



2024 – 2025 BUDGET SUMMARY



foothillsschooldivision.ca

CONTENTS

Operating Budget 2024-20253
Our Division..... 4
 Leadership..... 4
 Our Schools.....5
Budget Engagement..... 6
 Budget Process.....7
 Changes & Initiatives10
Revenue.....12
Expenditures14
 Financial Impact.....16
Capital Plan18

Presented to the Board May 29, 2024

Foothills School Division
300 – 128 4th Avenue SW
High River, Alberta T1V 1M7

403.652.3001
info@fsd38.ab.ca | foothillsschooldivision.ca

DIVISION CONTACTS

FOOTHILLS SCHOOL DIVISION OPERATING BUDGET 2024-2025 SUMMARY

The Foothills School Division has a budget of \$100.03 million in revenue and \$100.56 million in planned expenditures for 2024-2025. We provide public, K-12 education services to the County of Foothills, Alberta, Canada, and other municipalities therein, including the Towns of Okotoks, High River, Diamond Valley and the Village of Longview.

[Foothills School Division Education Plan](#)
[Annual Education Results Report](#)
[Audited Financial Statements](#)
[Operational Plan](#)



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We honour the spirit, life, and lessons this land and its ancestors teach us. We acknowledge the traditional land and territories of the Siksika, Piikani, Kainai, Tsuut'ina, and Îyârhe Nakoda as well as the Foothills District and the Rocky View District within the Battle River Territory of the Otipemisiwak Métis Government of Alberta.

[Truth and Reconciliation for Learner Success in Foothills School Division](#)



VISION

Engagement, Support, and Success for each learner.



MISSION

Each learner entrusted to our care, has unique gifts and abilities. It is our mission to find out what these are...Explore them...Develop them...Celebrate them!



PURPOSE

Education at the centre of a flourishing community.

PRIORITIES

Engagement: Ensure and maintain Division wide engagement that is timely, meaningful, and collaborative with all learners and communities.

Support: Ensure and maintain Division wide learning environments that are welcoming, caring, respectful, safe, and inclusive.

Success: Ensure and maintain Division wide excellence in teaching, learning and leadership.

Board Policy 01: [Division Foundational Statements](#)

Board Policy 14: [A Place for All](#)

» OUR DIVISION LEADERSHIP

The Foothills School Division prides itself on providing outstanding educational opportunities for the communities we serve and believes in its purpose of *education at the centre of a flourishing community*.

For further information about The Foothills School Division, view our Five-Year Education Plan, Annual Education Results Report, and the Audited Financial Statements on the Division's website at foothillsschooldivision.com. The website is a great resource to provide further information about The Foothills School Division's schools, services, and resources.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Jack Molyneux

Ward 1



John Evans

Ward 2



Theresa Letendre

Ward 3
Board Chair



Sharon Nichols

Ward 4



Lisa Penzo

Ward 4
Vice Chair



Phil Irwin

Ward 5

EXECUTIVE TEAM



Christopher Fuzessy

Superintendent of Schools



Andrew Chipman

Assistant Superintendent
Corporate Services



Allen Davidson

Assistant Superintendent
Employee Services



Caroline Roberts

Assistant Superintendent
Learning Services

OUR SCHOOLS

HIGH RIVER & AREA SCHOOLS

- [École Joe Clark School](#) (K-5)
- [Spitzee Elementary School](#) (K-5)
- [École Senator Riley Middle School](#) (6-8)
- [École Secondaire Highwood High School](#) (9-12)
- [Blackie School](#) (K-8), Blackie
- [Cayley School](#) (K-8), Cayley
- [Cayley Colony School](#)
- [High River Colony School](#)
- [MacMillan Colony School](#)

OKOTOKS & AREA SCHOOLS

- [Big Rock School](#) (K-6)
- [Dr. Morris Gibson School](#) (K-6)
- [Meadow Ridge School](#) (K-9)
- [École Percy Pegler School](#) (K-6)
- [Westmount School](#) (K-9)
- [École Okotoks Junior High School](#) (7-9)
- [École Secondaire Foothills Composite High School / Alberta High School of Fine Arts](#) (10-12)
- [Cameron Crossing School](#) (7-12)
- [Heritage Heights School](#) (K-9), DeWinton
- [Red Deer Lake School](#) (K-9), Foothills County

HIGH COUNTRY SCHOOLS

- [C. Ian McLaren School](#) (K-6), Diamond Valley
- [Turner Valley School](#) (K-6), Diamond Valley
- [Longview School](#) (K-6), Longview
- [Millarville Community School](#) (K-8), Millarville
- [Oilfields School](#) (7-12), Diamond Valley

LEARN ANYWHERE

- [Foothills Digital School](#) (1-12)

The school division was established in 1938 and proudly serves a community that is approximately 75,641 residents according to the 2021 Government of Canada census.

Foothills School Division has a planned enrolment of 8,025 students from Kindergarten to grade twelve. The Division provides high quality learning experiences for students through a broad range of educational programs in twenty schools, an online school, as well as three Hutterite colonies and the Cameron Crossing outreach school.



