



Sod-Turning Ceremony for FFCA's North High School Campus

A sod-turning or ground breaking ceremony is an event to mark the official beginning of a project where those involved come together with the community to show support and create excitement for the building. The Sod-Turning Ceremony for the new FFCA North High School was on the morning of Thursday, April 28, 2022. It took place in front of the north building, which was built as a Junior high school in 1956. In 1982, a link was built to connect the north to the south building, an elementary school built in 1954.

This ceremony celebrated a significant milestone for FFCA that has been a long time coming. In 2014 the high school replacement project was announced. Following the approved funding for Phase I and II, years went by without any advancement or word of when Phase III would be approved. Before the City of Calgary would move forward on any permits, Phase III funding, the final phase, had to be in place. After an intense public advocacy campaign undertaken by the Board of Directors, staff, parents, and students, the replacement building and its final budget was officially approved by Minister LaGrange and the Government of Alberta in 2019. This project is the first of its kind, 'ground breaking' if you will, being the first charter school replacement project with the land and building owned by FFCA. This brings us one step closer to achieving permanence in the education landscape!



Grade 10 art student, Grade 12 students, The Honourable Prasad Panda, Minister of Infrastructure, The Honourable Adriana LaGrange, Minister of Education, FFCA Board Chair Jeff Wilson.

Several grade 10 art students were in attendance to showcase their latest works of art and gift them to the invited dignitaries. We are so grateful to have been accompanied by Mannat K., Sarah A., Yusra A., Pareen C., Daniello T., Noor M., Aidan T., and Aisha F. Your artistic abilities are impressive and deserve to be displayed proudly; you are talented individuals!



Mingling and socializing with our special guests was second nature to these grade 12 students! Thank you to Yussra A., Mehak G., Kayley T., Max K., Vani P., Qasim C., Shahed I., Rizwan S., Tiffany Y., Ethan L., and Rajveer D., for helping make this event a huge success! They made the guests feel welcome and were emanating their fantastic character and leadership skills. These students are Alberta's future and confirm that Alberta's future is in capable hands.



In attendance to officially acknowledge the commencement of the project were The Honourable Adriana LaGrange, Minister of Education and The Honourable Prasad Panda, Minister of Infrastructure. The Ministers have played a significant role in this accomplishment. They each spoke about their commitment to schools of choice and the importance of investing in education for all of Alberta's students. They were impressed by the conversations they had with the grade 10 and 12 students, as well as the amazing art projects on display. Minister LaGrange said, "Students are why we are here. The decisions made are made through the lens of what is best for students, first and foremost." Each Minister picked an art piece to take with them. Minister Panda said, "Students are our future. During the pandemic, many Albertans felt alone, and the artworks' concept of togetherness and partnerships really spoke to me! Thank you, students, for your sacrifice. We will build the best learning facility that we can for you!"

FFCA's Board Chair, Jeff Wilson, expressed gratitude on behalf of the past and present Board of Directors and spoke to the advocacy of past students to secure a new high school building even though they would never sit in one of the classrooms. Jeff thanked all of the partners who helped make this project a reality - Alberta Education, Alberta Infrastructure, Gibbs Gage Architecture Firm, and Lear Construction Company. "To the Senior Administration, Superintendent Roger Nippard, Deputy Superintendent Kurtis Leinweber, you have been on this journey every step of the way. Your counsel and leadership have been exemplary. Thank you! To the staff, you are the embodiment of character and leadership and everything that FFCA stands for. As the heartbeat of this organization and despite the numerous challenges over the years, you have always put your students first! We are so excited for you to have the opportunity to come into this new building to continue to do the great work that you do!"



Pictured from left to right: FFCA Board Directors Shahid Qureshi and Sam Jin, The Honourable Prasad Panda, Minister of Infrastructure, The Honourable Adriana LaGrange, Minister of Education, FFCA Board Chair Jeff Wilson, Montgomery Community Association President Jason Sokolosky.



Pictured from left to right: North High School Principal Educator Susan Boyd, Superintendent Roger Nippard, Coordinator of Instruction Just Kool, Deputy Superintendent Kurtis Leinweber.

This campus will be a hub in the community of Montgomery, offering a gathering space for families and friends and hosting sporting events, theatre performances and community activities. We look forward to continued collaboration with the Montgomery residents and Community Association. Thank you for your support over the years, and thank you for joining the ceremony, MCA President Jason Sokolosky.

FFCA is focused on educating students with a strong emphasis on academics as well as the performing arts and physical education programs to help raise well-rounded young adults who are prepared to go out into the world and be successful in whatever they put their minds to. Since 1997, our mission has placed high importance on parental partnership. We understand that when our parents are involved in their child's education, it enhances our program and the students' learning in many valuable ways. Parental partnership is an essential part of creating a culture of character. FFCA's Character Mission is "To prepare students to be ethically engaged citizens who care deeply, think critically and act courageously." Having access to new modern facilities designed around the pillars of our charter will ensure we can plan for the next 25 years with confidence and continue to prepare Alberta's students for their future! Congratulations to all who helped make this happen. We are excited to see what the future has in store for FFCA and how far we will have gone in the next 25 years!

