



Holy Spirit

CATHOLIC SCHOOL DIVISION

Capital Plan

2026 - 2029

Holy Spirit Roman Catholic Separate School Division

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Executive Summary

In developing the Capital Plan, the Board of Trustees is guided by Board Policy No. 1 – *Board Mandate, Mission, Values and Goals* which states, “the Board is dedicated to serving the educational needs and aspirations of the Catholic parents and children in the communities of Coaldale, Lethbridge, Picture Butte, Pincher Creek, Taber, Bow Island and surrounding areas...”

Under Board Policy No. 2 – *Role of the Board*, as part of stewardship and under fiscal responsibility, the Board is required to “approve the Three-year Capital Plan and Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal Plan (IMR) Plan.”

Administrative Procedure 126 – *Long Range Facility Planning*, outlines a process to “maximize utilization of all school facilities and enhance programming opportunities for students.” This ensures the development of a capital plan that meets the educational needs of our school communities.

At the regular meeting of February 25, 2015, the Board of Trustees approved its 10-Year Capital Plan for 2015-2025. The Board remains committed to its capital plan for 2015-2025. We are currently in progress for the next 10-year capital plan which will be presented February 2026.

On March 1, 2023, the division received construction approval for a new West Lethbridge elementary school. Design is completed, and construction is set to begin this spring, with an estimated opening date of September 2026.

With the construction of a new elementary school, boundary consultations have started, to fill the school and address enrolment pressures elsewhere in the school division, as this has yet to be finalized, we have not made any major changes to the plan, as decisions could result in different priorities. The modernization or replacement of facilities that no longer meet the needs of our schools’ communities is still at the top of the list. On March 14, 2025 we received a letter granting us pre-planning funds to determine a replacement or modernization of St. Francis Junior High School.

At the March Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees, the Board set the following priorities for its Three-Year Capital Plan:

- Modernization/Replacement of St. Francis Junior High School (construction, 2027)
- Modernization of St. Michael’s School, Bow Island (value scoping, 2029)
- Modernization of Our Lady of the Assumption School (value scoping, 2029)

Articulating our Purpose

The Capital Plan will be aligned with the Mission, Vision, and Values of the School Division.



HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC SCHOOL DIVISION MISSION STATEMENT

The mission or purpose represents the fundamental reason for the organization's existence.

"What are we here to do together?"

It includes all of the elements of our purpose so we can ensure that our vision and goals clearly reflect our mission.

We are a Catholic Faith Community
dedicated to providing each student entrusted to our care
with an education rooted in the
Good News of Jesus Christ.

Guided by the Holy Spirit,
in partnership with home, parish and society,
our schools foster the growth of responsible citizens
who will live, celebrate and proclaim their faith.

Our Catholic faith is the foundation of all that we do.

THE VISION OF HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC SCHOOL DIVISION

A vision is a picture of the future you seek to create, described in the present tense, as it were happening now.

It shows where we want to go, and what we will be like when we get there.

A vision gives shape and direction to the organization's future and it helps people set goals to take the organization closer to it.

Holy Spirit Catholic Schools...
Christ-centered learning communities
where students are cherished and achieve their potential.

VALUES AND CORE COMMITMENTS

Values are the beliefs that reflect our mission and guide our actions on our progress to our vision.

Core commitments are not goals; they are the actions we are committed to performing in every aspect of our organizational life.

WE VALUE

OUR CORE COMMITMENTS TO THE VALUE

ALL GOD'S
CHILDREN

- We nurture the inherent spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, creative, physical, and emotional giftedness of everyone in our schools.
- We honour diversity.
- Our schools provide a welcoming, safe and accepting sanctuary.

EXCELLENCE IN
LEARNING

- We provide opportunities for all students to discover and become the persons God created them to be.
- We will implement best practices in education to support the learning needs of all students.
- We support and encourage the continued professional growth and reflective practice of all staff.
- We will promote continuous improvement in all schools and areas of the division to foster high quality Catholic education.

SACRAMENTALITY

- We see God and the wonder of His work in everything we do and in all the people we encounter.
- As disciples of God, we model Christ to the world.
- We celebrate the presence of God through prayer, liturgy and symbols of our faith.
- We practice Christian fellowship.
- We promote and practice charity and social justice, based on the teachings of Jesus Christ.
- We believe in the importance of the sacraments and encourage the participation of our students and their families in parish life.

