

2025 – 2028 CAPITAL PLAN



Table of Contents

Capital Plan Overview ----- 3

RVS At-a-Glance ----- 4

Our Division ----- 5

Our Schools ----- 5

Population and Growth ----- 8

Capacity and Utilization ----- 8

Modular Classrooms ----- 9

Geographical Challenges ----- 11

Priorities ----- 12

Capital Priorities List ----- 12

Airdrie At-a-Glance ----- 13

Priority 1: High School in Airdrie – Southwinds ----- 15

Priority 4: Airdrie Kindergarten – Grade 8 School – Lanark ----- 18

Priority 10: Middle School in Airdrie – Northwest ----- 21

Cochrane At-a-Glance ----- 23

Priority 5: Cochrane Kindergarten – Grade 8 School – Heartland ----- 25

Priority 6: High School in Cochrane – Horse Creek Sports Park ----- 28

Chestermere At-a-Glance ----- 30

Priority 2: Chestermere Kindergarten – Grade 9 School – Dawson’s Landing ----- 32

Priority 3: High School in Chestermere – Chelsea ----- 35

Priority 7: Chestermere Kindergarten – Grade 9 School – Chelsea ----- 38

Rural Areas At-a-Glance ----- 40

Priority 8: Crossfield Kindergarten – Grade 8 School – Vista Crossing ----- 42

Priority 9: Springbank Middle School – Modernization and Addition ----- 44

Rocky View Schools has an **urgent need** for new schools to continue to provide students with the world-class education they deserve.

RVS welcomes **750 – 1,000 new students** each year, enough to fill **one to two new schools**.

RVS will have increased by **1,900 Kindergarten – Grade 8 students** by the time a new school could possibly be opened in 2027.

Summary

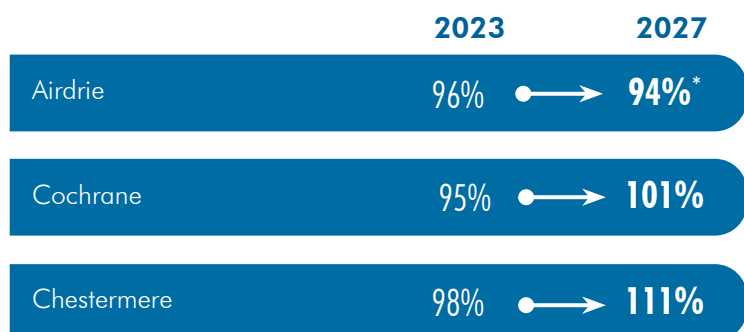
Rocky View Schools (RVS) is committed to deliver on its vision of being a world-class learning organization where all 28,600+ students achieve their absolute best, while responding to increasing enrolment growth pressures of our schools serving three of Alberta’s fastest-growing communities with populations over 10,000: Airdrie, Cochrane and Chestermere.

Despite government approval of construction funding for three new K – 8 schools in Airdrie and Cochrane in Budget 2024, rising utilization of most RVS schools will push schools in those communities to 94 per cent, 101 per cent and 111 per cent average utilization respectively in 2027, when those new schools are expected to open.

RVS is years behind in government approval and funding for new schools, additions and modular classrooms to accommodate our fast-growing communities and more space for students is urgently needed. Prioritizing the need for new schools is challenging as all three communities continue to experience tremendous growth.

Rising Utilization

Alberta’s three fastest-growing communities



*Utilization in Airdrie will drop in 2027 when two new K – 8 schools approved in Budget 2024 open but is still well above the optimal 85 per cent.

RVS At-a-Glance

Our Division



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 everyone learns, belongs and succeeds.

Our Schools

As of September 2023, the regular school buildings in RVS boundaries include:

- 19 core schools built since 1990, generally located in the major growth centres of Cochrane, Airdrie, Chestermere and Langdon. Two of these were replacement schools.
- 4 Private, Public Partnership (P3) schools constructed between 2012 and 2015.
- 11 core schools built in the 1970s and 1980s. These are in their original condition with varying degrees of upgrades, such as additions and minor modernizations.
- 8 schools in the division built before 1970.
- 1 new school opened in 2019. Since then, RVS has grown by 2,917 students, the equivalent of four schools.
- Re-acquisition of a school in Cochrane now housing RVS' Cochrane Christian Academy school. \$2.8 million in RVS' reserve funding was used for necessary upgrades and maintenance. With 328 students on opening day in September 2023, the school is already over utilized.
- 405 portable or modular classrooms dating from 1979 to present.

Upcoming Approved Facilities:

- Horseshoe Crossing High School: This facility in Langdon is being built as a P3 school and is expected to be completed by September 2024. The opening capacity of the school will be 1,004 student spaces.
- Bow Valley High School addition: Announced March 4, 2022. The expected start date for construction is May 2024. This project will be a phased construction and will add about 300 student spaces. The completion of all phases is expected to be ready for the start of the 2026/27 school year.
- The provincial 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)

RVS is creative in maximizing the existing space to offer the best learning environment possible; even so, more space is required to accommodate the growing student population.

Five-year Enrolment Growth Across RVS

	2019	2020*	2021	2022	2023
Kindergarten	1,918	1,527	1,907	1,832	1,798
Grade 1	2,082	1,893	1,972	2,130	2,039
Grade 2	2,062	1,954	2,062	2,013	2,232
Grade 3	2,123	2,017	2,085	2,100	2,144
Grade 4	2,019	2,035	2,147	2,119	2,201
Grade 5	2,108	1,962	2,135	2,180	2,237
Grade 6	2,178	2,093	2,109	2,199	2,312
Summary	12,572	11,954	12,510	12,741	13,165
Grade 7	2,005	2,117	2,163	2,136	2,259
Grade 8	1,894	1,986	2,174	2,151	2,196
Grade 9	1,815	1,953	2,145	2,276	2,316
Summary	5,714	6,056	6,482	6,563	6,771
Grade 10	1,723	1,764	1,991	2,107	2,372
Grade 11	1,626	1,675	1,824	1,926	2,224
Grade 12	1,541	1,638	1,908	1,692	2,316
Summary	4,890	5,077	5,723	5,725	6,820
Total	25,637	25,289	26,622	27,612	28,554
<i>Year-to-Year Growth</i>	3.7% 923	-1.36% -348*	5.27% 1,333	3.72% 990	3.41% 942

*Numbers declined due to COVID-19 pandemic

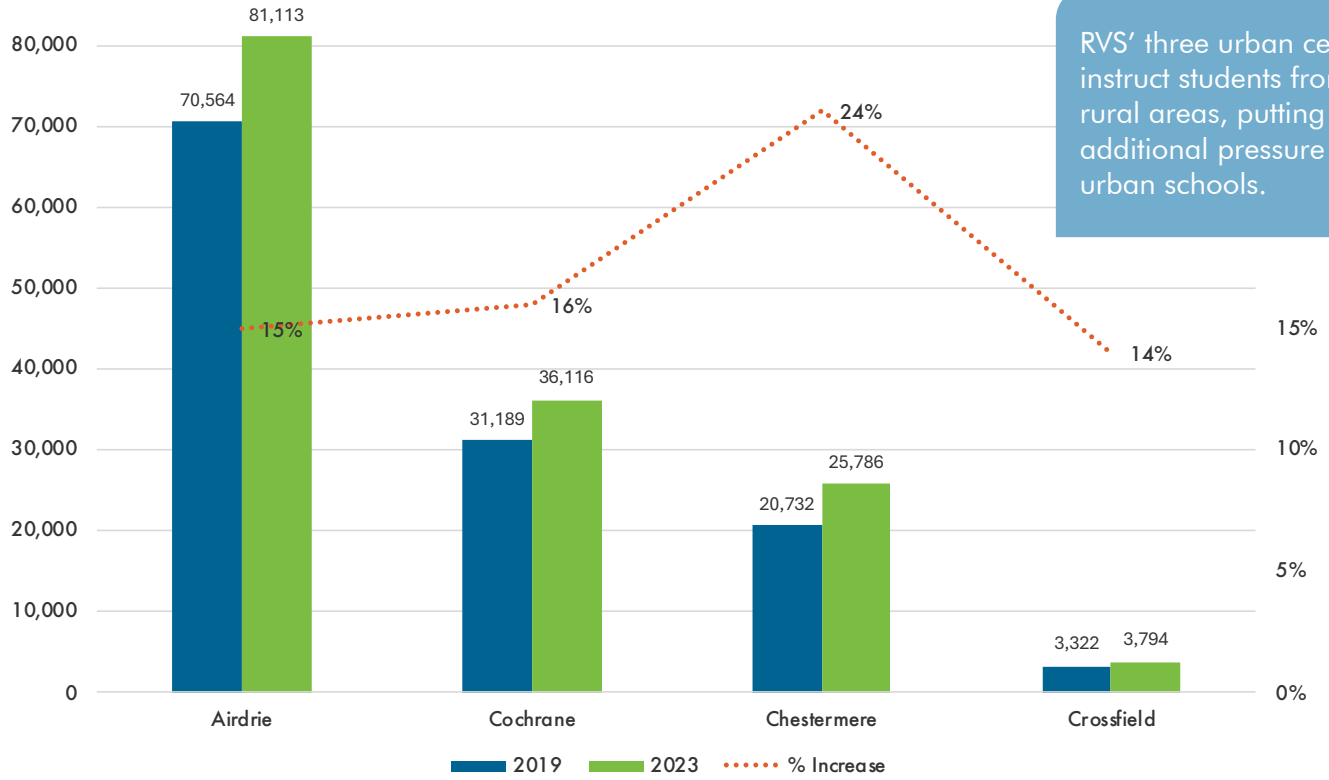
Five-year Enrolment Growth by Community

The following table shows the growth in the different areas of RVS over the past five years. RVS has added more than 925 students in 2023 in the three major municipalities of Airdrie, Cochrane and Chestermere alone.

	2019	2020*	2021	2022	2023	2024 Projected
Airdrie	11,075	11,101	11,566	12,405	12,904	13,252 (2.7%)
<i>Difference</i>	559	26	465	839	499	348
Cochrane	5,029	5,003	5,311	5,612	5,855	6,083 (3.9%)
<i>Difference</i>	346	-26	308	301	243	228
Chestermere	3,865	3,700	3,760	3,822	4,005	4,129 (3.1%)
<i>Difference</i>	-42	-165	60	62	183	124
Springbank	1,742	1,733	1,770	1,808	1,813	1,851 (2.1%)
<i>Difference</i>	-51	-9	37	38	5	38
Crossfield	669	661	668	704	711	726 (2.1%)
<i>Difference</i>	30	-8	7	36	7	15

*Numbers declined due to COVID-19 pandemic

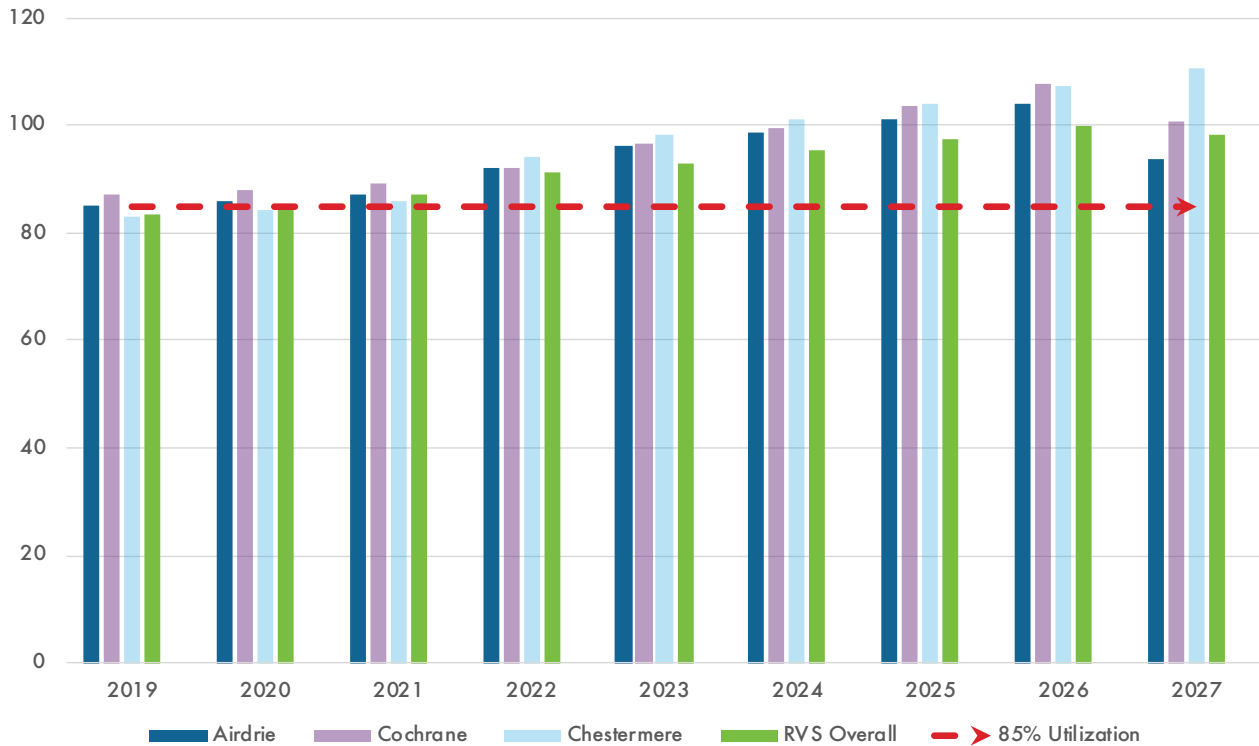
Population and Growth



RVS' three urban centres instruct students from rural areas, putting additional pressure on urban schools.

Capacity and Utilization

The division's utilization rate will increase from 95 to 98 per cent by September 2027 even with the new Horseshoe Crossing High School in Langdon, the expansion of Bow Valley High School in Cochrane, and the two new Kindergarten - Grade 8 schools in Airdrie and one new Kindergarten - Grade 8 school in Cochrane open.



