

***GUIDELINES  
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE 2008-2009  
DISTRICT BUDGET***

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## **Guiding Principles for Building of the District Budget and Allocations to Schools and Departments**

### **Preamble**

What is Catholic about the creation of a budget and the allocation of budget resources within Edmonton Catholic Schools? This question directs the articulation of principles that will guide decision-making around budget and allocation issues.

A Catholic social principle is a statement based on reason and revelation that is intended to guide behaviour so that gospel virtues are not compromised. The principles for budget and allocation decisions are not intended to provide a recipe for decision-making; rather, they will provide guidelines for implementation in the decision-making process.

Catholic social teachings and the teachings of Vatican Council II invite Catholics to integrate faith and culture by applying gospel virtues to the economic, political and social realities of day-to-day living. Budget and allocation decisions affect the lives of people in every dimension of the life of the school district, and so the decisions should reflect what it means to be Catholic.

The virtue of justice is central to Catholic social teachings. Principles of decision-making should therefore reflect justice, which is at the heart of what it means to be Catholic.

The proposed principles, though brief in number, encompass the key issues that arise in a consideration of budget and allocation decision-making.

*Edmonton Catholic Schools' budget and allocations will reflect the gospel virtues of justice and integrity, will reflect the principles outlined by the Budget Review Committee of the Superintendent, will attend to the social teachings of the Catholic Church, and will reflect our district's eight characters of Catholic education and the core values:*

### **Principles for Budget and Allocations**

#### **Dignity of Persons and the Common Good**

**Budget and allocations decisions will respect the dignity of all persons affected by decision making and will attend to the common good of the school district.**

**Catholic Social Teachings attend to the following key themes:**

#### **Primacy of persons:**

- economic decisions respect the dignity of persons (derived from the belief that persons are made in the image of God); and
- decisions and actions of the organization do not compromise the well being of persons and groups within the organization.

### **The Common Good:**

- the common good is the ultimate measure of justice in economic decision making; and
- economic decisions that are guided by the principle of the common good promote the well being of individual persons as well as the well being of the entire community.

### **Solidarity:**

- economic decisions consider the well-being of the entire community; and
- economic decisions that affect the larger community should be guided by representatives of that community.

### **Equitability**

**Budget and allocations decisions will be guided by equitability, according to the demands of the common good.**

**Catholic Social Teachings attend to the following key themes:**

#### **Justice:**

- social justice demands that individuals and groups strive to create social and economic structures that reflect gospel virtues of fairness and equity; and
- distributive justice requires fair distribution of resources according to need.

#### **Equitability and Fairness**

- equitability and fairness relate to disparity of resources;
- social justice and distributive justice demand that resource distribution does not disadvantage marginalized social and economic groups; and
- allocations redress economic and social disparities

#### **Special claim for the poor and marginalized**

- economic decisions give preference to the marginalized (preferential option for the poor)

### **Participation**

**Budget and allocations decisions will be transparent and will assure the full and ongoing participation of all according to the principle of subsidiarity.**

**Catholic Social Teachings attend to the following key themes:**

#### **Subsidiarity:**

- subsidiarity holds that persons affected by economic decisions should participate in those decisions

**Participation:**

- participation of all parties to decision making should be ongoing
- consultation with partners is part of the decision making process

**Transparency:**

- knowledge of circumstances that affect allocations is accessible to those affected by allocations decisions;
- decision makers are prepared to account for allocations decisions with reference to the principles of Catholic social teachings

## Membership of the District Budget Committee

The members of the Budget Committee are:

- Superintendent - Joan Carr
- Board of Trustees Representative – Marilyn Bergstra
  
- Directors
  - ◆ Aboriginal and Alternative & Life Long Learning Services – Rick Dombrosky
  - ◆ District Educational Services – Laurie Pelkie
  - ◆ Educational and Administrative Technology Services - Mike Carby
  - ◆ Educational Planning and Administrative Services - Boris Radyo
  - ◆ Facilities Services – Ron Chomyc
  - ◆ Financial Services (also represents Board Governance) - Andy Isbister
  - ◆ Human Resource Services (also represents EFAP) – Doug Aitkenhead
  - ◆ Learning Support Services - Brenda Willis
  - ◆ Religious Education Services - Heather Jamieson
  
- Principals
  - ◆ Two from Elementary Theresa Antonakis (year 1); Sharon Jonzon (2)
  - ◆ Two from Junior High David Andrews (year 1); Joe Buysen (2)
  - ◆ Two from Senior High Stephen Goss (year 1); Mary Lou Forest (2)
  - ◆ One District Principal Helen Matsuba
  
