



2021  
2022

# ASSURANCE PLAN

*Learners are innovative thinkers who are successful,  
confident, respectful and caring.*



Lethbridge  
SCHOOL DIVISION

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Lethbridge  
SCHOOL DIVISION

## Message from the Board Chair

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I am pleased to present the 2021-2022 Assurance Plan. Within this transparent lens we provide assurance and accountability to all stakeholders in the areas of student growth and achievement, teaching and leading, learning supports, governance, and our local and societal context. You will find Division priorities, trends, issues, opportunities, accomplishments and strategies we believe set us on course to raise learners who are innovative thinkers, successful, confident, respectful and caring.

As I write this, our community is continuing to endure an exceptionally long and challenging season. There is a weariness felt by all, but there is also a tenacity and resiliency that continues to propel us forward. Every person's contribution within our Division family has been valuable as we have forged forward with innovative thought and practice, served each other with diligence, care and compassion, performed with integrity, and maintained our mandate: to do what is best for kids. I am proud to be part of this community.

The Assurance Plan recognizes the value of collaborative contribution and shared responsibility for student growth and achievement. We encourage you to look through this unique lens into our Division and would appreciate hearing any feedback you may have. Diversity brings strength and your voice matters. If you would like to be involved in planning and/or decision-making processes of our Division, please connect with us.

Thank you again for viewing our plan and supporting Lethbridge School Division.



**Christine Light**  
**Board Chair**

## Accountability Statement

The Assurance Plan for Lethbridge School Division commencing the 2021-22 school year was prepared under the direction of the Board/Board of Directors in accordance with the responsibilities under the Education Act and the Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act. This plan was developed in the context of the provincial government's business and fiscal plans. The Board has used its performance results to develop the plan and is committed to implementing the strategies contained within the plan to improve student learning and results. The Board approved the Assurance Plan for 2021-2022 to 2023-2024 on May 25, 2021.

Signed:



Christine Light, Board Chair



Cheryl Gilmore, Superintendent

## Vision

Learners are innovative thinkers who are successful, confident, respectful, and caring.

## Mission

Lethbridge School Division is inclusive, forward thinking, and accountable for engaging students in quality learning experiences that develop strong foundations, innovative minds, and responsible citizens.

## Board of Trustees



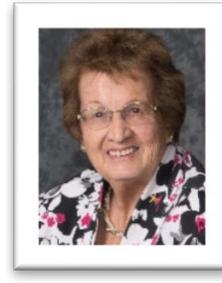
Christine Light  
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Lola Major

**Senior Administration**

**Dr. Cheryl Gilmore – Superintendent of Schools**

**Morag Asquith – Associate Superintendent, Instructional Services**

**Christine Lee – Associate Superintendent, Business and Operations**

**Mike Nightingale – Associate Superintendent, Human Resources**

## Jurisdiction Profile

Since 1886, Lethbridge School Division has offered high quality learning experiences over a broad range of programs to meet the needs of a wide variety of learners. The Division educates approximately 11,400 early learning through grade 12 students within the city of Lethbridge and employs 709 full time equivalent (FTE) certificated staff and 568 FTE support staff.

Lethbridge is a growing, vibrant city with over 100,000 residents. It is home to The University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge College, and the Lethbridge Research Centre, one of the largest agricultural research facilities in Canada.

The city also houses two large manufacturing plants involved in raw product development. Well situated in the southwestern part of Alberta, Lethbridge residents enjoy access to state-of-the-art cultural and recreational facilities. Comprehensive retail services attract consumers from southern Alberta, southeastern British Columbia and northern Montana.

Distinctly different from the at-home learning option to accommodate the pandemic context, the school division will be piloting an e-Learning Program for the 2021-22 school year. This program will span grades 1-12 and the on-line delivery will be facilitated by teachers using a synchronous structure. Elementary e-Learning will be part of the Dr. Robert Plaxton Elementary School community, middle school e-Learning will be part of Senator Joyce Fairbairn Middle School, and LCI will be the primary location for a selection of on-line high school courses.

All schools provide instruction in the core subjects (language arts, mathematics, social studies and science), physical education, and the fine arts. Students at each school have access to learning commons that provide a blend of print materials and access to state- of-the art computers and digital resources. French language instruction is offered in grades four through twelve and a French Immersion/French Bilingual program is available for students from kindergarten through Grade 12. A Spanish Bilingual program is in place at Coalbanks Elementary School. It currently spans Kindergarten to grade 4 and will continue to grow up to grade 5 with a grade added each year.

At the secondary level, students can experience a wide range of complementary courses or options designed to meet their unique needs and interests, including those related to career and technology studies. Information and communication technology instruction is integrated into all student programs. International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, Dual Credit, and Knowledge and Employability courses are also offered to high school students. The Division has an active International Student program involved in recruitment of students from around the world, mainly at the high school level.

Other instructional programs include kindergarten offered in all elementary schools, Indigenous (FNMI) education, and early literacy. Twenty Early Education Programs are offered in nine locations. A Montessori program is established in grades one to five. Lethbridge Christian School, Immanuel Christian Elementary School, and Immanuel Christian Secondary School provide Christian education as alternative schools for students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 as well as an early education program. The Division continues to enhance inclusive practices to provide all students with the most appropriate learning environments and opportunity to achieve their potential.

The instructional program is enhanced by the provision of counseling services in all schools including social/emotional, educational and career counseling. These services are enriched by long-standing,

community partnerships with the Lethbridge Regional Police Service, Alberta Health Services, Southwest Alberta Child and Family Services, Alberta Human Resources and Employment, and other agencies. Traditionally, strong co-curricular and extra-curricular programs include a variety of athletic, fine arts and student leadership opportunities flourish. Protocols and restrictions put in place to keep students safe has impacted the availability of these activities for students during the 2020-21 school year. The division is planning for a progressive transition to these activities the fall of 2021.

## **Assurance Framework**

This is the first year that Lethbridge School Division is structuring its planning and reporting using the Alberta Education Assurance Framework. It is a broader and more balanced approach to accountability with the goal of continual improvement and enhanced public assurance.

## **Guiding Principles for Assurance**

The guiding principles below describe the ideals that all education partners must embrace to ensure sound and consistent decision-making in all areas assurance is provided. Public assurance providers:

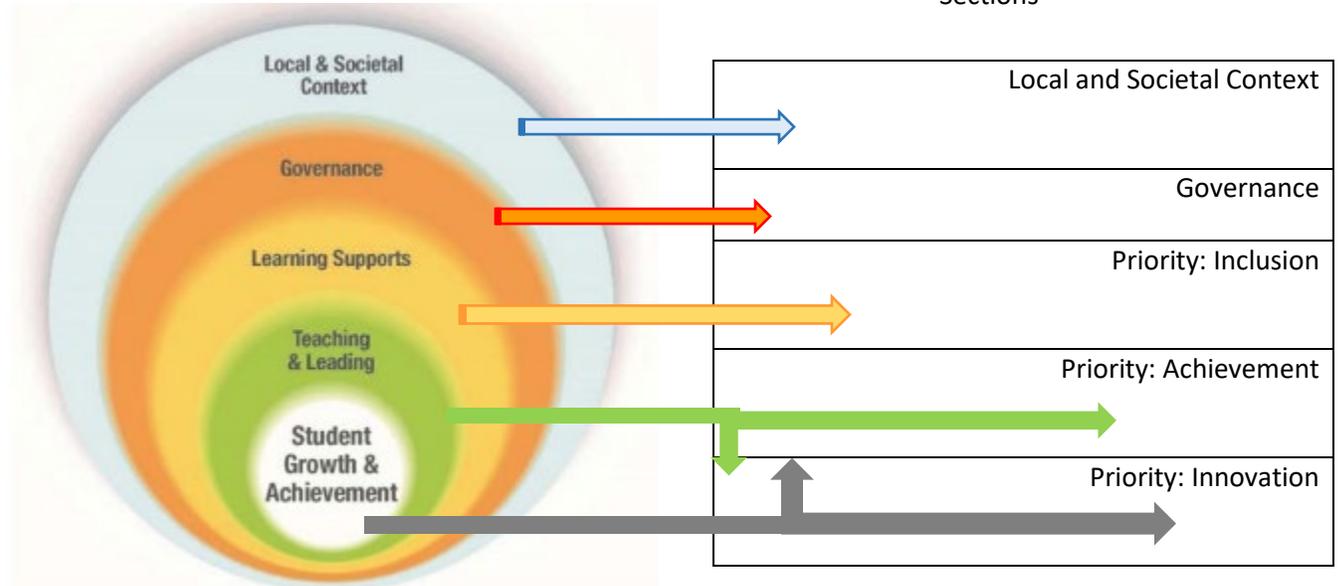
- Recognize that all education partners, each with unique contributions, share responsibility for student growth and achievement;
- Build professional capacity and a commitment to continuous improvement;
- Facilitate communication and the ongoing engagement of all education partners in respectful collaborative action;
- Engage regularly with education partners, across the spectrum of public engagement strategies (informing, consulting, involving, collaborating, and empowering);
- Acknowledge that communication must be a constant throughout the engagement process;
- Consistently use evidence from a variety of sources to ensure responsive and transparent decision-making;
- Reflect local and societal contexts, enabling innovative and flexible responses in classrooms, schools, school authorities and the government;
- Recognize the unique learning needs of students and foster equitable and inclusive learning environments;
- Commit to demonstrating fiscal responsibility and effective stewardship of resources in supporting system/student outcomes; and
- Provide a structure to ensure that what is measured and reported is consistent with the best interests of student growth and achievement, and the goals of education in the province of Alberta.

**Assurance Domains**

Lethbridge School Division Assurance Plan addresses the provincial assurance domains. The Local and Societal Context Domain and the Governance Domain are separate sections in this plan. The other three domains align with the division’s three priorities: Achievement, Inclusion, and Innovation. The alignment will be noted as part of the outcomes and strategies for each priority.

Provincial Assurance Domains

Lethbridge School Division Assurance Plan Sections



Relationship to Provincial Goals:

Alberta’s students are successful.	Yellow	Grey	White	White
First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students in Alberta are successful.	Yellow	Grey	White	White
Alberta has excellent teachers, school leaders, and school authority leaders.	Green	White	White	White
Alberta’s education system is well governed and managed.	Orange	Light Blue	White	White

**Ongoing Reporting of Measures**

This plan is part of a cyclical process that reflects on data on an ongoing basis. Measures and the “report locations” of the measures are identified in each Domain. Some measures are reported as part of the November Results Report annually while others are updated as data is available on the Division website using a Reporting Dashboard.

These performance measures allow the Division to review trends and continually look for improvements. The Dashboard allows an individual to click on the specific financial information within the dashboard and the report will be adjusted to focus into the selected information. This dashboard includes the following performance measures:

- **Accountability Pillar:** Performance measure on the instructional and operational activities of the Division, including student achievement, opportunities, involvement, and preparedness for their future.
- **Financial Ratios:** Performance measures on the some of the financial aspects of the Division, including Adjusted Accumulated Surplus, Liquidity ratios, and on our capital assets.
- **Student Surveys - Social-Emotional & Student Outcomes:** Performance measures on the Division's student survey measures, including specific measures on Social-Emotional Outcomes and the Drivers of Student Outcomes.
- **Student Demographics:** Performance measures on the student demographics, including the different types of funding classifications and groups.

## **Domain: Local and Societal Context**

This domain focuses on identifying and responding to the learning needs, interests, aspirations and diverse cultural, social and economic circumstances of all students. It is important for education partners to anticipate local and societal needs and circumstances and respond with flexibility and understanding.

### ***Educational Delivery in the Context of COVID***

It has been over a year since school divisions throughout the province have operated in the context of a pandemic. On July 21, 2020, the province announced that schools would return to operations in September guided by the Alberta Re-Entry Plan for Scenario One, near normal operations. Lethbridge School Division provided choice to parents for access to at-home learning or delivery of learning in-school. The division also provided for “pivot points” when parents could decide to change from one form of delivery to the other. The experience of the school division is that pivot points were a welcome opportunity for parents, but the opportunity for choice did prove somewhat challenging. Pivot points resulted in reconfigurations of classrooms and teaching assignments. Schools have been diligent throughout the year with the implementation of hygiene protocols and cohort configurations. This strict adherence to protocols did result in schools being safe places to work and learn with limited transmission of COVID-19 in schools. Schools were challenged, however, with fluctuating numbers of students and staff in quarantine primarily due to community transmission and classrooms subsequently quarantined because all members of a class cohort are considered close contacts. In spite of the challenges, staff engaged with both in school instruction and at-home delivery have continued to deliver quality instruction. Some students have continued to thrive as learners while others have found the fluctuating delivery and on-line delivery challenging. This Assurance Plan for the 2021-22 school year will be implemented in an uncertain context. Enrollment is uncertain given the number of students who did not remain registered and engaged with learning in Lethbridge School Division. The status of COVID-19 at the time of this plan remains uncertain for the fall. Planning for fall opening is progressing with the recognition that we may continue to be in a blended scenario where both at-school and at-home learning will need to be an option.

