



EDMONTON  
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

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## News Release

### **Three Year Education Plan Approved for Edmonton Catholic School District**

A number of exciting initiatives for 2004-2007 are planned following approval of the District's Three Year Education Plan tonight by the Board of Trustees.

The plan reflects the District's education strategy for the next three years while at the same time aligning programs with Alberta Learning and the Superintendent's Goals and Priorities for the coming year.

The plan also looks at projected enrolment and an increase in enrolment is expected for the Edmonton Catholic School District from 30,974 in 2003-2004 to 31,344 in the 2004-2005 school year.

Highlights of the plan include:

- An increased focus on **language literacy intervention** that would enable the district to commit that every child leaving Grade 3 would be reading at his or her potential.
- Ensuring maximum levels of **Aboriginal student achievement** in all Edmonton Catholic Schools by implementing 'best practices' as demonstrated by the Rainbow Spirit Project, and supporting the new Alberta Learning First Nations, Metis, and Inuit (FNMI) initiatives and its accompanying funding framework.
- The development of seven new **Focus and Language Programs** throughout the District including:
  - The new **Language Programs** for the 2004 school year:
    - Cree Bilingual at St. Pius and St. Francis of Assisi Elementary Schools,
    - Kindergarten French Immersion Program at Bishop Savaryn Elementary School,
    - Expansion of Spanish Bilingual at Grandin Elementary that will now include students from Kindergarten to Grade 3,
    - French Immersion for Kindergarten and Grade 1 students at Our Lady of the Prairies Elementary, and
    - Late Entry French Immersion for both St. Cecilia and Holy Cross Junior High Schools.
  - Exciting **Focus Programs** for the 2004 school year include: Golf Academies at both St. Kevin Junior High School and Austin O'Brien High School, a Science Academy at St. Mark Junior High School and the

A.C.E. (Accelerated and College Education) program at Archbishop O’Leary High School that helps students fast track through high school in 2 ½ years while taking half a year of post-secondary courses while completing high school.

- Continued promotion of the **GENESIS project**. The Board of Trustees will continue their work to preserve Catholic education in Edmonton and Alberta. School staff will maintain their work in the classroom to promote the gift of Catholic education to all students.
- Implementing an **early intervention program** at St. Gabriel Elementary in September of 2004 for children between the ages of 2 ½ and 5 ½ with severe disabilities to give these pre-school children a head start.
- The availability of high speed internet access for all schools (commonly referred to as Supernet).
- Opening the first Edmonton Catholic **High School** since 1984. Archbishop Oscar Romero High School opens its doors in September of 2004 in Callingwood.

‘This is an exciting time for all students in our District,’ said Charlie Koester, Board of Trustees Chairperson. ‘The Three Year Education Plan clearly shows that the Edmonton Catholic Schools experience is more than academic achievement and that the schools in our district provide the best learning opportunities possible to our students.’

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