



St. Catherine School

Continuous Improvement Plan 2025-2026

Our Story:

St. Catherine School is a rural, Catholic school in Picture Butte, Alberta which is part of the Holy Spirit Catholic School Division. We serve approximately 190 children from Early Learning (3 and 4 year-olds) up to Grade 9.

The K-9 enrollment at St. Catherine school increased by 70 students between 2013 and 2023. Many of those new students were Spanish-speaking immigrants from Mexico and other nations from Latin America. In addition, we have recently welcomed a number of families from the Philippines, Ireland, Ukraine, and South Africa. The draw for most of these families has been the growth in the agricultural sector around Picture Butte. Over the past few years, the growth leveled out and enrolment has dropped slightly, but the previous conditions have already produced a more diverse population with a higher proportion of English Language Learners at St. Catherine's. Overall, the influx of newcomers has injected a great deal of vitality into the community, the parish, and our school.



Though a small school, St. Catherine's offers a wide range of enriching experiences for students, including a full junior high athletics program, leadership opportunities, diverse options and fine arts classes, and inclusive school-wide events that foster strong connections across grade levels. These opportunities are made possible through the dedication of staff and the strong support of parents and the wider community, who contribute extensively through coaching, volunteering, and active participation in School Council and our Home and School Association which funds major resources and reduces costs for families. The school also benefits from strong partnerships with our local Catholic parish which supports students' faith development through masses and , ensuring that despite its small size, St. Catherine's remains well supported and deeply connected to the broader Church and school community.



As we move forward into the 2025-2026 school year, we continue to work toward the four priorities of the Holy Spirit Catholic School Division, paying particular attention to the unique needs of our St. Catherine School community. We have a new school division faith plan this year that has sparked new school initiatives related to Priority 1: Strengthening Our Catholic Faith. We also have new initiatives related to Priority 2: Learning Through Quality Teaching and Priority 4: Belonging In Our Diverse Community. The biggest change from last year in the area of Priority 3: Living Truth and Reconciliation is that we no longer have a Niitsitapi Facilitator to help support our FNMI students and to support our teachers in developing their foundational knowledge of FNMI. In this area, we continue to try to maintain the progress made over the last few years.



Faith Plan Year 1:

Know God BE SAINTS

St. Monica
Had a life full of prayer. Many people in her life didn't know God, and although her actions showed the love of Christ, she knew that they needed to know Christ for themselves. She spent over 10 years praying for the same people to have an encounter with God. Her husband, and her children. One year before her husband passed away, he encountered God and converted. As time passed 2 of her 3 children entered religious life, and lived for the Lord in big ways. Her final prayer was for her son Augustine. Although his choices during his life were selfish, and he removed himself from being close to his mom and the Lord, Saint Monica never stopped praying for her son to know the mercy and loving presence of Christ. This prayer was answered, and her son became a very well known Saint... Saint Augustine. St Monica's prayer, and life although at times was annoying to her son and husband, is an example of living and loving the Lord with everything we have. Her faith never wavered, even when it wasn't accepted or liked by those closest to her. Over hundreds of miracles are attributed to her prayerful intercessions in heaven.

Who in our school shows Piety?

WHO ELSE PRACTICES Piety?

Arwyn V
Enjoys sharing her knowledge of stories from the bible during Religion class, and shows her love of God through her actions of kindness to those in need.

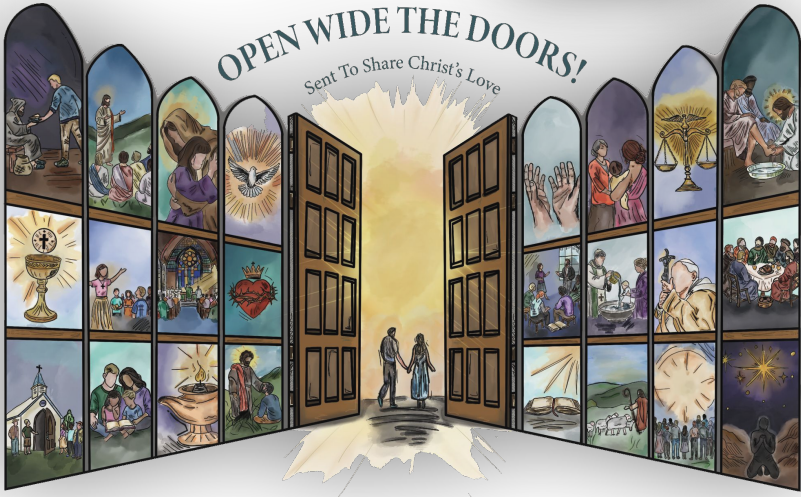
Genesis R
Lives the faith heroically, her belief and love of God is apparent in her joy, the way she treats others and the time she spends reading scripture.