OUR
COLLABORATIVE
COMMUNITY

- We share the responsibility of education with our students, staff, parents, parish, and the community at large.
- We encourage and appreciate the active involvement of all who share in the mission of educating students in our schools.
- We are committed to engaging our stakeholders, and will be receptive to and respectful of their input.

MINISTRY

- We employ people who share our commitment to our Catholic faith and the promotion of Gospel values so that our schools provide living witness to Jesus Christ.
- We honour the commitment and effort our staff members provide to Catholic education.
- We actively participate in the mission of the Church.
- We provide opportunities for faith development.
- We encourage and support the constitutional right to Catholic education.

STEWARDSHIP

- We respect and protect God's creation.
- We ensure that our resources and efforts best serve the needs of all our students.
- We are accountable to our supporters and will operate in a fiscally responsible manner.
- We ensure that decisions are both fact and policy driven.
- We support and provide processes which promote fair and objective decision-making through a Catholic perspective.
- We are open and transparent.

Partnering with our Community

Aligned with the belief that parents are the foremost educators of their children, the Holy Spirit Catholic School Division has fostered strong professional relationships with a wide array of support services, leveraging expertise from both internal and external partners. This collaborative approach, together with our commitment to creating an inclusive educational setting, ensures that children and students receive the most comprehensive education possible, enabling them to achieve their full potential. The Capital Plan is deeply informed by this philosophy, incorporating community partnerships aimed at addressing the diverse needs of our students and their families.

Creating Infrastructure Sustainability

The objective of long-range facility planning is to create an infrastructure that will sustain the Holy Spirit Catholic School Division's school communities for many years to come. Numerous factors influence the creation of a long-range facility plan. These include:

- Health and safety of students and staff
- Building conditions
- Utilization rates, both current and anticipated – influenced by population growth or decline
- Student transportation needs
- Student demographics
- Education program delivery
- Community relationships
- Capital funding constraints
- Ongoing operating costs

The Challenge

Holy Spirit Catholic School Division's primary challenge involves addressing the disparities in student enrolment across the school division, leading to either overuse or inadequate utilization of our facilities. Predicting enrolment trends for the next decade poses significant difficulties, while we review birth rates and immigration and migration trends, movement and growth, partly due to the Alberta Advantage Immigration Program, in our local areas has far exceeded current trends. Enrolment trends over the last number of years have been on a high growth trajectory. Filling some of our schools to overcapacity and further highlighting the needs of other schools to provide optimal spaces for learning. The 2024-2025 academic year saw enrolment growth of 6% (4.4% 2022-2023). Over the next 5 years enrolment will continue to grow.

This growth however will cause different challenges in that distribution of the population will change significantly between PK-6 and 7-12. While we expect to see a stabilization of our elementary populations, there is an expectation that grades 7-9 will increase approximately 13% and 10-12 a significant increase of 14%.

Based on current projections our junior high and high schools in our rural communities are also expected to experience increased enrollment. Local knowledge of large-scale employers moving into the areas, increased new home construction and immigrant populations, bring more families and thus more students to our rural areas. St. Joseph School in Coaldale is expected to see a 5% increase and St. Catherine School in Picture Butte an increase of 6%.

The enrolment trends for schools in Lethbridge will vary depending on their location within the city and the presence of school-aged children in their respective neighborhoods. If the trends continue as they are 7 out of our 12 schools will be over 90% capacity. Which could increase in at least 2 more schools depending on boundary changes with our New West Side Elementary school which is also projected to open at capacity.

Changes to boundaries with the addition of a new elementary school, slated to open in September 2026, in West Lethbridge was intended to mitigate some of the current enrolment pressures. However, based on the research this won't keep up with the expected growth.

The following enrolment and utilization projections do not include the addition of a new school in West Lethbridge, that is expected to open in 2026.



