



CITY HALL SCHOOL

ANNUAL REPORT
2023–2024



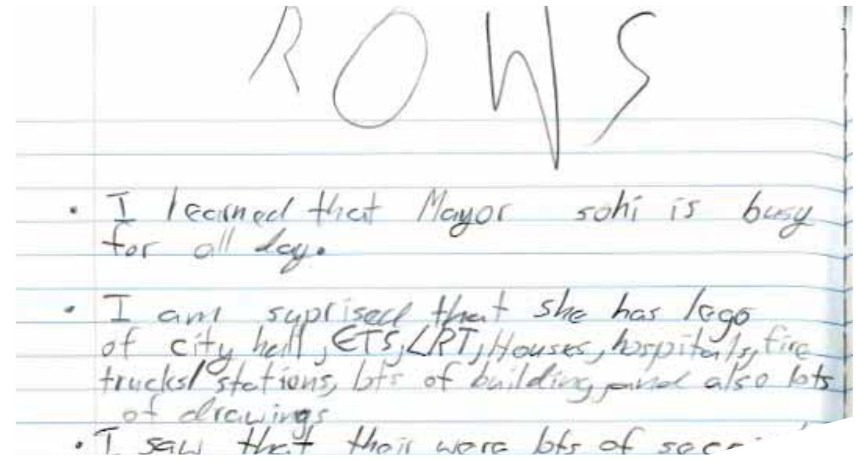
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INQUIRING MINDS CONNECTIONS

City Hall School is one of Edmonton's many [Inquiring Minds Site Schools](#). Site schools offer teachers an opportunity to move their class to a community location for a tailored week of hands-on, experiential learning. Throughout this engaging experience, students immerse themselves in curriculum-related activities, make connections with the community, engage in real-world problem-solving tasks, and document their experiences through journaling.

This [Beyond the Classroom Network](#) approach to learning was pioneered by Gillain Kydd over 25 years ago. This program is supported by both the Edmonton Public and Edmonton Catholic School Boards.



“Being a part of City Hall School has fostered curiosity and allowed my kids to be inquisitive. It has taught them the skill of how to ask strong questions. This program has given us the opportunities to be true explorers and learn through investigation.”

- Teacher



inquiring minds



EDMONTON
CATHOLIC
SCHOOLS

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HOW CITY HALL SCHOOL CONNECTS

City Hall School, launched in 2006, offers students a hands-on approach to learning outside of the traditional classroom settings. This initiative is a collaboration between the City of Edmonton and Edmonton Public Schools and involves seconding a teacher to develop the program. Tailored to Grade 1-12 students from both the Edmonton Public and Edmonton Catholic School Boards, City Hall School provides engaging, year-long programming related to municipal government and curricular outcomes.

“My students really enjoyed the hands-on learning and being out of the classroom. Active participation as well as frequent opportunities to reflect through journaling were emphasized. I felt these were learning practices that will have a profound impact on my students.”

- Teacher





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By leaving the classroom and immersing themselves in the rich learning community at City Hall, students develop an understanding of municipal government, citizenship, social responsibility and our city. They learn that this landmark building is not just the home of civic leadership but also a gathering place for the community.

“This week has changed me a lot. I will help change my city by voting when I am of age and will write letters to my City Councillor if there is an issue affecting my neighbourhood or if there is anything we can do to make our city a better place.”

– Grade 6 Student

WHO WE CONNECTED WITH IN 2023/24

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NAKOTA ISGA

Bishop David Motiuk School,
Dani Veldman,
Grade 5

ANIRNIQ

Athlone School,
Morgan Deschner,
Grade 3

St. Timothy School,
Christie Giasson,
Grade 1

TASTAWIYINIWAK

Dickinsfield School, Nadia Halabi, Grade 7

St Vladimir School,
Samantha Harvey,
Grade 3&4

DENE

Soraya Hafez School, Megan Hermary,
Grade 5

Soraya Hafez School, John Therou, Grade 5

Homesteader School, Karen Tang, Grade 4–6
(partial week)