Modular Classrooms

The term modular classroom is used to describe a moveable classroom unit built at a central location, transported and installed at schools across Alberta.

Modular classrooms have long been used as added space for schools. 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 divisions are experiencing high student enrolment growth.

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, 2023, for 22 new modular units and the relocation of 12 existing units from RVS facilities.

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, 405 of RVS' classrooms are modular: the equivalent of about 10,050 students – or 35 per cent – learning in a modular classroom.

One third of RVS' capacity is modular classrooms. About 10,050 students learn in these temporary classrooms.



Location of RVS' Modular Classrooms

School	Modulars	School	Modulars
A.E. Bowers Elementary School	8	Indus School	9
Banded Peak School	4	Kathyrn School	2
Beiseker Community School	2	Langdon School	8
Bert Church High School	8	Manachaban Middle School	10
Bow Valley High School	10	Meadowbrook School	6
Chestermere High School	4	Mitford School	12
Chestermere Lake Middle School	12	Muriel Clayton Middle School	10
Cochrane Christian Academy	6	Northcott Prairie School	7
Cochrane High School	12	Nose Creek Elementary School	14
Cooper's Crossing School	12	Prairie Waters Elementary School	8
Crossfield Elementary School	8	Rainbow Creek Elementary School	14
C.W. Perry School	16	Ralph McCall School	14
École Edwards Elementary School	8	RancheView School	15
East Lake School	16	R.J. Hawkey Elementary School	10
Elbow Valley Elementary School	12	Sarah Thompson School	12
Elizabeth Barrett Elementary School	12	Springbank Community High School	10
Fireside School	7	Springbank Middle School	4
George McDougall High School	9	Westbrook School	10
Glenbow Elementary School	14	W.G. Murdoch School	4
Heloise Lorimer School	6	Windsong Heights School	11
Hérons Crossing School	11	W.H. Croxford High School	8
Total Number of Modulars: 405			

42 out of 44 RVS school buildings have modular classrooms (online schools, colonies and learning centres excluded).

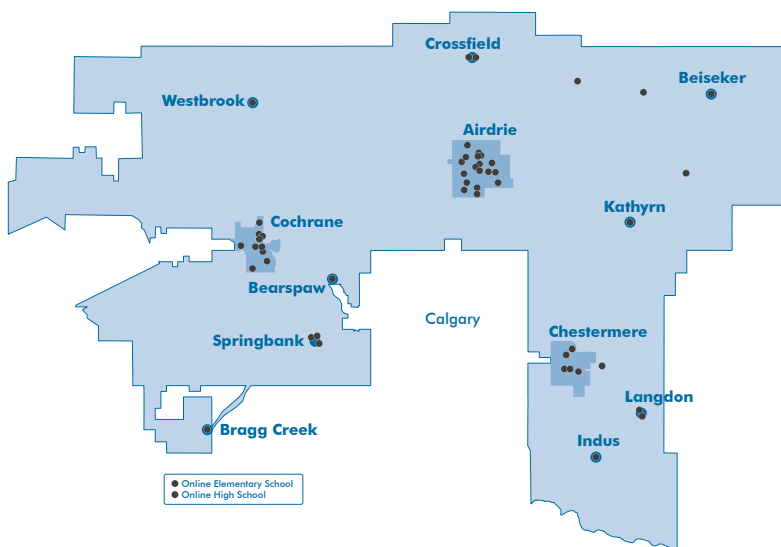
Modular classrooms are approved to alleviate short- to medium-term growth pressures. In many scenarios throughout the division, RVS is seeing these as permanent structures over the long term as no opportunities have presented themselves to remove and relocate units from schools. Many of these schools were never designed and planned to have multiple classroom additions and RVS is quickly running out of available space. Ideally, modulares are connected to the core building. RVS has 23 modular classrooms that 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.

Modular units can enhance the learning experience by providing temporary relief. However, modular units provide space for core programming instructional space and do not account for increased physical education space, such as gymnasiums, additional student and staff traffic in the interior corridors, or provide access to additional programming, while placing a strain on the entire facility.

There are other factors to consider when adding modulares such as current building code standards, site constraints such as firefighting provisions, allowable site coverage, parking stall counts, access for delivery and placement, along with other additional cost considerations such as interior corridors, firewalls and washroom facilities to add.

Geographical Challenges

RVS serves more than 4,500 square kilometers of land and has schools west of Highway 22 in Bragg Creek, as far east as Highway 9 and 797, north to Crossfield and south to Highway 22X. By vehicle, numerous schools can be a minimum one hour away from one another.



The Calgary-Edmonton Corridor Zone is one of Canada's biggest urban areas and the division encompasses a portion of this in the south. The 2021 Canada census had more than 3,200,000 people residing in the 38,300 square kilometer zone. The area includes Chestermere, Airdrie, Cochrane, and Rocky View County. Except for Bragg Creek, RVS' division boundary is greatly influenced by the proximity to major municipalities and the opportunity for migration and immigration to surrounding communities.

RVS, as well as most Alberta school divisions, is encountering challenges to secure sufficient drivers and buses at the current required service levels. The present RVS student population growth rate induces a demand for five to 10

new bus routes per year alone; Alberta Education's new busing eligibility rules will potentially contribute 30 to 50 extra routes by the 2025/26 school year.

We currently transport 44 per cent of our student population; the new eligibility rules are expected to increase that ratio slightly. By contrast, the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) currently transports about 16 per cent of its student body.

School of choice or special programs can significantly contribute to long duration routes. For instance, Bragg Creek area residents seeking French Immersion must be transported up to 70-minutes one-way to Springbank schools, instead of a 20-minute ride to Banded Peak.

Some of Rocky View County roads are not as well maintained as the metropolitan thoroughfares. Road accessibility is, therefore, affected seasonally and buses assigned to these routes have higher maintenance costs.

Capital Priorities

The following pages outline RVS' Capital Priorities for the Government of Alberta's budget years 2025, 2026, and 2027. Detailed information for each community and request, beginning with Airdrie and ending with rural county schools, is provided after the overall capital priority list.

Alberta Government Approved Projects March 2024 & Capital Priority List

2025 Budget Request	Capital Project	Build Out Capacity	Community	Project Classification	Site Readiness Status
1	High School in Airdrie	1,810	Southwinds	New School – Approved for design funding in March 2024	Ready*
2	Chestermere K – 9	950	Dawson's Landing	New School – Approved for design funding in March 2024	Ready*
3	High School in Chestermere	950	Chelsea	New School	Fall 2024
4	Airdrie K – 8	950	Lanark	New School	2025
2026 Budget Request	Capital Project	Build Out Capacity	Community	Project Classification	Site Readiness Status
5	Cochrane K – 8	950	Heartland	New School	Ready
6	High School in Cochrane	1,230	Horse Creek	New School	2026
7	Chestermere K – 9	950	Chelsea	New School	Fall 2024
8	Crossfield K – 8	680	Vista Crossing	New School	2025
2027 Budget Request	Capital Project	Build Out Capacity	Community	Project Classification	Site Readiness Status
9	Springbank Middle School	280	Springbank	Addition	Ready
10	Middle School in Airdrie	1,045	Airdrie NW	New School	TBD

*RVS is continuing to communicate with developers, Alberta Government departments and municipalities to ensure these sites are 100 per cent site-ready at the time of approval. Sites may have a temporary loam pile on them at time of report but can be removed by the developer following project approval for construction.

Airdrie At-a-Glance

The population in Airdrie was more than 80,600 as of April 1, 2023, in the municipal census data and calculated at 81,113 residents within the City of Airdrie’s annual growth report study. City of Airdrie administration is forecasting a 4.3 per cent average annual year-over-year growth rate – approximately 4,000 additional people per year, with a population of approximately 99,500 by 2027.

School buildings in Airdrie reflect this rapid growth. RVS has 17 schools in Airdrie; of these, 16 have modular units attached or freestanding with eight schools having 10 or more modular classrooms.

RVS has not opened a new school in Airdrie since Northcott Prairie School in 2019. RVS will have increased by 1,900 Kindergarten – Grade 8 students by the time a new school could possibly be opened in 2027.

About 350 – 500 new students enrol in an Airdrie RVS school each year, enough to fill a new school every two years.

City of Airdrie administration has made RVS aware they are committed to supporting all school boards and the province with short notice to provide up-to-the-month data for any information included within Airdrie’s 2023 Growth Report and any additional information that may help the province understand the needs in the area. With the municipality on board, RVS also needs the provincial government’s support.

Student Enrolment and Projections

The table below is the 2023 RVS student population in Airdrie. RVS’ Airdrie student enrolments increase annually by approximately 2.7 per cent by grade.

2023 Airdrie RVS Student Population

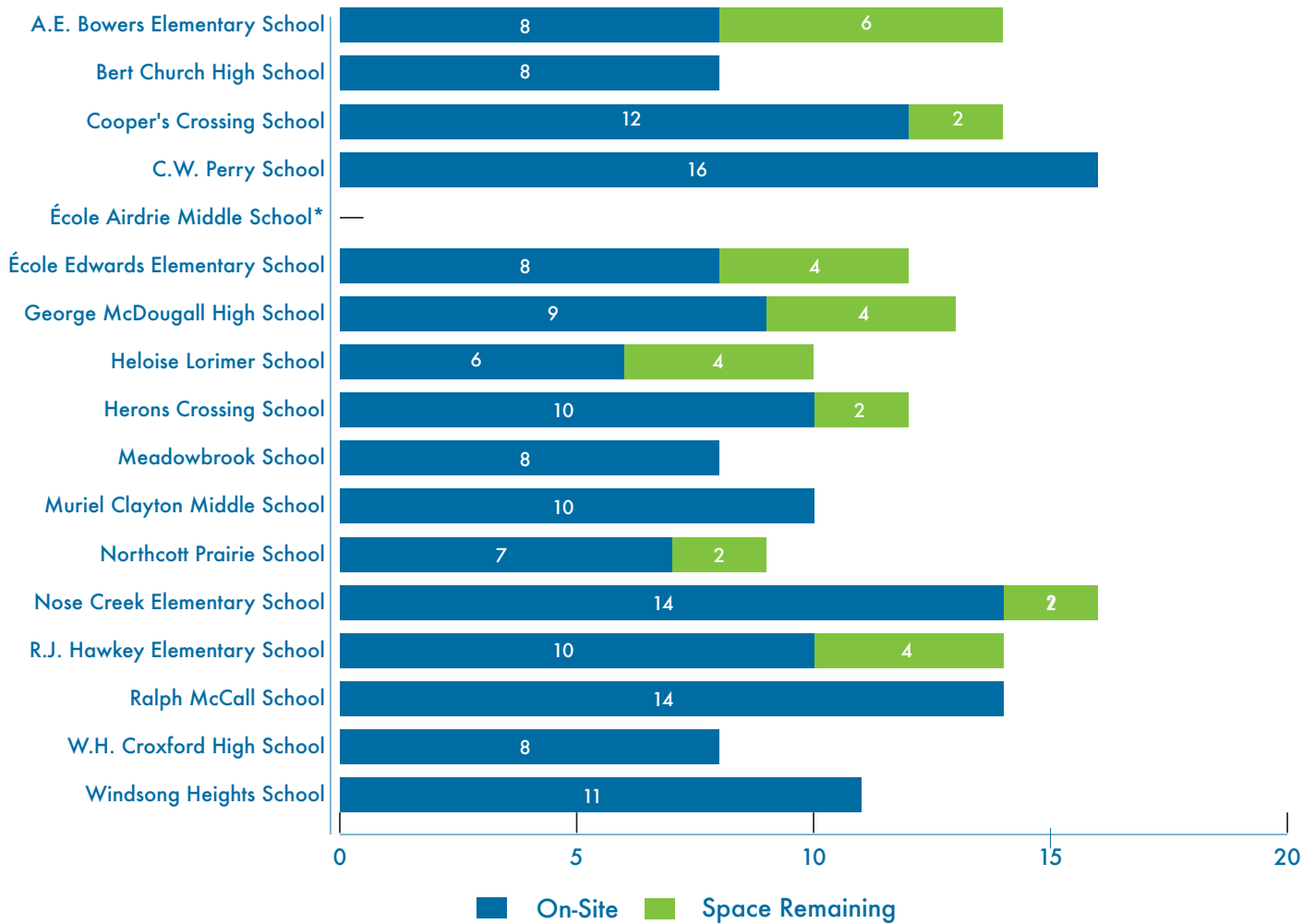
Grade	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Enrolment	861	998	1,040	977	997	1,019	1,032	1,005	994	1,082	1,074	956	851

From 2019 to 2023, RVS’ student population in Airdrie increased by about 500 students each year. RVS’ student population in 2019 was 11,075 with an 85 per cent utilization rate. In September 2023, this had increased to an enrolment of 12,904 students and a 96 per cent utilization rate. RVS schools in Airdrie currently have space for 13,491 students. This will rise to 15,301 when the newly approved Kindergarten – Grade 8 schools in South Windsong and Bayview open, hopefully in September 2027. The 587 student spaces currently available will have to be dispersed throughout all 14 elementary/middle schools and Airdrie’s three high schools. The remaining space will reduce quickly as student enrolments continue to increase.

RVS staff have worked hard to intensify existing space and the Board has [advocated](#) strongly for full construction funding and modular classrooms from the government to keep pace with growth. Unfortunately, school approvals have not kept pace with RVS’ growth in Airdrie of 350 to 500 new students annually – requiring one new school every two years. RVS has been exploring possible solutions to help alleviate pressure in some of the division’s overutilized schools. The Balancing Airdrie Student Spaces engagement gathered public feedback on potential changes to attendance boundaries and adjustments to the grade levels served by Airdrie schools. The Board aims to make its decision on April 25, 2024, which will take effect at the start of the 2025/26 school year.

Changes in Airdrie continue to be necessary to address the space challenges now and in the few years it will take to build and open the new schools.