Enrolment and Utilization Projections							
School	Grades	Actual Enrolment Sept 2024	Functional Student Capacity	Util. Rate	Enrol 2029	Enrol Growth 5 years (2029)	Util 2029
Our Lady of The Assumption	EL-6	194.00	352.00	55%	188.00	-3%	53%
Ecole St. Mary (E)	EL-6	437.00	489.00	89%	444.00	2%	91%
St. Paul (N)	EL-6	315.00	382.00	82%	290.00	-8%	76%
St. Teresa of Calcutta (N)	EL-6	433.00	400.00	108%	392.00	-9%	98%
St. Francis (E)	7-9	614.00	634.00	97%	696.00	13%	110%
CCH Campus East	10-12	552.00	984.00	56%	628.00	14%	64%
Trinity E-Learning	9-12	50.00	50.00	100%	39.00	-22%	78%
CARE (Outreach)	7-9	7.00	12.00	58%	7.00	0%	58%
Total Lethbridge East		2,602.00	3,303.00	79%	2,684.00	3%	81%
St. Patrick Fine Arts	K-6	293.00	305.00	96%	298.00	2%	98%
Children of St. Martha	EL-6	237.00	310.00	76%	219.00	-8%	71%
Father Leonard Van Tighem	EL-9	694.00	689.00	101%	697.00	0%	101%
CCH Campus West	10-12	451.00	489.00	92%	489.00	8%	100%
Total Lethbridge West		1,675.00	1,793.00	93%	1,703.00	2%	95%
Total Urban		4,277.00	5,096.00	84%	4,387.00	3%	86%
St. Joseph - Coaldale	EL-9	369.00	397.00	93%	388.00	5%	98%
St. Catherine - Picture Butte	EL-9	207.00	287.00	72%	220.00	6%	77%
St. Patrick - Taber	EL-5	226.00	237.00	95%	215.00	-5%	91%
St. Mary - Taber	6-12	174.00	399.00	44%	175.00	1%	44%
St. Michael - Bow Island	EL-12	47.00	230.00	20%	50.00	6%	22%
St. Michael - Pincher Creek	EL-12	348.00	420.00	83%	328.00	-6%	78%
Total Rural		1,371.00	1,970.00	70%	1,376.00	0%	70%
Total Holy Spirit		5,648.00	7,066.00	80%	5,763.00	2%	82%
Functional student capacity is less than official capacity as it takes into account additional space required for students with specialized learning needs Utilization rate = enrolment / functional student capacity							

Board Priorities

In setting its priorities for capital construction, whether this is new construction, school preservation or school expansion, the Board considers the building conditions of existing facilities based on facility audit scores, and from ongoing inspection of the buildings for program maximization and utilization of space. Furthermore, the potential impact on the health and safety of staff and students is carefully considered.

The construction of new schools and the addition of modular classrooms are necessary to address enrolment pressures. School preservation projects involve expansions to existing schools, modernization and upgrading of existing schools, the re-sizing of existing schools, and possibly the replacement of schools.

Complete details of the Board's capital priorities are contained within the 10-year Capital Plan:

[2015 - 2025 Capital Plan](#)

Three Year Capital Plan Requests

The Board has used the following as its guide in preparing the 2026 - 2029 Capital Plan:

- A review of the Mission, Vision and Values of the school division
- Administrative Procedure 126 – Facility Planning
- A review of Facility Audit Scores
- Ongoing visits to schools
- 10 Year Capital Plan
- Enrolment and Utilization Projections
- 2023 City of Lethbridge Census Results

School	Year
St. Francis Junior High School, modernization or replacement	2027
St. Michael School, Bow Island, value scoping	2029
Our Lady of the Assumption School, Lethbridge, value scoping	2029

It is important to recognize that the dependability of the enrolment forecast beyond five years becomes increasingly uncertain over time due to factors beyond our control. Nevertheless, with the use of dependable current statistical population information, and the application of methodical analysis of student population growth patterns in our jurisdiction over the past five years, it seems satisfying the need for student spaces over the next five years would likely also address them beyond five years, perhaps even for up to ten years, for most of our schools. Holy Spirit Catholic School Division's Capital Plan:

- Ensures adequate student spaces at the elementary and junior high levels;
- Addresses programming needs through the modernization of three existing facilities;
- Addresses student safety both within and outside of school buildings;
- Provides facility space to meet the provincial class size recommendations;
- Provides educational spaces that will meet the needs of 21st century learners; and
- Ensures that the Holy Spirit Catholic School Division's Board continues to serve its mandate to meet the needs of our Catholic communities.

Once fully implemented, our plan will provide our students with facilities that will meet projected needs for the next three years and beyond.



