

Society for Christian Education
in Southern Alberta
Spring Membership Meeting



Meeting Date: Monday, May 27, 2024

7:30 pm

802-6 Ave. N., Lethbridge

Included:

Minutes of November 27, 2023 meeting

Proposed 2024/25 Budget

Board Election Nominees

SCESA Guidelines for Creating a Safe and
Caring School for LGBTQ+ Students



Annual Spring Membership Meeting

Society for Christian Education in Southern Alberta
Monday, May 27, 2024, 7:30 pm Immanuel Christian Secondary School

Agenda

Welcome	Brendan Scholten <i>Board Chair</i>
Song: <i>Cornerstone</i>	
Opening Devotions	
Minutes of November 27, 2023 meeting and motion to approve same	Daniel Hummel <i>Board Secretary</i>
Service Awards and Recognition	Barbi Wall, <i>ICES</i> Matt Bekkering, <i>ICSS</i> Jason Ferrie, <i>SCESA</i> Monica Loewen, <i>SCESA</i> Brendan Scholten, <i>SCESA Board</i>
TfT Presentation	Alan Riewe/Mike Greeno Erika Anderson
Executive Director Report	Monica Loewen <i>Executive Director</i>
Presentation of the 2023-2024 Budget and motion to approve the same	Scott Van't Land <i>Board Treasurer</i>
Election of New Board Members	Dan Hummel <i>Nomination Committee</i>
Members Business	Brendan Scholten <i>Board Chair</i>
Closing	Dave Neels <i>Board Vice Chair</i>

Coffee Break

Addendum A Review Taskforce Presentation – “*SCESA Guidelines for Creating a Safe & Caring School for LGBTQ+ Students*”
Joni Brandsma

Round Table Facilitated Discussions

Cornerstone

Verse 1

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
But wholly trust in Jesus' name.

Chorus

Christ alone, Cornerstone
Weak made strong in the Savior's love
Through the storm, He is Lord
Lord of all.

Verse 2

When darkness seems to hide His face
I rest on His unchanging grace
In every high and stormy gale
My anchor holds within the veil
My anchor holds within the veil

Chorus

Verse 3

When He shall come with trumpet
sound
Oh may I then in Him be found
Dressed in His righteousness alone
Faultless to stand before the throne.

Chorus

Minutes of the Fall Society Meeting November 27, 2023

1. Welcome - Brendan Scholten, Board Chair, at 7:30
2. Song- How Deep the Father's Love
3. Opening Devotions- Vince Peters, ICSS Science teacher- Devotion on Thanksgiving- what do devotions look like in high school- Bible Reading, questions, and prayer
4. Minutes of May 29, 2023, Spring Society Meeting- Daniel Hummel, Board Secretary
 - **MSC** to approve the minutes of Spring Society Meeting- Motion made by Josh deHaan, seconded by Amy Ovinge. Carried.
5. Approval of meeting agenda- Brendan Scholten, Board Chair
 - **MSC** to approve Fall Society Meeting Agenda- Motion made by Alan Riewe, seconded by Josh deHaan. Carried
6. Presentation of 2022/23 Audited Financial Statements- Nadine Granson, Avail CPA
7. Approval of 2022/23 Audited Financial Statements- Scott Van't Land, Board Treasurer

- **MSC** to approve 2022/23 Audited Financial Statements- Motion made by Amy Ovinge, seconded by Josh deHaan. Carried
- 8. Tft Presentation- lead Tft teachers, Alan Riewe and Erika Anderson gave update from both campus what Tft looks like at each campus
 - ICES- update on chapel themes and how students are working with local organizations in the community
 - ICSS- staff is working on updating their Deep Hopes, monthly Tft newsletter is created to keep parents informed on chapels, classroom devotions and faith/curriculum integration and community service
- 9. Coffee Break for Fellowship, networking, questions and transparency with the Board
- 10. Executive Director Report- Monica Loewen, Executive Director
 - What is ICS? Why Christian Education
 - Focus on 3 areas- buildings, buses, Bibles- and how the Society supports both schools
- 11. Strategic Plan Report- Brendan Scholten, Board Chair
 - Main points
 - i. Christian Content in Education
 - ii. Building and Infrastructure
 - iii. Community Involvement
 - iv. Roles and Responsibilities of the Board and Society Members
 - **MSC** to approve the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan as presented- Motion made by Josh deHaan, seconded by Alan Riewe. Carried
- 12. Members Business- Brendan Scholten, Board Chair
 - Strategic Plan looks great but how are you going to implement the plans especially regarding Christian Content and Community Involvement? The Plan gives no direction in implementation. The Board will keep Society members and parents informed on what is being done in completing the Strategic plan. A good example of Christian Content in Education was Vince Peter's opening devotions at the Society Meeting- showing/explaining what devotions looks like in high school.
- 13. Closing Prayer- Dave Neels, Board Vice-Chair
- 14. Adjournment- Brendan Scholten, Board Chair

