



# EDMONTON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS:

## *Companion Guide to the Alberta School Councils' Association School Council Resource Guide*

### [Abstract](#)

This document is intended to be used as a companion guide to the Alberta School Councils' Association's School Council Resource Guide. It will provide the context and clarity for various aspects of School Council operations within Edmonton Catholic Schools. It is intended to be used as an online guide with links to documents and resources embedded within it.



## OUR FOUNDATION

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### **Mission Statement of the District:**

#### *Inspired by*

- Love of the Father
- Faith in Jesus Christ
- Hope from the Holy Spirit

#### *We believe in God and we believe*

- that each person is created in the image and likeness of God
- that each child is a precious gift and sacred responsibility
- in the goodness, dignity and worth of each person
- that Christ is our model and our teacher
- in celebrating and witnessing our faith
- in transforming the world through Catholic education
- that Catholic education includes spiritual growth and fulfillment
- that learning is a lifelong journey
- that all can learn and develop their gifts
- in building inclusive Christ-centred communities for service to one another
- that all have rights, roles and responsibilities for which they are accountable
- that Catholic education is a shared responsibility in which parents have a primary role

The mission of Edmonton Catholic Schools is to provide a Catholic education that inspires students to learn and that prepares them to live fully and to serve God in one another.

### **VISION**

Our students will learn together, work together and pray together in answering the call to a faith-filled life of service.

### **EIGHT CHARACTERS OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION**

- Community
- Tradition
- Humanness
- Sacramentality
- Rationality
- Spirituality
- Justice
- Hospitality

## **CORE VALUES**

Edmonton Catholic Schools is a Catholic/Christian community, which is inspired by and committed to the following values:

- Dignity and Respect
- Honesty
- Loyalty
- Fairness
- Personal and Communal Growth

## **A Statement of 21st Century Learning in Edmonton Catholic Schools**

Preparing our students for a world not yet realized

In keeping with our Foundation Statement, the students and staff of Edmonton Catholic Schools commit to 21st century learning. In support of hopeful Christ-centred living, in a society transformed by globalization, technological innovation, and human ingenuity, 21st century learning complements our commitment as a Catholic community of learners, leaders and educators.

Edmonton Catholic Schools fosters faith-based learning that deeply engages all staff and students in 21st century learning opportunities. All facets of the learning system -- curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional learning, accountability and resource allocation -- are in support of 21st century learning. Students will be creative, digitally aware, critical-thinking global citizens, analysts, communicators and producers engaged in learning that is conceptual and authentic within a faith-based environment.

Guided by our moral compass and focused on the common good, students and staff will be self-directed, adaptable, discerning and curious, as they engage individually and collaboratively in 21st century learning.

## **A Defining Statement of Inclusive Education in Our District – Katholos:**

Education for Life for All

In accordance with our District Foundation Statement, all \*resident students and their parents/caregivers are welcomed into our schools. The Learning Team is committed to collaborating, identifying, applying and monitoring practices enabling all students to reach their potential, spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically and academically within the Programs of Study alongside their peers.

\*resident student as defined by the School Act

## INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to be used as a companion guide to the Alberta School Councils' Association's [School Council Resource Guide](#). It will provide the context and clarity for various aspects of School Council operations within Edmonton Catholic Schools. It is intended to be used as an online guide with links to documents and resources embedded within it.

[Edmonton Catholic Schools](#) recognize parents as the first teachers and prime source of inspiration in the lives of their children. It is the privilege and responsibility of parents to be messengers of the faith and to create a home that will nurture the mental, physical, and spiritual growth of their children.

It is essential that teachers, school principals, administrators, trustees, and the community in general form a working partnership with the parents to provide a positive, protected, enriched environment in which children will be Inspired! to Learn.

Parental involvement in education has for centuries been a cornerstone of Catholic teaching. This teaching was re-emphasized in Vatican II, in the 1977 Vatican document [The Catholic School](#), and again in 1998 with the document [The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School](#).