## **Programs**

### **English as a Second Language (ESL) and Limited Formal Schooling**

Lethbridge School Division continues to welcome English language learners (ELLs), including newcomer/refugee students, into our schools, although the numbers arriving have been impacted by the worldwide pandemic. In September 2019, we welcomed 151 students new to Canada, whereas September 2020 saw only 82 new arrivals.

Nevertheless, our overall ESL numbers have remained stable at 1252, and between September and May we added another 46 newcomers.

As in previous years, a significant number of students new to Canada have limited formal schooling. While newcomers at the elementary level with limited or interrupted schooling join inclusive classrooms with ESL support, students at middle school and high school join a Limited Formal Schooling (LFS) classroom for up to a year after their arrival. Students in LFS classrooms at Wilson and GS Lakie Middle

Schools and Winston Churchill High School focus on developing language proficiency, building literacy and numeracy skills, and adapting to the social, behavioural and educational norms of a typical Canadian classroom. Additionally, supports are provided for students who manifest behaviours associated with trauma. Teachers in LFS classrooms work closely with Settlement Workers in schools from Lethbridge Family Services, an ESL Student Support Worker, the ESL lead teacher, and the Director of Inclusive Education. Our division ESL lead teacher completes academic intake assessments for all students new to Canada and, together with the Director of Inclusive Education, makes decisions about appropriate placements and programming.

During intake assessments, the ESL Student Support Worker also meets with parents and students, to learn more about family make up and needs, and to gather important information on necessary supports and services to enable students to be successful in school.

This year we continue to support several refugee students with exceptional needs who require significant specialized assistance to function in the school environment. In addition to team support from an educational assistant, the division has provided special transportation, specialized technology/equipment, and access to the Low Incidence Team (teacher of the visually impaired and/or deaf and hard of hearing, and the Complex Communication Team).

Lethbridge School Division is fortunate to have such diversity within our schools. It provides opportunity to learn about and celebrate different cultures, and to contribute to the future of our diverse Lethbridge community. Structuring programs to meet the needs of ELLs provides students with the opportunity to develop language proficiency, gain skills and become successful, contributing citizens in our community.

### **Supporting Families**

Although the Division has always provided support to children and their families, the Pandemic has presented a growing need for more intensive supports, particularly with respect to assisting parents in accessing services in the community. The needs include assistance with accessing food banks, parenting workshops, and supported referrals and transportation to community agencies and government services. Our Student Engagement Consultant has spent extensive time in the 2021 year supporting students who have disengaged from their learning and we anticipate that some students will struggle with returning when face to face learning presents regularly.

In addition, there is an increased need to support parents as they navigate custodial arrangements resulting from divorce or separation. The Division has responded to these needs in several ways, through funding from Mental Health Capacity Building (MHCB), Human Services, Family and Community Support Services, City of Lethbridge, and Parent Link Centers. The Division's MHCB program focuses on prevention and serves all schools, MHCB workers provide universal programs to schools that support children, youth, and families and work with schools in the delivery of preventative programming. We are fortunate to have secured 4 family support workers (via Making Connections) who have really supported our families who have identified with vulnerabilities.

In 2019-2020 the Division established a "Diversity and Inclusion Parent Table". This Table was created recognizing the importance of parent voice and to support parents to connect with other parents in a positive way in this world that continues to present more complexity. A parent night was hosted early in September that provided time to connect and identify parent needs. As well Lethbridge School Division hosted a parent evening later in the school year featuring speaker Shelly Moore, a nationally recognized

education expert. In 2020-21 the DIPT released a survey to parents regarding the Pandemic that was informative as it shared many of the struggles our families are experiencing currently.

We look forward to continuing to support our families outside of the Pandemic and we recognize 6-12 months post-Pandemic will continue to present with challenges.

Anti-racism and anti-oppression work was identified as a necessity moving forward in our school division and this was reinforced by the DIPT survey administered. A multi-levelled/systematic approach has been articulated with the Diversity and Inclusion Table and the Administrative Teams. It is anticipated that an Administrators Committee for Anti-racism and anti-oppression will gather regularly to identify tasks and learning over the 2021-22 school year.

Careers and post-secondary support continue to be an important part of the work our schools do at the secondary level. As we move into the 2021 school year the Counselling Program and the Work Experience Program will work closely with high schools and outside agencies to support career resource development, develop annual time lines and streamline parent support for careers moving forward.

## **Health and Wellness**

The Division and their educational stakeholder partners have long recognized the need for a focus on the health and wellness of students and staff. The pandemic has added an additional level of challenge with many people in Lethbridge and showcased the importance of the wellness work we have done and continue to do in Lethbridge School Division. Decreasing levels of activity among youth, nutritional gaps, and increasing challenges with mental health continue to call for attention to programs and services that promote active living, healthy eating and positive social emotional connections. Guided by a Wellness Committee and Board direction, the Division has been meeting this challenge in multitude of ways. Nutrition Programs, Wellness Grants (Self-Regulation and movement), regular Health Champ meetings and teaming with school based Wellness Teams has developed a more holistic approach to wellness in our Division that recognize the wellness involves proactive and intervention planning.

Breakfast, lunch or healthy snack programs have been implemented in some schools for a number of years, made possible with the generous support of industry, business, service clubs, and volunteers. For the third year, the nutrition programs in some schools have expanded with the infusion of money for school nutrition programs by the province. Some challenges with providing food to students have been encountered due to the pandemic.

Staff wellness promotion continues to be identified as a need into the 2021 school year, in particular the stress experienced by families and online learning. The ATA Pandemic survey shared the ongoing struggles teachers encountered and we as a system need to support those professionals in need.

The Division continues to encourage “Staff Wellness Throw Downs” that support reflection and highlight the importance of self-care as well as role modelling for our students who also may struggle. Monthly, schools are encouraged to promote a “Division Wellness Theme” connected to active living, healthy eating or positive social emotional relationships. This endeavor is supported by school-based Health Champs. Some of the monthly themes include “getting outside”, “10,000 steps” and “water consumption”. Staff meetings at school sites have ongoing agenda items that include Wellness topics.

Wellness Grants have now been offered for 5 years and were created for schools to have greater accessibility and flexibility to financially support Wellness initiatives that enhance achievement. The Wellness Committee has elected to continue to offer Wellness Grants for the 2021-22 school year and focus the grants on outdoor learning and physical activity.

LSD received a grant from the Alberta Healthy School Community Wellness fund to further promote outdoor learning in our Middle Schools. Unfortunately, the Pandemic emerged, and we were unable to implement the plan that was developed. This funding supporting outdoor learning was rolled over to the 2020-21 school year and Lethbridge School Division was able to partner with Helen Schuler to provide a program to our Middle Schools “Think Outside”. There were several disruptions to this program with the Pandemic and we anticipate that we will continue to provide more training and learning opportunities with “Think Outside” in the new year as there are fewer restrictions.

We also were fortunate to pilot a short-term intervention program to support youth struggling with their mental health and has been created by AHS Children’s Mental Health and Addictions at Chinook this Spring. We anticipate that we will be able to continue to grow this program and offer it at other high school sites in the 2021-22 school year.

### **Inclusive Education**

Lethbridge School Division is committed to creating inclusive learning environments. Through a collaborative team approach, we work with families and community agencies towards success for each student. We focus on the development of a continuum of supports, services and programming options intended to address student needs across a variety of settings. Through responsive teaching and identified supports/strategies for individual students, we strive to meet the diverse learning needs of students within the context of the regular classroom. In consultation with parents, we may decide to offer specialized programming to students who require a different curricular focus or a more sheltered setting.

Inclusive learning experiences that ensure all students are successful require educational practices that are flexible and responsive to the strengths and needs of individual students (Alberta Education). To this end, division schools have been working for several years within the Response to Intervention (RTI) framework. More recently, we have developed a new process-oriented Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI2) framework with a focus on certain access for all students to the instruction and supports they require. Teachers use benchmark and formative assessments to inform their instruction for all students within the classroom. If students are not responding adequately to quality core instruction, they can access targeted small-group support, such as Levelled Literacy Intervention or reading strategy instruction, typically within the classroom setting. If regular progress monitoring identifies that students are still struggling, these students may need more individualized support.

### **Early Education Programming with the Public Education System**

Lethbridge School Division values and promotes the best possible start to a child’s learning journey by providing Early Childhood Services programming informed by current research in the field of early learning and development. We currently offer twenty Early Education Programs at nine different school sites supporting that are three and four-years old.

Early Education programs provide opportunity for enhanced growth at an early age when physical development, brain development, and social competencies respond best to targeted programming and intervention. Our programs are primarily designed for children with identified developmental challenges, but we offer spaces to the public on a fee-paying basis, as available, for other children.

Recent changes in provincial mandates, requirements and funding relating to Early Childhood Services (ECS) have had some implications for programming. Program Unity Funding (PUF) now includes children that require support for severe developmental delays, with a new category for children that require supports for moderate language delays. Changes within Alberta Health Services mandates have impacted service delivery as well as assessment access and program referrals for young children. The division has had to take on most assessment responsibility and as a result of the pandemic, has moved to a virtual platform for screening new children entering early education programs. For effective use of resources, we have consolidated locations of programs and we no longer provide support in private preschool programs within the community,

With belief that strong brain foundations are critical to support future learning and life success, Lethbridge School Division has partnered with University of Lethbridge neuroscientists in implementing activities that improve executive functioning in young children within our Early Education Program across the division. Increased emphasis on executive functioning development during the current pandemic should provide children with increased resilience when facing present and future challenges.

### **Curriculum Development and Assessment**

As a Division, we embrace professional learning that emphasizes quality teaching and best practices with sustained focus on the needs of contemporary learners that align with the integration of learning competencies throughout the curriculum.

With a continued Division vision that focuses on the development of “innovative thinkers,” Lethbridge School Division continues to focus on instructional strategies that promote culture of critical thinking. Intent on building a pedagogy grounded in process-based learning, the goal is to develop learner competencies associated with creative thinking, innovation, and collaboration.

### **Technology**

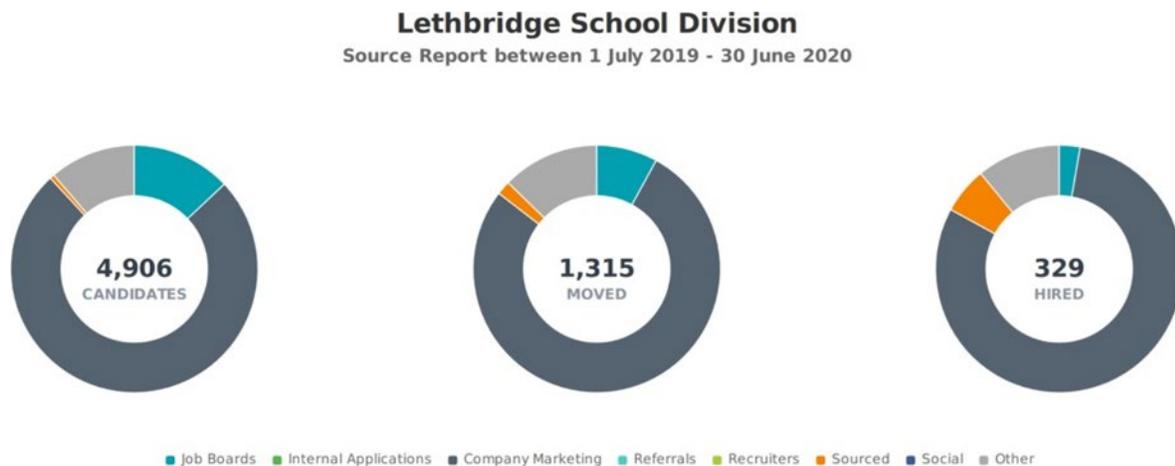
The need for technology infusion in education is no longer a want but a need in today’s society. The global pandemic displayed how technology can be leveraged to support and enhance the teaching and learning process. We have shifted the way students connect with staff, submit assignments, and interact with one another. Technology has become a staple for learning and an integral part of the education environment.

Digital citizenship is critical in today’s educational settings. Digital citizenship plays a vital role in preparing students to engage responsibly and ethically. A focus on digital citizenship will allow students and staff to use technology in critical, discerning, and innovative ways to create new knowledge and understanding.

## Growth and Staff Demographics

The 2020-21 school year has required the 1,111 contracted employees in Lethbridge School Division to be highly flexible and adaptable to ensure high levels of learning for our 11,400 pre-K to grade 12 students. From a staff deployment perspective, the division had to redistribute teachers to accommodate both in-person and at-home learning for students this school year. Currently 53 FTE teachers are supporting approximately 11% of the student population in at-home learning. Over the course of the school year the Division provided two pivot points, where students had the option to move from in-person to at-home learning or vice-versa. Approximately 450 students requested changes at these designated pivot points.

