



ROCKY MOUNTAIN SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 6 BOARD OF EDUCATION

# 2022-2023 ENHANCING STUDENT LEARNING REPORT

## Message from the Board of Education

The strategic plan 2020–2023 identified three priority areas and set the direction for continuous improvement over the three-year plan. As we come to the end of the strategic planning cycle, the district sits at a point of reflection and anticipation. We can reflect on countless ways we supported education through the heart of the pandemic, celebrated student achievement, and grew alongside students in our schools. We may also be anticipating the many ways we will continue to build on foundations of solid learning as we look into the next strategic cycle.

Before we look too far ahead, we believe that it is important to celebrate some of the fantastic work and achievements of the entire Rocky Mountain team. In pulling together over the last three years, a trend of student growth is evident in so many aspects of learning. The Board of Education is excited to share many of the positive student stories reflected in the data on student achievement. It is impossible to separate the contributions and efforts of all staff that led to the amazing results. While the evidence that follows is not specific to any one student, the fingerprints of all staff, in the lives of all students, at all levels of the system, are found on every one of these results.

Together we are making a difference in the lives of our students.

The Board of Education School District 06 Rocky Mountain

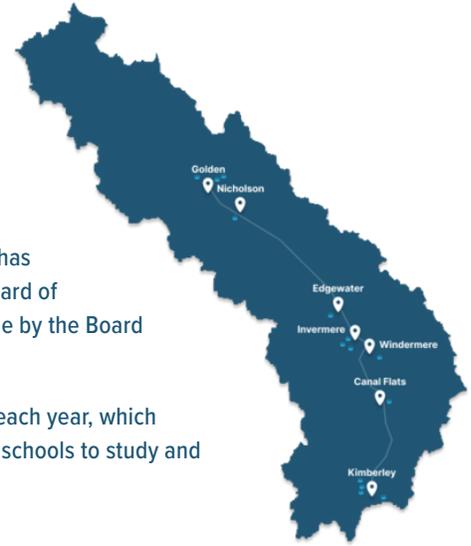


# OUR CONTEXT

School District No. 6 Rocky Mountain serves all communities from Golden to Kimberley. There are 18 schools including three alternate schools and one online school in three zones, Golden, including the community of Nicholson, Windermere, including Edgewater, Invermere, and Canal Flats, and Kimberley, including Marysville.

The district serves approximately 3500 students, employs approximately 550 staff, and has an operating budget of approximately \$52 million dollars. Nine Trustees make up the Board of Education, three from each zone: Its mission, vision, and values guide all decisions, made by the Board of Education.

Rocky Mountain School District also welcomes approximately 95 international students each year, which equates to 70 Full Time Equivalents. These students from around the world enroll in our schools to study and experience the unique environment that we have to offer in the Columbia Valley.



## MISSION

We collaborate in the pursuit of each student's success to become knowledgeable, caring, contributing, and resilient members of a global community.

## VALUES

### Respect

We foster respectful relationships that build trust, safety, and well-being.

### Equity

We strive to build equitable, safe, and inclusive learning and working environments that honour diversity.

### Integrity

We nurture a sense of self-awareness, responsibility, and honesty as we become environmental stewards and morally upright citizens.

### Accountability

We are accountable for ourselves, our students, and our communities for the professionalism, transparency, and quality results.

### Innovation

We create learning opportunities that are high quality, place-based, creative, and that encourage students to reach their full potential.

## VISION

Opportunity, Equity, and Success for each learner.



# STRATEGIC PLANNING CYCLE

In 2020 the Board of Education developed a three-year strategic plan aligned with the requirements under the Framework for Enhancing Student Learning (FESL) legislation. This report culminates the three-year planning cycle and lays a foundation for the Board’s next strategic plan which will utilize a four-year cycle.



## ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement is a requirement under the FESL framework. The opportunity for community engagement provides the district with valuable information from the communities the district serves. Evolving from the [Engagement Framework](#), an engagement plan was developed. The district sought feedback on the plan from all education partners (Indigenous, Parents, Unions, Students) through face-to-face meetings. In addition, the district conducted an online engagement for 8 weeks. The input that was received was collected and published in a [“What We Heard”](#) report.

Schools also engaged their communities to seek input on their “School Success Plan”. These were evening events where parents and community learned about the progress of the current plan and invited to provide input into the plan for the 2023-24 school year. Principals summarized the data and shared how they used the feedback in their new plan through a What We Heard report posted on school websites.



# FOCUS POPULATION DATA

The school district follows the achievement and success of focused groups of students through a number of avenues beyond the tracking of typical achievement data. Teams of educators, other professionals, partners, and families collaborate to ensure effective programming for these learners. Achievement data is masked for focus populations of students. However, throughout this report, the district has added important information related to these students' successes.

## Indigenous Education

School District 6 has implemented several strategies to support the learning experience for Indigenous students. To bring a baseline level of knowledge and understanding of Truth and Reconciliation, the District implemented an organization-wide learning program: The Four Seasons of Truth and Reconciliation. Staff worked either individually or in teams to complete the learning series. 95% of full and part time staff completed the learning series and the district is working to include all casual employees in this number. This learning series has also become a standard for all new staff to complete as part of the onboarding process prior to employment.

In schools, a new Indigenous Student Management System (ISMS) was implemented to track supports and services provided to Indigenous learners. Indigenous Education Support Workers (IESW) worked with principals to document and review supports for students. This tracking system provided an avenue to ensure that students received supports. Monthly reports reveal that students are receiving necessary support and services, and their related successes are noted.

To address the learning gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners' significant efforts to build both teacher and leader capacity to analyze student data and to plan strategic interventions to support learners. Principals, in partnership with IESW used data from ISMS in meetings with the School Based Team (SBT) or during Individual Education Program meetings bringing a better understanding of learner needs.

