February 18, 2016

Dear St. Luke families,

I write this letter in conjunction with Michael Hauptman, the Elk Island Catholic Schools' Superintendent, and the Elk Island Catholic Schools (EICS) Board of Trustees to inform you of:

- an update on the EICS Board of Trustees ongoing discussions relating to the St. Luke Catholic School Junior High school program; and

- what is our role as a school community to show our support for a favourable decision to keep the junior high program at St. Luke Catholic School.

Two years ago, the EICS Board of Trustees Board engaged the St. Luke community in a conversation about the future and direction of the Junior High School program at St. Luke. The conversation was whether or not Grades 7 and 8 should be kept, or whether those students should have been absorbed into the various other schools within the district.

At that time, the EICS Board was convinced to keep the Junior High School program. This decision was based in large part on the feedback that was received by the community indicating a large demand for the program, and the understanding that this demand was enough to maintain the program. There was significant number of families from St. Luke who choose to leave that had previously voiced their commitment to the School Board.

As a result of the above, the EICS Board indicated in September of 2015 that they would once again be considering whether the Junior High School program at St. Luke's should be continued. Current data would suggest that this program be closed due to the low numbers.

To demonstrate that the Junior High School program should not be closed at St. Luke's, we must do all we can to show the School Board that we support the Junior High School program and that we stand united as a school community, committed to preserving and growing the school that we have come to know and love.

In collaboration with the St. Luke Parent Advisory Council, there are two ways it is felt this sentiment can be demonstrated.

Early Registration

If we are to promise the EICS Board that the Junior High School program will be well attended, we must do more than verbally indicate this intention. The St. Luke Parent Advisory Council is calling for parents of Junior High School students staying at St. Luke's for the 2016-2017 school year to complete an early register. As part of your early registration we ask all families to complete the Data Verification Form in PowerSchool between March 1-7, 2016. We will have computers available at the Open House on March 1st for families to complete the online Data Verification Form. Also families with children going into junior high are encouraged to write a post-dated cheque of May 31, 2016 to St. Luke Catholic School to show their commitment. This way, we will have the numbers in place to show our support to the EICS Board.

St. Luke Open House

An open house for St. Luke Catholic School will be held on March 1, 2016, to which members of the EICS Board have been invited. We strongly encourage all concerned parents to attend to demonstrate their commitment to the Junior High School program, and to show the School Board that we are a community dedicated to St. Luke Catholic School.

Finally, on March 16, 2016, members of the Parent Advisory Council will be presenting to the EICS Board the many positive reasons as to why St. Luke's Junior High School program is viable and worth supporting. At this meeting the trustees will decide on the future viability of the junior high program.

I am confident that by working together, we can demonstrate to the EICS Board that we are a unified, supportive and cohesive school community, dedicated to maintaining and growing St. Luke Catholic School.

If you have any other positive ideas or suggestions that might assist in demonstrating our support and commitment to St. Luke, please do not hesitate to contact me at 780.922.5960, or at aoifec@eics.ab.ca. I would welcome and look forward to your feedback.

Blessings,

Mrs. Aoife Cahill
Principal