- Associations/Unions Presidents:
  - ◆ ATA Shannon McElroy
  - ◆ ECSSA Cheryl Andrews
  - ◆ AUPE Mark Weleschuk
  - ◆ Out of Scope Devin Wilken
  
- Financial Services Support
  - ◆ Manager – Budget Services – Norm Schmidt

Total Membership for the Budget Committee = 23

## **Role Of The Budget Committee**

The role of the Budget Committee is to **examine the entire district budget**, and it deals with **ALL** of the three funding envelopes (instructional, administrative, and operations & maintenance). The Budget Committee may recommend the moving of funds between these envelopes, provided this follows Alberta Education guidelines in this regard.

It is understood that the people who serve on the Budget Committee have an important task to do, and that this task involves a commitment to the entire process. If a member of the committee cannot attend a budget meeting, they cannot send a replacement member. There is simply too much information from prior committee meetings to enable a substitute member to be able to contribute effectively.

### Superintendent

- The Superintendent reviews the recommendations of the Budget Committee and prepares an annual budget based on these recommendations. The Superintendent acts as chair of the Budget Committee.
- The role of the superintendent is to chair budget meetings, to determine if the recommendations of the Budget Committee are educationally sound, fiscally responsible, and in keeping with Board policies and goals of the District.

### Trustee

- The Trustee representative on the committee is the liaison with the rest of the Board of Trustees. The Trustee representative shall ensure Administrative Policies and Regulations are followed and report back to the Board of Trustees Planning Meeting the progress the committee has made in the budget process.

### Directors/District Principal

- Provide clear, concise information to the Budget Committee on respective departments/areas of responsibility.

### Principals

- Should represent a cross-section of programs (e.g. special education, languages) and socio-economic areas.
- Should have knowledge of the budget and allocation process.
- Pilot the Budget Workbook before it is sent out to all principals.

### Employee Groups

- Represented by the president of each employee group.

### Role of Principals and Employee Groups

- Inform each level/employee group as to what is happening and get their feedback to the Budget Committee as deemed necessary.
- Have clear, concise information to communicate to their respective groups at appropriate times. (e.g. information available after budget meetings).
- Be responsible for providing information to their groups and getting feedback to meet the timelines. The nature of doing this (e.g. calling meetings) will be at the discretion of the representatives.
- Treasurer will distribute notes via email to all committee members, all principals and Trustees after each budget meeting.
- Timelines need to be clearly communicated to everyone.

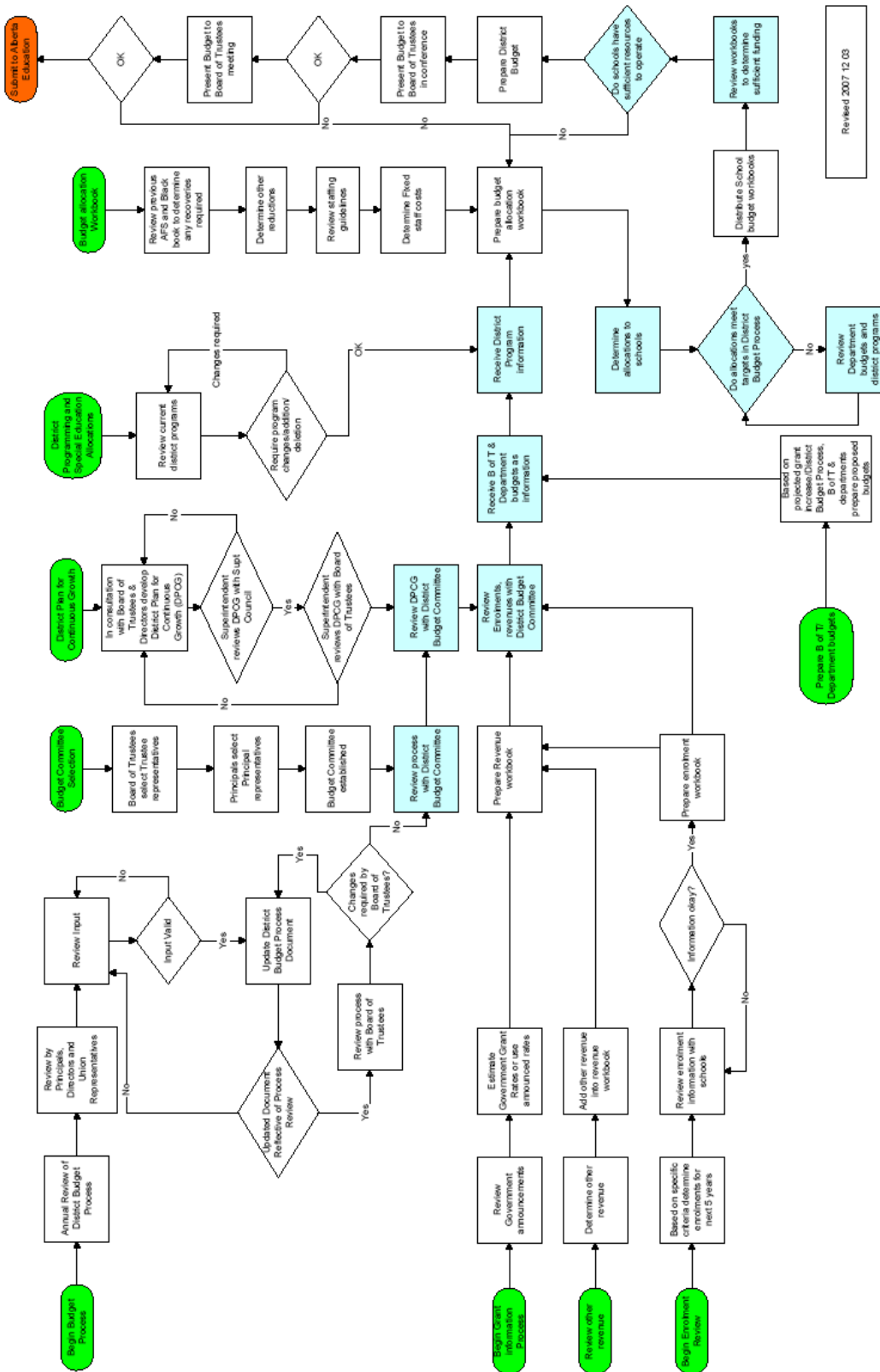
### Specific Tasks Addressed by the Budget Committee