Planning for Indigenous student supports, using targeted funding, was developed based on evidence which identified targeted areas for support throughout the year. Principals and the District Indigenous Education Team meet with Indigenous community partners, to discuss students on nominal roll to ensure that the Indigenous community has input into decision making.

At District Leadership Team meetings and in individual meetings with principals the Indigenous Education Team is building the capacity of principals by discussing Indigenous academic trends along with learning about Indigenous history and how to incorporate Indigenous perspectives and teachings into classrooms to support students.

## Learners with Diverse Needs

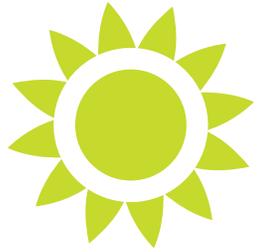
The achievement of students with diverse learning needs is monitored and supported by the involvement of teams including students, parents, and staff. Individual Education Plans guide the work to ensure appropriate supports lead to student success.

Over the past year, district vice principals have worked with teachers in schools to design equitable and meaningful instruction to provide access to all learners in the areas of numeracy and literacy. Increased engagement and participation for students with diverse abilities is being observed with this renewed commitment to differentiation and personalization of learning.

Continuing, teachers in four school communities worked with district staff to reflect on deep learning for students with diverse abilities as they piloted a new Competency-Based Individual Education Plan (CB-IEP) template within the district. Teachers reported the success of this type of planning in promoting not only personalized learning for each student, but intentional planning of the staff responsible for each part of a student's educational program and the strategies to be put in place to meet student need. The CB-IEP will be implemented in schools across the district in the 2023-24 school year, with all Individual Education Plans created in this form by Fall of 2026.

Connection and engagement in the school community is essential for all students. A review of barriers which may be impacting attendance will inform supports and strategies to support school teams in intervening to support regular school attendance.





## Children and Youth in Care

The number of children and youth in care are few and often changing as a result of individual circumstances. This small group of students face unique challenges to learning. While achievement data for these students is inconsistent, targeted supports and the stories of case-by-case success for these learners, instill pride in district employees and the students themselves.

Achievement data for Children and Youth in Care is masked, as per FOIPPA legislation. However, school staff recognize that students in care face multiple barriers to their learning and endeavor to promote individual student educational achievement and personal well-being.

District and school staff recognize that students in care face multiple barriers to their learning and endeavour to promote individual student achievement and well-being. This past year district staff have worked closely with the Ministry of Child and Family Development to engage as partners in Complex Care Intervention planning to build success for specific students in our communities. These collaborative plans help staff gain an understanding of a student's strengths while contributing to wraparound care and the creation of protective factors for a child. Outcomes for students as a result of this model indicate the district ought to broaden the scope of this supportive partnership.

As we move forward, the district will engage in a more robust identification process, in cooperation with Ministry of Child and Family Services and Ktunaxa-Kinbasket Child and Family Services to ensure all students can benefit from this level of wraparound service and support.

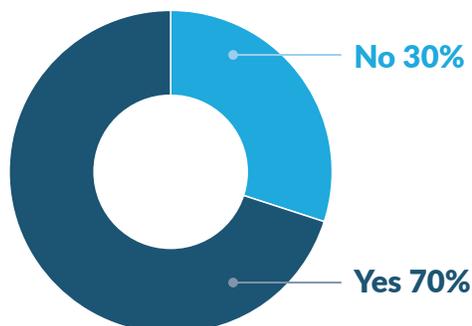
## Early Learners

Learning in the early years is critical for developing solid foundations for a student's learning journey. The **Early Learning Framework** applies to all learning environments, including StrongStart BC programs and primary classrooms to childcare settings, preschools and other early childhood development and child health programs. As the district begins to implement early learning and childcare programming the implementation of the Early Learning Framework strategies is a goal for the district to ensure that all students are successful in their learning journey from the onset.

In the area of Early Learning, the District sought to meaningfully include our pre-school and care providers with a meaningful connection to the work of the school district. Our CHEQ results showed that 70% of children coming into kindergarten were in child care and of those 76% were in licensed child care and/or preschool centres. The district realized the importance of connecting Early Childhood Educators with Kindergarten teachers and implemented a K-ECE Collaboration project in 2021. A survey was conducted at the beginning of this work, which showed that across the district, 89% of kindergarten teachers and outside care providers felt disconnected from each other's purpose and role.

### WAS THE CHILD IN A CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENT OTHER THAN PARENTAL CARE BETWEEN 3 YEARS & KINDERGARTEN?

Answered: 215



Thanks to the hard work of Early Childhood Educators, Kindergarten Teachers, and leadership, over the course of the year a partnership was built between pre-school providers and Kindergarten Teachers. Following a year of work to this end, 89% of the participants in district communities and schools reported a strong connection between pre-school and school-based programming. This collaboration, which is now going into its third year, continues to support conversations and observations around teaching and learning that is leading to a smoother transition for children and families from early years to the school system.

# PRIORITY 1

## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion



### Inclusion

Students who are well connected to their schools are likely to want to attend school and are more prepared to devote concentration and focus to learning. These aspects measure a student’s preparedness for learning.

Inclusive learning environments, where all students have equal opportunity for success, address the individual learning needs of students, and ensure all students meaningfully participate in learning. Meaningful participation includes a myriad of strategies designed to allow access to students with varying abilities and strengths to demonstrate understanding.

### Equity

Equity refers to the objective that all students have the supports and resources each of them needs to be successful. Since all students are unique, sometimes equity means that students’ needs are not the same. There are two ways to achieve greater equity: one is to ensure all students have the learning supports they need to be successful, and the other is to examine barriers to learning with the goal of removing or reducing them.

