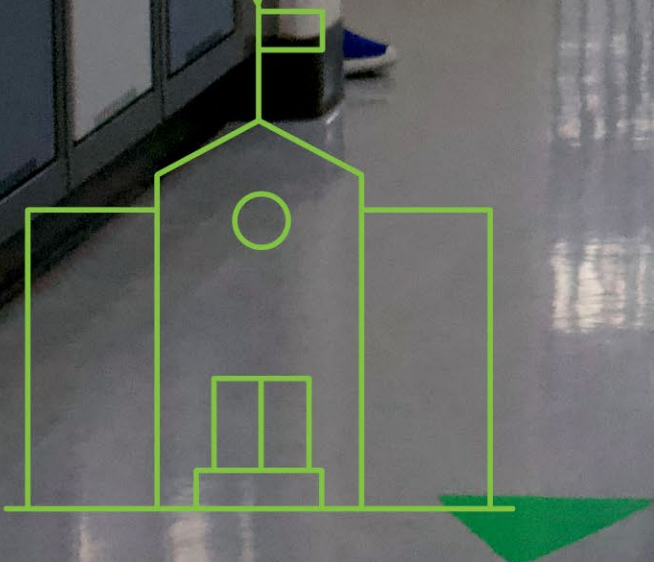
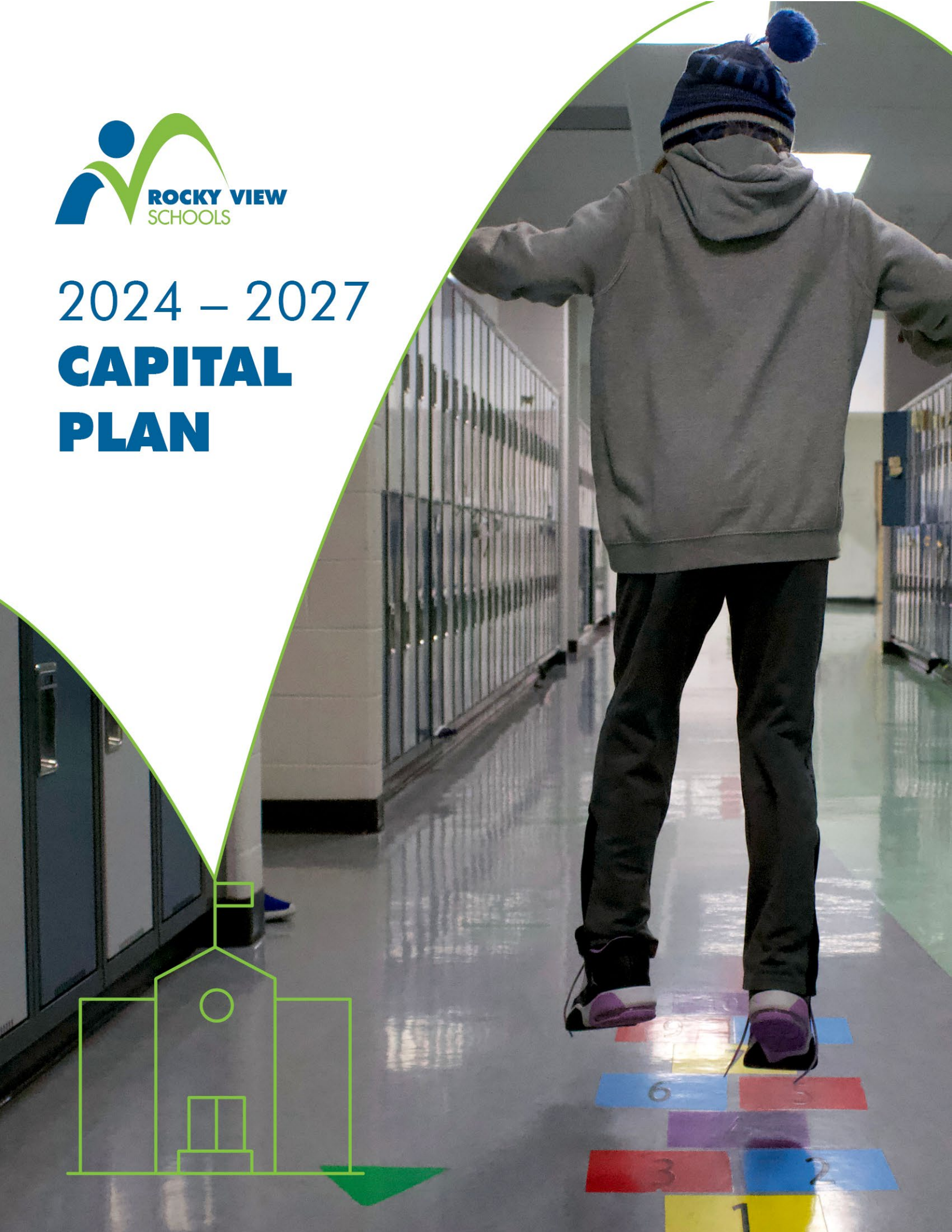




# 2024 – 2027 **CAPITAL PLAN**





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# 2024 – 2027

## Capital Plan Overview

### Summary

RVS provides a positive quality learning experience to over 27,600 public students in Kindergarten to Grade 12, and an appropriate number of spaces for students is required to support their learning and well-being. **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 Alberta communities with populations over 10,000 people, Cochrane and Airdrie are the two fastest growing, with Chestermere in ninth, according to recently released census data. Prioritizing the need for schools in these communities is challenging as they are all 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 92 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 the division does not continue to experience accommodation challenges.

## 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.



### 2022/23 By The Numbers



- 15** K – 6/7/8/9
- 12** Elementary Schools
- 8** Middle Schools
- 8** High Schools
- 3** Colony Schools
- 3** RVS Community Learning Centres
- 1** Online High School
- 1** Online Gr. 1 – 8 School
- 1** K – 12

### RVS:

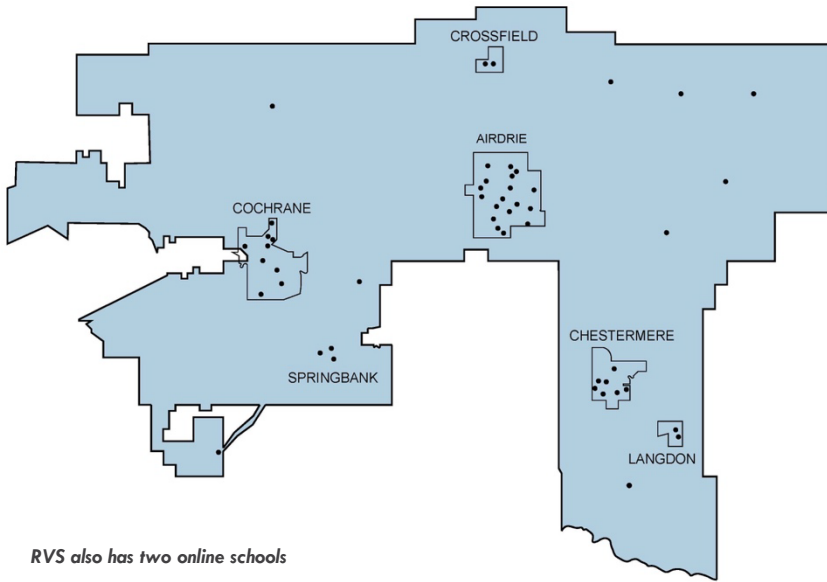
- represents a resident population of over 171,000 people.
- educates over 27,600 students.
- transports over 10,000 students daily, including students attending Catholic schools located in the same geographic area.
- includes over 1,750 square miles (456,372 hectares) of land.
- is the fifth largest 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



RVS also has two online schools

As of September 2022, 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.
- **re-acquisition of school on Powell Street in Cochrane.** \$2.8 million in reserve funding is being used for a modernization to accommodate an additional 300 students beginning September 2023.

