

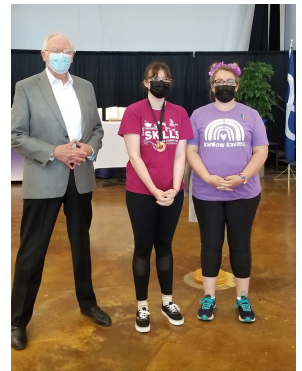
The Messenger

~ Notable News from the Edmonton Catholic Schools Board of Trustees ~



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Called to Serve: the New Board of Trustees.....	Page 2
Celebrating the St. Edmund Modernization.....	Page 5
Genesis Online School Opening & Blessing.....	Page 7
Get to Know Your Trustee.....	Page 8
What's Ahead.....	Page 10



Message from the Board Chair Sandra Palazzo

Dear staff, students, and families,

Although our Division is wrapping up the first half of the school year, the Board of Trustees is just getting started working hard for our students, families, and staff. We want to begin by thanking you all for having the faith in our leadership and guidance, as we begin a new term and serve as thoughtful advocates for Edmonton Catholic Schools in our endeavour toward a strong and prosperous Catholic education system in our Province. We are committed to making decisions that are both responsive and benefit our students and staff. I am also most humbled to again be elected as Board Chair and look forward to another year representing the families of ECSD.

As a Board, we've hit the ground running in this new term, celebrating the opening of our newest school, Genesis Catholic Online Elementary/Junior High School, the modernization of one of our more established schools, and working to build better communities through our time at the playground builds of St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Elementary School and St. Martin Catholic Elementary School as well as through the building of literacy skills in the read-alouds during Read In Week.

We've also acknowledged incredible milestones, as both Trustees Engel and Thibert were recognized by the Alberta School Boards Association for their many years of Service. They are true examples of being called to serve. And serve we will in this year and the next four years, as your ECSD Board of Trustees moves forward in our work to provide an excellent Catholic education to every student.



In the Know

We Are Called to Serve: Your Board of Trustees



The Edmonton Catholic Schools Board of Trustees is ready to begin their new term as advocates for Catholic education and stewards of our Division after the October 18 election, which saw many of our Trustees return for another term. The Board was officially sworn in to their positions at the October 27 Public Meeting of the Board and ceremonially blessed by Archbishop Smith on Catholic Education Sunday.

As locally-elected representatives of the public, individual Trustees will serve a four-year term. They are accountable to their constituents and responsible for overseeing and directing the school division's operations. Catholic school trustees also play an integral role as advocates for Catholic education by ensuring students receive an education permeated by our Catholic faith. Trustees are excited for this new term and look forward to engaging in meaningful dialogue with all their constituents. Click [here](#) to find out more about your Trustee.



Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.

1 Peter 4:10

Christmas Wishes From Your ECSD Board of Trustees and Chief Superintendent

The Edmonton Catholic Schools Board of Trustees and Chief Superintendent wish you and your family a very merry Christmas. May the love of our saviour, Jesus Christ, surround you this holiday season and always. Please click [here](#) to share in our telling of the Christmas story.

The Board is proud to also present [The Art of Advent](#), a virtual calendar celebrating the sacred beauty of the Advent season. This breathtaking display of the artistic talents of our Division also offers daily reflections from Father Glenn McDonald and Father Julian Bilyj, weekly prayers, and Advent-themed activities for our families to partake in, as we patiently and prayerfully prepare for Christmas.

May you also be blessed with Christmas messages from Archbishop Smith and Bishop Motiuk, which can be found on our homepage by visiting [ecsd.net](#).



Edmonton Catholic Schools
wishes you a joyful Christmas season celebrating
the birth of Jesus, our Wonderful Counsellor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father,
and Prince of Peace!

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Board Chair Vice-Chair
Sandra Palazzo **Lisa Turchansky**

**Alene Mutala, Debbie Engel,
Laura Thibert, Terry Harris**

CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT
Robert Martin


ecsd.net
9807-106 ST. NW | EDMONTON, AB | T5K 1C2 | 780-441-6000

“ But the Angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see —
I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:
to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the
Messiah, the Lord.

Luke 2:10-11

Trustees Engel and Thibert Receive ASBA Long Service Award

Ward 74 Trustee Debbie Engel and Ward 77 Trustee Laura Thibert have been given the Alberta School Boards Association Long Service Award for 7 terms of service and 3 terms of service respectively.



What an awesome privilege it is to work with you for the past the past 4 years. You guys have been our mentors and you have helped us along the way. We are very grateful for that. I also appreciate all the handwork you have done and being strong advocates for Catholic education and the success of our students," said Trustee Mutala.

The ASBA long service awards are presented each year and recognize significant contributions to Trusteeship.

