

A Note from Mrs. Westendorp

During the 2023/2024 school year, I have been participating in the Van Lunen Fellows program. This leadership program was created by the Van Lunen Centre in 2007 to provide executive management training for Christian school leaders. This year's cohort comprises 23 Heads of School from across Canada and the United States.

The program began in July 2023 with a week spent on the Calvin University Campus in Grand Rapids, Michigan. During this time, I received training in cultural leadership, strategic planning, board governance, advancement & fund development, marketing & admissions, and financial sustainability. I also spent time learning from my small group members and Van Lunen leaders as we applied what we had learned in the sessions and set goals for our schools.



My leadership development continued in January at our second training session at the Franciscan Renewal Centre in Scottsdale, Arizona. This session focused on personal leadership strengths and weaknesses, organizational health, building our team, crucial conversations, diversity & inclusion, capital campaigns, and staff compensation strategies. Time was also spent learning from other Christian school leaders in small and large group settings.

Over the next few months, I will write my Van Lunen project paper and prepare my presentation for our final session in July. I will also continue to meet with my small group monthly as I practice what I have learned to lead ERCS into the future.

This program provided me with excellent executive management training, developed my leadership skills, and allowed me to make meaningful connections with other Christian School leaders. It has broadened my understanding of the many facets of executive school management and provided me with both personal and professional resources to move the school forward.

I am thankful for the Governance Committee and their willingness to support my desire to grow and develop as a leader by participating in the Van Lunen Fellows Program. I am also thankful for the ERCS staff who covered me so well during my absence from school in January.

God has fantastic plans for ERCS, and I am excited to see where he takes us next.



Upcoming Events



Mar. 1 - ERCS choir sings O Canada at the Guelph Storm game

Mar. 6 - JD Sweid order pick up

Mar. 8 - Hot dog day

Mar. 11 - 15 - March Break

Mar. 28 - Pizza day; Dental screening

Mar. 29 - Good Friday

April 1 - Easter Monday



April 12 - Hot dog day

April 24 - Celebration of Learning

April 25 - Pizza day, gr. 3/4 trip to River Run Centre

April 30 - Tuition Assistance applications due

May 10 - Track & Field



Buddy Bench

Our new buddy bench is getting a lot of use. If you need a buddy to play with at recess, just hang out on the buddy bench! Our students have been practicing reaching out and including each other. The bench was a special gift in memory of Jerry de Vries, a longtime friend and supporter of our school.

ERCS Lions Update

CAASO VOLLEYBALL

On Tuesday, November 21st, our senior students competed in the CAASO Volleyball Tournament at the Haber Recreational Centre in Burlington. Our boys and girls teams competed well and showed excellent sportsmanship. At the end of the round-robin matches, our girls team ended up in 5th place and did not progress to the semi-finals. Our boys team was in 2nd place after the round-robin. They won their semi-final match and progressed to the finals. Although they played well as a team, they came up short and finished 2nd overall.



Claire van de Pol and Jeremy Sellers received the sportsmanship awards. Both students worked hard to improve their skills during practices, encouraged their teammates at the tournament, and consistently demonstrated excellent attitudes and effort on the court.



Special thanks to Mr. Burkhardt and Mrs. Westendorp, our coaches, and Christy Vanveen and Erica Martin, who drove our students to and from the tournament and helped cheer them on. Great work, ERCS!

CAASO BADMINTON

On Thursday, January 25th, eight ERCS students travelled to the KW Badminton Club in Kitchener to compete in the CAASO Badminton tournament. Due to tournament restrictions, we could only enter one team in each division.

Our team

- Girls Singles: Claire van de Pol
- Boys Singles: Reuben van de Pol

ERCS Lions Update

Our team (continued)

- Girls Doubles: Mia Massey & Julianna Venne
- Boys Doubles: Dennis Fehr & Bo Martin
- Mixed Doubles: Adelaide Stiller & Jeremy Sellers

Our teams competed well during their round-robin games. Each team won at least one game during the round-robin and proceeded to the play-offs. Although all teams worked hard and played their best, Claire and Reuben were our highest-placed athletes, ending in 4th and 5th out of 13. Four out of our five groups finished in the top half of all the competitors.



We were complimented on our sportsmanship by other coaches and a linesperson. Adelaide Stiller showed excellent sportsmanship, consistently encouraging her teammates throughout the day. She was very deserving of the Sportsmanship award for this tournament.



CAASO BASKETBALL

On Thursday, February 23rd, our basketball team travelled to Burlington for the CAASO basketball tournament. We lost the first game and won the second. During the third game, our team rallied from behind in the second half, but ended up losing by one point and being eliminated from the playoffs. Bo Martin received the sportsmanship award for his excellent attitude and consistent effort both on and off the court.

