

EICS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Monthly Highlights



French Immersion students play beanbag toss during the Carnaval celebrations at École Père Kenneth Kearns Catholic School (EPK) on Tuesday, March 4. The celebration paired students from EPK, Archbishop Jordan Catholic High School, and École Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic School into groups as all three schools celebrated Carnaval together for the first time.
More Photos on Page 12

Board Highlights

Living the Gospel: charity as a calling in Catholic education

This month's Faith Formation with our Elk Island Catholic Schools (EICS) Board of Trustees at their regular public meeting explored the theme of charity and our calling to meet the needs of students beyond providing an education.

The Trustees were blessed to have Darby Murphy, the Principal at St. Martin's Catholic School and a member of the EICS Faith Formation team, lead the discussion.

For his presentation to the Board, Murphy focused on how the act of charity ties into the history of the Catholic church and connects directly to the work done in our schools today.

Pointing to Matthew 25:37-40, the parable of the sheep and goats, Murphy said Jesus makes it clear that a life worthy



Students Keira and Ethan from St. Mary's Catholic School begin March's EICS Board of Trustees meeting with a prayer and land acknowledgement. Thank you to the staff and students of St. Mary's Catholic School for welcoming the Board of Trustees and hosting this month's public meeting.

of Heaven must be one in service to helping others in need. He noted that the first hospital in the Roman Empire, built around the year 400, was motivated in part by the teachings of Jesus Christ, emphasizing love, compassion, and care

for the sick and needy.

In fact, "Monasteries and religious orders often provided refuge for travelers, pilgrims, and the sick, contributing to the development of early hospital systems that later evolved into more

structured healthcare institutions," Murphy noted.

Within the context of EICS, this act of charity prioritizes the holistic wellbeing of each student and staff member. This emphasis on addressing physical, spiritual, and psychological wellness of students and staff is one of the four key pillars that form our division's annual assurance strategy.

Murphy said school staff respond to this calling through meeting the needs of students through acts of charity that extend well beyond the traditional role of being an educator.

"Christian charity is at the forefront of Catholic education," Murphy said. "It's not just about teaching, but it's about spreading the Gospel; God's love.... It is a lifestyle, it is a calling for teachers, for sure."

ELK ISLAND CATHOLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES



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& Sherwood Park
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Board Highlights

Focused on recruitment, faith leadership, wellbeing

HUMAN RESOURCES

Brett Cox, the EICS Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, presented an update on his department's activities for the current school year.

A top priority for the five-person team this year was an overhaul of the careers page on the EICS website with the goal of improving overall staff recruitment and retention.

The team is also actively seeking other ways to refine recruitment through partnerships with post-secondary colleges for practicum students, while demonstrating our Catholic faith when attending recruitment events.

For existing staff, HR has focused on strengthening internal mentorship programs, continuing to refine work flow and communication between the schools and

other EICS departments, making documents more widely available that detail common HR processes, and intentional visits to schools throughout the year.

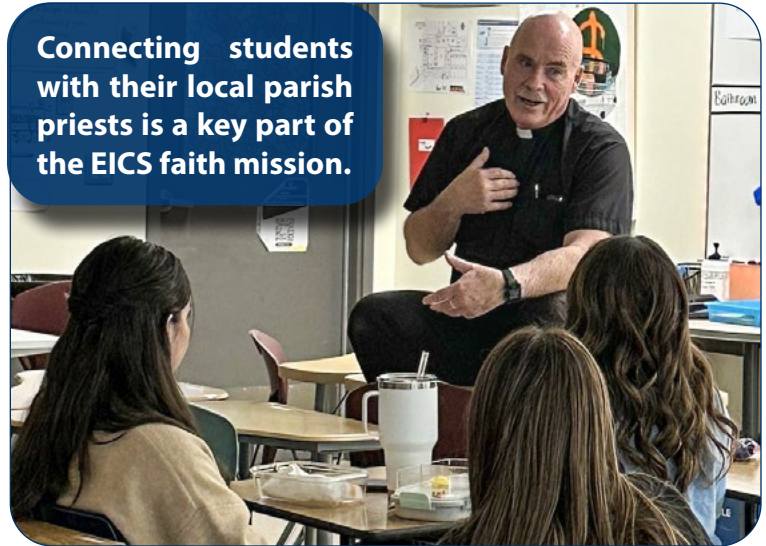
Cox said the goal of every HR effort is to strengthen the education EICS provides to all students.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL REVIEW

Archbishop Jordan Catholic High School (ABJ) recently completed its Catholic School review. These reviews are conducted by division administration to assist schools in identifying strengths and areas of improvement regarding its delivery of education and Catholic identity.

