



ANNUAL REPORT — 2019-20



Airdrie Christian Academy
Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.
1 Corinthians 10:31



EQUIPPING AND DISCIPLING GENERATIONS FOR CHRIST

Matthew 28:19, 20(a)

“Go, therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you.”



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LETTER FROM PRESIDENT AND CHAIR

Dear Society Members,

It is now March 2021, one year since we began to feel the real effects of COVID-19 and the challenges associated with the pandemic. It has remained clear that ACA is God's school, and He continues to protect and guide us through challenging times. As a student body, staff, society, and Board, we have been challenged to rise to new levels and to adapt to what has become a different reality. While the last year has been difficult it has created situations where we had to pivot and change how we operate. Our teachers learned how to provide their lessons online, students adapted to learning remotely, meetings moved to video instead of in person, we revamped our marketing team efforts with great success, and even though we have not been able to meet in person, we have made great progress increasing the sense of community at ACA.



Enrollment

In the last few years ACA has experienced a steady net growth of students (40-50 per year) and we were on track to grow again last September from 294 to 334+. As a result of COVID-19 our enrollment decreased to 251, with many families choosing formal alternative programs due to a variety of reasons that included health concerns, worry of the impacts of restrictions on children and financial strain. It is our prayer that we will return to regular classes and operations in September and those that moved to online learning will rejoin our ACA family. It is our goal to enter September 2021 with at least 334 students, picking up where we expected to be this last September. As our enrollment continues to grow, we are able to add in new programs and other enhancements for our students, staff, and society. Please pray for continued growth for ACA.



Facility Rentals

At the beginning of 2020 after a number of delays, we completed the construction on our facility, providing new opportunities for rentals when space is not being utilized for our education programs. We were not able to financially benefit from our completed space due to the COVID-19 restrictions, but we now are looking forward to a time when restrictions are lifted and after hours programs can resume. As an independent private Christian School, generating income over and above tuition, government funding, and donations are essential to supporting our education operational requirements. Once restrictions are lifted, the facility team will begin to advertise and promote our spaces for rent (Gymnasium, Chapel/ Banquet/Meeting Room, Open Areas, Classrooms, and outdoor spaces).



Solid Grounds Café

When appropriate, we plan to reopen the Solid Grounds Café. This service will provide a benefit for our staff and students during the school days and after hours for our tenants and when hosting tournaments. All net proceeds from the café will be shared between our operations and facilities budget.



Bus Program

Our bus program has continued to be a success and our marketing team is currently running a campaign to surrounding towns to poll interest in ACA if busing was made available. We receive regular requests for busing within Airdrie and while a busing program can be effective for remote locations with minimal stops, it has been proven in town busing with many stops is a costly service that cannot support itself.



International Student Program

COVID-19 hampered our progress in launching our International program, but we have continued to invest and engage in activities to attract these students to ACA. We pray that God will provide a great experience for the students that attend from another country and that these students and our local students will find many blessings while learning about each other's cultures.

ACA IS GOD'S SCHOOL

Repayment of Private Lenders

In November 2020 we highlighted a need to the Society by launching a giving campaign specifically for re-payment of the private lender portion of our debt. By January 31, 2020, \$42,675 was raised and distributed in February directly to the private lenders. Thank you for your generosity and partnering with the Board in this burden to repay the debts we owe. While the amount may seem small compared to what is owed, it is a significant first step in mending commitments and relationships that have been broken. Please pray for the Board as we seek the wisdom, timing and opportunity to re-finance and consolidate our debt with a single lending institution and lift that burden off our brothers and sisters in Christ.

In closing, we want to thank all our dedicated supporters of ACA, our teachers, staff, students, parents, alumni and all the outside individuals and groups who have felt led to support our school. We are all part of this school because we choose to be, and we feel this is where God has led us. The children attending our school are being educated in the Word of God and being equipped to go out into the world to do His work! We are very proud to be part of this school and we hope everyone feels the same.