## Provincial Student Learning Survey

Students who feel well connected to school are likely to attend school and be ready for learning. A sense of belonging and connection to school are aspects that measure a student’s preparedness for learning. The provincial student learning survey is conducted across the province in all school districts each year. The survey asks students for feedback about topics ranging from nutrition to activities out of school and feelings of belonging and connectedness to school. Students in grades 4,7,10, and 12 complete the survey. Student voice is extremely important in gauging the climate of the school district. As such, many schools have taken the information from the provincial student learning survey and included the learning in their school plans. Additionally, many schools have developed their own local methods for asking students throughout the year about their learning, well-being, and sense of connectedness to school. Often, the school based surveys provide teams additional, or different, data and evidence to pursue this important objective. In this way, schools across the district can adjust routinely throughout the year to what the students are telling them.

Figure 1.  
**TWO OR MORE ADULTS  
CARE ABOUT YOU  
ALL GRADES**

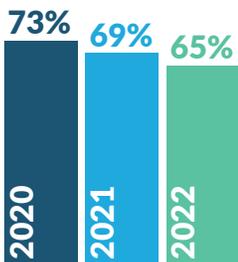


Figure 2.  
**TWO OR MORE ADULTS  
CARE ABOUT YOU  
GRADE 4**

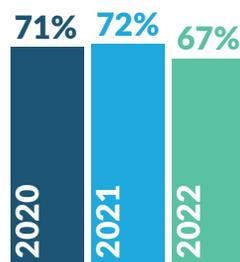


Figure 3.  
**TWO OR MORE ADULTS  
CARE ABOUT YOU  
GRADE 7**

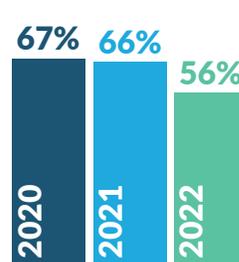
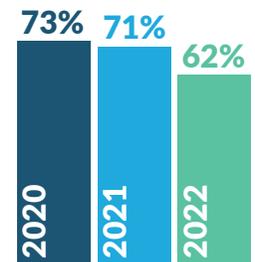


Figure 4.  
**TWO OR MORE ADULTS  
CARE ABOUT YOU  
GRADE 10**



Relationships are key to success. The district would like to see this overall pattern of feedback from students become an increasing trend. If the adults care, and students know and feel they care, there is a high likelihood these relationships will support successful learning.

While results in 2022 seem to show a decline on the student learning survey (Figures 1-4), local school surveys show much more positive results when asking the same questions of students. One possible explanation for this difference could be in the assessment design and process. The student learning survey is conducted online, in a single sitting, and is over 70 questions long. Local school surveys tend to be much shorter: in the range of 10 focus questions. Given these differences in design and process, the district has some concern that the importance of certain questions is lost to students in the volume of assessment items and the assessment setting.

An interesting pattern in the data for Indigenous learners emerges. Unlike other assessment measures in this report, Indigenous learners report that more than two adults care at a significantly higher rate than do non-Indigenous learners. While the numbers of learners are fewer and the responses more scattered, this pattern holds true for Indigenous learners living on reserve.

## Feeling Welcome, and a Sense of Belonging

Figure 5.

### ALL GRADES



Figure 6.

### GRADE 4



Figure 7.

### GRADE 7



Figure 8.

### GRADE 10



Generally, growth in these three areas is positive and shows a continued positive trend (Figures 5-8). However, there is a pattern that has developed: the older the respondent, the less positive their response. This requires investigation. In these three areas, Indigenous learners also report improving a sense of safety, belonging, and feeling welcome at school at broadly the same rates as non-Indigenous learners. As the district continues its focus on creating positive climate, student mental health, and racial equity for all students, so too should this growth continue.

## Indigenous Learner and Diverse Student Achievement Gap

To become an equitable organization, the district will monitor to ensure all students have the supports they need. Students with diverse ability and Indigenous learners are two focus populations of students for whom an achievement gap exists between them and the rest of the student population.

A priority in equity and inclusion was to improve outcomes for the most marginalized students. Changing outcomes for Indigenous learners has been a primary focus for the district. The district is pleased to share that Indigenous students have seen increasing levels of success over the last 4 years. Indigenous student completion rates in 2022 are the highest they have ever been. Additionally, the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners has closed to 6% as of 2022! Success for students with diverse needs is also improving. Learners with Diverse Needs are a much smaller population within the district. While growth for this group is evident over time, results often swing more drastically in the short term. In addition to continuing supports for Indigenous Learners, a focus on achievement for diverse learners continues through personalized and systemic intervention to provide required learning supports.

**INDIGENOUS STUDENT COMPLETION RATES** in 2022 are the **HIGHEST** they have ever been.

The gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners has closed to **6%**

Figure 9. 5 YEAR COMPLETION RATE **ALL RESIDENT STUDENTS**

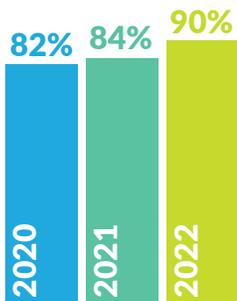


Figure 10. 5 YEAR COMPLETION RATE **INDIGENOUS LEARNERS**

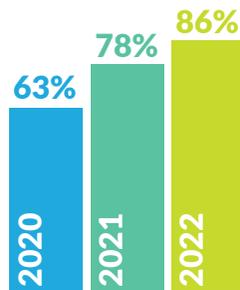
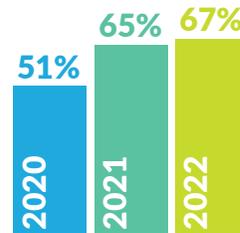


Figure 10. 5 YEAR COMPLETION RATE **DIVERSE LEARNERS**



# PRIORITY 2

## Success for Each Student



This priority targets student achievement in Literacy and Numeracy which both span the curriculum. Literacy refers to students’ ability to understand various forms of information, process that information, and create meaningful personal responses in a variety of different forms. Being literate involves solving problems, interpreting real life situations, and making meaning from the world around us.

