

## Regular Board Meeting Highlights

**April 28, 2020**

**Trustees:** Anne Marie Watson (Chair), Murray Hollman (Vice-Chair), Dorraine Lonsdale, Cynthia Leyson, Sharla Heistad, Kim Pasula and Rob Maloughney.

### **Edwin Parr Nominees**

The Board of Trustees congratulated the division's ASBA Edwin Parr Award nominees. Nicole Adrian from St. Gregory the Great Catholic School in Blackfalds is the division finalist and the other nominee is Brittany Glover from St. Matthew Catholic School in Rocky Mountain House.

### **2020-2021 School Calendars**

The Board of Trustees approved the 2020/2021 school year calendars for Red Deer, Blackfalds and Sylvan Lake, as well as our year-round St. Patrick's Community School.

### **Modular Announcements**

In the fall of this year, the Board of Trustees submitted an application for modulars for schools facing concerns or near/over capacity. The provincial government accepted the application and Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools will receive four modulars.

École Our Lady of the Rosary School will be receiving two modular classrooms this summer. These two modulars will allow École Our Lady of the Rosary School to become Pre-Kindergarten - Grade 4 and École Mother Teresa School Grade 5-9 as of September 2020. This will provide more classroom availability at École Mother Teresa School allowing for more flexibility in overall timetabling of students and teachers in instructional spaces. St. Thomas Aquinas Middle School will also receive two modular classrooms. This school is currently over capacity and these two additional modulars will help create more space for student learning.

### **Catholic Education Week (May 18-22)**

Ryan Ledene, Interim Associate Superintendent of Personnel, shared the division's plan to celebrate Catholic Education Week (May 18-22) and World Catholic Education Day (May 21, 2020).

### **Assessment During School Buildings Closures**

Our school division has three goals to help student's be successful in this new learning environment:

- The division is following the Minister's requirements that is found in the [Education Continuity Plan for COVID-19](#)
- We are supporting students by providing virtual learning and for those who do not have access, we are printing off course materials that they can submit to their teacher through paper.
- We are focusing on keeping students engaged. If students are engaged, there are more likely to continue with their learning in a virtual classroom and be successful.

### **Budget Assumptions for 2020-2021**

Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools' (RDCRS) Board of Trustees and Senior Administration are engaged in preparing the 2020/2021 school year budget. The process involves understanding Alberta Education's new funding framework and how that new structure will apply to our school division.

The strategic decisions for the 2020/2021 school year budget are reflective of the RDCRS Education Plan, the Board of Trustees' Strategic Plan, our Principles of Practice and the areas of focus provided by Alberta Education, while maintaining a high standard of Catholic education.

Planning for the long-term success and sustainability of our Division includes making flexible, data-informed decisions with an understanding that our expenditures need to be reduced. This is in response to the reduced funding our Division will receive from Alberta Education going forward.

"The Government of Alberta is maintaining the education budget at 2018/2019 levels. On top of that, the new funding framework has changed the way school divisions are funded. For Red Deer Catholic, which is a growing school division, this means that each year we will have to educate more students with less funding. Despite that, the Board is committed to keeping class sizes at similar levels and maintaining our strong support for student and staff mental well-being," said Anne Marie Watson, Board Chair.

The majority of departments within our school division will be impacted by budget cuts in order to maintain class sizes. Within the five categories of the new funding framework, the areas that affect us are:

- Base instruction grant, encompassing students from Kindergarten to Grade 12.

- Services and support grant, which covers specialized learning supports for students with complex needs.
- School grant, including transportation, operations and maintenance.
- A new formula will be implemented to fund school divisions which will be based on the weighted moving average of the student population from the previous 3 years. In addition, we cannot move funds in and out of operations and maintenance to support other areas of need, as had been the case in the past.

As part of this 2020/2021 budget planning process, The Board of Trustees and Senior Administration have been examining all of our initiatives, practices and procedures. Resources, whether they are people, materials or technology, will continue to be allocated to best support the education of each and every child as a “whole,” while understanding the complexity and ongoing needs of the classroom.

“We want to continue to focus on maintaining class sizes and supporting the mental wellness of our students and staff. The new funding framework does not make distance learning a viable model for Red Deer Catholic therefore we are proposing an elimination of St. Gabriel Online School. Our high schools could begin to offer online classes in September. St. John Paul II Outreach School may remain as an educational choice for students. Additional eliminations may include our embedded professional development model, Discovery Learning Centre (off-site), full day/every day kindergarten programs at three schools and the reduction of some central office and administrative positions in schools,” said Kathleen Finnigan, Interim Superintendent at Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools. “We anticipate further reductions in staffing, but have not completed our decision making process yet.”

Planning will continue over the next several weeks, with the final 2020/2021 budget to be approved by the Board in May.

### **CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE**

#### **St. Benedict the Moor Centre in Red Deer**

St. Benedict the Moor Centre is scheduled to be complete by mid-May. Flooring, doors and ceiling tiles are all completed. The facility will be outfitted with some of the office furniture from St. Gabriel Learning Centre.

#### **École Our Lady of the Rosary School Modulars in Sylvan Lake**

We will be adding two modulars to École Our Lady of the Rosary School on the north end attached to the existing modulars. This project went out for tender on April 22.



**St. Thomas Aquinas Middle School Modulars in Red Deer**

We will be adding two modulars to St. Thomas Aquinas Middle School directly behind St. Benedict the Moor Centre between the parking and the basketball courts. The new modulars along with St. Benedict the Moor Centre will allow us to reduce the overcrowding until we complete our new middle school in Kingsgate. This project will go to tender during the week of April 27 to May 1.

The next board meeting is May 26, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anne Marie Watson".

**Anne Marie Watson**, Board Chair

