



## 2018 – 2019 SEEDschool Information

### *Transforming perspectives, shaping communities*

SEEDschool is a site of Campus Calgary/Open Minds facilitated at The Mustard Seed in Calgary. Campus Calgary/Open Minds is an innovative school program that brings the classroom to vibrant community settings. Teachers, students and community experts come together for a week-long curriculum-based experience, designed to meet the needs of each individual learner. The result is a catalyst for learning activities throughout the year that inspire and promote critical thinking and problem solving.

SEEDschool is located on the second floor of The Mustard Seed's 1010 Centre apartment building, just south of the Calgary Tower. It contains tables, chairs, and a small kitchen with a sink, fridge, and microwave. Small cubby-size lockers are provided in which students may store jackets, shoes/boots, and backpacks. Students are not required to bring locks. We also have a coatrack for additional storage. Our classroom is locked and only accessible by staff.

The class has access to washrooms down the hall from the classroom which have multiple stalls. Students will always need to be accompanied by an adult when using these facilities.

The SEEDschool Coordinator and the Campus Calgary Education Coordinators will meet with you (and your teaching team, if applicable) to plan your interdisciplinary study approximately 6 weeks before your visit to SEEDschool. Drafts of your schedule will be sent by email afterwards. The SEEDschool Coordinator will support you throughout the planning stages and will co-facilitate with you during the week on-site.

### **Big Idea**

The ideal plan is based on an all-encompassing idea that will connect many of the Programs of Study expectations. This idea will include SEEDschool as only one week within the larger plan, and should also include many other experiences such as in-class projects and other activities. The plan can be developed for a 6-month time frame or can even become the focus for your school year. A large part of this "Big Idea" planning process is completed through the proposal and application to SEEDschool.

### **Meetings and planning**

Once your application has been accepted, we will meet with you or your team several times to assist with program preparations.

#### *Orientation*

On June 11, 2019 from 4:30-6:30, there is a welcome and orientation session at The Mustard Seed, hosted by the Open Minds Education Director and the SEEDschool Coordinator. This meeting will introduce you to The Mustard Seed and SEEDschool; we will discuss what to expect in the coming year and have an opportunity for you to gain a better understanding of what opportunities SEEDschool holds.

### *Teacher In-service*

This year's day-long in-service will take place on August 26, 2019. This day is designed to familiarize you with the resources, opportunities, and experiences of SEEDschool, and introduce you to observation, writing, and drawing techniques that will help you develop successful journaling skills with your class. We have the opportunity to explore the Beltline neighbourhood together and participate in some of the activities available at SEEDschool.

### *Fall pedagogy evening*

On September 12, 2019 in the evening, we will have a journaling workshop alongside teachers attending 2school.

### *Six weeks prior*

The CampusCalgary/Open Minds Program Director and the SEEDschool Coordinator will arrange a meeting at your school for 6-8 weeks prior to your SEEDschool week. These meetings are scheduled on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month. This visit is designed to review your long-term plan, Big Idea development, and other ideas related to planning your week. During this time we want to hear about the activities or projects you have been working on with the students, and what the students have explored in their journals. We will finalize any administrative concerns (e.g., forms, health concerns, payment, special needs) and draft a loose schedule together. We'll also discuss any requests for guest speakers. The Coordinator will finesse this schedule over the coming weeks and email you a copy to review 2-3 weeks before your week at SEEDschool.

## **Building knowledge and skills before SEEDschool**

In order to make the best use of your time at SEEDschool, it is important to teach students certain skills and equip them with some baseline knowledge about homelessness and the helping sector in Calgary before they arrive.

Here are some examples:

- Journal writing is an important skill that is developed with experience. In their journals, students can record their observations, draw, and write reflectively about their experiences. This is an extremely useful part of the students' learning. Students can begin using their journals well before their week at The Mustard Seed.
- Homelessness and poverty - cover vocabulary around these issues (homelessness, poverty, community, empathy, philanthropy, non-profit, etc.); discuss what homelessness looks like locally and globally through research and statistics; research what the City of Calgary has done and is doing to help end homelessness; explore where somebody might find help if they were homeless or living in poverty in Calgary; read story books related to helping. We have an extensive book list we would be happy to share with you if you are looking for resources to discuss these issues with younger students.
- Prepare students mentally and physically. Discuss fears and concerns prior to your visit as well as how you might respond in any potential problem situations

We believe that offering quality education programming to youth will inspire an awareness, understanding and appreciation of the homeless-serving sector in Calgary that will lead youth to become socially conscious and actively involved citizens. We hope that you will complement these efforts in your own lesson plans at school; please take the time to read about the work being done in our city and to become familiar with the issues as much as you can before your visit. Our website ([theseed.ca](http://theseed.ca)) and our book, *Miracle on Centre Street*, are excellent resources for learning.

