



May 2021

“Education is a dynamic reality, it is a movement that brings people to the light. It is a peculiar kind of movement, with characteristics that make it a dynamism of growth, aimed at the full development of the person...” (Pope Francis, Address to Participants in the Plenary Assembly of the Congregation for Catholic Education, 02/20/20)

The month of May is one which is very special for Catholic schools in Alberta. This month, beginning May 10, we celebrate Catholic Education Week. The pinnacle of this week is the celebration of World Catholic Education Day on May 13. Our students will have ample opportunity over the course of this week to explore the richness to be found in our Catholic schools. It is a time for families to reflect on the gift of publicly funded Catholic education in Alberta. We encourage everyone to wear blue in support of Catholic education over the course of the week. Please also keep your eyes on our social media accounts for our annual Humans of ECSD campaign; we are so proud to share some exceptional stories of the students of Edmonton Catholic Schools!

On March 15 and 16, 2021, the Board of Trustees engaged with the executive members of our School Councils and the administration teams of our schools to gather insights on the four Board Priorities for our various planning endeavors. This rich opportunity for stakeholder engagement was the first of its kind for our Division and provided invaluable feedback on the practices and supports that our families feel are of greatest value in the education of their children. The four priorities are *Growing in Faith, Student Success, An Excellent Place to Work and Learn, and Building our Future Together*. The report for the Community of School Councils (COSC) was presented at the Public Board Meeting on April 28 and can be found in the Board Agenda Package by [clicking here](#) and scrolling to the report. The overarching themes from this engagement were used at the Division level to inform the [Division Plan for Continuous Growth](#) and the Division Budget. Individual schools will use their specific results to inform their School Plan for Continuous Growth and their School Budget.

The April 28 Public Meeting of the Board also saw our Board of Trustees naming our new schools which were announced by the provincial government last year. In January, we asked our students, staff, and the greater community for help naming them. We received more than 300 submissions. We are delighted to share that these schools will bear the names of two lifelong advocates for Catholic education: Joan Carr Catholic Elementary/Junior High School (Keswick) and Father Michael McCaffery Catholic High School (Heritage Valley).

We are looking forward to welcoming our junior and senior high school students back to in-person learning after another hiatus from the classroom. It is never an easy decision to move to a virtual learning environment. Like our students, we all long for normalcy, certainty, and routines to return to our educational system and look forward to being together again.

May is a time to celebrate and give thanks for the mothers and maternal figures in our lives, and it also a time where we turn our eyes to our Holy Mother. Mary, Mother of God is the benefactor of Edmonton Catholic Schools. “(She) reminds us to be constantly attentive to the Christ-centeredness of Catholic education. She also reminds us to give ultimate respect to all persons in recognition of their dignity as daughters and sons of God, made in the image and likeness of the Creator and Giver of all good gifts.” (Edmonton Catholic Schools, *Holy is Thy Name*, 2017)

Have a glorious May!

Sincerely,

Robert Martin
Chief Superintendent