» BUDGET ENGAGEMENT

OUR STORY OF ENGAGEMENT

We are committed to engaging and collaborating meaningfully with our learners and communities. We communicate division progress and the use of resources transparently and with a view to guiding future decision-making. We consult widely and in a variety of ways with our learners, parents, and communities to include their voice in our decision-making and to build partnerships. We seek to understand the views of our learners and communities and use this knowledge to inform our decision-making. We do this to assure our communities that our decision-making is based on the best interests of all learners.

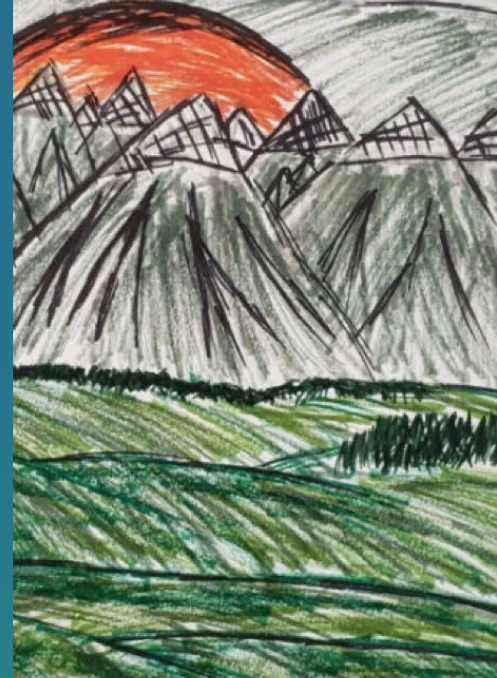
- [A Flourishing Community](#)
- [Advocacy](#)
- [Celebrating our Flourishing Community](#)
- [Celebrations for All](#)
- [Community Engagement](#)
- [Engagement Opportunities](#)
- [Foothills Flourishing Community Award](#)
- [FSD Footnotes](#)
- [FSD News](#)
- [Get Involved](#)
- [Ideas that Make Cents](#)
- [Safety for All](#)
- [School Council Presentations](#)

WHAT WE HEARD

The Foothills School Division Lead Team have completed a thorough review of the stakeholder engagement feedback collected throughout the year. FSD received several responses to the Ideas that Make Cents engagement opportunity as well as the FSD Assurance Survey that asked partners in education to identify funding priorities. We asked our community to prioritize where we should invest our funds and create efficiencies. Here are the significant responses below:

- Maintain frontline staff wherever possible (teachers and educational assistants)
- Leverage parent and community volunteers (coaching, traffic guards, fundraising)
- Minimize transportation routes, find efficiencies
- Reduce professional learning days
- Increase advocacy efforts to improve funding in schools
- Facility rentals
- Increase recycling and sustainability programs
- Boundary reviews to equalize school utilization rates