Kynlee R
Shows her faith and devotion to God through being respectful and reverent during prayer times, and how she treats her classmates.

The Persistent Friend

And he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him.' And he answers from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are

PILGRIMS Walk handily with God





St. Catherine School

Continuous Improvement Plan 2025-2026

Priority 1: Strengthening Our Catholic Faith

- We foster a Catholic worldview of reflection, service and sacramentality
- Our staff and students demonstrate knowledge of faith and commitment to faith development
- We create communities of accompaniment in our schools and school division.

St. Catherine Context / Baseline Data	School Goals and Indicators / Measures of Success	Strategies
<p>St. Catherine students come from diverse faith backgrounds, with many actively involved in faith communities other than the Catholic Church and others with little faith involvement outside of school.</p> <p>There are also several families who are very active in St. Catherine’s parish, serving in parish ministries and receiving the sacraments.</p> <p>On the <u>Our School</u> survey last year, students gave the following responses to questions related to faith:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 86% of gr. 4-6 students agree or strongly agree that “<i>My school is a Catholic community that helps me to understand the Catholic faith.</i>”• 89% of gr. 4-6 students agree or strongly agree that “<i>I am encouraged and given opportunity to live my faith actively, in the school and in the community.</i>”• 95% of gr. 7-9 students agree or strongly agree that, “<i>My school reflects a Catholic worldview that contributes to a deeper understanding of the Catholic faith.</i>”• 92% of gr. 7-9 students agree that, “<i>I am encouraged and given opportunity to live my faith actively, in the school and in the community.</i>”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• St. Catherine school will strengthen the connection of our Catholic students to their parish and to the sacraments. This will be observed in their participation in the sacraments and in service to the parish. In the long term, these students will be observed maintaining those connections after leaving St. Catherine School.• St. Catherine staff, students, and families will growth in their knowledge of faith and particularly of the aspects highlighted in our faith plan. This will be demonstrated in conversations and observations in class, meetings, and assemblies as well as in survey responses. (<i>*New: Schollie Survey</i>)• Students, staff, and families will experience a welcoming, authentic, and vibrant expression of the Catholic faith at St. Catherine School and will be supported, encouraged, and accompanied in their faith development, regardless of their faith background. This will be observed in conversations and survey data. In the long term, they will be committed leaders in their various faith communities who have greater understanding of and appreciation for the Catholic faith.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend the parish Wednesday mass as a school once a month at St. Catherine Church. One grade per month leads by being lectors, offertory, prayers of the faithful, etc. We also supply altar servers, choir, and extraordinary ministers of the eucharist (when possible).• Invite our parish priest to lead the Gospel and reflection at our Friday assemblies• Encourage teachers to brings classes over to the church at other times and to invite Fr. Iqbal into their classes for other activities.• Advertise parish events in newsletter, daily announcements, and assemblies (eg. sacrament preparation meetings, celebrate reception of sacraments, recruit altar servers, youth group, special masses such as Our Lady of Guadalupe etc.) <p>** NEW: Implement the 3 Year Faith Plan: “Open Wide the Doors” - Year 1: “Know God”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use the Parables of Luke at prayer in staff meetings and School Council meetings and our Friday Gospel assemblies with staff and students• Introduce a particular virtue that this parable describes and highlight a canonized saint or someone on the path to canonization who exemplifies this virtue.• Acknowledge staff and students who also exemplify this virtue through the Saints of the Month program at Friday gospels. Make make the description of the virtue concrete by listing ways that these individuals demonstrate it. Invite their families to this assembly. Post their pictures, along with actual saints, on our “Be Saints” bulletin board. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students compose and lead our daily prayer at our morning announcements..• Implement Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ and Fully Alive (supplemental) programs for all students at all grades (human sexuality components are now “opt in”)• Opportunities for broadly accessible faith experiences (prayer, service, music, and scripture) are frequent and are integrated across grades and subjects.• The Catholic worldview, including the liturgical calendar and seasons are reflected in school displays, decor, liturgies (eg. Advent, Ash Wednesday), and instruction.• Highlight significant events in the Universal Church (eg. papal election, canonizations)



St. Catherine School

Continuous Improvement Plan 2025-2026

Priority 2: Learning Through Quality Teaching

- We prepare students for career pathways.
- All students demonstrate growth in literacy and numeracy
- Schools reflect collaborative teaching and learning environments.