Consistent with the tradition of Catholic education, the District's [Administrative Procedure 110](#) on School Councils recognizes the importance of a formal organization to enhance communication among the school, the parents, the community, and the Board.

The [Board of Trustees of Edmonton Catholic Schools](#) views Catholic education as a shared responsibility. The trustees welcome and support the establishment of a School Council to advise the principal and the School Board respecting any matter relating to the school in accordance with the School Act and the provincial regulations. In addition to these regulations, the School Councils of Edmonton Catholic Schools add to the faith dimension by assuming a support role in creating a vital religious life in the school.

## CATHOLIC EDUCATION ADVOCACY

An important aspect of the School Council in an Edmonton Catholic Schools is the promotion and support of Catholic education, which has a very distinctive character. Parents who choose to embrace a partnership with their Catholic school in nurturing their children to reach their fullest potential are excellent advocates for publicly funded Catholic education.

It is possible to concentrate on parents, students, and the child-serving agencies around us, while forgetting that in Edmonton, many families do not have children in schools. We must therefore take every opportunity to let the broader community know the ways in which they benefit from publicly funded Catholic education.

## THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The [Board of Trustees](#) of Edmonton Catholic schools is committed to serving our community and to working to promote and preserve our Catholic identity. Seven trustees are elected for Edmonton Catholic Schools out of seven wards (Wards 71 to 77 inclusive). The candidate receiving the greatest number of votes in each ward shall be elected as trustee for that ward. While trustees are elected from wards, they represent all members of the Edmonton Catholic Schools electorate.

The Board of Trustees is committed to serving our community and to working to preserve our Catholic identity. In accordance with its governance model the Board defines [values](#) and [vision](#) for the District and assures that its [mission](#) to provide a Catholic education which inspires and prepares students to learn, to work, to live fully, and to serve God in one another, is affirmed. The Board hires the [Superintendent](#) who is the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Education Officer of the Board.

The Board holds its Regular Board Meetings at [Lumen Christi Catholic Education Centre](#), 9807 - 106 Street once a month from September to June. To access dates, click on [Meeting Dates](#) or call 780-441-6002.

7 Ward Boundaries - [Click here for more information](#)

## CONTACTING YOUR TRUSTEE

Trustees appreciate hearing from you and you are welcome to call or email them with matters concerning the business of the School Council. If the contact is in regards to issues relating to students and staff, the protocol to be followed before contacting your trustee is found in [Administrative Procedure 152- Dealing with Parent – School Conflict Management](#).

### TRUSTEES FOR 2017-2021

Ward 71	Terry Harris
Ward 72	Sandra Palazzo
Ward 73	Carla Smiley
Ward 74	Debbie Engel
Ward 75	Alene Mutala
Ward 76	Lisa Turchansky
Ward 77	Laura Thibert

## **CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE BOARD**

School Councils may write to the Board on a matter of interest or concern. This is a significant act. Often-time much of the desired information is more efficiently obtained from administration. The principal's advice should be sought about whether the communication should be directed to the administration of the District or to the Board of Trustees. Individual School Councils may request a meeting with their ward Trustee on school matters by calling the Board Office at 441-6002, by writing to:

CORPORATE SECRETARY  
Edmonton Catholic Schools  
9807 - 106 Street Edmonton AB T5K 1C2

or by emailing the Corporate Secretary: [Andrea.Klotz@ecsd.net](mailto:Andrea.Klotz@ecsd.net)

## **INVITING TRUSTEES TO THE SCHOOL**

School Councils may invite their ward trustee, or several trustees, to their School Council meetings. An invitation may be arranged by calling the Corporate Secretary at 441-6002 or by contacting the trustee directly. The majority of the Council should approve this, or the Council should follow whatever procedures it has established in terms of inviting guests to its meetings. The purpose of such a meeting is to enhance communications. It enables the trustee(s) to clarify board decisions and to gather input from Council members that is beneficial for board deliberations. The School Council must recognize that the trustee(s) attending their meeting cannot make promises or decisions about an issue at a School Council meeting. Trustees can legally do their business only in official Public Board Meetings.