The recruitment, retention and development of high-quality staff continues to be a key component in the Division's strategic human resource plan and is critical to our progress in all goal areas, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Innovative solutions such as digital job offers, electronic signatures and video interviews to augment candidate resumes, have helped the Division maintain robust candidate pools during the pandemic. Data indicates that almost 5000 applications were received in the Division from July 2019 -June 2020 (which resulted in 329 hires). The ability to recruit new staff combined with the deep commitment of our existing staff has allowed the Division to provide exceptional learning for our students, even during times of great change and uncertainty.



## Domain: Governance

This domain focuses on governing leaders attending to local and societal context; determining strategic direction; evaluating policy implementation; and managing fiscal resources to ensure learning supports, quality teaching and leading and optimum learning for all.

OUTCOMES	
Governors engage students and their families, staff and community members in the creation and ongoing implementation of a shared vision for student success.	
Legislation, policy and regulation provides clarity regarding the roles and responsibilities of education partners in matters of governance.	
Fiscal resources are allocated and managed in the interests of ensuring student success, in alignment with system goals and priorities and in accordance with all statutory, regulatory and disclosure requirements.	
Curriculum is clearly articulated and implemented in a relevant and meaningful manner.	
Governors employ a cycle of evidence-based continuous improvement to inform ongoing planning and priority setting, and to build capacity.	
MEASURES	
	Report Location
Assurance Survey measure of Parent Involvement.	Assurance Dashboard
Budget reporting for 2020/2021 provides the amount budgeted, the amount spent and the variance between these amounts for operational expense categories.	Financial Reports/ AFS/ Budget Financial Assurance Dashboard
Number of stakeholders involved in engagement activities such as feedback loops, community meetings, and participation on Board committees.	November Results Report
STRATEGIES	
<p>Engagement of stakeholders to develop priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Town Hall held February each year. Stakeholders, including parents, students, staff, and community members engage in providing perspective and feedback to the Board centered on a topic considered most relevant for the development of the Assurance Plan. Thematic results are posted on the website for further feedback and Board reviews the results as part of planning process.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for stakeholders to be involved in feedback loops. Feedback opportunities include boundary reviews, budgeting, and policy.</li> <li>• Inclusion and Diversity Committee. Engage different minority populations in feedback about experience with schools.</li> <li>• Board Community Engagement Committee structured to provide feedback regarding communication strategies and plan for events such as the ICE Scholarship Breakfast.</li> </ul>	

Collaboration with other school authorities, municipalities and community agencies

- Joint City of Lethbridge/ School Division Committee meets four times a year to explore common items including joint use of facilities agreement, grounds and playgrounds, safety, and programs.
- Zone 6 meetings with all jurisdictions, including Kainai, to explore best practice with Indigenous education delivery, professional learning, and shared services.
- CWSS Advisory Committee membership that focuses on community wellbeing and safety.
- Ongoing communication and collaboration with Holy Spirit Catholic School Division.
- Collaborative partnerships across agencies for service delivery to children and families including.
- Partnerships with the University of Lethbridge for professional learning, and the University of Lethbridge and Lethbridge College for dual credit programming.

Processes for ongoing sharing of progress and results

- Assurance Dashboard on the Division website will provide updated information regarding provincial testing, Assurance survey results, and other measures gathered and reported by the province. It will also provide updated information from the “Our School” surveys measuring domains associated with student engagement, health and wellness.
- Ongoing system of communication to keep staff and families informed of changes and response to COVID-19 scenarios and protocols, including ongoing updates to the COVID-19 Parent Re-entry Guide.

School Councils

- All schools ensure that School Council are formed in accordance with the provincial School Council Regulation. Board members are assigned as liaisons with the different schools and regularly attend School Council meetings providing a Board report.
- Board hosts a monthly Division School Council meeting with representatives from the different School Councils in attendance. The Division School Council has sessions prior to meetings regarding different programs and services, budget, planning, reporting, and any issues of concern they wish to explore.

Risk Management

- Develop an Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) framework which includes an ERM policy, ERM procedure and ERM assessment of risk matrix.

**Domain: Student Growth and Achievement**

Division Priority: Achievement and Innovation

<b>OUTCOMES</b>	
1. Students achieve prescribed provincial learning outcomes, demonstrating strengths in literacy and numeracy.	
2. Students apply knowledge, understanding and skills in real life contexts and situations.	
3. Students advance reconciliation by acquiring and applying foundational knowledge of First Nations, Métis and Inuit experiences. The school community applies the resources needed to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement.	
4. Students are active, healthy and well.	
5. Students demonstrate understanding and respect for the uniqueness of all learners.	
6. Students use ongoing assessment feedback to reflect continuously on their progress, identify strengths and areas of need and set new learning goals.	
<b>MEASURES</b>	
	Report Location
Outcome 1: Provincial Achievement Test results (all students) <i>Required</i>	Assurance Dashboard
Outcome 1: Provincial Diploma Exam results (all students) <i>Required</i>	Assurance Dashboard
Outcome 1: High School Completion results (all students) <i>Required</i>	Assurance Dashboard
Outcome 1: Data trends from Fountas & Pinnell (literacy scores grades 1-5)	November Results Report
Outcome 1: Create baseline with first year of MIPI data.	November Results Report
Outcome 2: Number of students involved in Work Experience & RAP	November Results Report
Outcome 2: Meeting the outcomes as delineated in the Technology Work Plan	Technology Work Plan
Outcome 2: Hardware evergreening	Technology Work Plan
Outcome 3: Provincial Achievement Test results (Indigenous student outcomes) <i>Required</i>	November Results Report
Outcome 3: Provincial Diploma Exam results (Indigenous student outcomes) <i>Required</i>	November Results Report
Outcome 3: High School Completion results (Indigenous student outcomes) <i>Required</i>	November Results Report
Outcome 4: Yearly Health Champ data on overall school wellness for staff and students	November Results Report
Outcome 4: Number of students participating in Nutrition Programs	November Results Report
Outcome 5: Provincial Assurance Survey measures of Citizenship <i>Required</i>	Assurance Dashboard
Outcome 6: Provincial Assurance Survey measure of Academic Engagement* <i>Required</i>	Assurance Dashboard

## Outcome 1 Strategies

Students achieve prescribed provincial learning outcomes, demonstrating strengths in literacy and numeracy.

### Strength in Literacy

- Continue to facilitate Division Elementary and Middle School Literacy Steering Committees to guide implementation of strategies and resources that improve literacy.
- Provide support to elementary schools to use Units of Study for Reading and Writing Workshop (Lucy Calkins).
- Provide support to use disciplinary literacy practices in content areas across all grade levels.
- Provide support to use comprehensive literacy practices including using assessment data (i.e., Fountas and Pinnell, Narrative Writing Continuum, ongoing teacher collection of evidence).
- Access Division specialists to support universal strategies and build capacity among staff (i.e., ELL/Literacy Lead Teacher, Speech Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist).
- Use Fountas and Pinnell assessment at middle school to inform teacher instruction.
- Support teachers to utilize benchmarks and analyze data to guide instruction with ELL Learners.
- Review the Comprehensive Literacy Framework.

### Strength in Numeracy

- Create and implement a new 2021-2024 Numeracy Work Plan.
- Continue to facilitate Division Elementary and Secondary School Numeracy Steering Committees to guide implementation of strategies and resources that improve numeracy.
- Use assessment data to inform instruction (i.e., MIPI, Foundational Skills Interview, ongoing teacher collection of evidence).
- Provide ongoing professional learning to support the purchase of new division-wide fact fluency resource (i.e., Building Fact Fluency: A Toolkit for Addition and Subtraction).
- Provide support in using the Guide to Effective Mathematics Instructional Practices.
- Create a division Numeracy Framework.

## Outcome 2 Strategies

Students apply knowledge, understanding and skills in real life contexts and situations.

### Learning Competencies Focus

- Support staff in the implementation of the learning competencies outlined in the curriculum that develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes for successful learning, living and working: critical thinking, communication, problem solving, collaboration, managing information, cultural and global citizenship, creativity and innovation, personal growth and well-being.

### High School Re-design Focus

- High schools implement strategies in both e-learning and in-school learning that align with the following principles: flexible learning environments, personalization of learning, rigorous and relevant curriculum, assessment, meaningful relationships.

**Experiential Learning Focus**

- Where possible and when safe to do so, continue to establish purposeful connections with business and industry to further student experience with real-world learning both in and out of the classroom: e.g. CTF and CTS programming, CALM, Health, off-campus, Careers Transitions events, and volunteerism (course credit as avenue for employment considerations).
- Where possible and when safe to do so, support student-driven off-campus experiential learning opportunities, such as Work Experience, to reflect the vision that off-campus opportunities are an integral part of exploring potential career pathways for all students.
- Facilitate a bi-monthly meeting with Work Experience, Counselling, Student Engagement and Indigenous Education Personnel to ensure efficiency of resources and refine focus with respect to transition for all students
- Refine the seamless integration of the online career planning program, My Blueprints, across middle school health curriculum and high school CALM. Begin planning for implementation of My Blueprints at the elementary level.
- Reflect on the culture of isolated access to program opportunities at different schools (eg. Cosmetology/ Auto-body) to expanded opportunities for all students across campuses.
- Examine the gap in supporting career and post-secondary opportunities and develop a plan to address the gap.
- Work with the University of Lethbridge and Lethbridge College to develop structures that support the continuation of dual credit opportunities.

**Transition Focus**

- Explore the why with stakeholders (Learning Support Teachers, Administrators, and Wellness Teams). Develop a philosophy to support meaningful transitions to ensure all participants across schools have shared understanding.
- Review and refine the Articulation and Transition Guide and supporting documents to ensure that practice is continuing to support student needs.
- Provide a feedback mechanism to allow for student and parent perspective to be heard.

**Transition Focus**

- Plan for Scenario 2 transition to learning for fall 2021.
  - Provide choice of in-school and at-home learning for the first quarter for elementary and middle school and first semester for high school.
  - Continue to build capacity of staff, students, and parents who choose at-home learning to effectively use Teams as an interactive platform.
  - Continue to structure in-school learning with a cohort model that minimizes COVID transmission and quarantine impact.
  - Continue with all health protocols in the school buildings.
  - Plan for transition to after-school programs that allow for additional cohorts within the school population.

**Innovation Focus**

- Implement an e-learning pilot project for students who choose to pursue learning using an online delivery platform.
  - A project that is *not* a response to COVID-19, students will engage with e-learning as part of a school community and assigned teacher.

- E-learning will engage students in full-time synchronous learning environments.

### **Innovation Focus**

- Build common understanding of the meaning of student success and language for innovation, creativity, and critical thinking.
  - Establish a division definition of innovation and language for common understanding of innovation, creativity and critical thinking.
  - Professional learning to build division-wide common understanding for innovation, creativity and critical thinking.
- Build common understanding of effective instructional practices that foster innovation, creativity, and critical thinking in all classrooms.
  - Division professional learning that supports concept-based teaching and learning and thinking classrooms.
- Build teacher capacity using digital platforms and sound pedagogy
  - Elementary and middle schools use concept-based pedagogy to build understanding, increase efficacy, provide time for safe exploration, and increase understanding of innovation, creativity, and critical thinking. High schools will move forward with reinforcing concept-based teaching and learning across subject disciplines.
  - Promote and celebrate engaging learning opportunities that support creative and innovative thinking.
  - Facilitate the use of virtual reality headsets to enhance student engagement and learning.
  - Provide educational technology support to teachers in a targeted manner that meets their individual needs.
- Develop and implement strategies that build teacher and leader capacity to use technology in a seamless manner that supports student learning.
  - Review the Division Educational Technology Work Plan.
  - Utilize site-based representatives from schools to inform and enhance practice at the school level.
  - Research new innovative strategies for the implementation of software that enhance instructional capacity.
  - Support various online tools that enhance the delivery of classroom instruction as well as at home learning.
  - Provide access to professional learning that builds awareness of available technology.
  - Continue to implement the curriculum outcomes and resources regarding digital citizenship.
  - Educate staff on digital safety awareness and practice.
  - Promote awareness of the Alberta Education’s Learning and Technology framework to help build the capacity of system leaders.
- Develop and implement strategies to support the Digital Literacy of Parents.
  - Provide resources and learning opportunities to support parents with digital literacy.
  - Create a checklist that outlines school, student, and parental responsibility as shared responsibility/expectations for digital learning.

### **Outcome 3 Strategies**

Students advance reconciliation by acquiring and applying foundational knowledge of First Nations, Métis and Inuit experiences. The school community applies the resources needed to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement.

