



## Annual Collaborative Planning and Financial Processes

### PREAMBLE

Regional Collaborative Service Delivery (RCSD) is a provincial program championed by the ministries of Children’s Services, Community and Social Services, Education and Health and further supported by Alberta Health Services, school authorities, interested First Nations and community organizations.<sup>1</sup>

Regional Collaborative Service Delivery is designed to more effectively meet the needs of children and youth and support their well-being at home, school and in the community by enabling service providers to better coordinate, integrate and provide supports and services. RCSD is not intended to replace the continuum of programs and services already provided through local systems; rather, it is intended to create a more streamlined and coordinated approach to service planning and service provision within each region.

Each RCSD region brings together school authorities, Alberta Health Services (AHS), Children’s Services, Community and Social Services, interested First Nations and other community stakeholders to collaborate for the benefit of children and youth. RCSD is intended to provide a regional model that will support partners in meeting the needs of children and youth throughout the school years – from Early Childhood Services (ECS) through to Grade 12 in public, separate, charter, and funded accredited private schools and private ECS operators, as well as institutional, home bound, home education and alternative programs operated by school authorities. It also includes children and youth identified with a low incidence disability, and/or complex needs from birth to age 20.

As collaboration and team leadership are principles for the RCSD program, Regional Leadership and Executive Teams are encouraged to follow collaborative and consensus based decision-making models in developing the region’s Annual Plan.

### RCSD FUNDING OVERVIEW

RCSD funding is administered by Alberta Education through the Provincial RCSD Office on behalf of the ministries partnering on RCSD. The Provincial RCSD Office distributes RCSD funding to the regionally determined designated banker school board to administer the funds on behalf of all partners. The RCSD Regional Handbook provides direction on target populations and eligible/ineligible costs.

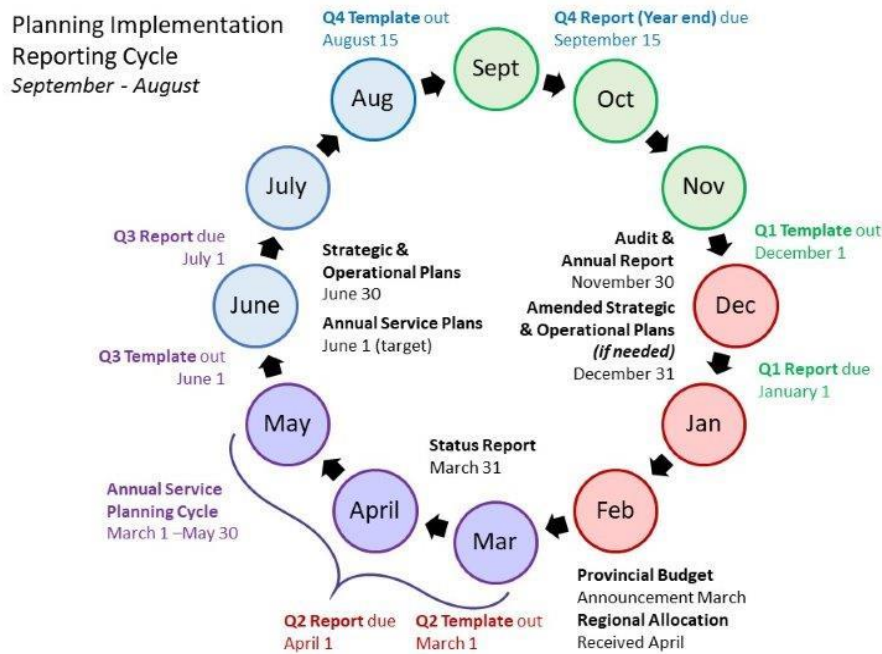
RCSD’s fiscal year runs from September 1 to August 31. The provincial RCSD budget is typically confirmed by the end of March with Calgary and Area RCSD’s regional budget allocation confirmed by the end of April for the next fiscal year.

There are overlapping planning, implementation, and reporting requirements for Calgary and Area RCSD, each with corresponding financial activities. Together, these requirements form a continuous cycle (see Figure 1 below).

