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2023-2026 Capital Plan Overview

Summary

RVS provides a positive quality learning experience to over 26,625 public students in Kindergarten to Grade 12, and an appropriate number of spaces for students is required to support their learning and wellbeing. RVS is in urgent need of government approval and funding for new schools, additions and modular classrooms to accommodate our fast-growing communities. Investing in space for students improves students' opportunity and ability to learn and achieve their absolute best.

Among communities with populations over 10,000 people, Cochrane and Airdrie are the two fastest growing Alberta communities, with Chestermere in ninth, according to recently released census data. Prioritizing the need for schools in these communities is challenging as they are experiencing rapid growth at the same time.

With hundreds of children expected in these communities the need for space is immediate.

Without additional school facilities RVS' overall utilization rate is expected to increase from the current 87 per cent to a critical rate of 101 per cent by 2026. Appropriate funding for new schools is required to ensure RVS' school capacity can keep up with student population growth in its communities and does not experience the accommodation challenges it struggled with several years ago.

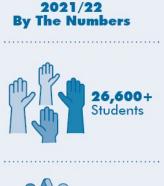
RVS At a Glance

Vision

Rocky View Schools is a world-class learning organization where all students achieve their absolute best.

Purpose

Rocky View Schools connects with all students to ensure that everyone learns, belongs, and succeeds.







16 K = 6/7/8/9

- 12 Elementary Schools
- 8 Middle Schools
- 8 High Schools3 Colony Schools
- 3 RVS Community
- Learning Centres
- 1 Online High School
- 1 Online K Gr. 8 School
- 1 K 12



RVS:

- represents a resident population of over 170,000 people.
- educates over 26,600 students.
- transports over 10,000 students daily, including students attending Catholic schools located in the same geographic area.
- includes over 1,750 square miles (456,372 hectares) of land.
- is the fifth largest school jurisdiction in Alberta.

Students Come From Diverse Areas Including:

- remote locations in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains;
- Tsuu T'ina First Nation and Stoney Nakoda First Nation;
- farms and ranches in areas where there is low population density;
- acreage communities;
- Hutterite colonies;
- satellite/suburb communities experiencing intense population growth; twelve urban centres (hamlets, towns or cities); and,
- areas annexed by Calgary where the school jurisdiction boundaries remain unchanged.

RVS is creative in maximizing the existing space to offer the best learning environment possible; even so, more space is required.

Our Schools

As of September 2021, the regular school buildings in RVS boundaries include:

- 23 core schools built since 1990 and generally located in the major growth centres of Cochrane, Airdrie, Chestermere and Langdon. Two of these were replacement schools
- 11 core schools built in the 1970s and 1980s. These are generally in original condition with varying degrees of upgrades, such as additions and minor modernizations
- 15 schools with significant renovations or additions, including several where the original building dates to the 1950s
- **385** portable or modular classrooms dating from 1979 to present
- 4 Private, Public Partnership (P3) schools opened since 2012
- 6 New school buildings opened since 2016

Upcoming Approved Facilities:

- Langdon Junior/Senior High School: This facility is being built as a P3 school and is expected to be completed by September 2024. The opening capacity of the school will be 900 student spaces.
- Bow Valley High School Addition: Announced March 4, 2022.





Historical Enrolment and Growth

RVS, Alberta's fifth largest school division, increases each year by about 750-1,000 students or four to five per cent growth annually. Generally, RVS' percentage of growth is double the growth of the larger school authorities in Calgary. This is partly due to families with school age children moving into RVS communities and partly due to natural growth.

Did You Know?