Pictured: Student artwork at Red Deer Lake School

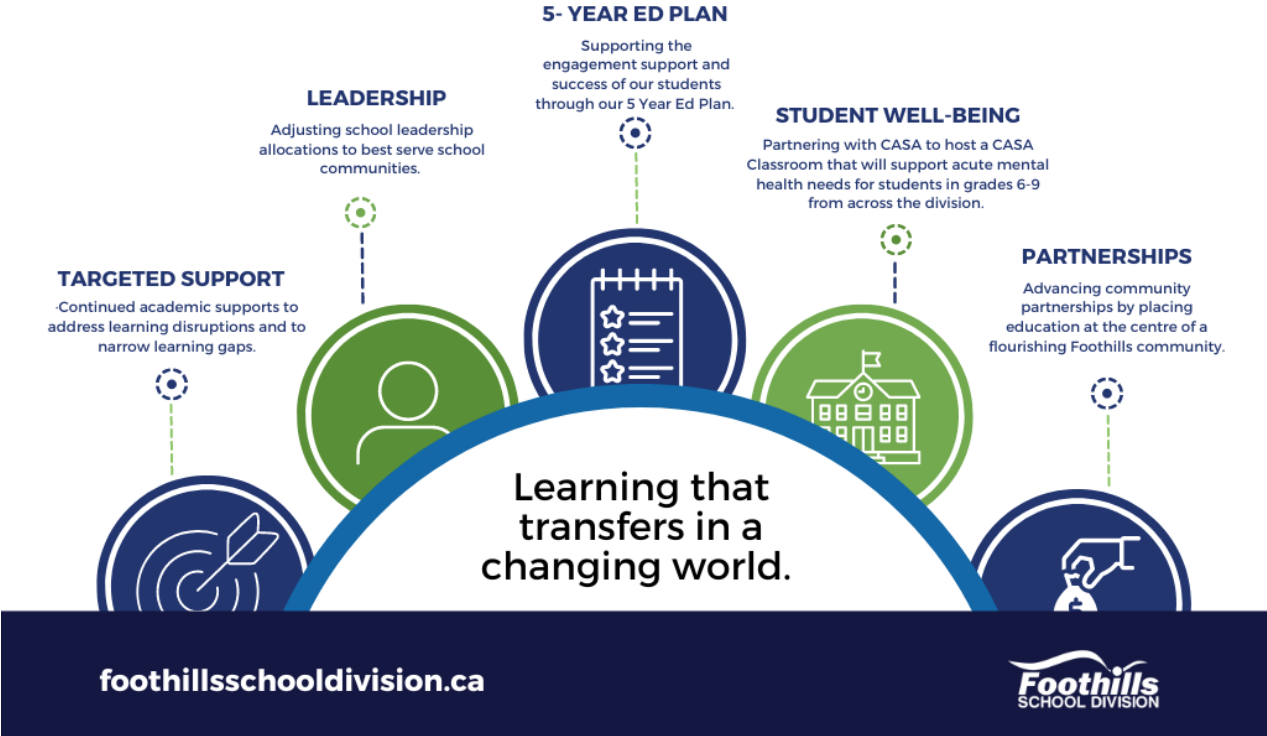


BUDGET PROCESS

The Board of Trustees developed belief statements and set priorities, through our [Education Plan](#), that guides the development of the 2024-2025 budget. Administration gathers information from Alberta Education, schools, divisional leadership along with parents and staff (through the assurance and engagement process) in formulating how the budget helps carry out our plan.

The Foothills School Division has had the ability to utilize reserve spending to enhance staffing, custodial time, technology, and divisional support over the past number of school years. We are now to the point where our reserve levels are severely limited, but within the threshold set by the Province. Due to lower than projected enrollment in 2023-2024, along with continued enrolment declines projected for 2024-2025, means that our funding from the province has decreased. There are also significant barriers noted with inflation that primarily affects fuel, utilities, bus costs, along with supplies and materials, while grant rates from the province have stayed stagnant. These challenges have been addressed in this budget to the extent they can be appropriately forecasted.

2024 - 2025 ED PLAN & BUDGET



SCHOOL AUTHORITY PLANNING AND RESULTS REPORTING

The Minister has moved to require boards to operationalize the accountability relationships and processes established in provincial legislation, one that The Foothills School Division implemented prior to the Department's deadlines. We have fully moved to the Assurance Model which includes new requirements for school authorities' education plans and annual education results reports (AERR).

The planning and reporting processes that school authorities use should reflect the guiding principles, domains and enabling processes outlined in the Assurance Framework. Effective planning and results reporting occurs in a continuous improvement cycle and are integral to school authority accountability and assurance. The planning and reporting cycle (see graphic below) involves:

- Developing/updating plans based on results, contextual information, input from stakeholders, and provincial direction
- Preparing budgets that allocate or re-direct resources to achieve priorities and meet responsibilities
- Implementing research and practice-informed strategies to maintain or improve performance within and across domains and focused on student growth and achievement
- Monitoring implementation and adjusting efforts as needed
- Measuring, analyzing and reporting results
- Using results to identify areas for improvement and to develop strategies and targets for the next plan (i.e. evidence-informed decision making)
- Communicating and engaging with stakeholders about school authority plans and results throughout the process.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT CYCLE

Successful work within and across the domains occurs within a continuous improvement cycle. There are a variety of approaches to improvement, and many include the following components:

- *Explore*: Involves accessing, analyzing and interpreting accurate and relevant data and identifying and understanding an issue, concern or problem. Key question: What is going on here?
- *Develop*: Involves identification of a problem or challenge that can be addressed; identification of potentially successful strategies to address a learner-centered problem/challenge; and developing an action plan. Key question: What needs to be improved? How?
- *Take action*: Involves learning as you implement the plan and making adjustments through formative feedback. Key question: How are we 'actioning' the plan?
- *Evaluate*: Involves evaluating the impact of the plan. Key question: Did our planned strategies have the desired outcomes? What is next?

Key Enabling Processes for Continuous Improvement

Key enabling processes that must be part of all phases of a continuous improvement cycle (see graphic) include:

1. *Evidence-informed decision-making:* In a continuous improvement cycle, participants are persistently attentive to gathering ongoing, triangulated evidence to inform next steps.
2. *Engagement:* Effective engagement processes rely on education partners working together for the purposes of bringing about positive change, with all partners recognizing that the nature of the engagement will vary according to the needs of the participants.
3. *Learning and Capacity Building:* In assurance, reflection on learning is critical. Because the provision of assurance is a dynamic process, the opportunities for building capacity for change and improvement must be ongoing.