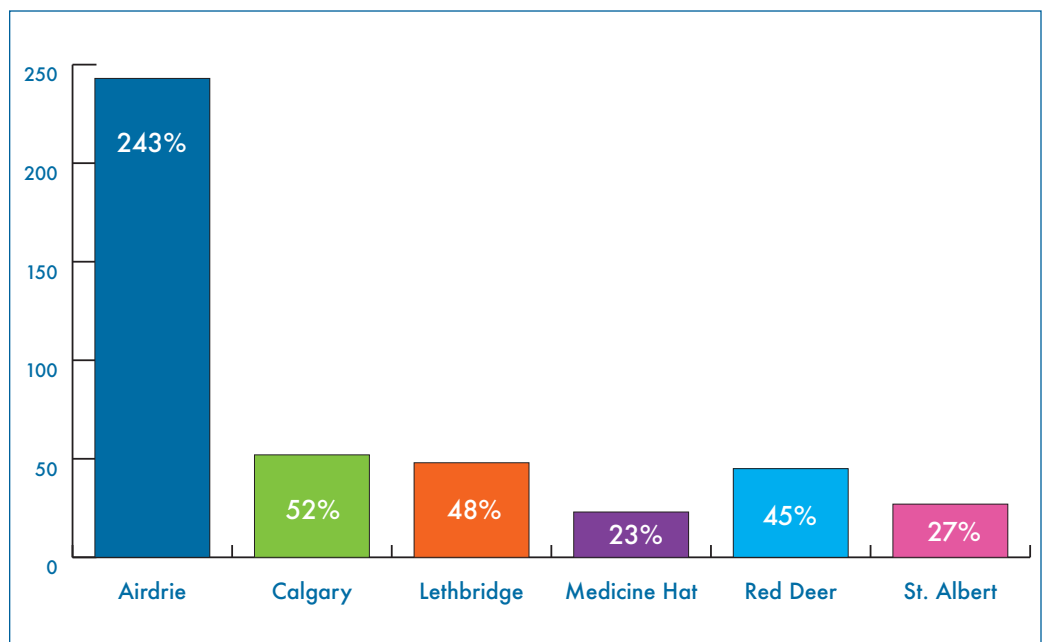
Current Airdrie Modular Unit Capacity



*École Airdrie School does not have any current modular units on-site, nor does the site have capacity for future units.

Airdrie Population Growth Comparison – 2002 to 2022

Airdrie is the fastest growing city in Alberta and will be the third largest city in the province in the next decade.*



*ATB Financial

Priority 1: High School in Airdrie – Southwinds

New School Information

Proposed for the neighbourhood of Southwinds in Airdrie, this new high school would reside off Osborne Drive southwest of the proposed Airdrie Kindergarten – Grade 8 site. RVS is requesting an 1,810-capacity high school upon completion of construction. This would result in 38 classrooms, advanced science rooms, increased career and technology studies options and much needed relief in enrolment pressures across Airdrie.

The three high schools in Airdrie are George McDougall High School in the north, Bert Church High School in the east, and W.H. Croxford in the west. Due to the community growth in Airdrie, especially in the southwest, this is an ideal location for the current and future needs of the city.

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 spring of 2024. Joint use efficiencies are being discussed with the municipality as the school will be adjacent to a future recreation centre.

- Southwinds is a 154-acre development of 610 new housing units with an expected population increase to 3,350 people once the development is complete.
- Of the approximate 1,500 new residents to the neighbourhood, it is expected RVS will soon see 450 additional student enrolments across the grades.
- The initial neighbourhood structure plan was first adopted in 2021 with site services and infrastructure currently being placed within the neighbourhood. Residential home construction is targeting to begin spring 2024.

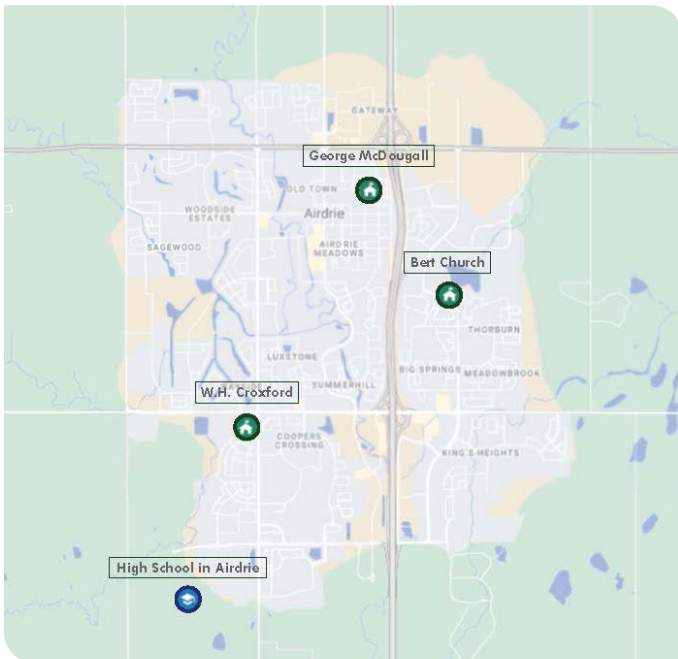
Airdrie's high schools will be 125 per cent utilized overall by 2027 with W.H. Croxford 154 per cent utilized.

Impacted Schools

September 2023 enrolment has already exceeded current capacity within the existing three high schools. George McDougall and Bert Church, two of the three high schools in Airdrie, have a total of 12 freestanding modular units in the fields next to the schools. W.H. Croxford, constructed in 2014 and the newest of the high schools, is a P3 and is expected to have a 146 per cent utilization rate in 2026. Both Bert Church and W.H. Croxford have reached their maximum modular capacity. George McDougall has one more modular unit awarded to the school as a part of the Alberta government's modular surplus program leaving space for three more units, the equivalent of approximately 63 students.

Airdrie High Schools

Year Actuals (A) Projected (P)	Bert Church High School 9 – 12 Current Capacity 1,341	George McDougall High School 9 – 12 Current Capacity 1,100	W.H. Croxford High School 9 – 12 Current Capacity 1,379	Enrolment Capacity 3,820	Approximate Utilization Average Rate
2019 (A)	1,085	741	999	2,825	74%
2020 (A)	1,172	738	1,101	3,011	79%
2021 (A)	1,200	833	1,175	3,458	91%
2022 (A)	1,276	991	1,356	3,623	95%
2023 (A)	1,374	1,050	1,539	3,963	104%
2024 (P)	1,316 (98%)	1,148 (104%)	1,709 (124%)	4,235	111%
2025 (P)	1,346 (100%)	1,201 (109%)	1,838 (133%)	4,479	117%
2026 (P)	1,335 (100%)	1,223 (111%)	2,006 (146%)	4,842	127%
2027 (P)	1,365 (102%)	1,296 (118%)	2,117 (154%)	4,778	125%



Need

If the school was approved, the soonest opening date would be 2028. The new Airdrie high school would result in 5,630 total spaces available and reduce the approximate utilization rate to 87 per cent. With a projected enrolment in this area of 4,907 students for 2028, this new school is critical for RVS' further growth. Without this school, RVS is expecting utilization to reach 129 per cent in RVS' Airdrie high schools.

Challenge

In Airdrie, accommodation changes will be implemented to maximize existing capacity; however, this does not replace the need for additional permanent capacity.

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; however, in Airdrie, there is nowhere to accommodate future high school students.

The footprint at Bert Church is at site capacity, W.H. Croxford is at maximum build-out, and George McDougall has room for three more modular classrooms, with the addition of one unit arriving in Spring 2024, prior to reaching full allotment of both the site constraints and building occupancy. Four additional units at George McDougall will not sustain RVS high schools in the next few years, nor result in an under 100 per cent capacity rate.

The reality is, there is no available capacity in which to accommodate Airdrie high school students with the ongoing growth.

With current bylaws and building codes, combined with current school site sizing, there are no options for an addition to take place at any of the three high schools. These facilities were constructed between 1962 and 2014. Both George McDougall and Bert Church have had major modernizations resulting in added space dating back to 1994 and 1997 respectively along with IMR-funded facility renovations to add individual classrooms into spaces where there once were none.

The reality is, there is no available capacity in which to accommodate Airdrie high school students with the ongoing growth and new school construction funding is required immediately. Airdrie RVS high schools are at 104 per cent utilization with September 2023 enrolments and show no sign of slowing down.

Solution

The new high school requested in Southwinds would open with a projected enrolment of over 1,670 students temporarily bringing the other three high school utilization rates down to 85 per cent. This change would allow for future growth in the designated neighbourhoods for all four high schools. In five years, the projected enrolment at the new school would be more than 1,850 students in 2033 and over occupancy. RVS is expecting more than 5,600 Airdrie high school students for 2033. With 5,630 spaces, all four high schools will be back at 100 per cent utilization in five years.



Photo: City of Airdrie

Priority 4: Airdrie Kindergarten – Grade 8 School – Lanark

New School Information

Proposed for the neighbourhood of Lanark in southeast Airdrie, this new facility is directly north of Lanark Boulevard and east of Lawthorne Link. RVS is requesting a 950-capacity elementary/middle school upon completion of construction. This would result in 25 classrooms, two separate spaces for career technology foundation learning, multiple ancillary spaces, a 940-square meter gymnasium and a modern learning commons.

The surrounding schools in the southeast quadrant of Airdrie include R.J. Hawkey Elementary School, Heloise Lorimer School and Meadowbrook School. Like most areas of Airdrie, there is on-going growth in this quadrant as well.

Residents in the newly developing communities of Kings Heights and Ravenswood attend school at Heloise Lorimer before heading north to Meadowbrook at Grade 6. With more land being acquired and housing construction continuing, the Lanark neighbourhood is already seeing additional families enrolling students into RVS schools.

The student population growth seen in the area is primarily between Kindergarten and Grade 2 intake and impacts Heloise Lorimer. This school is currently at 82 per cent utilization with projected growth of 10 to 15 students annually. Meadowbrook has a current utilization rate of 114 per cent, with the need to accommodate students exiting the elementary grade level onward to middle school. R.J. Hawkey, to the north of Heloise Lorimer and a Kindergarten – Grade 5 school, is at 90 per cent utilization and, not surprisingly, also projected to grow in overall enrolment.

- The City of Airdrie expects 600+ acres will have land use and detailed servicing plans approved by the end of 2024, enabling construction to begin in 2025.
- The Lanark neighbourhood is Airdrie’s fastest-growing area east of Highway 2.
- In August 2023, the City of Airdrie approved a land use change in the future Spring Valley neighbourhood, approximately two kilometers north of Lanark. The changes reduced a planned commercial/industrial zoning and replaced it with residential development that will accommodate 700+ new homes on Airdrie’s east side. Servicing plans for the area are approved and construction is expected to begin with the 2024 construction season.

Even if all modular units available to be added given the available space were in place by 2030, we would be short 656 spaces by September 2030.

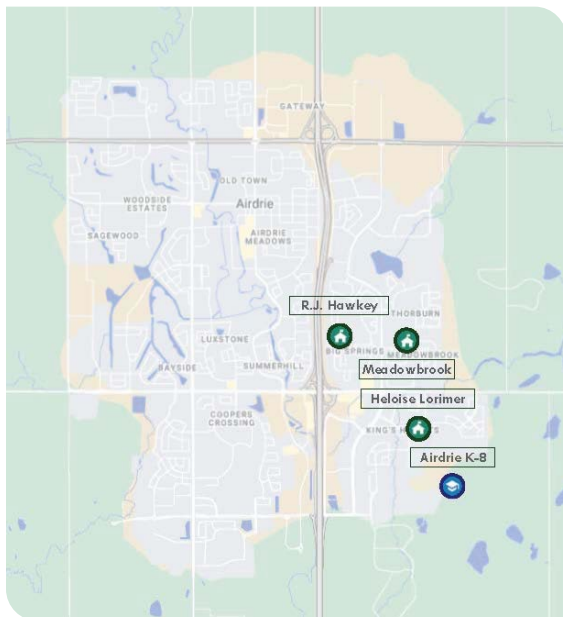
Impacted Schools

Heloise Lorimer, in the community of Kings Heights, is one of RVS’ newer schools having opened for students in 2016. Originally opened as a Kindergarten – Grade 8 school, the enrolment requirements for this new neighbourhood became increasingly difficult to manage and the decision was made to change this to a Kindergarten – Grade 5 school. Grade 6 students move on to attend Meadowbrook School through Grade 8.

The temporary solution for Heloise Lorimer to accept students up to Grade 5 solved the enrolment pressures at the time but has had an adverse effect on Meadowbrook.

Airdrie East Elementary and Middle Schools

Year Actuals (A) Projected (P)	Heloise Lorimer School K – 5 Current Capacity 808	Meadowbrook School 6 – 8 Current Capacity 542	R.J. Hawkey Elementary School K – 5 Current Capacity 494	Enrolment Capacity 1,844	Approximate Utilization Average Rate
2019 (A)	659	483	481	1,623	88%
2020 (A)	643	496	433	1,572	85%
2021 (A)	666	548	445	1,659	90%
2022 (A)	699	599	468	1,766	96%
2023 (A)	747	620	416	1,783	97%
2024 (P)	754 (92%)	616 (114%)	482 (98%)	1,852	100%
2025 (P)	762 (94%)	662 (122%)	478 (97%)	1,902	103%
2026 (P)	786 (97%)	679 (125%)	493 (99%)	1,958	106%
2027 (P)	784 (97%)	731 (135%)	481 (97%)	1,996	108%



Need

If the school was approved, the soonest opening date would be 2029. This new Airdrie school would result in 2,794 total spaces available and reduce the approximate utilization rate to 75 per cent. With a projected enrolment in this area of 2,108 students for 2029, this new school is critical for RVS’ continued support toward a quality learning experience. Without this school, RVS is expecting utilization to reach 114 per cent within existing schools in the area.

Challenge

With three schools offering Kindergarten – 8 on the east side of Airdrie, RVS’ options are limited. R.J. Hawkey and Meadowbrook are at maximum site capacity, and the four additional modular units available for Heloise Lorimer result will only sustain these schools for the short-term.

Heloise Lorimer has additional modular capacity for four units or approximately 84 students whereas Meadowbrook and R.J. Hawkey have reached both reached their modular site capacity and core building site coverage limits. Being in established neighbourhoods, and on smaller sites, Meadowbrook and R.J. Hawkey cannot add on to the existing 1985 and 1980 structures successfully.