Modernization – St. Francis Junior High School – Lethbridge

PROJECT DRIVERS:

- **HEALTH AND SAFETY**
- **BUILDING CONDITION**
- **ENROLMENT PRESSURE**
- **FUNCTIONALITY AND PROGRAMMING**



Constructed in 1957 and subsequently updated through the 1960s, with its last significant renovation in the mid-1980s, St. Francis Junior High School in Lethbridge reflects the educational standards of the mid-20th century. Alberta Infrastructure's evaluation in November 2015 gave the school a Facility Condition Index

(FCI) of 17%, indicating that while the building's components are aging and nearing the end of their lifecycle, it remains in acceptable condition for use. This assessment, now nearly a decade old, does not consider the building's suitability for modern educational programs or address pressing safety and security concerns due to its design.

Originally established as St. Francis Boys' School under the guidance of the Basilian Order of Priests, the design catered to the educational needs of active boys, without considering the requirements for co-educational settings or accommodating students with specialized learning needs. Many of the building's current deficiencies can be traced back to its initial design, highlighting how it has surpassed its original purpose as a conducive environment for adolescent education and development.

In light of these considerations and as part of a strategic planning exercise, the Board is exploring the possibility of replacing the school on its current site to better meet contemporary educational standards and safety requirements.

Safety and Security

The layout of the school poses a security challenge due to the administration office and reception desk being positioned without a direct line of sight to the front entrance. This arrangement hinders effective monitoring of the entrance, compromising the ability to ensure safety. Furthermore, the significant distance between the office and the classrooms and learning spaces limits opportunities for passive supervision, further detracting from the school's overall security and oversight.

Building Condition

The proposed modernization or replacement of the facility aims to resolve critical maintenance issues, including comprehensive upgrades to the mechanical and electrical systems. This initiative will significantly enhance the building's environmental conditions, primarily through the installation of advanced HVAC systems for improved air quality and climate control. Although a recent update to the information technology infrastructure in 2021 enhanced Wi-Fi and internet access, addressing some technological deficiencies, the physical layout of the building still restricts the full utilization of these advancements. Many of the educational spaces are outdated and require substantial updates to meet current standards if modernization is pursued.

Currently, St. Francis Junior High School stands as the oldest middle/junior high school in the area yet to undergo modernization. This status hampers the school's ability to offer a comprehensive range of learning opportunities that students need and deserve.

Enrolment Pressure

The school currently operates with a capacity to accommodate 634 students. As of September 2024, it enrolled 614 students, utilizing 97% of its capacity. Projections for the next five years suggest an expected increase in enrolment to 696 students, exceeding its capacity at 110%. As enrolment trends show, there will be a significant shift between elementary populations to junior and senior high school in the upcoming years. To meet the demands of Lethbridge's expanding population, expanding the school's capacity will be an essential component of its modernization efforts.

Functionality and Programming

St. Francis Junior High School's design, characterized by compartmentalized spaces along double-loaded corridors, lacks essential areas such as a central gathering space, a learning commons, and collaboration zones, all crucial for implementing current educational best practices.

The facility's limitations impact several programs and services:

- Daily physical activity is compromised by safety concerns due to overcrowded physical education classes.
- The fitness center, located in a cramped basement below the gym, suffers from poor ventilation and noise issues.
- Fine arts programs are constrained by inadequate spaces, with no proper facilities for choral, drama, art (lacking a kiln and isolated from other arts), guitar, and band activities, including a lack of performance areas.
- Shared space for construction tech with Catholic Central High School.
- Religious Studies are hindered by a small chapel that cannot expand to accommodate larger groups.
- Outdated and insufficient science labs, with only two available for 18 classes.
- A shortage of office space for essential support services.
- The absence of break-out rooms and gender-neutral washrooms.

Facility constraints also prevent the offering of programs like a multimedia lab, robotics, and a comprehensive life skills program (due to the lack of a kitchen). The lack of flexible learning and gathering spaces limits leadership activities, community events, and fine arts performances, alongside missing amenities like meeting spaces and a sick room.

Some programs are currently hosted at Catholic Central High School, including Foods and Band, but logistical challenges and space limitations at the high school complicate these arrangements and divide junior high band activities. Additionally, increasing enrolment at the high school restricts access to shared resources, impacting co-curricular programs and practice schedules.



