

March 22, 2018

For Immediate Release

EICS Board of Trustees Approve Boundaries and Grade Configurations for Urban Sherwood Park

Sherwood Park, AB. – At the March 21st public board meeting, Elk Island Catholic Schools (EICS) Board of Trustees approved the reconfiguration and boundaries for the Sherwood Park urban area beginning in the 2019-2020 school year. The Board vote was unanimous and demonstrates their ongoing commitment to provide exceptional Catholic education as the first and foremost assurance to the community of Sherwood Park within these revised boundaries and grade configurations.

Following the February 21st EICS Board meeting and the tabling of Option 5, a survey link was emailed to 4,300 parents in the Sherwood Park urban area and Strathcona County on February 23, 2018 and again on March 2, 2018. Total responses to the survey were 310. Individuals were also encouraged to provide written submission to EICS Board of Trustees and to date we received 19 letters.

Based on the January/February ThoughtExchange engagement, surveys and general feedback, the following key themes of what the Board should consider were developed. Key themes also took into account Central Learning Services Leadership feedback on what is possible and reasonable in achieving a balanced distribution of the population, increasing educational opportunities, and minimizing challenges:

1. Have a long-term focus that balances school population
2. Maintain proper class sizes
3. Students' needs and program options
4. Have students attend schools closest to them and limit ride times (especially for younger students)
5. Limit the impact on families
6. The financial sustainability of each option

“During the recent consultation on reconfiguration and boundaries, our EICS community told us repeatedly that any decision made must be able to serve the EICS school community for long-term sustainability, and we believe that Option 5 achieves that and provides the population balance that we need across our schools in the area,” explained EICS Board Chair Justine Wright.

The changes in both grade configurations and boundaries in Option 5 will not take place until September of 2019-2020. This will allow for the EICS Board of Trustees, administration and staff to have sufficient time to make the necessary infrastructure and programming changes needed for a seamless transition for students and staff.

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EICS, part of Alberta's publicly funded education system, is committed to developing educational opportunities in the context of Gospel values. EICS is dedicated to providing quality, faith-based learning environments to students of any background and faith, where their skills are nurtured and celebrated by dedicated, caring staff.

For more information or to request an interview, please contact:

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Backgrounder – Option 5

Option 5: K-4, 5-8 and 9-12 structure through Sherwood Park

School	Grade	Boundary Change
Ecole Père Kenneth Kearns Catholic School	K-4 French	Status Quo
Madonna Catholic School	K-4	Add Hillshire, Add part of Sherwood Heights, subtract part of Aspen Trails and Emerald Hills. (Boundary includes Cambrian)
Holy Spirit Catholic School	K-4	Add part of part of Aspen Trails and Emerald Hills
Jean Vanier Catholic School	K-4 English K-4 Ukrainian	Subtract Hillshire, Subtract part of Sherwood Heights
St. Theresa Catholic School	5-8 English 5-8 Ukrainian	Subtract Madonna Boundary, Add Holy Spirit Boundary
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic School	5-8 English 5-8 French	Add Boundary of Madonna for English (Boundary includes Cambrian)
Archbishop Jordan Catholic School	9-12	Status Quo