

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RE: Approval of modular classrooms vital to address enrolment growth

As a growing school division, modular classrooms play a critical role in Rocky View School's (RVS) planning for student spaces. RVS, along with other Alberta school divisions, submits its request for these temporary classrooms to Alberta Education every fall.

"Approvals for new modular classrooms and funding to relocate existing modulars each year continues to be necessary for RVS to relieve rising student enrolment pressures while we wait for new schools to be built," said Board Chair, Fiona Gilbert. "When we don't receive all the modulars we need, it further compounds the space challenges our schools already face."

This year, the RVS Board of Trustees has requested 27 new modular classrooms and for one washroom unit to be moved to schools where the space is needed the most: eight in Airdrie, seven in Cochrane, six in Chestermere (plus the relocation of a washroom unit) and six in Crossfield. Since 2023, Alberta Education has provided funding to RVS for 30 new and 20 relocated modular units.

The division's ability to add new modular classrooms every year, including the 27 new and one relocation request, is critical to address utilization pressures. RVS eagerly awaits the design and construction of five projects approved in Budget 2024. None of those projects will be completed until at least 2027; in the meantime, modulars are needed for the plans RVS has developed to respond to rising enrolments, especially as we face continuing rapid population growth across the division.

While modular classrooms are a necessary part of meeting space needs, they cannot fully resolve the challenges of over utilized schools. Modulars add classroom space to the core buildings of schools, but they do not address the additional strain on the common areas of the school, such as gymnasiums, playgrounds and learning commons. There is also a limit to how many modulars can be added – at many RVS schools, that limit has already been reached.

"We appreciate the government's acknowledgment of our need for additional student spaces in our growing communities over the last year," said Gilbert. "We remain optimistic the province will continue to recognize our space needs with future modular approvals."

RVS anticipates receiving a letter from Alberta Education in the spring regarding the approval of the modulars requested.

-30-

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