

Media Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 1, 2017

RE: 2017/18 Budget

Students continue to be the primary focus for Rocky View Schools' Board of Trustees, with its 2017/18 budget continuing to emphasize direct classroom instruction, inclusive education, specialized services for students with complex needs, and balanced literacy, numeracy, and 21st C skills.

Approved by the Board June 1, 2017, Rocky View's budget will be an estimated \$264 million for the 2017/18 school year to address the needs of 23,754 students – an increase of 1,040 FTE students over the previous year. Of the total, 77.2 percent will be directed towards instruction, 13.7 percent to plant operations and maintenance (POM), 6.09 percent to transportation, 2.98 percent to governance and administration.

"We've added 38 new teachers to our schools," said Board Chair Colleen Munro. "Thirty-one (31) new teachers at the K-8 level and seven new high school teachers. We also were able to enhance inclusive education funding by over \$575,000, bringing in new supports for students with complex and emotion needs."

Munro noted that the budget also added a new Numeracy Learning Specialist to target math competencies across the jurisdiction, as well as a Trustee as defined by the Board's new electoral boundaries approved by the Minister of Education in April 2017.

According to Darrell Couture, Associate Superintendent of Business and Operations, despite the addition of a Trustee, a Communications Manager, and a half-time Accounts Payable position, costs for administration and governance is 2.98 percent or \$8 million, falling well below the government's cap of 3.6 percent and a decrease from the previous year of 3.06 percent.

"Although our Education Centre staff members are removed from the classroom, staff remains committed to the Board's student-centered approach and continues to find efficiencies in their operations so revenues can be directed to students."

Challenges to be faced next year reflect those in the past, in that monies will need to be found to open two new schools, cover the government's carbon levy, and address insufficient grant levels for transportation.

"Although our Board continues to actively pursue ways to make RVS' student transportation system more efficient, this year we face over a \$600,000 deficit in this portfolio," said Couture.

Rocky View Schools' complete budget will be posted to the jurisdiction's website under Publications.

-30-

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Budget Backgrounder



BUDGET PRIORITIES

1. Direct classroom supports to enhance student achievement.
2. School-based services for inclusive learning environments.
3. Specialized and wrap-around services for students with complex and emotional needs.
4. Literacy & numeracy, and 21st C skills and knowledge.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- Maintained current class sizes, with the addition of 38 new teachers
- Increased numeracy supports
- Increased funding for inclusive education by 4.66 percent or \$576,000
- Increased administration & instructional supports to sustain a growing school division
- Revenues total \$264 million to address the needs of 23,754 student – an increase of 4.66 percent over the previous year
- Expenditures of \$266 million, including an operating deficit of \$2.3 million that will be drawn from reserves to cover spending of school reserves, transportation and maintenance operating deficits. In addition to these, the remaining projected deficit comes primarily from costs associated with the new web portal, the retirement of School Cash, and capital costs associated with furniture and equipment.

Direct Supports to Enhance Student Learning (69% of Budget)

- 31 FTE new K-8/9 teachers primarily to address growth at these grade levels.
- 7 FTE to new Grade 9/10-12 teachers to address enrolment growth.

Inclusive Learning Environments and Wrap-Around Services (5% of Budget)

- 3.1 percent increase in funding for inclusive education.
- 1.0 FTE new Teacher position to support a new middle school mental health program.
- 1.0 FTE new Family School Liaison to address increased needs of schools.
- 1.0 FTE new Behavior Analyst to work with complex communication students and act as a supervisor to the Division's Positive Behavior Strategists.

Literacy & Numeracy, and 21st C Skills (3% of Budget)

- 1.0 FTE new Numeracy Learning Specialist to further the Board's direction to target math competencies throughout the division.
- 1.0 FTE new IT Manager to oversee the Help desk and supervise school technologists.
- 1.0 FTE new Software Support Analyst to support PowerSchool training and manage documentation of processes.
- 1.0 FTE new Secretary for Learning Services.
- 0.5 FTE new Secretary for Technology for Learning.
- \$225,000 to support professional learning with the provision of supplies and substitute release time to further engage and support teachers with the literacy/numeracy framework.

Budget Backgrounder - 2

Governance & Administration Funding (3% of Budget)

- 1.0 FTE new Trustee
- 1.0 FTE new Communications Manager
- 0.25 FTE new Recruiter & Mentor Specialist for Human Resources
- 0.5 FTE new Accounts Payable/Accounts Receivable Clerk
- 0.5 FTE reduction in Records Coordinator for Office Services
- 0.5 FTE reduction of Secretary – File Management Project

Plant Operations & Maintenance (POM) (14% of Budget)

- 3.6 percent increase in labor costs for caretaking positions to respond to minimum wage increase.
- 14.8 FTE new caretakers to clean two new school buildings, 1 major addition, and the new CLC site in Cochrane.
- 1.0 FTE new carpenter to assist with the completion of capital, IMR and ongoing maintenance projects across the division.
- Carbon Levy increase of \$188,000 to utilities.
- Utilities, supplies, materials and equipment required to open new student spaces and to address the new facility area and increased enrolment, as well as to maintain existing aging facilities.

Transportation (6% of Budget)

- Board approval of \$325 fee per transported student living less than 2.4 kilometres from their designated school or attending a non-designated school.
- Funding of \$1.7 million for fee replacement grant.
- Incorporating 5 new routes for Prince of Peace School busing.
- Carbon levy on diesel fuel cost increase of \$163,000.
- 1.0 percent inflationary increase in bus contractor rates equating to a cost increase of \$140,000.
- 0.3 FTE reduction in Transportation Coordinator position.