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Kindergarten	1,976	2,008	1,918	1,527	1,907
Grade 1 Grade 2 Grade 3	2,006 1,911 1,996	2,033 2,072 1,933	2,082 2,062 2,123	1,893 1,954 2,017	1,972 2,062 2,085
Summary	5,913	6,038	6,267	5,864	6,119
Grade 4 Grade 5 Grade 6	2,041 1,953 1,829	2,038 2,115 1,979	2,019 2,108 2,178	2,035 1,962 2,093	2,1 <i>47</i> 2,135 2,109
Summary	5,823	6,132	6,305	6,090	6,391
Grade 7 Grade 8 Grade 9	1,726 1,700 1,710	1,863 1,750 1,770	2,005 1,894 1,815	2,117 1,986 1,953	2,163 2,174 2,145
Summary	5,136	5,383	5,714	6,056	6,482
Grade 10 Grade 11 Grade 12	1,612 1,485 1,465	1,666 1,569 1,474	1,723 1,626 1,541	1,764 1,675 1,638	1,991 1,824 1,908
Summary	4,562	4,709	4,890	5,077	5,723
Sub Total	23,410	24,270	25,094	24,614	26,622
Colonies Community Learning Centres (CLCs) and Alternative Programs	44 316	52 392	42 503	46 629	Enrolments above include Colonies and CLC students
Total	23,770	24,714	25,637	25,289	26,622
Year-to-Year Growth	<i>4.7%</i> 1,058	4.0% 944	3.7% 923	-1.36% -348*	5.27% 1,333

*Negatively impacted by COVID-19 pandemic

Most student growth is in the municipalities of Airdrie, Cochrane and Chestermere. The smaller centers, such as Beiseker and Indus, have remained relatively stable. The below table shows the growth in the different areas of RVS over the past five years.

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Airdrie	9,902	10,516	11,075	11,101	11,566
Difference	675	614	559	26	465
Cochrane/Westbrook/Bearspaw	5,186	5,450	5,788	5,693	6,004
Difference	180	264	338	-95	311
Chestermere/Indus/Langdon	5,043	5,110	5,054	4,781	4,876
Difference	243	67	-56	-273	95
Bragg Creek/Springbank	2,148	2,112	,2050	1,986	2,041
Difference	- 47	-36	-62	-64	55
Beiseker/Kathyrn	480	443	458	392	412
Difference	-13	-37	15	-66	20
Crossfield	651	639	669	661	668
Difference	27	-12	30	-8	7
Colonies	44	52	42	46	42
Difference	1	8	-10	4	-4
Community Learning Centres and Alternative Programs	316	392	501	629	406
Difference	-8	76	109	128	-223
Online School	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	607
Difference	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	23,770	24,714	25,637	25,289	26,662



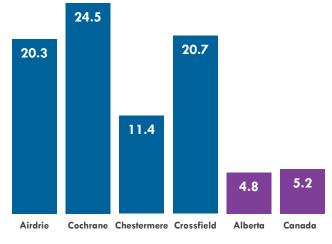
Population and Growth

Smaller municipalities just outside Calgary and Edmonton have experienced the largest percentage of growth in recent years. Airdrie, Cochrane, Chestermere and Crossfield have all experienced population growth well into double-digit percentages.

- Airdrie's population grew from 61,281 to 74,100 from 2016 to 2021, an increase of 20.3 per cent.
- Cochrane's population grew from 25,853 to 32,199 from 2016 to 2021, an increase of 24.5 per cent.
- Chestermere's population grew from 19,887 to 22,163 from 2016 to 2021, an increase of 11.4 per cent.
- Crossfield's population grew from 2,983 to 3,559 from 2016 to 2021, an increase of 20.7 per cent.

Since 2016 the urban centres of Cochrane, Airdrie and Chestermere are within the top ten fastest growing municipalities in Alberta (with populations over 10,000).

Per Cent Population Change of RVS Urban Centres and Higher Level Geographies (2016-2021)



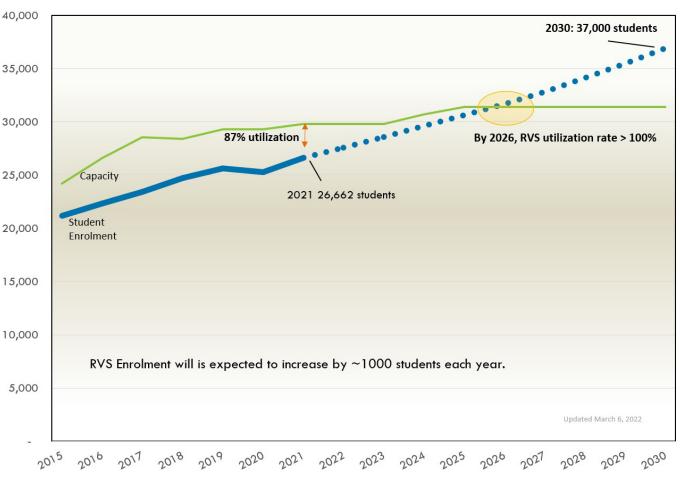
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population.