## Supervision

It is essential that all participants are aware that The Mustard Seed is a place of business as well as a residence for our clients and, therefore, workplace etiquette must be observed. Please ensure your students and volunteers appreciate the importance of not running, speaking in loud voices, or playing in the hallways.

## Parent Volunteers

Involving parent volunteers and other staff from your school will greatly enhance your SEEDschool experience. The more adult volunteers you have, the greater the flexibility to accommodate the various interests of your students. They will be especially valuable working with small groups or individuals, as well as during lunch and washroom breaks. Please supply your parent volunteers with information about your objectives and the trip activities. Parents that can participate for more than one day will help enhance the students' comfort level and experience.

We request a ratio of 1 adult to every 5 students for elementary groups and 1:8 for jr. high groups, though more volunteers are always gratefully welcomed. This ratio does not include staff from The Mustard Seed. You may want extra volunteers depending on the activities we have scheduled. Other school staff such as resource and strategist teachers, classroom aides and E. L. L. teachers are also an asset.

Parents who work downtown are welcome to drop in for a visit with their child over lunch providing they connect with us prior so we can sign them into the building and/or let them know where we will be.

During SEEDschool we ask that parents and teachers:

- Sketch and write in journals alongside the students. Your engagement in the work is a powerful message to students.
- Lead small groups with questions that promote inquiry (e.g. "What do you think..." "I wonder about..." "Is that the same as..." "Remember that expert who mentioned...")
- Listen for the connections to the big idea/inquiry question and help students discover their own
- Notice student work and ideas with comments that encourage further exploration (e.g. "I see that you..." "I notice..." "I wonder..." "I had not thought of that..." "Why are you considering that?" "You have made me think of...")
- Enjoy time with the class! CC/OM connects the curriculum with the community and provides rich and valuable learning that can be drawn upon throughout the school year and beyond.

We ask that teachers create "parent groups" where parents are assigned 4-6 students to be responsible for each day before arriving at SEEDschool. These groups make our small group activities much simpler!

*"I liked when my dad came and because he has never been on a field trip"*

- Gr. 3 student

## Snacks and lunches

Lunches can be eaten in the SEEDschool classroom or outside if weather permits. Microwaves are accessible for parent volunteers and teachers only. There is recycling in the SEEDschool classroom for paper and cans as well as a compost bin. As there is no drinking fountain in the classroom, students should bring water bottles. A coffee shop is located in close proximity to the Mustard Seed; however it is advisable to discourage the use of this outlet by students and volunteers during program hours.

We strive to maintain a nut-free classroom; please discourage parents and students from bringing peanut or nut products to SEEDschool.

During lunch, groups often walk to Haultain Park (4 blocks from SEEDschool) to play at the playground and eat lunch if the weather is appropriate. We may also visit important Calgary sites such as Olympic Plaza.

In accordance with school board policies, when temperatures reach -18 Celsius (CCSD) or -20 Celsius (CBE) or colder including the wind-chill factor, students will be kept inside.

## Journals

The use of journals to record observations, reflections, and sketches is an integral component of our program. It is advisable to begin using these at the beginning of the school year so you and the students are comfortable writing and sketching in them before visiting The Mustard Seed. Journals must be provided by the school or created by the class; many teachers have found creative ways to make journals at very little cost! CC/OM provides a journaling resource with techniques and prompts at the end of summer in-service day to help you begin journaling as a class. We can provide journals for parent volunteers to use during the week if the class does not have them available.

*“I feel like an explorer because I got to observe lots of things”*

*“I love journaling. I can express my ideas”*

*“I felt like it was just me, the pencil, and the book”*

*“I was excited about journaling because it was fun to do. I will be able to look at my book in the future and remember our trip”*

- Grade 3 students on their journaling experience at SEEDschool

## What to wear

All participants should wear clothing that is comfortable. Please remind both students and volunteers that they may be on their feet quite a bit so good walking or running shoes are important. As well, everyone should dress for Calgary's changeable weather. Even when the weather is less than perfect, it is important for all participants to go outside at some point in the day, if only for a short period of time, in order to refresh themselves.