Figure 1 Alberta Education Assurance Framework

CHANGES & INITIATIVES

- The [Alberta Education Assurance Funding Model](#) and changes to the funding framework, includes changes to requirement on minimums and maximums on reserve levels.
- A focus on supporting the key priorities identified in our [Education Plan](#)
- Insurance premium reduction by \$118,000
- A decrease in enrolment throughout the Division. This is in part due to delayed development in growing municipalities and decreasing birth rate in the region.
- Continued academic supports to address learning disruptions and to narrow learning gaps.
- Ongoing development and necessary increase of youth mental health supports. Partnering with CASA to host a CASA Classroom that will support acute mental health needs for students in grades 6-9 from across the division.
- Adjusting school leadership allocations to best serve school communities.
- Continued focus on enhancing the wellness and well-being of our students, staff team, families, and communities.
- The Foothills School Division continues to provide high quality professional development for teachers. Our priorities continue to target designing engaging learning for students through authentic, relevant learning opportunities, providing differentiated instruction as well as quality assessment practices.
- The province continues to promote and facilitate an increased awareness in First Nation, Métis, and Inuit education. Changes to curriculum and focusing on the *Truth and Reconciliation* recommendations continue to play a part within the work of The Foothills School Division.
- Advancing community partnerships by placing education at the centre of a flourishing Foothills community.



First Nation, Metis, and Inuit education for all learners continues to be a priority across the Division.

Students are provided opportunities to engage with cultural experiences to enhance their understanding of their community and world.

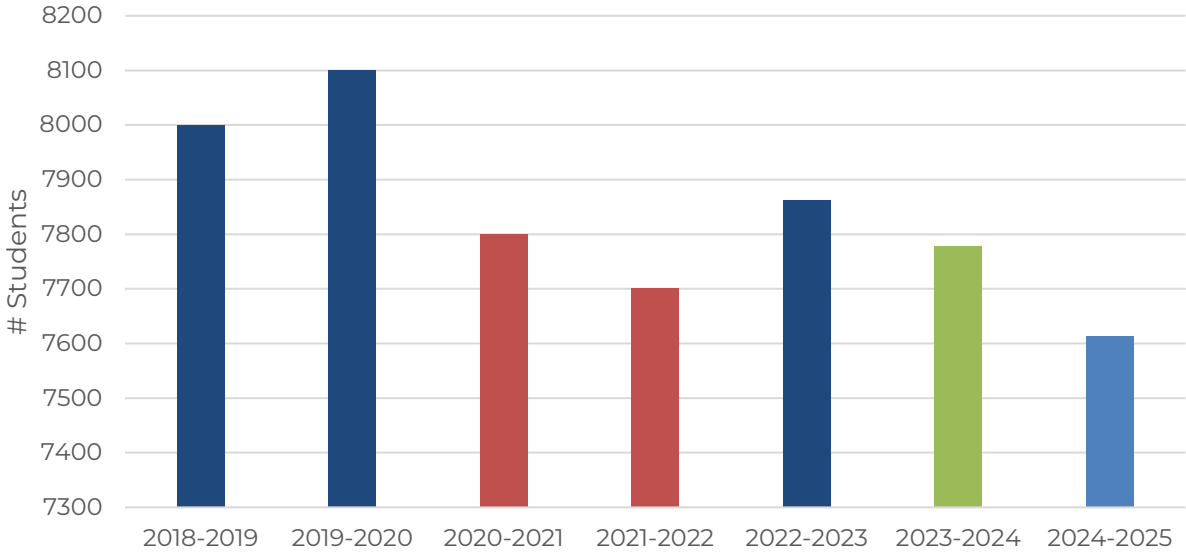
Pictured: Tipi at Highwood High School

ENROLMENT

The Foothills School Division has 7,614 (Kindergarten counted at @ 0.5) students projected in early education (kindergarten) through grade 12 in the 2024-2025 school year as compared to the actual 7,778 in 2023-2024. Enrolment projection for 2023-2024 was 7930, this is a decrease of 152 students from the actual, resulting in a decrease in funding.

Historical enrolment data and conversations with school administrative teams is used to predict enrolment for subsequent budget periods. The following chart illustrates the change in enrolment from September 2018 to September 2023 and projected enrolment for the 2024-2025 school year.

**KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 12
ENROLMENT***
Historical Actuals vs. 2023-2024 Estimation
vs. 2024-2025 Projection



*Kindergarten measured at FTE 0.5

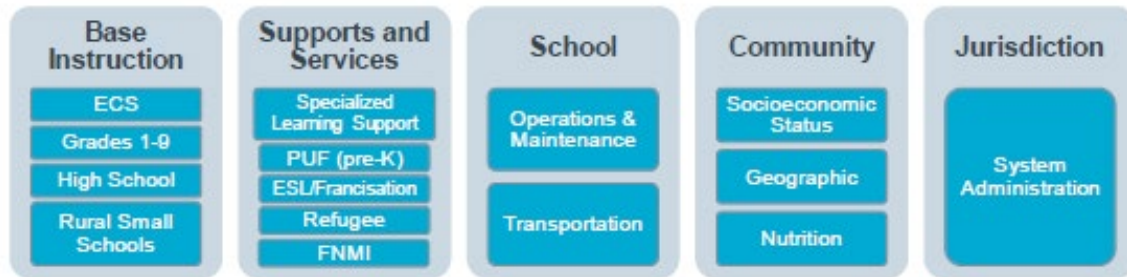
- Projection 2024-2025
- Estimation 2023-2024
- Actual 2022-2023
- COVID-19

Enrolment projections are shared and deliberated with the individual schools, and we work with school leadership to fine tune the forecasts. The Foothills School Division works closely with all our municipal partners and utilizes census data to prepare for the fluctuations in enrolment growth.