Specific tasks include:

- ⇒ Annually review the allocation methodology
  - ⇒ Review services, including budgets, provided through Catholic Education Services
  - ⇒ Review mandatory service budgets
  - ⇒ Review any fee for service structures (e.g. psycho educational services, printing services, etc.)
  - ⇒ Review factored allocations for each level
  - ⇒ Review basic school grants
  - ⇒ Other reviews as required
- It is important to note that the Budget Committee will do its work on a consensus model. This means that where at all possible, recommendations to the superintendent regarding the structure of the budget will be arrived at by consensus. In instances where it may not be possible to achieve consensus, the superintendent will have to determine which course of action is best for the District over all. Members of the committee are expected to represent the views of the entire District, and are not on the Budget Committee to represent only the views of the group or department they are from.
  - The Board of Trustees of Edmonton Catholic Schools is the only group who makes decisions about the budget. The Budget Committee is not a decision making body.
  - The role of the Budget Committee is to examine all the information, and to make recommendations to the superintendent.
  - The role of the Board of Trustees is to examine the budget proposal carefully, and to make the final decision as to amendments and approval.

NOTE: In the fall, following confirmation of September 30 enrolments, School Operations Services, directors and District principals (dependent on responsibility), on behalf of the Superintendent, shall review all allocations to ensure equity and fairness in dealing with any anomalies, and will provide recommendations for adjustments to the Superintendent. This review shall be completed by November 20.

# Budget Model for 2008-2009



## **How We Fund Schools**

In addition to the Guiding Principles for creating the district's budget and allocating funds to schools and departments, the following principles are specific to Site Based Decision-Making (SBDM) and allocations. They assist us in addressing the questions of how we fund schools and how we fund supports to schools.

### **Principles of SBDM**

- SBDM is designed to place decision making as close as possible to the decision and the people affected by it.
- Schools are producers of front line results. They are accountable for student results.
- Within the established financial resources and staffing guidelines of the District, it is up to the principal of the individual school, in consultation with staff, parents and other stakeholders, to determine exactly how large or small classes at various levels should be.
- Resources must be aligned (allocated) with responsibility.
- Principals are accountable for deploying the resources to meet the unique needs of their population and for controlling expenses.
- Performance will be monitored.
- Catholic Education Services (Superintendent and Superintendent's Council) is responsible for creating structure and framework within which people carry out their work.