## What to bring

Students will need to bring their own pencils, erasers, and other personal items. Individual pencil sharpeners are also an asset. The classroom teacher will need to bring extra pencils. These materials may be stored in the classroom for the duration of your visit. Students should bring:

- Backpack

- Pencils, pens, erasers, and spares
- Indoor and outdoor shoes
- Pencil crayons and/or felt pens
- Bag lunch
- Journal
- Snack
- Individual pencil sharpeners
- Weather-appropriate clothing (layers for both indoor and outdoor play year-round)
- Water bottle (***this is critical because we don't have a drinking fountain***)

***In addition to these things, teachers should also bring:***

- Coffee or tea from home; we do not have coffee on-site, so please arrive fully caffeinated and ready for the day!
- Extra set of outdoor gear (in case a student forgets)
- Student media release forms, field trip forms, and medical information

The SEEDschool classroom is equipped with craft supplies, pencils and erasers, scissors, glue sticks, tape, markers & other colouring supplies, all resources required for scheduled activities, and lots and lots of story books!

You are welcome to bring extra supplies and to keep your journals and supplies in our classroom for the week; however, please let us know if you plan to bring several bins so we can accommodate space-wise.

## **Safety**

- Students will always be with at least one of our staff as well as teachers and parent volunteers while they are on site at The Mustard Seed and when they leave site to explore the Beltline area
- Students will never be alone at any point in time during their trip to SEEDschool
- All SEEDschool coordinators are trained in First Aid and safeTALK, and the SEEDschool coordinator on shift will have a First Aid kit with them at all times
- Emergency medical information (health care number, allergies, etc.) for each student is the responsibility of the classroom teacher
- The SEEDschool classroom is secure and accessible only to staff of The Mustard Seed
- Guests and residents of The Mustard Seed that students will be interviewing and spending time with are familiar to SEEDschool coordinator and have been selected specifically to speak with children

*"I felt really thankful for the opportunity to go places downtown"*

*"Lots of people said hi to me and I said hi back and I didn't feel invisible"*

*"I felt safe because I was with Kelsey and the parent volunteers and [my teacher]"*

- Gr. 3 students on how they felt learning in the Beltline/Downtown

## **Bussing & Parking**

SEEDschool covers the cost of bussing; all buses are pre-arranged with Southland Transportation prior to your week. If there are any problems related to bussing, the SEEDschool Coordinator will contact you. The bus will drop students off on Centre Street in front of The Mustard Seed's building at 102 11 Ave SE. The SEEDschool coordinator will meet the group here on the first day.

Anyone arriving by car can park in the parking lot just off of 11 Ave, between Centre Street and 1<sup>st</sup> Street. There is a charge for the use of this parking lot as it is not owned by The Mustard Seed.

## **Payment**

The cost for a week of SEEDschool is \$1250 (\$1500 for Independent schools). Payment should be made no later than the first day of your scheduled visit. Please make cheques for \$750 payable to The Mustard Seed. The remainder is payable to Campus Calgary/Open Minds. Cheques can be given to the Coordinator on the first day of the program or mailed in prior to the week of programming. Our mailing address is:

Attn: Kelsey Brown, Community Engagement Coordinator  
The Mustard Seed  
102 11 Ave SE  
Calgary, AB T2G 0X5

## **Forms**

The SEEDschool coordinator will provide a Consent for Release form for all students and parent volunteers to complete and return to us. They should be printed and included with the information you send home with your students. Completion of this form is mandatory; however, guardians may choose to indicate that they do not give consent for photos/video/other media on the form. Providing consent allows us to take and share photos of the program and student work from the week, which is important to growing our program. Please collect and return the forms to us on the first day of your week at SEEDschool. It is important that you know who does not have consent and that you communicate that to the SEEDschool coordinator on the first day.

We also require that teachers provide a list of the names of all students and volunteers attending each day. This is for security purposes in our building and ensures that we know who is in the building in case of an emergency. We will provide a blank list for you to fill in and this is where you may also indicate who has not provided consent for media. Please complete this form and return it to us prior to your arrival at The Mustard Seed.

