

Superintendent of Schools

August 24, 2017

Dear Parents & Guardians,

This spring the Government of Alberta passed *An Act to Reduce School Fees*, with the intent of reducing the cost of public education for Alberta families. Through the legislation, the government eliminated Board Instructional Fees, which covered the cost of textbooks, workbooks, paper, and photocopying. The act and accompanying regulations also specify new rules for school fees and student transportation fees, both of which now must be approved by the Minister of Education.

School Fees

With the elimination of Board Instructional Fees, beginning September 2017 RVS families will no longer be charged \$25 for kindergarten students, \$105 for grades 1 – 8 students, and/or \$145 for students in grades 9-12. Families may, however, be charged fees for services that enhance their child's educational experience. Those include: optional course fees; activities and field trip fees; extra-curricular fees; non-curricular travel fees; non-curricular supplies, materials and services; and, lunch supervision and activities.

As defined through the new regulations, each school is required to establish an annual fee schedule by June 30 for review and approval by the Minister. These fees represent the maximum amount that can be charged during the school year. For field trips, fees will only be collected as trips are planned. For optional course fees, applicable revenues and expenses are to be tracked for each course where a fee has been established. At the end of each school year, if revenues exceed expenses by more than \$10 per student enrolled in the course, the school shall refund the surplus funds to parents.

Schools will waive fees for parents who provide a copy of their Goods and Services Tax (GST) credit notice with the names of dependent children listed. This waiver is applicable only to optional course fees and not items such as field trip fees, team fees, optional programs, or non-curricular travel.

Each school's approved annual fee schedule is now accessible on its public website under "Our School/School Fees".

Transportation Fees

In relation to student transportation fees, the act and accompanying regulations define that fees can no longer be charged for students who live 2.4 km or greater from their designated school. Students who live closer than 2.4 km from their designated school or who attend a non-designated school – defined by government to include programs of choice such as French Immersion and Christian programs – are subject to Minister approved transportation fees.

In August, RVS received notice that its proposed transportation fee of \$325 would not be approved, rather the Minister set a maximum per student fee of \$280. On August 24, 2017, RVS



Board held a special meeting and revised its 2017/18 transportation fees schedule, provided below:

	Per Grade 1-12 Student Per Annum	Maximum Per Family Per Annum
Resident students living less than 2.4 kilometres (as determined by Government of Alberta approved software) from their designated school	\$280	\$560
Resident students transported to a school other than their designated school	\$280	\$560
Students shuttled between Springbank Middle School and Springbank High School	\$280	N/A
Non-resident students accessing a school bus within the boundary of Rocky View Schools and attending either Beiseker, Kathryn, Westbrook, Indus, Crossfield Elementary or W.G. Murdoch schools	\$280	\$560
Non-resident students accessing a school bus within the boundary of RVS	\$450	N/A
Non-resident students accessing a school bus outside the boundary of RVS	\$1,000	N/A

Families who have already paid RVS' \$325 student transportation fee will be refunded \$45/student in October.

RVS' recognizes there has been significant uncertainty about the status of both school and transportation fees. We hope this letter provides clarity on fee changes applicable for this school year. For more information about *An Act to Reduce School Fees* and accompanying regulations, please visit Alberta Education's "Information about Bill 1", accessible at: <https://education.alberta.ca/bill-1-an-act-to-reduce-school-fees/how-bill-1-would-help-families/>

Sincerely,



Greg Luterbach
Superintendent of Schools