



Grande Prairie and District Catholic Schools

Serving the Regional Communities of Beaverlodge, Grande Prairie, Fairview, Sexsmith, & Spirit River
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Advocacy Plan (October 2011)

1. Catholic Schools support parental efforts to teach values & beliefs that are similar to values & beliefs taught in the home. Specifically students:

- Understand they are responsible for their actions, that boundaries and limits need to be set, and that Social Justice is a core pillar of our Faith.
- Celebrate service, especially works of Social Justice.
- Have the opportunity to integrate and explore faith in each of their subjects. Teachers permeate faith opportunities into each subject.
- Receive specific instruction and immediate preparation in the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation so they can share in Church Life.
- Participate in morning and class prayers everyday and religious school celebrations every month. Social Justice Projects (5 Stages) involves all students in all schools.

2. Funding for Education & Special Needs Education is Inadequate

Our Special Needs population is growing and profile funding & increases have been frozen for four years. Many of the needs are complex as families move to Alberta to seek employment and support for their child(ren). We believe that

- Each Child should receive funding that is appropriate to the individual child's needs. Currently "resident" student funding requirements requires us to redirect non-Resident students to other Boards.
- At the current time, special education funding is based on a snapshot of the district's needs in the 2000-2001 school year. A review of the District's profile has not resulted in an adjustment in nearly 10 years despite evidence being submitted to prove the need for an increase.
- Provincial assistance is needed to meet the demand in Behaviour Programming, Occupational and Physical Therapy, Student Psychological services, and Residential Student Treatment.
- Special Needs programming in an integrated environment requires specialized training.
- In our District we supplement Special Education services with an additional \$2,000,000

3. GPRC Teacher Education North needs a High School Program & Incentives need to continue to attract New & Specialty Teachers

A recent study by Workforce Development (Alberta Education) notes that provincial and national demands for teachers will increase beyond the current supply rate. This will require new and innovative ways to deal with teacher supply. We propose the following solutions:

- Develop and deliver a secondary teacher education program at GPRC that targets highest needs.
- Continue to the NADC's \$16,000 bursary to encourage students in Year 3 & 4 to start their career with GP & District Catholic.
- The closer employees are trained relative to their home community the more likely they are to permanently reside in their community.
- Deliver the GPRC program in various northern communities as a means to attract prospective teachers to the profession.

- Provide Districts with financial incentives large enough to attract teachers away from large urban centers.
- Training more qualified special education staff so Boards can use their expertise to assist regular classroom teachers.

4. Our Catholic Schools rank Exceptionally High when compared to others

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- Safe & Caring
- High School Completion
- Transition to Post Secondary
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5. The District may Experience 40% Growth in the next 12 years

The schools in Grande Prairie/ Sexsmith are small CORE schools and already have 50++ portables attached to the schools. According to Workforce Development (Alberta Education) the Grande Prairie/ Sexsmith corridor’s Catholic population will grow by 2000 students by 2020. Two elementary schools (population 500) and one high school (population 875) will need to be constructed to meet the demand forecasted by Workforce Planning: Alberta Education

The current schools do not have sufficient Core space (Library, CTS, Gym, Office, Music/Drama) when portables are added onto the school, and we believe that smaller schools enhance the development of Christian citizens and Safe and Caring Communities.

Alberta Education Approved Population

Actual population

❑	<i>Mother Teresa</i>	<i>425</i>	<i>(student population 308)</i>
❑	<i>Kateri Mission</i>	<i>677</i>	<i>15 portables (student population of 390).</i>
❑	<i>Holy Cross</i>	<i>542</i>	<i>11 portables (student population of 422).</i>
❑	<i>St. Gerard</i>	<i>765</i>	<i>12 portables (student population 621).</i>
❑	<i>St. Clement</i>	<i>333</i>	<i>3 portables (student population 190).</i>
❑	<i>St. Patrick</i>	<i>411</i>	<i>8 modulars (student population of 278).</i>
❑	<i>St. Joseph</i>	<i>1129</i>	<i>The school was built to accommodate 860 and was designed with large connectors During construction Infrastructure changed the “rule book” and believes that 269 additional students can be added without adding additional space (student population 833).</i>
❑	<i>St. Mary’s Sexsmith</i>	<i>143</i>	<i>(student population 222)</i>
❑	<i>St. Mary Beaverlodge</i>	<i>152</i>	<i>1 modular (student population of 128)</i>
❑	<i>Ste. Marie Spirit River</i>	<i>195</i>	<i>(student population 141)</i>
❑	<i>St. Thomas More Fairview</i>	<i>451</i>	<i>(student population 251)</i>