Immanuel Christian Schools

SCESA

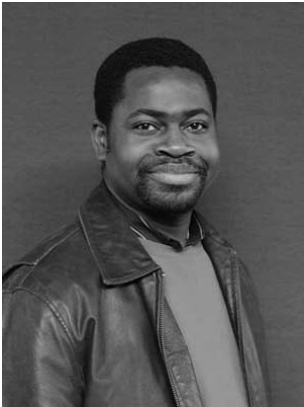
2024-2025 Budget

	Operations 2024-2025		% of Total Rev/Exp		Operations 2023-2024		% of Total Rev/Exp	Capital
Revenues								
District #51 - Plant O & M Revenue	\$320,000		15.6%		\$310,000		19.7%	
District #51 - Transportation	\$500,000		24.4%		\$49,500		3.2%	
Fees: Membership - Parents	\$58,750		2.9%		\$58,750		3.7%	
Fees: Membership Non-Parent (50 families)	\$12,500		0.6%		\$12,500		0.8%	
Fees: School Fees (235 families)	\$937,500		45.8%		\$931,500		59.3%	
Option Fees for ICSS Campus	\$32,000		1.6%		\$32,000		2.0%	
Fees: Transportation (125 families)	\$262,500		12.8%		\$252,000		16.0%	
Less: Reduced School Fees	(75,000)		-3.7%		(75,000)		-4.8%	
Total Revenue		2,048,250	100%			1,571,250	100%	
Expenses								
Instructional								
Option Fees to be paid to the District	\$32,000				\$32,000			
Salaries-Instructional	\$110,000				\$105,000			
Teaching For Transformation	\$32,000				\$21,000			
Christian Professional Development	\$25,000				\$25,000			
Trades Programs Contracts	\$65,000				\$62,800			
Promotion/Development	\$25,000				\$22,500			
Subtotal		\$289,000	14.1%			\$268,300	15.3%	
Society Office								
Salaries	\$220,000				\$220,000			
Pension/Insurance/Gov't Deductions	\$45,500				\$45,500			
Office Supplies/Copier/Postage	\$4,000				\$4,000			
In-Service Training/ IT Equipment/Promotion	\$3,000				\$2,500			
Subtotal		\$272,500	13.3%			\$272,000	15.5%	
Miscellaneous								
Fees for Services	\$20,000				\$20,000			
Membership Fees (PCCE/CSI/Other)	\$45,000				\$45,000			
Bank charges & interest/Bad Debts	\$10,000				\$10,000			
GST (Net)	\$20,000				\$20,000			
Subtotal		\$95,000	4.6%			\$95,000	5.4%	

Board Nominations—Spring 2024

The Board is asking the Society to elect 4 members to the Society Board. Brendan Scholten and Dave Neels have each completed their first term and have allowed their names to stand for re-election for a second, two-year term. There are also two current vacancies on the board which need to be filled. Thank you to each of the nominees for allowing their name to stand for election and for being willing to serve our school community in this way.

Justus Acquaye



I am Justus Acquaye, a father to three lovely girls who all attend Immanuel Christian Schools, I am also a member of Grace Community Church – Diamond City.

My family relocated from the UK to Lethbridge in 2022 in search of a more biblically conducive environment to raise our kids and by God's Grace we found that in Lethbridge; Immanuel Christian and Grace Community Church.

In the UK, I was an Elder in my Church and Trustee to both my Church and my local Scouts society. God willing if elected, I hope to bring all my previous life experiences to bear in being a faithful steward, first to God and to whatever task I am assigned to.

Brett Houweling



My name is Brett Houweling I am a K-12 alumni of Immanuel Christian School. I am married to my beautiful wife Anna and together we have 4 rambunctious children Breslyn (9/Grade 4) Adele (7/Grade 1) Corbin (4) Zoey (1). We live in Picture Butte and faithfully attend Westminster Chapel PCA where Anna and I are also the youth group leaders.

I am blessed to have become a partner in Alberta Prime and have over twelve years of experience in commercial transport and livestock brokering. I am a firm believer in Christian education and have become a strong supporter of Immanuel Christian Schools. Thanks again for your consideration.

