



Holy Spirit Catholic School Division

PRESS RELEASE

Thursday, June 4, 2020

Budget Update for Holy Spirit Catholic School Division in 2020/2021

In preparation for the 2020/2021 school year, the Board of Trustees approved the division's Operating Budget at the May 27, 2020 Regular Board Meeting.

As Board Chair July Lane notes, "We've been faced with a difficult budget this year. We're certainly not alone in the province on this front. I don't think there is a single school division that isn't being faced with serious financial challenges."

The 2020/2021 budget shows revenues and allocations of \$63.5 million, a decrease of over \$200,000 from 2019/2020. In the meantime, anticipated expenditures of \$64.4 million indicate that \$889,446 in operating reserves will need to be used to offset the deficit.

Unfortunately, further challenges have presented themselves. Alberta Education's \$52,000,034 funding commitment for 2020/2021, which is 83% of Holy Spirit's total revenue, is not sufficient to absorb wage increases due to grid movement for teachers and support staff. Nor will this cover increases to non-wage costs such as insurance, utilities, software licensing and hardware, as well as the unknown costs anticipated from school re-entry after the COVID-19 global pandemic. For the Holy Spirit Catholic School Division, this has translated to a shortfall of \$1.8 million.

Explains Superintendent Ken Sampson, "In addressing this shortfall, it's been imperative to keep cuts away from our students in the classroom as much as possible. We've worked diligently to reduce wherever possible and find efficiencies in other areas. As a result, some challenging restructuring and reductions of staff have taken place in all areas of the school division."

In terms of staffing, the division's teaching staff will not face a reduction, even though 130 additional students are expected. Instead, 21 positions have been cut in other areas; over 20% of which will come from the division's Central Office

Says Sampson, "It needs to be stated that these decisions have not been made lightly. The individuals we are losing have been hard-working employees, dedicated to our division. In fact, we know that these changes will definitely impact the services that we've traditionally been able to offer our schools and our students."

More information about the 2020/2021 Operating Budget can be found at:

https://www.holyspirit.ab.ca/resources_publications/reports_plans/financial_reporting

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