



**2023-2024**

# **School Family Handbook**



EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

[epsb.ca](http://epsb.ca)



## Principal Message 2023-2024

Welcome to the Balwin Family! At Balwin School, we focus on high quality education to support the needs of all students, and we are very fortunate to have exceptional staff. We are incredibly excited for this school year and the possibilities it brings. We are rich in diversity and that richness is our strength.

For 2023-2024 we are introducing our new anchor words that will guide our

conversations, support and expectations for everyone in the Balwin Family: **Capable, Confident, and Connected**. You will hear your child talk about what these words mean to us over the next 10 months!

Balwin School aligns with Edmonton Public Schools' Vision, Mission and Values. Our work is driven by the [District's Strategic Plan](#), which includes three priorities and strategic goals.

I look forward to the year ahead and am honoured to be the principal of Balwin School. Please know that I am available to meet and discuss any concerns and questions you have. Together we can create the future we want for our children.

I look forward to our partnership to ensure that your child has an enriching and rewarding time at Balwin.

**Vision**  
Enhancing pathways for student success

**Mission**  
Our commitment to high-quality public education serves the community and empowers each student to live a life of dignity, fulfilment, empathy and possibility.

**Values**  
Accountability, collaboration, equity and integrity

**2022-26 Division Priorities**

- 1 Build on outstanding learning opportunities for all students.
- 2 Advance action towards anti-racism and reconciliation.
- 3 Promote a comprehensive approach to student and staff well-being and mental health.

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I encourage families to always stay connected with us. Here are some ways to connect:

SchoolZone

Balwin Website

Balwin Facebook

Balwin Twitter



Carolyn Mathew  
Principal

## ***Respectful Learning and Working Environments***

Edmonton Public Schools, in cooperation with its staff groups, is committed to creating a healthy, respectful learning environment for students, staff members, trustees, parents, volunteers and contractors.

We recognize the worth of every person without discrimination. We are committed to working toward the elimination of objectionable behaviour in our schools and workplaces, and to maintaining an environment that is respectful, safe, nurturing and positive for everyone.

Please help us achieve this goal by interacting in a manner which respects the dignity and value of others.



**We are committed to the well-being of our students, staff and community members.**

Together, we achieve learning and working environments that are:

- **Safe**
- **Respectful**
- **Ethical**
- **Free from abusive behaviour, harassment and violence in any form.**



Darrel Robertson  
Superintendent of Schools



## Schedule & Hours of Operation for the Regular and Cogito Program

Time	Period	Number of Minutes	Thursday	
8:37 a.m.	First Warning Bell		8:37 a.m.	First Warning Bell
8:41 a.m.	Second Warning Bell		8:41 a.m.	Second Warning Bell
8:45–9:30 a.m.	Period 1	45	8:45–9:30 a.m.	Period 1
9:32–10:17 a.m.	Period 2	45	9:32–10:17 a.m.	Period 2
10:19–11:04 a.m.	Period 3	45	10:19–11:04 a.m.	Period 3
11:06–11:51 a.m.	Period 4	45	11:06–11:51 a.m.	Period 4
11:51 a.m.–12:31 p.m.	Lunch	40	11:51 a.m.–12:31 p.m.	Lunch
12:29 p.m.	Warning Bell		12:29 p.m.	Warning Bell
12:31 p.m.	Second Warning Bell		12:31 p.m.	Second Warning Bell
12:33–12:47 p.m.	Homeroom Community Skill Building	14	12:33–12:50 p.m.	Homeroom Community Skill Building (17 minutes)
12:49–1:34 p.m.	Period 5	45	12:52–1:37 p.m.	45
1:36–2:21 p.m.	Period 6	45	1:39–2:24 p.m.	45
2:23–3:08 p.m.	Period 7	45	Early Dismissal On Thursday	



- **Balwin school now has EARLY DISMISSAL ON THURSDAYS. Students are dismissed at 2:24 pm.**
- **Balwin is a CLOSED CAMPUS at lunchtime. Students must remain at school and on school grounds.**

Our school calendar is updated monthly. Review our newsletters on SchoolZone and [balwin.epsb.ca](http://balwin.epsb.ca) for the most up-to-date information.