Take care, and may God bless each of you,

Scott Calderwood
President

Gerald Andres
Board Chair



FAITH DEVELOPMENT AND DISCIPLESHIP

Mrs. Jaime Young, Chaplain

■ Through teaching and practical application in our classrooms:

- Adapted to online weekly chapels from a range of speakers: pastors, our teachers, and even two junior high students, international testimony.
- Teachers praying for students: these times have brought us closer together in new ways.
- Staff maintaining relationships with alumni through social media and coffee. Many of our students continue to serve Jesus through YWAM, Capernwray and Christian post-secondary Education. Others take their faith into secular institutions and businesses.
- Staff devotional times have been maintained through Google Classroom, where staff members take turns sharing through weekly posted videos to inspire and encourage one another.
- Yearly Scripture Memory verses across the grades promoting unity and dedication to the Word of God.
- The prayer team is growing in number and in strength, building relationships with students and teachers through weekly prayer and partnership with the chaplaincy.
- Chaplaincy and prayer team visits high school classrooms, rotating weekly.
- Mr. Ben Kostamo assists in Health classes with education on sexuality for male students and elementary discipleship.
- Increased opportunities for prayer and connections via prayer requests from families, students and staff.
- Parent Connection Meetings online: Online Safety with Cliff Wiebe, School Vision Night (108 views on YouTube) and a night focussed on Identity with the prayer team and Jaime Young as a speaker (169 views).
- Chaplaincy and counselling: meeting with students regularly across the grades.
- Spiritual needs assessment rolled out this spring, recommendations to be offered by a team of specialists.



■ **Looking forward to:**

- Furthering intentional discipleship, spirit-filled worship and service-oriented evangelistic outreach.
- Listening and praying for fresh ideas in regards to our Bible program and school chapels for next year.
- Structuring of a solid chaplaincy program, Mrs. Jaime Young to be ordained this year.
- Continued relationship with the Mustard Seed and Samaritan's Purse.
- Making new community-building connections for service within the city of Airdrie.
- A new relationship with Jericho Ministries in Honduras in the planning stage, including cultural exchange via video and future international service trips.

TEACHERS PRAYING FOR STUDENTS



INTENTIONAL AND DIVERSE INSTRUCTION

Mr. John Green and Mrs. Jordan Gallant, Vice-Principals

■ Through educational growth:

- We are actively supporting a growing variety of needs and learning styles at ACA, while also tweaking our admissions process to ensure we accept the students we have the resources and staffing to support, at this time.
 - We believe that being Christ-like is about loving and supporting as many learners as possible, while also referring the students who we cannot support to schools that can best meet their needs. In meeting the diverse learning needs of our students, considerations are made for all students including those with adaptations, accommodations and/or modification or enrichment. Some support categories within the Alberta Education guidelines include English Language Learners (who have the influence of another home language) and students with diagnosed support recommendations outlined in an Individual Learning Plan (or IPP).
 - In Elementary, ACA staff members support 35 ELL and 24 IPP students, while in Secondary there are 18 ELL and 22 IPP students.
- Our teachers design lessons to ensure a diversity of learning styles are supported.
 - We are attempting to diversify our teaching styles to accommodate the variety of learning styles we encounter in our classrooms. Incorporating music, drama, kinesthetic activities, building projects, readers theatres, artistic expression, and many other creative





responses to learning ensures each student reaches their potential.