Dave Neels



My name is Dave Neels. My wife Heidi and I have 5 children attending ICS, ranging from grades 2—11. We live near Fort Macleod and are members of Fresh Life Church. I believe a Christian education for our children is a great companion in bring them through their adolescent years.

I am a contractor by trade and the owner of Neelco Contracting, which has been a great benefit to me as I have been serving on the Building Committee and Master Facility Planning Committee. I've enjoyed my four years on the Board and am eager to complete a second term.

Amy Ovinge



My name is Amy Ovinge. I am an ICS alumni and all three of my children have attended ICS as well. My oldest has graduated, my middle is graduating this year and my youngest is in grade 8. My husband is a beekeeper and I run the business side of his operation. I also help lead the music at our church while taking care of our home and looking forward to the birth of our first grandchild.

I previously served on the society board from 2014 - 2020 and served as the treasurer for four of those years. Praying that our schools would be a light in the Lord in this dark world and that our students would live as children of light.

Brendan Scholten



My name is Brendan Scholten. I graduated from ICS in 1995 and am proud to have my children now attend Immanuel. My wife Jackie and I have three children - Shaun (gr. 12), Ben (gr. 9) and Natalie (gr. 7.)

In addition to being involved in the family farm, I am also an account manager at the Royal Bank here in Lethbridge. I've enjoyed my first term on the board, first as treasurer and this past year as the chair, and would enjoy completing a second term.

Prakash Timsina



My name is Prakash Timsina and I was born in Bhutan. When I was two years old, my family, along with other Nepali speaking Bhutanese people were evicted and we ended up living in a refugee camp in Nepal. I lived and grew up as a refugee boy with no hope for the future, but everything changed when God opened a door for me and my family to immigrate to Canada in 2009.

Now I pastor the largest Nepali church in Canada. I am married to Rekha and we are blessed with two kids, Precious and Peter! When it was time for my daughter to be in school I was recommended by my friend to Immanuel Christian School and this is how it started. I am thankful for ICS for it is a joy for me to see my daughter grow in the knowledge of our loving God.

Preamble

The mission of Immanuel Christian Schools is to provide a Christian environment in which God calls His children to develop and use their gifts for joyful service in His kingdom. This needs to be an environment where all students are loved and valued and encouraged as they grow and seek out their identity in Christ.

In 2015, the Board tasked a small group of people to draft a document addressing guidelines for how to care for LGBTQ+ students within our schools. This was, in part, in response to the direction from the provincial government at the time to create GSA's (gay-straight alliances) within Alberta high schools. That document, the initial Guidelines for Creating a Safe & Caring School for LGBTQ Students, was adopted in 2016 and has been a part of the Society's documents since that time.

In the 9 years since then, our world and culture continues to change quickly. There are conversations being had today that we might not have fully anticipated just nine short years ago. However, what hasn't changed is our desire to care for our students well here at Immanuel. As part of that commitment, the SCESA Board, school administration teams and ICSS counselor took part in a two day learning opportunity facilitated by Ed Noot, the now retired Executive Director of SCSBC - the Society for Christian Schools in British Columbia. He encouraged us to be intentional as we think about this topic of same-sex attraction and gender identity and how this impacts our students. He challenged us to re-write the narrative, suggesting the dream of gay ICS alumni who look back at their time at Immanuel, recognizing that the school did not affirm their life choices, but loved and cared for them well and where they felt wanted and included.

One of the next steps for the Board was to revisit the 2016 document, ensuring it is still appropriate for today's school setting. A small task force, composed of Joni Brandsma, Dan Hummel, Monica Loewen and Scott Van't Land, revised the former document into the document presented to you here this evening.

We now would like to hear from you, the parents and grandparents who make up Immanuel Christian Schools. We would like to have some intentional conversations after the Spring Society meeting, focusing around three questions. There will be someone at each table who will facilitate the conversation, as well as take good notes. The plan is to spend 15 minutes on each question, totalling around 45 minutes. This is simply discussion - we are not making motions or approving anything. We just want to hear from you what your thoughts on this document are.

Society for Christian Education in Southern Alberta (SCESA) **Guidelines for Creating a Safe and Caring School for LGBTQ+ Students**

The purposes of SCESA are to establish and maintain one or more schools to provide education based on the Bible as the infallible Word of God, properly relating the works of God and the Bible as interpreted in the Apostles' Creed, Nicene Creed, Athanasian Creed, Heidelberg Catechism, and the Westminster Larger & Shorter Catechisms. SCESA carries out these purposes through the operation and support of Immanuel Christian Schools (ICS).

