

June 25, 2013

PRAIRIE VALLEY BOARD OF EDUCATION APPROVES 2013-14 BUDGET

The Prairie Valley Board of Education approved a balanced budget for 2013-14 at its public meeting on June 19, 2013.

The budget includes reductions following a \$5 million cut in operating funding from the provincial government. The most significant part of this budget is an increase in the number of students per teacher in Grade 7-12 classrooms in all Prairie Valley schools.

The 2013-14 budget does include the continuation of career exploration initiatives for Grades 9 to 12, funding for a new partnership with Habitat for Humanity which will see high school students build a home for a Fort Qu'Appelle family and some high school programming enhancements. However, these enhancements are limited due to budget constraints.

"Despite the reduction, the Board of Education is committed to putting the needs of students and front line staff first," says Board Chair, Janet Kotylak. "We have worked within what was given to us to manage responsibly and balance the budget."

The \$99.5 million budget for 2013-14 was prepared based on Ministry of Education guidelines and complies with Public Sector Accounting Board standards.

The capital budget provides for the completion of current capital projects such as Emerald Ridge Elementary School and Lumsden Elementary School, however, moving forward there is no capacity to begin any new major capital projects despite aging infrastructure in school buildings.

This is the second year (2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15) of three years of funding reductions from the provincial government. In total, Prairie Valley School Division is facing a reduction of \$9.7 million (over 10%) by the end of the 2014-15 budget year.

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Despite funding challenges, the Prairie Valley Board of Education will focus on the continuous improvement and advancement of the School Division through prudent and strategic planning and effective and efficient service delivery. The Prairie Valley Board of Education remains hopeful the Ministry of Education will change its funding formulas to recognize the true cost of delivering rural education.

Prairie Valley School Division serves approximately 8,000 students in 38 schools throughout southeast Saskatchewan. In support of the vision "Leadership in Learning and Life", the Division strives to ensure a high-quality education that provides students with the tools to reach and exceed their potential.

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