- A temporary trimester system was created in Secondary to accommodate virtual learning.
 - The unique situation all schools found themselves in this year meant we had to adapt our programming to best suit our students and staff in all possible scenarios. Our Secondary program created a temporary trimester system which made online transitions simpler for students and staff, as the classes students needed to focus on went from 6 to 4 per day.
- Parent-Teacher Meetings went virtual on Zoom to ensure positive home-school communication continues.
 - We plan on continuing online parent-teacher meetings into the coming years, as they have been very positively received, and make meetings easier for both parents and staff to schedule and attend.
- Computer support was provided for our ACA families, with the new demands to learn at-home.
 - Chromebooks were provided to families who needed support last Spring. Families were able to keep the computers to use permanently.
- Virtual learning options, for students who wished to join us from home, were offered in the fall, and lessons continue to be recorded for students who are required to quarantine.
 - We are so thankful for the hard work of our tech support and educators, who have put in countless additional hours to ensure learning continues for students who chose to stay home in Term 1 or who are quarantining as per AHS guidelines!
- Our professional development opportunities guided by a clear vision to efficiently increase student engagement and success.
 - Staff have been exposed to many professional development opportunities over the course of the year as we look to adapt our teaching to the best future-conscious educational practices. Todd Hennig, Principal of Coopers Crossing School, led a session on Instructional Design - a planning methodology that focuses on designing lessons with

the end goal in mind. Teachers were given the opportunity to develop a unit plan using this structure. Danelle Bohnet hosted an in-house PD on Inspired Learning. Teachers were encouraged to discover their unique passions and engage students by integrating them into lesson planning. As a K-12 team, we have set the goal to increase student engagement and success through this intentional planning process.

- New Chromebook carts in our elementary classrooms.
 - We now have 3 in Elementary school. Grade 6 has full access every day. This allows an easy transition to Junior High and High School where every student has their own computer. Grade 4 and 5 share a cart with 50% access every day, Grades 1 to 3 share a set together in the primary area. This allows easy access within the cohort, ease of learning new skills and building the use at each grade level in an intentional approach that makes using technology second nature.
- All teachers are using Google Classroom as a hub for student lessons and parent communication.
 - This has made our virtual learning transitions much easier and we were proud to have the fastest turn-around times of the local

schools when we were required to teach from home. In the fall, teachers used the knowledge gained from the previous spring to enhance the learning experience in the classroom with a variety of new virtual tools.

- Grades 1 and 2 have adopted the Smart Start Reading program.
 - Smart Start Reading is a complete system of reading development that we have adopted for Grades 1 and 2. This system builds reading skills in small chunks and the passages integrate new vocabulary, writing skills, editing skills and important sight words effectively. One of the key advantages is that each student has the opportunity to do oral reading every day with an adult, and this allows us to gauge progress immediately.
- New Secondary Course offerings.
 - Secondary students have some unique course offerings this year, as we have adapted to the unique demands of keeping grades in the cohort groupings. We are so thankful for

our new Spanish language courses for Grades 7 to 9 taught by Mrs. Young, our new Creative Studies 7 course taught by Mrs. Quach, Introduction to Mentorship 10 taught by Mrs. Davis, and Automotive 9 taught by Mr. Driedger. Adaptation, with grace and excellence, has been the key to our success through this year's unique challenges.

- Shared Divisional Spaces have been created.
 - We have worked diligently to develop cohorts within each division (K-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12) that have common meeting areas and library spaces to support learning, as well as separate washroom facilities that ensure government expectations are exceeded.

■ Through our staff:



- Formal teacher evaluations have been placed on a bi-annual schedule, while we continue to support teachers through bi-weekly classroom visits by our Vice Principals.
 - Teacher Evaluations have been reinvigorated on a new bi-annual schedule for all teachers to receive a formal evaluation. This requires the administration to observe one or more classes taught by a teacher and give formal written feedback. Short informal classroom visits/verbal feedback continues to be a regular focus of how we support teacher growth and ensure timely feedback on the effectiveness of our programs. Class-

rooms are visited bi-weekly by the administration to support our teachers, ensure best practices are followed and maintain accountability.

- Permanent Certifications have been achieved by two more ACA educators.
 - We are celebrating alongside Mrs. Jessica Joy and Mrs. Emilia Davis as they have received their permanent teaching certifications. This is a wonderful milestone for our teachers and shows the dedication they have to their role as an educator. Both in-house and external evaluations were required for this



achievement, and we are very proud of their accomplishments!