Congratulations, Trustees Engel and Thibert!

Celebrating Our Custodians and Teachers for Custodian Appreciation Day and World Teachers' Day!

All of the Edmonton Catholic Schools staff play an integral role in the beautiful endeavour that is Catholic education, even in the most difficult of times. The Board of Trustees is grateful to all our staff for making our schools safe, inviting, and engaging spaces where our students can learn and grow in God's love. The Board is blessed to be able to acknowledge both our custodians and teachers who were recognized for their many contributions in the month of October.

On October 2 we celebrated Custodian Appreciation Day. The Board of Trustees shows our deep gratitude to all our custodian and maintenance workers for the many extra efforts you make daily to ensure that Edmonton Catholic Schools is a safe, enjoyable space for learning.

Teaching is a special vocation, and we recognize this calling each year on October 5. This year, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (the body responsible for World Teachers' Day) chose the theme "Teachers at the heart of education recovery." The importance of teachers cannot be overstated and they truly bring love and joy to our children each day.

We thank all our custodian, maintenance workers, and teachers for the loving care and commitment that they show each day. Thank you!

Trustees in the Community

Celebrating the St. Edmund Modernization

Board Chair Sandra Palazzo and Vice-Chair Lisa Turchansky joined Chief Superintendent Robert Martin and Superintendents Bouma, Fiacco, and Naccarato as St. Edmund Catholic Elementary/Junior High School celebrated a rededication ceremony in honour of the major modernization that was completed at the school in 2020.

Trustees had an opportunity to tour the upgraded classrooms, speak with staff about the importance of modernizing schools in established communities, and meet with the construction and architect teams responsible for the work. The St. Edmund modernization project was an important objective for Trustees in 2018 and was one that was lobbied for strongly with government.

Upgrades to the school included a new foods lab, music room, CTS room, fitness area and learning commons, as well as new washrooms, classroom teaching boards and LEDs. The modernization also addressed traffic and parking congestion, by optimizing the traffic flow with a new drop off zone. The modernization began in March of 2018,



St. Francis of Assisi and St. Martin Playground Builds

Trustees were busy over the summer and fall working to build better communities by giving our students more and equitable access to different spaces and places in their outside environments. The Board joined many other hands and hearts to build the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Elementary School and St. Martin Catholic Elementary School playgrounds.

"It's an extreme playground makeover!" said Board Chair Sandra Palazzo of the St. Francis of Assisi build specifically. "In just a few short days and with the support of our wonderful staff and a long list of generous donors, we were able to build a brand-new park for our students and the community of Balwin to enjoy. As the school's namesake, St. Francis of Assisi, said, 'For it is in giving that we receive,' and it couldn't be truer for this project."



Chair and Vice-Chair Join Bishop Motiuk and Others for Jacket Donation



On Tuesday, December 10, Board Chair Sandra Palazzo and Vice-Chair Lisa Turchansky joined the St. Gerard Catholic Elementary School community, as they were fortunate to receive a generous gift from the Knights of Columbus of the Ukrainian Councils Assembly and Bishop David Motiuk.

The school was delighted to see the wonderful donation of warm, winter coats, mittens, and toques. The schools' student ambassadors joined members of the Council and Assembly, as well as Bishop David, ECSD Manager of Religious Services Sandra Talarico, Board Chair Palazzo, Vice-Chair Turchansky, and other esteemed guests for the receipt of the winter clothing. The donation was a beautiful display of generosity, Christmas spirit, and giving.



Genesis Catholic Online Elementary/Junior High School Opening & Blessing



On November 3, the Board of Trustees was blessed to (virtually) join in and celebrate the opening of Edmonton Catholic's newest school: Genesis Catholic Online Elementary/Junior High School.

Trustees were delighted by an online mass, student performances and artwork, and a message from Minister of Education, Adriana LaGrange.

Genesis is home to more than 1,200 online learners.

Read in Week 2021: To Each Their Own Story



Terry Harris
@terryharris

Enjoyed reading today to @StLucyECSD Grade 6 students, about the amazing life, story & cause of @Malala Yousafzai. Beautiful books about important matters & challenging times. Thanks to organizer Danusia, teachers (Ms. Paniccia/Ms. Urso) & students.



Read in Week 2021 was held October 4-8 and this year's theme was "To Each Their Own Story." The Board of Trustees is proud to continue to support the Read In committee's mission to build and enhance both personal and community relationships through literacy and the love of reading. As schools welcomed guests virtually once again this year, Trustees joined Archbishop Smith, Bishop Motiuk, Chief Superintendent Robert Martin, and Deputy Superintendent Tim Cusack who prepared pre-recorded videos to replace regular in-person Read In events and shared those with their school communities via a secure YouTube playlist.