### **Indigenous Student Achievement Focus**

- Implementation of the Indigenous strategic plan that emphasizes targeted, personalized supports to promote Indigenous student success including:
  - Supporting Indigenous students on their path to graduation by providing graduation coaches at each high school that work directly with Indigenous students and families.
  - Reengaging Indigenous students that have become disengaged through the work of our Student Engagement consultant (monitor engagement rates of our Indigenous student population).
  - Supporting teachers in sharing and using strategies that celebrate Indigenous culture and promote Indigenous Ways of Knowing in the classroom. These supports are developmentally tailored.
- Monitor provincial data i.e. graduation rates, achievement and diploma results

#### **Indigenous Foundational Knowledge and Learning of Indigenous World View Focus**

- Support school based-personnel in identifying aspects of their professional practice (anchored in TQS 5) that are influenced by Indigenous Ways of Knowing to provide entry points for expanding understanding of Indigenous perspectives and their impact on our lives. Specific emphasis will be placed on the following entry points:
  - Connections between individuals. Indigenous communities emphasize strong connections between individuals. By supporting school-based personnel to identify actions they take in their professional practice that emphasize connections between individuals, we are providing an entry point to greater understanding of Indigenous perspectives and how they influence our lives.
  - Connections with nature. Indigenous perspectives are deeply rooted in emphasizing connection with nature. By supporting school-based personnel to identify actions they take in their professional practice to create connections with nature we are providing an entry point to greater understanding of Indigenous perspectives and how they influence our lives. (e.g. “Think Outside” Middle School project).
- Support school-based personnel in expanding their ability to incorporate the Blackfoot language as an entry point for learning activities.
- Connections with language – The deep linguistic tradition of the Blackfoot people in Southern Alberta provides an exceptional foundation for student learning. By supporting school-based personnel to identify opportunities to use the Blackfoot language in their professional practice we can create an entry point to greater understanding of Indigenous perspectives.
- Embark upon anti-racism work system wide and support in our schools i.e. Policy, PL and facilitate time to reflect upon perspectives

### **Outcome 4 Strategies**

Students are active, healthy and well

**The vision and implementation of the Instructional Services work plan focuses on Wellness for “All.”**

- The Wellness and Poverty Committees align efforts to reinforce and further build community partnerships that enhance the lives of students, staff, and families. Examine the streamlining and re-focusing of committee work to ensure alignment (may consider combining committees).
- Develop a District Wellness Work Plan
  - Ensure the Wellness Work Plan considers the role of support services (e.g. counsellors, liaisons, Making Connections, teachers, health champs, and administrators) in contributing to, and aligning with, the overall wellness plan.
  - Examine the relationship of wellness to nature, movement, connection and activity space in schools as part of the wellness plan (focuses include Indigenous world view, outdoor education, outdoor maker spaces).
  - Ensure the wellness plan examines the unique needs of high school students with respect to engagement and health
  - Build a common language and understandings relative to anxiety, trauma and stress among staff, students, parents and community partners as we return from COVID-19
  - Continue to look for creative ways to build the capacity of teachers and administrators around Trauma Informed Practices
  - Focus Wellness grant applications on building school capacity around self-regulation, staff wellness
  - Consider the provincial context regarding “nutrition grant” funding and support schools in developing strategies for sustainable food programs at the school level.
- Build and promote a culture of safety in schools with the progressive implementation of a comprehensive Occupational Health and Safety program
- Distribute resources and engage staff in the on-line PSW course that ensures staff continue to be knowledgeable about COVID-19 and the protocols put in place for safety.

**Outcome 5 Strategies**

Students demonstrate understanding and respect for the uniqueness of all learners.

**Focus on understanding and respect for the uniqueness of all learners**

- Initiate an Anti-racism and Anti-Oppression Committee with the mandate to: explore systems, professional learning, student learning and facilitate opportunities to reflect on perspectives through connection and experiences.
- Positive Spaces Committee with the mandate to: continue to work with schools regarding supporting all staff and students with understanding Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sexual Orientation.
- Support schools to visually represent their school communities in authentic ways.
- Diversity and Inclusion Parent Table.
- Continue providing opportunities for professional learning targeting Universal Design for Learning.
- Host a “Diversity and Inclusion Student Showcase” in the Fall of 2021 or Spring of 2022 that celebrates student diversity in our school division (Pandemic pending)

- Assess availability of flexible learning spaces in our buildings where all students can thrive and feel safe

### **Outcome 6 Strategies**

Students use ongoing assessment feedback

- Focus on process-based pedagogy that includes student reflective practice.
- Furthering of inquiry based learning that includes student reflective practice.

## Domain: Teaching and Leading

Division Priority: Achievement and Innovation

<b>OUTCOMES</b>	
1. Teachers and leaders respond with skill and competence to the unique learning needs, interests and cultural, social and economic circumstances of all.	
2. Teachers and leaders improve their professional practice through collaborative engagement in processes of growth, supervision and evaluation.	
3. Collaboration amongst teachers, leaders, students and their families, and other professionals enables optimum learning.	
4. Professional learning programs prepare teachers and leaders to meet the standards for professional practice.	
5. Teachers and leaders use a range of data arising from their practice to inform cycles of evidence based continuous learning.	
<b>MEASURES</b>	
	Report Location
Survey Measure of Educational Quality <i>Required</i>	Assurance Dashboard
<b>Outcome 1 Strategies</b>	
Unique Learning Needs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous Education Teaching Team will work closely with classroom teachers to build their capacity in place-based learning and Indigenous Ways of Knowing.</li> <li>• Develop a recruitment and retention strategy for Indigenous Education staff.</li> <li>• Provide support for the transition to a single-track French Immersion school at the elementary level including professional learning, resourcing, and work with a consultant to establish vision and culture.</li> <li>• Initiate an Anti-racism and Anti-Oppression Committee (See Outcome 5 Student Achievement and Growth Domain).</li> <li>• Positive Spaces Committee (See Outcome 5 Student Achievement and Growth Domain).</li> <li>• Continue providing opportunities for professional learning targeting Universal Design for Learning.</li> <li>• Focus on building teacher capacity for use of assessment to inform instruction.</li> </ul>	
<b>Outcome 2 Strategies</b>	
Collaborative Engagement Growth Supervision and Evaluation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to engage staff in <b>inquiry based professional learning</b> as part of the personal professional growth planning process.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Administrators continue to refine skills in the process of generative dialogue using a lateral school administration pairing of teams.</li> <li>○ Continue to refine processes with site structural flexibility for engaging teachers and support staff in inquiry based professional growth.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

- Inquiry based professional learning for staff will be grounded in reflection of provincial standards (teachers and leaders) or responsibilities specific to the employee's role (support staff).
- Support Division Collaborative Communities as an integral structure for building instructional capacity and professionalization. Structure collaborative groups of teachers to work in the delivery of programs that may include e-learning, on-line at-home learning, or unique programs that meet student needs.

### Outcome 3 Strategies

#### Collaboration for Optimal Student Learning

- Collaborative partnerships across agencies for service delivery to children and families including: South-West Collaborative Support Services (SWCSS), Family Supports for Children with Disabilities (FSCD), Children's Allied Health, Lethbridge Family Services-Immigrant Services, Child and Family Services (CFS), the Family Centre, South Alberta FASD Network, FASD Assessment and Diagnostic Clinic, Southern Alberta Ethnic Association, Lethbridge Local Immigration Partnership (LIP), Key Connections Consulting (KCC), Family Ties, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys and Girls Club, Alberta Health Services- First Steps and Mental Health Capacity Building, Parents as Teachers, McMann.

Opportunities for engagement and education for families in the Early Education Program, learning sessions through Division School Council, and engagement at the school level.

### Outcome 4 Strategies

#### Professional Learning

- Literacy
  - Professional learning that targets the development of a deep understanding of pedagogy that develops literacy
  - The ELL/ Literacy Lead Teacher supports the development and implementation of strategies that support English Language Learners including building pedagogical practices of teachers.
  - Facilitate work among teachers that builds lateral capacity for examining curriculum and pedagogy.
  - Support teachers in learning instructional and assessment (formative and summative) strategies that effectively build foundations in literacy and numeracy.
- Numeracy
  - Professional learning that targets the development of a deep understanding of pedagogy that develops numeracy.
  - Numeracy Lead Teacher supports instructional pedagogy in grades 1-9.
  - Build teacher capacity with numeracy pedagogy focusing on procedural fluency, flexibility and conceptual understanding through lead teacher support in schools, use of division-wide resources, and ongoing professional learning.
- Concept Based Instruction

- Continue to build capacity in teachers and administrators in concept-based instruction through workshops, book studies, and the Administrator Symposium.
  - Create in the Division/schools/classrooms cultures of thinking by building teacher competency in Universal Design for Learning (UDL), RTI2 and assessment to improve instructional practice.
  - Examine, apply and implement the development of reporting strategies and processes to reflect current pedagogy.
  - Continue to provide Collaborative Communities as a structure for teacher-created and teacher-chosen professional learning.
  - Continue to provide structures and opportunities for administrators and teachers to participate in the Generative Dialogue process.
  - Leadership
    - Continue to reflect on and structure the Administrator Mentorship Program using the Leadership Quality Standard to drive content and further develop ongoing contextual support as part of the program.
    - Build the capacity of system leaders with a professional learning plan developed by the Administrator PL Committee that supports learning across the Division priorities and the Leadership Quality Standard.
  - Continue to reflect on and implement the Teacher Induction Program (TIP) according to the new Teaching Quality Standard, and further develop on-site support of mentors and administrators as part of the program.
- Continue to implement targeted professional learning for support staff.

## **Outcome 5 Strategies**

### Use of Data

- Use of student assessment data by teachers to inform instruction with a focus on use of MIPI and Fountas & Pinnell assessments.
- Continual cycle of reflection using data from: Assurance surveys, Town Hall, parent and community feedback loops, provincial assessments, Our School survey.

## Domain: Learning Supports

Division Priority: Inclusion

<b>OUTCOMES</b>	
1. Learning environments are welcoming, caring, respectful and safe.	
2. Learning environments are adapted as necessary to meet learner needs, emphasizing a sense of belonging and high expectations for all.	
3. Education partners fulfil their respective roles with a shared understanding of an inclusive education system.	
4. Students and their families work in collaboration with education partners to support learning.	
5. Cross-ministry initiatives and wraparound services enhance conditions required for optimal learning.	
6. Infrastructure (e.g., technology and transportation services) supports learning and meets the needs of Alberta students and their families, staff and communities.	
<b>MEASURES</b>	
	Report Location
Outcome 1: Survey measure of Safe & Caring <i>Required</i>	Assurance Dashboard
Outcome 1: Our Schools survey measures associated with safe and caring schools	Assurance Dashboard
Outcome 2: Our Schools survey measures associated with belonging and expectations	Assurance Dashboard
Outcome 3: Survey measure of Student Inclusion <i>Required</i>	Assurance Dashboard
Outcomes 3 and 4: Survey measure of Access to Supports & Services <i>Required</i>	Assurance Dashboard
<b>Outcome 1 Strategies</b> Strategies pertaining to welcoming, caring, respectful and safe school delineated in the Student Growth and Achievement Domain – Outcome 4 (Healthy and Well).	
<b>Outcome 2 Strategies</b> Adaptation of learning environment to meet learner needs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on planning, instruction and learning through the lens of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) with high expectations for all learners.</li> <li>• Build on the shared understanding that the Programs of Study are the starting point for all students’ learning.</li> <li>• Further develop the Learning Support Teacher’s role in supporting assessment and instruction in the classroom.</li> <li>• Through professional learning opportunities and elbow-to-elbow support, continue to build responsive assessment and instructional practices through a UDL lens to meet the learning needs of all students.</li> <li>• Provide collaborative professional support (SLP, OT, PT, Learning Support Teacher, psychologist) for teachers in the classroom to help remove barriers to learning.</li> </ul>	

### **Outcomes 3 and 4 Strategies**

Shared understanding of inclusive education and collaborative partnerships to support learning.

- Continue to support the implementation of the RTI2 framework, as articulated by Alberta Education with a focus on classroom instruction.
- Continue to build an understanding of the roles of division specialists and other professionals in removing barriers to learning by supporting universal, targeted, and individualized strategies within the learning environment.
- Support ongoing use of learning support plans (Instructional Support Plan, Behavior Support Plan, ESL Benchmarks) as authentic means of supporting students, informing instruction and intervention, engaging parents in the planning process, and communicating progress.
- Access low-incidence supports such as Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired through shared regional initiative, Southwest Collaborative Support Services.

### **Outcome 5 Strategies**

Focus on Cross Ministry Initiatives

- Participate in Southwest Collaborative Supports Services (SWCSS) with representatives from Education, Health, Community and Social Services, and Children's Services to ensure wraparound supports for children, youth and families in local community.
- Through SWCSS, Partner with Alberta health Services Complex Communication Team to access specialty AAC service when appropriate.
- Participate in Complex Case Consultation with representatives from Education, Health, Community and Social Services, and Children's Service to share expertise and problem solve around supports for children and youth with complex needs that significantly impact learning.
- Continue to work collaboratively with Lethbridge Family Services- Immigrant Services to welcome newcomers/refugee students into our schools, provide appropriate programming and supports, and remove barriers faced by families that impede students' access to learning.