Capacity and Utilization

With a growth of 750 to 1,000 students annually, RVS is continually in need of additional school capacity. The division will add 900 student spaces with the opening of the Langdon Junior/Senior High School in 2024, and Cochrane's Bow Valley High School will benefit from more spaces in the coming years with the recent announcement of an addition and modernization. Airdrie's Northcott Prairie School opened in 2020. These permanent spaces are valuable in ensuring an appropriate number of spaces are available to students to support their learning and wellbeing.

Looking forward, RVS continues to need additional school facilities. With no additional capacity, RVS' utilization rate will continue to increase from the current 87 per cent to a critical utilization rate of 101 per cent by 2026. This projected utilization rate includes the added capacity of Langdon Junior/High School and the Bow Valley High School addition.

Did You Know?



RVS Enrolment and Capacity

The need for more school capacity to accommodate RVS' student growth is immediate.



Modular Classrooms

Procurement of Modular Classrooms

The term *modular classroom* is used to describe a moveable classroom unit built at a central location and transported to and installed at schools across Alberta. Modular classrooms have long been used as added space for schools and are a cost-effective way to allow for the expansion and contraction of a school building as the student population fluctuates.

Provincial funding, through Alberta Education's Annual Modular Classroom Program, is provided for the addition of new or the relocation of existing modular classrooms to ease enrolment pressures in communities where school jurisdictions are experiencing high student enrolment growth. Funding may also be provided for the replacement of existing portable classrooms due to demonstrated health and safety issues.

Modular classrooms can be placed by either directly attaching the units to the core school, requiring a "connecting link", or freestanding (i.e., not attached to the main school structure). A connecting link is the connecting corridor used when attaching modular classrooms to the permanent building.

Annually, Alberta Education requires school divisions across the province to review their accommodation needs to determine the demand for additional modular classrooms. RVS submitted its latest modular classrooms request on Nov. 1, 2021.

Modular classrooms are an important part of strategic facility planning in RVS, as **one-third of RVS capacity is modular** classrooms. As seen in the table on the following page, 386 of RVS' classrooms are modular: the equivalent to about 9,625 students learning in a modular classroom.

Location of RVS' Modular Classrooms

School	Number of Modulars	School	Number of Modulars
A.E. Bowers	14	Kathyrn	2
Banded Peak	4	Langdon	8
Beiseker	2	Manachaban	10
Bert Church	8	Meadowbrook	6
Bow Valley	10	Mitford	12
Chestermere High	4	Muriel Clayton	10
Chestermere Lake	11	Northcott Prairie	2
Cochrane High	10	Nose Creek	14
Cooper's Crossing	12	Prairie Waters	8
Crossfield	8	Prince of Peace	2
C.W. Perry	16	Rainbow Creek	14
École Edwards	8	Ralph McCall	14
East Lake	16	RancheView	15
Elbow Valley	12	R.J. Hawkey	10
Elizabeth Barrett	12	Sarah Thompson	12
Fireside	6	Springbank High	10
George McDougall	4	Springbank Middle	4
Glenbow	14	Westbrook	10
Heloise Lorimer	10	W.G. Murdoch	4
Herons Crossing	11 (+washroom unit stored onsite)	Windsong Heights	11
Indus	8 (+washroom unit stored onsite)	W.H. Croxford	6
			Total Number of Modulars: 386

42 out of 53 RVS schools have modular classrooms.

Priorities

The following pages outline RVS' Capital Priorities for the Government of Alberta's budget years 2023, 2024 and 2025. Detailed information for each Year One priority is provided after the overall three-year capital plan summary.