Programs and school offerings are key in meeting student and community priorities. FSD hopes to continue to grow enrolment through an expansion of the Foothills Digital School and through continued development of programs that parents and students see as priorities. Before and After School Programs, Junior Kindergarten Programs and full day Kindergarten are all aimed at providing early learners with the supports they need and to help encourage enrolment at Foothills Schools.

» REVENUE

The Foothills School Division is financially dependent on funding from the Province of Alberta. The school division receives over 95% of its funding from provincial government sources. The division has control over other revenues such as school fees, school generated funds, outside grants, and investment revenues, which comprise 5% of the Division's revenue. Grants are received in the envelopes shown below:

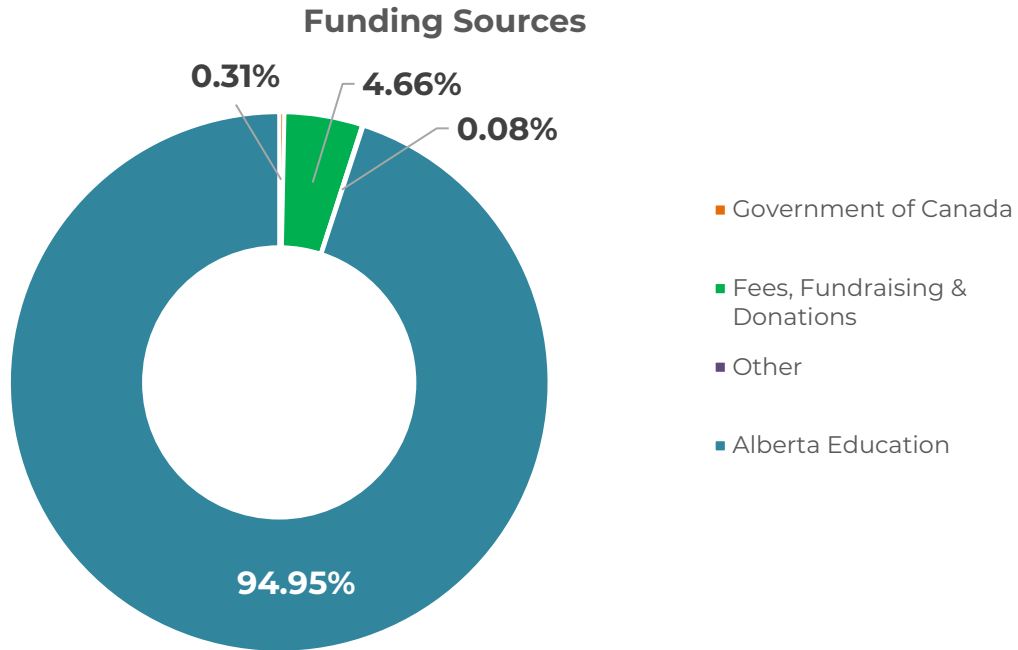


Total budgeted revenues for 2024-2025 is \$100.03 million.

Alberta Education recently undertook a funding framework review and changed the way Boards are funded. Boards are now funded based on a funding profile which considers the division's makeup and enrolment (weighted moving average for current year, projected year, and previous year).

(from Alberta.ca) Base instruction grants are allocated using the three-year Weighted Moving Average (WMA) enrolment of school authorities. Funding provided through the base instruction component does not allocate funding for specific students or schools. Rather, WMA FTE enrolment is used to allocate funding for the Early Childhood Services (ECS)-Grade 12 instructional activities of the entire school jurisdiction. The three-year WMA enrolment is calculated as follows:

School Year	Weighted Factor	Enrolment Count (FTE)
2022/23	20%	Actual
2023/24	30%	Estimate
2024/25	50%	Projection



Revenue Comparison

Revenues	2024-2025	2023-2024	2022-2023
Total Revenue	\$100,031,952	\$101,754,179	\$93,942,335
Base Instruction	\$52,373,438	\$53,470,961	\$48,925,011
Services & Supports	\$8,551,964	\$8,704,559	\$7,231,354
Schools	\$13,724,019	\$14,210,764	\$13,186,042
Community	\$1,869,949	\$3,575,501	\$3,488,088
Jurisdictions	\$4,786,265	\$4,800,952	\$3,094,605
Other AB Funding	\$8,026,359	\$6,326,375	\$8,416,042
Federal Government Funding	\$315,000	\$290,000	\$290,000
Alberta Municipalities	\$77,500	\$95,000	\$111,000
Capital Funding	\$5,643,948	\$5,849,667	\$5,793,143
Local fees & School Generated Funds	\$4,663,510	\$4,430,400	\$3,407,050

