



Medicine Hat Catholic  
Board of Education

# St. Francis Xavier School

## School Plan

2023-2024



*"Strong Inside Strong Outside"*

## INTRODUCTION

St. Francis Xavier School has a school population of 139 in grades K-6. We are also proud to offer both a morning and an afternoon Early Learning Program (ELP). This program is designed for children who are either not school aged or wish to attend ½ day in addition to their morning kindergarten programming.

We are home to Southern Alberta's only grades 4-6 Sports and Wellness Academy, which promotes an active lifestyle both within the school and outside of school hours. Our multi-sports academy challenges our students to engage in activities that promote inclusivity, such as: wheelchair basketball, rock climbing, kickboxing, and sledge hockey while also focusing on traditional sports like baseball, soccer, basketball and volleyball. The addition of wellness includes a diverse and interactive journey for students to gain awareness on the benefits of making good choices physically, mentally, spiritually, and emotionally in hopes of creating a happy and fulfilling lifestyle. We are excited about the lineup of guest speakers that include athletes and community members who have struggled in an aspect of their careers but learned to persevere and become successful despite adversity. Our academy runs for two afternoons every week, using facilities at the school, Medicine Hat College, Big Marble Go Centre and throughout the Medicine Hat community. The Sports and Wellness Academy program aligns with the school's dedication to physical literacy and is taught by teachers and community workers.

St. Francis School is once again lucky to have assistance from outside service agencies around our city to support the needs of all our children. Occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, counselors, Community Coming Together (CCT), Medicine Hat Police, and Big Brother and Big Sisters are all integral parts of our school community. By working together, we support the needs of all students while embracing their personality and self growth.

The promotion of an active healthy lifestyle can also be seen in our Alberta Education Nutrition program, ongoing work with Ever Active Schools, daily physical activity, and our out of school care (OSC) program. We are lucky enough to have support for daily lunch for all students in need of one. This is a division wide initiative that is provided free of charge for our families. As we strive to be an active school community, nutrition and a healthy balanced diet help us reach this goal. In addition, students who need morning or afternoon out of school care are able to do so while engaging in various activities throughout this time.

We are also proud of our diverse learners here at St. Francis. As the education system changes to accommodate the average learner, students who struggle with self-regulation, English Language Learners (ELL) and students with significant needs and disabilities, as does St. Francis School. We offer students the opportunity to strive for excellence, in whatever capacity that may look like for that given student.

## MESSAGE FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

At St. Francis Xavier School we envision a place where students, staff, parents, and community form a Christian family. We work to ensure that the individual needs of students are met in an atmosphere of Faith, Hope, Trust and Love. St. Francis himself told us to 'Be great in small things', and that is what we strive to do on a daily basis. All students are unique and made in the image of God. It is our job as a staff here at St. Francis to find a student's strength, and strive for excellence. We want our children to grow into not only great students but influential community ambassadors.

Our school community is one filled with fantastic parental support. Our Parent Council is actively involved and supports the needs of our students, just as the staff here at St. Francis is called to do. We welcome all our parents to continue to support our school and become actively involved in their child's education. As educators, it is integral that communication from the school to home is one of positivity and trust. Parents and guardians, you put your children in our hands. I want to assure you that we will cherish them and work with you to help support them in any way possible.

In 2023-2024 we will once again continue our philosophy of 'Strong Inside Strong Outside'. By continuing to grow in our faith as a school community, we will build a strong foundation for success within ourselves. Our goal this year in our ongoing faith journey as a school community is to recognize and cherish God's many gifts, big and small. We will look to recognize one another for showing the face of Christ here at school and hope to shine that light in the community. We will continue to work on our physical, mental, spiritual and emotional health with one another at St. Francis. Allowing students to feel strong in any task they wish to accomplish, we as a staff promise to uphold our agreement to keep everyone here at St. Francis safe and cared for.

God Bless,



**Ryan Irving**  
Principal

# MEDICINE HAT CATHOLIC BOARD OF EDUCATION

Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education is a publicly funded school division with over 2600 students in 9 schools: 6 elementary schools, 2 junior high schools and 1 high school.

Medicine Hat is located in Southeastern Alberta and is known as communities of choice. Also known as the sunniest city in Canada, Medicine Hat offers a low cost of living, many amenities and is an ideal place to raise a family.

Our school division ensures the integrity and enhancement of Catholic education. We are a faith-based community that strives to inspire and prepare our students to pray, to learn, to work, to live fully and serve God in one another. Our schools are immersed in faith, offering liturgies, masses, and many celebrations throughout the school year including "Faith Development Days" that enrich the lives of students, our parents and our staff.

