

A Year of Growth, Gratitude, and God's Goodness

by Principal Cindy Westendorp

As we come to the end of another school year at Elora Road Christian School, our hearts are full of gratitude for all that God has done in and through our school community. It has been a year rich with learning, growth, connection, and joyful experiences.

Together, we have shared many meaningful moments: exciting field trips, our Celebration of Learning, CAASO sports tournaments, and community service projects like singing at nursing homes, planting trees, and making breakfast for seniors. We laced up our skates on winter skating days, braved the slopes on our ski trip, and deepened friendships through Crew activities. We celebrated milestones with our SK and Grade 8 graduations — marking both the end and beginning of our student's journeys.

Our students have worked hard, not only academically but in growing spiritually, socially, and emotionally. Our staff has faithfully poured into their lives — encouraging, teaching, guiding, and praying for them. And none of this would be possible without our dedicated parents: you've made sacrifices by paying tuition, driving for trips, volunteering in classrooms, and supporting school events. Together, we've built a safe and loving learning environment where students can become all that God created them to be.



Now, summer is here. A time to slow down, rest from our busy schedules, and simply be. In his book *A Life of Being, Having, and Doing Enough*, Wayne Muller writes:

“Unstructured play awakens and expands children's capacity to express ever wider and richer realms of intelligence... when we fill their days with myriad activities so there is no time for free play, we implicitly suggest they are incapable of entertaining or educating themselves... We also deny them the chance to learn about the wisdom and security of their own good company.”

This summer, we encourage you to rest. Let your children play. Build sandcastles, swim in the lake, explore parks, or relax in your backyard. Listen to the birds, feel the sun on your face, and give thanks. Thank God for your children, your home, your meals, and your community. Every good gift is from Him.

As a staff, we too pause — and quietly reflect on a year well spent. We are deeply thankful for you, our school families, and the trust you place in us to walk alongside your children. May your summer be filled with rest, renewal, and reminders of God's goodness.



Upcoming Events

The 2025-2026 school calendar can be found on our website.

Please note: Some dates are subject to change, and more events will be added.

Please note the following upcoming events:

Sept. 2 - First day of school

Sept. 3 - Parent Council meeting, 9:10 am

Sept. 10 - Back to school BBQ, 3:30 - 6:00 pm

Sept. 17 - 19 - Grade 7/8 Medeba trip

Nov. 15 - Silent Auction



GOODBYES AND NEW BEGINNINGS AT ERCS

As we come to the end of the school year, we take time to reflect on the incredible blessings of our staff team — and this year, we find ourselves both celebrating and saying heartfelt goodbyes.

We are deeply grateful for the contributions of **Dee Butler**, who has faithfully served at Elora Road Christian School for the past **seven years** as one of our Grade 1/2 teachers. Dee's love for learning and creativity has left a lasting impression on her students. Whether through her famous Dr. Seuss Day celebrations, booklets for every special event, or helping students memorize and recite long passages of Scripture, Dee has poured herself into the spiritual and academic growth of her class. She has also blessed our community with the Core Value awards, organizing Thanksgiving lunches, and contributing her energy to school-wide events.



We also say farewell to **Emily Latam**, who has been with us this past year. In her short time at ERCS, Emily quickly became a valued part of our team, building strong relationships with students and staff. Alongside her classroom responsibilities, Emily also served in our student support services, helping to ensure all students received the care they needed to thrive. We're thankful for the time she spent with us and her positive contributions to our school community.

Another long-standing member of the ERCS community we will miss dearly is **Kristine Terpstra**, who has served as our **piano teacher for 20 years**. Over the years, Kristine has also led student worship teams, taught guitar to our Grade 7/8 students, and faithfully provided sound setup and support for our school performances. Her musical talents, servant heart, and love for students have blessed ERCS for two decades, and we are so thankful for her many contributions to our school.



While we are sad to see these beloved staff members move on, we trust God is leading each of them into new seasons and new callings. We pray that the next steps in their journeys will be filled with joy, purpose, and continued opportunities to serve Him.