To be numerate means to not only have a solid understanding of numbers and their inter-relationships but also the disposition to utilize them to make sense of the world around us. A numerate individual has the capacity to understand and use numbers to make sense of important social, scientific issues, both current and historical, local, and global, and therefore enact change within their own community and broader contexts.

### Success for Each Learner

Promoting success in literacy and numeracy involves a significant and concerted effort of staff teams across the district.

While the evidence of learning suggests that reading is an area of growth opportunity, when compared with writing, the growth trajectory is showing this learning is happening. In fact, Rocky Mountain staff were able to support growth in literacy and numeracy despite the ongoing impacts of the pandemic. In the upcoming strategic cycle, the instructional focus will be to assess reading and writing skills as complementary to each other and not as separate and distinct skills. Provincial assessments, like the Foundation Skills Assessment, are leading the way in shifting towards a more holistic view of literacy. However, as the district shifts to measures of reading and writing together, as literacy, there has been a drop in overall achievement. This pattern requires monitoring throughout the upcoming cycle.

#### Writing

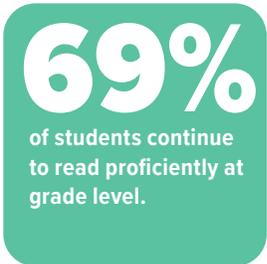
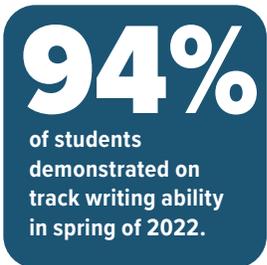
Student writing skill across the district remains a strong point for all students. In spring of 2022, 94% of students demonstrated on track ability on the District Writing Assessment.

For Kindergarten to Grade 3 students - a group whose reading skills were jeopardized by the pandemic interruption - evidence still shows staff teams supported growth in literacy and numeracy.

#### Reading

District results on reading benchmarks at K-3 show no significant learning loss from spring of 2020 to spring of 2022. 69% of students continue to read proficiently at grade level. Looking just at grade 3 students, 79% of all grade 3 students continue a transition to grade 4 at reading level.

In grades 4-7, spring benchmark data shows growth of 22% proficiency in the span of one year. 52% of students in the spring of 2021 were proficient, as opposed to 74% of students in the spring of 2022.





## Foundation Skills Assessment

The results of the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) are used by educators in the district to plan for student learning in the areas of literacy and numeracy. Because the FSA is designed by teachers from across the province, it represents the broad provincial expectations for student learning in literacy and numeracy. Therefore, educators also use the FSA to determine whether school and district-based growth is reflected in FSA results. Where there is good alignment between school, district, and provincial results, the district can be confident programs and services are meeting the objectives of our entire system of public education and the goal of the educated citizen.

As mentioned, in 2021 the FSA began to measure reading and writing skills together as literacy achievement. Before 2021, when reading and writing were assessed separately, students had very high achievement in writing and achieved less well in reading. Overall, the FSA achievement tended to be higher as a result of balancing two separate measures. However, FSA achievement dips in 2021 (Figure - 12). One of the explanations could be the new practice of measuring literacy as both reading and writing skills together. This is a more genuine way to measure literacy. The district has also adjusted its own assessment practice to no longer measure reading and writing separately. In 2023 a re-designed assessment structure will replace past assessment practice and will measure reading and writing together as part of a larger skill of literacy. The district will be monitoring this change in achievement closely in the next strategic cycle.

Indigenous learners experience an achievement gap of about 8% over the three-year trend and demonstrate the same abrupt decline in achievement in the 2021 school year. However, the Indigenous students who live on reserve, while fewer in number, have shown 35% growth in proficiency over the period of 2020 to 2022. Additionally, in 2022 this group learners achieved ahead of Indigenous learners taken as a whole.

In numeracy, the district is seeing lower achievement results compared to literacy. This pattern aligns with the evidence collected locally and reflects the picture on a provincial level. All learning evidence indicates a need to make numeracy education and success a focus within this priority. The good news in this area is district assessment models, while overall showing lower achievement in numeracy, show growth within grade years. The Student Numeracy Assessment and Practice (SNAP) assessment, for example, showed growth at all grade levels in numeracy learning from September to June. This growth was evident in all learners, including learners within marginalized populations, such as Indigenous students and children in care. The FSA is not able to show within-year learning trends as it is a measure taken only once per year.

For Indigenous students the three-year declining trend is similar. However, as in all areas of learning there is a prevalent achievement gap that must continue to be addressed. The achievement gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners in numeracy over the three-year trend is 25% in 2022. While numbers of on-reserve Indigenous learners vary and are generally fewer, this particular group of learners achieve at a lower rate than Indigenous learners taken as a whole. This difference represents a further achievement gap of approximately 9%.

Figure 12.

### GRADE 4 FOUNDATION SKILLS ASSESSMENT LITERACY % OF STUDENTS ON TRACK OR EXTENDING



Figure 13.

### GRADE 4 FOUNDATION SKILLS ASSESSMENT NUMERACY % OF STUDENTS ON TRACK OR EXTENDING



Figure 14.

### GRADE 7 FOUNDATION SKILLS ASSESSMENT LITERACY % OF STUDENTS ON TRACK OR EXTENDING



Figure 15.

### GRADE 7 FOUNDATION SKILLS ASSESSMENT NUMERACY % OF STUDENTS ON TRACK OR EXTENDING



Achievement trends on the FSA in grade 7 display a similar pattern to those in grade 4 (Figure – 14). The reason for the abrupt dip in achievement in 2021 applies to this group of learners, as well.