# 2023–24 Division Calendar

epsb.ca

### AUGUST • 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

### SEPTEMBER • 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

### OCTOBER • 2023

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

### NOVEMBER • 2023

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			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

### DECEMBER • 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

### JANUARY • 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

### FEBRUARY • 2024

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### MARCH • 2024

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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

### APRIL • 2024

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21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

### MAY • 2024

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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

### JUNE • 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

#### APPROVED HOLIDAYS

Labour Day	September 4
The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation	September 30
Thanksgiving	October 9
Remembrance Day	November 11
Christmas Day	December 25
Boxing Day	December 26
Winter Break	Dec. 25–Jan. 5
New Year's Day	January 1
Family Day	February 19
Teachers' Convention	February 29–March 1
Spring Break	March 25–29
Good Friday	March 29
Easter Monday	April 1
Victoria Day	May 20
First Operational Day (No Students)	September 1
First Day of Classes	September 5
Last Day of Classes	June 26
Last Operational Day	June 27

#### DATES OF SIGNIFICANCE

Yom Kippur	September 25
Diwali and Bandi Chhor Divas	November 12
Lunar New Year	February 10
Eid al-Fitr	April 10
Eid al-Adha	June 17
Summer Solstice and National Indigenous Peoples Day	June 21

#### LEGEND

- PUBLIC HOLIDAY
- PD DAY (NO STUDENTS)
- FIRST/LAST DAY OF CLASSES
- OPERATIONAL DAY (NO STUDENTS)
- TEACHERS' CONVENTION
- TEACHERS' DAY IN LIEU (NO TEACHERS OR STUDENTS)
- BOARD APPROVED NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAY (NO TEACHERS OR STUDENTS)
- WINTER/SPRING BREAK

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D22 June 9, 2022

## Balwin School Office Team

Administration/Office	Position	Phone Ext.	Email
Carolyn Mathew	Principal	303	<a href="mailto:carolyn.mathew@epsb.ca">carolyn.mathew@epsb.ca</a>
Crystal Lawrence	Assistant Principal	302	<a href="mailto:crystal.lawrence@epsb.ca">crystal.lawrence@epsb.ca</a>
Lori Choong	Curriculum Coordinator	TBD	<a href="mailto:lori.choong@epsb.ca">lori.choong@epsb.ca</a>
Nouha Ajaj	Administrative Assistant	301	<a href="mailto:nouha.ajaj@epsb.ca">nouha.ajaj@epsb.ca</a>
Laurie Baker	Administrative Assistant	300	<a href="mailto:laurie.baker@epsb.ca">laurie.baker@epsb.ca</a>

## Student Behaviour and Conduct

The Edmonton Public School Board is committed to ensuring that each student is provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that supports high quality learning, respects diversity, and fosters a sense of belonging and a positive sense of self. Students are expected to learn, practice, and demonstrate positive personal and interpersonal character traits that contribute to the development of productive learning environments. A copy of **Balwin's Student Rights And Responsibilities** can be found on SchoolZone and the Balwin website.

## Supporting Student Success

### Parents support their child's success and positive behaviour by:

- taking an active role in their child's personal and academic success
- reviewing expectations outlined in this document with their child and helping them develop the skills required to meet the school's expectations
- helping them to attend school regularly and punctually
- encouraging and modelling collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with others in the school community
- contributing to a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment
- reporting to the school any circumstances which may impact student safety

### Students are responsible for their behaviour and effort, and are expected to:

- contribute a welcoming, caring, inclusive, respectful and safe learning environment that commits to anti-racism and equity
- learn, practice and demonstrate positive personal and interpersonal skills and attributes
- use their abilities and talents to gain maximum learning benefit from their school experience
- attend school regularly and punctually
- be accountable for behaviour which impacts others in the school, whether or not the behaviour occurs within the school building or during the school day or by electronic means

