

Home Based School

February 2026



A Message from Principal Holbrow

Now that we have digital clocks, ticking hands became an extra, something that became a chore for students to have to do. Our dishwashers mean that only occasionally do we have to fill the sink to wash by hand. We even have robotic vacuum cleaners that make cleaning the floors a thing of the past. We have gained new opportunities and more time because of these and many other tools. We are also losing a skillset that was once commonplace. I have never had to hang my wet laundry on a line in the backyard and I don't think I have missed out on an important ability, but there are some areas where it might matter more. I used to enjoy working through all the paperwork to complete my taxes each year. I know, that's weird. There was a challenge and some effort that was needed and a sense of accomplishment when they were ready to be sent off. Technology has made it so that I only have to click some buttons on my computer and my taxes are complete and submitted. I appreciate the fact that I don't have to schedule a huge block of my day to work it out, but I also miss it. There will be many individuals who never develop an understanding for why their computer makes the calculations for their refund. They will simply hit the buttons and send off their results.

We are in this position with AI right now. Communication in all its forms is a skill that needs to be developed. Presently, we are able to efficiently analyze data, interpret opinions and synthesize



information into our own assessment and communicate to others our own rationale. Those of us who have developed the skills understand the value that is placed in a tool that can do the work for us. Yet, if it did not exist, we would continue to do the work like we always did. What we at the Outreach and Home-Based Schools are seeing is students already who simply want AI to do the work for them. This means that they don't have to read the work. They don't have to understand the context. They don't have to organize their thoughts into an accomplishment. Yet the task gets done. While we understand that catching the important details of a poem to develop a satisfactory conclusion of the poet's intent is not a lifelong skill many will use, those evaluation skills are applied to many other situations.

We will continue to hold students accountable for work that they did not create for themselves and we need parent support. We can lose the skill to read the hands of a clock. We can let the vacuum cleaner scurry under the sofa. We do not want to forego opportunities to challenge our brains, to work through meaningful problems, to struggle until we succeed.

Mr. Holbrow
Principal



Put This On Your Calendar...

2025-2026 School Year

January 30 - PD Day - **No School**

Feb. 2 Groundhog Day

Feb. 5-6 Teacher's Convention - **No School**

Feb. 14 Valentine's Day!

Feb. 16 Family Day - **No School**

Feb. 26 Home Based Event - Soapstone Carving (Grades 1-9 only)



Parent Directed and Shared Responsibility Mid Year Meetings

Hi Parent Directed and Shared Responsibility Families,

Great news! We are on our way to the mid-way point in the school year. The second semester starts February 2!

If you have not yet booked your Mid-Year meeting please

We are excited to hear about how things have gone so far this year and how your plans for the rest of the year are looking. Please book a meeting with us for your mid-point meeting. The meetings can be online meets, but if you prefer to come in-person we can arrange a meeting at the school. The meetings take about half an hour per student. If you have multiple students please plan accordingly.

Please add items to your child's google drive work sample folder 2 days prior to your meeting.

What to upload to the work samples folder:

- Samples of the AWESOME stuff your student has been doing
- A project your student is proud of (a story they wrote, a science experiment etc...)
- Anything else you would like to show off!
- Please add samples of student work and photos to your file.

You will need to access the drive with a gmail account. If you need your gmail account linked to the work samples folder, please let me know the email and I can help. Students must use their Black Gold Login information. Please call or email me if you need help with login information.

Please call or email some dates that work for you and we will get you scheduled in. Mrs. Andersen works in the morning for Home-Based School from 9:00 am to 11:30 am

Looking forward to hearing from you.

780-929-5784

STEMapalooza

FOR INTERNATIONAL DAY
OF WOMEN AND GIRLS
IN SCIENCE
FEBRUARY 11



Supported by:



Get inspired while having fun at STEMapalooza!

Celebrate International Day of Women and Girls in Science on February 11 with [STEMapalooza](#), a party showcasing women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) with lots of thrilling activities!

When: February 11, 2026, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

What to expect:

- Enjoy a 3D screening of *Superhuman Body: World of Medical Marvels* in IMAX followed by a Q&A with Dr. Jana Rieger, Professor in Rehabilitation Medicine at the University of Alberta.
- Discover demonstrations, games, and hands-on experiments throughout the galleries. Activities include designing a take-home circuit card, making a fluorescent lava lamp, and exploring organ dissection.
- Treat yourself to free cotton candy!
- Meet inspiring local women in STEM fields!

And much more!

Don't miss this inspiring night. [Get your tickets now!](#)

[GET YOUR TICKETS](#)



Services We Offer

For Students:

- Group Therapy
- Furry Foundations
- Individual Counselling
- Pen Paw Pal Program
- Volunteer Experience
- Animal or Nature Yoga
- Fur Fun Days (Field Trips)
- Skill Building Day Camps
- Recreation Day Camps
- Work Experience

For Faculty:

- Corporate Team Buildings
- Individual or Group Counselling
- Certification in Animal Assisted Education



dreamcatcherTM
nature assisted therapy

780.809.1047 ext. 1
info@dreamcatcherassociation.com
53044 RR #213, Ardrossan, AB

Dreamcatcher™ offers a unique range of services designed to support student wellbeing, personal growth, and skill development through nature and animal-assisted services.