However, for Indigenous learners, there are a few differences of note. First, in literacy, the gap between all learners and Indigenous learners is much narrower at 4% in 2022. Second, the abrupt decline seen for students in grade 4, and for all students in figure 14 above, was not nearly as abrupt or significant for Indigenous learners, as a whole. The decline for Indigenous learners between 2020 and 2021 was 3%. It is apparent that Indigenous learners on reserve require the ongoing attention of the district to ensure improved rates of success in literacy. The achievement gap for these learners and other Indigenous learners is about 30%.

Numeracy results on the FSA in grade 7 fit a similar pattern to the results seen in local district measures (Figure – 15). While some growth has taken place, overall achievement is simply below what the system expects for students. Despite lower overall achievement, Rocky Mountain students are achieving ahead of the provincial results.

The achievement gap is significant for Indigenous learners in this measure. While still maintaining achievement ahead of the province, over the three-year trend there is an approximate gap of 15% in each of the years between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners.

The grade 10 Literacy Assessment (GLA) is now a requirement of BC school completion. As is reflected by district and provincial measures in lower grades, literacy is generally achieved at higher rates than numeracy. The decline between 2020 and 2021 seen at earlier grades is also a concern for students in grade 10 (Figure – 16). It seems to be an isolated event as this year's data marks a slight improvement (Figure – 16).

At secondary schools in Rocky Mountain, Grade 10 students have shown two-year growth on the provincial literacy assessment. Again, this is result of shared efforts in supporting the ongoing shift to learning with the re-designed curriculum. Continuing to improve literacy achievement for students within the graduation program is an objective in this area of priority.

Indigenous learners fit a similar profile as in other provincial and district assessments. The gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners on this measure ranged from 20-25%. Of particular concern for the district is that Indigenous learners seem to experience even wider achievement gaps on secondary assessments than elementary assessments. This pattern requires exploration and monitoring by the district.

It is worthwhile to mention students writing the first year of the grade 12 provincial literacy assessment showed a proficient or extending rate of 78% in 2022.

While numeracy achievement rates are yet to reach expected levels for students beginning their graduation program, the growth on this measure has been steady (Figure – 17). The district has committed to continued growth and learning in numeracy that crosses all subject disciplines and expands the scope of learning beyond calculation and computation and into competencies, such as, critical thinking and communicating understanding. The next strategic cycle emphasizes student learning in the areas of additional curricular competencies such as analyses and interpretation. The broadening of numeracy instruction to elevate the importance of applying numeracy skills and the expansion of numeracy across courses will ensure this growth continues.

The achievement gap for Indigenous students on this assessment mirrors the pattern of other district and provincial assessments. As with the other grade 10 measure in literacy the Indigenous student achievement gap is very wide and ranges from 13%-16% on this assessment.

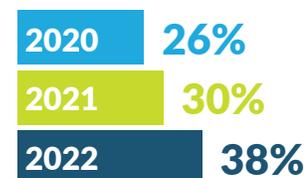
Figure 16.

### GRADE 10 PROVINCIAL GRADUATION LITERACY ASSESSMENT



Figure 17.

### GRADE 10 PROVINCIAL GRADUATION NUMERACY ASSESSMENT



## Grade to Grade Transitions

100% of students K-9 make successful grade transition from June to September. The **District Student Mental Health strategy** identifies several ways schools and staff plan and support student transition at key points. Within the graduation program, students may transition between grades at lower rates than 100%. Sometimes students elect to take a course again for a better grade. Some students take lower grade courses in their senior years. However, a very high number of students make successful transitions between grades during the graduation program. All secondary school teams closely monitor students in the graduation program to ensure successful transition and completion. When students are at risk of missing a transition, there are multiple avenues school staff pursue to intervene with supports and resources for the student to ensure successful completion.

There is a slight gap in the transition rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Despite this, Indigenous learners are also transitioning at rates near 100%. The district believes that a sharp focus on successful transitions ensures the successful completion rates for students continue to improve.

Figure 18.  
2022 GRADE TRANSITIONS



## Transition to Post Secondary Institutions

Part of the vision of students crossing the stage with future options is measured by how many students transition to a post-secondary institution following secondary school graduation. The readiness to make this transition can be predicted by the number of students who successfully transition between grades during their time in secondary school. It is also important to consider the geographical and workforce context in Rocky Mountain SD6. The local workforce is based largely in tourism and industry. Many students transition to programs outside of postsecondary or enter the workforce directly after graduation. The district considers these transitions to be successful as well as transition to post-secondary.

In 2022, 26% of all students completing school in Rocky Mountain, registered at a Canadian post-secondary institution upon graduation.

Within a period of three years following graduation – students who completed in 2020 – 26% of them registered in a Canadian post-secondary institution. This is a decline of about 20% over the previous year and is part of a declining pattern over a four-year period. It is possible a decline for this group of students entering post-secondary is explained as a consequence of the pandemic. This group of students would have been 2020 graduates and would have missed an entire term of “normal” in-school learning and preparation. While the district does not have a clear explanation for this pattern, the district must continue to ensure students see themselves as future ready with options and plans when they complete school.



## PRIORITY 3

### Teaching and Leadership Excellence

To build a culture of learning, and to encourage professional dialogue among colleagues, the district is using research based on collaborative learning as well as allocating resources to support teachers and leaders learning from one another. The model is based on *Instructional Rounds in Education* by Dr Elizabeth A City, Richard F Elmore, where time is strategically allocated to watch, explore, refine, and test all types of hypotheses about learning. Through a non-judgmental collaborative model that puts the lens on the learning. Participants focus the debrief conversation on the learning they observe, the task, and the learning space.