### School staff will help your child succeed by:

- providing a welcoming, caring, respectful, inclusive and safe learning environment that respects diversity, commits to anti-racism and equity, and fosters a sense of belonging
- ensuring that students and parents understand the school's expectations for student behaviour
- establishing supports and processes at the school to proactively guide positive student behaviour
- helping students develop and practice the skills and attributes to meet these expectations
- working with students, parents and other school staff to address behaviour concerns, including implementing appropriate responses to address inappropriate student behaviour



## **Our Belief and Commitment**

At Balwin School students are expected to learn, practice, and demonstrate positive personal and interpersonal character traits that contribute to the development of productive learning environments.

Balwin School is an open, welcoming community that strives to ensure students and families are supported in their educational journey. We do this by exemplifying the highest principles of diversity, equity, and community and by ensuring we can meet families at their needs.

## **Rights and Responsibilities**

Our school Division recognizes the following fundamental rights and responsibilities:

All students have the right to be treated with dignity, respect and fairness by other staff and students.

Students, parents, staff and trustees have a shared responsibility to create and support welcoming, caring, respectful, inclusive and safe learning environments.

All members of our school community are expected to respect diversity and not engage in any form of bullying, harassment, threats, intimidation or discrimination on the basis of race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status or sexual orientation.

Students and parents have a right to be informed about Division and school expectations for student behaviour. To support this right, all schools' Student Rights and Responsibilities documents will be posted on SchoolZone and on school websites.



At Balwin School we are the Balwin Family. Everyone in our school community has the right to learn and work in an environment that is respectful, inclusive, safe, healthy and focused on learning and success. In order to preserve these rights, students must also be aware of their individual responsibilities.

Our students have the right to be treated with dignity, respect and fairness by other students and staff.

Every student at Balwin School has the right to belong, to be respected, and to feel safe and included in a welcoming community.



### Need to Know!



- Students stay on school grounds for lunch breaks. Balwin School is a **CLOSED CAMPUS** at lunch time.
- Students take down their hoodies when they enter the building.
- Students do not use any personal electronic devices of any sort (including cell phones and iPods) during class time. Students will have access to school owned devices in order to complete work in the classroom. If students do have electronics at school, they are solely responsible for the security of these items, or any other valuables they chose to have at school.

### Grade 9 Farewell

Grade 9 students need to have 90% attendance to qualify to attend the Grade 9 Farewell Celebration at the end of the year. This includes both absences and lates. Attendance will be monitored each semester and a list of students who may attend the farewell will be posted at the end of reporting periods two and three. Students can earn their way back onto the farewell celebration list by making and following through on an attendance contract with their homeroom teacher.

### Lockers

A combination lock may be purchased from the school office and must be used to secure the locker. Students are responsible for the security, tidiness and contents of the locker. **Students must provide the lock prior to obtaining a locker.** Please do not tamper with locks or lockers, and do not give your combination to other students, including friends. Remember, lockers are borrowed from the school, and it is a privilege to have one. At the school's discretion, lockers may be searched and/or taken away. Your teacher will be asking for the combination so they may help you when needed.

### Physical Education

Physical education is one of the mandatory subjects in Alberta. Students must wear appropriate gym attire for all physical education classes. If an exemption from physical education is required, this must be arranged by consulting with your physical education teacher and the principal.



## Student Safety and Wellbeing

Edmonton Public Schools is committed to the safety of all staff and students in the District. As part of this commitment, Balwin School will be enforcing District protocols for entry into the building when parents and guardians are meeting children.