### **Principles of Allocations**

- Schools need to be funded first.
- A Superintendent's Contingency will be maintained to address unforeseen needs as noted below:
  - the initiative must have district wide implications;
  - the initiative must match and support the goals of the district as articulated in the District Three Year Strategic Education Plan and/or the District Plan for Continuous Growth;
  - the initiative must be in response to a new or emerging need in the district, as compared to asking for funding for something that was not supported through the regular budget process;
- Allocation methodology must be fair and equitable.
- Responsibility assigned must be appropriate.
- Allocation methodology must promote effectiveness and efficiency.
- Allocation methodology must be transparent...all staff must know what all allocations are.
- Allocation methodology must be understandable...formulas used must be clear and understandable.
- Allocation methodology must be flexible.
- Allocation methodology must demonstrate accountability.
- Allocation methodology must demonstrate strategic priorities for use of funds.
- Allocation methodology should be inclusive and represent 75-80% of operational funds.

- Strategic Priorities need to be clearly defined to articulate understandable formulas for distribution of resources.
- Allocation methodology needs to address inequities.

### **Allocation Methodology**

Based on the Guiding Principles and the principals of SBDM and allocations, the following allocation methodology will be used:

- Funding should follow established envelope funding provided by Alberta Education and transfer of funds from one envelope to another should be generally avoided.
- Funding for the following services provided by Catholic Education Services should continue and be funded through the System and Board Governance Envelope, Facilities Envelope, Transportation Envelope or required funds transferred from the Instructional Envelope

Budgets for these services should be reviewed annually by the Budget Committee:

- Board of Trustees and Corporate Secretary Services - System and Board Governance envelope
- Superintendent's Office - System and Board Governance envelope
- District Educational Services – Instructional envelope
- Religious Education Services - Instructional envelope
- Financial Services - System and Board Governance envelope
- Human Resources - System and Board Governance envelope and Instructional envelope
- Educational and Administrative Technology Services - Instructional envelope and System and Board Governance envelope
- Facilities Services - Plant Operations and Maintenance envelope
- Transportation Services (part of Educational Planning and Administrative Services) Transportation envelope
- Learning Support Services - special needs funding - Instructional envelope
- Alternative Education & Lifelong Learning – external services
- Aboriginal Learning - Instructional envelope

Funding for the following services provided by Catholic Education Services should be reviewed annually by the Budget Committee and funding provided from the Instructional envelope based upon support for continued service:

- Learning Support Services - other than high needs funding
- Educational Planning and Administrative Services (other than Transportation Services)
- Employee and Family Assistance Program Services (together with proportional funding from mandatory services)
- Leadership Services
- Purchasing Services
- Warehouse Services
- Printing Services (cost recovery basis)
- Risk Management (staff substitute costs, benefits, etc.)

- District Initiatives
- Funding available through Board Governance and System Administration should be used prior to any transfers from Instructional funds.
- Learning Support Services shall be responsible for the allocation of all special needs funding as well as specific grants related to early literacy, English as a Second Language, PUF grants, etc.
- Remaining funds shall be allocated to schools based on the following (Budget Committee to review and affirm prior to establishment of allocations):
- For school raised funds, to the school that raised such funds.

### **Equitability Fund**

Traditionally, a fund has been established to deal with staffing anomalies. These anomalies will be based on the establishment of a **school profile** as set out in the School Allocations Workbook, and will include such characteristics as:

1. Class configurations;
2. Ability to meet staffing guidelines;
3. Programs offered;
4. Size of the operational budget in relation to ability to staff within staffing guidelines;
5. Ability to pay (accumulated surplus); and,
6. Decisions made during spring of year that affect the following year's budget.

These funds will be decentralized to schools on or before November 30<sup>th</sup> based on their needs as demonstrated in their school profile.

### **Equity Guidelines**

All schools and departments are expected to operate within district equity guidelines, in that at the end of each fiscal year, schools and departments should have no more than a 3% deficit or a 7% surplus. Financial Services will monitor all schools and departments throughout the year to ensure that schools and departments operate within these guidelines. Monthly reports will be prepared and shared with the Board of Trustees.

**NOTE:** Certain funds that are held by the school in trust may not be considered to be included as a part of the school's equity amount. Examples of such funds would be items like caution fees, scholarships, year book deposits, special project funds, etc. Requests to exclude particular funds from the school's equity position must be made to Financial Services, and will be granted if the request is in compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

## **The Funding of High Needs Schools**

The District operates a number of schools that are termed “high needs schools.” These schools require additional supports in order to assist students in achieving success. The funding formula for the funding of High Needs schools will be reviewed for the 2008/09 school year.