Teachers and leaders have significant impact on the learning journey of students and impact their success in a variety of ways. Efforts build capacity of teachers and leaders continues to be a primary focus for the district. Specifically, changes to instruction, pedagogy, and assessment resulting from changes in curriculum, for example, combining reading and writing into literacy, have required capacity building efforts for all educators in the system. An ongoing learning focus on literacy and numeracy, as described in the curriculum and measured on assessments such as the FSA and literacy assessments, will be a theme running through all capacity building initiatives. These efforts are informed by the district's increased capacity to use local, provincial, and classroom evidence effectively.

## TECHNOLOGY

### Equity and Inclusion

Supporting priority one, we host several learning sessions to build capacity for staff to utilize digital resources. We have increased the number of student devices over the past two years. These increases result in better device to student ratios and students have improved access to digital resources. Since many resources are cloud-based, students and staff may access them from any device and any location provided they have Internet connectivity. We offer learning opportunities that support classroom use of assistive technologies such as immersive reader, dictate functions, and several other specialized applications. We have made infrastructure changes to support the use of specialized devices and software utilized in meeting the needs of individualized student learning plans. With increased devices being utilized, we have begun to update both wired and wireless networks to support the increased demand for access to these digital resources.



## Success for Each Learner

Numerous digital resources are accessible to students, staff, and parents and our websites are constantly being updated to support access to these resources. Students are provided with the tools and learning to empower them to become healthy Digital Citizens. Software and Apps have been updated to best meet the needs of students and staff. School and district staff continue to utilize an increasing volume of digital resources to support learning across all curricular areas. We have updated our overall security posture by implementing new administrative measures (ie. password complexity requirements) and providing educational resources to staff and students pertaining to this topic.



## Excellence in Teaching and Leadership

The District Tech Leaders Network continues to meet throughout the year to collaborate and learn. These leaders, and their principals, plan for school-based learning opportunities that support capacity building for all staff across the district. This year a few focus areas were the integration of assistive technologies, a thorough review of the Applied Design, Skills, and Technology curriculum, and the development of scope and sequence documents along with associated resources. Additionally, the Tech Team hosted many staff learning sessions focused on both the optimization of systems as well as accessing curricular resources.

## HUMAN RESOURCES ALIGNMENT

In support of teaching and leadership excellence, the Human Resource Department instigated a practice of hiring two additional contract teachers in each of the three communities to support teacher release. These additional teachers would be reliable and consistent supports for teachers who were working together and with principals to enhance their practice. This project was measured using feedback from school principals. All principals, except for two of them, elected to continue the program into the next strategic cycle. Given the overwhelming positive feedback for the program, the Human Resources Department will continue to try to improve the delivery of this model in the upcoming strategic cycle.

With respect to ensuring success for each learner the Human Resources Department set an objective to ensure supports are in place for all hiring staff to recruit the best possible candidates. To this end the HR Department worked with hiring managers to review all interview assessment forms and reference checking procedures. To recruit the best candidates for positions, staff attended virtual information sessions with graduating teacher candidates. Further to this, the Assistant Superintendent is a member at the table of the East Kootenay Teacher Education Program Advisory table. Through this work the district seeks to enhance relationships with teacher candidates such that Rocky Mountain may become their employer of choice. The HR Department is offering interviews to all grads from this program from June. Last year, the HR Department began a partnership with University of Calgary. Many teachers hired by the district are grads of their community-based teacher program. As partners, the district hopes to hire more candidates from this program.

Lastly, to enhance the capacity of district staff, the HR Department ran the Aspiring Leaders Program for the third year in a row. This is a program offered to teachers who have an interest in leadership: either formally or informally. They meet 2 times for a full day in person and meet 4 more times virtually after school throughout the year. There were 9 teacher participants. Feedback about the program was received by 8 of these participants. While most of them found the program useful to vary degrees, the request to continue to participate in learning about leadership was reflected in the feedback of half of them.



# FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

The district operates on a budget of approximately \$52 million dollars annually with projected enrolment of 3,468 for 2023-24 (2022-23 – 3,511). The majority of the revenue is received from the Ministry, revenue is broken down as follows:

Figure A - FUNDING BY SOURCE

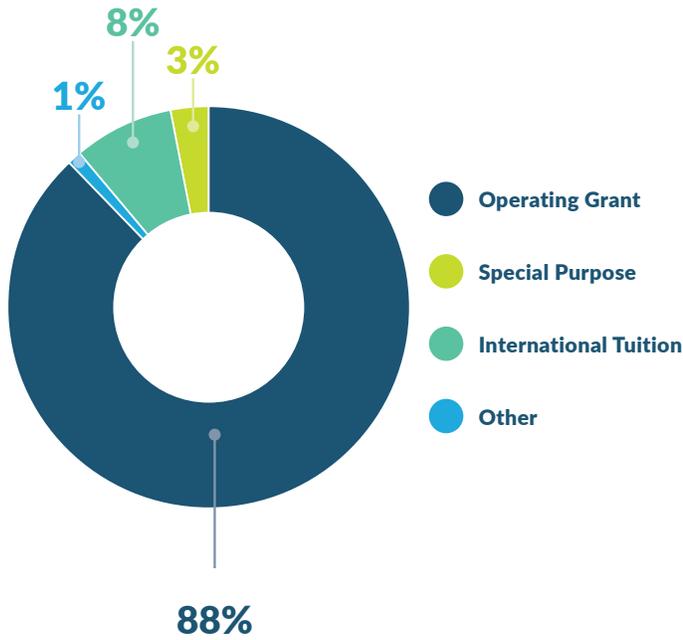
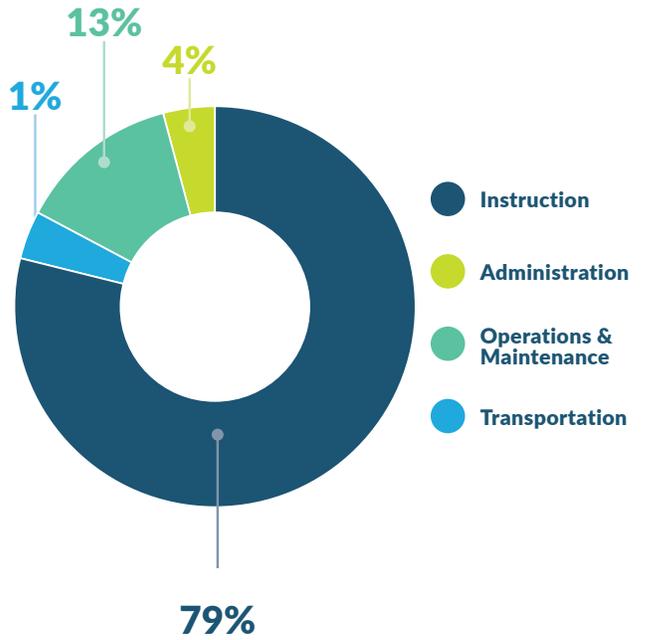