### Please note the following:

- Students enter using their assigned Entry/Exit Door in the morning.
- Parking, pick-up and drop-off are along 132 Ave
  - Parents are not permitted to enter the staff parking lot or the round-about at the school. This is a **SAFETY** issue.
  - There will be one stall for accessible parking for vehicles with government issued identification. There is one stall in the roundabout for wheelchair access which is indicated by sandwich boards.
- Students who are late for school **must** report to the office and sign in.
- All visitors must report to the office during school hours. If you are picking up any children from school during school hours, please come to the main office, and we will assist you.
- All students leaving the school during school hours must report to the office where we will sign them out as per communication we've had with parents and guardians.
- Staff will contact parents to ensure teachers are aware of parents' home-time procedures (e.g. having an older sibling walk a young one home).
- Children who are not part of teacher-led extracurricular programs are not allowed to be in the school after hours. Parents must ensure students are picked up by 3:08 p.m. (2:24 p.m. on Thursdays).

## Bad weather and students going outside

Recess and fresh air is an important break from the regular school routine and gives students a chance to get fresh air and exercise. Schools will continue to have morning and afternoon recess breaks, even in bad weather so students should dress appropriately.



Students will be provided access to the school building a minimum of 15 minutes prior to the morning instructional periods when there is poor weather. A large green circle will be displayed on entry doors letting students and families know that they will be let into the building early due to the following weather conditions:

- it's raining heavily, lightning, or there are dangerous winds
- temperatures drop to -23 degrees Celsius
- on days when Environment Canada issues an Air Quality Health Index rating that is at 7 or higher

## Attendance

Regular attendance in all classes is necessary for students to do well in school. If a student must be absent from school, a phone call or email ([Balwin@epsb.ca](mailto:Balwin@epsb.ca)) from a parent or guardian confirming the absence is required. Balwin School uses an automated phone system called Messenger to contact parents and guardians of absent students if we do not know the reason for their absence. For an extended family vacation, please notify each subject teacher and the office at least one week in advance. If school work is missed due to an absence, it is the student's responsibility to catch up. To catch up, students, parents and guardians can email teachers, call the school, sign in to [SchoolZone](#) or Google Classroom.

## Bicycles and other wheeled devices

Students may bring their bicycles to school as long as they lock them up. Students must not ride their bicycles on the school grounds during school hours. The school is not responsible for any items stolen if not locked up. Roller blades, heelys, scooters and skateboards are not to be used on school property during school hours.

## Electronics

The use of personal electronic devices of any sort (including cell phones and iPods) during class time and in the classroom is **not permitted**. Students have access to school owned devices to complete work in the classroom. If students do have electronics at school, they are solely responsible for the security of these items, or any other valuables.

If staff have reasonable grounds to believe that an electronic device contains evidence pertaining to a breach of the District's [Student Behaviour and Conduct Policy](#), students are expected to make available to school administration the unaltered contents of the permanent and/or removable memory of their device as is prescribed by law. Failure to make the contents available can be considered willful disobedience and is grounds for disciplinary action. **Also recording (pictures or videos) of students and staff without their permission is prohibited. Additionally, distribution of videos and pictures of students and staff without consent is prohibited.**

## We Rely on Parents as Partners!

Please keep track of the electronic apps your child is using and why. Have them update you on their passwords and make sure you are able to access their devices. This will help us all support them in the digital choices they make and in social relationships further down the road.

## Internet Safety

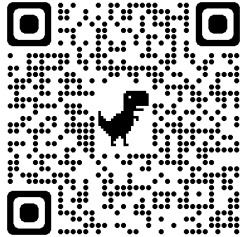


### Parents' Ultimate Guides

Struggling to keep up with the apps, games, and websites your kids are using? Common Sense's Parents' Ultimate Guides can help keep you up to date and answer your questions about all the latest platforms and trends. Whether you're trying to figure out if a new app is safe for your teen or if a popular game includes blood and gore, we've got you covered.



<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/parents-ultimate-guides>



### Parents' Ultimate Guide to TikTok

Is TikTok safe? How does it work? And can I do a duet with my kid? Everything you need to know about this popular musical singing and sharing app.