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<sup>1</sup> Regional Collaborative Service Delivery: Regional Handbook, 2018/19, p. 7.

**Figure 1: Planning, Implementation and Reporting Cycle**



RCSD funding must be pooled and shared by RCSD partners to support the identified needs of children and youth in the region. Children and youth throughout the region must have equitable access to services regardless of their school program.

RCSD funding is separate and external to individual system partner budgets.

The Financial Consultant divides the funding, including any interest or carry forward ( $\leq 5\%$ ) from the previous year, into administration ( $\leq 4.5\%$ ) and service delivery ( $\geq 95.5\%$ ).

Recommendations on how funding is to be utilized regionally, in accordance with the RCSD Regional Handbook, are made jointly by partners at the Finance Committee and brought to the Leadership Team for approval (see Appendix 1: Calgary and Area RCSD Service Delivery Partnering and Planning Process). The Executive Team has final approval on the annual budget as presented in the Annual Plan.

The financial status of the partnership is reviewed (balanced, surplus, deficit) and recommendations for adjustments made as necessary by the Finance Committee at the end of each quarter and at the end of the fiscal year.

## EXTERNAL FUNDING REQUESTS

As a rule, Calgary and Area RCSD will not entertain direct requests for funding from sources external to the partnership.

However, Calgary and Area RCSD may actively seek or receive information about the needs of children, youth and families from external sources in order to inform its priorities. Ad hoc consultation meetings may be convened by Calgary and Area RCSD, and/or community sources external to RCSD may be invited to participate in ongoing working groups in topic areas of relevance to them. External sources with information to share about the needs of specific populations should be encouraged to contact the Regional Manager for an initial discussion. The Regional Manager will keep a running list of needs arising to identify emerging themes. Depending on timing and relevance, this information will then be brought forward to the Leadership Team or other appropriate Calgary and Area RCSD committee for further exploration in relation to RCSD strategic directions and service priorities.

Strategic working and/or funding partnerships may be established with external initiatives or community agencies to leverage each other's work toward a common goal or need.

## ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET

RCSD is limited to a maximum of 4.5% of the total regional funding allocation for the administrative budget. Typically, Calgary and Area RCSD has kept the administrative portion to well under the allowable limit.

The administrative budget and plans for any predicted administrative surplus are developed by the Regional Manager and the Financial Consultant, conferring within the Leadership Co-Chairs as required. The draft administrative budget/plan is then brought forward to the Finance Committee for review, and a final draft is submitted to the Leadership Team for approval along with the rest of the annual budget plan. See Appendix 2 for details on management of the administrative budget.

## SERVICE DELIVERY BUDGET

### ***Complex Needs***

Each year, in its budget planning via the Finance Committee and Leadership Team, Calgary and Area RCSD determines the proportion of its budget to dedicate to Complex Needs. Funding for Complex Needs is held by the Banker Board and administered centrally. The Complex Needs work entails a tri-region partnership with Bow River RCSD, Central East Collaborative RCSD and Calgary and Area RCSD. It includes pooled funding from the three RCSDs, oversight and administrative leadership by the Tri-Region Complex Needs Committee, and a single Complex Needs System Coordinator. Complex Needs funding is allocated on a case by case basis through a request for a Systems Review and corresponding integrated case plan (see Tri-Region Complex Needs Model) and/or through development of other services as supported by the Committee (e.g., CONeX). Should a surplus arise in Complex Needs, the Tri-Region Complex Needs Committee will make recommendations to the Leadership Teams of the three RCSDs for its use. Those Leadership Teams, in turn, will either approve the recommendations or suggest other directions, in keeping with their regional priorities, to the Tri-Region Complex Needs Committee.

## ***Low Incidence***

An overall budget for the Regional Low Incidence Team is developed annually as agreed upon by partners. While the Team functions as a single unit, multiple employers are involved. As such, funding for the Regional Low Incidence Team is allocated accordingly to the various employing partners. Associated FTE and budget are included in the partners' Annual Service Plans (ASP) (see below) and clearly marked as Low Incidence. An annual review discussion and priority setting for the next year for the team occurs during the planning cycle described above.