- **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, which will add about 500 student spaces.



Bow Valley High School, Cochrane (2009)

## Historical Enrolment and Growth

**RVS, Alberta's fifth largest school division, increases each year by about 750-1,000 students 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?

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Kindergarten</b>	<b>2,008</b>	<b>1,918</b>	<b>1,527</b>	<b>1,907</b>	<b>1,832</b>
Grade 1	2,033	2,082	1,893	1,972	2,130
Grade 2	2,072	2,062	1,954	2,062	2,013
Grade 3	1,933	2,123	2,017	2,085	2,100
<b>Summary</b>	<b>6,038</b>	<b>6,267</b>	<b>5,864</b>	<b>6,119</b>	<b>6,243</b>
Grade 4	2,038	2,019	2,035	2,147	2,119
Grade 5	2,115	2,108	1,962	2,135	2,180
Grade 6	1,979	2,178	2,093	2,109	2,199
<b>Summary</b>	<b>6,132</b>	<b>6,305</b>	<b>6,090</b>	<b>6,391</b>	<b>6,498</b>
Grade 7	1,863	2,005	2,117	2,163	2,136
Grade 8	1,750	1,894	1,986	2,174	2,151
Grade 9	1,770	1,815	1,953	2,145	2,276
<b>Summary</b>	<b>5,383</b>	<b>5,714</b>	<b>6,056</b>	<b>6,482</b>	<b>6,563</b>
Grade 10	1,666	1,723	1,764	1,991	2,107
Grade 11	1,569	1,626	1,675	1,824	1,926
Grade 12	1,474	1,541	1,638	1,908	1,692
<b>Summary</b>	<b>4,709</b>	<b>4,890</b>	<b>5,077</b>	<b>5,723</b>	<b>5,725</b>
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>24,270</b>	<b>25,094</b>	<b>24,614</b>	<b>25,567</b>	<b>26,861</b>
Colonies	52	42	46	42	46
Community Learning Centres (CLCs)	392	503	629	406	336
Online Schools				607	369
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,714</b>	<b>25,637</b>	<b>25,289</b>	<b>26,622</b>	<b>27,612</b>
<i>Year-to-Year Growth</i>	4.0%	3.7%	-1.36%	5.27%	3.72%
	944	923	-348*	1,333	990

\*Negatively impacted by COVID-19 pandemic

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

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Airdrie	10,516	11,075	11,101	11,566	12,405
<i>Difference</i>	614	559	26	465	839
Cochrane	4,683	5,029	5,003	5,311	5,612
<i>Difference</i>	258	346	-26	308	301
Chestermere	3,907	3,865	3,700	3,760	3,822
<i>Difference</i>	44	-42	-165	60	62
Springbank	1,793	1,742	1,733	1,770	1,808
<i>Difference</i>	-49	-51	-9	37	38
Crossfield	639	669	661	668	704
<i>Difference</i>	-12	30	-8	7	36
Langdon	973	957	876	916	912
<i>Difference</i>	8	-16	-81	40	-4
Rural West – Westbrook, Bearspaw, Banded Peak	673	690	597	612	621
<i>Difference</i>	-394	17	-93	15	9
Rural East – Beiseker, Kathryn, Indus	1086	1067	943	964	977
<i>Difference</i>	391	-19	-124	21	13
Colonies	52	42	46	42	46
<i>Difference</i>	8	-10	4	-4	4
Community Learning Centres	392	501	629	406	336
<i>Difference</i>	76	109	128	-223	-70
Online Schools	n/a	n/a	n/a	607	369
<i>Difference</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-238
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,714</b>	<b>25,637</b>	<b>25,289</b>	<b>26,662</b>	<b>27,612</b>



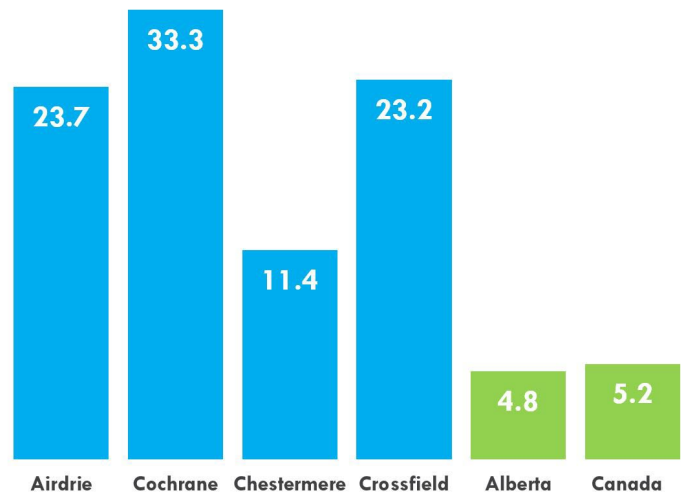
## Population and Growth

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 61,842 to 76,500 from 2016 to 2022, an increase of 23.7 per cent.
- Cochrane’s population grew from 25,853 to 34,467 from 2016 to 2022, an increase of 33.3 per cent.
- Chestermere’s population grew from 19,887 to 22,163 from 2016 to 2022, an increase of 11.4 per cent.
- Crossfield’s population grew from 2,983 to 3,674 from 2016 to 2022, an increase of 23.2 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 (2016-2022)**