## **Co-facilitation**

We know that you know your students best, and that's why we are keen to co-facilitate and co-teach with you during your week at SEEDschool. Whether you'd like to lead some activities, facilitate a discussion or debrief, share a story, or take the lead on a whole afternoon, we'd love to partner with you and allow you the time and space to connect with your students this week. We highly value the insight teachers have into what kind of discussions work well for their students and we appreciate when teachers tip us off that their class might need a body break or some journal time. Please don't hesitate to jump in, add on, or ask to take the lead for a while. We are so grateful for your expertise and love to learn from you!

## Content & learning

At SEEDschool, students will learn about poverty, homelessness, compassion, what makes a healthy community, and how we can care for people around us with the skills, passions, and resources that we have.

Each day is different at SEEDschool, but here are some things that your students may have the chance to do:

- Tour the buildings of The Mustard Seed, learn about what services we provide and how we help people in need
- Hear from a guest or resident of The Mustard Seed
- Explore art created by our guests as well as public art in the Beltline & Downtown neighbourhoods
- Interview a staff member of The Mustard Seed (advocacy, communications, employment, etc.) or an expert from another agency (Inn From the Cold, Calgary Homeless Foundation, Bylaw Services, etc.)
- Tour other helping agencies such as Inn From the Cold or Elements Mental Health
- Play The Mustard Seed's Economy game to learn about stereotypes, discrimination, and stigma (gr. 5/6+)
- Read and reflect on books about social issues and how we can help
- Explore public and private spaces downtown such as the new Central Library, The Bow, Devonian Gardens, Brookfield Place, The Palliser Hotel, the +15 network, the Calgary Municipal Building, Olympic Plaza, East Village and St. Patrick's Island
- Journal about artifacts from The Mustard Seed – explore what they mean to the people who use them, and consider how perspective changes what we value
- Create and write cards for our guests or make art to represent our learning
- Study real mustard seeds and learn the story behind our name
- Discover what factors contribute to a healthy community and discuss how we can contribute to the health of our own communities
- Plant mustard seed sprouts and watch them grow throughout the week
- Walk to First Baptist Church to see where The Mustard Seed started
- Sit in on a free lunchtime concert at Cathedral Church of the Redeemer
- Discuss stereotypes and ideas about homelessness, what we've learned, and what we can do to continue helping in our communities
- Read & respond to news articles (homelessness, The Mustard Seed, 10 year plan, etc.)
- Learn about quality of life and standard of living for those who are homeless or living in poverty in Canada (gr. 3 curriculum)
- Participate in a reader's theatre activity to dramatize books or scenarios regarding homelessness
- Spend time journaling downtown and share our journals with the class
- Have a visit from PALS pets and discuss how a pet may improve somebody's quality of life
- Tour Inn From the Cold and learn about family homelessness
- Sit in on lunchtime Mass at St. Francis of Assisi Church

... And so much more! Our schedule is based on your learning goals; the sky's the limit!

*"I learned not to judge people because I don't know their story"*

*"I learned to connect to my city. I also learned about empathy and compassion and what it looks like"*

- Grade 3 students

## Addictions & mental health content

Although our program is not explicitly focused on addictions or mental health, these topics certainly intersect with the work we do at The Mustard Seed and may be brought up within the learning environment. Generally, *we do not speak in-depth with elementary students about these topics*, but here are our thoughts if a student wanted to discuss further.

- **Addictions:**

- We all have hard things in our lives, whether we have a bad day or something really sad or difficult happens to us. We all also have different ways that we deal, or cope, with these hard things. “Coping” is something people might do to feel better if they are sad or stressed. Some ways to cope are healthy and some are not. A healthy way to cope might be to go for a long run or spend time with family and friends. Some people, however, have been taught that drugs and alcohol are a way to make themselves feel better when they feel bad or sad; unfortunately, these are not healthy ways to cope. Drugs and alcohol can make people feel better because they make people forget the sad things for a little while, but they don’t help people solve their problems, so soon they will start to feel bad again, sometimes even worse than before, and then they will want more drugs and alcohol. Drugs and alcohol can be addictive, which means that if a person has them, they will continually need to have more of them, and they often make people very sick. Just because a person uses drugs or alcohol does not make them a bad person. It may mean that they learned a bad way to cope with the hard things in their lives. Maybe they learned this when they were young or when they were old. It is certainly not a good idea to choose drugs and alcohol to cope with hard things, but when somebody is experiencing an addiction, the best thing we can do is to try to understand why they might be feeling sad or unhappy and help them find a caring adult to talk to. You can help somebody by telling an adult you trust and having them call the Alpha House if they don’t have a home or Alcoholics Anonymous if it is somebody you know who has a home.
- It is important to note that there are situations (like at dinner or with friends) where an adult may drink alcohol not because they are sad or addicted, but because they enjoy it, and that is okay. Some adults may also use certain drugs for medication. It is important to know that the problem behaviour is using certain drugs or alcohol inappropriately or too often.

