



# QUARTERLY REPORT

February 1 - April 30, 2024



Red Deer Catholic  
Regional Schools



[www.rdcrs.ca](http://www.rdcrs.ca)

Quarter 3

# QUARTERLY REPORT

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## A Message from the Superintendent of Schools

In reflection of our third quarter, we have much to celebrate at Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools (RDCRS) as we focus on student success academically, socially, physically, morally, and spiritually. This term saw us coming together in community to celebrate Catholic Education Week 2024. Focused on the theme, 'Courage to Lead,' we highlighted through video the many ways our students are engaged in faith activities within their schools. We also welcomed middle school students and their families from St. Gregory the Great Catholic School to an open house at St. Lorenzo Ruiz Middle School as they begin their transition to St. Lorenzo next year. Throughout this quarter we celebrated the success of our Red Deer Catholic International (RDCI) Program hosting 99 in-person and online international students. The relationships our RDCRS students are building with young people worldwide is contributing to developing stronger and more loving communities of hope. These relationships will last a lifetime.

We continue to have collaborative and collective leadership at the heart of our curriculum implementation. For September 2024, our Division will continue the mandatory implementation of the new Grade 4 to Grade 6 Science and French Immersion Language Arts and Literature curriculum. Teachers will also have the opportunity to pilot the new social studies curriculum in Grade 1 to Grade 3 and possibly Grade 4 to Grade 6.

During this quarter, the RDCRS Education Foundation invited proposals from school communities for projects that enhance Catholic education. Proposals were required to align with school priorities, highlight the creative ideas of students and staff, promote the unique identity of Catholic education as well as foster knowledge, skills, and attitudes that prepare students as community leaders who will positively contribute to society throughout their lives.

School communities continue to celebrate student success. Evident in our celebrations and the feedback we receive during this time of year, our schools are places where each student matters and every learner contributes to and enriches our school communities. Students are given the knowledge, freedom and confidence needed to reach their full potential because of the positive environments and the relationships every one of us creates with students and their families.

Dr. Kathleen Finnigan  
Superintendent

## FAITH REPORT

### SPICE Conference:

Nine division staff from Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools attended the SPICE conference in Kananaskis from April 25 - 28, 2024.

Brett Salkeld, Ph.D. was the conference speaker and spoke to teachers about how to authentically integrate the Catholic faith into all aspects of the curriculum. He reminded attendees that from math and science to health and social studies, every subject can and should be taught from a Catholic worldview, and that in doing so the true purpose of Catholic education is fulfilled.

Attendees came away with practical ideas and resources to use in their classrooms to help them to permeate the Faith in every lesson.



*Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools attending the SPICE conference in Kananaskis, which was held from April 25 - 28, 2024.*

## INDIGENOUS EDUCATION REPORT

### Land Camps:

RDCRS Indigenous Education Services (IES) team has recently completed two sets of land camps, where students are able to connect with each other and community members, gain high school credit and develop a better understanding of one's own culture.

In collaboration and with support from Red Deer Polytechnic's Red Hot Science Program and ACTUA the IES team hosted a 5 day 4-season land camp over the course of the school year at Painted Warriors Indigenous-owned Ranch. Students were able to see the similarities and differences between an Indigenous Worldview and a Western Scientific perspective. Students participated in hands-on activities while gaining their Hunters Education Certification and completing up to 5 High School CTS Credits. Students had the opportunity to spend an overnight part of the course in Metis Trapper Tents during the Winter camp. The last day of the camp was cumulated with the raising of the Tipi the students were able to gift to Painted Warriors. The 4 season land camp will wrap up with a feast and students sharing the digital stories they created throughout the camps at the RDP Arts Center on June 20th.

Our second land camp called Aunties in Training, arose from the community members from Grandmother Turtle Lodge in Rocky Mountain House. The Aunties and Kokums in Rocky were asking for gender-cultural-specific teachings for our girls at St. Dominic High School. Working closely with Red Hot Science, ACTUA and the Grandmother Turtle Lodge we hosted 5, one-day camps at the Rocky Mountain House Historical site where students had cultural teachings from numerous community members, and then participated in hands-on activities from both community members, the IES team and Red Hot Science. This program has been rewarding and moving for both adults and students, with one student saying how grateful she was for this group of women showing up for her.



## INDIGENOUS EDUCATION REPORT

### Land Camps:

A big thank you to all the staff and students at St. Dominic Catholic High School, St. Joseph High School, and École Secondaire Notre Dame High School for supporting and making these land camps a reality.