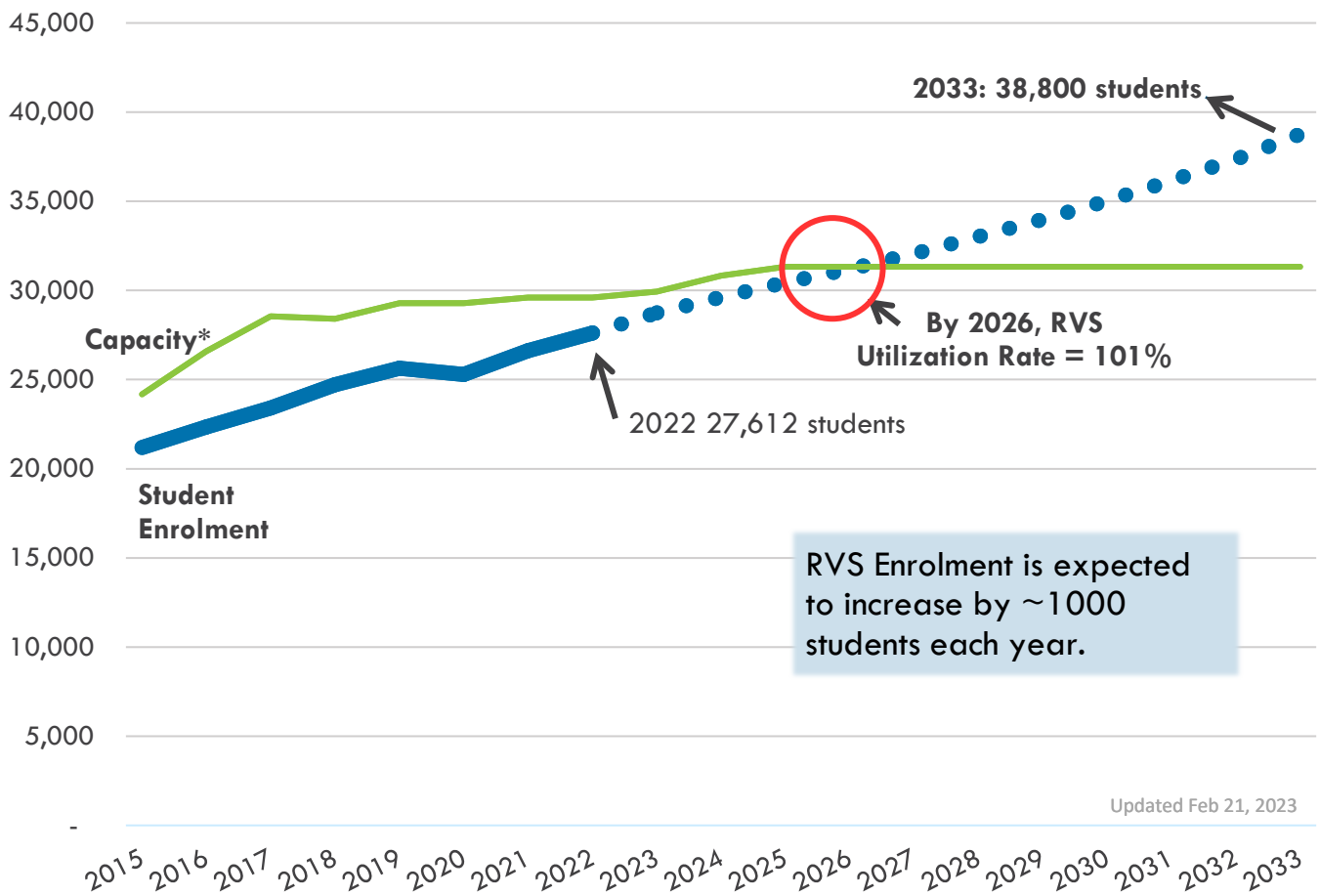
## Capacity and Utilization

With a growth of 750-1,000 students annually, RVS is constantly and urgently 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 because of an addition and modernization, currently underway at the school. 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 well-being.

Looking forward, RVS continues to need additional school facilities. With no additional capacity, **RVS' utilization rate will continue to increase from the current 91 per cent to an even greater critical situation of a 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.

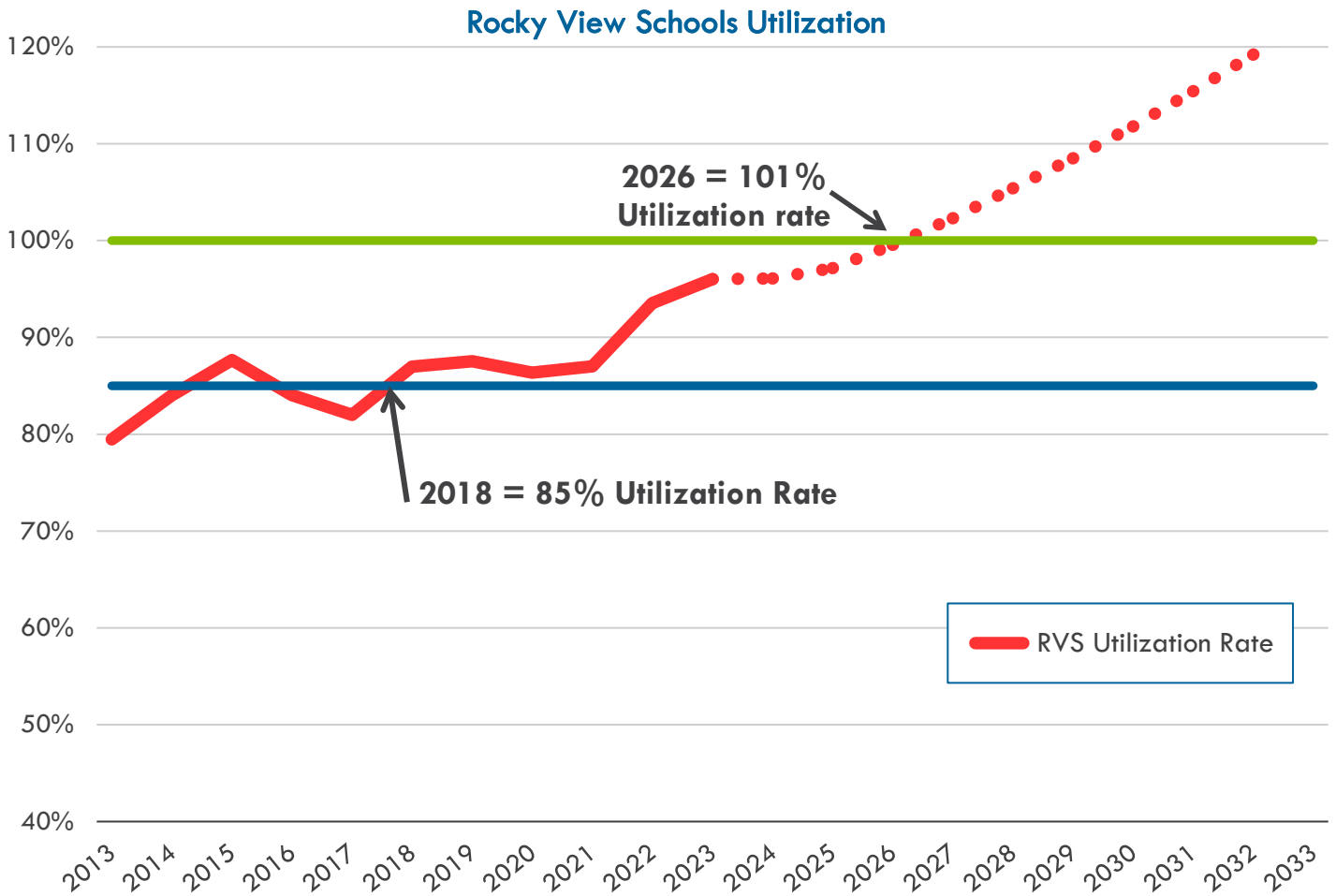


### RVS Enrolment and Capacity



Updated Feb 21, 2023

\*Capacity includes the opening of Langdon School (2024) and Bow Valley Addition (2025).



\*Capacity includes the opening of Langdon School (2024) and Bow Valley Addition (2025).

RVS has been above an optimal rate of 85 per cent utilization since 2018. Enrolment in the school division has been rising steadily and is expected to reach 101 per cent utilization by 2026.

The utilization rate also includes the capacity of all the modular units in the division, including those that have not been included in the original design of the school and are 'overloading' the core school as a result. While modular classrooms provide temporary space, they are not a long-term solution. They do not provide additional gymnasiums, learning commons, science labs or specialty shop spaces that are needed in addition to traditional classrooms.

**Did you know?**  
One-third of RVS' capacity is modular.



Modular Classroom Placement at Fireside School in Cochrane

## 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 modular classrooms due to demonstrated health and safety issues.

Modular classrooms can be either directly attached to the core school, requiring a "connecting link," or left 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.

Alberta Education requires school divisions across the province to review their accommodation needs annually to determine the demand for additional modular classrooms. **RVS submitted a request on Nov. 1, 2022, for 32 new modular units.**

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, 391 of RVS' classrooms are modular: the equivalent of about 9,775 students learning in a modular classroom.

Did You Know?

## Location of RVS' Modular Classrooms

School	Number of Modulars	School	Number of Modulars
A.E. Bowers	8	Kathryn	2
Banded Peak	4	Langdon	8
Beiseker	2	Manachaban	10
Bert Church	8	Meadowbrook	6
Bow Valley	10	Mitford	14
Chestermere High	4	Muriel Clayton	10
Chestermere Lake	11	Northcott Prairie	6
Cochrane High	10	Nose Creek	14
Cooper's Crossing	12	Prairie Waters	8
Crossfield	8	Powell Street	6
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	7	Springbank High	10
George McDougall	7	Springbank Middle	4
Glenbow	14	Westbrook	10
Heloise Lorimer	6	W.G. Murdoch	4
Hérons Crossing	10 (+ 1 washroom unit stored onsite)	Windsong Heights	11
Indus	8 (+1 washroom unit stored onsite)	W.H. Croxford	6
<b>Total Number of Modulars: 391</b>			

42 out of 44 RVS school buildings have modular classrooms (Online Schools, Colonies and Learning Centres excluded).

**24 modular classrooms are standalone and completely detached from the school core, creating separation for those students from the main school, requiring them to walk outside in all seasons and weather to use washroom facilities and change classes.**



## Joint Use and Partnerships

RVS schools are community hubs. Relationships exist with the local municipalities to support shared use of physical spaces and playfields. Opportunities to co-locate schools and recreation facilities are encouraged for the benefit of our students.