At the same time, we are thrilled to welcome **Sara Green** to our teaching team as our full-time Grade 1/2 teacher! Sara brings with her a wealth of experience — she is a mother of five adult children and grandmother to two. She holds a **Master's in Religion and Culture** and a **PhD in Humanities**, with a special focus on the History of Education in North America. Sara has also taught in a small Christian school in the Niagara region and is passionate about integrating faith and learning in meaningful ways. We are excited to see how God will use her gifts at ERCS in the year ahead.

Transitions are never easy, but we rest in God's perfect timing and provision. Please join us in giving thanks for the faithful service of our departing staff and in warmly welcoming Sara Green to our ERCS family!

ERCS Lions Update

CAASO Track & Field

On Tuesday, May 20, twenty-four ERCS students travelled to the University of Western Ontario in London to compete in the annual CAASO Track & Field Meet. We were blessed with beautiful weather, and our athletes gave their best effort in every event. They demonstrated determination, perseverance, and Christ-like sportsmanship throughout the day. We are proud of all our students for representing Elora Road Christian School so well. Several students achieved top finishes in their events:



Top Results:

- **Mackenzie Gordon:** 5th-1500m, 7th-800m
- **Aibra Garcia-Medina:** 7th-400m
- **Victory Oruchukwu:** 4th-400m, 4th-long jump, 5th-100m, 6th-200m, 6th Overall
- **Malia Gordon:** 3rd-1500m
- **Natalia Tamminga:** 6th-400m
- **Samuel Oruchukwu** – 2nd-400m, 3rd-100m, 3rd-200m, 4th Overall



A huge thank-you goes to our parent drivers and supervisors — Dawn Tamminga, David May, Eunice Oruchukwu, Nathan Gordon, and Rob van de Pol — for helping the day run smoothly. We're also grateful to Leslie Bauman and Cindy Westendorp for coaching and preparing our team. Congratulations to all of our student athletes!

Grade 8 Grad Trip



Each year, our graduating Grade 8 students have the opportunity to celebrate the end of their elementary school journey with a unique five-day adventure to Québec City — and this year's trip was full of exploration, culture, and unforgettable memories!

Led by Mrs. Westendorp (Mrs. West) and supported by dedicated parent volunteers, the students spent their days immersed in the rich history and vibrant beauty of Québec. They wandered the cobblestone streets of Old Québec, climbed the city gates and fortified walls, shopped in the charming boutiques of the Lower Town, and visited iconic landmarks like the Château Frontenac, Place Royale, and the Citadelle.

Beyond the city, students ventured into the natural wonders of the region — hiking 487 steps to the top of Montmorency Falls, walking across suspension bridges at Sainte-Anne's Canyon, and admiring the stunning

architecture and decoration of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré Basilica.

One of the highlights was a scenic drive around Île d'Orléans, where students enjoyed tasting locally made chocolate, cheese, and baked goods, and explored the tidal flats of the St. Lawrence River. They also visited the Québec Aquarium, where they encountered jellyfish, stingrays in a touch tank, seals, and even polar bears!



Grade 8 Grad Trip (Continued)

To top it all off, students rode the ferry across the St. Lawrence and enjoyed some fun and laughter playing in the massive water fountains in Lévis.

We are thankful for the chance to mark this important milestone with such a meaningful experience. Staying in the student residences at Laval University and preparing many of our own meals helped keep costs down — and gave students a little taste of independence and responsibility along the way.



A special thank-you to Rob van de Pol for driving the group to Québec, assisting with meal prep, and helping supervise, and to Daycian Cecato for joining us and adding to the fun. We're so grateful for the support that makes this tradition possible each year.

Congratulations to our Grade 8 graduates! This trip is a celebration of your hard work and a reminder of God's faithfulness in every step of your journey.



A Few Words from our Grade 8 Grads

After highschool, my plan is to study and focus on biology to then become a marine biologist.