- This year we have 30 educational staff.

- We have 15 full-time teachers, 5 part-time teachers and 10 EAs. We also have some teachers on maternity leave: Mrs. Wong, who has been on leave, Mrs. Van De Wal- le and Mrs. Davis who will be leaving fairly soon.

- Teacher mentor teams have been created to support continued teacher growth.

- Mentor Teams have been used this year amongst all of our teachers to ensure every- one continues in a close community during an isolating time, grows as a Christ-follower and an educator. Teachers meet together regularly for prayer and mutual support and are encouraged to pass along great ideas to invigorate their teaching.



■ Looking forward to:

- Student Opinion Surveys have been sent out to all Grades 7 to 12 students.

- In an attempt to hear the voices of our stu- dent body on big decisions moving forward, we have conducted a student opinion sur- vey. The feedback we received was encour- aging as it showed students feel cared for and receptive to the changes that came with this year, while also excited for the possi- bilities of the coming year(s). Each of our Secondary teachers was specifically named as having a positive impact on the lives and learning of one or more of our students, re- inforcing the loving community we have all been working hard to build at ACA.

- We have ensured our voice is at the table for the new AB curriculum design.

- Alberta Education is developing a new El- ementary curriculum and will be piloting new materials starting next fall. As a school, we like to be at the forefront of this devel-

opment and we sent Mrs. Craddock to the meetings to monitor and advise the prov- ince about what we would like to see in the curriculum.

- We are developing an Elementary Spelling Bee and Secondary Science Technology Engineering Math (S.T.E.M.) Fair.

- We believe hosting a Spelling Bee and S.T.E.M. Fair will encourage students to grow in this area and reward those who are pursuing excellence.

- We are pursuing more Project-Based Learning to cover a variety of outcomes through creative exploration and Intentional collaboration.

- As we normalize our quick-recall of grade-specific AB Ed outcomes, we would like to develop more projects that showcase achievement and integrate across subjects more effectively. We hope this will encour- age teacher collaboration and make better use of our instructional time.

CARING CULTURE

Mr. Earl Driedger, Principal

■ Through caring for our students:

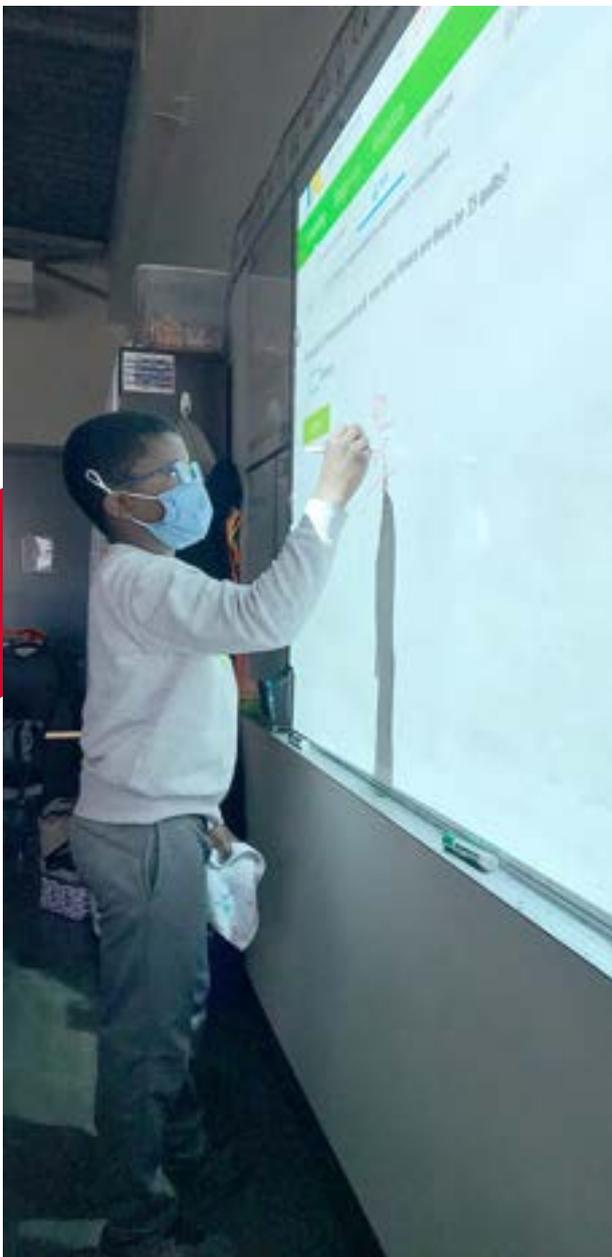
- Safe and Caring Culture surveys - in-house surveys across Elementary and Secondary grades which allow administrators and teachers to assess our school culture, address negative behaviors and plan for greater health in our school family.
- All staff (admin, teachers, support) checking in on students and building community. In a recent survey, a common thread among student comments was that they feel cared for and loved by the adults here at ACA.
- Greater focus on correction and resolution, aiming for personal spiritual and emotional growth rather than focusing on discipline and punishment.
 - Using incident reporting forms to accurately hear each child's story.
- Videos were recorded for each 2020 grad, allowing them to share their memories, words of appreciation and their plans for the future.
- Clubs continued: Chess, Intramurals continue to build community.
- Monthly fun dress-up days.
- Involvement in supporting Haiti Arise, Samaritan's Purse and other ministries.
- Playground updates & creation of the Gaga Ball court- funds donated by 2020 grads.
- Continued PE and Fitness Classes to support student lifelong health and wellness.
- Rival Ax Throwing - locally owned business donated their time to allow our students to experience this fun and unique opportunity.



STUDENTS
FEEL CARED FOR

■ Through caring for our staff:

- Staff community building.
- IT Support.
- Consideration is taken in class sizes- relationship building and quality community.
- A new health plan with improved coverage that includes counselling - better rates with more offered!
- Parent Council - coffees and treats, Staff appreciation lunch.



■ Through caring for our families:

- Parent Council - led by Mrs. Alayne Durand, supported by many others.
- Prayer Team - weekly prayer meetings at school, praying with students and staff members, walking through the school to claim each corner for God alone.
- Kahoot Family Fun Night, Buddy families, Spring Carnival.
- Fundraisers - carefully chosen to support the financial needs of ACA while also providing a valuable service to those who purchase the products.
- Strong communication with parents - Google Classroom, PowerSchool, effective report cards, Parent Teacher Meetings, open door policy and meetings when necessary.
- Christmas Hampers were sponsored and delivered to 10 families.
- Addressing urgent needs among our school family - staff, board and families responding with generosity!
- Reputation has been that students with challenges can find success at ACA, but we need to be careful about how much we can offer.
- A shift in roles here at ACA has Lucas Daley expanding his portfolio beyond maintenance. He is now the Director of Society Care and Operations and is regularly connecting with families to show support from ACA.

STRONG
COMMUNICATION
WITH PARENTS



■ Looking forward to:

- Further playground and park improvements - more seating, many more trees, more play structures, more places for building relationships.
- Full path around our property for walking, exercising and Terry Fox runs - we'd like community neighbours, with their children and pets, to continue feeling welcome at our campus.
- Renewed connections with renters who are blessed through the use of our facility.
- Increased community involvement and service - ACA people are those who serve!
- Increased partnerships with local churches for the furtherance of the Gospel

FACILITIES, IT & EQUIPMENT

Mr. Lucas Daley, Director of Operations and Society Care

I would like to start by saying thank you to all of the numerous volunteers who have helped out around the facility and IT. We are truly blessed to work in an environment where people are willing to serve. We wouldn't be able to do this without you.