### Bert Church LIVE Theatre

A joint venture with the City of Airdrie with a long-term thirty-year agreement, this partnership and shared space is mutually beneficial. The City primarily utilizes the space after school hours for performances, community classes, day camps and community rentals. Bert Church High School students use this state-of-the-art theatre during school hours, for evening performances throughout the school year and for an enhanced drama program. Every year the school puts on a musical and play. These productions allow the students to experience set, costume and prop design, scenic painting, lighting design, stage makeup, acting, technical theatre and front-of-house duties.

### Westbrook School

Located in the Foothills along scenic Highway 22, Westbrook School serves the surrounding rural student population. The building has been built to accommodate 227 students with a substantially larger gym that can host tournaments. The initial capital for this larger-sized gym was due in part to a donation from Rocky View County. An expanded gymnasium allows this community hub to further accommodate community use. The students benefit from a larger gymnasium that can accommodate spectators and host tournaments and special events.

### **Langdon High School**

For twenty years, RVS has been collaborating with community groups and Rocky View County to ensure the new Langdon high school is the ultimate joint use facility. The intent has always been for the school to be the vital community hub for Langdon and the surrounding rural area. The site has been planned to include both the high school and a recreation centre, along with ball diamonds. The school itself has been designed to allow for not only access to the high school facilities – including the gym, fitness studio and servery – but also to allow a physical connection with the future recreation centre.

### **Springbank Community High School**

As part of a strong partnership with the Springbank Park for All Seasons Agricultural Society, RVS is a vital partner supporting their operations. This partnership supports the Society in providing recreational, cultural and social opportunities for our students and their community. Springbank Community High School was built as an integral component of this community hub, and a joint use facility agreement was established that has been in place since the high school opened in 1975. Over time, additional facilities have been added that continue to enhance joint use. These include a curling rink, an additional indoor rink, a refrigerated outdoor rink, an indoor baseball diamond, a fieldhouse for football and soccer, and beach volleyball.

### **Joint Use with Municipalities**

Rocky View Schools has joint use agreements with our municipalities. The City of Airdrie supports a partnership committee between the City, Calgary Catholic School Division, Rocky View Schools and Conseil Scolaire FrancoSud. This collaborative committee supports a co-ordinated approach to the allocation, use, planning and development, and maintenance of municipal reserve, open space and school sites.



# Priorities

The following pages outline RVS' Capital Priorities for the Government of Alberta's budget years 2024, 2025 and 2026. Detailed information for the 2024 budget year is provided after the overall three-year capital priority list.

## Alberta Government Approved Projects March 2023 & Capital Priority List

Priority	Capital Project	Build Out Capacity	Community	Approved in 2023 Capital Plan	2024 Request
1	Airdrie K – 8	900	Airdrie	Design	New Construction
2	Airdrie High School	1,500	Airdrie	Planning	New Construction
3	Cochrane K – 8	900	Cochrane	Pre-planning	New Construction
4	Chestermere K – 9	900	Chestermere	Pre-planning	New Construction
Priority	Capital Project	Build Out Capacity	Community	Type of Project	Site Readiness Expected
<b>2024 BUDGET YEAR</b>					
5	Airdrie K – 8	900	Airdrie	New Construction	Ready
6	Springbank K – 8	900	Harmony	New Construction	Ready
7	Cochrane High School	1,500	Cochrane	New Construction	2024
<b>2025 BUDGET YEAR</b>					
8	Airdrie K – 8	900	Airdrie	New Construction	2024
9	Cochrane K – 8	900	Cochrane	New Construction	2024
10	Crossfield K – 8	600	Crossfield	New Construction	Ready
11	Chestermere High School	1,500	Chestermere	New Construction	2023
<b>2026 BUDGET YEAR</b>					
12	Chestermere K – 8	900	Chestermere	New Construction	TBD
13	Langdon K – 8	600	Langdon	New Construction	TBD
14	Airdrie K – 8	900	Airdrie	New Construction	TBD
15	Cochrane K – 8	900	Cochrane	New Construction	TBD

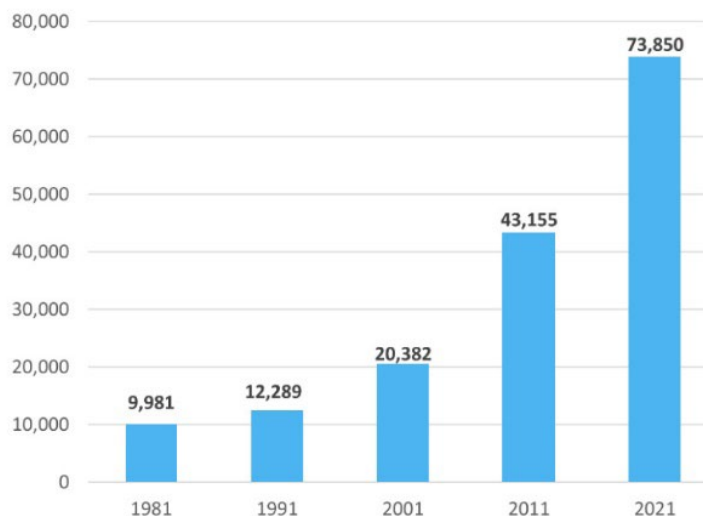
# Priority 1: Airdrie K – 8 School

## Information

Airdrie is Alberta’s second and Canada’s 25th fastest growing municipality (populations over 10,000). According to the City of Airdrie’s website, the population of Airdrie in 2022 was 76,500, increasing 20.3 per cent in the last five years. (Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population.)

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 of these, eight schools have 10 or more modular classrooms. Additionally, between 2014 and 2020, five new RVS schools and one addition opened to RVS students in Airdrie.

Northcott Prairie School, being the most recent school built in RVS, opened its doors to students in 2020. With no new facilities having opened in Airdrie in the past three years and at least three years required to design and construct a new school, Airdrie will not have a new school open for a span of at least six years. In that time span, RVS will have increased by 1,900 Kindergarten – Grade 8 (K – 8) students.



**Airdrie Population Growth over 40 Years**

Source: City of Airdrie Census  
(2021 Estimate at time of forecast preparation)

## Student Enrolment and Projections

The table below is the 2022 RVS student population in Airdrie. **The number of students at Grade 1 intake is 250 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 3.5 per cent by grade.

### 2022 Airdrie Student Population

Grade	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Enrolment	900	1,010	920	983	986	985	973	986	1,001	1,047	966	850	760

From 2016 to 2022, the student population in Airdrie increased by about 600 students annually. The table below shows enrolments and projections for K – 8 students. Though it appears there is sufficient capacity in schools with 1,391 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 – there will already be a shortage of 178 student spaces.**



## Airdrie

Year	Enrolments K – 8	Capacity	Capacity – Enrolment	Approx. Utilization
2022	8,421	9,812	1,391	86%
2023	9,005	9,812	807	92%
2024	9,300	9,812	512	95%
2025	9,625	9,812	187	98%
2026	9,990	9,812	-178	102%
2027	10,315	9,812	-503	105%
2028	10,670	9,812	-858	109%
2029	11,125	9,812	-1,313	113%
2030	11,495	9,812	-1,683	117%

Note: Current capacity includes all current modular units on school grounds.

## Challenge

As indicated by the previous chart, Airdrie's K – 8 student population will soon be over capacity at the existing schools. It is important to note many Airdrie schools are already beyond-buildout capacity, as modular classrooms have been added to schools not designed to accommodate this extra space, putting stress on the core school and impacting our students.

## Accommodation Options

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 has requested 32 new modular units for schools throughout the division for 2023. Provincial funding from Alberta Education's Modular Classroom Program has yet to be confirmed for these units.
3. Add permanent space: a new school is needed to accommodate K – 8 students in Airdrie. Five years from now, there will no available capacity in which to accommodate these students. New school construction funding is required immediately to meet Airdrie's expected student population growth.

