

# THE BRIEF

## BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS



ROCKY VIEW SCHOOLS

May 22, 2025

### Kathryn School Celebrates Agricultural Roots

Students at Kathryn School celebrate the agricultural heritage of this close-knit farming community through a variety of experiences and lessons throughout the year including the popular Aggie Day. Local farmers, businesses and community members share what they do in the agricultural field with students and staff from Kathryn School and nearby Beiseker Community School. Presenters provide information about a variety of topics, including crop management, cattle farming, vegetable farming, beekeeping, farm safety and agricultural equipment. It is a chance for students to learn more about the heritage and history of the local community and discover what the latest and greatest trends are in agriculture.

Given the rural location of the school, teachers regularly find opportunities to connect students with agricultural experiences to build their knowledge and provide exposure to career paths in the agricultural industry.

Real-world opportunities like Aggie Day help to build future-ready students, an important goal of RVS' Education Plan. These fun, interactive events also create an inclusive, engaging and healthy learning opportunity for students at one of RVS' rural schools.

### 2025/26 Budget Focused on Supporting Students and Classrooms

The [approved 2025/26 RVS Budget](#) reflects the Board's key budget priority of providing direct resources to schools to support student learning with a focus on numeracy, literacy and new curriculum implementation. Most of the \$344.5 million budget (\$221.8 million) will go directly to schools in areas such as classroom and school staffing, numeracy, literacy, career learning and inclusion supports, Indigenous knowledge-building, technology, and school-based supplies and resources. Every instructional dollar RVS receives is spent to directly support learning – zero instructional dollars are spent on division operations.

In 2025/26, \$16.3 million will be allocated directly to schools to strengthen the delivery of inclusion supports and services. An additional \$1 million for classroom staffing will focus on improving numeracy support and intervention for students in Kindergarten to Grade 8/9. High schools will also see increased staffing to expand career education programming.

To meet the growing complexity of student needs, learning support teachers are placed in schools – ensuring every K–8/9 school has at least one dedicated learning support teacher. Additional support teachers will be assigned based on each school's population and unique needs. In alignment with the Board's budget priority to support student and staff wellness, ongoing government funding for mental health is another welcome step, replacing temporary pilot project funding and allowing for long-term, stable planning and effective use of resources.

Most school fees will remain unchanged for the coming school year. Diverse learning opportunities such as the Mechanics Training Centre, Building Futures and dual-credit programs will continue to be offered, providing important choice for students and supporting RVS' commitment to offering a diverse range of engaging opportunities to help prepare them for the future.

Transportation expenditures will increase to \$27.3 million for the 2025/26 school year based on increased contractor costs, student enrolment and an anticipated 14 additional bus routes. As a result, the fee per student will increase by \$70

per year for Grades 1 – 12. To mitigate the impact of this increase on RVS families, early registration and family discounts will be maintained and a half-time rate will be introduced for Kindergarten students.

RVS continues to face financial pressure due to rising inflation and increasing core operating costs. To balance the 2025/26 budget, the division will need to use \$1.4 million in operating reserves for transportation services. This aligns with the Board's budget priority to target an operating reserve balance at 1 to 2 per cent while maintaining reserve levels within the range mandated by the provincial government at 1 to 6 per cent.

The current Average Adjusted Enrolment funding model, which does not provide funding for every student, every year, creates challenges for a growing division like RVS. The Board believes every student must be fully funded every year to ensure equitable access to quality education. In the upcoming school year, approximately 140 full-time students are expected to be unfunded by the province. As a result, RVS must redirect operational dollars that could have otherwise been used to enhance supports for all students.

The Board will continue to advocate to the provincial government for an equitable funding formula and increases to the funding needed for classroom complexities.

The approved budget will be posted on RVS' website soon.

### Adjustment Request Aims to Maximize Use of Modular Classrooms

On April 17, RVS was advised it had received approval from the provincial government for five new [modular classrooms](#) and the relocation of a washroom unit. To maximize efficiency, achieve the greatest cost savings and ensure these important student spaces are placed where they are most needed, the Board approved submitting a request to the government for amendments to the planned locations of these modular classrooms. If approved, four units will be placed at Nose Creek Elementary School in Airdrie, reducing utilization of the school from 118 per cent to 101 per cent for 2025/26. The remaining new classroom unit as well as the washroom unit will be installed at Rainbow Creek Elementary School in Chestermere, providing additional space for students newly designated to this school who will begin attending Rainbow Creek in 2025/26.

### 2025/26 School Calendar Modified

The Board approved changes to the 2025/26 school calendar to better accommodate Kindergarten students and to provide options intended to decrease the anxiety some students may experience over the start of the school year. These changes will apply to all school calendars moving forward.

- Two three-way child-parent-teacher Kindergarten conference days will be held, one in the fall and one in the spring for all RVS schools.
- Full-day, alternating day Kindergarten was approved for five schools: Cochrane Christian Academy, Indus School, Langdon School, Kathryn School and Westbrook School.
- All RVS schools can choose to adopt staggered entry for the start of the school year. Part of the student body will begin school on September 2 with the remainder beginning on September 3. This practice has been shown to decrease the stress that can accompany the start of the school year due to fewer students being in class/school.

### School Approvals and Funding Gains Reflect Strong Advocacy

Advocating for RVS students to ensure they receive a world-class education where they can achieve their absolute best is an important role of the Board. In 2024/25, the Board implemented a variety of strategies and tactics to bolster their advocacy efforts in priority areas of greatest need. Advocacy work in 2024/25 built on the learnings and successes of previous years' advocacy efforts which have resulted in [seven new schools being approved for RVS](#). The Board has also seen changes to the education funding formula and small increases to funding rates, two focus areas of its advocacy efforts.

Tactics included monthly advocacy focus topics shared through social media posts, Web stories, media releases and other activities that highlight the great work happening in RVS. Emails were sent to government officials and RVS' school councils to share information and maintain open lines of conversation and dialogue. Updates were also made to the [Advocacy](#)

[section of the RVS website](#). The Board participated in trade shows/fairs in Airdrie, Cochrane and Chestermere where the public had a chance to ask questions, offer feedback and pick up informational handouts.

Advocacy will remain a focus for the Board in 2025/26 – there is still work to be done to ensure all students can learn, belong and succeed in schools that are inclusive, safe and supportive.

### **RVS Board Meets with Infrastructure Minister on Top Space for Students Priorities**

On May 21, the Board met with the Honourable Martin Long, Minister of Infrastructure, and members of his team. During the meeting, the Board shared key information about RVS, highlighted our top infrastructure advocacy priorities, and presented potential solutions aimed at streamlining the school construction and approval process. It is critical for RVS that new schools are built and ready to welcome students, staff and the community as quickly as possible. Currently it takes about three years to build a new school after we receive construction funding approval. This process is slower than what RVS communities need, and the Board looks forward to working with Minister Long and Alberta Infrastructure to get schools designed, built and open for learning faster.

### **Congratulations to RVS' Class of 2025!**

Graduation time is here – a time of excitement, achievement and celebration! Approximately 2,300 students from our 11 high schools across RVS will proudly cross the stage and receive their diplomas this year. The Board extended its heartfelt congratulations to each and every graduate on this milestone accomplishment and knows the future holds great promise for the RVS Class of 2025.