Our division offers quality Catholic education with a focus on academic achievement and success for all students.

Our schools operate as professional learning communities through school success teams that promote effective schools in safe and caring environments. We offer strong core academic programming, diverse and inclusive fine arts programming, French immersion, comprehensive co-curricular programming and academy programming in fine arts and sports.

## MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

### **Our Mission**

In partnership with family, church and community, we provide Catholic education of the highest quality to our students.

### **Our Vision**

A gospel-centered community committed to learning excellence, Christian service, living Christ.

### **Our Motto**

"Showing the Face of Christ to All"

### **Our Principles of Practice**

In our ministry we are called, always and everywhere, to:

- Model Christ
- Prayer
- Service
- Strive for Excellence

### **Our Values**

We believe that Catholic education is a ministry that is at the heart of the church.

In our ministry, we value and celebrate:

- Teaching and living our Catholic faith.
- Our Catholic traditions.
- Our ability to offer a full range of educational programs for all students.
- The uniqueness of each child.

## What do Medicine Hat Catholic schools represent?



**Staff, students and families working together,  
under our faith, with quality education as our foundation.**

# ENROLLMENT TRENDS

Grade	23-24	22-23	21-22	20-21	19-20	18-19	17-18	16-17	15-16	14-15
K	23	16	14	16	13	16	13	18	8	24
1	22	17	15	16	18	14	18	6	21	19
2	20	16	17	17	13	18	8	22	15	23
3	21	17	16	12	16	9	19	14	21	15
4	20	16	10	18	14	18	12	18	16	19
5	23	13	22	14	21	13	15	18	21	26
6	10	21	17	22	10	16	14	23	18	16
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>139</b>	116	111	115	105	104	99	119	120	142

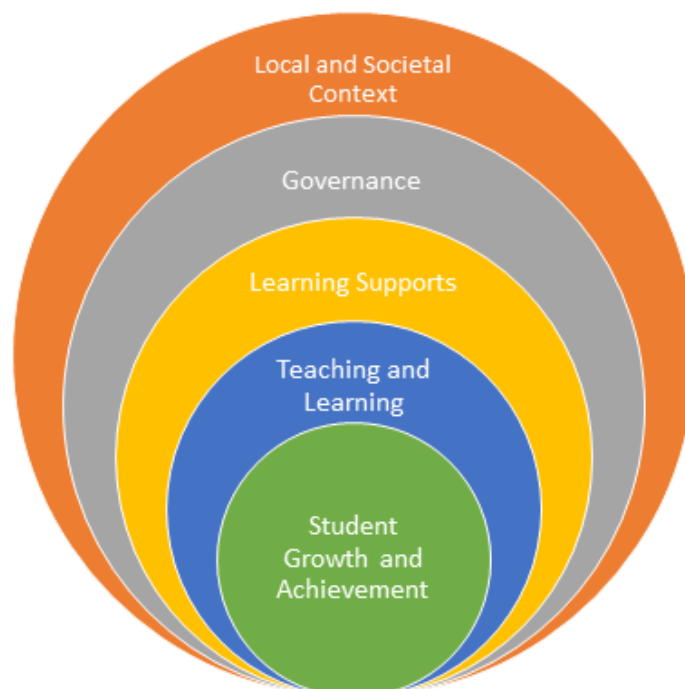
## ASSURANCE

Assurance in the education system happens when community members, system stakeholders and education partners engage across five domains:

1. Student Growth and Achievement
2. Teaching and Leading
3. Learning Supports
4. Governance
5. Local and Societal Context

For the purposes of this document, a domain is an area of activity where education partners have specific responsibilities that they are accountable for and provide assurance about. Fundamentally, assurance is reflected in what the public understands, perceives and knows about student growth and achievement, where the quality of the daily interaction between teacher and student is paramount. Assuring the public that the education system is successfully supporting student growth and achievement requires engagement and thoughtful action across all five domains.

Student growth and achievement is the primary purpose of the education system and is the core outcome domain for the assurance framework. The domains of Teaching and Leading, Learning Supports and Governance support and enable Student Growth and Achievement. Local and Societal Context, while a separate domain, operates across and is integrated into the others. For the purposes of description, the domains are considered discrete and separate. However, in practice, they overlap and are interconnected and interdependent, as depicted in the graphic below:



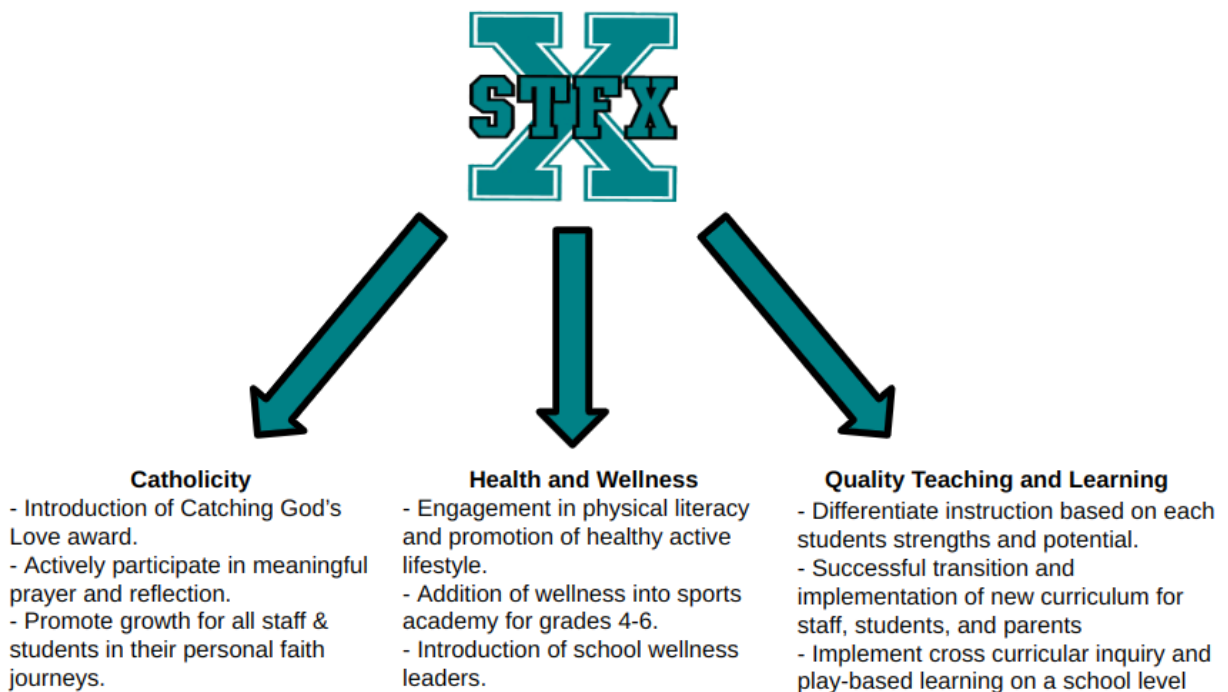
# ENGAGEMENT

- Consistent Communication
  - School Website
    - Calendar
    - Regular Updates/Notices
  - Monthly Newsletter
  - Social Media Updates on all platforms
  - Parent Distribution (Email) List
    - Weekly Announcements
    - Programming Updates
    - Procedure Communications
    - Emergencies
  - Classroom Communication
    - Google Classrooms
    - Student Agendas
    - Class Dojo
- Parent Council
  - Meetings
  - Volunteer Opportunities
  - Fundraisers
  - Classroom activities/events
- School Events
  - Meet the Teacher/Principal Barbecue
  - Christmas Dinner and Mass
  - Christmas Concert
  - Valentines Dance
  - In-Person Parent/Teacher Interviews
  - Book Fair
  - Family Movie Night(s)
  - Read-a-thon
  - Spelling Bee
  - Year End Fun Day
  - Celebrations
    - Masses
    - Liturgies
- Student Leadership Opportunities
  - Student Council



- Wellness Leadership Committee
- AMA Safety Patrols
- Milk Delivery
- Lunch Monitors
- Prayer Leaders
- Division led School Faith Leaders program
- Recycling Program
- Team/Clubs
  - Co-Ed Soccer team
  - Hockey Club
  - Sports and Wellness Academy
  - Dance Club

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Outcomes for each of these priorities were developed to plan for the successful achievement of each priority. Specific performance measures and initiatives have been put into place for each of the outcomes

# SCHOOL GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION SPECIFICS



## Catholicity

### Goal #1

Introduce 'Catching God's Love' award given to staff, students and parents who catch others doing good works within the school community.

### Goal #2

Allow staff and students the opportunity to grow in their faith by actively participating in meaningful prayer and reflection with student prayer partner(s).

### Goal #3

School faith leaders participate in liturgies, masses and school events while actively promoting all students in the school to grow in their own faith journeys.