ERCS SILENT AUCTION

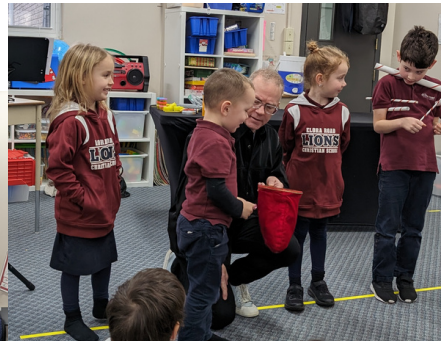
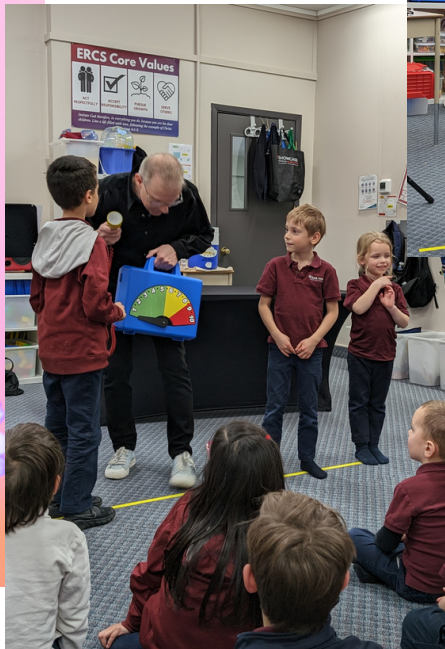
Our Silent Auction was a HUGE success. A big thank you to our Parent Council who spent many hours working behind the scenes to make the auction a success. Special thanks to Candice Duimering, Brittany Walton, Michela Morrison and Jenn Venne for organizing and setting up the auction and raffle tables; Angela Vreman, Naima Medina, Amber Vyn, Christy and Dylan Vanveen for looking after the food & beverages; and Rachelle Sloom and Yvette Splinter for taking charge of decorating. A big thank you to Rob & Sara van de Pol for creating, setting up and managing all of the children's games. Thanks also to the many other parents and teachers who helped out during the auction.

We are also thankful for our auction sponsors and to everyone who donated and or collected items. Finally, thank you to everyone who attended the event and purchased an item, raffle tickets, or children's game tickets.

This year, our silent auction raised \$17,772! We are blessed to have such an amazing school community!

Support our sponsors!

<p>Platinum Sponsors</p>  <p>Silver Sponsors</p>    <p>Bronze Sponsors</p>  	<p>Gold Sponsors</p>     
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Our JK - Grade 2 students had a special guest to teach them about filling each other's buckets with acts of kindness and encouragement! Thanks, Mr. Mike, for a great presentation.

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

Fundraising plays an essential role at ERCS. The money raised is used in 5 main areas:

- Technology (Chromebooks, projectors, charging carts)
- Curriculum (textbooks, teaching resources)
- Classrooms (shelving, new toys, science equipment)
- Extracurricular activities (sports equipment, musical instruments)
- Building & property (fences, playground equipment, ventilation systems)

This Fall ERCS has participated in 4 fundraising events.

EAT TO GIVE PROGRAM

- An ongoing program that's easy to participate in
- Families purchase gift cards for items they regularly spend money on, such as groceries, gas, or Tim Hortons, each month.
- A portion of the money for the gift cards is donated back to the school, and donors receive income tax receipts at the end of the year.
- The gift cards are very flexible, and dollar amounts and retailers can be changed each month.
- For more information, please contact alicias@ercs.cloud or check out our website, eloraroad.ca.

TOTAL MONEY RAISED IN 2023: \$2,874.13

ELMIRA POULTRY FUNDRAISER (OCTOBER)

- 28 families and 4 staff sold 379 boxes of chicken
- Top sellers were the Mousseau's (39 boxes), Waltons (31 boxes), and Stillers (27 boxes)

TOTAL MONEY RAISED: \$2595.00

SILENT AUCTION & DESSERT FUNDRAISER

- Largest fundraising event
- Includes games for children, a silent auction, and a raffle
- Over 200 people attended the event
- 20 sponsors, 112 silent auction items, 9 gift baskets, 51 raffle items
- Sold 1312 kids' games tickets and 1025 raffle tickets

TOTAL MONEY RAISED: \$17,772.42

CORPORATE GIFT CARDS

- Local businesses placed Christmas employee gift card order with ERCS
- ERCS receives a small percentage of the gift card total
- Thank you to HFH, Siderman, Pioneer Septic Solutions, Duimering Concrete, RLB Chartered Accountants (Matt Venne), Alpha Graphics, and Kay Ogunyoye.

TOTAL MONEY RAISED: \$1,280.00

TOTAL RAISED: \$24,521.55

Christmas Squad Food Drive & Scavenger Hunt



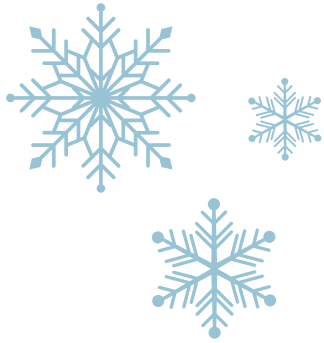
Our squads collected a total of 445 items for the Salvation Army Christmas Hampers! Thank you to everyone who contributed.

Christmas Program

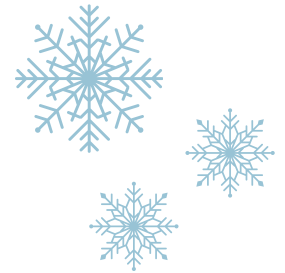


100 Days of Learning





Skating Days



Throughout the year, we have four opportunities to go skating at Exhibition Arena. Thank you to all of the volunteers who help out with these days.





Hockley Valley Ski Trip



On Thursday, February 15th, thirty grade 5-8 students travelled to Hockley Valley to participate in their learn to ski program. Special thanks to our parent drivers/volunteers (Jason Morrison, John Martin, and Craig Bremner) who made this day a success.



*Join us for the
Elora Road Christian School*

Celebration of Learning

*Open house - Meet the teachers
Special performances - Bake sale*

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

1 pm - classrooms open - 6pm

2pm - performance - 7pm

**Recitations, Band,
Choir, Drama**

Matinee

1 - 3:30 pm

Evening

6 - 8:30 pm

Wednesday, April 24