### ***Requests from Other RCSDs***

Other RCSDs may request Low Incidence or other specialized support from Calgary and Area RCSD. Where Calgary and Area has agreed to provide the requested support, a corresponding budget is prepared for each requesting RCSD and followed up with invoicing, twice annually (Fall and Spring), for the cost of services. Actual travel costs associated with outreach are also invoiced at the end of the school year. FTE and costs associated with this outreach are reflected in the overall Calgary and Area RCSD budget for Low Incidence.

## ***Community Outreach of Pediatrics and Psychiatry in Education (COPE)***

COPE is a regional specialty service that provides pediatric and psychiatric consultations regarding developmental, behavioural, and/or mental health concerns identified by schools about children and youth in the classroom. A core administrative budget is developed annually by the COPE Coordinator in conjunction with the COPE Working Group and presented to the Finance Committee for incorporation into the draft annual budget plan. The Calgary Board of Education (CBE) functions as the banker board for COPE and, thus the COPE administrative budget is reflected in the Annual Service Plan for CBE.

Where additional RCSD funds are being directed to COPE by partners (i.e., from the Mental Health and Rehabilitation service area), the FTE and costs are included in individual partner Annual Service Plans and clearly demarcated for COPE.

## ***Mental Health and Rehabilitation***

This service area accounts for the largest proportion of RCSD funds and requires a **phased partnering process**.

In 2015, a population model for the allocation of Mental Health and Rehabilitation funds was established, determined by the previous year's September 30 student enrollment counts.

The RCSD Financial Consultant, utilizing the population model, prepares a Mental Health and Rehabilitation allocation plan for partners to review and use to plan collectively in preparing Annual Service Plans. The allocation plan identifies funding allocations for each partner – Calgary Board of Education, Calgary Catholic School District, Palliser Regional Schools, Rocky View Schools, Private and Charter schools through the Independent Schools Advisory Committee (ISAC) and Alberta Health

Services. The Alberta Health Services allocation is depicted as a percentage ( $\geq 35\%$ ) of the total allocation to Mental Health and Rehabilitation <sup>2</sup> (**phase one**).

It is understood that when the RCSD receives budget increases or decreases, all partners adjust correspondingly. In general, all partners have the same budget management rights and responsibilities.

The deployment of the Alberta Health Services allocation is determined through annual service delivery planning discussions with school partners followed by reconciliation across the partnership (**phase two**).

Once the partner allocations are reconciled, partners may proceed to develop additional service delivery agreements with other service providing RCSD partners or external community agencies (**phase three**). In general, Calgary and Area RCSD supports a multi-employer approach that maximizes service delivery arrangements with its partners prior to entering into service agreements with external agencies.

These three phases provide transparency for decisions on utilization of partner level allocations and a collaborative service delivery planning process for the partnership.

#### *Development of Annual Service Plans (ASP)*

The Annual Service Plan (ASP) template is sent to partners by email in April (see Appendix 3 for the template). It includes three components:

1. human resource plan
2. supporting budget
3. service delivery description (one page)

Annual service planning begins with a discussion among partners at the Leadership Team to confirm annual service priorities, exploring opportunities and needs of children and youth across the partnership. Service planning then proceeds following the three phases outlined above.

Preliminary plans and FTE designation are discussed at the Leadership Team to ensure that all service synergies and opportunities among RCSD partners are exhausted. Once the partner options are exhausted, partners are free to consider additional service delivery arrangements, such as contracts with external community agencies.

The planning process should articulate the process/rationale for service commitments and human resource assignments, include a supporting budget and a brief description of the expected service delivery.

Partners are expected to refer to and utilize the RCSD Regional Handbook for definitions, groupings and eligibility of expected costs.

Plans are returned to the Financial Consultant by early June, with copies provided to the Regional Manager. Annual Service Plans undergo a final review at the Finance Committee meeting prior to be incorporated into the region's Annual Plan.

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<sup>2</sup> The foundational 35% allocation to AHS was calculated based on partner service arrangements in 2014-2015. This percentage is substantially higher in most other RCSDs so should be viewed as a starting point.