Heloise Lorimer, being a recently constructed school has appropriately designed spaces. Renovations were completed at Meadowbrook in 2013, 2018 and 2022 to ensure the existing spaces are being utilized to their full potential. R.J. Hawkey also had a major facility renovation in 1999.

Meadowbrook is the only RVS middle school on the east side of Highway 2. Busing and parent transportation to one of RVS' other Airdrie middle schools would prove challenging and only add to the congestion in west Airdrie. Revisiting the current grade structure in this area only shifts the enrolment pressures around. RVS would see all schools over 100 per cent. As these students progress through the grades, the pressure is eventually felt once again at Bert Church. With the addition of another school in Lanark, this has the advantage of reducing capacity at all three schools.

Solution

This new school in Lanark would open with a projected enrolment of more than 750 students with the other area schools at 85 per cent capacity. In five years, the projected enrolment at the new school would be more than 880 students in 2036. The Lanark, Ravenswood and Kings Heights neighborhoods are projected to be fully constructed prior to Lanark's new school's construction timeline. More than 1,600 students are expected to enroll in the years to follow.



Photo: City of Airdrie

Priority 10: Middle School in Airdrie – Northwest

New School Information

Planned for the northwest quadrant of Airdrie, a dedicated middle school is needed to balance the enrolment levels between the elementary and high school grade structures. Currently in Airdrie, RVS has four middle schools, Meadowbrook and École Airdrie, which are Grades 6 – 8, along with Muriel Clayton and C.W. Perry School, which are Grades 5 – 8.

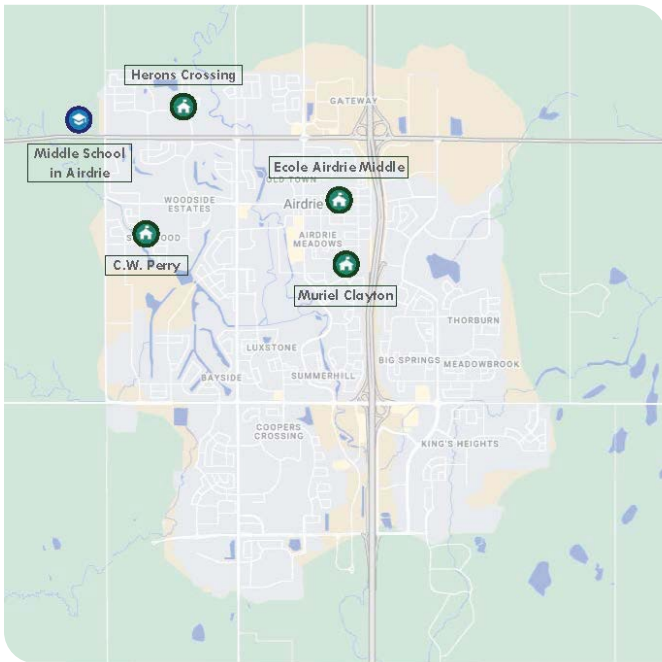
RVS is requesting a 1,045-capacity middle school upon completion of construction. This would result in 21 classrooms, a 1,060-square metre gymnasium, multiple options and space for career technology foundation courses, modern ancillary spaces and a functional learning commons.

Impacted Schools

This critical planning alleviates future challenges and enrolment concerns for multiple locations throughout Airdrie. With C.W. Perry being in Sagewood, it has the three communities of Wildflower, Key Ranch and Vantage Rise in direct vicinity of the current school with the Canals and Midtown nearby. Muriel Clayton, located in Airdrie Meadows, is in one of Airdrie’s older neighborhoods with homes being constructed between 1960 and 1980; however, RVS continues to see enrolment requests and growth in this area as demographics evolve. École Airdrie continues to support its directly associated community of Jensen, while also supporting French Immersion programming and accepting rural students outside of Airdrie’s municipal boundaries. Herons Crossing (Kindergarten – Grade 8) in Williamstown, the newest of the four schools with the addition in 2016, is currently taking enrolment pressures from the southwest. Herons Crossing will need to rely on an alternate location for Grades 7 – 9, at a minimum, as the student enrolments of Reunion and Williamstown continue to rise.

Airdrie West Middle Schools						
Year Actuals (A) Projected (P)	C.W. Perry School 5 – 8 Current Capacity 772*	École Airdrie Middle School 6 – 8 Current Capacity 535	Hérons Crossing School K – 8 Current Capacity 899	Muriel Clayton Middle School 5 – 8 Current Capacity 730	Enrolment Capacity 2,936	Approximate Utilization Average Rate
2019 (A)	697	465	748	581	2,491	88%
2020 (A)	609	479	816	611	2,515	86%
2021 (A)	562	464	872	628	2,526	86%
2022 (A)	524	456	914	673	2,567	87%
2023 (A)	530	485	901	691	2,607	89%
2024 (P)	547 (71%)	528 (99%)	978 (109%)	690 (95%)	2,743	93%
2025 (P)	546 (71%)	537 (100%)	985 (110%)	684 (94%)	2,752	94%
2026 (P)	590 (76%)	541 (101%)	1,001 (111%)	676 (93%)	2,808	96%
2027 (P)	648 (84%)	548 (102%)	993 (110%)	670 (92%)	2,859	97%

* C.W. Perry has a portion of the school’s instructional area dedicated to supporting RVS’ online schools.



Need

If the school was approved, the soonest opening date would be 2030. RVS will continue to communicate with developers and the City of Airdrie to choose an appropriate site in west Airdrie to accommodate this pre-planned middle school for future divisional growth.

This new Airdrie school would result in 3,981 total spaces available and reduce the approximate utilization rate to 78 per cent for 2030. With a projected enrolment in this area of 3,096 students for 2030, this new middle school is critical for RVS' continued delivery of a quality learning experience. Without support for this school, RVS is expecting occupancy to reach 105 per cent for these schools.

Challenge

While three schools offering Grades 6 – 8 on the west side of Airdrie seems acceptable, RVS' middle school spaces are becoming extremely limited. There is no opportunity to bus students across the highway to Meadowbrook with that school's current enrolment at 114 per cent, nor are there any middle schools with capacity outside of Airdrie, regardless of extended transportation and busing times. Planning for another middle school has the advantage of reducing capacity at four schools across Airdrie and aligns with RVS' long-term goals.

Hérons Crossing has additional modular capacity for two units or approximately 42 students. C.W. Perry is one of RVS' P3 model schools and there is no option to add and/or decrease modular unit capacity. Muriel Clayton has reached its maximum allotted coverage both with core school space and modular unit capacity and École Airdrie is in the same position.

École Airdrie underwent a large-scale modernization and expansion in 1992, gaining additional learning space and modern amenities as did Muriel Clayton in 1999. C.W. Perry, as a P3 school, has a specific set of contract obligations which must be maintained.

RVS only has space for 13 additional modular units, or approximately 273 students, throughout the Town of Cochrane.

Solution

This new middle school would open with a projected enrolment of more than 350 students with the other area schools at 100 per cent capacity. In five years, the projected enrolment at the new school would be more than 400 students in 2036. RVS will consider additional boundary options prior to the opening of this school. An ideal utilization of 85 per cent across the four schools would provide the new school with an opening capacity of more than 800 students, approximately 84 per cent utilized, growing to more than 850 students and 88 per cent utilized in the same five-year span.

Cochrane At-a-Glance

The Town of Cochrane’s space for students challenges are similar to Airdrie’s. In five years, RVS’ student population in Cochrane increased by more than 1,000 students. RVS’ Cochrane student population in 2019 was 4,698 with an 84 per cent utilization rate. In September 2023, this had increased to an enrolment of 5,855 students at a 96 per cent utilization rate. RVS schools in the Town of Cochrane currently have combined space for 6,151 students. (This will rise to 7,056 with the opening of the newly approved school in Rivercrest in 2027.) That leaves only 296 free student spaces for the 2024 school year. The remaining space will be filled as student enrolments increase.

Due to the geography in Cochrane, all schools are affected by continued enrolment and municipal growth. With intersecting highways, the Bow River, and varying elevations, the Town of Cochrane’s developments expand the Town in ways that do not easily fit into a grid system or are dividable by quadrants like seen in other RVS municipalities. This makes boundary configurations and future space planning more challenging.

RVS schools in Cochrane have a current overall utilization rate of 96 per cent.

School buildings in Cochrane reflect this continued growth. RVS has nine schools in Cochrane, all of these containing modular units, with seven out of nine, having 10 or more units.

Student Enrolment and Projections

The table below is the 2023 RVS student population in Cochrane. RVS’ Cochrane student enrolments increase annually by approximately 3.9 per cent by grade.

2023 Cochrane RVS Student Population

Grade	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9*	10*	11*	12*
Enrolment	368	402	465	454	451	441	425	428	401	498	545	479	488

*High school grades are higher as two rural schools feed into a Town of Cochrane high school.

In September 2026 – the approximate completion date of the Bow Valley High School expansion – there will be an increase of 310 spaces; however, this only applies to Grades 9 – 12 at one school facility in Cochrane. RVS schools in Cochrane will be more than 100 per cent utilized having exceeded the available space by approximately 50 students.

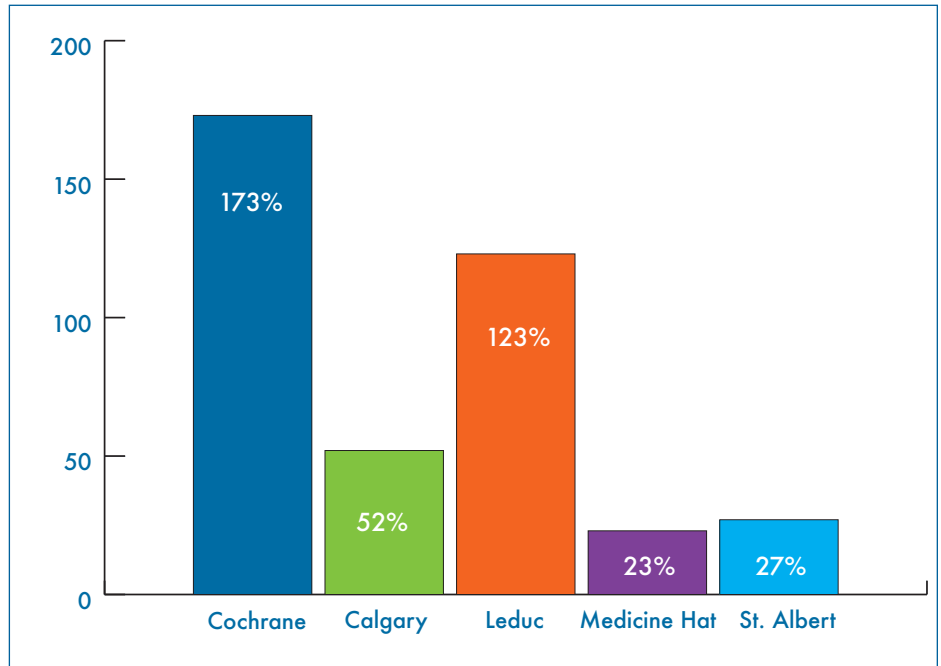
An RVS staff working group is currently discussing possible solutions to balancing student enrolment and providing relief in some of Cochrane’s highest utilized schools.

It is difficult to provide a long-term solution with so little capacity in Cochrane schools. More information will be shared once the working group is ready to provide recommendations.

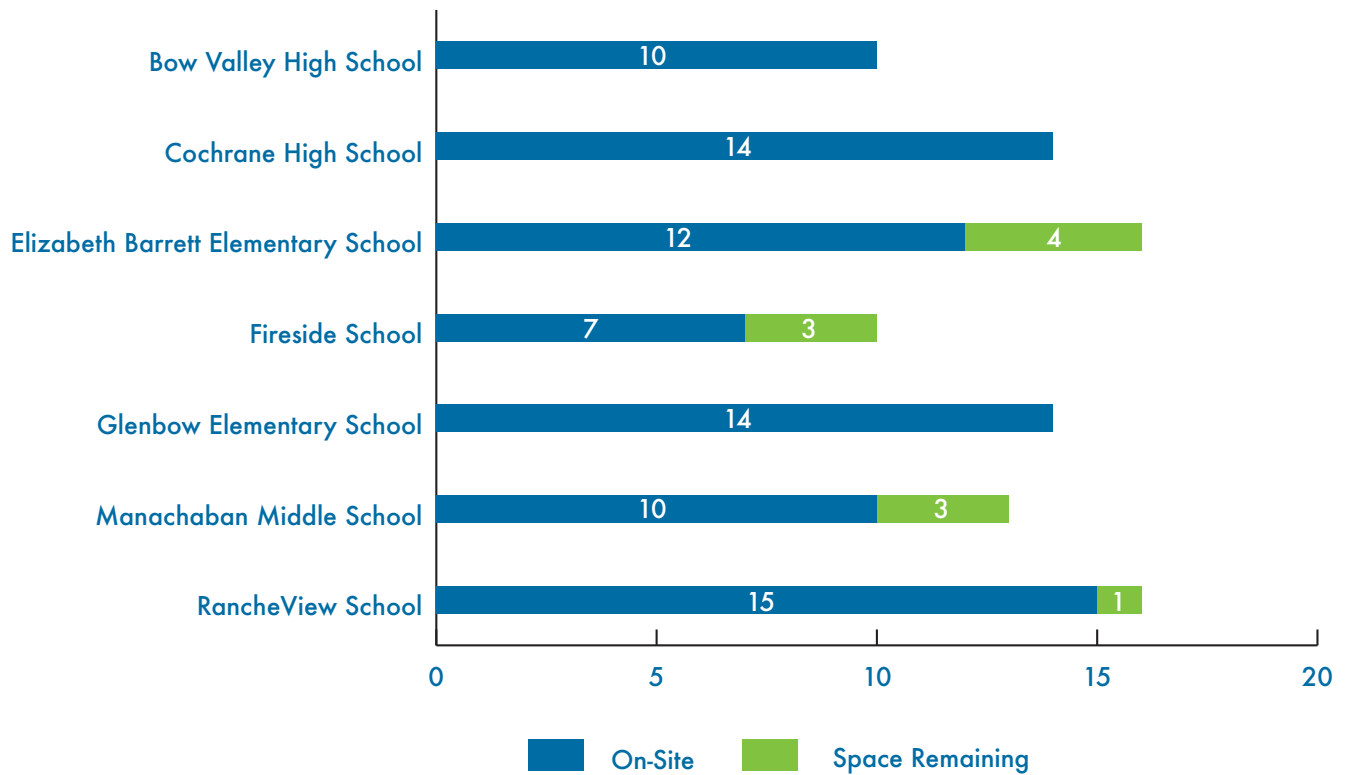
Cochrane Population Growth Comparison – 2002 to 2022

Cochrane is the fastest growing town in Alberta and 11th fastest growing in Canada.*

*ATB Financial



Current Cochrane Modular Unit Capacity



Priority 5: Cochrane Kindergarten – Grade 8

School – Heartland

New School Information

Heartland is in the northwest of Cochrane and has neighboring communities of Heritage Hills, West Terrace, West Valley and West Point. This eight-acre school site is on Heartland Way between Morgan Street and Saddlebred Link. RVS is requesting a 950-capacity elementary/middle school upon completion of construction providing future RVS students with an additional 25 classroom spaces, new ancillary space, a 940 square meter gymnasium, construction foundations rooms and a modern learning commons.