Neither of these camps would have been successful if it wasn't for the support from our friends. A big thank you goes out to the following; Elders Lynn & Corky Jonasson and Darryl Lickers, Tim Mearns and Tracey Klettl at Painted Warriors, Brenda Holder, Clare Butterfly, Denai Baltzer at Creative Cousine in Rocky Mountain House, The Aunties and Kokums from Grandmother Turtle Lodge in Rocky Mountain House; Shannon Mah, Kim Ghostkeeper, Gladys, Chrys Shabot, Shelley Rose May, IndigeSTEAM, and Pamela Neuman and her team at Red Hot Science.



## CAREER PATHWAY PROGRAMS REPORT

### Sky Wings Aviation Academy:

Six students from Red Deer Catholic had the incredible opportunity to complete the ground school program through a partnership with Sky Wings Aviation Academy. This collaboration included cohorts from both Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools and Chinook's Edge School Division.

While the program offers a glimpse into becoming a pilot, it also provides insights into other crucial roles necessary for safe air travel. The aviation industry relies on more than just skilled pilots; air traffic controllers, technicians, and ground crews are essential for ensuring aircraft navigate and operate safely and reliably. Students have the option to take the next step and obtain their private pilot's license now that they have successfully obtained their ground school credentials.

Sherry Cooper, co-owner and chief flight instructor for Sky Wings, noted that this is the first time the company has offered a dual-credit program in partnership with local school districts. She is hopeful this training will inspire more young people to pursue careers in aviation. Sky Wings Aviation donated the instructional space and the full cost of their training while Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools in turn covered the cost of their books.

Aviation careers have been identified as a high-need area in Alberta, with a particular shortage of pilots and aircraft maintenance technicians not only here in Alberta, but across the country. We will continue to offer this exciting dual-credit opportunity to our students next year in both semesters and look forward to expanding offerings in this career pathway.



*Six Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools students took part in a complete ground school through partnership with SkyWings Aviation, Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools, and Chinook's Edge School Division.*

## CAREER PATHWAY PROGRAMS REPORT

### Veterinary Technical Assistant Convocation:

Red Deer Catholic students completed their Veterinary Technical Assistant Certificate Program at Olds College and participated in the convocation ceremony on June 1, 2024.

Students completed five courses throughout the year which included some weekend lab times at Olds College of Agriculture & Technology.

All of our students graduated with distinction and we are extremely proud of their hard work and dedication.



*Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools students participating in the Veterinary Technical Assistant Certificate Program at Olds College of Agriculture & Technology graduated with distinction on June 1, 2024.*



## EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY REPORT



### Esports and Robotics:

Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools has had a successful year in Esports.

St. Patrick's Community School (SPCS) highlighted the year for RDCRS with a strong showing at the Alberta Esports Championship in Lethbridge on May 3 - 4, 2024. The SPCS Celtics Green Team won the 2024 Canadian Scholastic National Championship, while the Celtics Purple Team placed in the top 8 nationwide.

The Celtics Green Team represented RDCRS as they competed against high school students at the Alberta Esports Championship. The middle school students demonstrated impressive teamwork, communication skills, flexibility and conflict resolution during the event.

### U15 FINAL STANDINGS

U15 DIVISION COMPETITIVE		U15 DIVISION AMATEUR	
1ST	ST. PATRICK'S CELTICS (ALBERTA)	1ST	STONYBROOK KNIGHTS (MANITOBA)
2ND	HOLY FAMILY CARDINALS (ONTARIO)	2ND	HOLY FAMILY CARDINALS (ONTARIO)
3RD	OUBS-JANQUES-CASAILTY GRIZZLIES (QUEBEC)	3RD	ECOLE DUGALD DRAGONS (MANITOBA)
4TH	ECOLE DUGALD DRAGONS (MANITOBA)	4TH	STONYBROOK KNIGHTS (MANITOBA)
5TH	MAPLEHURST HUSKIES (NEW BRUNSWICK)	5TH	LINDALE LIONS (SASKATCHEWAN)
6TH	HOLY FAMILY CARDINALS (ONTARIO)	6TH	RUNDLE STUDIO ALTITUDE 2 (ALBERTA)
7TH	ST. PATRICK'S CELTICS (ALBERTA)	7TH	RUNDLE STUDIO ALTITUDE 3 (ALBERTA)
8TH	NIVERVILLE PANTHERS (MANITOBA)	8TH	ECOLE DUGALD DRAGONS (MANITOBA)



## EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY REPORT

### Esports Program Development:

Many of the schools in RDCRS are in the developmental stages of their academic Esports programs. Our schools are building programs identifying what their school teams need is between competitive (varsity) programs, curricular programs, or community-based teams. Esports is designed to promote equity for all of our students. Students are interested in joining teams because they do not need prior experiences or skill sets similar to traditional sports. Many students are interested in joining teams in additional roles to the competitive players, such as being team managers, streamers and “shout casters.”