The ABJ review affirms the school's strong Catholic identity and Christ-centred community, commending faith formation initiatives that engage staff and

Connecting students with their local parish priests is a key part of the EICS faith mission.



students through liturgies, community service, and parish partnerships.

Next steps for ABJ include deepening Catholic integration across all subject areas, expanding opportunities for prayer, and enhancing faith leadership through professional development.

Overall, ABJ is well-positioned to strengthen its role as a leader in Catholic

education.

The full report is available on the EICS website's **Catholic School Review Dashboard**.

FOOD PROGRAM

EICS Superintendent Paul Corrigan noted that students will be a beneficiary of the recently announced Canada-Alberta National School

See BOARD on Page 4



Our Board of Trustees gathered in March for professional development, focusing on faith formation, Catholic education, and Board governance. A special thank you to Elder Garry and Knowledge Keeper Rob for leading a smudging ceremony and sharing their wisdom on Indigenous ways of knowing.

Board Highlights

Final highlights: policy reviews, bus safety, and Lenten giving

BOARD from Page 3

Food Program Agreement, which will help to provide nutritious meals to students at school.

POLICY REVIEWS

The Policy Committee reviewed the following policies during March's public meeting:

- **Policy 11: Board Delegation of Authority**
- **Policy 14: Appeals and Hearings Regarding Student Matters**

Policy 11's second reading was approved with no amendments.

First and second readings for Policy 14's amendments were approved by the Board.

BISHOP ASSURANCE UPDATE

Our role as a pilot group in the Catholic Bishops of Alberta and the Northwest Territories' Bishop Assurance Project is ongoing.

We continue to work closely with Archbishop Richard Smith on this project, however he was recently appointed to the Archdiocese of Vancouver

by Pope Francis.

Currently, Archbishop Smith is serving as the Administrator of the Archdiocese of Edmonton until his formal installation in Vancouver later this spring.

We are eternally thankful for His Grace's ongoing vision, leadership, and dedication to Catholic education and the Catholic faith, and we pray that he receives abundant blessings and continued strength as he begins this new chapter of service and leadership in Vancouver.

LURANA SHELTER DONATION

The EICS community has donated more than \$40,000 in support of Lurana Shelter during this school year.

Most of the money was donated during the Advent season leading into Christmas, however \$3,000 was collected during Mass at our division's Faith and Wellness day on March 7.

Currently, EICS has a Lenten donation drive collecting clothing and stuffed animals in support of the first-stage emergency shelter for women and their children.



St. Patrick's Day was a celebration of all things Irish and green across all EICS schools. It also offered an opportunity for students and staff to reflect on how we can better serve others, not unlike St. Patrick.

Board Highlights

Updated 3-Year Capital Plan refines board priorities

At its March 19 public meeting, the EICS Board of Trustees approved the 2026-2029 3-Year Capital Plan and the 2025-2034 10-Year Facility Plan, which outline the division’s priorities for school construction, modernization, and long-term planning.

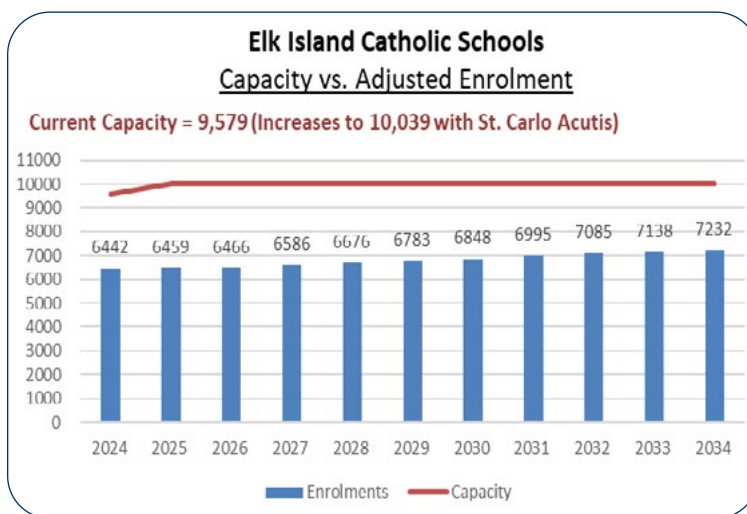
These plans are updated annually to reflect the division’s evolving needs and to present compelling funding requests to Alberta Education for future capital projects.

PRIORITY 1: K-4 SCHOOL IN FORT SASKATCHEWAN

The top priority in the updated capital plan is to seek \$25.1 million in funding for the design and construction of a new 540-core capacity Kindergarten to Grade 4 school in Fort Saskatchewan. This funding would result in the consolidation of Our Lady of the Angels (OLA) and St. John XXIII Catholic schools and also include the demolition of OLA once the new school is operational.