The nearest schools are Glenbow (Kindergarten – Grade 4) and Mitford (Grades 5 – 8). By vehicle, Glenbow and Mitford are both an approximate 10-minute drive. Walkability is not ideal due to the Canadian Pacific Railway line that runs through the Town of Cochrane. The average walk to Mitford would be 30 minutes with an additional 15 minutes to Glenbow.

As land continues to be developed and housing construction not showing any sign of a slow-down, the Heartland neighbourhood is just one of the five northwest communities with additional families seeking enrolment into RVS. With Glenbow at 102 per cent occupancy and the next nearest Kindergarten – Grade 4 school of Elizabeth Barrett at 86 per cent utilization, RVS' school capacity is not keeping up with the growth.

- Three subdivisions remain in this area with The Town of Cochrane expecting final applications for development in 2024.
- Approximately 1,100 units have been built to date, out of an anticipated 2,130 total units.
- Timing for complete build-out is expected in the next two to three years.

Impacted Schools

As stated earlier in this document, the Town of Cochrane's growth is moving at a rapid rate and in all quadrants of the town. The report RVS received from the Town of Cochrane describes a 3.9 per cent annual growth rate based on their historical data. What that means for RVS is an increase in student population faster than in Airdrie and Chestermere and more than 130 additional students per year.

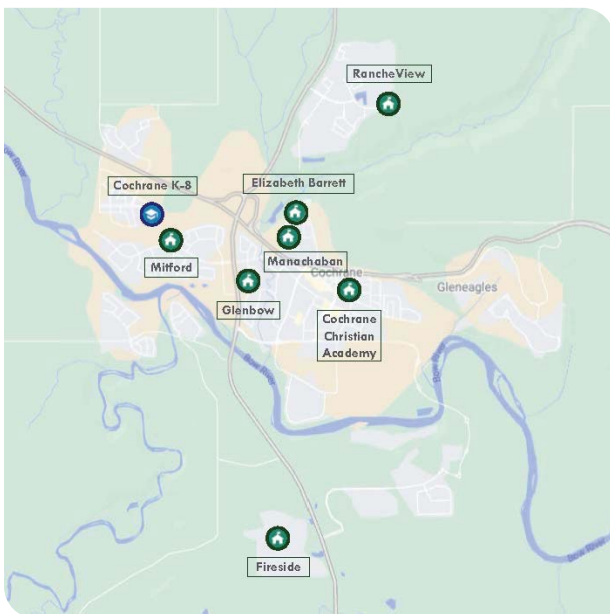
With the addition of another Kindergarten – Grade 8 school in Cochrane's northwest, there would be fewer enrolment pressures seen across the entire north portion of the town and a significant improvement to the current situation in Heartland.



Photo: Town of Cochrane

Cochrane Elementary and Middle Schools

Year Actuals (A) Projected (P)	Cochrane Christian Academy K – 8 Current Capacity 301	Elizabeth Barrett Elementary School K – 4 Current Capacity 542	Fireside School K – 8 Current Capacity 799	Glenbow School K – 4 Current Capacity 548	Manachaban Middle School 5 – 8 Current Capacity 520	Mitford School 5 – 8 Current Capacity 604	RancheView School K – 8 Current Capacity 857	Enrolment Capacity 4,109	Approximate Utilization Average Rate
2019 (A)	–	515	628	482	419	210	846	3,100	81%
2020 (A)	–	516	653	530	442	206	650	2,997	79%
2021 (A)	–	476	788	494	554	274	635	3,221	85%
2022 (A)	–	480	812	515	560	319	645	3,331	87%
2023 (A)	371	465	894	556	537	355	667	3,845	94%
2024 (P)	374 (124%)	458 (85%)	907 (114%)	559 (102%)	576 (111%)	328 (54%)	698 (81%)	3,900	95%
2025 (P)	377 (125%)	450 (83%)	934 (117%)	572 (104%)	613 (118%)	357 (59%)	702 (82%)	4,005	98%
2026 (P)	381 (127%)	440 (81%)	955 (120%)	578 (106%)	652 (125%)	374 (62%)	748 (87%)	4,128	100%
2027 (P)	385 (128%)	450 (83%)	968 (121%)	611 (112%)	635 (122%)	402 (67%)	771 (90%)	4,222	103%



Need

If the school was approved, the soonest opening date would be 2030. This new Cochrane school would result in 5,964 total spaces available and reduce the approximate utilization rate to 79 per cent. With a projected enrolment in this area of 4,726 students for 2030, this new school is urgent for RVS' continued delivery of a quality learning experience. Without this school, RVS is expecting occupancy to reach 94 per cent. This assumption has been made with RVS' awarded school in Rivercrest being fully constructed and open by September 2027.

Challenge

The elementary one to five grades in Cochrane currently have, on average, 35 more students per grade than seen in the six to twelve grades. As students continue their journey through RVS – and presuming RVS follows the status quo boundaries and current grade configurations of Cochrane – this will assist in increasing enrolment at a lesser utilized school such as Mitford. However, the availability to provide enrolment options at Kindergarten, Grade 1 and Grade 2 for young families and new residents to the community is compromised.

With approximately 200 student spaces for Kindergarten – Grade 5, the available capacity of approximately 32 students each is less than the growth in one year.

Glenbow had a major modernization in 2010 to ensure functional spaces were present throughout and another minor renovation in 2013 further expanding the school's spaces into best utilization. Elizabeth Barrett has seen additional modular units in 2005, 2007 and 2014 with room for four more – approximately 84 students. This leaves Fireside and RancheView as options. Fireside, located in the southwest, opened well over capacity in 2017. RancheView in the northeast, opened in 2017 surrounded by growing Cochrane communities.

For the elementary grades, Cochrane does not have any schools below 85 per cent utilization.

RVS will have increasing enrolments coming from the developing community of Heartland for the near future. These students are currently designated for Glenbow. Glenbow School does not have any more modular capacity, nor is there ample space on site for an addition. Elizabeth Barrett has some capacity while RVS monitors the situation; however, that is a three-to-four-year window.

Solution

This new Kindergarten – Grade 8 school in Heartland would open with a projected enrolment of more than 425 students with the other area schools at 85 per cent utilization. In five years, the projected enrolment at the new school would be more than 500 students in 2036.



Photo: Town of Cochrane

Priority 6: High School in Cochrane – Horse Creek Sports Park

New School Information

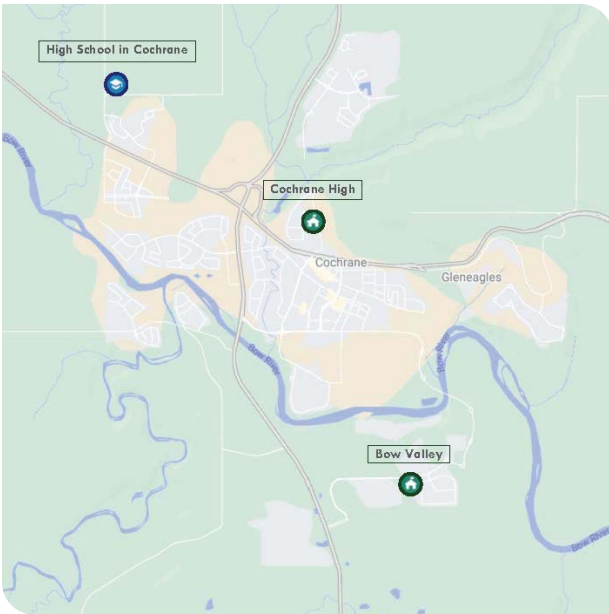
The Town of Cochrane is planning for a community recreation hub in Horse Creek, one of the latest developments in the town. Horse Creek is directly north of Heritage Hills. RVS and the Town have been in discussion since 2014, and most recently in Spring of 2023, pertaining to RVS’ third high school in Cochrane. A portion of that development includes setting aside a 28.8-acre portion of the available quarter section for the high school.

This school site is located along Horse Creek Road, also known as Range Road 44A, on the corner of Township Road 262. RVS is requesting a 1,230-capacity high school upon completion of construction. This would serve the needs of RVS’ students in Cochrane by providing 25 classrooms, six CTS options, multiple science and lab offerings, as well as a strong sports presence with a 1,300+ square-metre gymnasium. Joint-use options would be abundant and would benefit the entire community.

With Bow Valley in the southwest and Cochrane High School to the east, this is the ideal location for a future high school.

Impacted Schools

Cochrane High Schools				
Year Actuals (A) Projected (P)	Bow Valley High School 9 – 12 Current Capacity 920 (1,230 – September 2026)	Cochrane High School 9 – 12 Current Capacity 994	Enrolment Capacity 1,844	Approximate Utilization Average Rate
2019 (A)	739	859	1,598	88%
2020 (A)	816	881	1,697	85%
2021 (A)	833	909	1,742	90%
2022 (A)	901	1,013	1,914	96%
2023 (A)	1,004	1,006	2,010	97%
2024 (P)	1,027 (131%)	1,027 (106%)	2,084	119%
2025 (P)	1,098 (140%)	1,106 (111%)	2,204	126%
2026 (P)	1,140 (93%)	1,152 (116%)	2,292	105%
2027 (P)	1,208 (98%)	1,184 (119%)	2,392	109%



Need

If the school was approved, the soonest opening date would be 2031. This new Cochrane high school would result in 3,454 total spaces available and reduce the approximate utilization rate to 84 per cent. With a projected enrolment in this area of 2,788 students for 2031, this new school is urgent for RVS' continued support of delivering a quality learning experience. Without this school, RVS is expecting utilization in Cochrane high schools to reach 151 per cent.

Challenge

Cochrane currently has two high schools - Cochrane High, which is part of a tri-school site on the northeast side of the Bow River and Bow Valley on the south side. Both high schools reached maximum capacity in the 2021/22 school year.

The modernization of Bow Valley is expected to commence construction in May 2024. The phased construction plan is necessary to ensure all current and future high school students have available space. Cochrane High, with the addition of two more modular units under the government's modular surplus program, will benefit the division but also put the school at full build-out capacity.

There are six modular units that will be relocated from Bow Valley following the completion of construction to align with what will then be 2026 enrolments. These units may need to be strategically placed elsewhere in the division's boundary, recognizing there may be a need for them back at Bow Valley temporarily should high school student enrolments continue to rise.

Cochrane High has had multiple small facility renovations and a major renovation spanning 2013 to 2015. The Planning and Operations teams continue to explore creative solutions and most recently proposed to the school the additional intensification of space. This is not ideal; however, areas such as the atrium, which doubles as the cafeteria and gathering hub for the school, the fitness room, administration spaces and reduction of the library space, have all been considered, with some already implemented in 2023.

Even with the approved addition at Bow Valley, growth is outpacing capacity in Cochrane. The addition allows space for about 300 more students, but projected enrolments will exceed overall high school capacity once again by 2026 when RVS' Cochrane schools will be back up to 103 per cent utilization.

The preferred solution would be to start the planning and subsequent design and construction tendering documents for a new high school in Cochrane as soon as possible, with construction funding coming within the next two years.

Solution

This new high school in Horse Creek would open with a projected enrolment of 714 students with the other area high schools at 100 per cent capacity. In five years, the projected enrolment at the new school would be 864 students, 70 per cent utilized, in 2036. Using an ideal utilization of 85 per cent at the other two Cochrane high schools would provide the new school with an opening capacity of 1,042 students, resulting in an equally utilized school of approximately 85 per cent. Future growth would see the new high school reach 1,115 students and 91 per cent utilization in the same five-year span.

Chestermere At-a-Glance

Like the geography in Cochrane, all Chestermere schools are affected by community growth. Chestermere Lake divides the east and west portions of the city and Highway 1 runs across the north and east sides. The City of Chestermere’s developments currently are expanding in the west, with a substantial portion in all directions recently being annexed. The boundary configurations currently in place are resulting in extended commute times and longer busing routes to address availability of nearby schools.

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 rapidly expanding once again.