Capital Priority List

Proposed Priority	Capital Project	Build Out Capacity	Community	Type of Project	Site Readiness Expected					
	2023 BUDGET YEAR									
1	Airdrie K – 8	900	Airdrie	New Construction	Ready					
2	Cochrane K – 5	600	Cochrane	New Construction	Ready					
3	Chestermere K – 9	900	Chestermere	New Construction	2022					
4	Airdrie High School	1,500	Airdrie	New Construction	2022					
		2024	4 BUDGET YEAR							
5	Airdrie K – 8	900	Airdrie	New Construction	2023					
6	Chestermere High School	1,500	Chestermere	New Construction	2023					
7	Cochrane K – 8	900	Cochrane	New Construction	2023					
8	Springbank K – 8	900	Harmony	New Construction	Ready					
		202	5 BUDGET YEAR							
9	Langdon K – 5	600	Langdon	New Construction	TBD					
10	Cochrane K – 8	900	Cochrane	New Construction	TBD					
11	Crossfield K – 8	600	Crossfield	New Construction	2022					
12	Airdrie K – 8	900	Airdrie	New Construction	TBD					

Priority 1: Airdrie Kindergarten – Grade 8

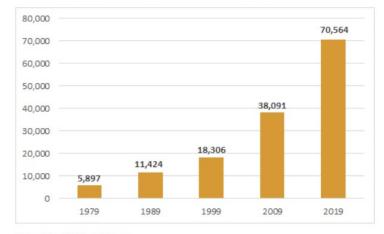
Information

Airdrie is Alberta's second and Canada's 25th fastest growing municipality (populations over 10,000). School buildings in Airdrie reflect this rapid growth. RVS has 17 school buildings in Airdrie; of these, 16 have modular units attached or freestanding and 13 of these schools have more than 10 modular classrooms. Additionally, between 2014 and 2019, five new RVS schools and one addition opened to students in Airdrie – that is more than one school each year!

Northcott Prairie School opened in Airdrie in 2020. This was the last school RVS opened. With no new facilities having opened in Airdrie for the past two years and with at least three years required to design and construct a new school, Airdrie will not have a new school open for over five years.

Site Readiness - A site in the community of South

Airdrie population growth over 40 years



Source: City of Airdrie Civic Census *Most current, 2020 was not a census year

Windsong in the southwest region of Airdrie is ready for construction. It is within an area where there is a great deal of new development occurring.





Student Enrolment and Projections

The table below is the 2022 RVS student population in Airdrie. Note the number of students at Grade 1 intake is 210 students greater than the number of students leaving at Grade 12. In addition to this natural increase at entry, RVS' Airdrie student enrolments increases annually by approximately 2 - 2.5 per cent students per grade.

Grade	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Enrolment	890	953	917	932	957	946	949	933	967	974	961	851	743

From 2014 to 2019, student population in Airdrie increased by about 600 students annually. Birth rate trends in Airdrie indicate a slight decline in the number of births in Airdrie over the last few years, which will impact student enrolments; however, an annual increase of 300-400 students per year for the next five years is still expected in Airdrie.

The table below shows enrolments and projections for Kindergarten – Grade 8 students. Though it appears there is sufficient capacity in schools with 1,587 spaces currently available, this space is throughout all 14 elementary/middle schools and will reduce quickly as student enrolments increase. In 2026 – the earliest RVS could open a new school (if funding were approved in spring 2023) – there will only be a negligible 237 student spaces available.

	Airdrie								
Year	Enrolments K–8	Capacity	Capacity – Enrolment						
2021	8,358	9,945	1,587						
2022	8,484	9,945	1,461						
2023	8,727	9,945	1,218						
2024	9,032	9,945	913						
2025	9,360	9,945	585						
2026	9,708	9,945	237						
2027	10,127	9,945	-182						
2028	10,613	9,945	-668						
2029	11,168	9,945	-1,223						
2030	11,718	9,945	-1,773						

Note: Future capacity does not assume approval of additional student spaces – modular or permanent.