## **PUBLIC BOARD MEETINGS**

The public is welcome and encouraged to attend Regular Meetings of the Board of Trustees. Meetings are held monthly from September to June. Visit our web site at [www.ecsd.net](http://www.ecsd.net) for board meeting dates and minutes or call the Board Office at 441-6002 for this information.

## **COMMUNITIES OF SCHOOL COUNCILS (COSCs)**

The Board of Trustees of Edmonton Catholic Schools is committed to serving its community and to preserving our Catholic identity. The Board governs with an emphasis on an outward vision, encouraging diversity in viewpoints, strategic leadership, collective decisions, the future, and proactivity.

An important link between the Board and School councils is the [Communities of School Councils \(COSCs\)](#). Communities of School Councils (COSCs) consist of schools in each of the trustees' Wards.

The purpose of COSC meetings is to provide a venue for meaningful communication with, and involvement of, school councils, including:

- sharing of information from the Board
- discussing concerns and answer questions of school councils
- receiving advice and input from school councils (budget, three-year plan, etc.)
- launching lobby efforts when necessary

There are a variety of ways for Communities of School Councils to gather:

- individual trustees will host a meeting of the school councils in their respective wards
- two or three trustees may host a joint meeting in a school in one of their wards
- a district-wide COSC meeting hosted by all trustees

There is a difference between trustees attending school council meetings and a COSC meeting.

- Trustee attendance at a School Council Meeting is by invitation extended to a trustee by a school council in his/her ward
- COSCs are hosted by a trustee/group of trustees/Board of Trustees

## **MEETING WITH SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS**

School Councils may wish to meet with senior administrators, such as the Superintendent, or the Assistant Superintendents on specific issues or to gather information. Appointments with these people can be arranged through the Corporate Secretary (441-6002).

## **PARISH RELATIONS**

One of the most meaningful contributions a School Council can make is to support the school staff in its efforts to have a vital religious life in the school. This can mean working with teachers to build parent participation in liturgies and parent meetings for sacramental preparation, as well as promoting a better understanding of religious education within the school community.

In most cases, parish clergy, youth workers, and pastoral workers are already involved in the school, but their time may be very limited due to other responsibilities. Close relations between the School Council and parish council can help to cover some of the areas which clergy cannot reach.

Schools drawing students from more than one parish deal with a complex problem which has no easy solution. The School Council might find it beneficial to periodically invite the total group of clergy and parish workers to confer regarding their levels of participation and involvement. Whatever communications style is suitable to the individual school, the objective is to strengthen the school-home-parish partnership for the benefit of the children and their families.

It is important that the Council looks for ways to strengthen and enhance the relationship between the school community and the parish(es). One excellent way is to seek parish representation in its membership.

Parish Boundaries with Schools - [Click here for more information](#)

## **APPEAL MECHANISMS**

For internal matters among School Council members, between the School Council and the wider community, and between the School Council and the school staff, the School Council must develop a conflict resolution procedure. This should be done in conjunction with the [Administrative Procedure 110: Appendix - Resolution of Conflicts Involving School Council Members Policy](#).

## **FUNDRAISING**

School Councils may NOT incorporate under the Societies Act. While School Councils may fundraise, they may not engage in any activities which require a gaming license. Any funds raised by the Council must be deposited in the accounts of the District.

## **REPORTING TO THE BOARD**

Annual reports are to be submitted to the Board of Trustees through the Corporate Secretary. Such reports are to be completed by September 30 each year. The report is to include the membership of the Council, the highlights of the Council's activities throughout the year, and a financial statement.

## **NAMING OF SOCIETIES**

The school administration and parents of students who attend the school may chose the name of an Edmonton Catholic School if the proposed society bears a direct relationship to the school in name and in function and if the society monies are to be given to that school. (A copy of the proposed name and bylaws must be approved, in writing, by the [Chief Financial Officer](#) at Edmonton Catholic Schools.