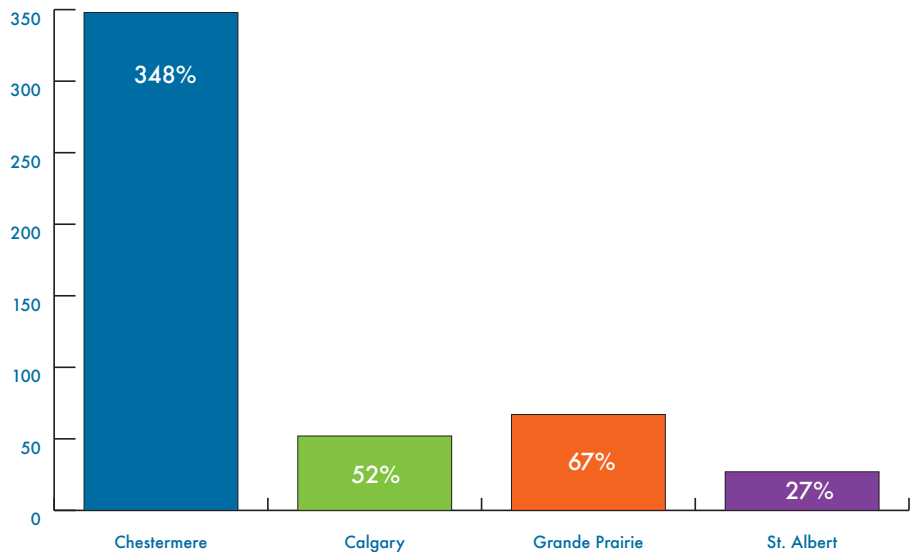
As of April 2024, RVS will have space for eight additional modular units throughout the City of Chestermere. These additional 170 student spaces will not satisfy the growth projected in 2024 enrolment and is insignificant toward any long-term solution.

An RVS staff working group is currently discussing possible solutions to balancing student enrolment and providing relief in some of Chestermere’s highest utilized schools. Similar to Airdrie and Cochrane, this is a significant challenge with such little capacity in Chestermere schools. More information will be shared once the working group is ready to provide recommendations.

Balancing student enrolment in Chestermere will need to take place to provide relief to the highest utilized schools.

Chestermere Population Growth Comparison 2002 – 2022

There were 1,652 new homes built in Chestermere between 2015 and 2022.*



*Canada Housing and Mortgage Corporation

Student Enrolment and Projections

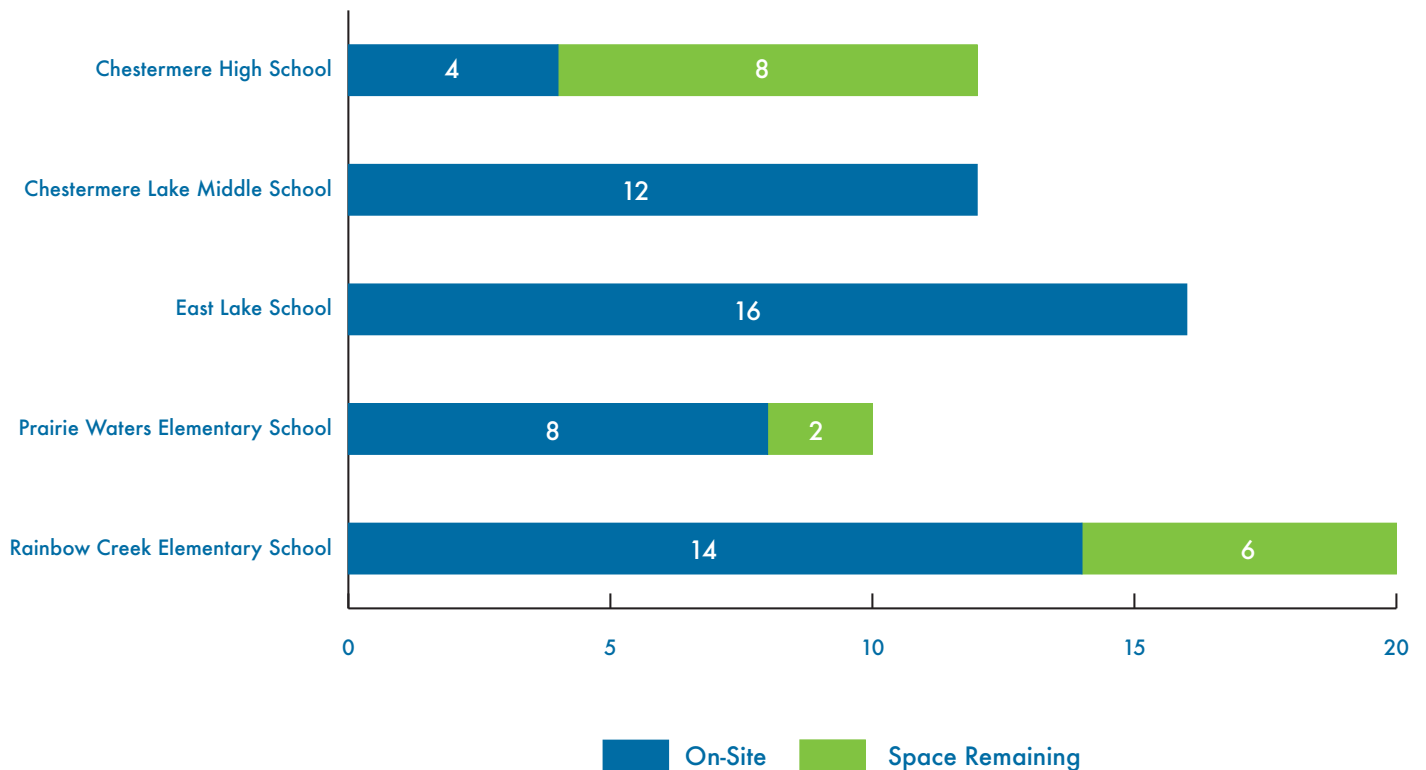
The table below is the 2023 RVS student population in Chestermere. RVS' Chestermere student enrolments increase annually by approximately 3.1 per cent by grade.

2023 Chestermere RVS Student Population

Grade	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10*	11*	12*
Enrolment	237	266	282	273	300	306	332	303	290	291	409	362	334

*Currently support Grade 10 – 12 students from Langdon who will now be attending the new Horseshoe Crossing High School in Langdon starting fall of 2024.

Current Chestermere Modular Unit Capacity



The areas of growth in Chestermere’s west side of the city are causing the nearby RVS schools to become too full. Students residing in the growth areas are bused to East Lake School, which is expected to be 109 per cent utilized in September 2024. In 2022, 150 new students joined RVS schools from the developing communities of Dawson’s Landing, Chelsea and Waterford. RVS is expecting another 100 new students from these communities in 2024.

RVS overall student spaces in Chestermere declined with the closure of the Prince of Peace facility in 2022 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.

All the elementary schools and one middle school in Chestermere have a high number of modular classrooms attached or freestanding. While this has helped to provide some temporary classroom space it also puts a strain on the core school facilities including CTF spaces, gyms and corridors. New schools in Chestermere are needed immediately as the city continues to grow.

Priority 2: Chestermere Kindergarten – Grade 9 School – Dawson’s Landing

New School Information

Proposed for Dawson’s Landing in Chestermere, this new facility resides along Dawson Drive and Dawson Dock Avenue, south of Dawson Way and west of Rainbow Road. RVS is requesting a 950-capacity elementary/middle school on this eight-acre site to accommodate growth in the west of the city. Upon completion of construction, RVS would have a school that adds 25 classrooms, two separate spaces for career technology foundation learning, ancillary spaces and a gymnasium.

The other four schools with attendance areas for Kindergarten – Grade 9 in Chestermere include Prairie Waters Elementary School, Rainbow Creek Elementary School, East Lake School and Chestermere Lake Middle School.

- Dawson’s Landing is more than 50 per cent developed and has a final build-out of 784 residential units ranging from single-family to semi-detached and multi-family properties.
- Upon completion, this single neighborhood is expected to increase RVS’ Chestermere enrolments by more than 375 students. Currently, about 110 Kindergarten – Grade 9 students attend East Lake Chestermere Lake from the neighborhood and 40 students attend Chestermere High School.
- Chelsea, at the west end of the city is expected to add 250 new students. Waterford, at the south end, is expected to add 150 new students. Given the land annexed by the City of Chestermere and actively being developed, additional schools are desperately needed.

RVS does not have another solution beyond new school construction to ease the crowding in Chestermere’s schools.

Impacted Schools

All four of Chestermere’s elementary and middle schools are showing signs of enrolment pressures. Prairie Waters and East Lake are already at more than 100 per cent capacity. Rainbow Creek can absorb some of this new growth, but not for long. Rainbow Creek is on the other side of Rainbow Road, directly east of the proposed site, and the remaining space for 90 students is quickly filling. RVS only has one stand-alone middle school – Chestermere Lake. This school is close to 100 per cent occupancy and does not have any available space for additional modular units or an addition.

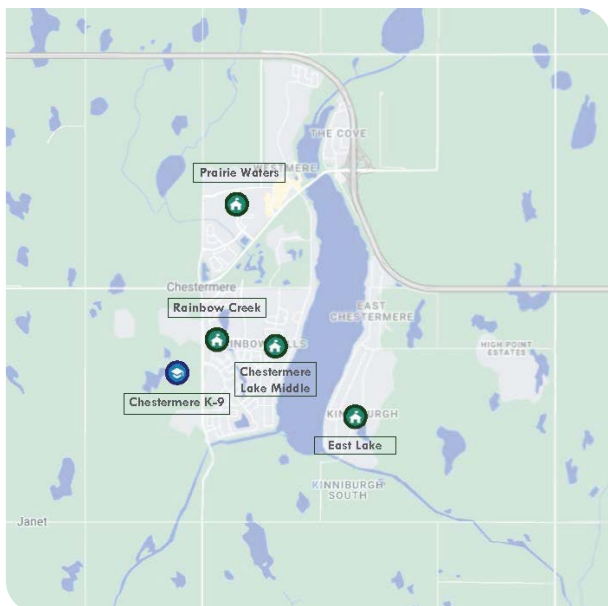
With the addition of another Kindergarten – Grade 9 school in Chestermere, relief would be applied to all the schools, not only those with neighbouring communities near the Dawson’s Landing neighbourhood school site.

Chestermere Elementary and Middle Schools

Year Actuals (A) Projected (P)	Chestermere Lake Middle School 7 – 9 Current Capacity 909	East Lake School K – 6 Current Capacity 827	Prairie Waters Elementary School K – 6 Current Capacity 582	Rainbow Creek Elementary School K – 6 Current Capacity 610	Enrolment Capacity 2,928	Approximate Utilization Average Rate
2019 (A)	664	660	569	631	2,524	86%
2020 (A)	731	601	552	527	2,411	82%
2021 (A)	749	637	573	533	2,492	85%
2022 (A)	880	804	619	538	2,841	97%
2023 (A)	884	879	617	520	2,900	99%
2024 (P)	894 (98%)	903 (109%)	635 (109%)	493 (81%)	2,925	100%
2025 (P)	939 (103%)	966 (117%)	640 (110%)	485 (80%)	3,030	104%
2026 (P)	944 (104%)	1,046 (127%)	655 (113%)	475 (78%)	3,120	107%
2027 (P)	1,077 (119%)	1,054 (128%)	668 (115%)	469 (77%)	3,268	112%



Photo: City of Chestermere



Need

If the school was approved, the soonest opening date would be 2028. This new Chestermere school would result in 3,878 total spaces available and reduce the approximate utilization rate to 87 per cent. With a projected enrolment in this area of 3,363 students for 2028, this new school is critical for RVS' continued delivery of a quality learning experience. Without this school, RVS is expecting occupancy to reach 115 per cent.

Challenge

In March 2024, RVS received design funding approval for this project. RVS has entered into an agreement with an Alberta consulting firm to expedite the design work. Full construction funding is required to ensure there are appropriate school spaces for RVS students.

RVS does not have another solution beyond new school construction. Changing of grade structures or moving boundary configurations in Chestermere only shifts the exceeded enrolments to other schools. Modular classrooms were added to Prairie Waters in 2019 with space for only two more. Rainbow Creek has added more modular classrooms six times since 2010. East Lake, opened in 2014, is a P3 school and has been constructed to maximum build-out where it will remain as-is under contract until 2044. Finally, Chestermere Lake, constructed in 2000, has had appropriate facility reviews and exploration into how spaces could be maximized within the facility to accommodate more instructional spaces.

Chestermere has one school that is below 85 per cent utilization – Rainbow Creek. All others have surpassed or are on the cusp of 100 per cent utilization.

RVS has space for eight additional modular units, or approximately 168 students, throughout the City of Chestermere. This relief would aid Rainbow Creek and Prairie Waters; however, this does not address the growth projected in 2024 enrolment or the years following.

Solution

This new Kindergarten – Grade 9 school in Dawson's Landing would open with a projected enrolment of more than 450 students with the other Chestermere area schools full at 100 per cent capacity. In five years, the projected enrolment at the new school would be more than 555 students in 2033. Using an ideal utilization of 85 per cent at the other schools would result in the new school having an opening capacity of 690 students, resulting in a school approximately 73 per cent full. Future growth would see the new school reach 1,014 students and over 107 per cent utilization in the same five-year span.

Priority 3: High School in Chestermere – Chelsea

New School Information

Proposed for Chelsea in Chestermere, this new school site is directly north of West Lakeview Drive and south of Merganser Drive West. RVS requests a 1,055-capacity high school on the nine-acre portion of the joint-use site that is zoned Municipal School Reserve and in RVS' name. Upon completion of construction, RVS would have a school that adds 21 classrooms, four dedicated science rooms, multiple career and technology offerings, a learning commons space spanning over 400 square meters and a large gymnasium.

- Chelsea is 25 per cent developed and has a final build-out of 504 residential units ranging from single-family to semi-detached and multi-family properties.
- Upon completion, this neighborhood is expected to increase RVS' Chestermere enrolments by more than 250 students.
- With Waterford and Dawson's Landing also growing and, in such proximity, pressure is being felt on the entire west side of the city.

Impacted Schools

The City of Chestermere does not have a dedicated high school in the city's boundary. Currently Chestermere High has an attendance area that spans as far south as the Bow River beyond Highway 22X and north beyond Calgary's city limits to the west as far as Highway 566 encompassing a substantial portion of Rocky View County's east boundary. It is approximately 15 minutes by vehicle from the proposed school site to Chestermere High and results in a bus ride of at least 45 minutes as the buses pick up additional students along the route. The current high school also has the challenge of requiring students to cross Highway #1.