Challenge

As indicated by the chart on the previous page, Airdrie Kindergarten – Grade 8 schools will be over capacity shortly. It is important to note many Airdrie schools are already beyond-buildout capacity, as modular classrooms are on core schools that were not designed to hold the number of modular classrooms currently on the school. The only school that can properly accept more modular classrooms is Northcott Prairie School, which opened in 2020. This school, also located in southwest Airdrie, will be 101 per cent utilized by 2023 with the full allotment of modular classrooms.

Solutions

The solutions for high utilization situations are to either move students to a school with lesser utilization, add more modular classrooms to existing schools or add more permanent space (additions or new school construction).

- 1. Accommodate students differently: RVS reviews accommodation needs and facility spaces annually. In Airdrie, accommodation changes will be made over the next few years to maximize existing capacity; however, this does not replace the need for additional permanent capacity.
- 2. Modular classrooms: RVS is proposing moving modular classrooms within the division, particularly from schools with below 85 per cent utilization to schools expected to be greater than 100 per cent utilization. Provincial funding from Alberta Education's Modular Classroom Program has been requested for these relocations.
- 3. Add permanent space: a new school is needed to accommodate students in Airdrie. Five years from now, there will not be available capacity in which to accommodate Kindergarten Grade 8 students if another school is not open. New school funding is required quickly in order meet Airdrie's expected student population growth.

Preferred Solution:

Construction of a new school with a core capacity of 550-650 student spaces, with a possible modular classroom addition of 250-350 capacity, for a total buildout capacity of 900 student spaces.

Priority 2: Cochrane Kindergarten – Grade 5

Information

It is no surprise RVS' Cochrane enrolments continue to climb; the municipality is the fastest growing in Alberta, and the 11th fastest growing in Canada (over 10,000 population).

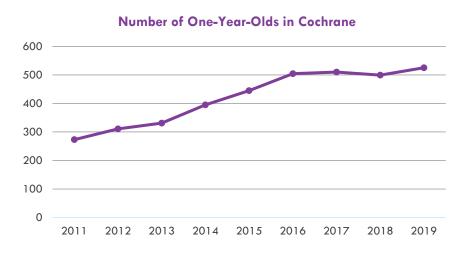
RVS is experiencing student population growth of approximately 300 students annually in the area; a new school is required every two to three years in Cochrane just to keep up with this growth. The last school that opened in Cochrane was in the Fireside community, five years ago in 2017.

Availability of school site readiness has been a challenge in Cochrane in recent history. Fortunately, two sites are expected to be ready for school construction by fall of 2022 with one of these sites currently construction ready. This is a change from the previous five years, in which no sites in Cochrane have met "site readiness."



Student Enrolment and Projections

Student population in Cochrane increases at Kindergarten and Grade 1 intake then across the grades. This chart shows the number of one-year-old children in Cochrane from 2011 to 2019. In 2011 there were 273 one-year-old children living in



Cochrane, compared to 2019 when there were 525. That's almost double the number of one-year-olds in an eight-year period. This trend is expected to continue as new communities develop.

In addition to increasing births in Cochrane (as shown by the one-year-old population), in-migration also adds to the natural increase in the cohort; for example, that same cohort of 273 one-year-old children in 2011 increased to 430 five-year-old children four years later.

Similarly, RVS experiences growth in enrolments of two per cent from one grade

to the next. For instance, for every 500 students in Grade 3, RVS can expect an additional 10 students the next year in Grade 4. When compounded across twelve grades, that is an additional 120 students in Cochrane RVS schools annually, in addition to the increase at the Kindergarten and Grade 1 intake.

	Cochrane								
Year	Enrolments K–8	Capacity	Capacity – Enrolment						
2021	3,569	3,901	332						
2022	3,917	3,901	-16						
2023	4,085	3,901	-184						
2024	4,308	3,901	-407						
2025	4,512	3,901	-611						
2026	4,783	3,901	-882						
2027	5,102	3,901	-1,201						
2028	5,447	3,901	-1,546						
2029	5,833	3,901	-1,932						
2030	6,222	3,901	-2,321						

Taking into consideration the above factors – natural increase at intake and in-migration – RVS is projecting the continued increase of \sim 300 Kindergarten – Grade 8 students annually for the next five years. See table below.