O-DAY'MIN

Holy Child School, Eve Molina, Grade 6

MÉTIS

Waverley School,
Don Douglas,
Grade 6

Holyrood School,
Sophia Barry,
Grade 3

SIPIWIYINIWAK

Michael A. Kostek School,
Vandana Shah,
Grade 2

Annunciation School, Lalaine Bacig,
Grade 4

Annunciation School,
Colleen Van Tighem, Grade 6

PAPASTEW

St. Augustine School, Jerica Pierce, Grade 6

Greenfield School, Jasmine Yume Kinjo,
Grade 6

PIHÉSIWIN

Joey Moss School, Bianca Cabantan,
Grade 3

Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour School,
Sarah Donato,
Grade 1

IPIIHKOOHKANIPIAOHTSI

George P. Nicholson School, Shandell Switzer/Allison Desmarais,
Grade 6

Keheewin School, Elizabeth Moubarak,
Grade 6

George P. Nicholson School, Kim Mielke/ Allison Desmarais,
Grade 4

KARHIIO

Kameyosek School, Don Henderson,
Grade 6

SSPOMITAPI

A. Blair McPherson School, Jennifer Moore,
Grade 4

Holy Family School, Renee Nahayowski,
Grade 1

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CONNECTING ALL YEAR LONG

At the beginning of the school year, each class is presented with a set of personal journals for the students, a Key to the City, as well as an opportunity to meet Madame Moselle and Sohi Saurus.

The five days students spend at City Hall are the catalyst for a year of engagement and a lifetime of possibilities. The weekly eNewsletter, the City Beat,

provides opportunities for classes to be connected to City of Edmonton issues, events and initiatives throughout the entire year.

The year finishes up with an in-person Citizenship Fair in June, which brings schools who participated in City Hall School together at City Hall to showcase their work inspired by their experiences.

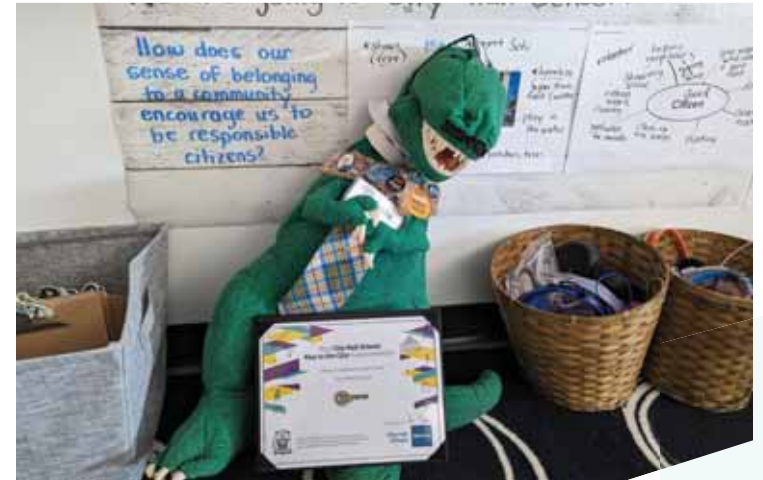


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“Amazing programming for 5 days! I wasn't aware there was so much to do, see and learn. This was a fantastic opportunity for the kids to learn about their city and government.”

– School Volunteer

“The best thing about my city is learning with Madame Moselle.”

– Grade 3 Student

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CONNECTING WITH THE CITY

The diversity of our city is reflected in the students who attend City Hall School. Some students are newcomers to Canada, some are enrolled in bilingual or immersion programs, and some are in programs for students with learning and cognitive disabilities. Being able to use the City of Edmonton as a classroom provides real life learning, allowing students to make authentic connections to key topics and themes from their school year.

During their five days at City Hall, students learn to appreciate and value their city in a deeper way. They come to feel not only a sense of pride, but also a sense of belonging.

The students learn about the history of our city, its growth, and the plan our leaders have for the future. When they realize that the future we are building is for them, it fosters a strong connection and eagerness to be ambassadors for Edmonton.



"My take-aways from this week include: the importance of being community-minded, supporting others, taking care of our city, and taking advantage of what our city has to offer. I was also reminded of the impact of thinking beyond the four walls of the classroom."

- Teacher

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“Loved being able to offer the kids opportunities to learn more about our city and to really see what our city needs in order to grow. It provided students with a sense of pride and purpose in how they can help make a difference.”

