

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 9, 2020**

**RE: May 2020 Budget Reductions**

Rocky View Schools (RVS) is incredibly proud of how its staff has responded to these challenging times in supporting its students, families, and one another. In response to the government's surprise announcement that it intends to reduce school boards' instructional and transportation grants for the remainder of the school year, the Board will be reducing its operating budget by \$5.03 million to match the government adjustment.

"Recognizing the changing landscape as we move to an at-home learning environment, we will reduce staffing by \$3.46 million and transportation by \$1.57 million beginning this spring," said Board Chair Fiona Gilbert. "Upon thorough consideration of the government's announcement, our Board has decided to repurpose all central funds originally allocated for substitute teachers, end nearly 50 support staff temporary contracts, as well as temporarily layoff 240 support staff effective May 10."

Given the Board's priority is on the continuity of learning, Gilbert explained that layoffs will include select Education Centre support staff, as well as school-based learning commons staff and receptionists. To support student learning and services for families, approximately 50 per cent of RVS' learning assistants will be retained, while the balance will be temporarily laid off.

"Volunteer layoffs, too, will be investigated in the coming weeks to mitigate these staff layoffs," added Gilbert.

Staff on temporary layoff will have the option to maintain health, dental, long-term disability, and life insurance with the Board paying the premiums.

As asked by government, transportation costs to the tune of \$1.57 million will be reduced for the months of April, May and June, with bus contracts already being renegotiated to respond to this funding reduction.

"We value each staff member and are saddened by these temporary layoffs," said Gilbert. "We look forward to having our full team back when schools reopen, and students return."

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