I've always been interested in sea life and it's been my dream job for a year. Plus, going to the aquarium in Quebec made it even better. The grad trip to Quebec was truly one of my most memorable experiences at ERCS. The trip gave us an opportunity to get to know each other better and grow closer.

-Salome B.

Looking back, some of my favourite memories are all the CAASO sports tournaments I have attended. Each was fun and exciting, but if I

could pick a favourite it would be the Badminton Tournament this year. One lesson that has stuck with me from my time here is, "Try your best, do your best, be your best."

This is a mindset I plan to carry with me throughout life.

-Ethan O.



Truthfully, I'm not ready to let go of some of the teachers who pushed me to be the best I could be, who believed in me when, honestly, I didn't believe in myself. I'm not ready for what comes next... but I'm excited. Because even though this goodbye is hard, it means we had something worth missing

-Mia M.

Proverbs 19:21 says, "Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it's the Lord's purpose that prevails." I love this verse because we always make plans for our lives but they don't always work, and that's because the Lord has greater plans for us.

-Abby M.

If there were just one thing I was going to pass on, it would be not to waste any time.

I spent so much time wrapped up in my little bubble, afraid of what people would think of me that I lost sight of what really mattered and missed out on a lot of fun. I stayed where I knew it was safe. But get out there! Get out of your comfort zone! With the help of many friends and teachers, I came out of my shell and was able to live life to the fullest.

-Julianna V.

If I dwelled on my stress I wouldn't have been able to lose myself in the beauty of old Quebec, I wouldn't have allowed myself to aspire to a future that, frankly, I'm completely oblivious to, and if I didn't let go of my past mistakes, I wouldn't have been able to appreciate my accomplishments. I didn't do it alone. I have my friends who keep me grounded, I have my Ma who refused to let me give up, and WE have God's word, specifically Phil. 4:6-7: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

-Tobias L.

A Bible Verse that means a lot to me is 1st Timothy 4:12 which says "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young. Instead set an example for all the believers." This Bible verse is important to me because I skipped a grade so I was always younger than everyone in my class. I will still be younger going into high school and there will be a big change, but the verse also reminds me to shine my light at high school as well.

I will miss the school and will never forget how encouraged I was here.

-Reuben vdP.

Year End Awards



Principal's Award - Julianna Venne

This award may be given to a deserving senior student who has exemplified diligence in their studies and consistently displayed Christian character in their conduct.

Academic Award of Excellence - Ethan Ogunyoye

This award may be given to a deserving senior student who has demonstrated academic excellence in effort, achievement and homework, and who actively engages in the learning process.

Friendship Award - Mia Massey

This award may be given to a deserving senior student who best exemplifies the character traits that define friendship such as honesty, respect, selflessness, kindness and integrity .

Athletic Excellence Award - Reuben van de Pol

This award may be given to a deserving student who consistently demonstrates excellent athletic skill across many different sports. They are hard-working, dedicated, and participate in most, if not all, CAASO tournaments.

Performing Arts Award - Julianna Venne

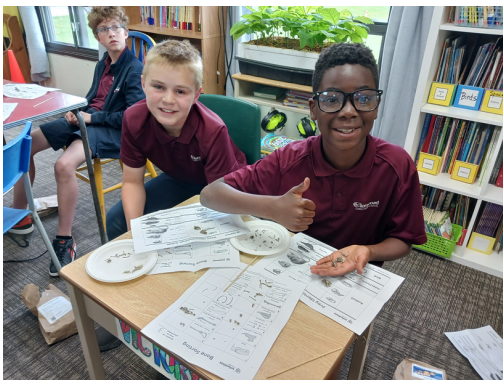
This award may be given to a deserving student who has displayed a consistent willingness to learn, has made good progress and has made a positive contribution to the performing arts program.

Core Values Award - Riley Fehr

This award may be given to a deserving senior student who has consistently demonstrated the ERCS Core Values; Act respectfully, Accept Responsibility, Pursue Growth, Serve Others.

