

1. As parents of students that attend Edmonton Catholic Schools, what are those things that you value the most - what are the big rocks?

Division 1

- Maintain small class size
- Maintain infrastructure
- Maintain supply of resources – text technology, literacy
- Maintain curricular opportunities – ie. fieldtrips
- Continue our focus on faith based learning
- Continue funding full day kindergarten
- Big rocks – supported inclusive education
- Community centered, safe
- Early intervention especially in K-Gr.3
- Catholic school in the community (faith)
- Necessary learning tools
- Small class sizes
- Quality teachers
- Resources – materials and staff
- Technology – keeping it current, Smartboards
- Money for special needs
- Books
- Catholic faith
- Fine arts

- ELL

Division 2

- Catholic Education
- Core Values
- Extra curricular
- Fine Arts in each school (art, music)
- Extra assistance for individual children
- Testing (diagnostic/psycho. ed. Testing) as needed
- French immersion
- Opportunity for language programs
- Continue to offer focus programs ie. academies, sports
- Offer more academies in elementary
- Teaching assistants in large classrooms
- Children First
- All decisions are based on the needs of the child
- Quality teaching in the classroom
- Rely on the expertise of educators to determine what is necessary
- Every child's needs taken care of, everyday
- Our Catholic schools; the right to a Catholic education
- Maintain class sizes: 17, 23, 25, 27 – current levels
- Special needs funding must be maintained

- Provide the resources for every child to reach their potential: artistic, intellectual, social, emotional, spiritual, physical, creative...

Division 3

- Teaching staff
- Administration at the school (strong core/team)
- Support for special needs students – start in K-12) (FAS, ELL, Severe, FNMI ...)
- Small class sizes in all grades not only primary
- Funding closest to the student – in the school
- School resources/prioritized spending in alignment with school specific goals
- Professional development for teachers
 - Specific for future learning ie/literacy, technology, special needs, new curriculum.
- The face of students are changing. Ministries need to work together to ensure students basic needs are met – money closest to students.
- Catholic Education – main priority.
- Faith based learning
- Class size
- Qualified quality teachers
- Qualified support staff
- Appropriate supports for special needs students
- Appropriate programming for special needs programs

- Availability of choices to accommodate needs and interests (ex: sport focus, IB, K & E, EE3, PreAPO)
- Funding for resources (when curriculum changes support with \$)
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Maintain Catholic identity – keep Catholic schools unique
- Casino money status quo pooling to be based on numbers.
- Greater accountability on societies (creation and allocation of dollars).
- Value volunteers under utilized resource
- High academic standards to be maintained
- Proper support in the makeup of the variety of classes
- Class sizes (small)
- Want to protect special/focus programs ie. French Immersion
- Must protect language programs
- Technology – preparing for students
- Catholic Identity
- Limit the number of programs

Division 4

- Catholicity is the reason we choose this system and is an essential fundamental ... prayer
- Technology and advancing it
- High level of education ... challenge for the students who are bright

- Class size ... within a manageable size
- Variety of programs ... opportunity
- IB programs ... challenge students
- All students at whatever level they are at need to be challenge
- Classroom size
- Catholic faith
- IB Programme
- Diversity in programming (fine arts/sports/phys. Ed/ languages/culture)
- Teacher support in classroom
 - Internet/webcam
 - Visual aids
 - Resources: technology
- Competitive advantage for post secondary
- Preparation for future – cannot be less educated – maintain standards – cannot disadvantage students
- Extracurricular activities
- Values, active citizenship, problem solving
- Travel opportunities – incentive to do well.
- Cleanliness of school – custodial services must remain intact.

All Divisions

- Focus on community
- Inspires curiosity , innovations, inventive thinking

- Uniqueness of Catholic education – Christ centered learning community
- Community with reasonable sized classes where students are individuals.
- Respect for teachers and student in a Catholic environment/community
- Link between parish and schools
- Opportunities to give students voices – to be heard
- Hands on learning to experience tools for the 21st century
- Creating global citizens
- Strong moral ground
- Serving the greater good and giving back to the community
- Quality of education
 - Qualified staff and sufficient amount of staff
 - Resources (books, technology) for 21st century learner
 - Literacy
 - Class size
- Safety
- Catholic Faith – social justice
- Physical fitness and play time
- Nutrition and health focus
- Positive moral (relationships and community) no bullying
- Special needs supports (teacher's aides)
- After school programs
- Catholic education
- Literacy