## Preferred Solution

**Option three:** Construction of a new K – 8 school with a core capacity of 600 student spaces, with a possible modular classroom addition of 300 capacity, for a total buildout capacity of 900 student spaces.

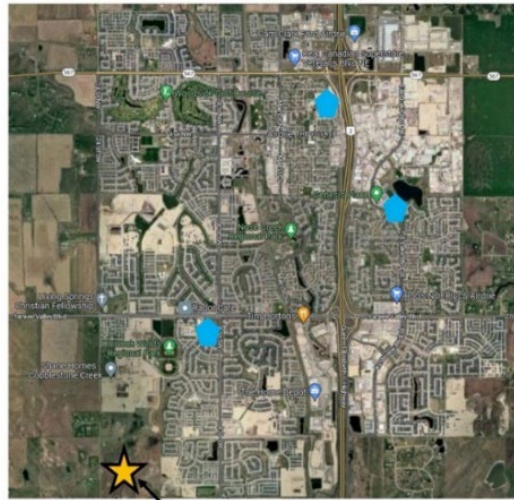
# Priority 2: Airdrie High School

## Information

RVS has three high schools in Airdrie, accommodating students from the city and surrounding rural areas. RVS partnered with the City of Airdrie to secure and develop the land required for a fourth new high school. Site readiness will be in the summer of 2023. Joint use efficiencies are being discussed with the municipality as the school will be adjacent to a future recreation centre.

## Student Enrolment and Projections

September 2023 enrolment is projected to exceed current capacity within the existing three schools. By 2022, two of the three high schools in Airdrie had a total of thirteen freestanding modular units in the fields next to the schools: George McDougall and Bert Church. W.H. Croxford, the newest of the high schools and a P3, is expected to have a 140 per cent utilization rate by 2025.



Airdrie				
Year	Enrolments Gr. 9-12	Current Capacity	Capacity – Enrolment	Approx. Utilization
2022	3,623	3,666	43	99%
2023	3,990	3,666	-324	109%
2024	4,315	3,666	-649	118%
2025	4,539	3,666	-873	124%
2026	4,730	3,666	-1,064	129%
2027	4,875	3,666	-1,209	133%
2028	5,000	3,666	-1,334	136%
2029	5,150	3,666	-1,484	141%
2030	5,330	3,666	-1,664	145%

Note: Current capacity includes all current modular units on school grounds.



### Challenge

Adding modular classrooms is the only short-term solution to accommodate this enrolment growth. Unfortunately, this will be a challenge at each of the high schools – each for a different reason.

**George McDougall:** George McDougall High School was built to accommodate 950 students, yet by 2025, RVS expects the school to have a student population of 1,300 students. There are already three freestanding modular units on the George McDougall site. This additional space works fine for students as regular classroom space; however, having more than 950 students in the school puts added pressure on the core building, particularly overuse of the CTS space, gym, learning commons and hallways, as these spaces were not designed to accommodate greater than the 950-student capacity. At least four additional freestanding modular units will need to be added each year to George McDougall until a new high school is open.

**Bert Church:** Bert Church High School is designed to accommodate 1,100 students and currently has an enrolment of 1,300 students. Eight freestanding modular units were added to this school in 2021. Like George McDougall, this is putting pressure on CTS, gym, learning commons, hallways and bathroom spaces. The Bert Church site does not allow for any additional modular units. Fortunately, enrolment at Bert Church is expected to remain stable for the next five years.

**W.H. Croxford:** Enrolment at W.H. Croxford High School is projected to increase by 150 students each year – this means an additional six modular units are needed annually until a new high school opens. According to the P3 contract, only two additional units can be added to this school; yet, RVS has determined there is a need for well beyond the two units.

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 specialty 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 resulting in higher class sizes in specialty spaces.

### Accommodation Option/Preferred Solution

Funding the design and construction of a new, fourth Airdrie high school immediately.

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.

# Priority 3: Cochrane K – 8 School

## Information

It is no surprise RVS' Cochrane enrolments continue to climb; according to Statistics Canada, the municipality is the fastest growing in Alberta (over 10,000 population), and the 11th fastest growing in Canada at 24.1 per cent growth since 2016 (Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Population).

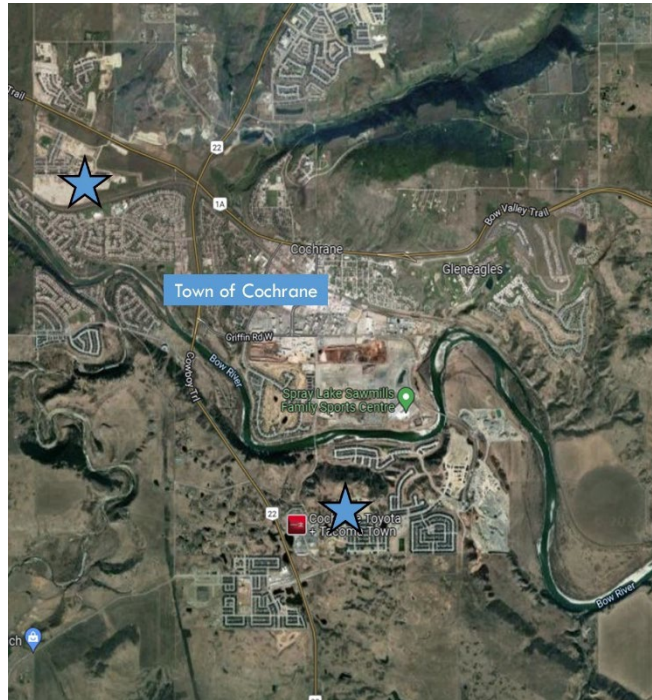
**RVS is experiencing student population growth of approximately 300 students annually in the area, requiring a new school every two to three years in Cochrane just to keep up with this growth.** The last school RVS opened in Cochrane was in the Fireside community, six years ago in 2017.

Cochrane, being a popular town for young families, has a very rapidly increasing student and preschool population. This growth is shown by the increasing one-year-old population over the years. The graph (below right) shows the number of one-year-old children in Cochrane from 2012 to 2022.

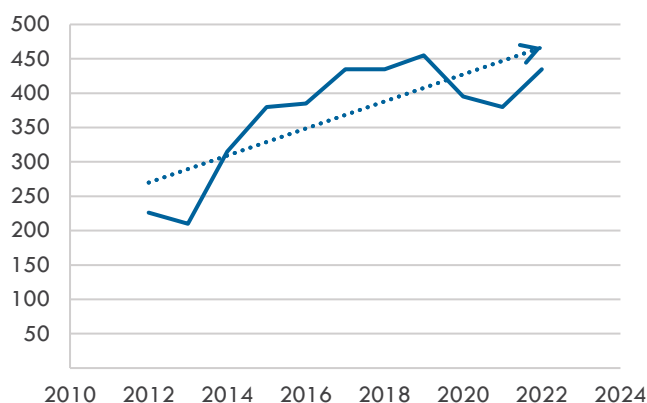
In **2012** there were **226** children who were age one living in Cochrane, compared to **2022** when there were **435** children. That's almost double the number of one-year-olds in a ten-year period.

In addition to increasing births in Cochrane, there are also families moving to Cochrane from elsewhere, adding to the natural increase of the cohort; for example, that same cohort of **226** one-year-old children in 2012 almost doubled (**420**) in population through families moving to Cochrane by the time that cohort turned five years old.

Similarly, RVS experiences enrolment growth of 3.5 per cent from one grade to the next. For instance, for every 500 students in Grade 3, RVS can expect an additional 18 students the next year in Grade 4. While this may not seem like many additional students, when multiplied by twelve grades, this is an annual increase of 234 students, in addition to the increase at the Kindergarten and Grade 1 intake.