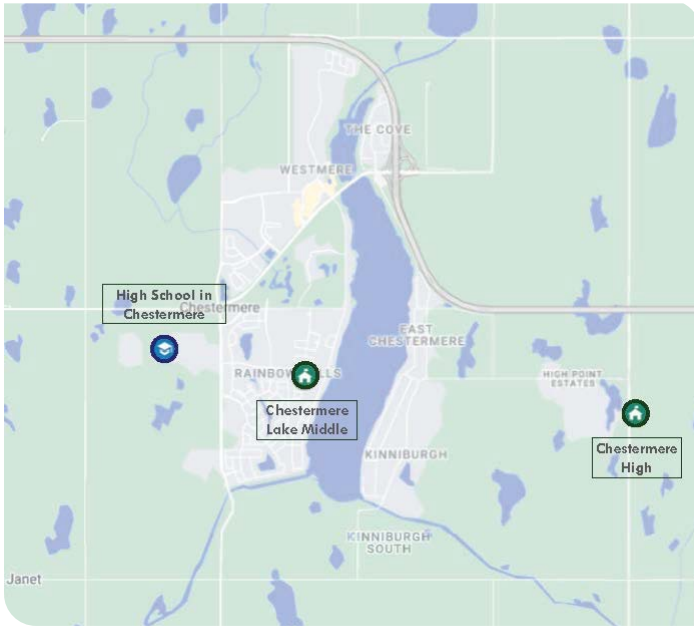
Chestermere High already has more than 100 per cent enrolment with 186 students above the intended occupancy. Looking at the attendance and registration numbers of Chestermere Lake, an even bigger influx of students is yet to come.

A second high school in Chestermere would decrease space pressure at Chestermere High School and provide students across the city with a school within a reasonable distance from their neighbourhoods.

In September 2024, the new Horseshoe Crossing High School in Langdon will open to students. Despite the additional capacity in the south, and Chestermere High's wide attendance area boundary, there is still a strain on Chestermere's high school capacity. There are many rural students who attend Chestermere High from the north in Rocky View County along with the students who reside within the City of Chestermere.

Chestermere Middle and High Schools

Year Actuals (A) Projected (P)	Chestermere Lake Middle School 7 – 9 Current Capacity 909	Chestermere High School 10 – 12 Current Capacity 1,017	Enrolment Capacity 1,926	Approximate Utilization Average Rate
2019 (A)	664	920	1,584	82%
2020 (A)	731	911	1,642	85%
2021 (A)	749	943	1,692	88%
2022 (A)	880	981	1,861	97%
2023 (A)	884	1,106	1,990	103%
2024 (P)	894 (98%)	1,143 (112%)	2,037	106%
2025 (P)	939 (103%)	1,189 (117%)	2,128	111%
2026 (P)	944 (104%)	1,239 (122%)	2,183	113%
2027 (P)	1,077 (119%)	1,201 (118%)	2,278	118%



Need

If the school was approved, the soonest opening date would be 2029. This new high school would result in 2,072 total Grade 10 – 12 spaces available and reduce the approximate utilization rate to 63 per cent. With a projected enrolment of 1,271 high school students for 2029, this new school is critical for RVS' continued delivery of a quality learning experience. Without this school, RVS is expecting occupancy to reach 127 per cent.

Challenge

Options are limited for RVS for this scenario in Chestermere. Chestermere High can accept an additional eight modular units; however, those additional 170 students will add to the congestion in the corridors of the core school, will impact functional

programming for blocks of physical education, restrict which optional classes students can choose to add to their curriculum, and place strain on the overall maintenance and up-keep of the current facility.

Chestermere's only high school is currently at 109 per cent utilization. With the high school student population increasing by 50 students per year, a new school is needed to accommodate this growth.

Solution

This new high school in Chelsea would open with a projected enrolment of more than 620 students with Chestermere High School at 85 per cent capacity. In five years, the projected enrolment at the new school would be more than 865 students in 2034. It is likely boundary adjustment will be made to balance enrolment at the two high schools.

Priority 7: Chestermere Kindergarten – 9 School – Chelsea

New School Information

Proposed for Chelsea in Chestermere, this new school site is in phase 9 of the neighbourhood development plan. The school site is east of Range Road 284 in the southwest portion of the Chelsea neighbourhood. RVS requests a 950-capacity Kindergarten – Grade 9 school. Upon completion of construction, RVS would have a school that adds 25 core classrooms, two career technology foundation classrooms, ancillary spaces, a gymnasium and modern learning commons.

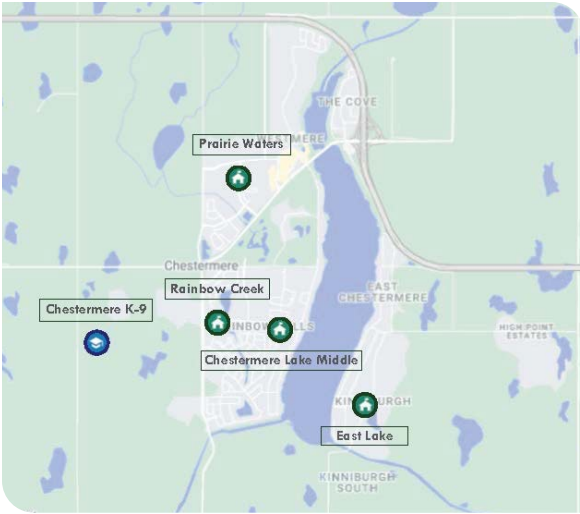
- When the school opens in September 2030, Chelsea is expected to be 100 per cent developed with 500+ residential units occupied.
- These 180 – 200 additional students from Chelsea will be accompanied by more from neighbouring communities as forecasted population increases to over 56,000 residents within the City of Chestermere.
- The assumption is Waterford and Dawson’s Landing will also be complete and one of the surrounding 11 quarter-sections north and south of these neighbourhoods will be in various stages of development.

Impacted Schools

Chestermere’s elementary schools and the single middle school are all facing enrolment pressure. East Lake and Prairie Waters were both at 106 per cent capacity in September 2023. Chestermere Lake Middle School’s enrolment reached 97 per cent in September 2023. And, with so little remaining capacity at Rainbow Creek, two additional Kindergarten – 9 Grade schools are required by 2032. The additional Kindergarten – 9 school in Chestermere would alleviate space pressures and support the communities ongoing rapid growth.

Chestermere Elementary and Middle Schools

Year Actuals (A) Projected (P)	Chestermere Lake Middle School 7 – 9 Current Capacity 909	East Lake School K – 6 Current Capacity 827	Prairie Waters Elementary School K – 6 Current Capacity 582	Rainbow Creek Elementary School K – 6 Current Capacity 610	Enrolment Capacity 2,928	Approximate Utilization Average Rate
2019 (A)	664	660	569	631	2,524	86%
2020 (A)	731	601	552	527	2,411	82%
2021 (A)	749	637	573	533	2,492	85%
2022 (A)	880	804	619	538	2,841	97%
2023 (A)	884	879	617	520	2,900	99%
2024 (P)	894 (98%)	903 (109%)	635 (109%)	493 (81%)	2,925	100%
2025 (P)	939 (103%)	966 (117%)	640 (110%)	485 (80%)	3,030	104%
2026 (P)	944 (104%)	1,046 (127%)	655 (113%)	475 (78%)	3,120	107%
2027 (P)	1,077 (119%)	1,054 (128%)	668 (115%)	469 (77%)	3,268	112%



Need

It the school was approved, the soonest opening date would be 2029 – 2030. This new Chestermere school would result in 4,828* total spaces available and reduce the approximate utilization rate to 74 per cent. With a projected enrolment in this area of 3,581 students for 2030, this new school is urgent for RVS’ continued delivery of a quality learning experience. Without this school, RVS is expecting occupancy to reach 92 per cent**.

* This assumption has been made with RVS’ Priority 2 school being fully funded, constructed, and open by September 2028.

** Without finalization of RVS’ Priority 2 school, the occupancy is expected to be 132 per cent within Chestermere.

Challenge

An RVS staff working group is currently discussing possible solutions to balancing student enrolment and providing relief in some of Chestermere’s highest utilized schools.

It is difficult to provide a long-term solution with so little capacity in these schools. More information will be shared once the working group is ready to provide recommendations.

RVS will continue to communicate and monitor the current situation surrounding any future announcement for the Priority 2 school in Dawson’s Landing. Following a successful approval of Chestermere’s first Kindergarten – Grade 8, RVS can explore short-term strategies to mitigate continued city-wide growth.

RVS does not have space for more Kindergarten – Grade 6 students if the schools are expected to be below 100 per cent utilized.

Solution

The request to construct a Kindergarten – Grade 9 school within the neighbourhood of Chelsea will prove successful for the division aligning with RVS’ long-term planning. This new school would open with a projected enrolment of more than 550 students with the other area schools at 85 per cent capacity. In five years, the projected enrolment at the new school would be more than 650 students in 2035.

Rural Areas At-a-Glance

The two rural areas within Rocky View Schools 2025 – 2028 Capital Plan include the Town of Crossfield in the north portion of RVS’ division boundary and Springbank, encompassing a substantial portion of the division’s west boundary.

Crossfield, to the north of Airdrie, is surrounded by Rocky View County. In 1980, the Town of Crossfield replaced the village designation it held since 1907. Due partially to the Town being within the Calgary – Edmonton Corridor zone, it is growing. Crossfield has gone from a population of 3,322 in 2019 to 3,793 residents in 2023. Crossfield is the 10th fastest growing municipality in the province with a 17 per cent increase in the last five years.

Rocky View County has many developments planned for Springbank, to the west of Calgary. Harmony is one of the largest with a proposal for 4,000 residential homes. Rivers Edge, The Acres and Pradera Springs are expected to be around 200 homes. There is a large Springbank Area Structure plan involving the combining of north, south and central area structure plans creating half-acre lots via Rocky View County’s Open Space Residential plan. Based on resident feedback, the build-out population has been set to 17,000 people.



Photo: Rocky View County

Harmony, on the north side of Highway 1, is a new 1,750-acre community development. The projected population of Harmony is expected to be more than 10,000 people. Current developments have slowed in Harmony due to a variety of conditions. RVS will continue to monitor the situation and plan accordingly. Current enrolments, specifically from the Harmony community, show more than 300 students, covering all the grades offered in RVS, attending the three Springbank schools.

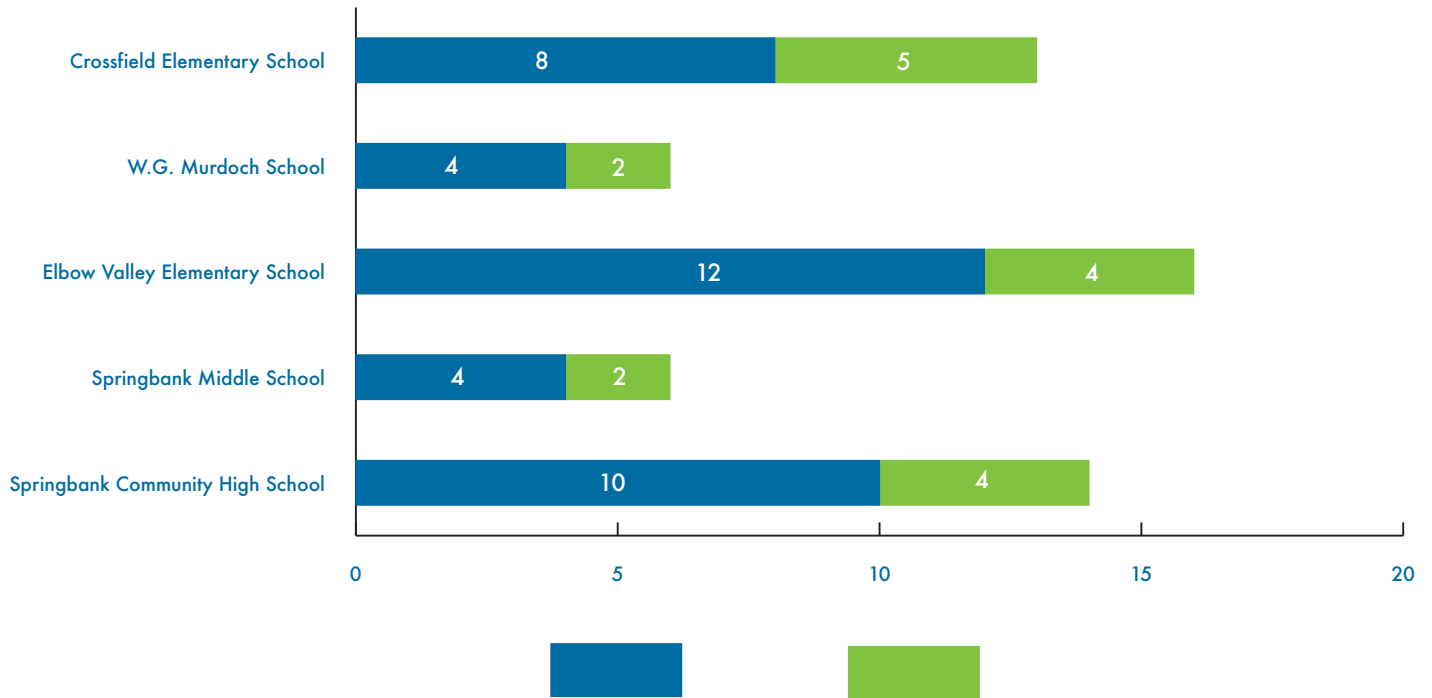
Student Enrolment and Projections

The table below is the 2023 RVS student population in the rural area. RVS’ rural student enrolments increase annually by approximately 2.1 per cent by grade across the entire catchment area. The growth in Crossfield and Springbank aligns individually with similar growth rates.

