

THE BRIEF

BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS



ROCKY VIEW SCHOOLS

April 17, 2025

Students Make a Splash in New Inclusive Aquatics Program

Some Rocky View Schools (RVS) Grade 1 – 12 students in Airdrie with unique needs are strengthening their physical, emotional and social skills in a new inclusive aquatics program thanks to a partnership with Genesis Place.

Supported by a team of RVS staff including learning assistants, the students learn water safety and strengthen their motor function and skills. By visiting a public community setting, they gain confidence, independence and experience at the pool, on the bus and while transitioning between the two locations. They also grow connections with peers and adults by using their social and functional communication skills. Through their experience, students achieve goals in their Student Success Plans while having fun in the water.

This aquatics program provides an inclusive learning environment in Airdrie which is one of the desired outcomes of RVS' Education Plan. The Learning department is eager to grow the student aquatics program to other communities in RVS and is seeking out partnerships in Cochrane and Chestermere.

Majority of School Fees Remain Unchanged for 2025/26

The Board of Trustees of RVS encourages schools to offer a diverse range of engaging opportunities that support students in exploring interests and learning new skills, while thoughtfully balancing any associated costs to families. The Board has approved minimal increases to school fees for 2025/26 despite increases in the costs of materials, travel, equipment and other items required in many optional courses, programs, field trips and other activities. Fees for Programs of Choice such as Building Futures and the Mechanics Training Centre remain unchanged, ensuring students continue to have access to these diverse and enriching opportunities.

- 80 per cent of current school fees across the division are maintained. Of the 20 per cent with increases, less than half increased to the maximum \$10 or five per cent
- 117 fees are eliminated as they are no longer required
- 106 new optional courses and extracurricular activity fees were added

Families with low or modest incomes who qualify for the federal Goods and Services Tax (GST) credit can apply to have optional course fees waived.

The approved schedule of school fees will be posted to the RVS website and on school websites by the end of June.

Community Use Fees Maintained at Current Rates to Encourage Use of RVS Facilities

To provide our communities with access to RVS' well-maintained indoor and outdoor facilities when not in use by schools and encourage ongoing use by the public, fees for 2025/26 will remain at current levels. The fees are in line with comparable facilities in our service area, with any proceeds being invested back into schools.

Connecting with our communities is a priority in the Board's Strategic Plan and community use of our facilities is tracked in support of this priority. In 2023/24, an RVS facility was accessed by the community 3,246 times.

RVS Prioritizes Safe, Accessible Transportation While Supporting Families Amid Rising Costs

The Board is committed to ensuring students have safe and accessible transportation while minimizing the impact of rising costs of providing student transportation on our families. While the Board has maintained transportation fees over the last four years, mounting costs require an increase in the fee to close the gap between government funding and the costs for providing the service.

Raising the regular transportation fee by \$70 for Grades 1 – 12 in 2025/26 – while maintaining family and early registration discounts – introducing a half-price rate for Kindergarten students and charging a full fee for students requiring access to a second stop, means RVS can sustain service levels within budget and keep instructional funds focused on classrooms.

RVS provides transportation to approximately 13,500 students each year on more than 300 routes – and those numbers will continue to rise for the 2025/26 school year as enrolment increases. Given the unpredictability of transportation funding from government and other external factors like bus and driver availability and contractor costs, effectively managing transportation resources is essential for RVS to consistently meet families' busing needs at a reasonable cost.

New Developments and Approvals Featured in Chair's Report

Board Chair, Fiona Gilbert reported on a variety of important items during her Chair's Report:

- On behalf of the Board, Gilbert wished RVS students, staff and families a healthy and restful upcoming spring break.
- RVS was awarded planning approval for two new schools by Alberta Education in March – a Kindergarten – Grade 9 school in Lanark in Airdrie and a high school in the community of Chelsea in Chestermere. In addition to the previous five approvals, [these new schools](#) will bolster RVS' infrastructure by addressing the division's ongoing need for new student spaces and improve the learning and teaching environments in these communities.
- RVS received permission to use Infrastructure and Maintenance Renewal funds to construct a connector link from the core school to two modular classrooms at Cochrane High School.
- Correspondence from the Minister of Education was received regarding various proposed amendments to the *Education Act* in Bill 51, the Education Amendment Act, 2025. RVS awaits further information and clarification.