Schools are considered full when the “approved population” or “capacity” reaches 85% of the number listed. This year 310 kids are enrolled in Kindergarten, 304 in Grade 6, and 223 in Grade 11. This demonstrates that Grande Prairie continues to grow and that additional facilities are needed.

6. The Class Size Matters

We are working to achieve the overall Jurisdiction Class Size guidelines as follows:

Pre-K-3 = 17 4-6 = 23 7-9 = 25 10-12 = 27

Funding is now only available for K to 3 and Specialized High School Courses. Reduced class sizes, when coupled with a change in instructional practice, yield educational benefits.

7. An Educated Population is the Alberta Advantage

Alberta's economy will strengthen if Alberta students receive a well-rounded education. Specifically we target numeracy, Religion, and literacy.

8. Personal: Why does it matter to you?

Include a personal story.

Please Report back on your Advocacy efforts, if possible

Please share number of phone calls, letters and visits with your principal, fellow Board members and colleagues.

Parents report to their Principal who reports to the Superintendent.

School Council Members report to the Principal who reports to the Superintendent.

Individual Board members report back to the Board.

**One message with *many* voices can make a difference
We believe that many individuals need to carry the message. MLAs
respond quicker when parents voice their concerns if they have
“proof” or “data”.**

Write, phone, or visit your MLA

• Every letter or phone call counts

Form letters are not as successful as letters that are written individually ... on each letter to an MLA, cc the Minister of Education, the Minister of Infrastructure, and the Premier. The most successful form of communication is by phone or in person. The MLAs, Ministers and Premier are required to respond to letters and phone calls. However, they are not obliged to respond to an email!

Contact your MLA...

Mr. Wayne Drysdale, MLA, Grande Prairie Wapiti

101 Junction Point Village

9814 - 97 Street

Grande Prairie, AB T8V 8H5

Phone: 780 538-1800

Fax: 780 538-1802

Mr. Mel Knight, MLA, Grande Prairie – Smoky

105 9804 - 100 Avenue

Grande Prairie, AB T8V 0T8

Phone: 780 513-1233 Fax: 780 513-1247

Mr. Hector Goudreau, MLA, Dunvegan Central

513 Legislature Building

10800 - 97 Avenue

Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Phone: 780 415-9421 Fax: 780 427-1835

The Honorable Alison Redford

Premier of Alberta

307 Legislature Bldg, 10800 - 97 Avenue

Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Phone: 780 427 2251 Fax: 780 427 1349

The Honorable Thomas Lukaszuk

Minister of Education

224 Legislature Bldg, 10800 97 Avenue

Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Phone: 780 427 5010 Fax: 780 427 5018

The Honorable Jeff Johnson

Minister of Infrastructure

319 Legislature Bldg, 10800 97 Avenue

Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Phone: 780 427 5041 Fax: 780 422 2002

The Honorable Ron Liepert

Minister of Finance

208 Legislature Bldg, 10800 97 Avenue

Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Phone: 780 427 8809 Fax: 780 427 5543

Office of the Board of Trustees

Target Audience	Trustee#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7
Local Priests and/or Youth Workers							
School Council Chair							
Parents @ School Council you know							
Parents @ School Council you don't know							
Alderman/ Mayor							
Parishioner you know							
Someone at work you know							
Parent you know							
Staff member you know							
Parishioner you don't know							
Someone at work you don't know							
Parent you don't know							
Staff member you don't know							