

Elk Island Catholic Schools – Alberta Budget 2019 Statement

November 29, 2019

For Immediate Release

Sherwood Park... At the November 27, 2019 public meeting of the Elk Island Catholic Schools (EICS) Board of Trustees, the Board approved the 2019-2020 budget in light of the recent provincial budget announcements.

"After an initial examination of the October 2019 Provincial Budget, EICS is echoing the concerns expressed by many school boards across the province," said Board Chair Ted Paszek. "For EICS, education funding is down significantly on a school year basis as the Government of Alberta redistributed a few important grants. We were also hit very hard by an unprecedented increase in our insurance premium by 274%. Coupled with copyright litigation that EICS was randomly selected as part of Federal Court litigation, we are faced with an approximately \$3.0 million funding shortfall into this school year."

During the Spring Budget, the EICS Board of Trustees made prudent decisions by finding efficiencies and proactively adjusting operations. At that time, over \$2.0 million was reduced from the overall EICS budget in anticipation of provincial funding reductions.

"In the Fall, we thoroughly reviewed our budget and operations to find efficiencies that were not already considered," stated Board Chair Ted Paszek. "As always, our priority was to minimize the impact that any adjustments would have on the classrooms and service levels to our students."

"We want to take the opportunity to thank all members of the EICS school community for their continued support as we work through these challenging times with hope for the future and confident that our actions and decisions are done in the best interests of our students." Chair Paszek expressed.

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EICS, part of Alberta's publicly funded education system, is committed to developing educational opportunities in the context of Gospel values. EICS is dedicated to providing quality, faith-based learning environments to students of any background and faith, where their skills are nurtured and celebrated by dedicated, caring staff.

For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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EICS Fall Budget 2019-2020

- Due to provincial funding reductions, insurance premium escalation of 274% and involvement in copyright litigation, Elk Island Catholic Schools (EICS) has an approximate \$3 million funding shortfall in 2019/20.
- During the Spring Budget, the EICS Board of Trustees supported a pre-emptive reduction of over \$2 million budget in anticipation of funding decline due to the 2019-2020 Alberta Budget.
- EICS is faced with an additional shortfall of \$1 million in the fall.
- Since the October 24, 2019 Alberta Budget was presented, administration and staff across the Division have been working collaboratively in dealing with the fiscal reality.
- The primary focus of the process was to lessen the impact on students that any adjustments may cause, while balancing the budget.
- 52% of the reductions will occur through thoroughly reviewing various budget lines and finding efficiencies that are not already uncovered in the Spring Budget.
- 37% of the reductions will occur through staffing adjustments in the central office and schools.