- Teacher

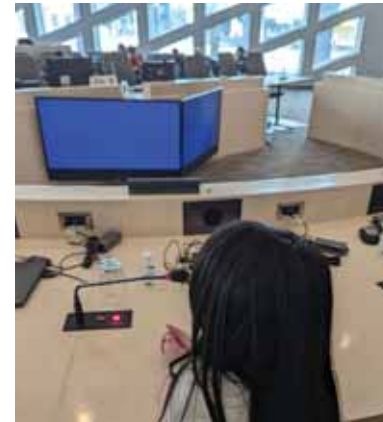
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CONNECTING WITH CITIZENSHIP

Learning from people who share their expertise and passion is a special part of the experience. Through their involvement, the Mayor and Council Members lend their support to City Hall School by actively engaging with classes and igniting students' curiosity around the structure and practice of democracy. When students step into the roles of Mayor and City Councillors to stage their own Mock Council, democracy comes to life!

Students also become informed and civically engaged citizens. They acquire new skills to leverage their voices for positive change. They also learn that they can not only advocate for themselves, but can lend a helping hand in their community and in the city as a whole.



"I used to think that the Mayor made all the decisions, but now I know he has 12 Councillors and concerned citizens helping him decide!"

-Grade 6 Student

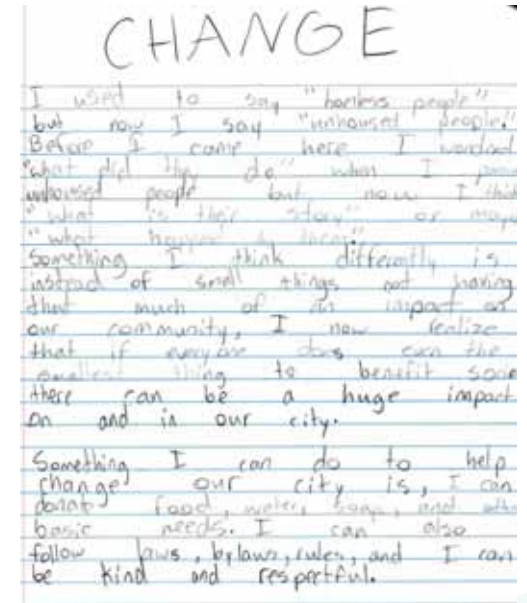
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CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY

City Hall School offers students a platform to learn more about social responsibility through meaningful opportunities to engage with several complex topics related to their learning.

Many presenters share their passion and perspective on issues of poverty, houselessness, reconciliation, inclusivity and equity. The lessons learned at City Hall School often resonate deeply with students, motivating them to share what they have learned at their schools, with their families and in their communities.



“The manner in which poverty was addressed and presented was touching. Mme Moselle presented it in a way that the students could relate to and empathize with our unhoused community. All the adults present were all impressed with how it was presented and explained. Thank you Mme Moselle for allowing our students to have a better perspective of poverty.”

- Teacher

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This year, several classes were recipients of United Way Dentons Make Your Mark grants for student-led projects that take action against local poverty. As students organized and ran donation drives, they had the opportunity to share their knowledge about poverty and their passion for helping others. At City Hall School, students learn that little things, like breakfast bags and socks that are donated to local organizations, can all make a difference. They also see how small acts of connection can have a big impact on Edmontonians' quality of life when learning from organizations such as SAGE and the Age-Friendly Alliance.



“Our week at City Hall School has impacted me more as an educator than anything else I have done in the past two years. Empathy is a foundational aspect of my teaching practice and it is something I try to infuse into my teaching. To see the students engage with their community and the experiences of others, I could see how it taught them more about empathy in one week than I am able to convey over the course of many months. I got to see my class see themselves as citizens outside of their relatively small community and as a part of something bigger.”

-Teacher

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CONNECTING WITH CAREER PATHWAYS

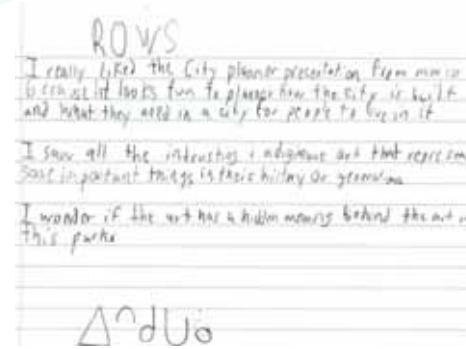
Whether we welcome guest speakers into our classroom or travel around the city to meet experts, their presence brings curriculum to life and motivates students to consider possible career pathways. Students learn how adults use creative thinking, problem-solving abilities, collaboration, effective communication, and design thinking while working independently and on teams.