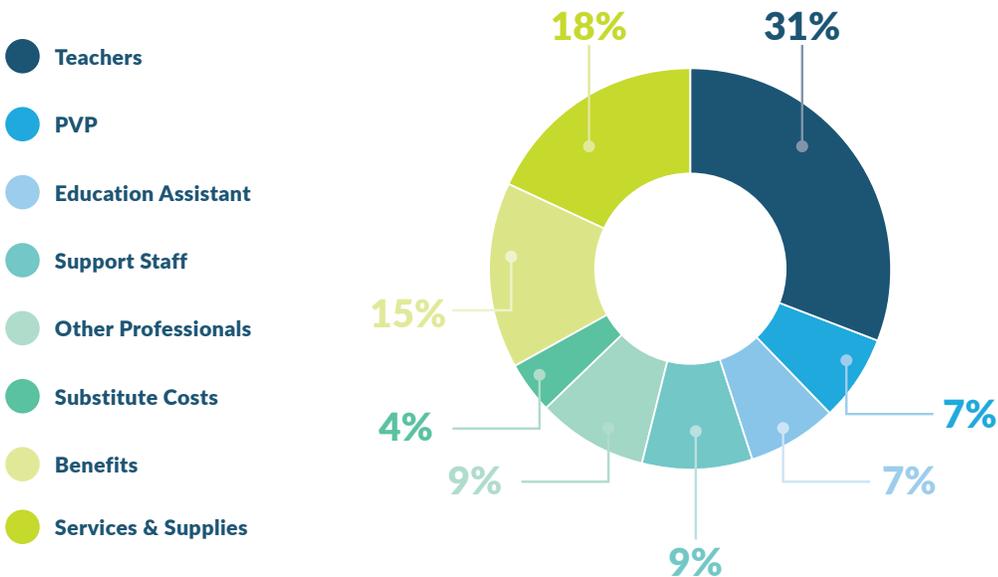
Figure B - EXPENDITURES BY DEPARTMENT

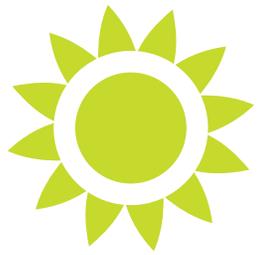


The budget breaks down into four main areas: Instruction, Operations and Maintenance, Transportation and Administration as shown in Figure A.

Staffing costs are determined mainly on student configuration within the schools. Employee expenses make up the majority of the budget expenditures and are broken down as shown in Figure C.

Figure C - EXPENDITURES BY FUNCTION





Instruction services and supplies are funds allocated to support student success. District administration, operations, maintenance, and transportation allocations are required to support the overall operations of the District. Special purpose funds are grants provided by the Ministry which are outside of the normal operating grant and are targeted funds that support Ministry identified priorities or projects. The majority of the special purpose funds relate to Classroom Enhancement Funds which are provided to appropriately staff the schools for restored language to the Collective Agreements. These directly benefit instruction by providing over 30 additional classroom teachers. This aligns with Priority 2 – Success for All Learners. A new special purpose fund for 2023-24 is Feeding Futures. These funds will be utilized to ensure all learners receive the nourishment required to allow them to excel in their learning. This aligns with **Priority 4** – Stewardship for the Future.

Other special purpose funds and targeted funds add supports for Indigenous learners, English language learners, and learners with diverse abilities/disabilities, capacity building, early learning and French programming and have been allocated to support the Board of Education priorities articulated in the 2023-27 Strategic Plan. The allocation of these aligns with Priority 1 – Equity, Diversity and Inclusion by removing barriers to equity, providing learning environments and inclusive opportunities while engaging Indigenous, parent and other partners.

The Business Services are focused on providing effective support services related to facilities management, financial and risk management, payroll and benefits administration, procurement, and policy development and implementation. The district's goal is to effectively support our school communities by providing a safe, healthy and financially sustainable learning environment.

- Ensure through multi-year financial planning, budget reviews and the annual budget process the allocation of resources (people, time, and money) is completed in a fiscally responsible manner and supports the achievement of the Board's strategic plan.
- Continuously review and improve business processes and business systems to create value.
- Support our community of learners through effective communication which enables efficient decision making.
- Ensure business continuity through effective risk management, succession planning, strategic recruitment, retention, and professional development.
- Effectively support the governance function of the Board of Education.
- Continue to effectively represent the district perspective to provincial government on business related initiatives

The above items support all four priorities identified in the strategic plan through the transparent allocation of resources for instruction, efficient and effective communication, and understanding that all employees of the district are responsible for the success of students.

