



RIGOROUS AND RELEVANT CURRICULUM

How does Alberta Education define rigorous and relevant curriculum?

- Materials and assessment are aligned with the curriculum.
- Focus on application of knowledge to real world context.
- Teachers encourage high standards.
- Teachers share strategies that work.

What does rigorous and relevant curriculum look like at CCH?

The focus of CCH on developing excellent instructional pedagogies with teachers began with our AISI projects years ago. As a staff, we decided that the best way to ensure student engagement, student success and excellence in learning was to ensure that teachers had access to professional learning that encouraged collaboration and innovation. We sent teams of teachers to summer institutes led by Dr. Barry Bennett, and his books, especially *Beyond Monet: The Artful Science of Instructional Integration* guided our change in practice. Teachers chose to focus our staff meetings and professional learning days on sharing, practicing and implementing innovative and engaging strategies for instruction.

What did our students tell us?

In our Round Table discussions we asked students, "What do teachers do at CCH that help you to learn?" Their top five responses are as follows:

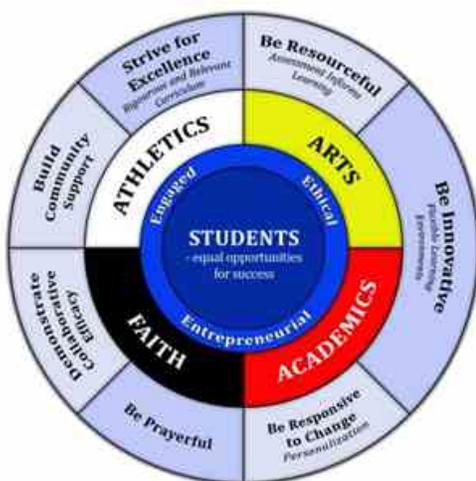
1. Work in small groups or with partners.
2. Hands-on projects and activities. Graphic organizers and mapping.
3. Showing us what to do ó giving examples.
4. Feedback that is 1:1 and immediate.
5. Providing clear study guides so we know what is important for tests.

What does “relevance” look like at CCH?

- **Faith in Action** (our volunteer component of Religious Studies) is being extended into Grades 10 and 11. Students are in the community, practicing social justice skills in real world situations.
- Our new **Science and Inquiry** campus is deliberately designed to encourage real world applications of science concepts.
- Our expanded **Fine –Arts** academy not only expands programs available to students, but recognizes the work that students do after school hours through courses such as Theatre Appreciation.
- **Biology 20-the Outdoor Classroom** blends CTS outcomes with the science curriculum, providing students with real-world environmental experiences in an activity based program.
- Our **RAP and Work Experience** programs encourage students to develop real world skills and explore career opportunities while still in high school. In 2014-15 we hope to offer a blended Foods/RAP program.
- In 2014-15 we will also offer, at student request, a **Flex-time Leadership** course to help students build skills in leadership, team-building and public speaking.

“When I plan my instruction now, instead of asking myself, ‘What do I need to do?’ I find myself asking, ‘What are my students going to do?’ As a result, my focus has shifted to strategies that make learning both relevant and engaging for students. The classroom is way more interesting that way.”

CCH Science teacher



"We need to create a shift in thinking. Instead of, 'I need 100 credits to graduate', I'd like students to be saying, 'How can I have a variety of experiences, develop my communication and collaborative skills and practice problem-solving and critical thinking so that I'm really prepared for life-long learning?' If we make the curriculum relevant to students, they will want to explore as many options and pathways as possible during their high school years."

Carol Koran, Principal