One-Year-Olds in Cochrane



## Student Enrolment and Projections

Taking into consideration the above-noted factors of natural increase at intake and in-migration, **RVS is projecting a continued increase of approximately 300+ K – 8 students annually for the next five years.** The need for another K – 8 school in Cochrane continues as population growth in the town is putting increased pressure on the existing schools.

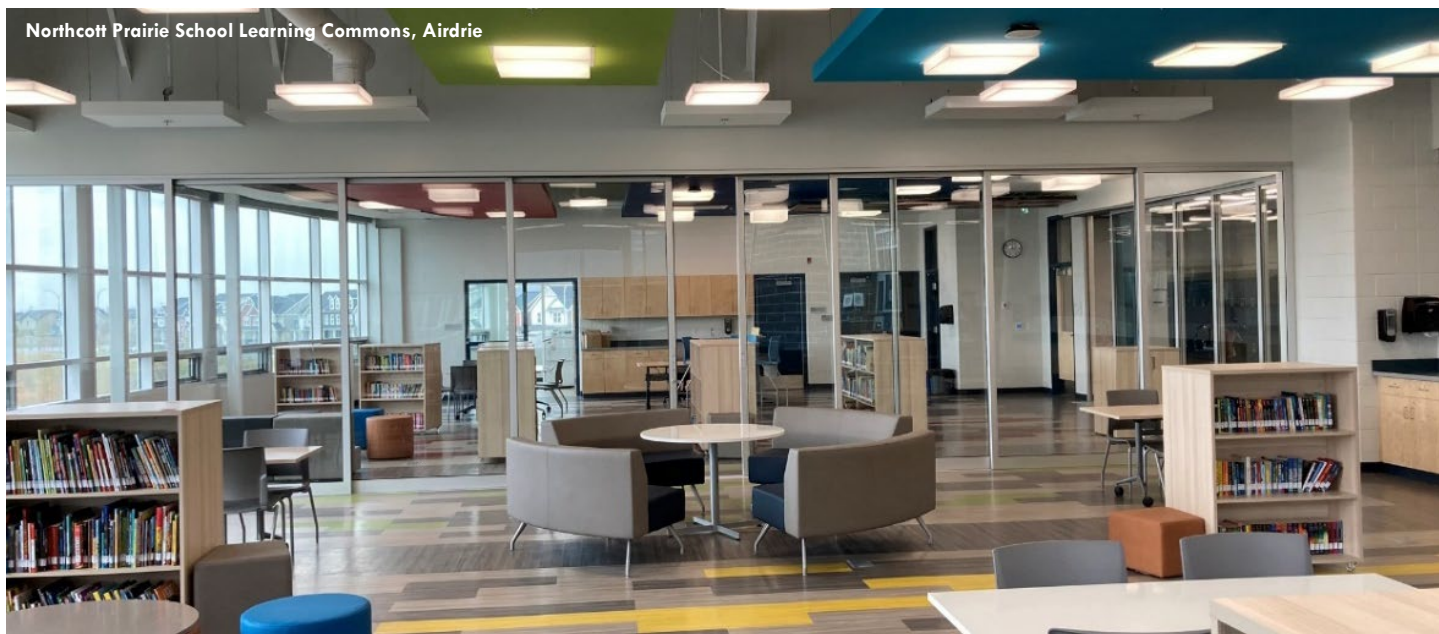
Cochrane				
Year	Enrolments K–8	Capacity	Capacity – Enrolment	Approx. Utilization
2022	3,680	3,970	290	93%
2023	3,990	* 4,270	280	93%
2024	4,225	4,270	45	99%
2025	4,485	4,270	-215	105%
2026	4,775	4,270	-505	112%
2027	5,045	4,270	-775	118%
2028	5,340	4,270	-1070	125%
2029	5,645	4,270	-1375	132%
2030	5,990	4,270	-1720	140%

Note: Current capacity includes all current modular units on school grounds. Current capacity does not include Westbrook K – 8 or Banded Peak K – 8.  
 \*2023 capacity includes 300 additional students with the re-opening of the school on Powell Street.

## Challenge

As seen in the table above, Cochrane K – 8 schools will be well over capacity by September 2025. The existing schools are already well above the optimal 85 per cent utilization rate. This is considered optimal as the school is full enough to be using the space wisely but there is still some flexibility with scheduling of common areas. Student population in Cochrane is expected to continue increasing and the challenge is ensuring adequate capacity for the expected student population.

Northcott Prairie School Learning Commons, Airdrie



## Accommodation Options

The solutions for high utilization situations are to either move students to a school with lesser utilization, add modular classrooms to existing schools or to 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. RVS reduced the catchment area for this school just a few years ago in anticipation of the further development of Sunset Ridge. Accommodating other Cochrane communities in this school would be short-sighted, as the school will be reaching 85 per cent capacity within the next three years.
2. Add modular classrooms to existing schools: **RVS has requested 32 new modular units for schools throughout the division for 2023.** Provincial funding from Alberta Education’s Modular Classroom Program has yet to be confirmed for these units.
3. Add more permanent space: A new school building is needed to accommodate K – 8 students in Cochrane. Five years from now, there will be an additional 1,500 K – 8 students in Cochrane that RVS will be educating. **Additional space is needed immediately to accommodate and educate these students.**

The school on Powell Street (formerly Holy Spirit School, operated by the Calgary Catholic School District) in Cochrane has returned to RVS’ ownership. RVS has committed to modernizing the school and is currently evaluating various accommodation options for this space; stakeholder engagement is underway. The school will be ready to welcome students in September 2023. The capacity of the building is 300 student spaces.

## Preferred Solution

**Option three:** Construct a new K – 8 school immediately.

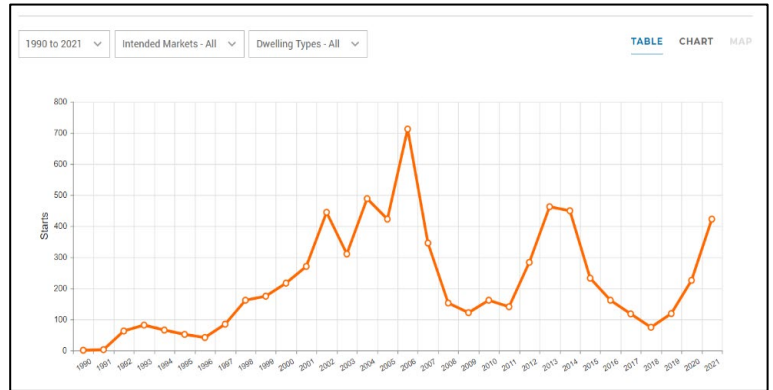
# Priority 4: Chestermere K – 9 School

## Information

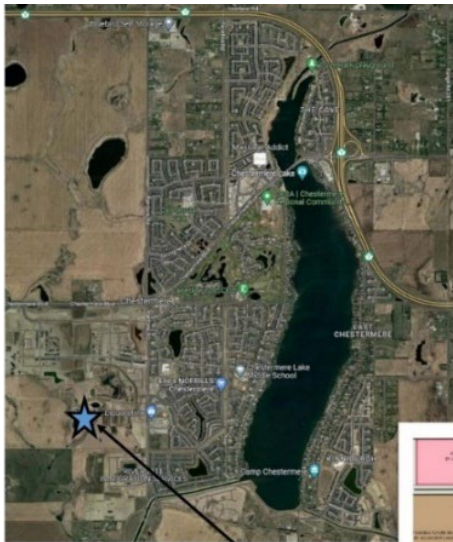
Student population in Chestermere was increasing at an unprecedented rate five to ten years ago with enrolments increasing by 200 to 300 students annually. Enrolment growth slowed beginning in 2018, as housing construction in Chestermere stalled. This pause in new builds occurred due to needed stormwater management and utility infrastructure.

As of 2022, the utility infrastructure has been completed and Chestermere is booming. This chart shows the number of new housing starts since 1990. The number of housing starts was 400+ units in 2021; the housing starts are expected to continue rising to numbers well above the previous year's rates, bringing many new residents to the community and students to RVS.