Throughout the year St. Lorenzo Ruiz Middle School offered a curricular component to Esports during their CTF options. The school utilized the [Gaming Concepts Fundamentals](#) curriculum through [Generation Esports](#) during this CTF course. Beginning next year, St. Lorenzo Ruiz will be developing its own curriculum bridging career [connections](#) with fundamental curriculum.



*Winners of St. Lorenzo Ruiz Middle School's first Esports tournament pose for a group photo following the finals on February 13, 2024.*

## SYSTEM SERVICES REPORT



### **New Kindergarten - Grade 4 School in Blackfalds Update:**

Both the Design Development Report as well as the Request for Proposal (RFP) for all 7 schools in this P3 bundle have been released.

The Town of Blackfalds has graciously stepped up with a financial commitment to ensure the site is appropriately serviced within the timelines set by Alberta Infrastructure. This was very important for the continuation of this project within this P3 bundle as delays in establishing the subdivision could have been detrimental to the project.

The design of the school could best be described as a single story building with aesthetically appealing features and state of the art technological attributes. It will blend seamlessly into a residential subdivision with beautiful glass features and clearstory windows to provide an abundance of natural light. The school balances well designed classroom spaces to ensure flexibility in accommodating a growing population with the ability to create new classroom space with minimal alterations to the structure.

We are very excited to see construction begin in early 2025 and hope you will consider joining us for the official groundbreaking ceremony happening on October 17, 2024.

## SYSTEM SERVICES REPORT

### City Transit Update:

The current agreement with the City of Red Deer Transit expires on June 30, 2024. In negotiation meetings, City Transit has expressed concern with the cost of transporting school children for both Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools and Red Deer Public Schools.

Even though our school routes are full, the department operates these routes in a deficit due to the cost of buses in their fleet. The City of Red Deer heavily subsidizes regular routing but this is an expectation as they operate a mass transit system for the city's tax base. This is not an expectation for groups contracting their services so although they lose less in special school routes they are still losing money.

In an effort to begin to reduce the operating deficit for school routes, City Transit has proposed a payment structure for each participating school division based on the number of riders they serve and the Alberta Education Funding Manual which lays out the grant funding for transporting high school students. The five year escalating fee structure starts at \$377,159 per year and increases 5% per year to end at \$458,439 per year in the fifth year of the agreement. They will maintain current levels of service throughout the five years but would have to charge additional fees if we required service levels to increase.

The RDCRS Transportation Department did a preliminary calculation of what it would cost us to run our own additional buses to serve our high school population and it worked out to around \$500,000 per year. Based on these numbers we feel it is in our division's interest to accept the terms offered by City Transit for the next 5 years. In year 4 we will re-examine the agreement to see if we should begin to plan to serve our high school students with our own transportation services or if we should remain a customer of City Transit.



## SYSTEM SERVICES REPORT

### Transportation Registration - Current Status:

At the date of creating this report, over 55% of our riders have registered for next year.

The new fee structure was introduced to parents and only one call has been received by the Associate Superintendent of System Services. Comments on social media indicated that it “seemed fair” that students who are eligible have a free option while those choosing out of catchment or specialized programming need to pay a fee.

We are hopeful that most students will be registered by the deadline of June 15th as failure to register by then will result in a late fee and could result in delayed services when school begins. With the expanded eligibility criteria, we are expecting more riders but only registration will provide the confirmed numbers that we need to effectively schedule the routes.

**GET ON BOARD**

Both options listed below assume your child meets the new distance requirements for accessing transportation services. Visit [www.rdcrcs.ca/transportation](http://www.rdcrcs.ca/transportation) for more.

**No Fee**

Your child plans to attend **their catchment school**.

**\$300 Fee**

Your child plans to attend a **non-catchment school, a school of choice** (St. Patrick's, St. Martin's) or a **non-catchment school with a specialized program offering** (hockey academy, baseball academy).

Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools

**School Bus Registration**  
A step-by-step guide

**FIND YOUR CATCHMENT**

Go to [www.rdcrcs.ca/where-is-my-catholic-school](http://www.rdcrcs.ca/where-is-my-catholic-school) to determine where your child's catchment school is located.

**CHECK ELIGIBILITY**

Next, head to [www.rdcrcs.ca/transportation/eligibility-for-school-bus-service](http://www.rdcrcs.ca/transportation/eligibility-for-school-bus-service) to check if your child qualifies for school bus service.

**QUESTIONS**

Visit [www.rdcrcs.ca/transportation/frequently-asked-questions](http://www.rdcrcs.ca/transportation/frequently-asked-questions) for an updated list of common questions. Still unsure, contact RDCRS Transportation at (403) 309-8801.

**REGISTER**

All set? Register your child by visiting [www.rdcrcs.ca/transportation/school-bus-registration](http://www.rdcrcs.ca/transportation/school-bus-registration).

[WWW.RDCRS.CA/TRANSPORTATION](http://WWW.RDCRS.CA/TRANSPORTATION)

Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools

A sample of the graphics shared on social media and the division website to help guide parents through the bus registration process.

## SYSTEM SERVICES REPORT

### St. Matthew School Portable Placement:

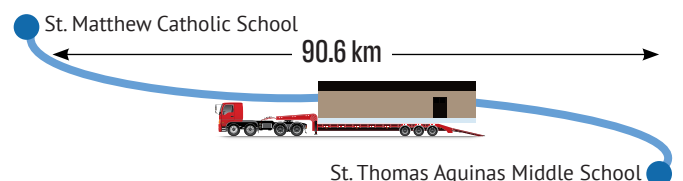
RDCRS is nearing the completion of our modular relocation of two classrooms from St. Thomas Aquinas Middle School to St. Matthew's Catholic School.

This was a project funded by Alberta Infrastructure as part of their portable relocation program. Despite some challenges that included moving a substantial underground powerline and an early spring thaw, we were able to keep the project moving forward and are now in the process of replacing asphalt basketball courts at St. Matthew and St. Thomas Aquinas schools.

Finishing touches on landscaping will be completed before the end of June so we can fully utilize these new spaces in the fall.



*Photos showing the new portables on site following their installation at St. Matthew Catholic School in Rocky Mountain House.*



## PERSONNEL REPORT

### **Substitute Teachers Numbers & Educational Assistants:**

At this time we have 125 substitute teachers which includes 13 teachers on part-time contracts and 8 recent graduates who we are fortunate to have on board starting their education career.

We have 62 educational assistant substitutes on our list, including 14 educational assistants on part-time contracts. We celebrated Substitute Teacher Appreciation Week from March 11-15. We honoured our substitute teachers and support substitutes by sending out a note of appreciation on our Absence Management system and doing several draws for gift cards. Substitutes were very grateful and appreciative.

### **ASEBP's Sick Leave Support Program to Replace Early Intervention Program:**

We are excited to share some improvements to ASEBP's medical leave program. The Sick Leave Support (SLS) program will be launched in January of 2025, replacing the Early Intervention Program (EIP) that we are currently utilizing offering several enhancements. The SLS offers comprehensive active case management for all covered members on a sick leave, not just those needing a gradual Return to Work (RTW) as with the EIP in the past, providing support to even more of our employees in need that are on medical leave. SLS provides active case management, medical assessment, treatment coordination, and funding if applicable, unlike the EIP which lacked these elements in all cases. For example, in instances where a specific benefit has been maxed out, a claims facilitator may deem additional benefits to be allocated to said employee, if they are participating in the program.

Employers receive enhanced, timely communication on the covered member's case status compared to the EIP. SLS informs employers whether the absence is medically supported, provides regular updates during sick leave, and offers details on any restrictions or limitations for a gradual RTW if applicable.

### **Complex Learner Bus Attendants:**

In April, we successfully onboarded two bus attendants to support students with complex needs on separate buses serving two of our schools. The feedback from both drivers, parents and administrators has been overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the invaluable support these attendants provide for students who require additional assistance during their bus journeys. Additionally, we are pleased to report that we have received zero submissions to our specialized rider communication form from bus drivers, indicating smooth and effective operations.

## FINANCIAL SERVICES REPORT

### Budget Expectation:

For the 2023-24 school year, we are projecting a \$4.02 M deficit, spending down reserves and reducing flexibility for deficit spending in 2024-25.

The 2024-2025 balanced budget was approved by the board on May 24, 2024. Included in the adjustments to balance the budget were several changes and restructuring activities, resulting in reductions in certificated and non-certificated staffing levels. The transportation budget includes an increased number of students riding the bus, increased number of drivers and routes resulting from the changes in the transportation guidelines.

The 2024-2025 budget was prepared using new budgeting software - MyBudgetFile, which provides increased visibility and more detailed information to assist with budgeting decisions.

	School Jurisdiction Code: 19
<b>BUDGET REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING AUGUST 31, 2025</b> <small>[Education Act, Sections 139(2)(a) and 244]</small>	
0019 The Red Deer Catholic Separate School Division <small>Legal Name of School Jurisdiction</small>	
5210 61 Street Red Deer AB AB T4N 6N8; 403-343-1055; laurel.latka@rdors.ca <small>Contact Address, Telephone &amp; Email Address</small>	
<b>BOARD CHAIR</b>	
Mr. Murray Hollman <small>Name</small>	_____ <small>Signature</small>
<b>SUPERINTENDENT</b>	
Mrs. Kathleen Finnigan <small>Name</small>	_____ <small>Signature</small>
<b>SECRETARY TREASURER or TREASURER</b>	
Laurel Latka	