

# Media Release



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### RE: RVS Welcomes Provincial Support for Future School Spaces as Growth Climbs

Rocky View Schools (RVS) appreciates the provincial government's recognition of the division's urgent need for additional student spaces and the significant role investment in educational environments plays in student success.

The government announced funding for five highly anticipated RVS schools in Budget 2024:

- Full construction funding for an Airdrie Kindergarten – Grade 8 school (South Windsong)
- Full construction funding for an Airdrie Kindergarten – Grade 8 school (Bayview)
- Full construction funding for a Cochrane Kindergarten – Grade 8 school (Rivercrest)
- Design funding for an Airdrie high school (Southwinds)
- Design funding for a Chestermere Kindergarten – Grade 9 school (Dawson's Landing)

"These have been long-awaited as top priorities for RVS and are crucial for providing relief in our most crowded schools in Airdrie, Cochrane and Chestermere," said Fiona Gilbert, Chair of the Board of Trustees. "Today's announcement marks a positive step forward as we plan for the rapidly increasing student population in these communities."

"Our staff work hard every day to create safe, positive and engaging learning environments for our 28,600+ students," said Greg Luterbach, Superintendent of Schools. "This is not an easy task when you have limited space to work with. We appreciate all they do to support student success and we look forward to celebrating together as each new school opens."

With an expected average utilization of 101 per cent by 2028 across RVS, several schools are projected to significantly exceed this rate.

"These figures are not just numbers; they represent real challenges to providing the high-quality learning environment every student deserves," said Gilbert. "The new schools will help, but they will not solely resolve the space challenges faced in RVS. The Government of Alberta will need to continue to fund additional new schools for construction every year for the foreseeable future and provide new modulars and relocation funding to use as temporary spaces while the division waits for new schools to open."

RVS remains dedicated to working with municipalities and exploring options at the school and division level for student spaces, along with continued engagement with families and staff.

School approvals have not kept pace with RVS' growth of 750 to 1,000 new students annually – requiring one to two new schools every year across the division. RVS has been exploring possible solutions to help alleviate pressure in some of the division's overutilized schools. The [Balancing Airdrie Student Spaces](#) engagement is seeking public feedback on potential changes to attendance boundaries and adjustments to the grade levels served by the schools. An online survey is open until March 17 and the Board plans to make its decision on April 25, 2024.

“Changes in Airdrie are necessary to address the space challenges in our schools now and in the few years it will take to build and open the new schools,” said Gilbert. “Greater certainty of future space is timely as we consider community input, accommodation factors, and other information to inform this important decision.”

RVS working groups are also currently exploring potential solutions to address similar space pressures in Cochrane and Chestermere schools. Recommendations resulting from this work will be able to factor in these new pending schools before coming to the Board for their consideration.

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