Chestermere – Housing Starts 1991-2021



Source: Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation



The areas of growth in Chestermere are primarily on the west side of the city. The nearby RVS schools are full, so students residing in the growth areas are bused to East Lake School, which is expected to be 97 per cent utilized in September. There were 150 students attending RVS schools in September 2022 from the developing communities of Dawson's Landing, Chelsea and Waterford. RVS is expecting these numbers to increase by an additional 100 students in 2023.

## Student Enrolment and Projections

### 2022 Chestermere Student Population

Grade	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Enrolment	222	261	254	282	286	315	321	293	286	301	365	347	269

This table shows current and projected enrolments with capacities for K-9 students.

Chestermere				
Year	Enrolments K – 9	Capacity	Capacity – Enrolment	Approx. Utilization
2022	2,821	2,879	58	98%
2023	2,967	2,879	-88	103%
2024	3,161	2,879	-282	110%
2025	3,390	2,879	-511	118%
2026	3,633	2,879	-754	126%
2027	3,922	2,879	-1043	136%
2028	4,306	2,879	-1427	150%
2029	4,759	2,879	-1880	165%
2030	5,329	2,879	-2450	185%

Note: Current capacity includes all current modular units on school grounds. Current capacity does not include Indus K-9 or Langdon K-9 or Sarah Thompson K-5 schools.

## Accommodation Challenges

RVS faces three accommodation challenges in Chestermere.

1. As described above, **RVS is expecting a surge of new students.**
2. RVS overall student spaces in Chestermere declined with the closure of the Prince of Peace facility due to the lease expiring and the owner selling the facility to a private school. This resulted in **a loss of approximately 500 student spaces** and increased enrolment pressures at Chestermere schools.
3. All the elementary schools and one middle school in Chestermere have the addition of modular classrooms, putting a strain on the core school facilities including CTF spaces, gyms and corridors.
4. East Lake School, a P3, is expected to have a September 2023 utilization rate of 97 per cent.

## Solution

A new K – 9 school in Chestermere is needed immediately.



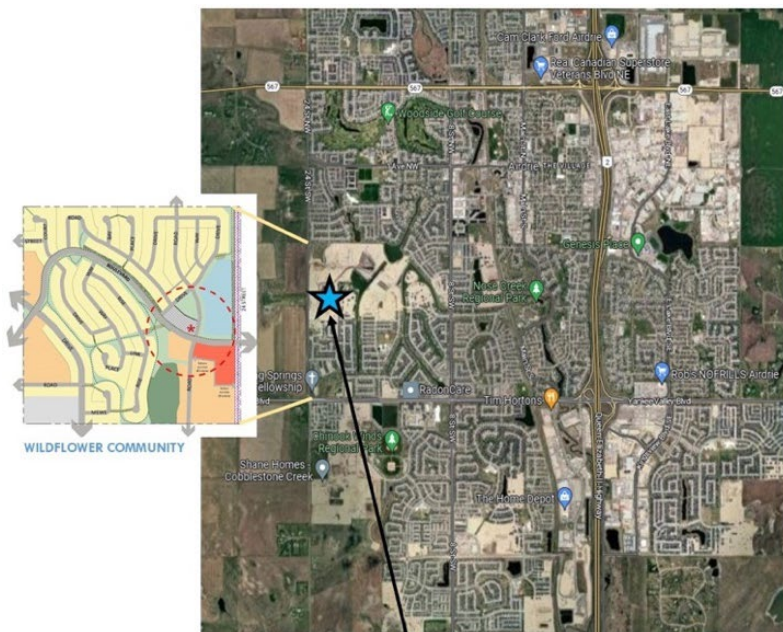
# Priority 5: Airdrie K – 8 School

## Information

As the second fastest growing municipality in Alberta, it is no surprise **the student population is increasing at a rate that requires a new school be built every year to two years.** The last school RVS opened in Airdrie was in 2020, yet the student population continues to increase by about four per cent annually. This is why RVS has prioritized the need for two K – 8 schools to be constructed and opened in Airdrie immediately.

The map below illustrates the communities in Airdrie either considered developing communities or expected to start development in the next year or so – the communities highlighted below have or will soon have increasing student populations.

There are two sites on which RVS can build for Priority 5; one is the community of Bayside on the west side of Airdrie and the other is in the community of Lanark in the southeast part of Airdrie.



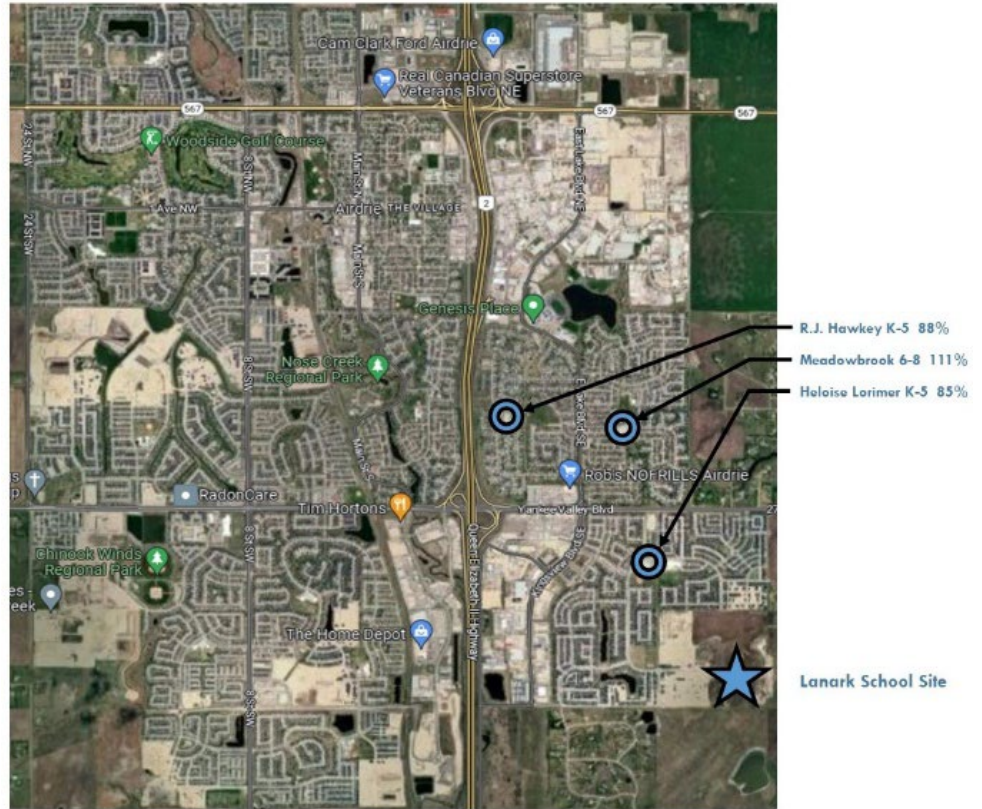
## Bayside

Nose Creek School, in the community of Bayside, is a core school with two freestanding modular units. Like many schools in RVS, Nose Creek has a capacity well beyond its build-out capacity. With Windsong Heights to the south at 95 per cent utilization and Ralph McCall to the north at 87 per cent, students in this area newly enrolling in RVS are only going to add to these utilization rates. Additional neighbourhoods are already approved with houses actively being built to the west, north and south of Bayside. RVS has made the difficult decision to redirect students to schools further away from surrounding neighbourhoods such as Cobblestone Creek (southwest) and Wildflower (northwest) to balance the enrolment rates at the existing schools.

## Lanark

Situated in Lanark in southeast Airdrie, this school site addresses the need for a K – 8 school on the east side of Airdrie. With more land being acquired and housing construction continuing, the Lanark neighbourhood will soon include additional residents.

