

THE BRIEF

BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS



ROCKY VIEW SCHOOLS

Jan. 25, 2024

Students from W.G. Murdoch School Construct a Museum for Human Rights

- Molly Maguire, Grade 10 teacher from Crossfield's W.G. Murdoch School, presented to the Board of Trustees (the Board) of Rocky View Schools (RVS) about the Museum for Human Rights Project at the school.
- This project-based learning saw students choose a topic in human rights to research and create an exhibit. The various exhibits were then displayed as a museum Jan. 17 and school families and staff were invited to explore.
- Part of their social studies learning, the Grade 10 students were influenced initially by a virtual visit to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg. The exhibits they saw online sparked their interest and helped them decide which topic they wanted to research.
- Developing promotional materials for their exhibit and the museum was part of the project, as was creating a call to action, such as a fundraiser or letter-writing campaign, related to their topic.
- This project connects to several outcomes of RVS' Education Plan. In choosing and researching their human rights topic, students were actively engaged in meaningful and relevant learning. Throughout the project, students demonstrated critical thinking, communication, problem-solving, collaboration, cultural and global citizenship, creativity and personal growth.

Student Transportation Needs Continue to Grow

- RVS' Transportation department is serving the busing needs of approximately 12,700 students this school year, and that number is expected to rise each year as the populations of RVS communities continue to grow. 87 per cent of those are RVS students and 13 per cent are students from Calgary Catholic School Division for which we provide service.
- The Transportation department is facing challenges securing enough drivers and buses for the many routes it provides. Post-pandemic supply chain issues continue to create a chronic shortage of new buses and replacement parts.
- To help with these challenges, Transportation has several initiatives to support our bus contractors to attract and retain bus drivers for its routes. To address concerns regarding providing up-to-date information about schedules and delays to students and parents/guardians, a new app is currently being pilot tested, with a full rollout expected in the next few months.

Indigenous Learning Branch Provides Important Support for Staff and Students

- RVS' Indigenous Learning Branch continues to support staff and students in ensuring Indigenous Ways of Knowing are part of curricular and resource supports, professional learning, protocol guidance and planning for recognition for significant events. The branch is committed to building relationships with the

Indigenous communities in Treaty 7 and offers support and guidance to the Indigenous Advisory Circle, newly formed in fall 2023.

- The branch was expanded in the fall of 2023 and now encompasses a director, two learning specialists, two Indigenous cultural liaisons and an Indigenous connector.
- To date, the branch has received and responded to 131 requests for support from school-based staff.
- For the remainder of the 2023/24 school year, the Indigenous Learning Branch will focus on continuing to support administrators, teachers and other school-based staff in their efforts, including supporting planning for events such as National Indigenous Peoples History Month and Red Dress Day, and providing important professional learning opportunities. Discussions with Tsuut'ina Nation to complete an Education Services Agreement (ESA) will continue and initial discussions with Mini Thni regarding an ESA will be sought.

Board Receives Financial Update

- The Board was provided with an update on the budget for the 2023/24 fiscal year which, despite a \$1 million increase in budgeted revenues, is still feeling significant pressures.
- The increase in revenue is a result of several factors, including additional supplemental enrolment funding announced by the provincial government in November 2023 and increased English as an Additional Language funding.
- Due to increased leave utilization and corresponding costs, earlier this fall significant budget adjustments were made at the school and central level to reduce spending in areas such as professional development, supplies and the freezing of planned expenditures related to technology and other equipment.
- RVS' reserve balance is projected to be \$4.5 million at the end of the current school year. This constitutes 1.4 per cent of RVS' operating budget, just above the required threshold established by Alberta Education.

Protocol Ensures Student Safety During Inclement Weather

- A recent cold snap resulted in the implementation of RVS' Inclement Weather protocol. After a mild fall and first few months of winter, the weather changed drastically in early January 2024 when temperatures dipped below -40 degrees Celsius. Temperature, road conditions and the amount of ice and snow are factors leading to implementation of the Inclement Weather protocol.
 - Committees for each area composed of one trustee and a designated principal met before 5 a.m. to review the conditions and make recommendations to the Superintendent of Schools.
 - Based on these recommendations, the Superintendent decided to close all schools (except for online schools) and cancel all buses on Jan. 12. On Jan. 15, schools remained open, but buses were not running in part due to contractor shortages.
 - Parents/caregivers were informed about the closure and/or buses via a variety of methods including direct email, the RVS app, corporate website, news media and social media. These communications went well Jan. 11 and Jan. 12 but a system outage within RVS on Jan. 15 led to emails being delayed until 7:10 a.m.
 - Although schools were closed Jan. 12, staff were on site to ensure a safe, warm space was available for any students who may have been dropped off.
 - The decision to keep children at home during questionable weather – regardless of whether RVS has closed schools – is ultimately the responsibility of parents/guardians.
- Despite no buses running on Monday, Jan. 15, 68 per cent of RVS' overall student population attended school that day.

Board Ratifies Agreement with Alberta Teachers Association Local

- After multiple bargaining sessions on collective agreement matters determined to be negotiated between RVS and Alberta Teachers Association (ATA) Local #35, the Board ratified the Mediated Memorandum of Settlement and previously agreed to items.
- The Board awaits information from ATA Local #35 to determine if they will ratify the settlement.

Balancing Airdrie Student Spaces Engagement Open Houses Begin

- The first of four open houses for the Balancing Airdrie Student Spaces (BASS) engagement on proposed options for alleviating space pressures in overutilized Airdrie schools was held Jan. 23 at George McDougall High School.
- Families, students, staff and interested community members are encouraged to attend an open house and can also find detailed information and provide feedback online through [RVSEngage](#).
- Open houses are scheduled:
 - Jan. 30 at C.W. Perry School (6:30 to 8 p.m.)
 - Jan. 31 at W.H. Croxford High School (6:30 to 8 p.m.)
 - Feb. 6 at Bert Church High School (6:30 to 8 p.m.)
- The Board appreciates the time and effort of area administrators who acted as facilitators at the open house and to all those who participate in this important engagement.