■ Facilities Team:

Dwight Sieb

- We have been blessed to have Dwight full-time Managing our IT Department.
 - Dwight also helps manage our chapel Audio, Visuals.
- With the pressures of COVID-19 and the need for ACA to go online, Dwight worked tirelessly to support our teachers and students to have the best possible education with the restrictions.
- With the need to go online, Dwight saw the need to secure computers for families to work on their courses from home.
 - Through connections Dwight has, he was able to secure around 75 computers for free.
- Knowing we would also need to teach students at home once we came back, Dwight installed cameras in all classrooms so teachers could record lessons as they needed.

Niel Nielsen

- Niel joined our team in September full time as Maintenance Manager.
 - With years in construction and vast knowledge of various equipment, we have seen an incredible impact on our school.
- With our building being around 5 years old now, we have begun to see that we have many items due repair. Niel has been working hard to ensure everything stays in good working order.
- COVID-19 has been a blessing in some ways for Maintenance. We have been able to complete many jobs that usually wouldn't happen with students in the building.

THANK YOU TO
ALL OF OUR
VOLUNTEERS



Josh Joy

- It has been incredible having Josh work on our team in the rentals department.
 - With COVID-19 making it challenging to have our rentals in the building, Josh has been diligent at sending regular updates to inform our groups when they can return.
- Josh has also been working on finding ways to attract groups to our building. This has been challenging due to the fact that groups aren't able to commit because of COVID-19.
- Josh has also been working in our Marketing department with creating content and managing our social media platforms.

Luis Arias (LA Bureau Services LTD)

- With Luis's experience, we have been able to exercise all Alberta Health Guidelines.
- Not only have we been able to disinfect our facility a minimum of 3 times a day, but we have also been able to do it on pennies on the dollar compared to any other company in the industry.



■ Projects:

- One of the major projects we completed in September was our exterior enhancement project.
 - We were able to significantly improve the appearance, safety, and functionality of our playground and area.
 - We also created some outdoor learning areas to allow a teacher to teach outside.
- Another large project was repairing our weeping tile on the west side of the building.
 - This required digging up multiple sections of weeping tile and tying cleanouts.
 - This new cleanout will give us access to the pipe surrounding the building and ensure that water is flowing through it.
 - Repairing the weeping tile will ensure we don't have any flooding in the school's basement.

SOCIETY CARE

Mr. Lucas Daley, Director of Operations and Society Care

- Society care is a new role here at ACA and the role's main purpose is to bring strength and support to our Society.
- The goal is to bring a new level of service to our school community and create an environment where students and families alike find belonging.
 - We will be holding connecting events where we can come together to learn and grow in our faith and relationships
- Another goal is to raise funds to help accomplish the mission and vision of ACA. We are called to educate and train His children to know love and serve Him.
 - This will be done through annual giving campaigns and fundraising events.



MY GOD SHALL SUPPLY ALL YOUR NEEDS

FINANCES

Mrs. Kim Vander Wal, Director of Business/HR

We began the 2020-21 school year with many uncertainties with the COVID-19 pandemic. Our enrollment decreased to 251 from 292 the year before due to the level of comfort around COVID-19.

We continued to offer additional programs that generate revenue, we have one International student and three part-time Homeschool students enrolled.

Due to COVID-19, we were eligible for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy Program which we received retroactive to April 2020. This enables us to pay our staff even with the loss of enrollment, rental and donation revenue

because of the pandemic restrictions.

We continue to run a pretty tight reign on expenses. The challenge we face is building up our monthly donor base and focus on rebuilding and increasing enrollment.

We have a great focus on increasing enrollment, expanding our rental base, introducing new incentives and programs for families and moving our International Student Program forward. I believe that there is a great opportunity on the International Student front.

Our budget is tight, and, as projected,

we should end the fiscal year with a small surplus. Our gifts and donations have fallen short in the first part of the year. We rely on donations to make up a part of our Operating Budget, so please consider how you, your friends and your family can support us in this way.