- Excellence in education
- Maintain classroom size initiative K-3, review 4-6 (unrealistic)
- Updated/current resources
- Communication
- Expert teachers
- Faith – keeping Catholic schools.
- Quality of education
- Class sizes
- Small school community
- Support for languages
- Learning resources
 - Technology
 - Fine arts
 - Physical education
 - Library – media resources
 - Literacy resources
- Infrastructure – maintenance
- Faith based education system
- Maintaining our Catholic identity
- Maintaining a standard of excellence
- Continue to support inclusive and district programs
- Maintain the integrity of instruction in the classroom
- Maintain small class sizes, specifically primary

- Continue with early learning and literacy focus.
- Class size (smaller)
- SNTAs – every class
- Reading programs
- Extra support/programming for students special needs
- Supporting program-based field trips – despite policies
- Continued support for DPA/Gym
- Technology – critical 21st century
- Resources, training, equipment
- Catholic Dimension must not be diminished

2. What areas would you suggest Edmonton Catholic Schools identify to address potential budget constraints?

Division 1

- Examine contractual (service) work outsourced outside the district
- Ask government to examine their own initiatives and practices – Smartboards etc.
- Sharing resources with schools in same vicinity
- “PAT’s” remove
- Reduce amount of paper expenses (glossy etc) for what is sent out
- Use technology to communicate – also signage
- Number of head office personnel

- Limiting paper
- Option to receive email newsletters, etc.
- After school PD instead of during day and sub. teachers coming in
- Creative ways to pay for sub
- Keep teaching until the end of June or dismiss earlier
- Could rent out space in schools to make money
- We would rather location of PD for staff be in Edmonton and not out of town.
- Designated lead teacher to attend PD
- Teleport for principal meetings instead of leaving school
- No free meals, we didn't need food tonight

Division 2

- Spend less money on technology or "stuff" and spend money on teachers
- Less money spent on promotional materials – fancy posters, things to promote (ie. CD's to promote languages)
- Care less about things, more about people
- Increase user fees for specialized programs/focus programs (sports)
- Look at turning one of the elementary schools in Castledown's into a junior (already existing) (redo boundaries)
- Rent out excess space in schools (leases)
- Areas; potential budget constraints:
 - Fewer school days, longer day
 - Inservices, workshops, travel (organize within the school)

- Make schools more efficient: consolidate programs.
- Close under-utilized schools
- Transportation: create regional systems that serve all schools systems
- Expand transportation to serve all students

Division 3

- Infrastructure – revamp the \$ - support schools with greater need
- Combine roles ie. – do we need all of our departments **or** combine **or** can we combine departments **or** combine personnel within a department?
- Schools are already doing this – need departments to do so too (ie. admin wear many hats)
- Departments directly affects students are a must – those further away from students should be scaled back ie. PD for teachers, supports for students
- Departments need to focus on projects that are closest to the student- do less, but do it well. Ie. AISI projects.
- Too much paperwork downloaded
- AB Education's requirements need to be rolled back – what they are asking schools/districts for is too much – focus on students
- Level of requirement for paperwork/bureaucracy is too much – bogs us down in paperwork
- Review/revisit technology – do we need that many computers?
- Four day week
- Shorter school year
- Retirement incentives to replace with quality lower salaried staff
- School utilization (not closures, but shifting or renting out, or adding programs)

- Costs of transportation of varied activities
- Greening of schools
- Visit the staffing dynamic throughout
- Visit the "RTOP" opportunity for (not beneficial to school)
- Look at alternative staff PD models (keeping in mind PD is valued) – if Cadillac is what we have now – notch it down a rung or two"
- Can transportation costs be re-examined?
- Lower facility costs – some things may not be required
- Can we look at fuel/cost efficiency?
- Do not expand focus programs at this time

Division 4

- I want happy teachers teaching my students ... Salaries???
- Have a list of areas for prioritization
- Classroom supports
- One less fieldtrip ... what each classroom could contribute ... what kids would suggest
- What can we all do? Would create a sense of community if it was we approach
- Be aware of programs ... especially if they are self sustaining
- Cut some of the bureaucracy ... reporting to parents ... reporting to the government
- Field trips and the paperwork should be cut
- Generic consent – proper reduction – use internet to contact parents – those who want paper can request.

- Allocate a certain amount of paper and charge kids for more money or print at home. Have reports sent to teachers' computers. Use memory stick.
- Exams on computers.
- Move forward with technology.
- Not wasteful now, so hard to cut. Down to the bone.
- Consolidate the number of days before holidays – value to actual education of student.
- What's the largest budget other than staffing? Is there movement in that budget?
- Can transportation be reduced? Can ride times be increased? More use of school specials? What is the saving for closing a school when the students have to be transported? Revisit number of bus passes.

