



Canadian Rockies School Division

618 – 7th Avenue
Canmore, AB T1W 2H5

Tel: 403-609-6072
Fax: 403-609-6071
www.crps.ca

MEDIA RELEASE – April 19, 2023

Canadian Rockies Public Schools 2023/24 Budget Approved

Dedicated to offering the best education Canadian Rockies Public Schools can afford its students, the Board of Trustees approved its 2023/24 budget, April 19, 2023, targeting CRPS' priorities of health and wellness, engaged learning, and student supports.

With total revenues of \$35,926,069 million and expenditures of \$35,896,256 million, the budget directs 68 percent toward instruction, 14 percent to operations and maintenance, 4 percent to student transportation, and 6 percent to governance and administration.

“Through the infusion of new provincial monies, the generous financial support of the Wim and Nancy Pauw Foundation, our Educational Service Agreement with Stoney Nakoda,, and monies generated through the division’s International Student Program, the student supports and program opportunities available will set our division apart,” said Superintendent of Schools Chris MacPhee. “In all areas of operation, our families will see enhanced service levels, particularly in learning.”

In line with the board’s priority to support the well-being of staff and students, MacPhee said the 2023/24 budget provides for a wellness team made up of four counsellors, a school social worker, a divisional psychologist, a school and family wellness worker, a family school liaison worker and, five Right from the Start success coaches.

“Through the mental health grant, renowned wellness coach Dr. Lisa Belanger also will climb on board to work with the division to provide educators direction on best practices and tools that can be used to support student wellness and belonging in schools,” stated MacPhee.

Advancing the division’s pursuit to engage students through transformational education, the budget also will afford CRPS to top its staffing complement to offer culinary studies, cosmetology, fashion design, career exploration, Indigenous education, outdoor experiential learning, and STEM/STEAM programs like Environmental Sustainability and Synthetic Biology. According to MacPhee, given the size of CRPS, the breadth of student programming from K to 12 is commendable and not unlike that of larger boards.

“I also feel confident in stating our wrap-around team will be able to provide the necessary expertise to effectively address the diverse and complex learning needs of students.. In particular, our youngest learners will benefit through the continued support of a literacy and numeracy specialist in each school.

“Through this team’s efforts this past year, the percentage of Gr. 1 to 4 students identified as at risk has dropped between 27 to 34 percent. This performance is significant, and a trend we believe will continue to climb,” he stated.

-more-

In addition to the seven literacy and numeracy specialists, MacPhee noted the wrap-around team includes an occupational therapist, speech and language pathologist, school psychologist, educational psychologist, nine learning support teachers, and four success teachers. Over 42 educational assistants, an increase of 7.5 full-time equivalents, also will be added to schools to help foster inclusive learning settings.

Fulfilling the board's budget principle that funding allocations reflect the needs of CRPS' seven schools, MacPhee said, overall, the total number of teaching staff to be added next year is 17.8 Full-Time Equivalents (FTE) and 16.7 FTE school-based support staff.

"Given our teaching complement, we anticipate our class sizes averages will be 19 students in Kindergarten to Gr. 6, 21 students in Gr. 7 to 9, and 20 students in Gr. 10 to 12. Topping that good news for parents is the removal of lunchroom supervision fees, which range from \$93 to \$166, beginning September 2023," he added.

With the province's plans to lower student walking distances to 1 km and 2 km for students in Kindergarten to Gr. 6 and Gr. 7-12, respectively, CRPS is expecting to see 25 additional families in Canmore and 45 in Banff qualify for transportation services in September. Its Transportation Department will be advising those families impacted by this change, encouraging them to sign up for student transportation services soon.

Little change was afforded to the governance and administration envelope. Costs were included to retain contracting services for Occupational Health and Safety and communications, as well as a small contingency was built in to engage CRPS communities in the development of a new four-year education plan for the years 2025 – 2028, which will begin next spring.

With \$5,183,565 being allocated towards operations and maintenance, however, increased attention will be given to facility upgrades to enhance learning environments. MacPhee said at Canmore Collegiate High School (CCHS) projects already underway or being planned include a theatre and kitchen upgrade, washroom retrofit, aquaponic pond installation, an outdoor classroom and upgrades to the school's cosmetology classroom. CCHS' mechanics room is being converted to allow for an environmental sustainability course. At Banff Community High School, a culinary kitchen is being planned, as well as upgrades to the home economic room for other course possibilities such as fashion design. Advancing CRPS' desire to decrease its carbon emissions, solar panels will be installed at the division's central board office, making it the sixth of eight facilities to decrease energy costs and cut greenhouse gases in CRPS.

"Overall, our division's picture for the 2023/24 school year is bright! We are delighted to see a significant increase in provincial education funding. When coupled with the tremendous financial support of local donors and educational partners, we are guaranteed the opportunity to deliver our 'Whole Child' comprehensive approach to learning that nurtures students' development physically, cognitively, emotionally, socially, and spiritually," he added.

CRPS' budget will be submitted to Alberta Education for review by May 30, 2023.

-30-

For more information, contact:

Christopher MacPhee
Superintendent of Schools
Tel: 403-609-6070
E-mail: Chris.macphee@crps.ca