The City of Fort Saskatchewan has designated land in the Forest Ridge community for the location of the new school.

This design and



build request follows the value scoping and public engagement that was held with our school communities in Fort Saskatchewan in the first half of 2024. For more on that, see our [Planning for the Future in Fort Saskatchewan web page](#).

Presenting the capital plan to the Board, Secretary Treasurer Tracy Leigh explained that funds are not being requested to demolish the St. John XXIII building as it offers valuable surplus for the division once the new school is operational.

Since no provincial funding has been acquired for the design and build phases, there are no timelines for this project at this time.

PRIORITY 2: PRE-PLANNING FOR SHERWOOD PARK

The second priority

seeks \$120,000 to conduct value scoping and public engagement in Sherwood Park. The goal is to explore options for increasing school utilization rates and enhancing learning environments.

The value scoping would include a cost/benefit analysis of the long-term maintenance cost of keeping underutilized sites running versus the cost of operating a new, more efficient consolidated school.

Leigh told the Board that this priority was amended from a year ago to remove language that suggests potential consolidation of elementary schools to leave the options more open ended due in part to year over year enrolment changes.

“In looking at Strathcona County as a whole and what a value

scoping session would entail, we can’t say for sure (consolidating two Kindergarten to Grade 4 schools) is what would come out of the value scoping,” she told the Board. “We didn’t feel comfortable, so we’re asking for pre-planning funds to do some public engagement to see what we can come up with for a solution to increase the utilization rate.”

EICS Superintendent Paul Corrigan told the Board that capital planning involves aiming for goal posts that can shift from year to year. “This is primarily because of the good work being done in our schools and the new programs being offered,” he said.

A similar request in 2024 was not funded, but EICS administration is committed to securing the necessary resources. If funding is received, public engagement sessions are not planned to begin prior to 2026.

PRIORITY 3: RIGHT-SIZING STUDY FOR VEGREVILLE SCHOOLS

The third priority requests pre-planning funds to explore a Kindergarten to Grade 12 consolidation at either St.

See PLAN on Page 6

Board Highlights

Planning ahead for new schools, evolving municipal communities

PLAN from Page 5

Mary's Catholic School or St. Martin's Catholic School.

This would involve a value scoping study and public engagement to assess a cost/benefit analysis of the long-term maintenance cost of keeping underutilized schools running versus the cost of consolidating and modernizing either school. Pending the results of the value scoping workshop and public engagement, EICS will develop a more detailed scope of work and cost estimate.

The 3-Year Capital Plan is requesting funds to hold value scoping and public engagement sessions as well as planning and design funding to help develop one of two options:

- Option 1: \$10.8 million in funding to consolidate both schools into St. Mary's.
- Option 2: \$14.2 million to consolidate both schools into St. Martin's.

Similar to other projects, no timelines have been set as the initiative depends on provincial funding.

LONG-TERM PLANNING & FUTURE GROWTH

The Board also reviewed as part of this document a long-range 10-year facility plan for 2025-2034, which guides EICS in providing high-quality learning spaces close to home.

New residential developments in Cambrian and Bremner near Sherwood Park have been identified as potential sites for future Catholic schools, while other communities may see shifting enrolment trends based on local growth.

ONGOING ADVOCACY FOR FUNDING

While EICS was not included in the province's 2025 capital funding announcements, Leigh noted that funding could still be granted at other points in the year.

"The most important thing is showing that the division has a solid plan moving forward," she said. "We have a direction, and we know what we're asking for."

The full 3-Year Capital Plan and 10-Year Facility Plan **is on our website**.



Our EICS Board of Trustees held their monthly public meeting in Vegreville on March 19, and then had the opportunity to meet with Vegreville Town Council. The group shared a meaningful conversation about how our division and the Town can work together.

Board Highlights

2026-2027 calendar approved for most communities

With their approval on Wednesday, March 19, the EICS Board of Trustees took a historic step — approving a school year calendar more than a year in advance for the first time in our division’s history.

The 2026-2027 school year calendar applies to schools in Fort Saskatchewan, Sherwood Park, Strathcona County, and Vegreville. Schools in Camrose are not included at this time.

Superintendent Paul Corrigan shared that the early approval was directly influenced by parent feedback

received during consultations for the 2025-2026 calendar. Families expressed a preference for having school calendars available sooner, and with our student transportation provider in these communities already releasing their schedule, the division was able to move forward.

Corrigan also addressed questions from the Board about the last day of school falling on Monday, June 28, 2027. He explained that this is due to Alberta Education scheduling the Science 30 diploma exam on that

date, a decision affecting school divisions across the province. If that exam date changes, EICS Trustees and administration will have the opportunity to review and consider amending the calendar.

