

Regular Board Meeting Highlights

May 26, 2020

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

Division Budget 2020-2021

The Board of Trustees approved the 2020-2021 school year budget. See the attached news release.

Notice of Motion to Close St. Gabriel Online School

The Board of Trustees passed a notice of motion to permanently close St. Gabriel Online School, due to a change in the provincial funding formula that makes this school no longer financially viable. For more information, please see www.rdcrs.ca/schools/closure-of-st-gabriel-learning-centre

St. Patrick's Community School Calendar (2020-2021)

The Board of Trustees passed a motion to move St. Patrick's Community School from a year-round to a traditional school calendar only for the 2020-2021 school year, due to COVID-19. See the attached news release.

Local Memorandum of Agreement (ATA) 2018-2020

The Local Memorandum of Agreement with the Alberta Teachers' Association was ratified by the Board of Trustees for 2018-2020.

CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

New Red Deer Middle School

We are awaiting a meeting with Alberta Infrastructure to find out our method of delivery for our new middle school.

Capital Maintenance and Renewal Funding

On May 20, the [Alberta Government](http://www.alberta.ca) announced that school divisions will be receiving Capital Maintenance and Renewal funding in addition to regular Infrastructure Maintenance and

Renewal funding. Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools will receive \$2.5 million and the division plans to use the funding for the following school projects:

- Install LED light fixtures
- Replace building system controls
- Replace door hardware
- Replace gymnasium bleachers at École Secondaire Notre Dame High School
- Replace gymnasium and other flooring
- Replace heat generation systems
- Repurpose classrooms at St. Gregory the Great Catholic School

The next board meeting is June 23, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.



Anne Marie Watson, Board Chair



News Release

The Board of Trustees approved Budget 2020-2021

For immediate release – May 28, 2020

On Tuesday, May 26 the Board of Trustees approved the 2020-2021 school year budget at their regular meeting. While Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools strives to maintain a balanced budget, the main goal is to have the least impact to the classroom and continue to give students a quality faith-based education.

On February 18, Alberta Education announced a new funding model for 2020-2021. Alberta Education mandated that School Boards deliver a balanced budget for the upcoming school year and restricted access to operating reserves. The provincial budget also mandated that School Boards must seek the approval of the Minister of Education in order to use their reserves.

The new funding framework is comprised of three grants:

- The base instruction grants, encompassing students from Kindergarten to Grade 12:
- Services and support grant, which covers specialized learning supports for students with complex needs.
- School grant, which includes 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 three years. The division cannot move funds in and out of operations and maintenance to support other areas of need, as had been the case in the past.

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Senior Administration and the Board of Trustees collaborated to ensure 2020/2021 budget decisions were reflective of the Education Plan, Strategic Plan, RDCRS' Principles of Practices and the areas of focus provided by Alberta Education.

The main areas that will reflect change in the 2020-2021 school year in order to balance the budget are:

- Removing embedded professional development Mondays each week in our Red Deer, Sylvan Lake and Blackfalds schools. Instead, there will be an extra five professional development days throughout the year.
- Closing the Discovery Learning Centre at River Bend in Red Deer, which was used for professional learning for the past two years for early learning (Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten).
- The way that distance learning is funded has changed, so that a fully online school may no longer be a viable option for Red Deer Catholic. As part of the development of the 2020/2021 division budget, the Board of Trustees will consider closing St. Gabriel Online School and move the online courses to its two Red Deer high schools, École Secondaire Notre Dame High School and St. Joseph High School, as well as St. Dominic Catholic High School in Rocky Mountain House. For more information, please see <https://www.rdcrs.ca/schools/closure-of-st-gabriel-learning-centre>. The final decision on closing St. Gabriel Online School will be made at the Board's regular June meeting.
- Eliminating full-day/everyday Kindergarten at three schools.
- Changing some staffing allocations, such as reducing faith coaches full time equivalencies.

The Board of Trustees chose to retain the [Mental Support Team \(MS2\) Model](#), as the mental health of students and staff is a high priority. In addition, they chose to continue offering a robust Pre-Kindergarten program.

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Background (2019-2020 School Year):

- This school year (2019-2020) our division saw a \$2.75 million dollar unanticipated shortfall in October 2019 due to the Classroom Improvement Fund, Class Size Initiative and School Fees Grants being eliminated.
- We addressed this \$2.75 million shortfall by:
 - Pulling \$2 million from our reserves
 - Reducing \$350,000 in direct services from our school's budgets
 - Reducing \$100,000 in our transportation budget
 - The Inclusive Learning Department reduced services and purchases of \$150,000
 - And we reduced spending of \$150,000 in software and materials
 - Our reserves are like a savings account for a rainy day. To date, we have only \$2.5 million in reserves.
- In addition, due to COVID-19, our division lost an additional \$1.3 million in funding for the 2019-2020 school year.

"We were faced with a funding cut in October 2019 and since we were in the midst of the school year, we chose to use reserves to maintain our programming. But that essentially delayed the difficult decisions we have now had to make with this 2020/2021 budget. This was not an easy budget, but I am proud that the Board of Trustees has chosen to fund priorities, such as Pre-Kindergarten and our successful mental health program," said Board Chair, Anne Marie Watson at Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools.

"The feedback we've received from families and staff regarding the elimination of early-dismissal Mondays (used to provide professional development for staff) has been positive. The Board is confident that staff will be better served with the new full-day professional development opportunities beginning in the 2020/2021 school year."

Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools serves over 10,480 students in 21 schools in Red Deer, Blackfalds, Sylvan Lake, Rocky Mountain House, Innisfail, and Olds. It also supports the learning of over 600 students in a Home Education Program. The Division is committed to serving

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children and parents with a complete offering of learning opportunities delivered within the context of Catholic teachings and within the means of the Division.

For more information, contact:

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St. Patrick's Community School moves to a traditional calendar for the 2020-2021 school year

For immediate release – May 28, 2020

Due to COVID-19, the Board of Trustees passed a motion Tuesday evening (May 26) to move St. Patrick's Community School to a traditional calendar for the entire 2020-2021 school year. To ensure the safety of students and staff, Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools is following the Chief Medical Officer of Health and Alberta Education recommendations on the reopening of our schools and in-person classes.

Following the traditional calendar, students are scheduled to begin classes on August 31.

Please note that with the transition to a traditional calendar, students will be delivered the same quality of education and instructional time as in the year-round calendar.

"We know that families choose St. Patrick's Community School for a faith-based year-round educational experience, but in this unprecedented time, we cannot be sure that all safety measures will be in place for them to start on schedule in early August. So for this year, we have made the difficult decision to operate St. Patrick's Community School on a traditional calendar. The September start will allow us more time to work with Alberta Education and the Chief Medical Officer of Health to figure out how to keep our students and staff safe when schools reopen," said Board Chair, Anne Marie Watson at Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools.

"Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools has had a long standing tradition of offering year round schooling which successfully meets the needs of students and their families. In order to safely return all of our students to school we want to develop a consistent re-entry plan across the

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division, while ensuring we are adhering to the guidelines set out by the Chief Medical Officer of Health and Alberta Education. We appreciate the understanding of our staff, students and parents on this decision to move St. Patrick's Community School to the traditional calendar for the 2020-2021 school year," said Interim Superintendent of Schools, Kathleen Finnigan at Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools.

For more information and to see the school year calendar, please visit

<https://www.rdcrs.ca/download/172765>

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