### Implementation Specifics:

- Catching God's Love awards for good works around the school given out at weekly assemblies. These are works that students achieve daily.
- Assemblies and liturgies will be designed around the goal of 'Encountering' God (division theme for 2023/2024).
- Staff and students will have prayer partners within the building that they will work closely with to strengthen their faith.
- Students will participate in religious retreats throughout the year (student led instruction as well as presenters from the community).
- Incorporate indigenous teachings and exercises into existing Catholic education
- Church(es) and school will work closely with one another to coordinate masses, liturgies, and events.

### Outcomes:

1. Staff, students and parents will recognize one another as living examples of Christ and recognize them with an award for encountering good works within the community.
2. Staff and students will grow in their faith journeys through meaningful prayer with prayer partner(s) both at school and at home.
3. Division Faith Leaders will not only lead by example but work with their peers to embrace the faith leadership mentality.



# Health and Wellness

## Goal #1

Engagement in physical literacy and promotion of healthy active lifestyle both inside and outside of the classroom.

## Goal #2

The creation of a wellness portion to our existing sports academy for grades 4-6.

## Goal #3

Introduction of school wellness leaders who promote proper nutrition and body health awareness.

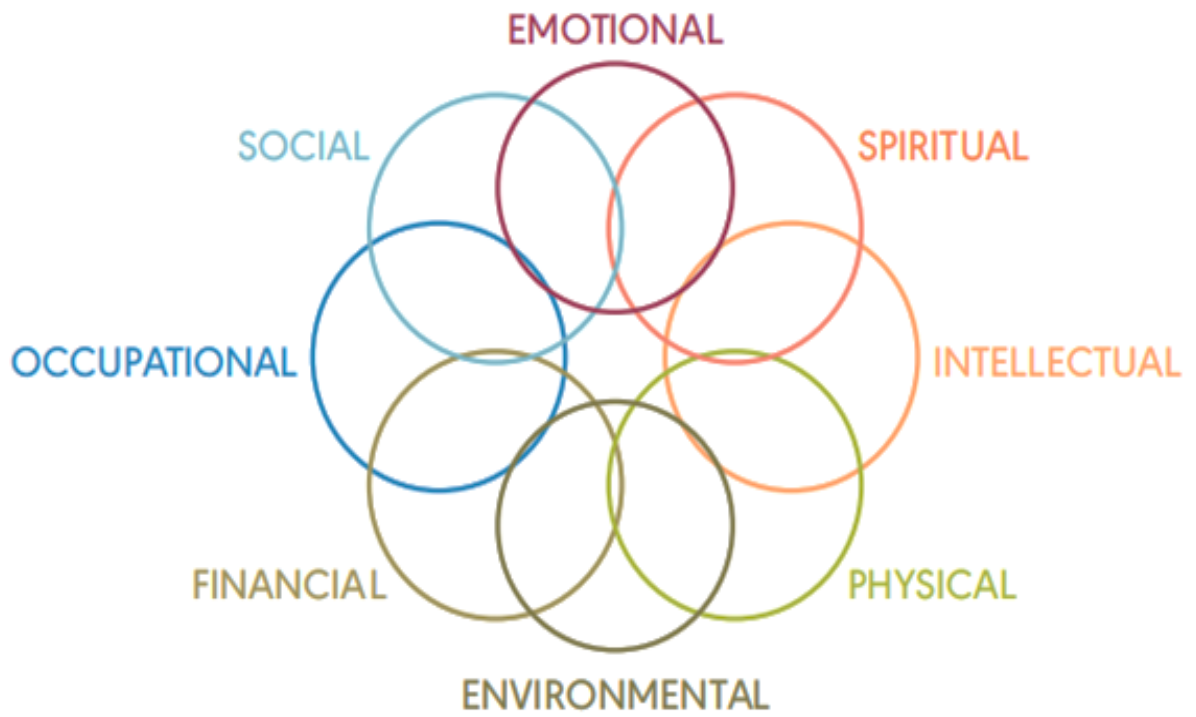
### Implementation Specifics:

- Addition of physical education specialist to our teaching staff on a more regular basis who promotes engagement in Physical Education classes as well as classroom instruction.
- Continue relationship with Ever Active Schools.
- 'Don't Walk in the Hallway' allows movement within the hallways that is structured and allows for movement breaks outside of the classroom.
- Sports academy will include a wellness portion that introduces students to speakers, goal setting techniques and importance of nutrition.
- Student School Wellness leaders will meet monthly to coordinate school events related to nutrition and education.

### Outcomes:

1. Physical literacy will be embraced by all staff and students while understanding the importance of becoming physically literate.
2. Students in the Sports & Wellness Academy will be equipped with tools to help them manage stress, set goals and live a healthy active lifestyle.
3. An increased knowledge for all students of eating a healthy diet, getting enough exercise and drinking enough water provided by the school wellness team.