Our rental income has also decreased due to COVID-19. With sights on restrictions being lifted we see this program ramping up in the Spring/Fall.

Philippians 4:19 says "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."





Fundraising is another portion that makes up our Operating Budget. Fundraisers like the Davison Orchard Apple Sale and ACA Shopping Card Program all help our bottom line.

We have been hit hard by the effects of COVID-19, but our trust is in the Lord, the supplier of all our needs! God has been good and we feel that He has covered us through these challenging times and will see us through it all.

Special thanks goes out to our Finance Committee, which includes Chris Vander Wal, Callistus Orji, Kathy Harmon and Kim Vander Wal. We are looking for new members for this committee. If you are interested, please contact our treasurer at treasurer@airdriechristian.com. These folks

have spent countless hours pouring over financials, financial policy, cash flow projections, expenditures and the general business operations of ACA to safeguard our financial viability and ensure that we are being good stewards of God's finances. Thank you!

You can view our Audited Financial Statements on our website through the link at

airdriechristian.com/financials.

BUSINESS REPORT / HR

Mrs. Kim Vander Wal, Director of Business/HR

The business side of ACA is a busy, ever-changing part of the school that works behind the scenes. We are always looking at streamlining processes, finding new outlets for advertising, increasing enrollment, creating revenue, being good stewards of God's finances and moving ACA forward.

Truly it is parents like you who choose Christian education that enables us to fulfill our call to advance God's Kingdom.

Due to COVID-19, we had to put many programs on hold, such as the Preschool Program, Out of School Care Program, Summer Camps and the Solid Grounds Cafe. It is our goal to reopen these programs when it becomes appropriate to do so.

PROGRAMS

Calgary Busing Program continues to be a success, with one bus coming from two stops in North Calgary daily

HUMAN RESOURCES

- Mrs. Jordan Gallant was hired as our Part-time Kindergarten Teacher (Mrs. Christine Wong is on Maternity Leave for the 2020-21 school year.



- Mrs. Hannah Van De Walle was hired as one of our Elementary Teachers.
- Mrs. Jessica Joy was hired as our permanent Grade Five Teacher as Mrs. Caralee Lee decided not to return after her Maternity Leave.
- Mrs. Jordan Gallant was hired as our Secondary Vice-Principal.
- Ms. Carlee Latta was hired as one of our Part-time Kindergarten EA's.
- Mrs. Candice Vikse was hired as one of our Part-time Kindergarten EA's.
- Mr. Niel Nielsen was hired as our Maintenance Manager.
- Mr. Lucas Daley has an expanded role with Society Care and Operations.
- Mr. Josh Joy has an expanded role as our Evening Facility Rental Supervisor and Social Media Marketing.
- Soon Mrs. Hannah Van De Walle and Mrs. Emilia Davis will be starting Maternity Leave.

We are looking ahead to the 21/22 school year. With the uncertainty of COVID-19, several families chose an online program for their children. We have invited all these families to return. It has been a positive conversation. Inquiries have also started earlier this year, which is a sign that parents are looking for alternative options for education or a return to the classroom environment.

In an effort to streamline our programs we made the decision to remove our Fundraising Commitment and Family Volunteer Program this school year. These programs did provide an opportunity for each of you to be a part of the mission and vision of our school and it is our prayer that you will continue to do so.

We must remain conservative with our spending

while providing the best educational environment possible for our students. We are very thankful for each family that calls ACA "home". We look forward to continuing this growth trend. Our facility is well suited as a positive learning environment, our staff is made up of incredible, Godly people who truly care about children and the family atmosphere that exists within our parent body is truly amazing.

We are called by Jesus Christ to advance God's Kingdom by educating and training His children to personally know, love and serve Him. ACA is equipping and discipling generations for Christ. Great things are happening at ACA and we are seeing the fruits in every student that graduates and goes out into the world as a disciple of Christ.





Airdrie Christian Academy

Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.
1 Corinthians 10:31



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