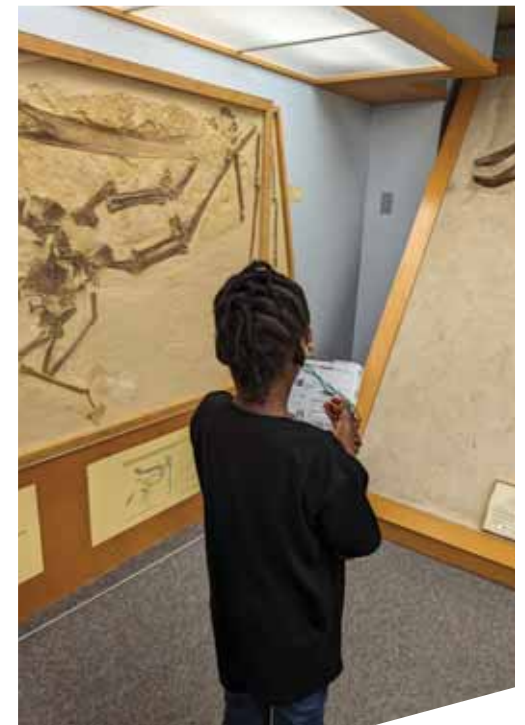
Many students also have the opportunity to conduct small group interviews with some of these guests, which helps them learn about a variety of careers. They hear different personal journeys, some that took unexpected turns and detours. All of these experiences teach students to consider their own strengths and interests and understand how these can be applied to a wide range of careers.



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At the beginning of the year, each teacher proposed a big idea or inquiry question that provides the focus of the City Hall School experiences. Through presentations, interviews with experts and site visits, we use an inquiry approach to connect to many curricular outcomes.

Students also see examples of how inquiry happens in everyday life. They learn how problem solving, collaboration and communication are an integral part of many jobs. Connecting curricular outcomes and these real world experiences helps students understand the "why" behind what they are learning in school.

“This experience reminded me of the importance of learning from experts and the value of getting to know your own city.”

-Teacher

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CONNECTING THROUGH JOURNALING

Students use a journal as a tool to reflect on and record their new learning and their experiences. They start using it in September with their classroom teacher by noting down questions, participating in research activities, and responding to the weekly City Beat eNewsletters.

While at City Hall School, students continue to use their journals to take notes, sketch, collect stickers and reflect upon their experiences. The daily reflection time allows students to clarify and process what they have learned. Teachers can even respond to student journal entries to continue a dialogue about the day's events.

By the end of the school year, students are proud to show their work (and stickers) in their journals. They become keepsakes, and evidence of the incredible growth and learning students have done throughout the year.



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Change

I used to think that social was boring and didn't really like it, but now I like it after learning about democracy. I can try to donate to human about non-perishable foods. It was also interesting to learn about Alberta's history like the bank or the Mac Donald hotel. I also liked when we went to the Oilers stadium and it was so cool because I never ever in my life I ever went to a stadium. It was also very very very cool to actually go to Mayor Sahis office. I loved this trip and I will definitely go to City Hall again!

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CONNECTING WITH THE LAND AND INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING

At City Hall School, students learn that Edmonton has been a gathering place, a travelling route and a place to call home for Indigenous Peoples for thousands of years. Throughout the year, we discuss and explore the fact that we are all Treaty People. At school and at City Hall, students are given the opportunity to deepen their understanding of what it means to live on Treaty 6 Territory and on traditional Métis homeland. From Orange Shirt Day, to Métis Week, to National Indigenous Peoples Day in June, students are encouraged to use their voices to share their new knowledge and understanding with others.



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Another way we make these connections is by looking at Indigenous languages and meanings – for example, learning that this place is named amiskwaciwāskahikan, meaning 'Beaver Hill House' – in Cree. Students also have the opportunity to learn firsthand about the historical and cultural meanings behind Edmonton's newly amended Wards with Indigenous names and about EPL's Thunderbird House (PIYĒSĪW WĀSKĀHIKAN) at the Stanley Milner Library. Some classes visit and are inspired by the art at ᐃᓄᓄ (ĪNĪW) River Lot 11⁰⁰ Indigenous Art Park and the Tawatinā Bridge. Some City Hall School students also learn from the Indigenous Relations Office at City Hall, using artwork as a jumping off point to discuss the City's Indigenous Framework.