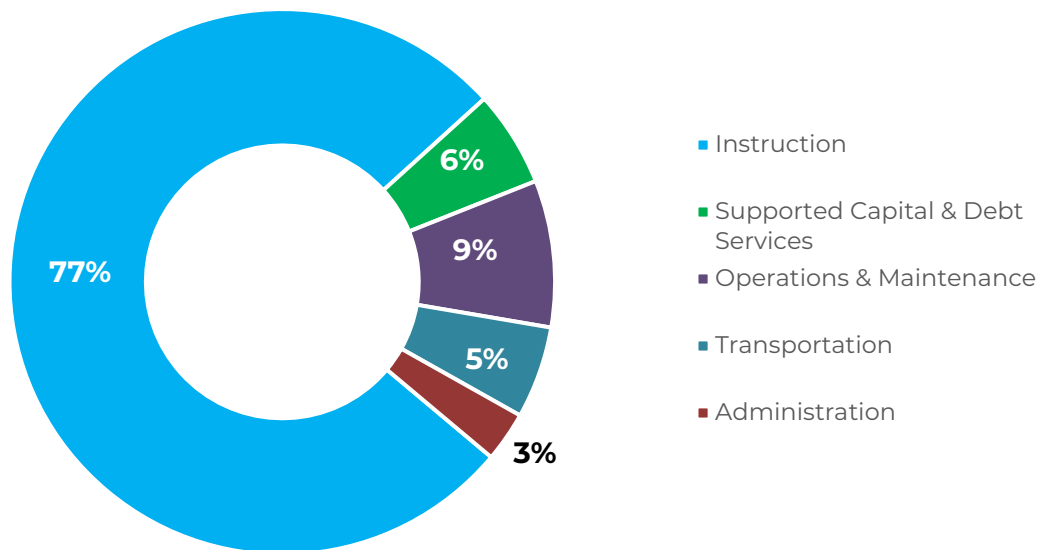
This budget reflects a deficit of \$531,836 for the 2024-25 school year.

» EXPENDITURES

EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM

Funding is allocated to division programs and services to ensure that programs meet the needs of students and schools to remain viable. The \$100.56 million of funding resources are allocated to major program areas including Instruction, Operations and Maintenance, Transportation, System Administration, as well as Capital and Debt Services.

**Expenditures by Program
2024-2025**



Spending by Program	2024-2025	2023-2024	2022-2023
Total Expenditures	\$100,563,788	\$102,676,668	\$95,442,473
Instruction	\$77,331,227	\$79,200,829	\$72,333,089
Administration	\$3,149,445	\$3,042,704	\$3,019,260
Operations and Maintenance *	\$8,995,892	\$8,975,845	\$9,143,016
Transportation	\$5,280,363	\$5,607,623	\$5,153,965
Supported Capital and Debt Services	\$5,806,861	\$5,849,667	\$5,793,143

Instruction - The allocation to all schools and other instructional programs, such as the Foothills Digital School and our outreach school (Cameron Crossing). Instruction includes our Junior Kindergarten, Early Childhood Services (Kindergarten) through to the grade 12 student population. Students can attend school and be fully funded by the province if they are older than 6 years of age and younger than 19 years of age as of September 1. System instructional support is also included as part of this program expenditures category.

Administration - includes Board Governance, Corporate Services, Employee Services, Board and System Administration.

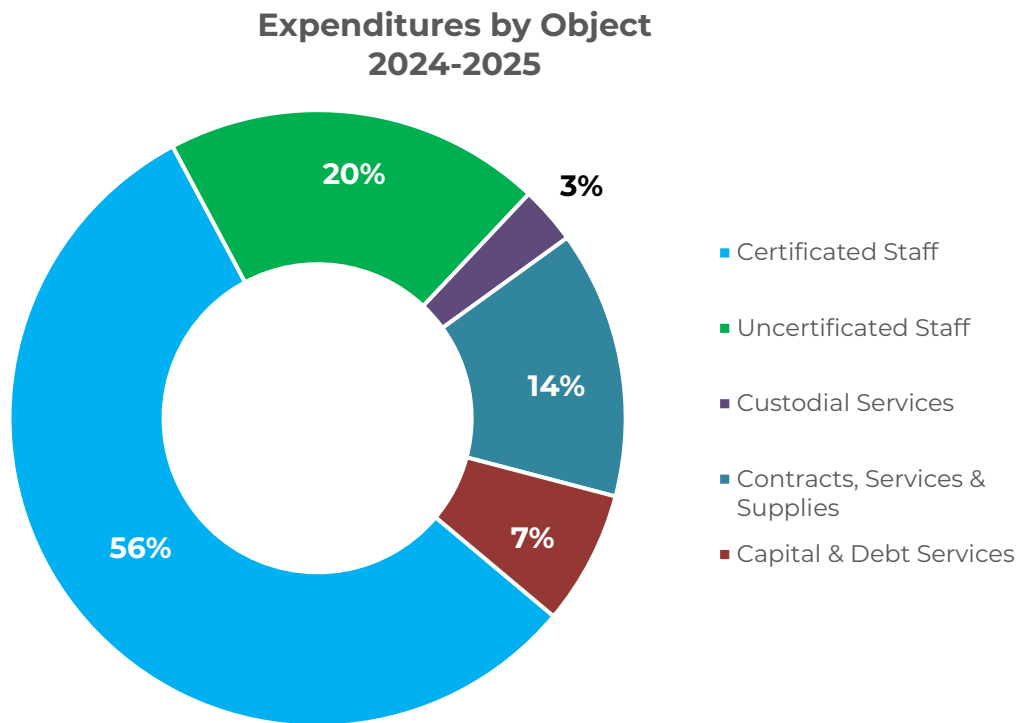
Operations and Maintenance - activities relate to the Division's responsibility for the construction, operation, maintenance, safety and security of all school buildings and the maintenance facility.

