



# News Release

## **The Board of Trustees advocates for new schools in Blackfalds, Sylvan Lake and Red Deer in the Three-Year Capital Plan**

*For immediate release – April 1, 2021*

The Board of Trustees approved the Three-Year Capital Plan for 2021-2022 to 2024-2025 requesting four new schools projects at the Regular Board Meeting yesterday evening. These requests are based on projected enrolments for the Division.

To help meet the needs of the Division's growing student population, additional project priorities in the Three-Year Capital Plan included a new K-5 School in Blackfalds, a new K-5 School in Red Deer, a new K-5 French Immersion School in Red Deer and a new K-5 School in Sylvan Lake. No modernizations or preservation projects were requested.

Annually, the Board of Trustees approves the Three-Year Capital Plan submission, as Alberta Education requires new rankings of construction and modernization projects.

"Families and young people in our region continue to choose Catholic education. Over the last 10 years, enrolment in our Division has increased by 50 per cent and many of our schools are operating well beyond their utilization capacity", said Board Chair, Kim Pasula at Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools.

"We expect continued enrolment growth throughout the region, especially in Blackfalds, Sylvan Lake and Red Deer, and our near-term capital plan reflects the need for new schools in each of these priority areas," said Pasula. "Our highest priority is for a new elementary school in Blackfalds. St. Gregory the Great Catholic School, built in 2017, has already reached its full capacity and the community, home to many young families, expects continued growth."

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St. Lorenzo Ruiz Middle School, a new Grade 6-9, 700 student school in Red Deer, has been given approval for construction. With over 100 per cent of English schools that offer middle grades being utilized, the addition of St. Lorenzo Middle School will help to alleviate the pressures and overcrowding of the middle school population in 2023. A design team has been assembled and the new school is expected to open in September of 2023.

“The addition of St. Lorenzo Ruiz Middle School in Red Deer will help alleviate the overcrowding in our middle school population where our schools are greater than 20 per cent overcapacity. In Blackfalds, we have applied for two modular classrooms to be added to St. Gregory the Great School which will be a short-term solution. We expect St. Gregory to be 30 per cent overcapacity by the start of the 2023 school year,” said Rod Steeves, Secretary-Treasurer at Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools.

Modular classroom needs will be addressed by the Board of Trustees through the submission requirements by Alberta Education in the fall of 2021.

For more information on the Three-Year Capital Plan, please click [here](#).

*Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools serves over 10,360 students in 20 schools in Red Deer, Blackfalds, Sylvan Lake, Rocky Mountain House, Innisfail, and Olds, as well as an at-home learning program. It also supports the learning of over 1095 students in a Traditional Home Education Program. The Division is committed to serving children and parents with a complete offering of learning opportunities delivered within the context of Catholic teachings.*

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