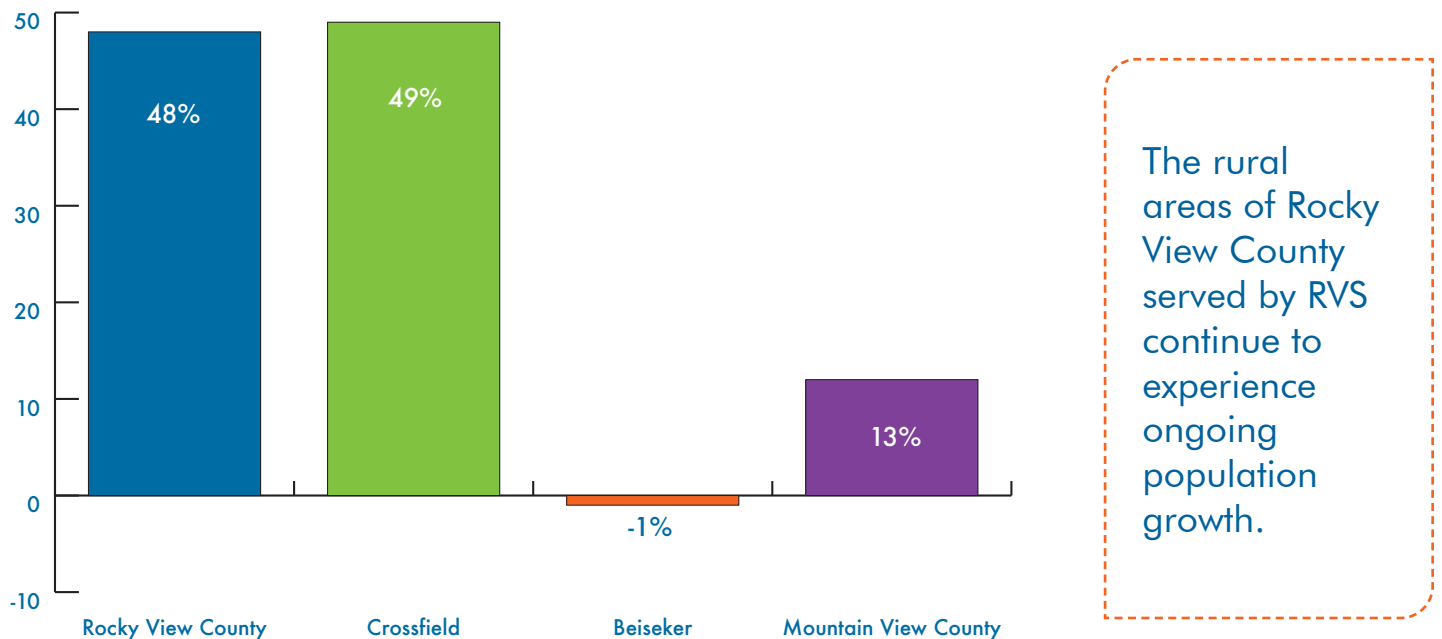
2023 Rural RVS Student Population

Grade	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Enrolment	329	358	430	413	430	440	496	498	457	386	247	291	252

Current Rocky View County Modular Unit Capacity



Rural Rocky View County Population Growth – 2002 to 2022



Rocky View County population data include Indus, Springbank, Irricana, Bragg Creek, Kathryn and Langdon.

Priority 8: Crossfield Kindergarten – Grade 8

School – Vista Crossing

New School Information

Vista Crossing in the Town of Crossfield is a new community 20 minutes north, by vehicle, from Airdrie. RVS has a school site dedicated to the division on Ellen Way and Vista Drive just north of Township Road 285, and east of Range Road 12 in Crossfield’s west side. RVS is requesting a 680-capacity Kindergarten – Grade 8 school upon completion of construction to serve the needs of the community. The build-out would provide RVS with 16 classrooms, three dedicated science rooms, ancillary spaces, additional programming for career technology foundation classes, a gymnasium and a learning commons space.

Crossfield Elementary School (Kindergarten – Grade 5) and W.G. Murdoch School (Grades 6 – 12) are approximately four minutes away by vehicle to the east and an approximate 18-minute walk. Surrounding neighborhoods which are also in development include Sunset Ridge, Iron Landing and Hawks Landing. Vista Crossing is a 155-acre development with an anticipated population of 2,900 people residing in 771 housing units, low density residential. Of these new families, RVS is expecting to see an eventual influx of more than 1,000 students.

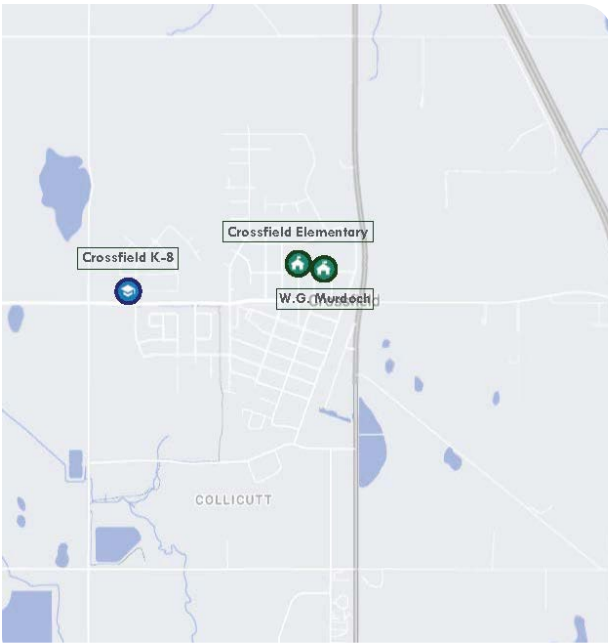
Impacted Schools

A new Kindergarten – Grade 8 Crossfield school in the growing community of Vista Crossing will help to accommodate current and future projected student enrolment in the rural area. Without the school, RVS is projecting an overall 107 per cent utilization rate by 2027. By 2031, the earliest this school is expected to open, the Town of Crossfield’s RVS schools will be at 119 per cent utilization.

With the addition of another school in Crossfield, a balance of available space can occur and additional programming can support the future students at RVS.

Crossfield Schools

Year Actuals (A) Projected (P)	Crossfield Elementary School K – 5 Current Capacity 363	W.G. Murdoch School 6 – 12 Current Capacity 419	Enrolment Capacity 782	Approximate Utilization Average Rate
2019 (A)	300	369	669	86%
2020 (A)	296	365	661	85%
2021 (A)	303	365	668	85%
2022 (A)	304	400	704	90%
2023 (A)	322	389	711	91%
2024 (P)	309 (85%)	406 (97%)	715	91%
2025 (P)	344 (95%)	448 (107%)	792	101%
2026 (P)	365 (101%)	444 (106%)	809	104%
2027 (P)	373 (103%)	460 (110%)	833	107%



Need

With an award of design funding in the 2026 budget year, and timely construction approval, RVS is projecting an opening date of September 2030. This new Crossfield school would result in 1,462 total spaces available and reduce the approximate utilization rate to 64 per cent. With a projected enrolment in this area of 931 students for 2031, this new school is critical for RVS' continued delivery of a quality learning experience. Without this school, RVS is expecting occupancy to reach 119 per cent.

Challenge

If no additional school was built and RVS requested and was awarded the required modular units for the Town of Crossfield schools, Crossfield Elementary would be at 97 per cent utilization with W.G. Murdoch at 99 per cent utilization. These rates are not sustainable with the area's continued growth.

Crossfield Elementary has space available for five modular units and W.G. Murdoch has capacity for two. With the additional modular units at Crossfield Elementary, the school could be 76 per cent utilized by September 2031. With the addition of two units, W.G. Murdoch utilization drops from 98 per cent to 88 per cent.

Understandably, 300 students attending on opening day in a 680-capacity school is not ideal. However, nor is having both schools in the Town of Crossfield at 121 per cent utilization when 85 per cent was considered the Province's benchmark. As the neighbourhood and surrounding community expands, the proposal could include the plan of accepting new registrations from students on the west side in newly developed neighbourhoods while keeping a balance at the other two schools.

Additionally, due to the Town of Crossfield's close-knit community and easy accessibility, RVS will look further into shared-use spaces between all three schools and explore strategies for community use.

With two schools in Crossfield, one surpassing 100 per cent utilization in 2025 and the other in 2026, RVS sets this as a Priority 8 to meet the needs in a growing division.

Crossfield Elementary and W.G. Murdoch's additional modular capacity will only assist in short-term planning until an award for new construction is presented. W.G. Murdoch went through a modernization in 2016 and Crossfield Elementary had a facility review in 2020 to ensure all students were learning in the best possible environment.

Solution

This new Kindergarten – Grade 8 school in Vista Crossing would open with a projected enrolment of more than 300 students with the other two schools at 85 per cent capacity. In five years, the projected enrolment at the new school would be more than 350 students in 2037.

RVS is expecting to see an eventual influx of more than 1,000 students due to continuous population growth and new residential development in Crossfield.

Priority 9: Springbank Middle School – Modernization and Addition

School Modernization and Addition Information

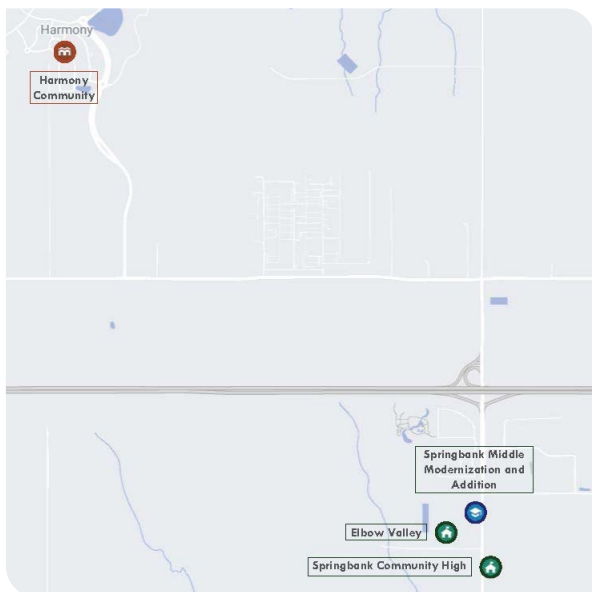
RVS is requesting a modernization and addition to Springbank Middle School which would add 280 permanent spaces onto the existing facility. This addition would consist of five core classrooms, ancillary space, another CTF space, an allowance for increased circulation, along with a larger gymnasium to better align with current Capital Manual building standards and similar schools of this enrolment. RVS has 3,875 square meters available on-site and is proposing to utilize approximately 2,500 square meters of the available site space.

Upon further review of RVS’ 2024-2027 Capital Plan and monitoring the current growth patterns in the west portion of RVS division boundaries, it was determined a full-scale new school build in the Harmony community was not quite necessary at this time. This alternate approach is being presented in the 2025 – 2028 Capital Plan for consideration and future-proofing divisional growth.

Impacted Schools

RVS has three schools that accommodate students in the Springbank area: Elbow Valley Elementary School, Springbank Middle School and Springbank Community High School. This addition directly benefits the students in the current catchment as Springbank Middle has the smallest occupancy of the three schools. Regardless of the continued development of Harmony, students leaving Elbow Valley will continue to enter a middle school more than 100 per cent utilized. With a difference of 135 extra student spaces at the elementary level and another 345 spaces at the high school grades, Springbank Middle continues to be over-crowded based on the original design capacity.

Springbank Schools					
Year Actuals (A) Projected (P)	Elbow Valley Elementary School K – 4 Current Capacity 706	Springbank Middle School 5 – 8 Current Capacity 571	Springbank Community High School 9 – 12 Current Capacity 918	Enrolment Capacity 2,195	Approximate Utilization Average Rate
2019 (A)	492	529	721	1,742	79%
2020 (A)	483	526	724	1,733	79%
2021 (A)	506	537	727	1,770	81%
2022 (A)	517	576	715	1,808	82%
2023 (A)	530	556	727	1,813	83%
2024 (P)	513 (73%)	601 (105%)	678 (74%)	1,792	82%
2025 (P)	511 (72%)	605 (106%)	670 (73%)	1,786	81%
2026 (P)	493 (70%)	606 (106%)	719 (78%)	1,818	83%
2027 (P)	491 (70%)	597 (105%)	703 (77%)	1,791	82%



Need

If the school was approved, the soonest opening date would be 2029 – 2030. The new addition would result in 2,475 total spaces available and reduce the overall approximate utilization rate to 77 per cent. More importantly, this addition brings Springbank Middle's utilization down to 74 per cent in 2030 from an expected utilization rate of 111 per cent with a forecasted population of 633 students. With a projected enrolment in this area of 1,901 students for 2030, this addition is critical for RVS' continued delivery of a quality learning experience. Without this school, RVS is expecting occupancy to reach 87 per cent.

Challenge

One strategy RVS considered was to change Elbow Valley's grade structure to Kindergarten – Grade 5 resulting in Springbank Middle being Grades 6 – 8. Between English and French Immersion, approximately 140 students would be added into Elbow Valley. This results in a 95 per cent utilization rate with Springbank Middle reducing to 73 per cent. RVS chose not to pursue this option because, not unlike other municipalities and districts, this is pushing the enrolment pressures of RVS to another school.

When strategizing about solutions, RVS considers the uniqueness of each community to determine changes that will best serve those students and their families. In the Springbank area, the current grade structure is working well for families, students and RVS staff and the desire is to maintain that structure.

Elbow Valley was constructed in 1971 and, therefore, has smaller classrooms, some of which are only 64 square meters. When considering placing Grade 5s into this school, there are few suitable methods for programming and average class sizes. Foundation classes for technology or ancillary spaces are non-existent resulting in one or two of the larger classrooms requiring the use of a current modular unit as they are the largest, being converted into an option class outside of the core curriculum.

With such a large boundary, and nearby developments occurring, the addition balances out the misaligned occupancy between the three schools. Having space for 851 students at Springbank Middle allows for natural growth to continue and assists in bringing the school down to a reasonable utilization.

RVS does have space for two modular units at Springbank Middle; however, that only brings down the utilization rate to 102 per cent in 2024 and is projected to increase back up to 105 per cent by 2030 without accounting for further neighbouring growth.

Springbank and Harmony's solutions for growth are to either add more modular classrooms to the existing three schools or add more permanent space. 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.

Solution

Upon completion of the addition, Springbank Middle would have a projected enrolment of 633 students increasing to 656 students in 2035, an approximate utilization of 77 per cent.

2025 – 2028 CAPITAL PLAN



Photos: Rocky View County & Town of Cochrane



Rocky View Schools
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