### **Outcome 6 Strategies**

Focus on management of growth and capacity building to support learning spaces and the provision of programs

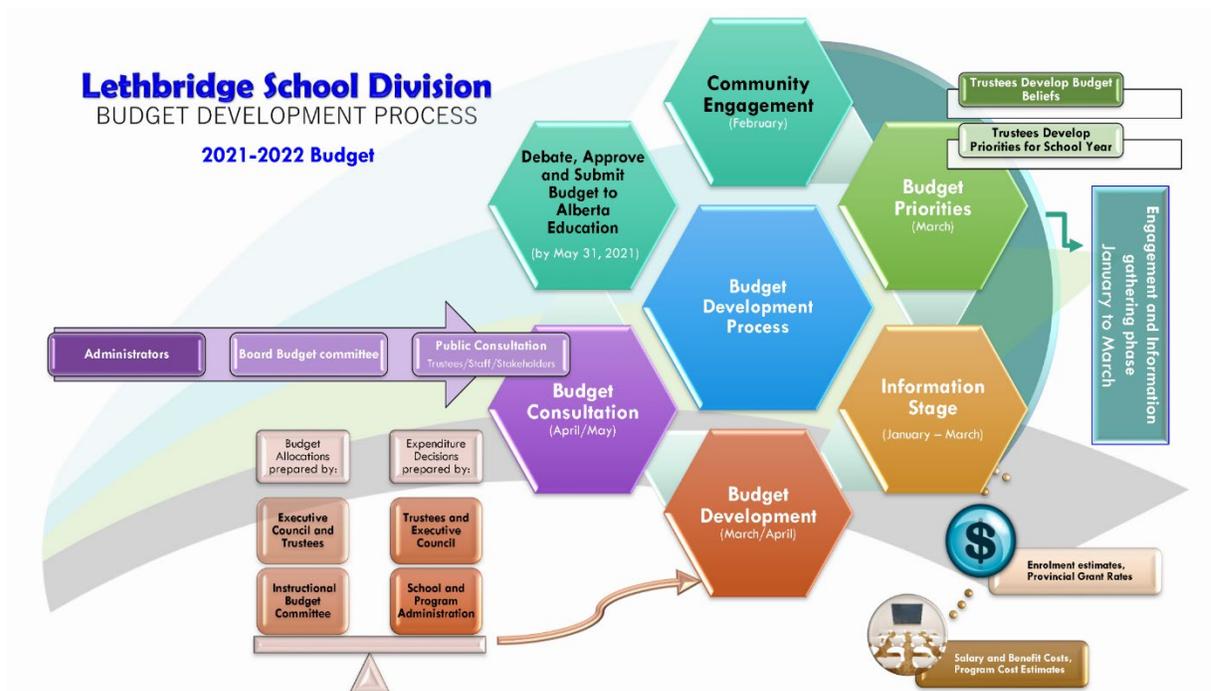
- Monitor impact of boundary changes for any unintended consequences.
- Monitor new bus routes and service provider for any changes that need to be made to ensure student ride times are appropriate and the new transportation\_system is efficient and effective.
- Develop a process to provide administrator involvement in the planning process for IMR/CMR projects.
- Plan facility upgrade projects with accessibility and student physical environment in mind to support inclusive practices.

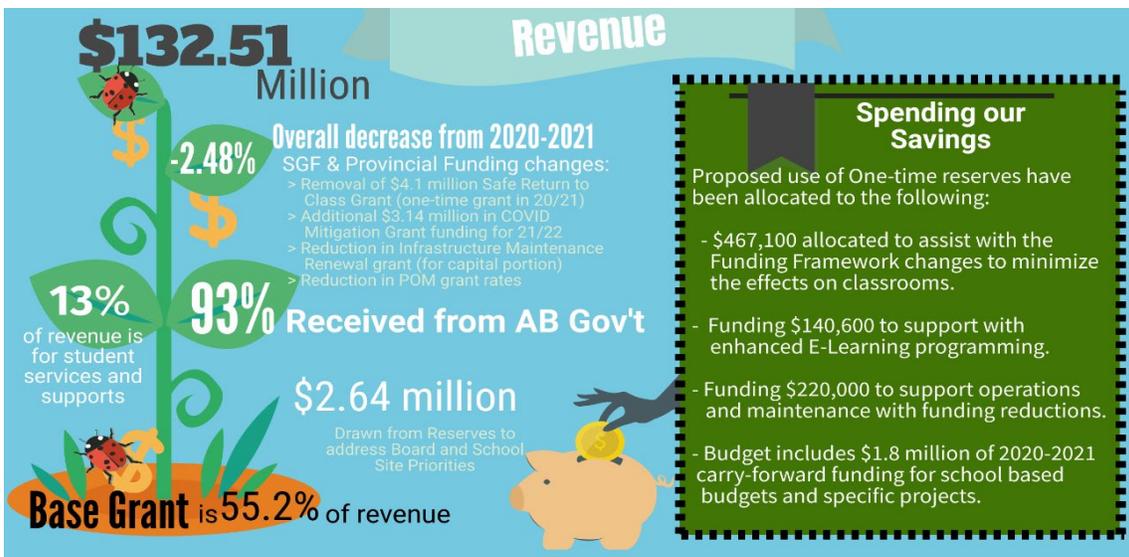
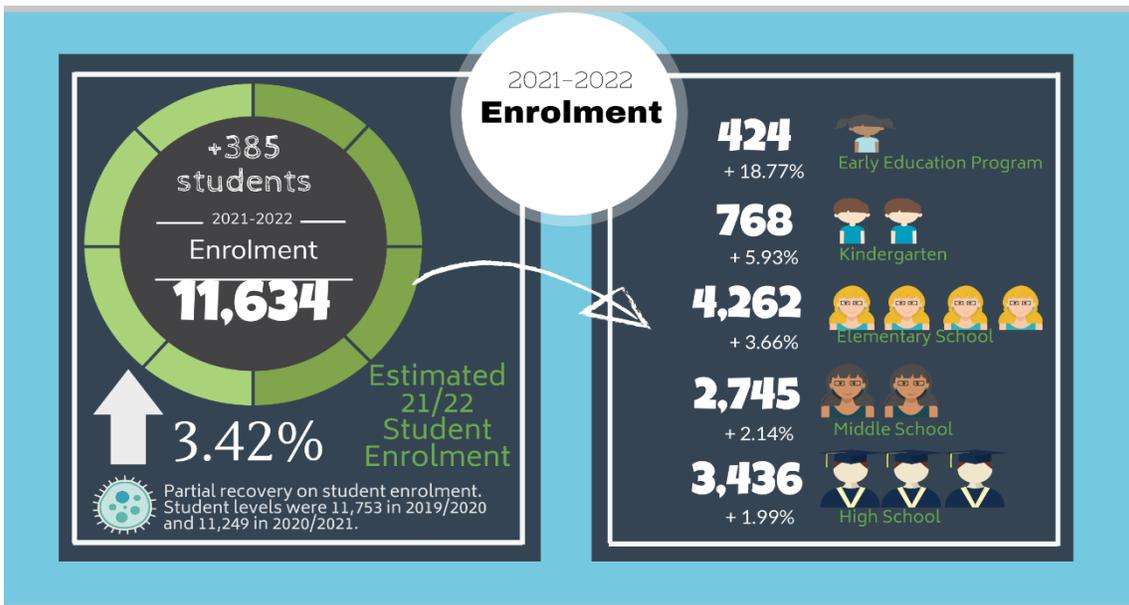
## Lethbridge School Division 2021-2022 Preliminary Budget

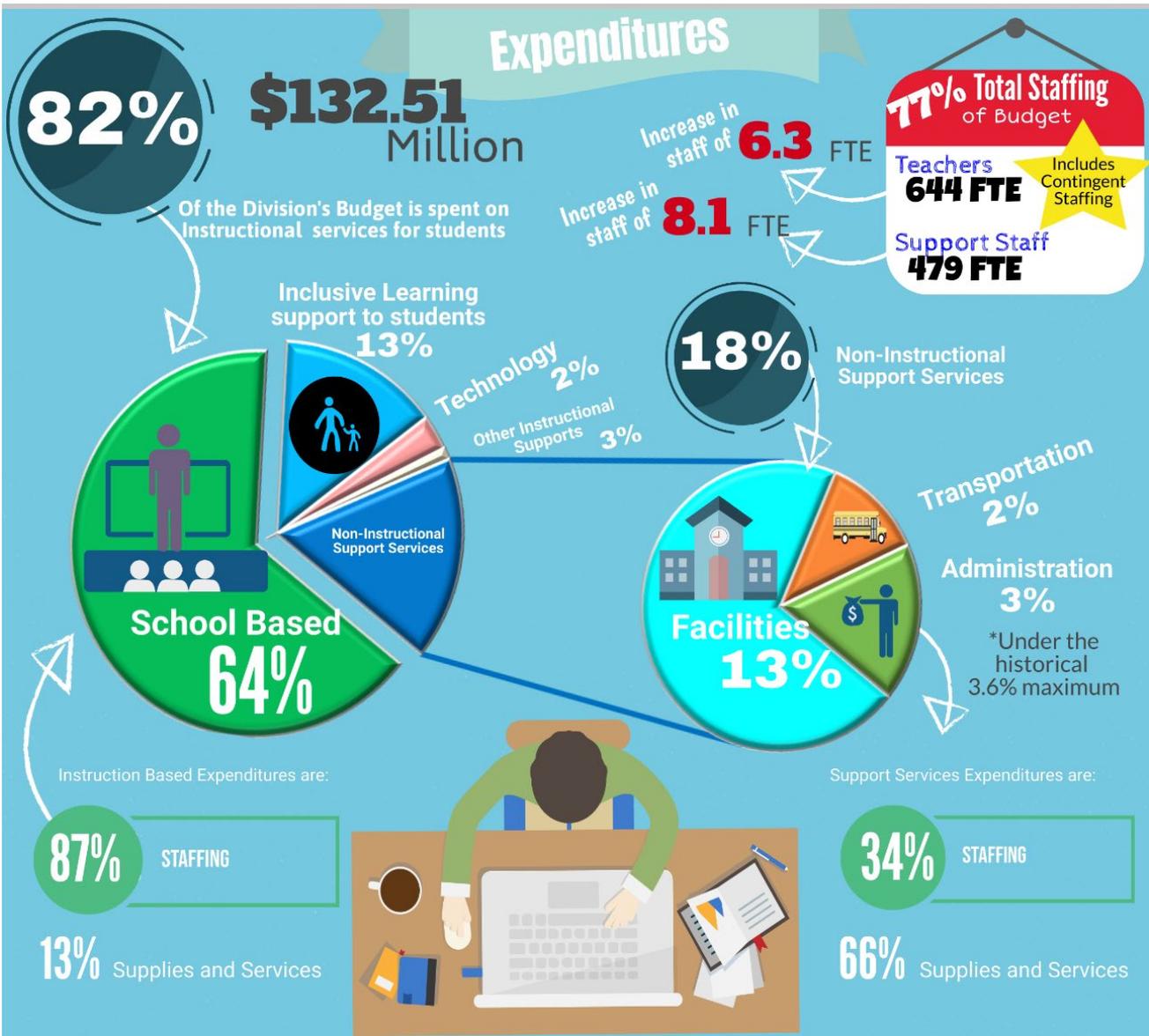
### Board of Trustees Belief Statements for Preparation of the 2021-2022 Budget

Lethbridge School Division is primarily funded by Alberta Education. The Board is legally obligated to create and approve the annual division budget and to fiscally manage the Division's funds in a responsible manner, ensuring that the educational needs of students are met within a balanced budget, as required by the Education Act.

- The Board believes the Budget should be developed in the best interests of all students.
- The Board believes in a budget process that is open and transparent.
- The Board believes the Budget shall provide for staffing to facilitate educational opportunities for all students.
- The Board believes education at the primary level is foundational to student success, and as such is a priority.
- The Board believes funds need to be allocated to promote equitable access to educational opportunities and resources for all students.
- The Board believes in keeping Division and school levied fees as low as possible.
- The Board believes maintaining an uncommitted reserve is necessary for emergent and contingent situations.
- The Board believes equitable opportunities for student learning are achieved by allocating funds to specific centralized programs and services.
- The Board believes in providing targeted opportunities to further innovative practices in schools.







## Vision:

Learners are innovative thinkers who are successful, confident, respectful, and caring



Innovation



Inclusion



Board Priorities



Achievement

## 2021-2022 Preliminary Budget Executive Summary

Lethbridge School Division has a total operating budget of \$132.51 million and provides public education services to the citizens of the City of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.

The School Division was established in 1886 and proudly serves a community that grown over 100,000 residents. Lethbridge School Division serves approximately 11,634 students from early education (pre-school) to grade twelve. The Division provides high quality learning experiences for students through a broad range of educational programs in twenty-four (24) schools and four (4) institutional programs.