- Ensure district assets are safeguarded and that the district's financial position is stable through the design and implementation of adequate internal controls and financial processes. This supports and models leadership excellence as identified in **Priority 3** – Growing the Capacity of Self and Others.
- Ensure that the finance department has the organizational capacity (people and expertise) to manage all current and planned initiatives and projects, while delivering regular operations. This supports **Priority 2** – Success for Each Learner by ensuring the departments have the resources required for literacy and numeracy and the students are ready to learn.

Our goal for 2023-24 is to successfully implement a new Enterprise Resource Planning software, called SparkRock. This change will have an impact on many aspects of the organization which includes time entry, payroll, finance, human resource functions, and reporting. One of the key aspects of SparkRock is the ability to move towards a paperless system. This aligns with **Priority 4** – Stewardship for the Future and supports our efforts to reduce our carbon footprint.



# TRANSPORTATION

Rocky Mountain School District No. 6 transports approximately 1,600 students on 21 bus routes in and around the three major communities in our school district, Golden, Invermere and Kimberley. Our District spans over 270 km from one end to the other.

Supporting **Priority 1** – Equity and Inclusion, for families eligible for transportation, the Transportation Department provides financial transportation assistance for parents of those children where bussing is not available. The District strives to provide inclusive learning environments and has purchased a wheelchair accessible bus that provides students with diverse abilities access to school.

In an effort to minimize the time students spend on the busses, the District has acquired a software program called Bus Planner. The goal for 2023-24 is to successfully implement this software. The outcomes will result in more efficient bus stops and routes. In addition, it is anticipated that there will be a reduction in diesel use with more efficient bus routes.

A transportation agreement has been developed in collaboration with our Indigenous partners to adjust our school bus routes to enhance the service level for our Indigenous students. Extracurricular transportation will be provided for the Indigenous students with the goal of increasing participation in after school and community activities. The transportation department is active in the creation of the transportation plan with respect to the BCTEA, providing extracurricular access to our on-reserve Indigenous students.

As part of our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint, the district has purchased the three electric busses. The district is investigating further action with the replacement of white fleet upgrade. We are also investigating a transition to electric options for our white fleet. These initiatives help model environmental stewardship and support **Priority 4** – Stewardship for the Future.

Our goal for 2023-24 is to complete an assessment of the current carbon footprint within the District. This information will provide us with a roadmap on where we can focus our efforts to reduce the impact we have on the environment. The goal for 2024-25 would be to acquire 2 white fleet electric vehicles and upgrade the charging infrastructure for electric vehicles and busses. The goal for 2025-26 would be to double the electric bus fleet to 6 busses.

# FACILITIES

Our schools are located in the 11 communities we serve throughout our District. Nestled along the Rockies we are protected by 9 fire departments and reside in 2 different regional districts. We operate 3 maintenance centres approximately 1.5 hours apart.

In an effort to support the priorities of the Board of Education, the Operations Department enhances the learning environment by maintaining our buildings, grounds and equipment in a safe, clean and in good working condition which results in healthy school facilities for students and staff.

The maintenance teams provide customer service for our schools while maintaining building systems with a robust maintenance program. Annually, facility renewal projects are completed to ensure our facilities remain safe and in good condition.



Each year, our Board of Education submits a 5-year capital plan to the Ministry of Education and Child Care that outlines the major capital projects the district has identified. Student population has declined significantly since the early 2000's; however, in the past few years' student population has stabilized and we are starting to experience growth in student population. Kimberley and Windermere areas of the district lead that growth and we expect the student population to increase gradually over the coming years.

**Priority 2**, Success for each Learner is supported by the district as we begin to think about the new Ministry mandate for early learning and child care. There is a need to increase the offerings of the Facilities Department especially in the area of custodial services. This new programming impacts schools because these programs operate when schools are traditionally closed. The Facilities Department is committed to ensuring the needs of the students, families and all community partners are met.

In support of **Priority 4**, efforts to reduce the carbon footprint, the district continues to convert lighting systems to LED high efficient lighting. Currently, 70% of our facilities have been upgraded. We have two LED lighting upgrades scheduled for this summer at Nicholson Elementary School and McKim Middle School. We continue to seek climate change energy reduction funding incentives through BC Hydro, Fortis, and Clean BC. A thermal efficiency building envelope upgrade is scheduled for the Golden Zone Office. Six Rooftop Units have been scheduled for replacement, improving the HVAC systems at Marysville Elementary, Windermere Elementary and Edgewater Elementary. Additionally, two heat pumps are being replaced at David Thompson Secondary. Finally, we will be installing a solar panel inverter at Golden Secondary School.

## CHILD CARE FACILITIES

The district has committed to a Director of Early Learning and Child Care which is funded through a special purpose grant. Part of the focus is to oversee the development of New Spaces Funds for new childcare spaces. The district has been approved to build two new facilities in Kimberley and Invermere. The creation of childcare spaces aligns the priorities as follows:

**Priority 1** – Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and **Priority 2** – Success for Each Learner: offering the services of childcare on the same sites as K-3 schools will allow for collaboration and connection between childcare staff and school staff enabling us to identify and support students with diverse learning needs early. This will also allow for the appropriate funding and supports to proactively be in place as children enter kindergarten, ensuring a smoother transition for children, their families, and school staff.

**Priority 4** – Stewardship for the Future: the district has been at the forefront of childcare implementation and has developed strong relationships with early years programs and services, including child care providers, to meaningfully connect the birth-to-5 system with the school system. This is creating a seamless journey for children and their families by providing consistency in communication, accessibility to programs/services, and pedagogy as we work to move forward and solidify the new birth to graduation system.