## **The Funding of Special Education**

### **Special Education in Edmonton Catholic Schools**

Edmonton Catholic Schools has a long and distinguished history of providing programs and services to students with special needs. As a jurisdiction we provide a variety of programs for students with special needs. These programs provide the most enabling learning environment for the student with special needs. The supports and services range from full inclusion, with support at the classroom and school level, through District special education classes integrated in neighborhood schools, to out of District placements. In keeping with the provincial policy on the educational placement of students with special needs released in 1993, providing a program within the neighborhood school is considered as the first option for all students entering the District.

We provide special education services to students with:

1. An adherence to the mandates of the *School Act (2002)* relative to the provision of special education programs and services; and
2. In consideration of the recommendations contained within the document *Alberta Education Standards for Special Education (2002)*.

### **Special Education Funding**

The following four statements are designed to create a funding structure within the District relative to special education that will streamline and clarify the allocation process. They also address the current issue within the District of accountability in funding for special education and align the District with special education funding practices of other large urban school districts within the province.

1. That from the basic grant and special education funding, sufficient funds (as determined by LSS, SOS, and the Budget Committee) will be allocated to cover the costs of District special education programs, which includes the Knowledge & Employability Program.
2. Special education funding received from the government can only be used to provide supports and services authorized in writing by the District and Alberta Education.
3. That the development of the allocation formulas for funding of special education programs and services within the District be both collaborative and transparent.

4. That a system of accounting be established to monitor the costs of special education programs and services within the District on an annual basis.

### **Special Education Programs and Services**

The following aspects of the budget address issues relative to service delivery in special education, the funding of centralized support services, costs associated with staffing of special education programs and services, and funding shortfalls in special education.

1. Following on the feedback of the Special Education review and mandate of Alberta Education, special education programming in ECS continue to provide a range of programs and services from inclusive, through district special education programs, to out of District.
2. That the special education delivery model in ECS meets Alberta Education standards.
3. That the District establishes clear and consistent allocations based on specified criteria for students with severe special needs programmed for in inclusive settings. These allocations will be communicated to all District staff, and further, that students who cannot be accommodated through the inclusive allocation be directed to District programs or to out of District placements.
4. To the greatest extent possible the cost of special education programs and services should be covered by the funding received from the government.

### **The Funding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students**

This year during the budget process it was determined that each school would receive an allocation of \$ 521 for each self identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) student. The money was to go to each school that participates in the planning/accountability process. As a result, two documents were developed to assist school principals in planning to address the needs of FNMI students. The strategies can be summed up in five categories:

1. Staffing
2. Resources
3. Student Supports
4. Cultural Presentations
5. Professional Development

The second phase to this program is to develop broad based accountability to determine the level of success in improving outcomes for FNMI students. Accountability could incorporate data such as: Provincial Achievement Test and Diploma Exam results, FNMI student attendance rates, % of students that graduate, and retention rates.

For 2007-2008, the following centralized services will be provided via the FNMI budget: Curricular Consultant Services, Student Crisis Services, Community Liaison Services, Elder Services and Cultural Programming Services.

## Budget Process 2008 – Operational Guidelines

The final budget of the Edmonton Catholic School district will manifest the Gospel virtues of justice and integrity and reflect the following operational guidelines. In doing so, the District budget and allocations process:

- will be designed to meet the goals of the District and Alberta Education (**Common Good**);
- will ensure that the provision of an effective teaching-learning environment for students is the *first priority* for budget allocations (**Dignity of Persons and Common Good**);
- will support the enhancement of our Catholic identity in all aspects of the District's operation (**Common Good**);
- will be created through a consultative process with partners in the District (**Participation**);
- recognizes that responsibility and accountability for programs, activities and services rests with each District director, department head, and school principal (**Participation**);
- will ensure that school administrators develop priorities and plans for programs and services in consultation with District administration, school staff and parents (**Common Good and Participation**);
- will ensure that District administrators develop priorities and plans for programs and services in their respective areas of operation that are congruent with their department's mandate and in alignment with the goals of the District and in keeping within their budget allocations (**Common Good**);
- will ensure that the budget process is transparent, and that the surplus or deficit positions of all district departments and school site budgets will be clearly communicated throughout the district at the end of each fiscal year (**Participation**);
- will ensure fairness and justice in the provision of the necessary financial resources for each school to offer the Program of Studies in a Catholic environment (**Equitability**);
- will encourage innovation in Catholic leadership, organization, learning and teaching, administrative and resource distribution practices (**Primacy of Persons and Common Good**); and
- will be a balanced budget each year, and will require that all District departments and school sites develop and submit a balanced budget each year; sites and departments will not exceed a seven percent surplus or a three percent deficit (**Common Good**).