Trustees are blessed to continue to be able to engage with our students in unique ways such as events like this. Thank you to all the schools who virtually invited Trustees to be a part of their Read In Week festivities, as we celebrate our love of reading together.

Get to Know Your Trustee

SANDRA PALAZZO | BOARD CHAIR & TRUSTEE WARD 72

What is one goal you want to accomplish as Trustee over the next four years?

To ensure that through our interactions, we leave a legacy where every student and staff member feels valued and that their experience with Edmonton Catholic creates lasting positive memories.

What biblical person do you relate to most and why?

St. Teresa of Calcutta, as she was a passionate educator and the Patron Saint of World Youth Day. Her heroism was a testament to her invincible hope and extraordinary charity.

What do you look forward to most in your capacity as Trustee over the next four years?

To interact with our students, staff, and families and make a difference in their lives by highlighting and celebrating their remarkable gifts and talents that make Edmonton Catholic unique.

What is one question you get asked about your job when speaking with students and how do you answer it?

Why did you become a Trustee? As a former educator and administrator with ECSD I had a passion to ensure student success, the well being of all, and share the positive narrative of our Division.

What is your favourite family tradition?

Christmas is an extraordinary time of togetherness and fellowship as we celebrate the coming of Jesus and share the peace, joy, and love that serves as reflection of what is important in life.

If you could ask Jesus one question, what would that question be?

Did I serve my purpose in life as a good and faithful servant?

What is your favourite way to relax?

Vacationing as well as being in the presence of my family and friends by taking the opportunity to laugh and comfortably be myself.

When you were younger, what did you think you would grow up to do as a profession?

Teaching was always a priority as my passion to inspire, empower, and make a difference in people's lives enriched my life and made it meaningful and rewarding.

What is something the COVID-19 pandemic has taught you?

To not take the luxury of in-person learning or gatherings for granted as life long learning and living is a gift that should be embraced.



LISA TURCHANSKY | VICE-CHAIR & TRUSTEE WARD 76

What is one goal you want to accomplish as Trustee over the next four years?

Get the curriculum to an acceptable standard, find supports for our staff and students as mental health becomes more challenging, and keep publicly funded Catholic education a leader in the Province.

What biblical person do you relate to most and why?

I don't really, but instead I wish I was like all of our Elementary students who take our faith so literally. They all think Jesus is their real friend and I would love the joy that perspective brings.

What do you look forward to most in your capacity as Trustee over the next four years?

Advocating for our students, staff, and families. Also getting back into the schools and meeting with everyone face-to-face. I miss visiting our extraordinary schools.

What is one question you get asked about your job when speaking with students and how do you answer it?

Who is my boss? I tell them that we are fortunate to have lots: the Education Minister, the Archbishop, and all of the families, staff and students. They think it's funny that they are my boss.

What is your favourite family tradition?

Christmas Eve dinner with our family and friends. Come hell or high water, this tradition has lived on. Numbers ebb and flow but it is the highlight of the year and goes late into the night.

If you could ask Jesus one question, what would that question be?

I would ask him what his teachings would be now that the world has evolved and it's no longer black and white. The most vulnerable are so different today than they were thousands of years ago.

What is your favourite way to relax?

I absolutely love sitting outside and just being. Even for a few minutes, being outside and looking at the colours of nature recharges me like nothing else.

When you were younger, what did you think you would grow up to do as a profession?

I wanted to be a teacher in the worst way. Unfortunately, I did way too much networking during my post-secondary studies and needed to re-evaluate my "educational goals." So I switched to banking.

What is something the COVID-19 pandemic has taught you?

That my husband is extraordinary and that we both truly appreciated the time we were able to spend with each other and our children without outside distractions...and that I am incredibly lucky.



CONTACT YOUR TRUSTEE

Ward 71 - Terry Harris

C: 780-937-8268

E: terence.harris@ecsd.net

Ward 72 - Sandra Palazzo, Chair

P: 780-965-6083

E: sandra.palazzo@ecsd.net

Ward 73 - Vacant

Ward 74 - Debbie Engel

P: 780-970-7160

E: debbie.engel@ecsd.net

Ward 75 - Alene Mutala

C: 780-242-5926

E: alene.mutala@ecsd.net

Ward 76 - Lisa Turchansky, Vice-Chair

C: 780-903-2033

E: lisa.turchansky@ecsd.net

Ward 77 - Laura Thibert

P: 780-231-6312

E: laura.thibert@ecsd.net

WHAT'S AHEAD

Christmas Day

December 25

Classes Resume

January 4

Orthodox Christmas Day

January 7

Upcoming Meeting Dates

January 26, 2022

February 23, 2022

March 23, 2022

For updated information on attending
Public Board Meetings, please visit the
Board of Trustees web page [here](#).