

Media Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RE: Rocky View Schools 2011/12 budget

The provincial government's decision to cut a number of instructional and operational grants and provide zero percent increases in the areas of Transportation and Plant Operations and Maintenance (POM) will see service levels in Rocky View Schools (RVS) drop significantly for the 2011/12 school year.

Tabled Feb. 24, 2011, the provincial budget equated into a \$4.9 million increase to RVS' basic instruction grant to cover the cost of the Alberta Teachers' Association's provincial bargained salary increase. The budget's fine print, however, outlined over \$4.2 million in cuts to other instructional grants, including the loss of revenues for Gr. 4-6 Class Size Initiative, Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AIS), and CTS and Technology equipment. The net result: RVS grant increase for 2011/12 is \$637,546.

"Once all is said and done, we'll be looking to cut instructional services by over \$3.3 million," said Board Chair Bruce Pettigrew. "Outside of finding monies for salary and benefit increases and grid rollups, we'll need to downsize our AISI project from \$2.2 million to \$1.1 million, and eliminate the evergreening of CTS and technology equipment by \$815,000."

On the operational side, Pettigrew said the Board will need to cut approximately \$1.3 million to the areas of Transportation and Plant Operation and Maintenance, having received zero percent grant increase for those areas, plus the loss of other operational grants.

"Where we will find these monies has yet to be determined," said Pettigrew. "With the provincial grants now announced, our Board will begin its budget deliberations this Thursday, beginning with defining our budget priorities and reviewing projected enrolment growth," he said. "We anticipate deliberations will be ongoing until mid-May when it will be presented to the Board for approval."

Pettigrew said the Board is anticipating that the jurisdiction's continuing enrolment growth of over 500 students each year, along with attrition and retirements, will see RVS head into the 2011/12 school year with the approximate same number of staff, but with more students.

"Class sizes will undoubtedly go up, but we feel confident our 21st C approach to teaching and learning will help ensure all students continue to succeed in learning environments that focus on building individualized learning plans," he said.

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