



## **Division Budget for 2020/21**

*For release: May 26, 2020*

The Board of Trustees of Edmonton Catholic Schools has approved a balanced operating budget of \$521.2 million for the 2020-2021 school year. While overall funding is relatively flat from the 2018-19 school year, the new funding model for Alberta Education shifts funding from Early Childhood Services and places it into Kindergarten to Grade 12. A total of 77% of this budget goes to supporting students in the classroom, while only 2.7% is used for System Administration, which is lower than the 3.15% cap established by Alberta Education.

“Throughout this process, difficult decisions were made while exploring ways to maximize the dollars going into the Kindergarten to Grade 12 classroom,” said Laura Thibert, Board Chair. “We are thankful for the hard work of our administration, as they expertly navigated the new funding realities,” added Thibert.

### **Bridge Funding**

Alberta Education has provided Edmonton Catholic Schools with \$30.3 million in temporary Bridge Funding to help transition to the new funding model announced in February. “We are thankful to Alberta Education for this funding as our Division continues to review opportunities for efficiencies,” said newly appointed Chief Superintendent Robert Martin. “The Division continues to recognize the very challenging fiscal situation being faced by the Province,” added Martin.

Bridge Funding will be reduced by \$15.2 million for the 2021-2022 school year and will then be fully removed for the 2022-2023 school year. The Division anticipates there will be additional impacts to programming once this funding disappears.

### **Program Unit Funding (PUF)**

ECSD experienced approximately a \$28 million reduction for funding in this area. Alberta Education’s new funding model reduced targeted dollars from PUF. The remaining PUF dollars were shifted into kindergarten to grade 12 base funding. In order to respond to this loss of funding, Edmonton Catholic Schools has reduced the number of pre-Kindergarten (100 Voices) programs from 103 programs to just 34.

“While the new funding model continues to fund inclusive education initiatives, there has been a shift out of Program Unit Funding (PUF) that will have a negative impact on meeting the learning needs of pre-K children with severe developmental disabilities or delays prior to starting kindergarten,” explained Thibert. “We will continue to advocate to the provincial government for adequate funding to meet the needs of all students with severe and complex needs,” she concluded.

## **Enrolment Funding**

Our enrolment will no longer be funded on the number of students enrolled on September 30<sup>th</sup> each year but a Weighted Moving Average (WMA) enrolment approach.

- The WMA enrolment is based 20% on 2018-19 enrolment, 30% on 2019-20 enrolment and 50% on forecast 2020-21 enrolment.
- The Division will continue to fund schools based on enrolment and provide additional funding allocations for schools based on their assessed needs.

## **Additional Highlights**

Bus pass fees will increase by 5% for all students to help compensate for cost increases. The Division is continuing to identify and implement changes to address inflationary pressures while balancing the needs of an efficient and sustainable transportation system.

The Division has spent considerable time identifying and implementing changes to maximize dollars including:

- the amalgamation of two junior high Spanish Bilingual Programs to create a viable and sustainable program at Louis St. Laurent Catholic Junior/Senior High School.
- the amalgamation of two dual track French Immersion programs to create one single track French Immersion school at École Bishop Savaryn Catholic Elementary School.

## **Block funding for high school students as opposed to funding based on completed CEUs.**

The change from actual Credit Enrolment Units (CEUs) earned to Block Funding using the WMA enrolment for high school students has reduced the Division's funding for Alternative Education by approximately \$2 million. While the Division's Alternative Education programs (such as, but not limited to, Outreach, Our Lady of Grace, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year programs, along with after hours and summer school) will continue for students that require different supports from those provided by our traditional high schools, the scope of programming has been decreased to reflect the new funding realities.