First Class Honours - Reuben van de Pol, Julianna Venne, Lucy Walton, Victory Oruchukwu and Ruby Walton

First class honours are presented to students whose average grade exceeds 90%.



FUNDRAISING UPDATE & DONOR OPPORTUNITIES

Fresh Box

This year, we decided to sell Fresh Box for our spring fundraiser instead of chocolate bars. We raised \$329.50, and are enjoying boxes of fresh produce!

Impact Bursary

Have you heard about the ERCS Impact Bursary? It's a fund specifically designed to support families with significant financial need who would otherwise not be able to send their children to ERCS. Donations to the bursary can be dropped off at the school or e-transfers can be sent to school@ercs.cloud marked "Impact Bursary" in the memo.

ERCS Silent Auction

Save the date for our upcoming Silent Auction on Saturday, Nov. 15th. We'd love to see you there! If you would like to donate something or sponsor the auction, please contact the office at school@ercs.cloud.

Joy of Missing Out (JOMO)

This year, through our connection with Edvance, we were able to join in on four webinars with Christina Crook. Parents received practical strategies to align their family's tech use with their values and goals. This starts with building a healthy foundation of trust and connection. Parents then received tools for helping their children navigate big emotions and develop emotional intelligence. By the last session, they learned about the connection between mental health and digital wellbeing, and how to manage both.

We hope many of you were able to take advantage of this great series! Let us know how you enjoyed it. There is also a half-hour free JOMO summer webinar available anytime at jomocampus.com/summer, with tips for a more joyful summer by setting thoughtful digital boundaries and intentional tech use.



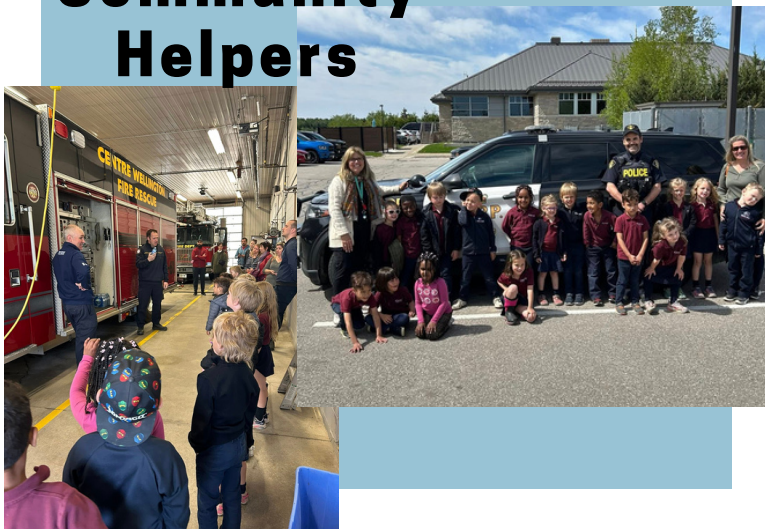
Butterfly Conservatory



Field Trips



Community Helpers



Crawford Lake



Agriculture Day



Wellington County Museum



Doon Heritage Village



Shaw Festival - The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

Grade 1 & 2 trip to A Rocha



Thank you to our volunteers

Our school would not be the same without the generous help of so many volunteers. Parents, extended family and alumni have volunteered for field trips, classroom helpers, parent council, hot dog day, sporting events, fundraisers and more. We appreciate each one of you. We want to mention a few “Super Star Volunteers”, who have helped this year in multiple school-wide events.

2024-2025 Super Star Volunteers

- Jenn Venne
- Brittany Walton
- Angela Vreman
- Michela Morrison
- Naima Medina
- Christy & Dylan Vanveen
- Andrea Fuerte
- Yvette Splinter
- Jelena Gordon
- Sarah Gordon
- Arden & Jeff Reinhart
- Laura Fehr
- Erica Martin
- Ainslie Bouwman
- Steve Massey
- Rob & Sara van de Pol

We know there are many more who helped in specific classrooms, and/or supported the school in many ways, and we appreciate each one of you.

Water Fun Day



French Plays