Annual Service Plans are a part of Calgary and Area RCSD's reporting and accountability requirements and represent the commitment of partners to Regional Collaborative Service Delivery. Any variances from the Annual Service Plans must be noted in Quarterly Reports as well as the Annual Report. Any significant changes to the expected utilization of the funds must be brought forward for discussion and approval at the Finance Committee and/or Leadership Team.

### ***First Nations***

A regional allocation for First Nations is identified by the province when Calgary and Area RCSD receives its annual funding notice. This funding is depicted separately within the annual budget plan and recommendations on its use made in conjunction with Tsuut'ina Nation based on identified needs. This allocation is subject to the same planning process as above when used for Mental Health and Rehabilitation. A surplus in First Nations funding is viewed as separate from the rest of any RCSD budget surplus, but allowed the same maximum of up to 5% of the original allocation to be carried forward to the subsequent fiscal year, in accordance with the Funding Manual and RCSD Regional Handbook.

### ***New Service Development***

The Leadership and/or Executive Teams may support the pilot testing of service developments in new areas (e.g., transitions across the lifespan). In these cases, the associated funding is determined collectively by partners and then held centrally for invoicing by any employing partner.

## **FUNDING RELEASE**

The funding for the Low Incidence, COPE, Mental Health and Rehabilitation and First Nations streams is released as follows:

- 7/12<sup>th</sup> of the funding released in late October, and
- 5/12<sup>th</sup> of the funding released in late April.

The Complex Needs, Administrative and New Service budgets are managed centrally with funding released for approved expenditures throughout the year.

## **QUARTERLY REPORTING SCHEDULE**

In keeping with standard financial controls as required by the Banker Board, partners have a responsibility to provide quarterly reports on actual versus budgeted expenditures and on projections for the remainder of the year. These reports are required within four weeks of the end of the quarter, with the exception of the year end Q4 report which is distributed in mid-August for a September 15<sup>th</sup> due date to facilitate year end reporting. Quarterly reports are to be submitted to the Financial Consultant and copied to the Regional Manager, who review the reports for any anomalies and request clarification from, or recommend discussion/approval by, partners as needed. Delays in quarterly reporting could affect future release of funds.

Quarterly Report templates are sent to partners one (1) month before they are due:

- Q1 – covers from September 1 to November 30, due January 1  
(Used to determine if partner and overall partnership budgets are on track)
- Q2 – covers from September 1 to February 28, due April 1  
(Used to determine if partner and overall partnership budgets are on track)
- Q3 – covers from September 1 to May 31, due July 1  
(Used to determine adjustments and if the reporting partner and/or overall partnership is going to have surplus at year end)
- Q4 – covers from September 1 to August 31  
(Q4 template is distributed August 15 and due September 15; Used for year-end planning and to produce the Annual Report)

Calgary and Area RCSD Service Delivery Partnering and Planning Process – Meeting the Needs of Children and Youth in Our Region – updated August 2018

**Cross-Ministry RCSD**  
~\$68.3 M

- Annual provincial commitment
- Pooling of funds and service integration at the regional level

**Calgary and Area RCSD ~\$19.7 M + other revenue**  
**Executive and Leadership**

- Uphold RCSD Mission, Values, Principles
- Partnership collaboration and agreement on broad priorities via Executive and Leadership

**Finance Committee**

- Develop regional funding model(s), financial processes, templates
- Prepare annual budget, monitor quarterly, report on overall partnership budget

