



## **Media Release**

**November 28, 2017**

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### **GPCSD Board of Trustees approves final 2017-2018 Budget**

The Board of Trustees approved the Grande Prairie and District Catholic Schools' final 2017-2018 budget for the year ending August 31, 2018.

Alberta Education requires a budget update submitted by November 30, 2017.

Key highlights of the Budget include increases in teachers, support staff, and services that would provide more support for students and staff:

- The increase of teachers went up to 284.8 Full Time Equivalence (FTE) from 271.5 FTE in 2016-2017.
- 16% increase in support staff budget for School Support staff, including 10% for Teacher Education Assistant Collaborative Time.
- The elimination of school based fees.
- \$100,000 was allocated to Classroom Literacy Resources.
- Catholic Family Services has increased from \$300,000 to \$389,000 to address increased Mental Health needs of students.
- A Speech Pathologist was hired through Peace Collaborative Services.
- Additional resources were allocated for more contracted Behaviour Specialists, Occupational Therapists and Physical Therapists.
- The creation of Pre-Kindergarten class at St. Mary Catholic School (Beaverlodge) and an additional Pre-K class at St. Catherine Catholic School.
- Increased school mini-budgets by approximately \$200,000.

Additionally, the district has drawn down on Reserves. The Board of Trustees currently has a plan to expend on Reserves, so that more funds go directly to students and their schools. The surplus has been reduced and those funds are transferred into services for students on day one.



In a couple months, students will be entering the new St. John Paul II Catholic School / Faculté St. Jean-Paul II. With the opening of the school, students will have access to a variety of services and Commercial Cooking Lab, Welding Lab, Construction area, Cosmetology area and Live-Performance Theater.

Funds from the Reserves were allocated towards St. John Paul II Catholic School / Faculté St. Jean-Paul's Celtic Sports Academy (\$125,000), Library (\$100,000), Commercial Cooking Lab (\$650,000) and Welding Lab (\$150,000). While \$199,225 from the Reserves went towards Faith Education Resources

Approximately \$250,000 has been allocated to St. Patrick Catholic School for new books and school equipment. Fleet vehicles will be purchased and money set aside to construct a transportation shop (\$1,500,000).

Within the Budget, additional staff were hired including a Supervisor of Religious Education and FNMI Education, Youth Chaplin, Director of Facilities, Director of Finance, District Principal of French Language and District Principal of Student Achievement to prepare for future district growth.