



# GREATER ST. ALBERT CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

## 2020-2021 Board Advocacy Plan

### **LIVING OUR FAITH: ARISE! GET UP GET GOING, GO WITH GOD!**

#### **Strategies:**

- ✓ Trustees bear witness to celebrate and communicate evidence of students and staff arising, getting up, and answering the call to Christ in our schools.
- ✓ Trustee representatives engage in and support the work of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Leadership Committee, with a focus on connections between our Catholic faith and Indigenous spirituality.
- ✓ Support Grateful Advocates for Catholic Education (GrACE) and the Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association (ACSTA) in their work of celebrating and promoting a fully-permeated Catholic education system in Alberta.

#### **Measures:**

- ✓ Schools communicate monthly exemplars of students and staff "arising" and "getting up" to answer the call of the Jesus at Board meetings.
- ✓ Trustee representatives reporting on the work of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Leadership Committee at meetings of the Board of Trustees.
- ✓ Trustee GrACE representative reporting on the work of the Division GrACE Committee, as well as any updates from GrACE at the provincial level, at meetings of the Board of Trustees.

### **ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITY: ENGAGE WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND AGENCIES TO FURTHER TRUST, RESPECT, AND RECONCILIATION**

#### **Strategy:**

- ✓ Through the Division's Manager of Community Engagement & Communications, work to enhance the image and highlight the positive impact of our schools within the community.
- ✓ Through engagement in strong and coherent governance practices, highlight to stakeholders the role of the Catholic school trustee.
- ✓ Seek opportunities to collaborate and communicate with parishes, community partners, groups, and organizations.
- ✓ Participate within the Division First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Leadership Committee, promote community understanding of current educational priorities, and continue to connect with Elders in a variety of contexts through the work of the Board.

#### **Measures:**

- ✓ Increased positivity from parents, students, and staff on Division surveys regarding the reputation of their schools in the community.
- ✓ Efficient governance and highlighting the role of trustees at school council meetings and through communication channels.
- ✓ Effective partnerships which mutually benefit the particular parish, community partner, group, or organization and the Board.
- ✓ Experience understanding, relationship, and emerging student and staff supports through liaising with regional First Nations, Métis, and Inuit leadership and community Elders.
- ✓ Communicate using messaging and artifacts about ongoing indigenous education initiatives.

**ACTIONING ADVOCACY:  
ENHANCE AND PROMOTE  
COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS**

**Strategies:**

- ✓ Employ Division channels of communication, both written and digital, as appropriate, to promote awareness of the value of Catholic education and why we are a system of choice.
- ✓ Trustee GrACE representative working with the Division GrACE committee to advocate for the continued viability of Catholic education in Alberta.
- ✓ Articulate to the provincial government why adequate funding is necessary in order to address the diverse learning needs encountered by staff in schools and to support those students that are most vulnerable.
- ✓ Proactively engage political counterparts (municipal and provincial) in partnerships and dialogue about working together to accomplish strategic priorities for mutual benefit.

**Measures:**

- ✓ Leveraging the Division website, social media, and messaging systems to distribute communication about the importance of publicly-funded Catholic education and its value for students and families.
- ✓ Messaging from the Division GrACE Committee through the Division's various channels of communication about the importance of Catholic education and the work of GrACE.
- ✓ Meetings and letters, as necessary and appropriate, to government officials for the purpose of funding model advocacy.
- ✓ Trustee engagement with political counterparts as measured through the Board Public Engagement Highlights.
- ✓ Annual meetings with Town and City Councils.

**PROMOTING EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION:  
UNDERSTAND AND SUPPORT RESOURCING NEEDS OF SCHOOLS TO  
ENHANCE PROGRAMMING AND STUDENT WELL-BEING**

**Strategies:**

- ✓ Exercise fiscal stewardship – strategically move toward a balanced budget and build a responsible level of financial reserves, while providing the best possible learning opportunities and supports for students.
- ✓ Explain the scope of governance, reporting, and trustee commitments to the community through a handbook and an area of the Division website dedicated to the work of trustees.
- ✓ Advocate to the Ministry for a revised funding model that appropriately addresses the costs associated with being responsive to diverse learning needs within the school and classroom — including those associated with addressing early learning and mental health needs.
- ✓ Providing assurance to the community that the Division's schools are safe, caring, welcoming, and faith-filled.

**Measures:**

- ✓ Board establishment of a budget approximating or equaling a balance between grants and expenditures, while gradually increasing operational reserves in order to be prepared for possible financial eventualities.
- ✓ Developing and regularly updating a trustee handbook and area on the division website dedicated to highlighting the work of trustees.
- ✓ Meetings and written communication issued for the purpose of financial advocacy to ensure the needs of students are met
- ✓ Communication to the community highlighting the Division's efforts to provide students with a faith-filled, safe, caring and welcoming learning environment.