



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GSACRD Board of Trustees to rename Vital Grandin Catholic Elementary School

June 28, 2021 (St. Albert, AB) – Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools’ Board of Trustees has decided to change the name of Vital Grandin Catholic Elementary School in St. Albert. The Board unanimously passed the motion at a Special Public Meeting on June 28, 2021.

“Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools is an inclusive faith and learning community that welcomes all,” says Noreen Radford, Board Chair. “The current name of this school does not reflect these values and must be changed.”

The recent discoveries of the remains of Indigenous children in unmarked graves at former residential schools in Kamloops, B.C., and on what is now Cowessess First Nation, SK, has led to profound grief and the need to address the commemoration of historical figures who were complicit in that system. The school’s namesake, Bishop Vital-Justin Grandin, OMI, who died in 1902, was one of the architects and supporters of the residential school system in Canada in the late-1800s.

“We must continue to take positive steps toward meaningful reconciliation with our Indigenous brothers and sisters. Working to address things that exacerbate pain and trauma for both survivors and those with close ties to residential schools is a priority,” Radford says. “Renaming this school is a critical step towards ongoing reconciliation, healing, and meaningful change.”

Exterior signage on the school building, which first opened its doors in 1959, will be removed immediately, and the Board will select a new name for the school by Sept. 30, 2021. An ad hoc committee will be formed to facilitate the process, following *Board Policy 18 – Naming of Schools*. This committee will consist of trustees, the Superintendent of Schools, a priest from the local parish that serves the school, two parents/legal guardians from the school, the school’s administration, and any other stakeholders or community members deemed appropriate.

“As a Division, we remain committed to understanding and carrying out the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada Calls to Action (2015),” Radford says. “To that end, we will continue to work continuously, proactively, and intentionally with our First Nations, Métis, and Inuit brothers and sisters.”

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Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools serves 5,200+ students in St. Albert, Morinville, Legal, and Sturgeon County.