### Parents' Ultimate Guide to Snapchat

Is Snapchat safe for kids? How does it work? And what's with Snapstreaks?

Everything curious parents need to know about this ultra-popular app.



## Parents' Ultimate Guide to Minecraft

Dive deeper into the choose-your-own-adventure world of Minecraft, the quirky building game that can keep kids hooked for hours.



## Parents' Ultimate Guide to Roblox

Is Roblox safe for kids? How does it work? And what the heck are Robux?



## Parents' Ultimate Guide to Fortnite

Are your kids caught up in the Fortnite frenzy? Here's everything you need to know about this popular video game.



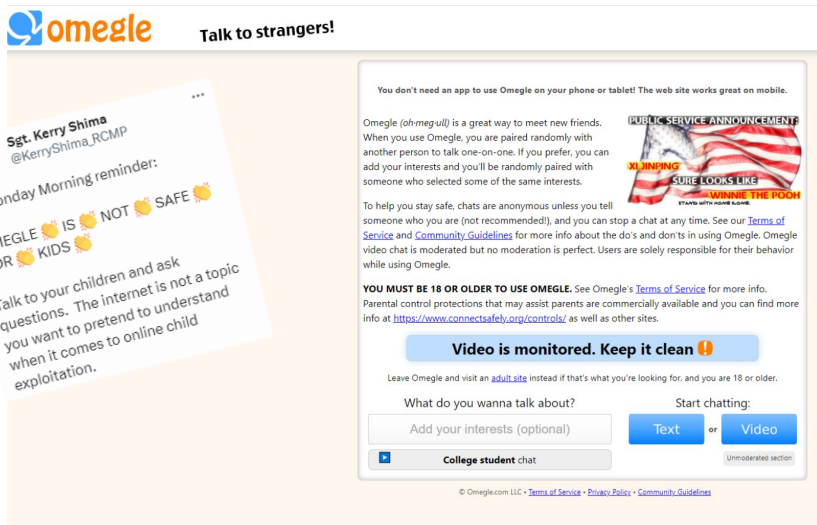
## Parents' Ultimate Guide to Discord

Is Discord safe? How does it work? Here's everything you need to know about this popular chat app.



## Parents' Ultimate Guide to Instagram

Is Instagram safe? How does it work? And how are teens using it?



## Respectful Clothing

Students are expected to be respectful under all circumstances. This includes how they dress. Balwin School expects students and staff to dress in a manner that is consistent with respectful work environments. Students should be dressed comfortably and professionally, and the following guidelines apply:

- No bandanas (headwear of a religious nature may be worn)
- No offensive language, pictures or insinuations on clothing
- No images of weapons, illegal drugs, alcohol, e-cigarettes or inhalants
- No images, language or symbols of gang activity

If a student comes to school inappropriately dressed, they will be lent clothing that meets the dress code or sent home to change once parents or guardians are notified.

## Eating at School

### Lunchtime guidelines

At Balwin School, students in Kindergarten to Grade 9 eat their lunches in their classrooms.

Students are reminded to use the garbage cans provided and assist in keeping the school and schoolyard clean and in good order.



- Students stay on school grounds for lunch breaks. Balwin School is a **CLOSED CAMPUS** at lunch time.

## Parent involvement—You make us stronger!

### School Council

Our School Council is actively involved in supporting our programs and school. The Friends of Balwin (fundraising society) meeting dates and times will be announced in the monthly Balwin School newsletter and on SchoolZone.

### Monthly Newsletters and Videos

Please watch for a monthly newsletter from Mrs. Mathew and Mrs. Lawrence, in addition to regular videos where we can highlight special events and people at Balwin School!





7055 132 Ave NW  
Edmonton AB T5C 2A7

T 780-475-3646  
F 780-478-9889  
E [balwin@epsb.ca](mailto:balwin@epsb.ca)

[balwin.epsb.ca](http://balwin.epsb.ca)

