



## Prairie Valley School Division

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### – MEDIA RELEASE –

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#### **Board of Education Budgets for Growth**

The Prairie Valley School Division Board of Education is living up to its commitment to address infrastructure needs with \$10 million of the 2008-2009 budget allocated to a capital program. The board approved the budget at this week's meeting.

Board Chair Rod Luhnning said, "Prairie Valley has over 8,100 students supported by approximately 1,100 employees, working in 38 schools and division office. The students are our priority and it is our responsibility to ensure our expenditures have the greatest potential to improve student outcomes. At the same time, we are responsible to our ratepayers, who expect us to apply the mill rate effectively and efficiently."

Capital expenditures include the continuation of energy performance upgrades across the division. The division also plans to modernize and add library space and improve life-safety systems at Balcarres School; and add relocatable classrooms to alleviate space shortages at Greenall High School in Balgonie.

In addition to bricks and mortar the division budget includes funds for:

- expansion of *Pathways to Literacy*, a multi-faceted initiative to improve reading levels among Prairie Valley students, to include grades 1, 2, 6 and 7;
- renewal of the Practical and Applied Arts (PAA) equipment in schools throughout the division, and development of a long term plan for PAA programming;
- technology renewal in seven schools, as part of a multi-year rollout across all schools;
- expanded availability of band programming to more schools;
- continued implementation of *A Time for Significant Leadership* to promote, support and sustain system-wide change focused on First Nations and Métis education goals;
- implementation of new pre-kindergarten programs for three and four year olds at Fort Qu'Appelle Elementary School, Lumsden Elementary School and Whitewood School;
- implementation of Project CRISS (Creating Independence through Student-owned Strategies), designed to help all students read, write and learn more effectively.

Luhnning says, "The budget the board passed today anticipates an operating surplus of \$1.38 million, which will be targeted to future capital improvements." Total revenues are estimated at \$89.95 million and total expenses are projected at \$88.57 million.

*Prairie Valley School Division serves more than 8,100 students in 38 schools throughout south-eastern Saskatchewan. To support its vision of leadership in learning and in life, and through a commitment to shared values, 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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