Transportation - program relates to all activities of transporting students to and from their attendance area schools.

Capital and Debt Services - includes the provision of unamortized portion of school buildings and supported debt from the Province of Alberta. Also included in the Capital and Debt Services budget is the amortization of capital assets as well as Capital Maintenance and Renewal (CMR).

EXPENDITURES BY OBJECT

The Foothills School Division will spend approximately \$79 million on staffing, which is about 79% of the Division's \$100.56 million budgeted expenditures. The percentages go to over 85% when you remove the supported portion of Capital and Debt Services. 56 percent would then be the amount spent on teaching staff and 23% spent on uncertificated staff (including custodial).



The chart below compares the expenditures of the 2024-2025 budget compared to the 2023-2024 and 2022-2023 budgets.

Expenditures by Object	2024-2025	2023-2024	2022-2023
Total Expenditures	\$100,563,788	\$102,676,668	\$95,442,473
Certificated Staff	\$56,009,727	\$57,412,288	\$53,012,648
Un-certificated Staff	\$19,935,808	\$20,292,720	\$17,083,779
Custodial Services	\$3,117,000	\$3,086,000	\$3,055,264
Contracts, Services and Supplies	\$13,785,166	\$15,123,621	\$14,414,984
Capital and Debt Services (supported & unsupported)	\$7,716,087	\$6,762,039	\$7,875,798

The Division expends approximately 83% of the budget, including the amount spent on contracted custodial services for salary and benefit costs (removing the supported amortization for school buildings).

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The Foothills School Division has benefited by having operating reserves for the last number of years. The Board of Trustees previously implemented a plan aimed at reducing the surplus to meet the government's target of 3.2% of the division's expenditures. The province has also required that Boards have a minimum level of operating reserves at no less than 1% of expenditures. Maximum and minimums are as of August 31, 2023. This budget requires Ministerial approval to take \$ 531,836 out of operating reserves. The Division's plan to run a deficit will keep us above the minimum reserve level and allow us to maintain staff.

Operating Reserves

The Board's operating reserves has provided it with flexibility and the opportunity to be innovative. Some of the purposes reserves have been used for include:

