



# News Release

## Board Statement re: Ongoing Negotiations with Alberta Teachers' Association

*For immediate release – February 5, 2024*

Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools (RDCRS) is currently engaged in local bargaining with the provincial Alberta Teachers' Association to finalize the legislated two-stage bargaining process for teachers employed in all school divisions throughout Alberta. The first stage (Central Bargaining), was completed in May 2022 and ratified by the ATA membership in June 2022. The central table provisions affect all Alberta teachers and are currently in place within the 2020-2024 collective agreement. Those provisions largely include compensation, benefits, working conditions and terms of the Collective Agreement. The term dates of the current Collective Agreement for teachers is September 1, 2020, to August 31, 2024.

Following completion and ratification of the central bargaining, the Alberta Teachers' Association can commence local bargaining with the 61 school divisions in Alberta, which includes RDCRS.

The Association served notice to RDCRS to commence local bargaining on June 27, 2022. No action was taken by the Alberta Teachers' Association to commence actual bargaining of the local negotiations until RDCRS insisted on meeting in June 2023. The first bargaining meeting was held on June 21, 2023, to exchange bargaining proposals.

Subsequently, the two sides met on October 5 and 6, 2023 to begin the discussion phase on the tabled bargaining items. Good conversations between the parties occurred during those two meetings. Future dates were under discussion between the two sides when, unexpectedly, the Association made an application on December 14, 2023, to the Alberta Labour Relations Board for the appointment of a mediator.

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A mediator was appointed on December 19, 2023. Meetings including the mediator were scheduled following the Christmas recess for January 24 and 25, 2024. During and at the end of our two days of meetings, the Association advised RDCRS that a meeting with teachers of RDCRS would take place sometime during February 13 - 15, 2024. Currently, RDCRS and the Association have agreed to meeting dates on March 7 and 8 and April 25 and 26, 2024.

Vice Chair Dorraine Lonsdale states, "It is the intention of RDCRS to continue a principled and respectful approach while bargaining the local items tabled by both sides while arriving at a mutually acceptable agreement. The school division highly values its teachers and in addition, we are responsible to students, parents, and our communities. RDCRS has a duty to preserve our programs and services, to manage our complex education system and to be financially accountable for our decisions. These three pillars extend also to our bargaining of collective agreements affecting our employees. RDCRS takes these responsibilities under great consideration at all times."

*Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools serves over 10,650 students in 21 schools in Red Deer, Sylvan Lake, Rocky Mountain House, Innisfail, Blackfalds and Olds. It also supports the learning of over 850 students in a Home Education Program. The Division is committed to serving children and parents with a complete offering of learning opportunities delivered within the context of Catholic teachings and within the means of the Division.*

**For more information, contact:**

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