### Division Priorities and Strategies

The Board of Trustees held a consultation session with the education stakeholders of the community. Although the Division typically hosts a highly successful in-person Town Hall meeting, considering the COVID19 pandemic, the Division hosted a virtual event through a Division Town Hall website and other online platforms. There were over 200 participants that joined our Virtual Town Hall. This year's consultation centered on one main question:



*In response to COVID-19, changes were made to school organization and instructional delivery. Are there changes that impacted students in a positive way that should continue and be built on?*

There were seven (7) main themes that emerged from the discussions and feedback our Division received from the Virtual Town Hall:

1. Enhanced Sense of Community
2. Online instruction
3. Online platform for communication and parent engagement
4. School structures
5. Communication
6. Wellness
7. Health standards and secure schools



The Board of Trustees have established three (3) priorities: Achievement, Inclusion, and Innovation. Although these have specific outcomes, they are highly correlated with each other with the success of any one priority impacting the others. The themes that come from Town Hall are used as part of the information that informs strategies for each of the priorities.



As delineated earlier in the Assurance Plan, the Board priorities are threaded into the Assurance model domains: Local and Societal Context, Governance, Learning Supports, Teaching and Leading, and Student Growth and Achievement. The outcomes for the Assurance model domains are delineated earlier in the Assurance Plan.



## Meritorious Budget Award Program

Lethbridge School Division is pleased to participate in the Association of School Business Officials (ASBO) International Meritorious Budget Award Program (MBA) for presentation of the 2021-2022 budget. The Division received its first MBA for excellence in the presentation of the 2006-2007 budget and the fifteen (15) subsequent years up to and including the 2020-2021 budget. Once the budget is approved by the Board of Trustees, the Division develops the 2021-2022 comprehensive budget report for the public and for the submission to ASBO for consideration for the Meritorious Budget Award.

## Budget Process

The Division’s budget process involves stakeholders to ensure there is involvement in the development of the budget from start to final approval. The Division undertook a number of consultations with stakeholders to discuss the current fiscal situation and to develop expenditure priorities for the 2021-2022 budget. A Virtual Town Hall meeting was held in February 2021 involving parents, students, staff, and the community, to explore and discuss one main question:

- In response to COVID-19, changes were made to school organization and instructional delivery. Are there changes that impacted students in a positive way that should continue and be built on?

The feedback on these questions influenced the development of Board priorities. The Board of Trustees developed belief statements in March 2021 and set priorities which guided the development of the 2021-2022 budget. The budget process and policies used to develop the budget remained relatively consistent from the development of the 2020-2021 budget.

Information on funding and expenditure estimates was gathered and then the budget was developed in consultation with senior administration, school and program administrators, and trustees. Stakeholders, including parents, staff members, administration and trustees, are invited to the review the online presentation of the budget in May 2021 to discuss the significant challenges in developing a fiscally responsible budget, how it relates to the priorities and strategies developed, and to gather feedback on the draft budget. Stakeholders are then encouraged to provide written comments on the budget to the Board for consideration at the budget debate May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021. After final approval by the Board, the budget is then submitted to Alberta Education as required under legislation. Under legislation, the budget is to be submitted to Alberta Education by May 31<sup>st</sup> each year.

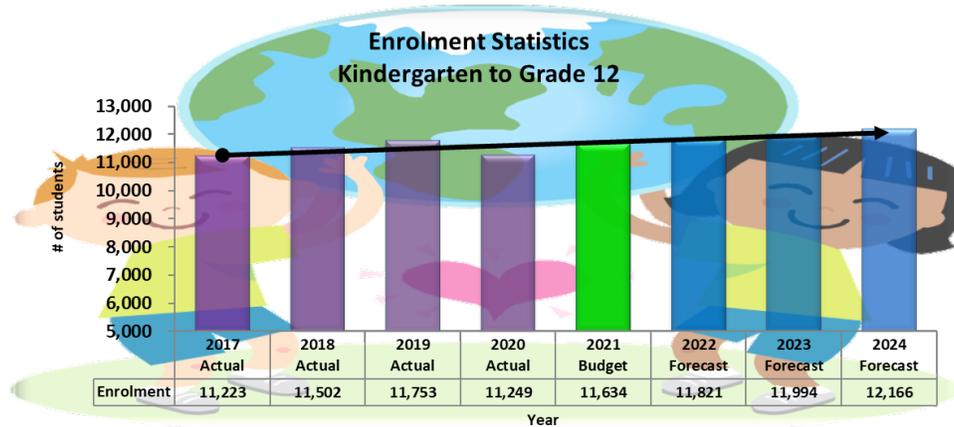
This budget is called the “Preliminary” budget version, although it is the legally adopted budget for purposes of meeting legislative requirements. The budget will be updated for actual known enrolments and other known changes as of September 30<sup>th</sup> 2021. This budget will become the budget under which the Division will operate for the 2021-2022 school year.



## Enrolment

Lethbridge School Division has 11,634 students projected to be enrolled in early education (pre-school) through Grade 12 in the 2021-2022 school year as compared to 11,249 in 2020-2021. This is an increase of 385 students or 3.42%. This increase is only a partial recovery on student enrolment as a result of the COVID19 pandemic; whereas, the overall projected enrolment is still less than the student enrolment that the Division had in 2019-2020 of 11,753. Initially for the 2020-2021 school year, it was projected that the Division would increase to 12,019 students as the Division typically has seen consistent growth from year-to-year; however, as a result of the COVID19 pandemic, the enrolment decreased to 11,249 students, a decrease of 504 students from the prior year (and 770 students less than budget).

Program	Actual				Projected September 2021	Change	
	September 2017	September 2018	September 2019	September 2020			
Early Education	471	506	497	357	424	67	18.77%
Kindergarten	859	766	806	725	768	43	5.93%
Elementary (Grades 1 - 5)	4,231	4,386	4,467	4,111	4,262	151	3.66%
Middle School (Grades 6 - 8)	2,412	2,490	2,631	2,687	2,745	58	2.14%
High School (Grades 9 - 12)	3,250	3,354	3,352	3,369	3,436	67	1.99%
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,223</b>	<b>11,502</b>	<b>11,753</b>	<b>11,249</b>	<b>11,634</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>3.42%</b>
% Change		2.49%	2.18%	-4.29%	3.42%		



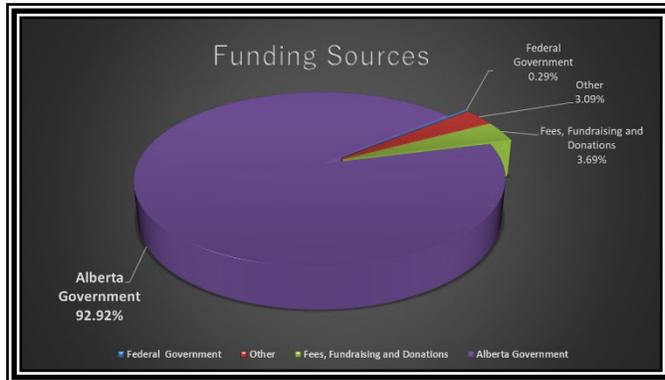
Historical enrolment data and other factors is used to predict enrolment for subsequent budget periods. The preceding chart illustrates the change in enrolment from September 2017 to September 2020 and projected enrolment over the next four years to September 2024. There has typically been an upward trend in enrolment due in part to the significant growth that the City of Lethbridge has experienced in prior years. In the four-year period 2021 to 2024 enrolments are projected to increase by 532 students or 4.57%.

Enrolment fluctuations have a significant impact on future grant revenues as approximately 55% of the Division's funding is specifically for Base Instruction. These fluctuations have somewhat been minimized with the new Provincial Funding Framework; whereas, the Provincial funding is now based on a Weighted Moving Average (WMA) based on the following weighting for the 2021-2022 funding:

School Year	FTE	Weighting	WMA
2019-2020 Actual FTE Enrolment	10,947	20%	2,189.3
2020-2021 Estimated FTE Enrolment	10,604	30%	3,181.1
2021-2022 Projected FTE Enrolment	10,946	50%	5,472.8
<b>Weighted Moving Average (WMA) FTE Enrolment</b>			<b>10,843.2</b>
Variance from 2021-2022 FTE enrolment (unfunded students)			(102.3)

*Provincially funded Full-Time Equivalents (FTE) enrolment is factored at 0.5 FTE for Early Education and Kindergarten programs and does not include unfunded enrolment (i.e., fee paying student enrolment).*

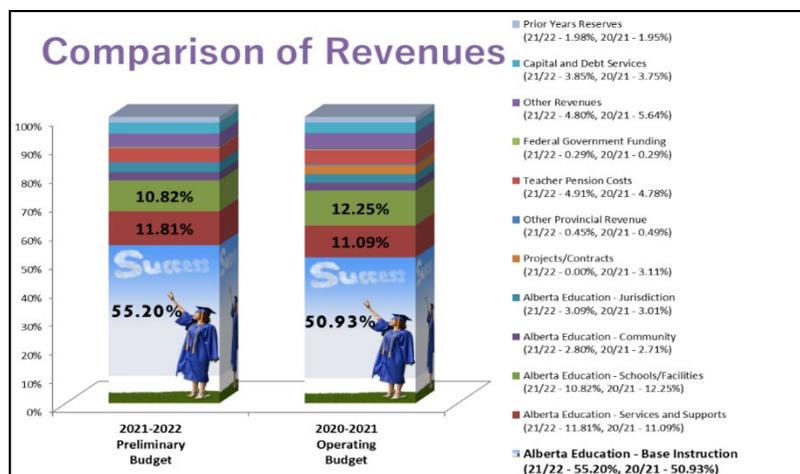
## Funding Sources



Lethbridge School Division is financially dependent on funding from the Province of Alberta. The School Division receives approximately 93% of its funding from the Provincial Government. The Division has control over other revenues such as school fees, school generated funds, outside grants, investment revenues, and one-time reserve funds, which comprise only 7% of the Division's revenue.

Total budgeted revenues and allocations for 2021-2022 are \$132.51 million. Included in these revenues is approximately \$2.6 million of prior year's reserves. Total revenues and allocations for the Division decreased by 2.48% over 2020-2021 with the removal of the one-time Safe Return to Class grant, the removal of the capital portion of the Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal (IMR) grant, the reduction in the projected fee revenues from school generated funds (SGF), and the other changes to the Provincial Funding Framework.

Revenues and Allocations	2021-2022 Preliminary Budget	2020-2021 Operating Budget	Variance from 21-22 Prelim Budget	Change %	2020-2021 Preliminary Budget	Variance from 21-22 Prelim Budget	Change %
Alberta Education - Base Instruction	\$73,144,391	\$69,200,752	\$3,943,639	5.70%	\$71,200,508	\$1,943,883	2.73%
Alberta Education - Services and Supports	\$15,648,431	\$15,071,270	\$577,161	3.83%	\$15,740,533	(\$92,102)	-0.59%
Alberta Education - Schools/Facilities	\$14,340,654	\$16,645,620	(\$2,304,966)	-13.85%	\$16,741,922	(\$2,401,268)	-14.34%
Alberta Education - Community	\$3,708,748	\$3,687,410	\$21,338	0.58%	\$3,687,410	\$21,338	0.58%
Alberta Education - Jurisdiction	\$4,092,198	\$4,092,507	(\$309)	-0.01%	\$4,092,507	(\$309)	-0.01%
Projects/Contracts	\$0	\$4,228,129	(\$4,228,129)	-100.00%	\$62,500	(\$62,500)	-100.00%
Other Provincial Revenue	\$596,611	\$659,611	(\$63,000)	-9.55%	\$470,711	\$125,900	26.75%
Teacher Pension Costs	\$6,500,000	\$6,500,000	\$0	0.00%	\$6,500,000	\$0	0.00%
Federal Government Funding	\$388,944	\$388,944	\$0	0.00%	\$388,944	\$0	0.00%
Other Revenues	6,358,052	\$7,658,297	(\$1,300,245)	-16.98%	\$7,751,476	(\$1,393,424)	-17.98%
Capital and Debt Services	\$5,097,276	\$5,097,276	\$0	0.00%	\$5,097,276	\$0	0.00%
<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$129,875,305</b>	<b>\$133,229,816</b>	<b>(\$3,354,511)</b>	<b>-2.52%</b>	<b>\$131,733,787</b>	<b>(\$1,858,482)</b>	<b>-1.41%</b>
Prior Years Reserves (one-time funds)	\$2,636,431	\$2,647,749	(\$11,318)	-0.43%	\$2,717,468	(\$81,037)	-2.98%
<b>Total Revenue and Allocations</b>	<b>\$132,511,736</b>	<b>\$135,877,565</b>	<b>(\$3,365,829)</b>	<b>-2.48%</b>	<b>\$134,451,255</b>	<b>(\$1,939,519)</b>	<b>-1.44%</b>



### **Alberta Education - Base Instruction** – 55.20% of Division Revenues

As part of the Provincial Funding Framework, the Base Instruction funding is based on the Weighted Moving Average (WMA) of funded full-time equivalent (FTE) student enrolment. The 2021-2022 WMA is calculated based the following:

- 20% of actual FTE enrolments of 2019-2020,
- 30% of the estimated final FTE enrolments of 2020-2021, and
- 50% of the projected funded FTE student enrolments for 2021-2022

The WMA is set by Alberta Education for the 2021/2022 school year during the Preliminary Budget based on initial student enrolment projections; whereas, although there are still the September 30th final student enrolment counts, these updated enrolments do not take account until the following budget year as part of estimated enrolments and as part of a prior year WMA adjustment.