## Health and Wellness Components





# Quality Teaching and Learning

## Goal #1

Differentiate instruction based on each student's strengths and potential.

## Goal #2

Successful transition and implementation of *new* curriculum for staff, students and parents.

## Goal #3

Implement cross curricular inquiry and play-based learning on a school level.

### Implementation Specifics:

- Teachers will engage in meaningful conversations with their students about their own learning styles.
- Students will identify their own strengths while learning to challenge themselves in their own learning.
- New curriculum resources and tools will be purchased and used in classrooms
- Staff will have access and be exposed to professional development opportunities to allow for further exposure to new curriculum material.
- The division will be providing professional development for new curriculum implementation as well as collaborative planning time.
- Students will be invited to explore materials, ask questions and share ideas in all aspects of their learning.
- Teachers and educational assistants will work with their students to guide instruction while setting up an environment that allows options and imagination.

### Outcomes:

1. Differentiated instruction will be focussed on teaching to the strength of the student. Thus allowing all students to learn at their own pace and help assist them to set goals for themselves that can be achieved.
2. Transition to the new curriculum will be successful while allowing for feedback from parents, teachers and students at the conclusion of the school year.
3. Students will have a greater understanding of inquiry and play based learning.

## ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR

### St. Francis Xavier Alberta Education Assurance Measure Results (Fall 2023)

Education Measure	Current Results	Previous Year	Alberta Average
1. Student Learning Engagement	<b>83.3</b>	75.7	84.4
2. Citizenship	<b>85.3</b>	79.3	80.3
3. Education Quality	<b>92.0</b>	92.5	88.1
4. Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments	<b>87.6</b>	86.6	84.7
5. Access to Supports & Services	<b>80.0</b>	86.8	80.6
6. Parental Involvement	<b>73.6</b>	77.3	79.1
7. Lifelong Learning	<b>67.9</b>	81.8	80.4
8. Programs of Studies	<b>79.2</b>	76.6	82.9
9. Program of Studies - At Risk Students	<b>83.7</b>	84.8	81.2
9. Safe and Caring	<b>89.2</b>	90.5	87.5
10. Program Access	<b>75.4</b>	85.2	72.9
11. School Improvement	<b>57.2</b>	72.1	75.2
12. Work Preparation	<b>85.7</b>	85.7	83.1

## RESPONDING TO ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR RESULTS

### School Strategies by Measure

### Indicators of Success

<p><b>Safe and Caring Schools</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Staff participate in faith permeation activities</li> <li>● Staff keep up to date on safety certifications</li> <li>● Students engage in Catholic virtue activities that promote a safer school atmosphere</li> <li>● Students recognized for kindness shown towards one another</li> <li>● Staff and students access supports within the school</li> <li>● Access to community supports promoted to students in need</li> <li>● Regular drills for staff and students on emergency protocols</li> <li>● Clubs and teams formed to promote inclusivity</li> </ul>
<p><b>Student Learning Opportunities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students in grades 4 -6 are introduced the Sports and Wellness Academy</li> <li>● Resources for both home and school to support ongoing success (ex. Raz-Kids, Mathletics, JUMP Math, Prodigy)</li> <li>● Push for inquiry and play-based learning</li> </ul>
<p><b>Student Learning Achievement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Data collection for grade 1-3 (pre and post assessment) in literacy and numeracy using government testing model</li> <li>● Intervention strategies and model implemented based on results of grade 1-3 testing</li> <li>● Learning growth achieved for all students K-6 using various literacy and numeracy programs (school and home access available)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Preparation for Lifelong Learning, Citizenship, World of Work</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students have the opportunity to volunteer as a student leader throughout the school including: milk program, recycling program, student council, faith leadership, wellness leadership</li> <li>● Students have the opportunity to experience additional athletic pursuits through the sports academy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Parental Involvement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased attendance in parent council meetings</li> <li>● Volunteers for school initiatives</li> <li>● Parent council supports all of our major field trips and community classroom experiences</li> <li>● St. Francis will continue to have an active parent</li> </ul>

	<p>council who leads many initiatives and fundraising events throughout the year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social media platforms used to show successes of staff, students and the school</li> </ul>
<b>Continuous Improvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers participate in professional development sessions and share their learning at the school</li> <li>• Sports and Wellness Academy expands enrollment and continues to develop new and exciting programming</li> <li>• Awareness of physical and spiritual wellness becomes common practice for all staff and students</li> <li>• Work with indigenous worker and leaders within the Medicine Hat area</li> </ul>

## COMMUNICATION

Stakeholders are communicated with in a variety of ways at St. Francis:





## CONTACT US

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