

update

Council of School Councils Meeting Update

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May, 2015

Thank you to everyone who attended the Council of School Councils meeting on April 23. The following provides a high-level summary of the budget discussion and Q&A session held with Brad Grundy, Chief Financial Officer, David Stevenson, Chief Superintendent of Schools, and Trustees.

Since the meeting, a change in government has resulted in some uncertainty related to what education funding will look like in Alberta for the coming year. We are currently seeking clarification and guidance from the government. In the meantime, we must submit a balanced budget by June 30 to comply with the requirements of the School Act.

The CBE presented the Board of Trustees with a simplified “interim” budget on May 12 that is designed to keep as many options open as possible while supporting the prudent resourcing of our schools for the fall. On the same day, Alberta Education informed school boards that the deadline for submitting a balanced budget has been extended to June 30 from May 31.

At the public board meeting on May 19, the Board of Trustees agreed to postpone further budget considerations until June 9, in the hopes that more information from the government will be available to inform decision making.

In the meantime, this proposed interim budget assumes provincial funding for 2015-16 will allow the CBE to maintain schools at a level consistent with the 2014-15 school year, adjusted for projected enrolment growth. At this time that revenue assumption is by no means certain. The CBE’s final 2015-16 budget will be presented once that number has been determined through the provincial budget process.

Principals have made their budget decisions based on the funds allocated to their school through the Resource Allocation Method (RAM) in late April. Schools will be funded to allow them to address issues related to enrolment growth while maintaining class sizes equivalent to those of 2014-15 on a system-wide basis. Principals have consulted with staff and community stakeholders and are making decisions within the context of available resources to determine school organization, programming and staffing.

As always, we will continue to be efficient and prudent in how we use dollars to support student success. Maximizing the dollars directed to supporting student results remains the top priority.

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It is important to recognize that the fiscal situation in Alberta remains challenging. To that end, this interim budget assumes that a number of key reviews will proceed to ensure that the CBE continues to provide world-class education to each of our students within the funding ultimately allocated to us.

The CBE looks forward to working collaboratively with the Province on the budget process. We are committed to keeping our schools, employees and the public informed as more information about the budget for the coming school year becomes available.

Information about the CBE budget is updated regularly and can be found here:
www.cbe.ab.ca/budget

This is a very busy time of year, and information is changing rapidly. Thank you for your hard work with your school council, and your support and interest in the CBE and public education.