All Divisions

- Even playing field for all classes in terms of numbers – re-evaluate focus programs, re-evaluate transportation costs, IB programs and AP
- School furniture and equipment
- Look at fully day kindergarten
- Attrition
- Take care of our special needs students (last to cut)
- Find additional sources for revenue
 - Sponsorships
 - Partners
 - Charitable donations
- Hold off on renovations

- Alberta Education
 - Gr. 3 PAT
 - Data collection
 - Rotation of subjects to be tested – PAT
- Paper/Printing
- Survey – paperless (less often)
- Student info updates – online
- Report cards – online
- Wasteless Days (no garbage, no microwaves, etc.)
- Staff retreats – delayed – downsized
- Revisit AISI projects.
- PD – more district wide PD/shared PD
- PAT's – revisit/re-examine
- Looking at assessment
- Keeping the funds in the school so ...
- Look at schools with low enrollment (ie. less than 160 students) and class sizes (ie. combine to save on staffing)
- Trim from large departments
- Continue to market ECSD products such as Eluminate
- Pray
- Identifying areas:
 - Cut at the top – MLA money (raises)
 - Focus programs – back to basics

- Academy schools – worth it?
- PAT's

3. Any further ideas about future educational directions in Edmonton Catholic Schools?

Division 1

- Think creatively ... network and build community connections.
- Be visible in the community at large – meet our faith based learning outcomes and garner community support.
- Government learn from the past; don't repeat the same mistakes.
- Continue student support as needed.
- Faith – religious support
- New ways to fund schools (haves and have nots)
- Look at sharing casino funds with other schools and how it can be spent
- Be cautious with closing schools

Division 2

- Teach sacraments in school/do the sacramental prep at school
- Smaller classes in all elementary grades
- Continued focus on reading elementary grades
- Increased partnership between health sector and education
- #1 Priority – preserve Catholic education
- 21st Century Learners:

- Use of technology
- Use of lap tops in place of text books; for research, communication
- Closer partnerships with our churches
- Remove Provincial achievement tests and put the \$ back in schools

Division 3

- Less bureaucracy
- Money closest to students
- Departments focused on students
- 21st Century Schools – PD/Resources/Student Learning
- When the district starts a project – finish it. Carry through from K-12 ie. literacy, small class size, 21st century technology – do not move on to something new until capacity has been built – district wide continuity.
- Retain faith based
- Importance of meeting the needs of all students
- Marketing – increase opportunity for international students (focus on summer programs)
- Revisit the “IB” possibilities for more schools
- Are we effectively using under utilized schools ie. can focus programs be here
- Use transportation to move students so that they can access specialized facilities ie. CTS, labs – rather than build new facilities
- Can ‘big ticket’ items be shared among schools rather than purchased individually?
- Share facilities/expertise throughout the district – fine arts.

Division 4

- Don't step back ... keep going forward ... technology advances
- Strong foundation ... fundamental thinking
- Independent, critical and creative thinkers
- Integration of subjects
- Don't lose the humanness in the use of technology
- Volunteer service
- IB to continue and expand. Provide opportunities, support, encouragement to students to take courses in a world that is getting smaller.
- The IB skills prepare them for the world not just their school.
- Opportunities for students to participate in the world market.
- Attitudes, discipline provides important life skills.
- Students in IB want to be there. Students need to understand the benefits. Becoming lifelong learners. They learn deeper. Stronger for secondary education.
- Very strong motivator (IB) focused, challenged, respectful and value education.
- Increased focus on Catholic faith:
 - Celebrations
 - Morning prayer
 - Increased student involvement
- Catholic faith a priority
- Catholic faith is why we are attending Catholic schools. Cannot deviate. Maintain identify of Catholicism.
- Faith carries us through the unknown.

All Divisions

- Even playing field for all classes in terms of numbers, technology, class room and teaching resources – per pupil grant is not equitable.
- Year round schooling – longer/shorter days
- More choices of subjects, managing money and finances
- Language programs
- Life skills
- Increasing uniqueness of programs
- 21st Century Learners
 - Science and tech
 - Digital world
 - User friendly
 - Christian values
- More info evenings ie.: math
- Promote small schools
 - Focus schools to build population in low enrolment schools
- Review catchment and transportation boundaries
- 4 day week – save on transportation
- Sharing transportation
- Trend toward cyber school – online, distance education (secondary)
- Continue to promote focus programs
- Flexible timetables

- Study from home?
- Virtual learning for infrastructure reduction
- Renting space (evenings) – community and weekends, church groups?