Note: Future capacity does not assume approval of additional student spaces - modular or permanent.



Challenge

As indicated by the table above, Cochrane Kindergarten – Grade 8 schools will be over capacity by September 2022. Student population in Cochrane is expected to continue to climb and ensuring adequate capacity for the expected student population is challenging.

Solutions

The solutions for high utilization situations are to either move students to a school with lesser utilization, add modular classrooms to existing schools or add more permanent space (additions or new school construction).

- 1. Accommodate students differently: Cochrane has one school that is below 85 per cent utilization RancheView School. RancheView School is in the developing community of Sunset Ridge and as such, will have increasing enrolments for the foreseeable future. Accommodating other Cochrane communities at this school would be short-sited, as the school will be reaching 85 per cent utilization within the next four years.
- 2. Add modular classrooms to existing schools: in November 2021, as part of Alberta Education's Modular Classroom Program, RVS requested additional modular classrooms for both Fireside School and Mitford School. Both these schools will be over 100 per cent utilized as of September 2022. Adding modular classrooms onto schools will serve the short-term need for accommodating students.
- 3. Add more permanent space: a new school building is needed to accommodate students in Cochrane. Five years from now, there will be an additional 1,000 Kindergarten Grade 8 students in Cochrane whom RVS will be educating. Additional space is needed to accommodate and educate these students.

The current Holy Spirit School in Cochrane will be returning to RVS' ownership in the summer of 2022. RVS is considering various options when it comes to the future of this building. The capacity of the building is 175 student spaces and has been utilized by a different school division for the past 29 years (since 1993).

Preferred Solution:

Construct a permanent building to meet the medium and long-term needs of Cochrane students.

Priority 3: Chestermere Kindergarten – Grade 9

Information

Student population in Chestermere was increasing at an unprecedented rate five to ten years ago with enrolments increasing by 200 to 300 students annually. Enrolment growth slowed beginning in 2018, as housing construction in Chestermere stalled. This pause in new builds occurred due to needed stormwater management and utility infrastructure expansion. As can be seen on the chart to the right, eight to 10 years ago housing starts in Chestermere were around 450 per year. It then dropped to a low in 2018 of only 75. Also evident is the rebound in housing starts over the last three years with 2021 returning to near 2013 levels. To date, 2022 is on track to be the biggest year for new builds in the past 10 years, as the housing starts for January and February are 20 per cent greater than the same months in 2021.

The areas of growth in Chestermere are mainly on the west side of the city. The nearby schools are currently full, and two school sites are very close to being site ready with an expectation of at least one being complete at the end of this construction season.



Student Enrolment and Projections

The below table is the 2021/22 RVS student population in Chestermere by grade. The intake at Grade 1 is 100 students greater than the number of students leaving in Grade 12. This natural increase is expected to intensify due to the increasing development in Chestermere.

2021 Chestermere Student Population

Grade	К	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Enrolment	290	363	343	379	374	406	398	395	381	402	354	332	273

The table below shows enrolments and projections for Kindergarten – Grade 9 students.

	Chestermere									
Year	Enrolments K–9	Capacity	Capacity – Enrolment							
2021	2,492	3,299	457							
2022	2,653	2,949	296							
2023	2,724	2,949	225							
2024	2,837	2,949	112							
2025	2,963	2,949	-14							
2026	3,133	2,949	-184							
2027	3,320	2,949	-371							
2028	3,565	2,949	-616							
2029	3,834	2,949	-885							
2030	4,151	2,949	-1,202							

Note: Future capacity allows for the reduction in student spaces due to the closure of Prince of Peace School and does not assume approval of additional student spaces – modular or permanent.



Challenge

RVS faces three accommodation challenges in Chestermere.