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CITY HALL SCHOOL AND THE CLOSURE OF CITY HALL

On January 23, 2024, an incident at City Hall resulted in the closure of the building. During this time, City Hall School shifted from its regular program delivery. Through a mix of rescheduling, delivering content virtually, visiting schools and working out of alternate locations downtown, City Hall School was able to continue connecting with students. By the second week of the closure, we were able to move to the Downtown Community Arena in Rogers Place. This space offered us a unique opportunity to see City services and continue to deliver programming similar to what we did out of City Hall.

On April 3rd, we welcomed the first group of City Hall School students back into City Hall. Students were so excited to go on a tour, meet their City Councillor and observe a Council meeting. All of the staff present made the class feel extremely welcome, with many expressing how having students back in the building brought life back into City Hall! After that date, we were able to deliver our regular programming for the remainder of the school year.

THANKS TO OUR TEAM OF CONNECTORS

There are so many individuals who have shown tremendous support for City Hall School in a variety of ways, it would be impossible to name them all. The following people are those who shared their passion and time with our students.

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

Tim Cartmell, Sarah Hamilton, Michael Janz, Andrew Knack, Aaron Paquette, Karen Principe, Jennifer Rice, Erin Rutherford, Ashley Salvador, Anne Stevenson, Amarjeet Sohi, Keren Tang, Jo-Anne Wright

Jayanthi Karan Mathur

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

Andre Corbould – *Former City Manager*

Salima Ebrahim – *Chief of Staff and Corporate Lead on Anti-racism and Reconciliation*

CITY OPERATIONS

Adrienne Beaulac – *Community Gardens*

Jennifer Bird – *Electrician*

Centennial and Andrews Garage Staff – *ETS Bus Garage Visits*

Shannon Breen, Jasmine Greenwood, Simranjit Kharal, Hasanna Kucher, Amelia Minchau – *Natural Areas*

Ray Burgess – *Safety and HVAC*

Kayla Pelletier – *Snow and Ice*

Paul Arseneault, Shenae Borschneck, Calvin Kufuor-Boakye, Camryn Marcichiw, Max Nixon, Yolanda Pyrdol, Elaine Stone, George Szilagyi, Steve Yan – *Urban Forestry*

Mike Simpson – *Waste Services*

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

AJ Dimas-Lehndorf – *Bylaws, Snow and Ice*

Brunella, Cindy, Kayla, Laurie – *Citizen and New Arrival Information Centre*

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Camilla Campbell, Austin Szmidi – *Animal Care and Control*

Supreet Brar, Harleen Gill, Dianne Gillespie, David Jenkinson, Debbie Malnwarig, Lindy Mair, Ann McCluskey, Kristine Reid, Jackie Scott, Elliot Taylor, Zhander Zhuo – *City Hall Guides*

Kathryn Ivany – *City of Edmonton Archives*

Alex Haskin, Angelica Huynh, Meshkin Makari, Leah Mayer, Jenny Paterson, Leigh Pederson, Nicole Poirier, Kim Simkin – *Civic Events and Festivals*

Ella Lombard, Natasha Shaw, Sherry Webber, Greg Witt – *Commonwealth Rec Centre*

Wendy Keller – *Ensuring Edmonton is an Age-Friendly City*

Chancy Black Water, Kayla Bellerose, Andy Levey, Emilea Saadeh – *Indigenous Relations Office*

Maria Bartoli – *Neighbourhood Services*

Shawn Beskowiney – *Park Rangers*

Ashley, Eden, Evan, Jordan, Kale, Kyle, Liam, Rob, Tyson, Vince – *Peace Officers*

Peter Daly – *Pest Management*

Christine Causing – *Women's Advocacy Voice of Edmonton*

EDMONTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Anna, Audrey, Elvira, Emylia, Hugo, Kat, Michelle R., Zoe – *Stanley Milner Staff*

