

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 10, 2020**

**RE: 2020 Budget Priorities & Surveys**

At the March 5, 2020, public meeting, Rocky View Schools' (RVS) Board of Trustees established budget priorities to guide the development of its 2020/21 budget. Largely influenced by over 1,680 stakeholders who provided feedback in February through a public budget priorities survey, the board will focus its allocation of dollars on:

- Student success through direct funding to classrooms;
- School-based supports for students with complex needs;
- Wellness supports; and
- Literacy and numeracy skill development.

“Across all surveys, stakeholders asked that the board find cost savings outside of the classroom wherever possible to minimize the impact to class sizes and supports for students with complex needs,” said Board Chair Fiona Gilbert. “Our board’s priorities echo these wishes; our first priority is always to support our students’ learning but we’ve a challenge ahead to table a balanced budget.”

According to Gilbert, with the provincial budget tabled, Feb. 27, 2020, the board is hard at work reviewing Alberta Education’s new funding formula to understand its implications on the jurisdiction. As was announced with the budget, RVS is expecting to receive just under \$238 million in operating grants for next year – an increase of \$2.8 million over the current year, which will be confirmed by government in April.

Based on this announcement, RVS initial analysis reveals that the jurisdiction will be looking for significant cost savings and revenue generation to offset the \$6 million in one-time operational reserve funds used to balance RVS’ 2019/20 budget, to educate an anticipated 857 new students in 2020/21 and address other inflationary pressures such as rising insurance and transportation costs.

Gilbert said from March 10 to 30, 2020, RVS will administer a second budget survey that outlines a variety of cost saving ideas and potential revenue sources. The questions being asked were shaped by the recent provincial budget, as well as feedback received through the budget priorities survey.

“Results from this survey will be released, May 21, 2020, as our board prepares to deliberate and approve a balanced budget to government by May 31, 2020,” said Gilbert. “We encourage our public to participate to help shape the delivery of our services under this new funding model.”

Results of RVS’ budget priority survey and a link to the second budget balancing strategies survey is accessible on its public website under 2020 Budget Consultation at <https://www.rockyview.ab.ca/2020-budget-consultation/>.

**For more information, contact:**

Erlene Gococo

Communications Officer  
403.945.4146