We have a variety of therapeutic and experiential learning services for students and faculty available, please see the attached flyer for a full list of our services.

These programs provide students with meaningful connections to nature and animals while building social-emotional skills, resilience, and confidence in a supportive, engaging environment.

Ayla Ramos
Volunteer for Dreamcatcher Nature Assisted Therapy
info@dreamcatcherassociation.com

www.dreamcatcherassociation.com

Yoga for Homeschoolers!

I'm reaching out to let you know about a new yoga class being offered for homeschoolers at Yoga Within studio in Edmonton. As a former homeschooler myself, I have designed this class to touch on educational outcomes for a variety of subjects including Physical Education, Health, Social Studies, and Science.

It runs on Tuesdays 1-2pm (6 weeks, beginning Jan. 27)

Here is the link to register and learn more.

<https://yogawithin.ca/home-school-yoga>

If you have know families in the area who you think might be interested, please feel free to pass this along! And please contact me if you have any questions.

Thanks so much!

Natalie Czar

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Nat on the Mat

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and Yoga

linktr.ee/nat_onthe_mat

[Instagram](#)



LESSONS FOR KIDS

[Best Lessons for Kids in Edmonton & Area](#)

Check this out!

Your School's Digital Library



School's Out? Reading is IN!

How much can YOU read?

How to find Digital Resources?

On the Library homepage, use the dropdown to select preferred format



Search by title, author or topic, and embark on your digital reading adventure!

Did you know...

- You can borrow any ebook or audiobook using any device **ANYTIME, 24/7**. Just log in with your student account!
- There are **5000** different ebooks to choose from, and **1412** different audiobooks!
- Ebooks and audiobooks will **NEVER** be late! Automatic returns on item due dates.
- Ebooks will have this icon
- Audiobooks will have this icon

Ask your **librarian** for help!

Visit destiny.blackgold.ca for access!

Beaumont Minor Baseball



Beaumont Minor Ball is actively gearing up for our 2026 baseball season. Not sure if you watched the Blue Jays (Canada's Team) playoff run this past October but it was something that got all of Canada excited and talking!! And we are certain that new to baseball families probably thought about trying the game of baseball at some point. This is where we come in and why I'm reaching out.

We have a FREE come try it event for all female AND male youth ages, see attached poster. We are requesting that it be added to your next newsletter if possible.

Thank you for your time, and please let me know if you have any questions.

Brant Poyer

BMBA GM

Whether your child is into sports, science, drama, dance, gymnastics, nature, or technology, there is an extracurricular option in Edmonton & Area to fit their unique interests! We are hunting for the BEST Lessons and classes for Kids to add to our list and share with your family. Our goal is to help keep your kids active and engaged throughout the school year by trying something new or getting back to a beloved activity!

February Home Based Event

Thursday, February 26 from 1:00 - 3:00

This is for the February Event: Soapstone (this is rescheduled from October)

February 26, 2026 1-3pm



Link: <https://forms.gle/op7JXRr8LbDvptqu7>

This event is open to Gr 1-9 ONLY.

Teacher Directed Moodle Classroom

We will be utilizing our Moodle Capacity this year. Students and parents are required to watch the Moodle Tutorial video below. Please familiarize yourself with the video. The Moodle Site can only be accessed with the student's Blackgold account. It is the same log-in credentials that you use to check your Blackgold email (same username and password). You can access all of your materials digitally, watch video tutorials, and scan in your work all by using Moodle.

Website <https://moodle.blackgold.ca/> . We will also be requesting that work submitted digitally (scanned or pdfs) be uploaded through the Moodle dropboxes. Instructions are found in each Moodle course. Please don't hesitate to ask for help!

How to use Moodle to Submit your Assignments.

First, download a free version of Adobe Scan free from the App Store.

Watch a quick tutorial here: [Adobe Scan Tutorial](#)

Then, go to your Black Gold Moodle at: <https://moodle.blackgold.ca/>

Log in with your BGSD login and password.

Here is a quick tutorial to watch: [Moodle Video](#)

Remember, we have already added you to your classes. If you are missing a class, email Mrs. Andersen at nicole.andersen@blackgold.ca.

You will be looking for the "Dropboxes" in the menu. That is where you will upload your assignments.

For example, "Assignment 1A" goes in the "Assignment 1A Dropbox".

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU ARE UPLOADING THE CORRECT ASSIGNMENT IN THE CORRECT DROPBOX

Please note your teacher will enroll you in the courses - you are NOT required to self enroll - ignore that part in the video.

Health & Wellness

Kickstand

Kickstand Connect is a virtual walk-in clinic for Albertans aged 11-25 (but they said their age range is soft; kids will not be denied if they are older or younger than that). Their services are provided by Alberta-certified providers, and there is NO COST associated with them.



There is NO limit to how many times a kid can access the walk-in services; they will be directed to further support if their needs are more intensive. This program has a TON of connections to other mental health support programs in the province.