St. Catherine Context / Baseline Data	School Goals and Indicators / Measures of Success	Strategies
<p>St. Catherine School has traditionally been above the provincial average on most domains of the the Alberta Education Assurance Measure survey. In this year's results :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 95% of students, parents, and staff were satisfied or strongly satisfied with the <u>Education Quality</u> at St. Catherine School. This is the highest level in many years.• The <u>Student Learning and Engagement</u> measure is also at the highest level in a long time (91.2%) and is well above the province. <p>Results on the Provincial Achievement Tests were also strong last year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gr. 9s were above the provincial averages in all subjects for both acceptable and excellence• Gr. 6 only wrote Math and ELA PATs last year and both of those subjects has new curriculum. We were near provincial averages on those exams: slightly above in Math excellence and ELA acceptable but below in Math acceptable and ELA excellence <p>St. Catherine has a high proportion of students "in need of additional support" on the provincial K-3 Literacy and Numeracy screenings and many students reading below grade level on Fountas & Pinnell assessments in gr. 4-9. Our high ELL population impacts this significantly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• St. Catherine school will maintain high quality classroom instruction, resulting in high levels of student achievement on provincial achievement tests and high levels of satisfaction on the Alberta Education Assurance Measures.• St. Catherine teachers will collaborate to identify areas of need in instruction and to share ideas and expertise. This collaboration will be observed during embedded Friday collaborative team meetings, staff meetings and professional development days, as well as spontaneously as needed.• St. Catherine's students will show increased growth in literacy skills, as demonstrated by:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Movement of a significant number of students off of the "in need of additional support" list on the K-3 literacy screens by June 2026.◦ Reduced number of gr. 1-4 students identified as "in need of additional support" on next year's K-3 literacy screens◦ Reduced number of students entering grades 7-9 with reading levels below level Z on the F&P literacy assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School-based professional development determined by areas of need as identified on assessment and survey results and/or through collaborative discussions with staff. Recent topics have focused on assessment and reporting, new curriculum and resources, and evidence-based literacy practices.• Embedded time for Collaborative Team Meetings every Friday (by topic / need but generally primary one week and upper elementary / junior high the following week). Some of these are used to analyze assessment and survey results, look for areas of concern, and propose possible solutions for emergent issues• Frequent teacher growth, supervision, and evaluation by administration provides teachers feedback on teaching practices and keeps admin informed of classroom conditions and context.• Utilize school division Learning Coach to provide group and/or individualized assistance with the implementation of new curriculum resources and evidence-based literacy and numeracy practices. These include Heggerty, UFLI, Words Their Way, Bug Club Morphology, and Building Fact Fluency kits <p>** New - Elementary Literacy Intervention Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students are identified for intervention through provincial literacy screens K-3 and Fountas & Pinnell assessments in grades 4-6 and through collaborative team meetings.• 2 teachers (Constant and Gokarn) were freed up for 2 periods per week to provide literacy intervention to grades 3-6 students with support from Mrs. Elashuk and Mr. Vanden Dungen for another 2 days per week.• Identified students in gr. 3-6 will receive 30 minutes of pull-out intervention, 4 days per week (Mon-Thurs) in small groups of 4 or less for 8-10 week rounds. Intervention students will be grouped according to the skills requiring development.• Interventions will use evidence-based direct instruction (eg. UFLI program) which targets the skills in the areas requiring development.• K-2 classrooms will utilize shorter, targeted interventions within the classroom, utilizing teachers, educational assistants, and/or student teachers to provide extra practice on previously covered skills.



St. Catherine School

Continuous Improvement Plan 2025-2026

Priority 3: Living Truth and Reconciliation

- Our First Nations, Metis and Inuit students will continue to see increasing success rates.
- We foster reconciliation through listening, accompaniment and recognition of the ongoing impacts of the past.
- We will deepen our understanding of our collective responsibilities as Treaty People.

St. Catherine Context / Baseline Data	School Goals and Indicators / Measures of Success	Strategies
<p>St. Catherine School has a very small number of FNMI students and those that we do have generally live with non-FNMI families. Some of these students have individualized support plans and/or success in school plans but their parents/guardians report that they are very happy with the levels of success that these students experience at St. Catherine School.</p> <p>Our school does not have any FNMI staff members and this year we no longer have access to a Niitsitapi Facilitator as we did the last two years.</p> <p>This means that we have limited internal access to lived experience of FNMI knowledge and culture and limited opportunities for relationship building with indigenous individuals and/or communities. To grow in this area we must intentionally seek out external resources and professional development.</p> <p>There is a great willingness on the part of St. Catherine staff to grow in their foundational knowledge of FNMI, as demonstrated by the very significant uptake of professional development in this area (especially the Learn, Build, and Go workshops).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First Nations, Metis and Inuit students will continue to see significant success at St. Catherine School, as demonstrated by academic results, individualized plans, and conversations with parents and/or guardians.• St. Catherine School staff will continue to show high levels of commitment to growth in knowledge of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit and of our collective responsibilities as Treaty People by signing up for professional development in this area.• St. Catherine staff and students will demonstrate a commitment to fostering reconciliation through our participation in school-wide events such as Orange Shirt Day, through the incorporation of indigenous perspectives and worldview into academic content, and through the welcoming of outside FNMI guests and resources into our classrooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Success of FNMI students will be monitored by admin and IEL and discussed with parents / guardians.• St. Catherine School will continue to promote respect, recognition, and listening through:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Orange Shirt Day◦ Metis Week◦ “Rock Your Mocs”◦ Indigenous involvement in our Cultural Appreciation Day• Classroom presentations and FNMI worldviews braided into instruction in a variety of courses at all grade levels• Staff will take part in professional development provided by the school division (Learn, Build, and Go)• Administration will seek out input and advice from our Holy Spirit Division Principal Of First Nations, Metis, & Inuit Education regarding:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• strategies for supporting our FNMI students• opportunities for bringing in guests with FNMI experience and knowledge and/or building relationship with individuals and/or communities• strategies for increasing the integration of FNMI perspectives and worldviews into classroom instruction



