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*For Immediate Release*

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## **EICS Launches Online Kindergarten Program**

*Sherwood Park, AB* - New for the 2023-2024 school year, Elk Island Catholic Schools (EICS) is launching an online Kindergarten program at its St. Isidore Learning Centre (SILC). The new program provides the benefits of traditional Kindergarten and enables families to have more flexible learning times for their young learners.

"Our online Kindergarten program at SILC provides an exceptional faith-integrated Catholic education that offers a flexible and convenient alternative for families," said SILC Principal Karen Antoniuk. "This program caters to the diverse needs and schedules of our students and their families, and it enables our youngest learners to embark on their educational journey from the comfort of their own homes."

Starting its inaugural year at the end of August, the online Kindergarten curriculum has been developed by SILC staff to specifically foster growth and learning in an environment where students can advance at their own pace and delve into subjects that capture their interest.

"Our team of online teachers are phenomenal with guiding students of all ages through their learning, and SILC's online Kindergarten will be no different," said Thérèse deChamplain-Good, the EICS Assistant Superintendent of Educational Excellence. "In preparing to launch this new program, SILC's teachers should be proud of the work they have done to ensure their students will thrive."

The online Kindergarten program will provide opportunities for students to connect with their peers, exchange ideas, and participate in collaborative learning activities with the assistance of their parents. These interactions are a core aspect of the program, and will closely resemble social and educational developmental exercises that are found in traditional in-person learning settings. These opportunities for SILC's online Kindergarten students also offer a unique advantage not typically found in conventional homeschooling.

"It had my full support when an online Kindergarten at SILC was proposed," said EICS Superintendent Paul Corrigan. "SILC has made such incredible strides since it first began five years ago that an online Kindergarten seemed like a natural fit for the school and our division."

Currently, SILC provides online and in-person educational opportunities for students in Grades 1 to 12, as well as continuing education, adult education, outreach, and summer school for students across Alberta and Canada. Its Chesterton Academy offers classical high school learning to students across North America.

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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 request an interview, please contact:

Michael Di Massa  
Communications Coordinator  
Elk Island Catholic Schools  
780.449.7487 | [michael.dimassa@eics.ab.ca](mailto:michael.dimassa@eics.ab.ca)

310 Broadview Road, Sherwood Park, AB. Canada T8H 1A4  
Telephone: 780.467.8896  
Website: [www.eics.ab.ca](http://www.eics.ab.ca)