

Media Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 24, 2011

RE: Capital bundle announced for Rocky View Schools

After four years of advocating for much needed schools in Airdrie and Chestermere, Rocky View Schools' (RVS) efforts were rewarded, May 24, 2011, with the announcement of a capital bundle, providing funding for three new schools in the jurisdiction, with a middle and high school to be built in Airdrie and a multi-level school to be constructed in Chestermere.

At a press conference held at George McDougall High School in Airdrie, Premier Ed Stelmach announced capital funding for 35 schools in communities across Alberta. These projects are to be built through regional bundles or public-private partnerships (P3).

"It is our hope that the construction of these schools will be expedited to facilitate their opening for the elementary and middle schools no later than 2014 and 2015 for the high school," said Board Chair Dr. Bruce Pettigrew. "We are extremely grateful to the province for this capital funding, as the continued economic prosperity of Alberta has resulted in these communities being under extreme pressure to accommodate students."

According to Pettigrew, RVS' utilization rate is 85.9 percent. In Airdrie, utilization already is at 90.7 percent. Without these capital projects, by 2014 Airdrie would have been operating at 109.9 percent.

"This is an issue our Board and parent community have been working on since my first term in office," said Pettigrew. "As a trustee and Chair of the Board, I am thrilled with this announcement and the positive effect it will have on Rocky View Schools."

Pettigrew explained that the Board already has passed a contingency plan to bridge some of the emerging accommodation needs up to the end 2013. The plan includes nineteen new portable classrooms, the relocation of twelve portable classrooms, the construction of an outreach facility for the Chestermere sector (required because of a lease termination), a 150 capacity school in northwest Airdrie and a 125 capacity school for west Airdrie.

"To implement this contingency plan, we have a funding shortfall of \$8 million, of which we are still hoping to receive approval," said Pettigrew. "We're not out of the water yet."

All schools will meet high-quality provincial standards and will be built to achieve LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver certification, which will result in greater energy efficiency and provide a healthier environment through improved air quality and the use of natural light.

RVS' physical boundaries form a horseshoe around the west, north, and east boundaries of the City of Calgary. RVS serves over 17,000 students and is the fifth-largest school jurisdiction in Alberta, employing more than 2000 staff.

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