**Mental Health / Rehab**  
\$15.856 M (78.46%)  
School Boards – enrollment %  
AHS ≥ 35%

**Low Incidence Regional Team**  
\$1.19 M (5.9%)

**COPE Admin**  
\$186 K (0.92%)  
**COPE Working Group**

**First Nations**  
\$210 K (1.04%)  
**Tsuut'ina RSCD Working Group**

**Transitions 0 - 5**  
\$125 K (0.62%)  
**0 to 5 Working Group**

**Transitions**  
School age \$282 K (1.40%)  
To adulthood \$150 K (0.74%)  
**Transitions Working Group**

**Complex Needs**  
\$1.472 M  
Includes CONeX (7.28%)

**Admin**  
\$636.8 K (3.15%)  
[plus \$100 K for regional management]

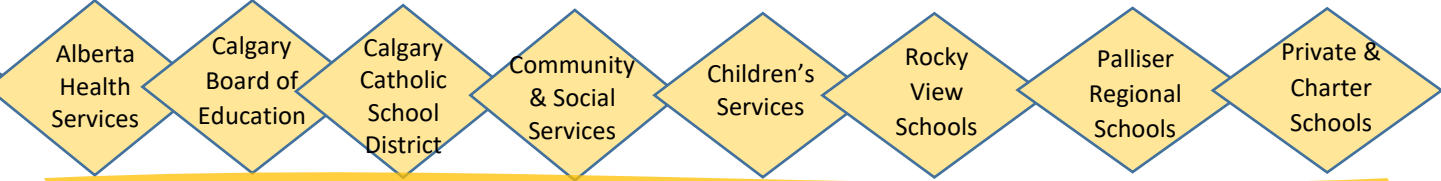
**Integrated Service Planning at Leadership Team**  
- Primary planning for MH/Rehab and Low Incidence  
- Linkages to all other service areas

- All partners participate and collaborate to operationalize service delivery
- Collective decision-making
- Confirm annual priorities and opportunities to align/realign among partners for maximum efficiency in meeting needs
- Collective review of partner annual service plans (early June) – explore synergies
- Articulate processes/rationale for service and HR assignments; exhaust opportunities among partners prior to exploring external contracts

**Tri-Region Complex Needs Committee**  
- Primary planning for Complex Needs  
- Accountable to 3 Leadership Teams

**Regional Management**  
- Supports centralized, partnership-wide RCSD functions

**Customized Annual Service Plan (ASP) Process**



- ASPs prepared collaboratively among each school board, AHS, Children's Services, Community & Social Services
- Phased process extends to other partners/service providers following AHS reconciliation

**Existing Partner Services and Resources**  
**Community Partners, Agencies, Services and Resources**



## APPENDIX 2

### Process for Management of the Calgary and Area RCSD Administrative Budget

1. An allotment for RCSD administration to support the partnership is established annually via Finance Committee recommendation to the Leadership Team (maximum of 4.5% allowed).
2. The Admin Budget is prepared by the Financial Consultant in conjunction with the Regional Manager. This budget goes forward to Finance for review and is tabled at the Leadership Team meeting for approval along with the other components of the annual budget.

The annual Admin Budget includes, but is not limited to, the following components:

- ✓ Secretariat staffing costs
  - ✓ Banker Board fees and Financial Consultant costs
  - ✓ Payroll partner admin fees
  - ✓ Parent Honoraria
  - ✓ Travel costs
  - ✓ Secretariat professional development
  - ✓ Meeting expenses
  - ✓ Office supplies
  - ✓ Computer/technical equipment and associated software
  - ✓ Website upkeep and other communications costs
  - ✓ Cambrian Heights site costs
  - ✓ Learning events budget (connected to Learning Partnerships Committee)
  - ✓ Evaluation budget (connected to Accountability and Assurance Committee)
3. The Regional Manager has the responsibility and authority for administering and monitoring the approved Admin Budget. A second expenditure authorization is required from the Banker Board when the Regional Manager is not an employee of that board.
  4. Where funds are connected to the designated work of particular committees, the Regional Manager works in conjunction with those committees to determine expenditures and contract resources as required to complete the work.
  5. Anticipated large expenditures (above \$10,000), or expenditures above \$5,000 and outside the expected scope of the Admin budget, should be brought to the attention of the Leadership Co-Chairs where a decision will be made as to whether Leadership Team approval is required.
  6. Expenditures related to the Regional Manager (travel, training, etc.) will be signed off for payment by the Financial Consultant.
  7. The Quarterly Reports for the Admin Budget will be reviewed, along with those for other components of the RCSD, at the Finance Committee to ensure ongoing planning and consideration of any expected surplus or arising collaborative need.