The COVID19 pandemic has negatively impacted student enrolment and has created additional uncertainty in estimating student enrolment. The initial student enrolment projections were estimated at recovering to the 12,019 student enrolment level; however, through obtaining additional information on enrolment and current levels of student registrations, the Division is now projecting student enrolment of 11,634 for 2021-2022. To effectively plan based on the updated enrolment, the Division has estimated a WMA adjustment relating to 2021-2022 at a total reduction of \$1.81 million, including \$927,000 specifically relating to Base Instruction funding (other funding categories also effected); whereas, although the Division will receive the funding based on the Preliminary Budget, knowing that we will have to effectively repay the WMA adjustment in the following year, the Division defers the related operating contributions for the estimated student reductions so that these deferred contributions can be applied to the following budget year. This deferral is used so that the Division does not have an extreme funding change in the following year with both reduced WMA funding for 2022-2023 and having to payback the WMA adjustment relating to 2021-2022.

Budget 2021-2022 also includes one-time transitional grants of \$2.8 million in Bridge Funding and \$3.1 million in COVID Mitigation funding in the budget year; whereas, these transitional grants are likely to be significantly reduced or eliminated in the next budget year (Bridge Funding projected to be cut in half for 2022-2023 school year and the COVID Mitigation funding is projected to be eliminated).

### **Alberta Education – Services and Supports** – 11.81% of Division Revenues

As part of the Provincial Funding Framework, the Services and Supports funding includes various grants to support the specialized learning needs and/or groups of students that may require additional supports, such as through the Specialized Learning Supports, Program Unit Funding (PUF), English as a Second Language (ESL), First Nations Metis and Inuit (FNMI), Refugee, and other Institutional Programs. Most of these grants also use the WMA to determine the funding levels.

The Provincial Funding Framework was updated in 2021-2022; whereas, there were two additional grants that were identified and separated from the Specialized Learning Supports, including a grant for Specialized Learning Supports specifically for kindergarten students with severe needs and a grant for early education/kindergarten students with a moderate language delay. These two additional grants were funded by a reallocation from the general Specialized Learning Supports grant and some additional funding was provided by the Province in this area (reallocated from other sources).

### **Alberta Education – Schools/Facilities** – 10.82% of Division Revenues

As part of the Provincial Funding Framework, the Schools/Facilities funding includes Operations and Maintenance funding, Transportation, and Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal (IMR) funding. The Operations and Maintenance funding is allocated in a combination of the WMA enrolment and the facility space utilization. The capital portion of the Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal (IMR) grant was

removed from the funding framework (moved to the capital fund) and there were reductions to the Operations and Maintenance grant rates (2.3% reduction in per student rates).

**Alberta Education – Community – 2.80% of Division Revenues**

As part of the Provincial Funding Framework, the Community funding is effectively a new category of Provincial Funding that includes various grants such as Socio-Economic, Geographic, and School Nutrition. These funding allocations are specific provincial allocations based on the Division’s factors and indexes compared to the Province and the respective funding allocations.

**Alberta Education – Jurisdiction – 3.09% of Division Revenues**

As part of the Provincial Funding Framework, the Jurisdiction funding is specifically separated to identify the funding specifically for the Board and System Administration. Although this funding is based on a base allocation and WMA factors, the total grant is limited to a specific adjustment factor that reduces the funding to a specified portion of the Division’s budget.



The 2021-2022 Budget included the Provincial Funding Framework for School Divisions throughout the Province. The model is a “3-year funding commitment to Education” to allow for predictability and sustainability.

This new Provincial Funding Framework was initially implemented in 2020-2021 and our Division is now in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of operating within this new framework which utilizes a Weighted Moving Average (WMA) for funding enrolment and multiple other factors that impact our Division’s funding.

The prior funding framework grants (36 grants) has now been modified to the new framework (now 17 grants); whereas, these new grants are not easily (or at all) comparable to the prior framework.



**Projects/Contracts – 0.00% of Division Revenues**

Project/Contract funding is for specific one-time targeted grants that have been provided for specific projects/contracts. There are currently no one-time targeted grants that have been identified or provided for the 2021-2022 school year. The 2020-2021 Operating Budget included an additional \$4.14 million of Safe Return to School grant (federal grant flowed through the Province) to support the transition back to in-class and online learning as a result of COVID-19. There was also a two-year project grant relating to First Nations Metis and Inuit (FNMI) instruction that is being completed in 2020-2021.

**Other Provincial Revenues – 0.45% of Division Revenues**

Other Provincial Revenue includes the Provincially funded Making Connections programs for Alberta Mental Health and the Family Resource Network.

**Teacher Pension Costs – 4.91% of Division Revenues**

To appropriately account for current year teacher pension costs that are paid by the Province of Alberta on behalf of school boards, the Division is required to record teacher pension costs paid as part of total Division revenues along with the corresponding expenditure as part of Certificated Salaries and Benefit costs.

**Federal Government – 0.29% of Division Revenues**

The revenues from the Federal Government relates to the funding received from Kainai Board of Education (KBE) for their students attending our Division.

**Other Revenues – 4.80% of Division Revenues**

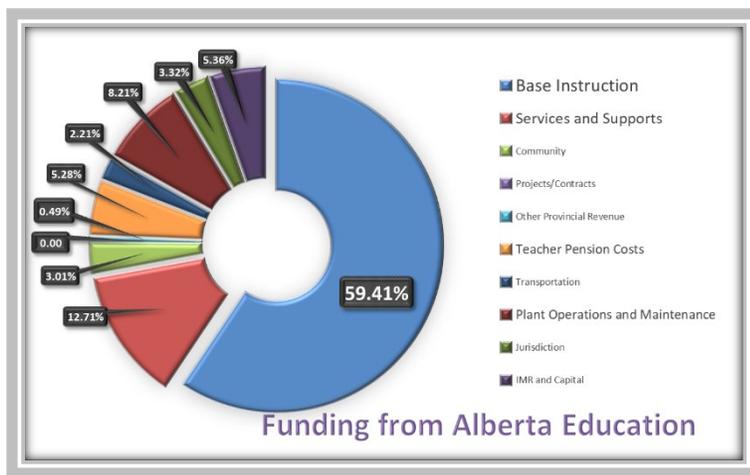
Other Revenues include donations, fees and fundraising related to school generated activities, optional course fees, early education fees, and international student tuition fees. The majority of the decrease relates to the reduction in the projected fee revenues from school generated funds (SGF) as there are likely less SGF activities that can be completed during the year as a result of the COVID19 pandemic.

**Capital Block – 3.85% of Division Revenues**

The Capital Block funding relates to the capital allocation revenues recognized for the supported tangible capital assets; whereas, this is typically updated in the fall Operating Budget based on the most recent annual financial statements.

**Prior Year Reserves – 1.98% of Division Revenues**

Prior Year Reserves is the amount of one-time reserves used to address priority areas. The majority relates to central instructional reserves being used to assist in the transition of the funding framework, support with an E-Learning platform, and planned utilization of carry-forward reserves from school/department.



*\*Chart and percentages above are based on total Alberta Education funding (excludes other Division revenues)*

**Provincial Revenue Estimates:**

(Excluding reserves and other revenue sources)

	Projected 2021-2022	September 2020-2021	Total Change	% Change
Alberta Education Operating Grants	99,598,181	99,347,172	\$251,009	0.25%
Operations and Maintenance	10,109,005	10,557,970	(\$448,965)	-4.25%
Transportation	2,723,518	2,723,518	\$0	0.00%
Capital and Debt Servicing	5,097,276	5,097,276	\$0	0.00%
Infrastructure Maintenance Renewal (IMR)	1,508,131	3,364,132	(\$1,856,001)	-55.17%
Jurisdiction	4,092,198	4,092,507	(\$309)	-0.01%
	<b>123,128,309</b>	<b>125,182,575</b>	<b>(\$2,054,266)</b>	<b>-1.64%</b>

## Funding Allocations and Programs:

Funding is allocated to Division programs and services to ensure the programs meet the needs of the students and align with the Division’s priorities. Based on the available revenue sources, funding is allocated to the Division major program areas. The following is a comparison of the available revenue sources:

Revenues Sources	2021-2022 Preliminary Budget			2020-2021 Operating Budget			Variance from 21-22 Prelim Budget			
	Operating Revenues	One-time Reserves	2021-2022 Preliminary Budget	Operating Revenues	One-time Reserves	2020-2021 Operating Budget	Operating Revenues	One-time Reserves	Variance from 21-22 Prelim Budget	Change %
Alberta Government	\$123,128,309	\$0	\$123,128,309	\$125,182,575	\$0	\$125,182,575	(\$2,054,266)	\$0	(\$2,054,266)	-1.64%
Fees, Fundraising and Donations	\$4,894,203	\$0	\$4,894,203	\$6,312,715	\$0	\$6,312,715	(\$1,418,512)	\$0	(\$1,418,512)	-22.47%
Other Revenues	\$1,463,849	\$0	\$1,463,849	\$1,345,582	\$0	\$1,345,582	\$118,267	\$0	\$118,267	8.29%
Federal Government	\$388,944	\$0	\$388,944	\$388,944	\$0	\$388,944	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00%
One-time Reserves	\$0	\$2,636,431	\$2,636,431	\$0	\$2,647,749	\$2,647,749	\$0	(\$11,318)	(\$11,318)	0.43%
<b>Total Allocations</b>	<b>\$129,875,305</b>	<b>\$2,636,431</b>	<b>\$132,511,736</b>	<b>\$133,229,816</b>	<b>\$2,647,749</b>	<b>\$135,877,565</b>	<b>(\$3,354,511)</b>	<b>(\$11,318)</b>	<b>(\$3,365,829)</b>	<b>-2.48%</b>

As shown above, there is a \$3.35 million net decrease in operating revenues, including \$1.86 million decrease with the removal of the capital portion of the Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal (IMR) grant, a \$449,000 decrease to Plant Operation and Maintenance (from grant rate reductions), and the reduction in the projected fee revenues from school generated funds (SGF). The overall net effect was a decrease of \$3.37 million in funding available for allocations.

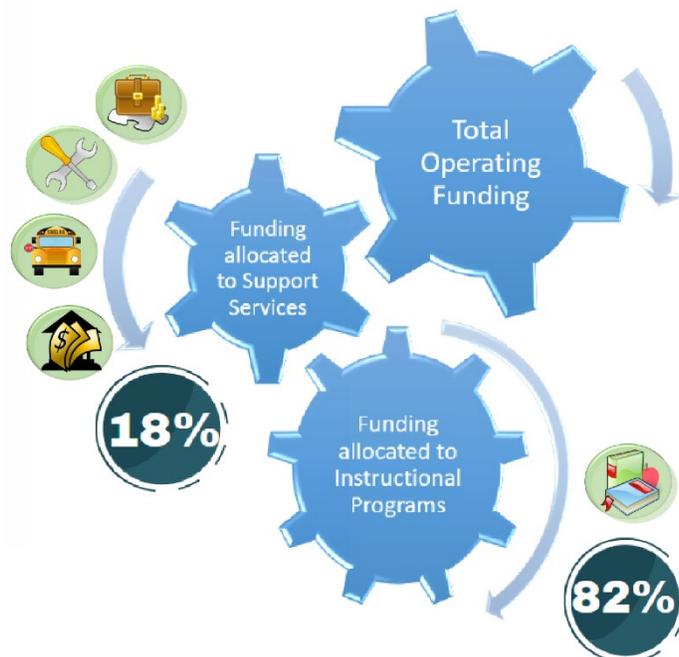
Funding Allocations	2021-2022 Preliminary Budget			2020-2021 Operating Budget			Variance from 21-22 Prelim Budget			
	Operating Revenues	One-time Reserves	2021-2022 Preliminary Budget	Operating Revenues	One-time Reserves	2020-2021 Operating Budget	Operating Revenues	One-time Reserves	Variance from 21-22 Prelim Budget	Change %
Instruction	\$105,877,787	\$2,416,431	\$108,294,218	\$107,134,815	\$2,647,749	\$109,782,564	(\$1,257,028)	(\$2,231,318)	(\$1,488,346)	-1.36%
Administration	\$4,092,216	\$0	\$4,092,216	\$4,092,216	\$0	\$4,092,216	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00%
Plant Operations and Maintenance	\$9,987,849	\$220,000	\$10,207,849	\$10,269,331	\$0	\$10,269,331	(\$281,482)	\$220,000	(\$61,482)	-0.60%
Transportation	\$2,750,797	\$0	\$2,750,797	\$2,710,797	\$0	\$2,710,797	\$40,000	\$0	\$40,000	1.48%
Capital and Debt Services	\$7,166,656	\$0	\$7,166,656	\$9,022,657	\$0	\$9,022,657	(\$1,856,001)	\$0	(\$1,856,001)	-20.57%
<b>Total Allocations</b>	<b>\$129,875,305</b>	<b>\$2,636,431</b>	<b>\$132,511,736</b>	<b>\$133,229,816</b>	<b>\$2,647,749</b>	<b>\$135,877,565</b>	<b>(\$3,354,511)</b>	<b>(\$11,318)</b>	<b>(\$3,365,829)</b>	<b>-2.48%</b>

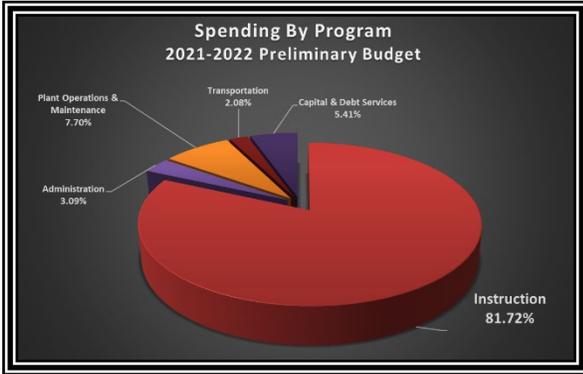
The five (5) major programs include Instruction, Administration, Plant Operations and Maintenance (POM), Transportation, and Capital and Debt Services. Many of these funding allocations are directly correlated to the types and amounts of funding provided for each area and the applicable restrictions that may be included in the funding.