Modernization – St. Michael’s School – Bow Island

PROJECT DRIVERS:

- **SAFETY AND SECURITY**
- **BUILDING CONDITION**
- **FUNCTIONALITY AND PROGRAMMING**
- **ENROLMENT**



St. Michael’s School in Bow Island is an Early Learning to Grade 12 facility that was originally built in 1962 with a series of additions through the 1960s and 1970s. A CTS shop was added in 2000. This school was transferred to Holy Spirit Roman Catholic Separate School Division in September 2014 from Medicine Hat Catholic School Division. The school

was last assessed by Alberta Infrastructure in February 2017 and was assigned a facility condition index of 19%. Facilities with an FCI that is equal to or greater than 15%, or equal to or less than 40%, indicate aging components that are nearing the end of their life cycle and require additional expenditures for renewal or refurbishing.

Safety and Security

The facility faces several safety and security challenges due to accumulated deferred maintenance. Although the most pressing concerns were mitigated when the school transitioned to The Holy Spirit Catholic School Division, significant improvements still need to be made through modernization. A primary security concern is the visibility of the front entrance from the front office, which requires urgent attention.

Building Condition

A modernization will address outstanding maintenance items, including a full mechanical/electrical system upgrade and remediation of existing building code and building envelope issues at the school.

Functionality and Programming

A modernization will allow for the construction of a Learning Commons and collaboration spaces to help improve educational programming in support of student learning.

Enrolment

The proposed modernization will entail resizing the facility to improve its currently low utilization rates. Current functional capacity of the school is 230 students, enrolment is approximately 50 students. The resizing of the facility will address the unique challenges of a small school, while providing spaces for the wide demographic (K-9) of students that attend. While enrolment in rural communities remains a challenge, a modernized facility, that address some of the functional issues, and provides better learning opportunities for students, coupled with the growth of the small community will provide the school with what they need to attract and maintain students in the area.



Modernization – Our Lady of the Assumption School – Lethbridge

PROJECT DRIVERS:

- **BUILDING CONDITION**
- **FUNCTIONALITY AND PROGRAMMING**



Our Lady of the Assumption School is an Early Learning to Grade Six elementary school located in South Lethbridge. The facility was originally built in 1956 with a significant addition in 1960. A pair of modular classrooms were added in 2011. The facility's FCI index in 2015 was 7%. The school is in acceptable condition overall.

Building Condition

The school's modernization will address critical maintenance needs, featuring comprehensive upgrades to its mechanical and electrical systems. Upgrades to the HVAC system will align the school's heating and ventilation with contemporary standards, addressing the current issue where, during May, June, and September, excessive heat and insufficient airflow render many classrooms unsuitable for effective teaching and learning. This situation has, at times, compelled teachers and students to seek alternative learning areas outside or in hallways. Furthermore, enhancements to electrical systems and information technology infrastructure will not only improve lighting conditions for both students and staff but also enhance Wi-Fi and internet connectivity throughout the school.

Functionality and Programming

The current structure of the school, with its mix of double and single-loaded corridors flanked by traditional classroom spaces, is set for a transformation. The envisioned modernization aims to introduce a learning commons and a variety of collaborative

learning environments, aligning the facility with the latest research-based educational practices.

Facility limitations currently affect several programs, including:

- **Physical Education:** The gym's size restricts activities and storage space for equipment.
- **Early Learning Program and Early Childhood Services:** The lack of nearby bathroom facilities.
- **Religious Studies:** The existing chapel space is too small.
- **Support Services:** There is insufficient office space for the School Counselor, First Nations Facilitator, Speech Language Pathologist, and other essential services.
- **Administration:** There is no designated office for the Associate Principal.
- Additional needs include a sensory room for students, the absence of bathroom facilities in modular classrooms, a lack of modern gender-neutral bathrooms, an outdated library that does not support a Learning Commons model, and very limited meeting or conference space.

The current facility's constraints also preclude offering several programs:

- There is no dedicated multi-purpose science (STEM) room.
- A shortage of breakout rooms.
- The gym's size is inadequate for hosting sporting events like basketball or volleyball.
- The absence of a proper commercial kitchen prevents the offering of food preparation programs.
- A lack of a sizable gathering space restricts drama and fine arts presentations, spiritual activities, parent meetings, and other community events.
- While there are wheelchair lifts, the overall layout falls short in accessibility for individuals with disabilities, including lack of wheelchair access to the playground exit.

