

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 8, 2020

### RE: RVS Board of Trustees Approves Safe Return to Class Fund Spending Plan

Committed to the health and well-being of our students and staff, the Rocky View Schools (RVS) Board of Trustees has approved the spending plan for the \$9,285,850 federal government Safe Return to Class Fund allocated to the jurisdiction from the Government of Alberta.

“The Board of Trustees appreciates the dollars provided by the federal government to help cover additional costs for COVID-19-related school measures and is confident in the jurisdiction plan to spend the funds over the school year,” said Board Chair, Fiona Gilbert. “The Board was also pleased that the provincial government afforded local school boards the autonomy to use these dollars to address local needs, recognizing we are in the best position to understand the needs and priorities of our communities.”

The approved spending plan recognizes the unique needs of each of RVS’ schools, allocating \$2 million directly to schools. “The principal, in consultation with their school community, will decide how best to address local school issues related to COVID-19,” said Gilbert. This could include funds for social-emotional learning supports, supervision, breakfast/lunch programming, staffing and class pressures, sound amplification systems, reading materials, manipulatives, and others.

The remaining funds will be allocated across the jurisdiction as follows:

- \$2.8 million in additional teacher staffing to support online offerings and address class pressures now and in February (the one-time transition point to change from in-class learning to online or vice-versa);
- \$2 million for additional substitute teachers resulting from COVID-19-related absences;
- \$1 million for centrally funded personal protective equipment and sanitizer;
- \$900 thousand to maintain bus routes (that could be combined) to minimize the number of riders on the bus;
- \$400 thousand for additional online curriculum resources, technical support and equipment to better support individuals working from home;
- \$200 thousand for Education Centre staffing to support schools and departments with additional hiring required as a result of COVID-19 and supporting schools when there are identified COVID-19 cases.

“These federal funds will supplement the \$2 million the Board already committed from reserves to increase caretaking staffing in all schools/sites and \$1.4 million of 2019/2020 operating funds dedicated towards COVID-19-related health and safety expenditures,” said Gilbert. “Our Board also recognizes the evolving nature of the pandemic and RVS will continue to monitor and respond to the needs of the jurisdiction in the best interests of our students, staff and school communities.”

See additional information on the Safe Return to Class Fund from the [Government of Canada](#) and the [Government of Alberta](#).

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