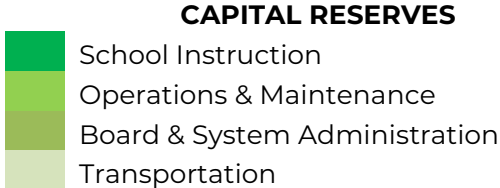
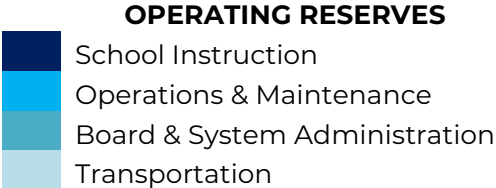
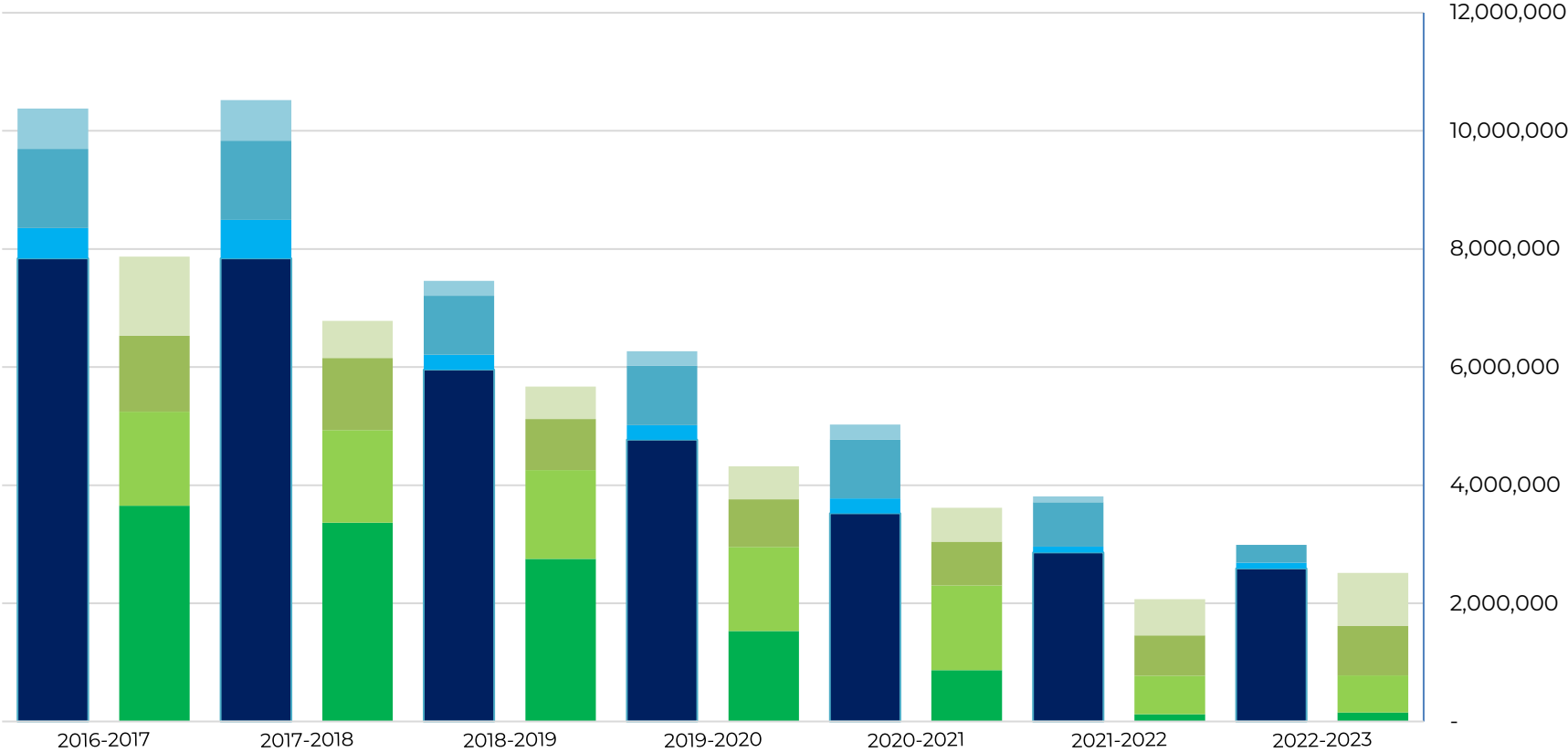
- The opportunity to design and implement the Classroom Program Innovative Projects
- Allows the Division to continue to integrate technology into the classroom
- Allowed for the provision of additional teaching and support staff
- Augment the furniture and equipment budgets during recent modernizations or new builds
- Provide dollars in the case of emergencies.

Capital Reserves

The Board uses capital reserves to provide for purchases which meet Alberta Education's capitalization criteria.

These capital reserves also allow us to purchase buses and equipment for the Transportation and Facility Services departments and to provide upgrades to non-instructional buildings. The division will need to monitor its reserve levels in future operating budgets to ensure that it maintains an appropriate balance between meeting the needs of students and the financial health of the division. The amount of the reserves will be dependent on future financial resources from Alberta Education and expenditure decisions made by the division.

**RESERVES BY PROGRAM
YEAR OVER YEAR COMPARISON
AS AT AUGUST 31, 2023**



CAPITAL PLAN

All new school facilities are funded from the Province of Alberta through Alberta Infrastructure in consultation with the Department of Education. Each year, school jurisdictions submit facility needs for the next three years and await funding and approval from the province.

The Government of Alberta, during its 2024-2025 Budget announced funding for the design-phase of the new 10-12 school in Okotoks. This is the final stage of funding before the commitment of construction funding.

THE 2025-2027 THREE YEAR CAPITAL PLAN PRIORITIES

New Construction

1. New 10 – 12 School, Okotoks (1,200 Capacity)
2. New K – 9 School, Okotoks (900 Capacity)
3. New School, High River (Configuration TBD at Spitzee Crossing Development)

Modernization Priorities

1. École Senator Riley School – High River
2. Turner Valley School – Diamond Valley
3. C. Ian McLaren School – Diamond Valley
4. Cayley School – Cayley
5. École Joe Clark School – High River
6. Big Rock School – Okotoks
7. Longview School – Longview

Overall Priority List

1. New 10 – 12 School, Okotoks (1,200 Capacity)
2. New K – 9 School, Okotoks (900 Capacity)
3. École Senator Riley School – High River
4. Turner Valley School – Diamond Valley
5. C. Ian McLaren School – Diamond Valley
6. Cayley School – Cayley
7. New School High River, Configuration TBD at Spitzee Crossing Development
8. Longview School – Longview
9. École Joe Clark School – High River
10. Rock School - Okotoks



Pictured: École Senator Riley Middle School