest in your child's learning: whenever possible volunteer at school and in the classroom
- Encourage independence and exploring the world around them – hands on exploration.

## Questions to Ask Your Kids When They Get Home From School

(instead of "How was school today?")



1. What was the funniest thing that happened today?
2. Did you do something nice for someone?
3. Did someone do something nice for you?
4. What challenged you today?
5. What did you eat for lunch?
6. What games did you play at recess?
7. Who made you smile today?
8. What was one thing that you learned in class?
9. What did you learn about one of your friends/classmates?
10. On a scale from 1 to 10, how was today?
11. Did anything troubling happen at school today? Did someone push your buttons?
12. What is your favorite thing about your teacher?
13. What are you hoping to learn about tomorrow?
14. Did you make any new friends?
15. Does anyone in your class have a hard time following rules?
16. What is one thing that you did today that makes you proud?
17. Did you have trouble with anything you were learning today?
18. What are you most excited to keep learning about?
19. What subject do you like the most?
20. If you were the teacher, what subject would you teach?
21. Did you hear about any new books we can read?
22. How do you describe your family to your friends?
23. Did anyone do anything gross today?
24. If you could change one school rule, what would it be and why?
25. What school grade are you most excited for?

## WHEN IT GETS COLD...

Extreme weather conditions can cause school closures and/or suspension of school bus services. When this happens, special announcements will be made on most radio stations and/or check [www.eics.ab.ca](http://www.eics.ab.ca). You will also receive a phone message outlining details of the closures. Cold weather may also prevent children from going outside for extended periods of time. Please visit <https://epk.eics.ab.ca/parents/fag> for ÉPK's cold weather practices.

## WHEN YOUR CHILD IS AWAY FROM SCHOOL

If your child is not attending school, please contact the school and share:

- the name of your child
- his/her homeroom classroom



- the reason for the absence and
- the duration of the absence.

#### Absences can be reported in several ways:

- Please go to the Safe Arrival website:
- <https://go.schoolmessenger.ca/#/account/signup>
- Call the toll free number: 1-844-478-2613
- Report the absence through the smartphone mobile APP: SchoolMessenger
- Email us at [epk@eics.ab.ca](mailto:epk@eics.ab.ca)

If you have any questions or require assistance, please contact us at the school at  
780-467-7135

To ensure student safety, we check student attendance in the morning and afternoon.

### TAKING THE BUS

If you coordinated bussing through EICS, it will officially begin Thursday, September 1st, 2022. Your child's bus driver will notify you by phone just prior to school starting as to the time and location of your child's pick-up. Please make sure you ask the bus driver for the number of the bus your child will be taking to **return** home after school.



Your child will receive bus passes within the first few days of school. We strongly encourage you to attach these passes to the outside of your child's back pack so that it is easily visible. This will assist your child as well as the staff in ensuring your child boards the correct bus.

If you have applied for bussing on your registration, to date, no further information is available regarding routes. If you have not yet requested bussing, and would like to, please go to [www.eics.ab.ca](http://www.eics.ab.ca) and click **Transportation** to complete an application.

Throughout the summer, routes will be established by the EICS Transportation Department. We thank you in advance for your patience, as the EICS Transportation Department works hard to serve all EICS students. As soon as details are confirmed, you will be notified by the EICS Transportation Department. If you have any questions, please contact the Transportation Department at Elk Island Catholic Schools 780-449-6480.





Please note, bus pick-up and drop-off points will be the nearest bus stop to your house on the route. For safety reasons, urban buses are not allowed into keyhole crescents or any areas that necessitate backing up.

Flashing lights are no longer permitted in Sherwood Park. Students should be at the bus stop **PRIOR** to the arrival of the bus.

Transferring buses may be necessary for some students, even in Kindergarten. Don't worry, the students are well taken care of and they learn quickly. You can help by ensuring bus passes as well as bus numbers are visible on the exterior of your child's backpack. There are always supervisors at transfer points to help ensure children get to their correct bus. Please encourage your child to go to a supervisor (usually wearing a reflective vest) if they are confused.

Time spent riding the bus may vary according to routes. However, attempts will be made for "First On – First Off" basis whenever circumstances permit.

Buses shall not wait for tardy students. The children must learn to dress themselves quickly, even in winter. Thank you for making every effort to have your child ready for pick up, as well as being at the bus stop for drop off.

During field trips that operate outside of regular Kindergarten route times, transportation becomes the responsibility of the parent to and from school. These situations are rare, and mostly apply when there is a field trip outside of regular programming hours or days. Teachers communicate these dates well in advance to allow parents time to make arrangements for child pick-up or drop off.

Should parents require that their child be dropped off at an address other than their own, please communicate this to the Transportation Department, at 780- 449-6480

## A PRECIOUS GIFT

Your child is a gift from God. We at ÉPK, with Christ as our ever-present teacher, in an environment rich in French language and culture, together with you, will ensure your child succeeds: personally, spiritually and academically. Your child will be cherished, encouraged and inspired at ÉPK.



We look forward to seeing you in the fall. May your summer be blessed with abundant joy!

If you have any questions please contact us at [epk@eics.ab.ca](mailto:epk@eics.ab.ca) or by phone at 780-467-7135. ÉPK school office will remain open until Tuesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022. After this day, if you prefer to call, please leave a voicemail as the office will reopen August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022. We will respond to all emails and voicemail messages received throughout the summer during the week of August 22 – August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

Peace and light,

École Père Kenneth Kearns Catholic School Kindergarten & School Leadership Teams

**Kindergarten Teaching Team**

Mme Alisa Akkerman (T/Th alternating Fri)

Mme Janelle Tremblay-Butz (AM and Full days)

[epk.eics.ab.ca](mailto:epk@eics.ab.ca)



**ÉPK School Leadership Team**

Mme Jacqueline Dargis-Boucher – Principal/Directrice

M Daniel Holden – Directeur Adjoint/Assistant Principal



## Unity

I dreamt I stood in a studio,  
And watched two sculptors there.  
The clay they used was a young child's mind,  
And they fashioned it with care.  
One was a teacher, the tools he used  
Were books, music, and art.  
One a parent with a guiding hand  
And a gentle loving heart.

Day after day, the teacher toiled,  
With a touch that was deft and sure.  
While the parent labored by his side,  
And polished and smoothed it o'er.

And when at last, their work was done,  
They were proud of what they had wrought.  
For the things they had molded into the child,  
Could neither be sold nor bought.

And each agreed they would have failed  
If each had worked alone,  
For behind the parent stood the school  
And behind the teacher the home.

-Author Unknown