The 2026-2027 calendars for Camrose schools have not yet been proposed, as the student transit provider for EICS students in that community has not finalized its schedule. These calendars are expected to be approved in early 2026.

In Fort Saskatchewan, Sherwood Park, Strathcona

County, and Vegreville, notable dates for the 2026-2027 school year include:

- **Aug. 31, 2026:** First day of school
- **Nov. 9 - 13, 2026:** Fall break
- **Dec. 21, 2026 - Jan. 1, 2027:** Christmas break
- **March 22 - 26, 2027:** Spring break
- **March 26, 2027:** Good Friday
- **March 29, 2027:** Easter Monday
- **June 28, 2027:** Last day of school

2026-2027

Sherwood Park, Fort Saskatchewan, Vegreville
FINAL Approved Calendar - March 2025

August 2026				
M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

September 2026				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

October 2026				
M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

November 2026				
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16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

December 2026				
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21	22	23	24	25
29	30	31		

January 2027				
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18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

February 2027				
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15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26

March 2027				
M	T	W	T	F
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15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

April 2027				
M	T	W	T	F
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May 2027				
M	T	W	T	F
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10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

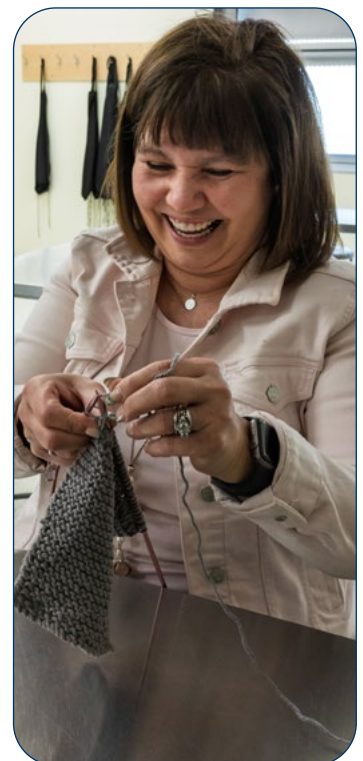
June 2027				
M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

Legend	
First Instruction Day --Semester 1 & 2	
PD Days/Operational – School closed to students	
Early Dismissal/Staff Meeting	
Holiday/Vacation/School Closure	
Day in Lieu Interviews Operation Day -no students/staff	
Last Student Day	

Click the image for the 2026-2027 calendar for Fort Saskatchewan, Sherwood Park/Strathcona County, and Vegreville.

Division News in Pictures

The whole division came together to celebrate our annual Faith and Wellness Day on Friday, March 7. The morning started with Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, and featured keynote speaker and former EICS Superintendent Michael Hauptman. A total of \$3,000 in donations was also collected during Mass to support Lurana Shelter. In the afternoon, staff had a variety of activities to participate in to support their well-being.



School News in Pictures



Staff and students across EICS celebrated Shrove Tuesday on March 4, gathering for pancake breakfasts before the start of Lent. Shrove Tuesday is an important day in our faith as it invites us to prepare our hearts for Lent through reflection, repentance, and prayer.



School News in Pictures



Ash Wednesday was observed on Wednesday, March 5 with reverence and reflection for students and staff across EICS. Schools gathered for Mass with parish priests in each of our communities. The sign of ashes reminds us of our call to repentance, renewal, and drawing closer to Christ through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.



School News in Pictures



The French Immersion programs at Archbishop Jordan Catholic High School, École Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic School, and École Père Kenneth Kearns Catholic School celebrated Francophone Week during the week of March 17. All three schools celebrated Mass together and separately highlighted the richness of French language and culture.



School News in Pictures

French Immersion students from Archbishop Jordan Catholic High School, École Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic School, and École Père Kenneth Kearns Catholic School (EPK) celebrated Carnaval on Tuesday, March 4 at EPK. This first-ever joint celebration was filled with joyful activities that honoured French culture.



School News in Pictures



In March, Grade 6 Social Studies students at St. Theresa Catholic School had the opportunity to explore the Alberta Legislature, meet with Sherwood Park MLA Kyle Kasawski and learn about how laws are made and the role of the provincial government in Alberta.

Trustee Event Calendar for March 2025

March 7

EICS Faith and Wellness Day.

March 13

EICS Board of Trustees Professional Development Day.

March 14

Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) Zone

2/3 General Meeting.

March 17

Advocacy Meeting with Alberta Teachers' Association.

March 18

French Immersion Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish.

March 19

EICS Board of Trustees Public Meeting.

Advocacy Meeting with Vegreville Town Council.

March 27

ASBA Board Chair and Superintendent Engagement.

JOIN US AT OUR NEXT PUBLIC BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, April 23
1 p.m.

Central Learning Services
310 Broadview Rd.
Sherwood Park, 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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