There are three schools that accommodate elementary/middle school students who reside east of Highway 2 in Airdrie: Heloise Lorimer School (K – 5), R.J. Hawkey Elementary School (K – 5) and Meadowbrook School (6 – 8). The student population growth in the area is mainly at the Kindergarten and Grade 1 intake and primarily impacts Heloise Lorimer. Heloise Lorimer accommodates students from the community of King’s Heights and the developing community of Lanark and is currently at 85 per cent utilization with projected growth of 25+ students annually. Meadowbrook has a current utilization rate of 111 per cent, averaging a slightly smaller growth of 10 students per grade for the next five years. R.J. Hawkey, at 88 per cent, is projected to see a slight and gradual decline in overall enrolment as the communities the school serves are not new developments.



## Preferred Solution

Construct a new K – 8 school to meet the medium- and long-term needs of Airdrie students.

# Priority 6: Springbank K – 8 School

## Information

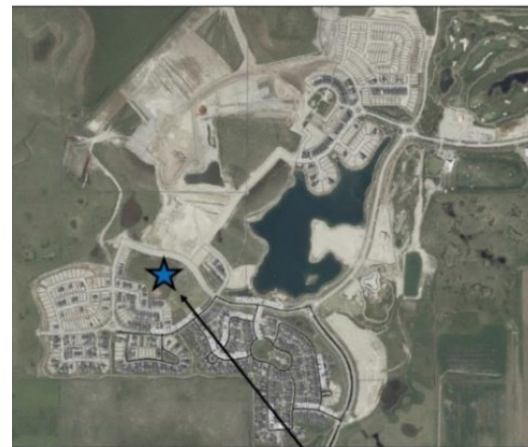
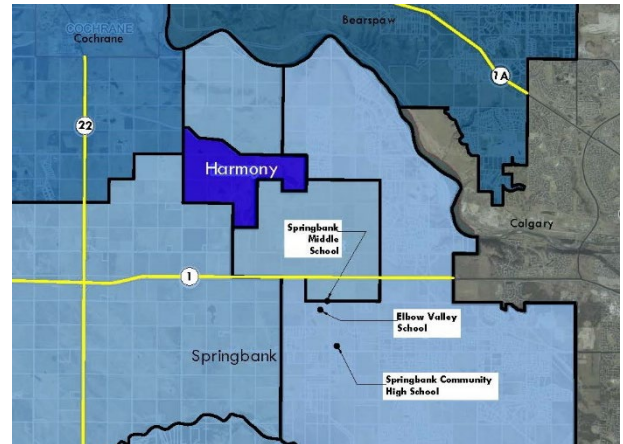
Springbank and area are located west of the City of Calgary within Rocky View County.

RVS has three schools that accommodate students in the Springbank area – Elbow Valley Elementary, Springbank Middle and Springbank Community High. A new school in the community of Harmony will alleviate enrolment pressures that will be experienced at the elementary and middle school level.

Harmony is a new 1,750-acre community development on the north side of Highway 1 within Rocky View County. The projected population of Harmony is expected to be over 10,000 people. This new school will address enrolment pressures on the existing Elbow Valley and Springbank Middle schools. RVS' school site, located in the centre of Harmony, is ready for construction of a school. (See below, right.)

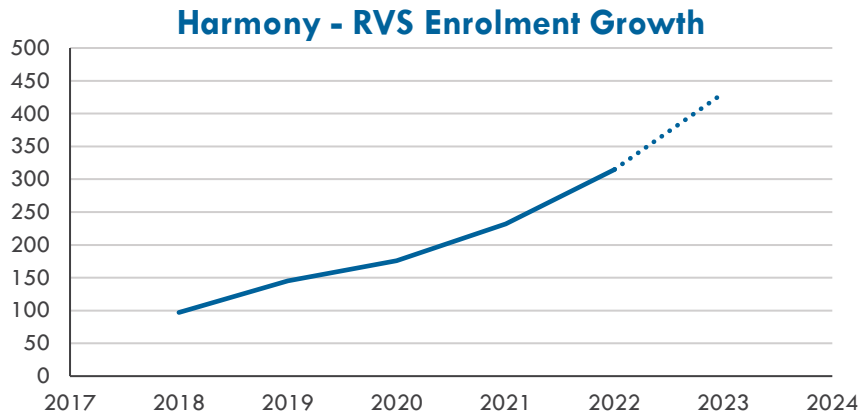
## Harmony - Student Enrolment and Projections

There are currently 315 K-12 students in RVS schools from the Harmony community. Current students who reside in Harmony attend school at Elbow Valley, Springbank Middle and Springbank Community High.



## 2022 Springbank Student Population

Grade	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Enrolment	75	119	104	98	121	149	142	131	154	176	188	184	167



Springbank and Harmony						
Year	Springbank Area	Harmony Area	Total K – 8	Capacity	Capacity - Enrolments	Approx. Utilization
2022	836	257	1,093	1,281	188	85%
2023	853	330	1,183	1,281	98	92%
2024	870	405	1,275	1,281	6	99%
2025	887	500	1,387	1,281	-106	108%
2026	905	585	1,490	1,281	-209	116%
2027	923	700	1,623	1,281	-342	127%
2028	941	810	1,751	1,281	-470	137%
2029	960	940	1,900	1,281	-619	148%
2030	980	1,055	2,035	1,281	-754	159%

With projected growth from Harmony at approximately 75 students per year, the urgent need for a new school is evident.

## Challenge

With such a large development and the schools nearby reaching full capacity a new school is needed within Harmony.

## Accommodation Options

Springbank and Harmony's solutions for growth are to either add more modular classrooms to the existing three schools or add more permanent space (additions or new school construction). Due to the geography and location, relocating students north to Cochrane is not viable, nor does RVS have the space in Cochrane to accommodate these students.

1. **Modular classrooms:** **RVS has requested thirty-two new modular units for schools across the division for 2023.** Provincial funding from Alberta Education's Modular Classroom Program has yet to be confirmed for these units.
2. **Add permanent space:** Another new K – 8 school is needed to accommodate students in Harmony and surrounding areas. **If Elbow Valley and Springbank Middle stay as-is, there won't be any additional space for students by 2026.**

## Preferred Solution

Construct a new K – 8 school to meet the medium- and long-term needs of Harmony and Springbank students.

# Priority 7: Cochrane High School

## Information

Cochrane currently has two high schools - Cochrane High, which is part of the tri-school site on the north side of the Bow River and Bow Valley High School on the south side.



## Student Enrolment and Projections

Both high schools reached maximum capacity in the 2021/22 school year.

Cochrane				
Year	Enrolments 9 – 12	Current Capacity	Capacity – Enrolment	Approx. Utilization
2022	1,914	1,914	0	100%
2023	2,060	1,914	-146	108%
2024	2,190	1,914	-276	114%
2025	2,350	*2,409	59	98%
2026	2,470	2,409	-61	103%
2027	2,710	2,409	-301	113%
2028	2,950	2,409	-541	123%
2029	3,240	2,409	-831	135%
2030	3,550	2,409	-1,141	147%

Note: Current capacity includes all current modular units on school grounds.

\*2025 includes additional capacity for the Bow Valley High School expansion (495 more students, creating a 1,425-capacity school)

## Challenge

Even with the approved addition at Bow Valley High School, growth is outpacing capacity in Cochrane. The addition allows space for about 500 more students, but projected enrolments will exceed overall high school capacity in the next three years. Cochrane High has space on site for a maximum of two more modular units and the Bow Valley High School expansion maximizes the school site to its fullest potential.

## Solutions

**Funding provided for the design of a new high school immediately with construction funding being provided once the site is completely ready.** This is expected by August 2024. A high school takes a minimum of four years to build from approval to opening day. The permanent space would accommodate 1,500 student spaces in the core school with the ability to add 300 student spaces in modular units, resulting in a total buildout capacity of 1,800 students.

### Preferred Solution:

Start the design of the Cochrane High School as soon as possible, with construction funding coming within the next two years. Construct a new high school to meet the medium- and long-term needs of Cochrane high school students.