St. Catherine School

Continuous Improvement Plan 2025-2026

Priority 4: Belonging In Our Diverse Community

- We will assist students in navigating various pathways of support.
- We provide programming and support for student and staff well-being.
- We celebrate and respect all cultures and ethnicities in our schools.

St. Catherine Context / Baseline Data	School Goals and Indicators / Measures of Success	Strategies
<p>St. Catherine's has a variety of supports for students with academic, language and social-emotional differences. On the Alberta Education Assurance Measure survey 85.3% of students, parents and staff reported satisfaction with the <u>Access to Supports and Services</u> at St. Catherine School. This was 5.2% above the provincial average. 89.1% were satisfied that St. Catherine is a <u>Welcoming, Caring, Safe, and Respectful Learning Environment</u> (4.7% above prov. ave.)</p> <p>On our 2024 <u>Our School</u> survey, however, we found that we had areas where mental health concerns were higher than national norms. In gr. 4-6, 45% of girls reported high levels of anxiety (national norm 36%). Levels were similar in gr. 7-9, although these were below national norms (because those norms are alarmingly high!)</p> <p>Approximately 40% of St. Catherine students are English as Additional Language learners and almost half of those students are in the first three years of learning English. EAL students make up far more than 40% of our "students of concern" on K-3 literacy screens and Provincial Achievement tests and they also make up a significant number of our ISP students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• St. Catherine school will have increased social interaction and activity and reduced screen time for junior high students during break times this year. This will be apparent from observations by administration and by participation of students in programming (such as student leadership and intramural sports). In the long term, this is expected to produce more positive mental health which will be observable on survey data (*New - Schollie Survey)• Students in all grade levels at St. Catherine will demonstrate knowledge and application of positive mental health and socialization strategies that they have learned through the mental health programming available. This should produce observable positive changes on survey data and decreases in recess incidents of isolation and/or bullying (from records of administration)• Students with English as Additional Language at St. Catherine School will continue to adapt strategies to increase their fluency in English. They will be situated so that they will have the opportunity to achieve at an "Acceptable Standard" on standardized tests like Provincial Achievement Tests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Half time (15 hour) position dedicated to working with students who are learning English as an Additional Language.• Hosting a Cultural Day where students and families are encouraged to share their heritage with the wider school community.• Programing from the Mental Health Capacity Building Team in classrooms.• Family School Liaison Counsellor is at the school supporting students for 2.5 days a week.• Highlighting of Staff Support Services during monthly staff meetings. <p>** New - Cell Phone and Personal Device policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engaged school community throughout 2024-2025 regarding the appetite to engage in a full, bell-to-bell "no cellphone" policy school wide. There was nearly unanimous support.• Starting in the 2025-2026 year, students will not be allowed access to cellphones between the bell that starts the day until the last dismissal bell. <p>** New - Connection Programing at Lunch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school is running a formalized intramural program in which teachers help organize rosters and maintain standings. Program is highlighted during morning announcements by announcing upcoming games and maintaining standings.• Athlete of the Month award, as chosen by their peers, given each month to a student who i s demonstrating excellent sporting conduct and strives to better themselves physically.• Go Girls/Game On programing hosted by Big Brothers, Big Sisters.• Communi-TEA club once a week, hosted by Family School Liaison Counsellor. <p>** New -Increasing Support Services for Vulnerable Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In alignment with divisional strategies, St. Catherine School has implemented a hybrid approach to the Inclusive Education Lead with one person being an in-class EA coach and support with the other managing the administrative portion of the role.• The new position includes 0.1 FTE worth of release time in order to support the implementation of programing for students with exceptional needs.