



News Release

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Board of Trustees Approves Balanced Budget

At tonight's monthly meeting, the Edmonton Catholic Board of Trustees approved a balanced budget of close to 217 million dollars for 2003-2004.

'Edmonton Catholic School District students and staff will benefit the most from this balanced budget,' said Charlie Koester, Board Chair. 'This budget translates into class sizes remaining the same in the coming year as well as no reduction in staff,' Koester went on to say.

Average class sizes for September, 2003 will remain as follows:

- Kindergarten 19 students
- Grades 1-6 23 students
- Grades 7-9 27 students
- Grades 10-12 dependent on program

When bringing the budget forward, Dr. Dale Ripley, Superintendent for Edmonton Catholic Schools highlighted two funding concerns that have also been shared with Alberta Learning and the Alberta's Commission on Learning.

'The shortfall in funding for special needs students continues to be a major concern. While we fully support an inclusive setting for these students we cannot meet the needs of these children without the necessary supports,' said Dr. Ripley.

'As well,' Ripley went on to say, 'the change in funding formula by Alberta Infrastructure, for the Plant Operations and Maintenance budget, especially as it relates to the utilization formula, has also impacted this budget and will further tighten limited budget dollars for the 2004-2005 budget year.'

The Board of Trustees and Senior Administration continue to work with the provincial government to secure adequate funding in these two areas and continue to provide the best educational opportunities for the students of Edmonton Catholic Schools.

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