FINANCIAL & CORPORATE SERVICES

Iain Gillis, Claire Laing, Logan Moran – *Open Data*

INTEGRATED INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

Carol Belanger – *Architect*

Tom Lumsden – *Blatchford*

Ryan Tepitsky – *Bridge Engineers*

Adam Laughlin – *Former DCM of Integrated Infrastructure Services*

Tania Gonzalez – *LRT Expansion and Renewal*

Danae Kortmann-Watts – *Project Management Research, Innovation & Evaluation*

URBAN PLANNING AND THE ECONOMY

Daniel Boric, Jordan Brown, Marco Melfi, Marty Vasquez, Morgan Wilson – *City Planners*

Ian Hosler – *Jane's Walk*

Alanna Young – *Mapping and GIS*

Pablo Orozco – *Planning and Environment Services*

AFFILIATES

David Turnbull – *Edmonton Arts Council*

Joseph Legaspi, Krina Patel – *Edmonton Convention Centre*

Kyla Fisher – *Edmonton Heritage Council*

OTHER SPECIAL GUESTS

Brian Christy, Linda Hut – *1881 Schoolhouse*

Devyn Rudd, David Ulliac – *Associated Engineering*

Chris Martin – *CBC*

Luc Teller – *Citadel Theatre*

Gerry, Jackie, Roberta, Roger, Rose – *CKUA*

Lisa Turchansky – *ECSD Trustee*

Susan Padgett – *Edmonton's Food Bank*

Saadq Sumar – *EPSB Trustee*

Staff at Fire Station 1 and 2

Hallway Cafe Staff

Sean Arceta, Annysa Baldeo, Nathan Davies, Deillah Turner – *iHuman Youth Society*

Carolina Roemmich – *Kidmonton*

Justice Dixon, Justice Roy – *Law Courts*

Joe, Hans – *Loyal Edmonton Regiment Museum*

Jacqueline Kanini, Bryan Mwaka, Veronica Quaidisimo – *Mustard Seed*

Amanda Bachard – *Oilers Entertainment Group*

Security Team – *Paladin Security*

Kristine Archibald – *River Valley Alliance*

Christopher Bullough, Rachel Tassone – *SAGE*

Father Tesfu – *St Benedict Chapel*

Julia Molaro – *Valley Line LRT, Reverb Communications*

Nadia Bouslama, Maria George, Areezah Jiwa, Echo Kelzer, Julianne Threlfall – *WAVE*

School at the Legislature and Legislature Visitor Centre Staff

Gabriel Boutros, Lisa Budney, Dr. Victor Shegelski – *University of Alberta*

Dakota, Monaco, Sneha – *University of Alberta Observatory*

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CONNECT WITH US

CITY HALL SCHOOL

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Student responses to 'How has CHS changed you?'

- + City Hall School changed me by teaching me about Indigenous cultures.
- + I learned a lot about my city's history.
- + It changed me by helping me see all the great things our government is doing to make Edmonton a better place.
- + We wrote letters to FreshCo to get groceries to make sandwiches for the Mustard Seed. It made me so happy that I got to help others.
- + I saw more places downtown than I have ever seen before.
- + You taught me about the LRT and many other things.
- + Going to City Hall School changed how I viewed democracy. This was an amazing opportunity!
- + It really opened my mind and made me more accepting of things.
- + I learned how our local government works.
- + City Hall School changed my opinion of Edmonton. Now I recognize how special our city is.
- + I think one day I will be the Mayor!
- + City Hall School changed me by showing me this is home to a lot of people. We need to help each other out so no one feels alone or left out.
- + I learned more about our city's history and what life was like in the past here.
- + I now know way more about our government and how it works.
- + I loved working with the Mustard Seed and iHuman. They taught me about ways we can help in our community.
- + I feel more motivated to help people in Edmonton.
- + City Hall School made me realize that houseless people have a home. And that home is EDMONTON!
- + I learned more about City Hall and got to see so many new places in the city.
- + City Hall School changed me because I realized that one day I want to work in government.
- + At City Hall School I learned that words can have a positive or negative impact on people. Now I know to say "houseless" or "unhoused" instead of calling people "homeless."
- + I think this field trip made me a better person.
- + I learned a lot about art at City Hall School. Now I appreciate all the art we have in the city.
- + The Mustard Seed taught me that small things can make a big difference!
- + I got to travel to a bunch of different places that I had not seen before.
- + I learned about iHuman and now I would like to work there when I am older.
- + City Hall School showed me how many amazing people there are in Edmonton!
- + City Hall School gave me a new perspective on some things. Like people experiencing homelessness.
- + I learned that EPL is one of the coolest places in the city.