- **Mental health**

- We all have something called mental health. Mental health is like physical health, but instead of focusing on our bodies, it’s the health of our brain and emotions. Our brain and emotions can either be healthy or unwell. We don’t have to be feeling happy 100% of the time, but usually if people have good mental health, they will feel generally positive about life and will be able to enjoy most days without troubles. If a person has a mental illness, it means that something is happening in their brain that is making their brain and emotions unwell. Sometimes this might mean that they feel sad and tired very often, which is called depression. Sometimes they might feel worried very often, which is called anxiety. Some of our guests may have behaviours or ideas that are very different than yours; they may look, sound, or speak differently. This could all be because their mental health is at a different place than yours. It is never nice to call somebody crazy; instead, we should seek to understand each other.
- Just like physical illnesses, mental illnesses can get better with the right treatment plan. People will discuss their treatment plan with their doctor and/or counsellor. A counsellor is a person whose job is to

listen well to people—sometimes they even give advice or homework to help people feel better. Some people may use medication as part of their treatment.

- We are all responsible for taking care of our mental health; just like we play outside and eat well to take care of our bodies, we have to take care of our brains and emotions, too! We can do this by talking to friends and family about anything that troubles us. We also need to help others take care of their mental health. If we see somebody that needs a friend, seems troubled, or is unwell, we can ask them if they need to talk and take them to an adult we trust if they do.

## **A note about people first language**

During SEEDschool, you may notice our staff talk about or use people first language. At The Mustard Seed we will talk about *people experiencing homelessness* rather than *homeless people*. We use this language to signify that we value all people, and that individuals are not defined by their situation. For example, those of us who are housed rarely would identify as a “housed person” and likewise we choose not to identify those who are not housed by their living situation.

Another example: “people live in homeless shelters” not “homeless people live in shelters.”

While we use people first language at The Mustard Seed, it is common language in our society to use the term “homeless people” and this language is also accepted. We’re all on a learning journey, and changing our language of habit is a not an overnight process. While we encourage you to share this language with your students prior to attending SEEDschool, this decision is up to you. However, we discourage the use of more pejorative terms such as hobo, bum, or street people.

We also use unique terms for the individuals who access our services at The Mustard Seed. They are as follows:

- Guest: Somebody who accesses the services of The Mustard Seed, whether at the Shelter, Wellness Centre, or Support Centre. Guests may be homeless or may be accessing services because they simply cannot afford or find those services (like a chiropractor or employment help) elsewhere
- Resident: Somebody who lives in one of The Mustard Seed’s apartment buildings. Residents are not homeless because they have a home here at The Mustard Seed.

## **Program Feedback and Follow-up**

After your week at SEEDschool, we will email you evaluations for students, teachers, and volunteers to help us improve our program. We ask that you distribute and complete these within a week of attending the program, while reflections are still fresh in your mind. We also appreciate examples of student, teacher and parent work that we can use to create displays, show other teachers, and promote this amazing program. Some classes have a celebration of learning following their week; if this is something you plan for, we would love an invitation! As well, students often express an interest in taking action on issues that arise during the week and we are often available to assist with finding resources, ideas etc.

## Contact information

SEEDschool is on the second floor of 1010 Centre St. SE, Calgary, AB T2G 1B3

- The general line for The Mustard Seed is (403) 269-1319
- For questions about SEEDschool, contact our staff:
  - Kelsey Brown – Community Engagement Coordinator/SEEDschool Coordinator
    - Office - (403) 767-2809
    - [KelseyBrown@theseed.ca](mailto:KelseyBrown@theseed.ca)
  - Brittany Vine – Community Engagement Manager
    - Office - (587) 349-9491
    - [BrittanyVine@theseed.ca](mailto:BrittanyVine@theseed.ca)

## Want to learn more about The Mustard Seed?

We invite you and any parents/guardians to learn more about our work. If you'd like to join us for a tour please visit <http://theseed.ca/book-a-tour/> or email us at [tours@theseed.ca](mailto:tours@theseed.ca)

*"This school plants seed that are real. It plants seeds in your heart."*

- Grade 3 student