<https://mykickstand.ca/connect/>

Leduc County Family Resource Network (FRN)

Leduc County Family Resource Network (FRN) offers permanent drop-in hours at its two facilities, located in Devon and Thorsby.

All families are welcome to drop in and join FRN staff for:

- coffee and snacks
- resources and referrals
- monthly prize draws
- free Wi-Fi and computer use
- games and crafts
- programs and supports

FRN facility locations

Devon: 5 Jasper Court in the Old Robina Baker School

- Open Mondays from 2 to 8 p.m.

Thorsby: 4711 48 Ave. in the modular building across from the Arctic Spas Recreation Complex

- Open Tuesdays from 2 to 8 p.m.
- Open Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Please note: drop-in hours will be closed when school busses are not running.

For more information, contact Leduc County FRN at 780-979-2385 or frn@leduc-county.com

Indigenous News

Please take some time to read the [Newsletter](#) prepared each month by our division Indigenous Coordinator Michael Swampy.

Community Events

We are thrilled to announce that **ESBCHS will be presenting *Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical* this January**, and we invite everyone to join us for what promises to be a truly memorable production. This year is particularly special as it **marks the first Block 5 musical produced in our school in 25 years**, and **for the first time, the ESBCHS Atrium will be transformed by Prairie Fire Productions** into the magical world of *Matilda*.

Tickets

Tickets are now on sale and can be purchased through Eventbrite:

[ESBCHS Matilda Ticket Link](#)

Seating is currently limited. While we hope additional seats may become available closer to the performance dates, we encourage early ticket purchase to secure your spot.

Support & Promotion

We invite the entire district to help celebrate and promote this remarkable student achievement:

- Share the ticket link with families and community members
- Follow and share updates on social media

Instagram & Facebook:

<https://www.instagram.com/esbchsproduction>

This production highlights the extraordinary talent, creativity, and dedication of our students and staff, and we are proud to showcase it to the wider Beaumont community.

Thank you for your support, and we look forward to seeing you at the show!

Ms. Yardley, ESBCHS

Beaumont's annual Family Day celebration! An afternoon of fun activities for the whole family.

Date: February 16, 2026

Time: 1 to 4 pm

Crescendo Music Studios

We're excited to provide **homeschool families with a significant discount** on daytime music lessons at our studio! Families can take advantage of our new **Daytime Intro Pass** for only **\$75** – regularly **\$99** – which includes:

- 3 x 30-minute lessons **or**
- 2 x 45-minute lessons

Lessons can be booked **any time between 12:00 PM and 3:00 PM**, making it a perfect fit for homeschool schedules.

This is a great opportunity for students to explore music with our professional instructors in a supportive, creative, and fun environment. We offer piano, voice, guitar, drums, violin, and more – all tailored to meet each learner's individual goals.

Challenger is new programming we started last year in partnership with the Jays Care Foundation and we are hoping to grow in 2026. The program is for individuals living with physical and/or cognitive disabilities

2026 Board Highlights can be found here: <https://www.blackgold.ca/board-highlights>
If you cannot access the Board Highlights from the links above, please view them from our website as follows:

- www.blackgold.ca
- Board
- Board Highlights

The HBS Staff Contacts

All general Inquiries, please email: hbs@blackgold.ca

School phone: 780-929-5784

Principal - Mr. David Holbrow - David.Holbrow@gshare.blackgold.ca

Assistant Principal - Mrs. Nicole Andersen - nicole.andersen@gshare.blackgold.ca

Secretary - Mrs. Jennifer Hay - jennifer.hay@gshare.blackgold.ca

Grades 1-6 & Personalized - Mrs. Marla Kniestel - marla.kniestel@gshare.blackgold.ca

Grades 7-9 - Mrs. Kristen Gilchrist - kristen.gilchrist@gshare.blackgold.ca
Curriculum Developer, Grades 7- 9 Social & ELA - Ms. Andrea Collins - andrea.collins@gshare.blackgold.ca
Curriculum Developer, Grades 7- 9 Social & ELA - Mrs. Danielle Manchak - danielle.manchak@gshare.blackgold.ca
Educational Assistant - Mrs. Kiran Shaikh kiran.shaikh@gshare.blackgold.ca

Come Visit Us

Home Based School Website

How to Use Moodle - Tutorial Video

Division School Calendars

School Handbook

Home Education Handbook

Parent Directed Reimbursement Information

Virtual Open House

Mission Statement

Black Gold is a leading school division in creating innovative programming to inspire and create success for students. Black Gold Home-Based School is committed to providing flexible learning options so every student can achieve. Home-Based education choices work in cooperation with students, parents and Black Gold Schools to ensure quality program planning and



transition. Home-Based School provides opportunities for Parent-Directed or Teacher-Directed programs and is respectful of parent choice and collaboration. We believe to achieve their full potential, children must be the center of all decisions related to learning and provide course work online or in print in a variety of environments. Home-Based education allows for a personalized learning opportunity for students who require flexibility.



Nicole Andersen

Nicole is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters