

EICS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Monthly Highlights



Activities like wreath making are one of the many ways our schools celebrated the Advent Season. See more pictures on Page 6.

Board Highlights

Education report highlights our division's strengths

FAITH FORMATION

Continuing the discussion on the eight encounters with Jesus that are chronicled in the Gospel of John, this month's EICS Board of Trustees meeting pondered the faith journey of Nicodemus from scepticism and resistance to growth and love.

In Chapter 3, Nicodemus comes to Jesus at night cautious but curious, asking how a person can be born again. Enlightened by his conversation with Christ, he later defends Jesus against the Pharisees and ultimately helps Joseph of Arimathea prepare the body of Jesus for burial after the crucifixion.

The journey of Nicodemus, from doubt to faith, is similar to one that many Catholics experience today, said Jody Seymour, our Director of Student and Staff Formation who leads the trustees' faith formation.

"Deep inside we long for



Christina MacKinnon, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Excellence, introduces her team as part of her report to trustees.

something more, something real, something that will satisfy us, but we often look for it in something other than God. We construct our own idols in His place. And we settle for counterfeit versions of His love," she said.

Our longing is where God will meet us. "He wants to heal our grief, draw us away from sin, and, most importantly,

reveal a love that satisfies us more than anything this world has to offer," she said.

"Ask yourself: Where are you on this spectrum? Do you find yourself moving toward or away from the light in different moments? Ultimately,

Nicodemus reminds us that encountering Jesus invites us to leave darkness behind and embrace the light of truth,

love, and discipleship. God's light does not condemn but saves, calling us into a deeper relationship with Him."

EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE REPORT APPROVED

The EICS 2023-2024 Annual Education Results Report was approved by trustees at their December Public Board Meeting.

Presented by Christina MacKinnon, our Assistant Superintendent of Educational Excellence, the full report is a snapshot of EICS success stories, goals and strategies, and areas of improvement from the previous school year.

This information is collected each year through EICS and Alberta Education survey feedback provided by staff, parents, and students, as well as through a deep analysis of student achievement that examines academic data and compares it to provincial

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ELK ISLAND CATHOLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES



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Board Highlights

Active citizenship continues to rank high in annual survey

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averages.

Information provided in this report is used by schools and departments across the division as they make plans for the future in the areas of EICS priorities of Faith Integration, Learners and Learning, Systemic Wellness, and Community Engagement. All priorities are connected to the Alberta Education Domains.

“Our commitment to building the capacity of administrators and teaching

staff to support school achievement growth is directly impacting teaching and learning in the classroom,” MacKinnon told the trustees. “We’ve built a culture of responsive teaching, and we’re data driven to meet the needs of our students.”

In addition, EICS Superintendent Paul Corrigan noted that the questions on the EICS survey are written to obtain clear information to avoid guesswork when looking at the data.

Looking at faith, “we have achieved highly in all areas,” MacKinnon noted. “This is an area of strength for EICS. Our active citizenship remained high, forming faithful students and staff to be servants to God and each other by living out the Catholic Social Teachings.”

Trustee Dean Sarnecki said he was, overall, impressed with the results. “I’ve been involved in a number of these over the years, and this report is a compliment to the staff and admin for the good work

that they’re doing.”

The full report is **available on our website.**

EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE INTRODUCTION

MacKinnon also presented information about her team and its responsibilities. Educational Excellence is responsible for overseeing student education in the division, as well as assisting schools and departments with the division’s assurance **See EDUCATION on Page 4**



Our division and schools focused on supporting local charities during the Advent Season by way of monetary donations or by donating items. Collectively, EICS also fundraised in support of Catholic Social Services’ Lurana Shelter, donating nearly \$15,000 so far.

Board Highlights

École Our Lady of Perpetual Help the focus of Catholic School Review

EDUCATION from Page 3
 Superintendent Corrigan reported on the following items during December’s meeting:

Superintendents of Alberta (CCSSA), Corrigan attended a Catholic Roundtable between the Alberta Catholic School Trustees’ Association, Grateful Advocates for Catholic Education, CCSSA, and Alberta bishops.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT
 EICS Superintendent Corrigan reported on the following items during December’s meeting:

CATHOLIC SCHOOL REVIEW
 The latest focus of our EICS Catholic School Review was École Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic School.

Corrigan presented on the progress made by EICS and the Archdiocese of Edmonton as the two partner together in the province-wide Alberta Bishops Assurance Pilot.

These reviews are part of our ongoing effort to measure how our schools are meeting the Five Marks of an Excellent Catholic School.

In his role as past president of Council of Catholic School

The review is **available on our website**, and info about the Five Marks is **also available online**.

EICS HISTORY

An ad-hoc committee was formed by the trustees to chronicle the formation and history of EICS.

LETTER OF SUPPORT

The EICS Board of Trustees will write a letter of support for the proposed New Horizon School Expansion and Modernization.

New Horizon is located in the old St. Theresa Catholic School site in Sherwood Park, and the building is still maintained by EICS.

CAMROSE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAMS

With Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic High School anticipated to open in

September 2025, new leadership teams for the three schools in Camrose will be:

Blessed Carlo Acutis (Grades 9-12)

Bob Charchun, principal; Jaymie Reinhart, assistant principal.

Our Lady of Mount Pleasant Catholic School (Grades 5-8)

Becky Gumpinger, principal; Sharilynn Shakeshaft, assistant principal.

St. Patrick Catholic School (Kindergarten to Grade 4)

Michelle Nantias, principal; Mindy Wilcox, assistant principal.

See Page 5 for more information.



ELK ISLAND CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
Seeing Christ in Everyone

Advent Reflections

Visit our social media channels for videos of our students offering their thoughts on the meaning of Advent.



@eicscatholic

Division News

New Leadership Announced for Camrose Schools

As we prepare for the much-anticipated opening of Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic High School in Camrose, Elk Island Catholic Schools (EICS) is pleased to announce the principals who will support the growth and success of Catholic education in the community.

Mrs. Becky Gumpinger: Principal of OLMP

We're pleased to announce that Mrs. Becky Gumpinger will take on a new principal role serving Mount Pleasant Catholic School (OLMP). She has been a dedicated member of EICS for 19 years, serving as a teacher, chaplain, assistant principal, and now principal.

As an active member of the St. Francis Xavier parish, she is well-known in Camrose and brings strong

instructional leadership to her role. She will help guide the transition of Our Lady of OLMP into a Grade 5-8 school when the new high school opens in 2025.

Mr. Bob Charchun: Principal of Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic High School

Mr. Bob Charchun has been appointed principal of Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic High School, set to open its doors for Grades 9-12 in August 2025. He currently leads Our Lady of Mount Pleasant Catholic School and brings a wealth of experience and a strong connection to the Camrose community.

Known for his collaborative leadership and deep commitment to faith, Charchun will oversee



the launch of the new high school as it nears the final stages of construction.

Mrs. Michelle Nanas: Continuing Leadership at St. Patrick Catholic School

We are also excited that Mrs. Michelle Nanas will continue as principal of St. Patrick Catholic School. Since joining EICS in 2016, she has served in various roles, including teacher, chaplain, and assistant principal,

before stepping into her current role as principal. She is a passionate advocate for student success and a supportive leader for staff.

This dynamic leadership team will ensure a bright future for Catholic education in Camrose, with a strong focus on faith, community, and student success.

Stay tuned for more updates on the opening of Blessed Carlo Acutis Catholic High School as the 2025-2026 school year nears!



Our EICS Board of Trustees and Superintendent Paul Corrigan attended the 15th annual Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton Bishop's Gala in early December. It was a pleasure to catch up with Fr. Rendy Yackimec (third from right) from St. Sophia's Ukrainian Catholic Parish, as well as members of the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association. It was a wonderful evening to celebrate our faith.

School News in Pictures



In anticipation of the Advent Season, many of our schools held faith and family nights starting in late November. Advent wreath building was a popular activity for these occasions.



School News in Pictures



The upcoming Christmas Season was plenty reason for our schools to celebrate in December. Everything from charitable donation drives to in-school festivities and at night concerts were infused with the true spirit of Christmas and seeing Christ in others.



Division News in Pictures



The EICS Board of Trustees and Superintendent Corrigan met with MLA Kyle Kasawski (third from left) on Thursday, Dec. 5 to discuss priorities that are vital to the success of our students and staff, including publicly-funded Catholic education, instructional funding, infrastructure needs, and mental health supports.

Trustee Event Calendar for December

December 5

Theology on Tap with Fr. Kris in Camrose.

Bishop's Gala hosted by Bishop David Motiuk of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton.

December 6

Alberta School Boards Association's Zone 2/3 General Meeting.

Advocacy meeting

with Sherwood Park MLA Kyle Kasawski.

December 11

Our Lady of the Angels Catholic School Faith and Festivities Evening.

École Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic School Advent Arts Evening.

December 16

Holy Redeemer Catholic School Parent

Council Meeting.

ABJ Choir's Winter Wonderland Performance.

December 18

Public Meeting of the EICS Board of Trustees.

December 20

Ukrainian Carolers visit Central Learning Services.

Christmas Break begins for all EICS schools.

JOIN US AT OUR NEXT PUBLIC BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, January 22

1 p.m.

St. André Bessette Catholic School
8300 Southfort Drive
Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta

Visit our website for meeting agendas and minutes.



ELK ISLAND CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
Seeing Christ in Everyone

Catholic-integrated education from Kindergarten to Grade 12 in the communities of Camrose, Fort Saskatchewan, Sherwood Park, Strathcona County, and Vegreville.

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