



## NEWS RELEASE

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### Catholic school enrolment tops 20,000

For the first time in the school division's history, student enrolment at Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools exceeds 20,000 students.

As of September 30, 2022, enrolment for pre-kindergarten – Grade 12 students in the division is 20,513—943 more students compared to the same period in the 2021-22 school year and 540 more than projected.

"After slower-than-expected growth during the pandemic, the number of students we are welcoming is really encouraging," said Diane Boyko, Board of Education chair. "Knowing that parents entrust us with the education of their children is always a bit humbling, and it helps keep our responsibility as educators top of mind."

Families new to Canada and re-engaging families who struggled to remain connected to their school over the past couple years (in-person or online) contributed significantly to the overall growth.

Members of the division's Attendance Care Team have spent a significant amount of time reaching out to and visiting parents and caregivers to identify and overcome barriers they experienced that inhibited full participation in learning.

Since June 2022, over 570 students new to Canada have been welcomed into GSCS schools. Bishop Filevich Ukrainian Bilingual School—Saskatchewan's only Ukrainian bilingual school—has experienced the most dramatic increase with the number of students almost doubling because of the number of Ukrainian families fleeing war in their home country.

"More students means the need for more resources to serve those families who chose Catholic faith-based education," said Boyko. "We're happy to be able to offer comprehensive services to students, and areas like English as an Additional language and counselling services to support the mental health and well-being of students are going to be stretched. We'll continue to work with the Ministry of Education to encourage investment in those, and other, important areas."

Enrolment data has been submitted to the Ministry of Education for verification and approval. Depending on provincial enrolment numbers, additional funding later in the year to support higher-than-projected enrolment is a possibility.

With 50 schools and over 20,000 students, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools is Saskatchewan's largest Catholic school division, providing Catholic education from pre-kindergarten through Grade 12 in Saskatoon and area, Biggar, Humboldt, Martensville and Warman. We are rooted in faith, growing in knowledge and reaching out to transform the world.

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