ICS operates with the mission *"To provide a Christian environment in which God calls His children to develop and use their gifts for joyful service in His kingdom"*. ICS further outlines its basic beliefs and philosophy in the Statement of Faith and Philosophy of Education. All ICS parents formally sign an agreement to these documents as part of the application process.

The framework that follows is based on the following basic Biblical principles:

1. **God loves all His children.** (Deut 7:9, Jer 31:3, Jn 1:12-13, Jn 3:16, Rom 5:8, Rom 8:37-39, Gal 2:20, Eph 2:4-5, 1 Jn 3:1, 1 Jn 4:14-16)
2. **We are called to serve and respect our neighbours as ourselves.** (Lev 19:18b, Mt 7:12, Mt 22:37-40, Jn 13:34-35, Rom 12:9-10, Rom 13:8-10, Gal 5:13b-14)
3. **All students are recognized as "image-bearers".** (Gen 1:26-27, 9:6, Is 64:8, Eph 4:24, Col 3:10)
4. **Both male and female are important to God's plan for humanity. Gender differences are God-given and part of His good design for us.** (Genesis 1:27)
5. **Male-female marriage, for life, is God's design for human flourishing. No other alternative marriage arrangement is approved of in the Bible.** (Gen 2:23-24, Mk 10:6-9, Rom 1: 24-27, 1 Cor 7:2)
6. **Christ-followers are called to keep expressions of their sexuality within marriage.** (Heb. 13:4)
7. **Parents bear primary responsibility for raising their children** (Deut 4:9b; Deut 6:1-9; Deut 11:18-21, Ps 78:1-8, Prov 1:8-9; Prov 3:1-12; Prov 4:1, Prov 22:6, Eph 6:1-4)

It is the desire of ICS to disciple all students to build a relationship with their savior, Jesus Christ (Jn 1:11-13, Jn 15:5, Rom 6:6-8, 2 Cor 5:17, Gal 2:20, Eph 2:10, John 14:6). ICS will create an appropriate school environment for students who identify as LGBTQ+ or who are questioning their gender identity. This document tries to provide enough guidance to our school staff to help them create a safe, caring, and hospitable school environment for all students, including LGBTQ+ students.

Guidelines

1. **Immanuel Christian Schools will be a safe and caring learning environment for all** (Mk 12:30-31, Lk 6: 27-28, Jn 13:34-35, Rom 12:9-10, 1 Cor 13:1-7, Rom 13:8, Eph 5:1-2, 1 Jn 3:11-18; 1 Jn 4:7-21)

2. ICS will not tolerate hatred or violence towards people nor bullying of any kind (Lev 19:18, Rom 12:18-21, Eph 4:29, 1 Jn 2:9, 1 Jn 3:15, 1 Jn 4:20)
3. Building a community of love and respect is of primary importance. When teachers are approached in regards to sexual orientation or gender identity, they will remind students they are known, valued and loved by God and encouraged towards places of support, such as parents/guardians and their faith communities. (Matt 11:30, Phil 1:6, 2 Tim. 2:24-25, 1 Pet 5:7)
4. Administrators and teachers will work with parents and students, providing support and resources, always mindful of the primary responsibility of parents to raise their children. The school's role is to support them in whatever ways possible. (Prov 22:6, Eph 6:4, 2 Tim 2:24-25)
5. Public displays of affection and overt sexual activity (or unseemly sensuality) on school property, to and from school, and during any school sponsored activity off-campus is prohibited to ALL students. (Mt 5:28, 1 Cor 6: 18-20, 1 Thess 4: 3-5, Heb 13:4)

A student who identifies as LGBTQ+ does not automatically mean that he or she is or will be sexually active. LGBTQ+ concerns and issues will be addressed within our biblical framework and that of student health, safety, and human rights. Sexual orientation and gender identity concerns will be addressed respectfully within our school context

As fallen people, graciously under Christ's costly redemptive and restorative work, there are many Biblical principles to which we need to be held captive (Jn 14:6, Rom 3:10, Rom 3:21-23, 1 Tim 1:15; Js 1:19-27). Principles regarding sexual morality are not the only ones that come into play on this issue. As Christ-followers, we are also called to humility, gentleness, graciousness and hospitality (Zech 7:9-10, Rom 12:3, Rom 12:9-16, Rom 13:9-14, Gal 5:22-25, Col 3:5-14, 1 Peter 4: 1-11, Eph 4:2, Phil 2:3, 1 Pet 3:8, 1 Pet 4:9; 1 Pet 5:5).

"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth." *1 Jn 3:16,18*