

THE BRIEF

BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS



ROCKY VIEW SCHOOLS

March 21, 2024

Chestermere High School Students Compete at Welding Rodeo and Skills Competition

- Each year, the Boilermakers Lodge 146 in Calgary holds a Welding Rodeo and this year students from Chestermere High School (CHHS) participated in the competition held Feb. 24, in Calgary, placing second.
- A total of 45 students from six school divisions competed in the event which involved students following a blueprint designed by Red Seal welders and creating weld sculptures.
- Many students in the program at CHHS go on to work in the trades. The program prepares them to be successful, in life and work, with former students often returning to mentor current students.
- Current students from CHHS presented to the Board of Trustees (the Board) of Rocky View Schools (RVS) about their experience.
- This activity connects to several goals and outcomes of RVS' Education Plan, including building future-ready students and engaging students in meaningful and relevant learning.

Provincial Budget 2024 Highlights – Full Implications for RVS Not Yet Known

- Budget 2024, announced by the provincial government Feb. 29, included a 4.4 per cent increase in education funding to support enrolment growth and students with specialized needs.
- RVS received funding for five highly anticipated school projects:
 - Full construction funding for a Kindergarten – Grade 8 (K – 8) school in South Windsong in Airdrie
 - Full construction funding for a K – 8 school in Bayview in Airdrie
 - Full construction funding for a K – 8 school Rivercrest in Cochrane
 - Design funding for a high school in Southwinds in Airdrie
 - Design funding for a Kindergarten – Grade 9 school in Dawson's Landing in Chestermere
- A letter expressing the Board's appreciation for these new school approvals has been sent to the Minister of Education and the Minister of Infrastructure, as well as the MLAs for RVS' communities.
- As the specific details (known as the funding profile) for RVS have not yet been received, understanding the implications of the Province's increased education funding is difficult. The funding profile should be received shortly and will help the division understand the impact of Budget 2024.

Three-Year Capital Plan Highlights Continuing Need for More Space for Students

- RVS' Capital Plan 2025 – 2028 requests government approve funding the construction of 10 additional new schools across the division in the next three years. These are needed to address the ongoing growing utilization in RVS schools even after the opening of the three recently announced new schools expected to take place in 2027, the opening of Horseshoe Crossing High School in Langdon in September 2024 and completion of a previously approved expansion to Bow Valley High School in Cochrane in 2026.

- Despite recent government approval of construction funding, school utilization is projected to continue to rise due to ongoing population growth in RVS' fastest-growing communities of Airdrie, Cochrane and Chestermere.
- RVS is years behind in government funding for new schools, additions and modular classrooms as approvals have failed to keep pace with rising enrolment.
- Each school division in Alberta is required to submit a list of capital requests, in order of priority, by April 1 of each year.
- The Board will continue to advocate to government to provide funding for new schools where they are urgently needed in RVS' communities.
- The 2025 – 2028 Capital Plan is available on the RVS website, rockyview.ab.ca

Modular Classroom Approval Announced

- As enrolment in RVS continues to rise, modular classrooms are needed to provide appropriate space for students to learn and achieve their very best. RVS requested 22 new modular units and the relocation of another 12 classrooms and one bathroom unit to mitigate ongoing enrolment growth until new schools can be built.
- On March 14, Alberta Education announced the approval of nine new units and the relocation of one washroom unit for the division. This announcement is well below what RVS needs.
- It is unknown at this time when the new units will arrive or when the relocation of the one approved existing unit will take place.

New Locally Developed Courses Provide Expanded Options for High School Students

- The Board approved the acquisition of several Locally Developed Courses (LDCs) beginning in the 2024/25 school year.
- LDCs are courses which are developed by other jurisdictions and include subjects such as Astronomy, Indigenous Art and Ceremony, Métis History and Stories, and Pathways to Reconciliation.
- LDCs allow school authorities to be innovative and responsive at the local level and offer students a unique opportunity to explore a range of interests that complement provincial programs of study.

Board Agenda Planning Committee Terms of Reference Updated

- The Board Agenda Planning Committee meets to set the agenda for upcoming Planning meetings, prepares the annual Board Work Plan and the meeting schedule for the Board.
- The Terms of Reference have not been updated since 2019 and, as the scope of the committee had expanded since that time, required revision to better reflect the work the committee oversees.

City of Chestermere to be Asked to Expedite School Site Purchase

- A letter from the Board will be sent to the City of Chestermere urging it to complete the purchase of the outstanding 7.01 acres of land required for construction of a high school.
- The public high school site in Chelsea in Chestermere is on RVS' Capital Plan priority list; however, the City of Chestermere has not completed the purchase of the entire site from the developer, potentially delaying government approval to construct this urgently needed school.