- 1. As described above, RVS is expecting a surge of new students, particularly at intake of Kindergarten and Grade 1 due the current surge in housing starts.
- 2. RVS is losing overall student spaces in Chestermere with the closure of the Prince of Peace facility due to the lease expiring and the owner selling the facility to a private school.
- 3. There are three elementary schools and one middle school in Chestermere. Three of the schools have additional modular classrooms that cause the facilities to be at beyond-buildout capacity, which puts strain on the core school facilities including CTF spaces, gyms and corridors. The fourth school is a P3 school; RVS is not permitted to add more modular units to the facility as it is at buildout capacity and is not permitted to have a beyond-buildout capacity.

Solutions

The opening of the Langdon Junior/Senior High School will assist in decreasing the utilization rate at Chestermere High School, which may allow for some short-term relief until the new Kindergarten – Grade 9 school is open to students.

A new Kindergarten – Grade 9 school is necessary to accommodate the expected student population in Chestermere.

Priority 4: Airdrie High School

Information

RVS has three high schools serving Airdrie and surrounding rural area students. The site for the next Airdrie high school is expected to meet site readiness in 2022. RVS partnered with the City of Airdrie to secure and develop the land required for the new high school in southwest Airdrie. Possible joint use efficiencies are being considered with the City as the school will be adjacent to a proposed recreation centre.

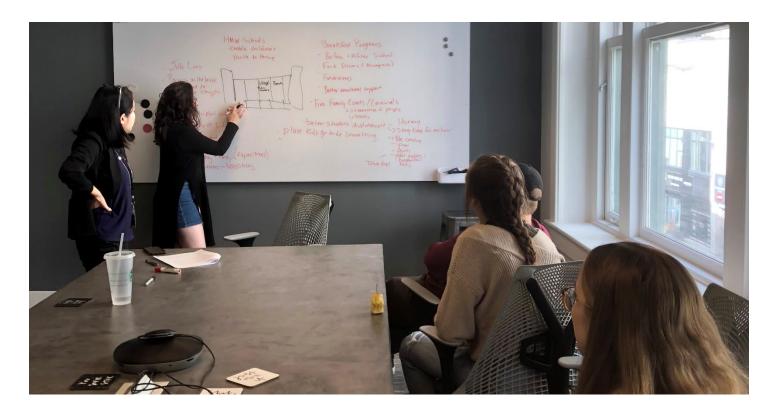




Student Enrolment and Projections

The need for another high school in Airdrie is evident considering enrolments at the high school level are out-pacing capacity.

Airdrie High School								
Year	Enrolments Gr. 9-12	Capacity	Capacity – Enrolment					
2021	3,208	3,581	373					
2022	3,557	3,731	24					
2023	3,853	3,731	-122					
2024	4,019	3,731	-288					
2025	4,130	3,731	-399					
2026	4,245	3,731	-514					
2027	4,331	3,731	-600					
2028	4,446	3,731	-715					
2029	4,526	3,731	-795					
2030	4,629	3,731	-898					



Challenge

Adding modular classrooms is the only short-term solution to accommodate this enrolment growth. Unfortunately, RVS cannot add more modular classrooms to the Bert Church or W.H. Croxford sites. There is no space on the Bert Church site for more modular classrooms unless they are put on the sports field. W.H. Croxford cannot accommodate further modulars because it is at its maximum as a P3 school with a defined number.

Only George McDougall can take additional modular classrooms – the challenge is this high school has the smallest core building. Bert Church is currently beyond-buildout capacity and by September 2022, George McDougall will also be beyond-buildout capacity. Both schools will have freestanding modular classrooms to accommodate students.

While modular classrooms provide temporary space, they are not the solution particularly when the modular classrooms put the schools into a beyond-buildout capacity situation. They do not provide additional gymnasiums, learning commons, science labs or speciality shop spaces that are needed. Furthermore, the addition of modular classrooms on schools that are not designed for the added student populations puts further pressure on the existing core school, specifically congesting the smaller corridors and higher-class sizes in specialty spaces.

Solutions

Funding the design of the high school in year one. This will allow the 18 months for design and construction and allow for opening of the permanent building to occur as soon as possible. At build-out, the permanent space will accommodate 1,500 student spaces in the core school with the ability to add 300 student spaces in modular units, resulting in a buildout capacity of 1,800 students.