



# News Release

## **RDCRS hosts its first community engagement session with Kentwood residents about St. Lorenzo Ruiz Middle School**

*For immediate release – April 7, 2021*

Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools (RDCRS) held their first community engagement session regarding the construction of a new middle school in Kentwood, St. Lorenzo Ruiz Middle School, on Tuesday evening for neighbourhood residents.

“Families are choosing Catholic education. Over the last 10 years enrolment at our schools has increased by 50%,” said Board Chair, Kim Pasula at Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools.

“Our middle schools are currently operating at over 120% capacity and we expect continued growth. The new St. Lorenzo Ruiz Middle School will help to alleviate the overcrowding and create educational and amenity opportunities for the children and families that live in the surrounding neighbourhoods.”

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the community meeting was held virtually via Zoom with 35 attendees ranging from RDCRS’ Board of Trustees, Superintendent of Schools, members of the St. Lorenzo Ruiz Middle School Design Team, Group2 Architecture, and Clark Builders, as well as Kentwood-area residents.

The intent of the engagement session was to provide a forum for community feedback and an opportunity to voice concerns with the overall design, with the first session focusing primarily on the site layout.

Attendees were given a project overview to-date, information regarding the allocation of the school site, facts about the new middle school, a design review and an opportunity for those in attendance to voice any questions or concerns regarding the construction of the new school.

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“We appreciate the feedback from our first community engagement session and look forward to a continued conversation with the residents of Kentwood at our second community engagement session planned for May,” said Superintendent, Kathleen Finnigan, at Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools.

“Our Division is growing and we are excited people are choosing Catholic education for their children.”

Work has begun on the design of the school, with preliminary geotechnical testing completed in early 2021 to understand site conditions. Construction is expected to start in the Fall of 2021, with the school opening September 2023.

For additional information and updates regarding St. Lorenzo Ruiz Middle School, please visit <https://www.stlorenzoschool.ca/>.

*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.*

**For more information, contact:**

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