The **Budget Allocation Model** first allocates the targeted/ restricted funding (as it must be used for that specific purpose), then allocates the remaining funding based on the Division and its priorities.

The **Support Services** areas of Administration, Plant Operations & Maintenance, Transportation, and Capital & Debt Services are funded by specific/ targeted Provincial funding for their respective areas of supports. These represent approximately **18% of the total operating budget**.

The **Instructional Programs** represents approximately **82% of the total operating budget**. The Instructional Programs include some specific/ targeted Provincial funding such as the Program Unit Funding (PUF), Institutional Programs, and School Nutrition Funding. The remaining operating funding is then available for allocations for schools and other institutional programs.





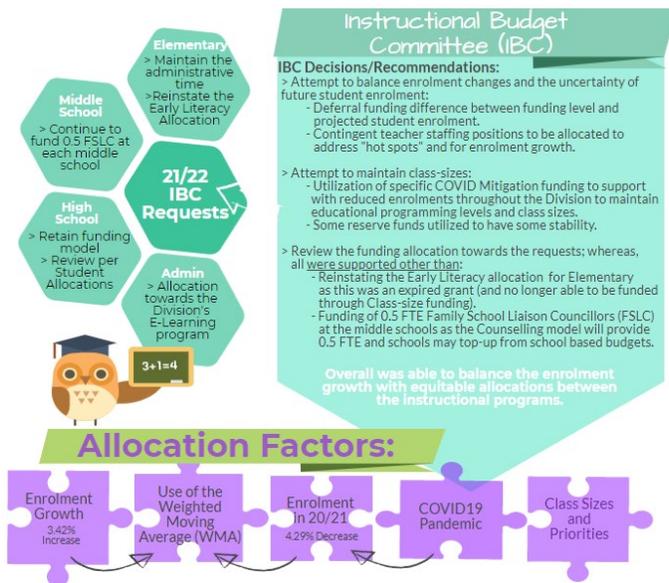
Funding is allocated to Division programs and services to ensure that programs meet the needs of students and schools to remain viable. The \$132.51 million of funding resources are allocated to five major program areas including Instruction, Plant Operations and Maintenance, Transportation, Administration, and Capital and Debt Services.

The chart below compares spending by program of the 2021-2022 Preliminary Budget, the 2020-2021 Operating Budget, and with the 2020-2021 Preliminary Budget:

Spending by Program	2021-2022 Preliminary Budget	2020-2021 Operating Budget	Variance from 21-22 Prelim Budget	Change %	2020-2021 Preliminary Budget	Variance from 21-22 Prelim Budget	Change %
Instruction	\$108,294,218	\$109,782,564	(\$1,488,346)	-1.36%	\$108,356,254	(\$62,036)	-0.06%
Administration	\$4,092,216	\$4,092,216	\$0	0.00%	\$4,092,216	\$0	0.00%
Plant Operations and Maintenance	\$10,207,849	\$10,269,331	(\$61,482)	-0.60%	\$10,269,331	(\$61,482)	-0.60%
Transportation	\$2,750,797	\$2,710,797	\$40,000	1.48%	\$2,710,797	\$40,000	1.48%
Capital and Debt Services	\$7,166,656	\$9,022,657	(\$1,856,001)	-20.57%	\$9,022,657	(\$1,856,001)	-20.57%
<b>Total Expenditures and Transfers</b>	<b>\$132,511,736</b>	<b>\$135,877,565</b>	<b>(\$3,365,829)</b>	<b>-2.48%</b>	<b>\$134,451,255</b>	<b>(\$1,939,519)</b>	<b>-1.44%</b>

### Instruction Allocations – 81.72% of Division Spending

The Budget Allocation Model is a collaborative process through the Division’s Instructional Budget Committee (IBC), which includes representatives from elementary, middle, and high schools. It also includes



members of Board Administration. This committee, through Board priorities and consultation with our schools/groups within the Division, determines the funding allocations for the Instructional Programs.

The IBC Committee had challenges this year with the allocation of the instructional funding as there was additional uncertainty on student enrolment which is a large factor in funding allocations.

The COVID19 pandemic and the fact that the Division had recently completed a significant school boundary change (effective for the 2021-2022 school year) adds uncertainty on student enrolment both at the Division and the school/department level allocations.

The IBC Committee was able to effectively mitigate the uncertainty of student enrolment by ensuring that the

Division plans in advance for the projected student enrolment (deferring the student funding exceeding projections) while also ensuring that the Division is staffed appropriately including the allocation of contingent staffing to address “hot spots” and to support schools that have additional student enrolment growth.

Instruction is the allocation to all schools (elementary, middle, and high) and other instructional programs and services offered to provide educational opportunities to students within the Division. Some of the other instructional programs and services include the First Nations Métis and Inuit Program (FNMI), Technology and a Counseling Program to provide universal counseling supports to students.

The reduction in instructional expenses of 1.36% mostly relates to the reduction in the projected fee revenues of \$1.42 million from school generated funds (SGF) as there are likely less SGF activities that can be completed during the year as a result of the COVID19 pandemic. Overall, the Alberta Education Operating Grants (for instructional programs) had a \$251,000 increase (or 0.25%) from the prior year. Although there was the \$4.14 million decrease from the removal of the one-time Safe Return to Class grant; this reduction was more than offset by the additional \$3.14 million in COVID Mitigation one-time funding and other increases in the Services and Support grants.

Overall, the Instructional Program resulted in the following changes:

- An increase of 6.3 FTE in teaching staff (certificated staff) including 2.0 FTE additional principal/vice-principal for the new school. This includes a total of 25.6 FTE of contingent staffing to support with addressing potential “hot spots” and to support schools that have additional student enrolment growth; in which, these positions may be allocated once more information is finalized relating to student enrolment levels. There was a slight reduction in the average teacher costs.
- A net increase of 6.2 FTE in actual support staffing (uncertificated staff) including 5.4 FTE increase in actual educational assistants / advanced educational supports. Note that for 2020-2021 school year, the actual educational assistant staffing was slightly less than the operating budget as staffing was made based on actual student needs. The average costs of educational assistants had also increased from the prior year with grid movement and higher benefit costs.
- Contracted and General services had reductions in consulting costs for Occupational Therapists as part of this was reallocated to a staffing position and part was reduced as Alberta Health Services is covering some of the complex services that were previously provided by the Regional Collaborative Service Delivery (RCSD) program.
- Supplies costs decreased with the reduction in the School Generated Funds (SGF) activity costs which correlates directly with the reduced SGF fee revenues.
- Commitments decreased as the prior year included the outstanding commitments for each school; whereas, this is updated in the fall budget update.
- There was an increase in the reserve allocations of \$300,000 for the technology evergreening program; whereas, during 2020-2021 the Division enhanced this program to also include a Portable Devices phase for base levels of laptops and iPads throughout the schools.

### **Administration Allocations** – 3.09% of Division Spending

The allocation to Administration directly correlates to the specific Provincial funding the jurisdiction (covering Board and System Administration). There were no changes from the 2020-2021 grant funding.

Administration includes Board Governance, Business and Finance, Human Resources, Office of the Superintendent, and System Instructional Support. With the Provincial Funding Framework, the Province allocated a specific grant to cover the costs relating to the Board and System Administration (other than related amortization). Historically, administration may utilize up to 3.6% of the budget; whereas, in 2021-2022 administration only accounted for 3.09%.

Overall, there was a budgeted increase in the administrative insurance costs with increased insurance premium rates; however, these increases were able to be offset by savings in supplies and utility costs.

**Plant Operation and Maintenance (POM) – 7.70% of Division Spending**

The allocation to Plant Operation and Maintenance (POM) directly correlates to the specific Provincial funding within the schools/facilities. Based on the 2021-2022 grant funding, the POM allocation resulted in a \$281,500 decrease as the POM grant rates were reduced from the prior year (and some decrease facility utilization). The Division is planning on utilizing \$220,000 of one-time reserves to support with these rate reductions as many of the POM costs are increasing from prior years (i.e., insurance), additional supports for COVID19 protocols will be maintained, and the Division has a new school being added in 2021-2022.

The Plant Operations and Maintenance activities relate to the Division’s responsibility for the construction, operation, maintenance, safety and security of all school buildings. Expenditures also include the transfer of maintenance dollars to Lethbridge Christian School and Immanuel Christian School Societies for the maintenance of these Society owned facilities.

Overall, POM was increased in caretaking staffing of 1.0 FTE to facilitate the new school. There was an estimated \$110,500 increase in the cost of insurance on schools/facilities; whereas, the Division reduced the budget for building maintenance, utilities, and other services to cover these additional costs.

**Transportation – 2.08% of Division Spending**

The allocation to the Transportation program directly correlates to the specific Provincial funding within the schools/facilities (for transportation). There were no changes from the 2020-2021 grant funding; however, the Division has started providing the coordination of transportation services for another school division so that both divisions can maximize the combined services (fee revenues for services).

The Transportation program relates to all activities of transporting students to, from and between schools. Funding is provided to transport students who live a walking distance of 2.4 kilometers or greater away from their resident school.

**Capital and Debt Services – 5.41% of Division Spending**

The allocation to Capital and Debt Services directly correlates to the specific Provincial funding for Infrastructure, Maintenance and Renewal (IMR) and the specific projected capital allocation revenues for the supported tangible capital assets. There was a \$1.86 million reduction from the removal of the capital portion of the Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal (IMR) grant.

Capital and Debt Services includes the amortization of capital assets and the Infrastructure Maintenance Renewal Program (IMR). As the IMR grants have decreased, the related costs are also decreased accordingly.

Expenditures by Program and Object	Instruction	Administration	Plant Operations and Maintenance	Transportation	Capital and Debt Services	Total
Certificated Staffing	\$74,087,140	\$723,564	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$74,810,704
Uncertificated Staffing	\$20,628,035	\$2,211,721	\$5,149,069	\$121,886	\$0	\$28,110,711
Contracted and General Services	\$3,769,009	\$986,028	\$2,390,003	\$2,566,311	\$0	\$9,711,351
Supplies	\$8,840,477	\$99,503	\$413,777	\$10,000	\$0	\$9,363,757
Utilities	\$0	\$40,100	\$2,255,000	\$0	\$0	\$2,295,100
Capital and Debt Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,166,656	\$7,166,656
Transfers - Contingency/Other	\$6,116	\$31,300	\$0	\$52,600	\$0	\$90,016
<b>Total Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>\$107,330,777</b>	<b>\$4,092,216</b>	<b>\$10,207,849</b>	<b>\$2,750,797</b>	<b>\$7,166,656</b>	<b>\$131,548,295</b>
Transfers - Reserve Allocations	\$900,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$900,000
Transfers - Board Funded Capital	\$63,441	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$63,441
<b>Total Expenditures and Transfers</b>	<b>\$108,294,218</b>	<b>\$4,092,216</b>	<b>\$10,207,849</b>	<b>\$2,750,797</b>	<b>\$7,166,656</b>	<b>\$132,511,736</b>

## Expenditures by Object

Lethbridge School Division will spend approximately \$102.92 million on staffing, which is about 77% of the Division's \$132.51 million budget.

Wage increases in the budget will be 0% for 2021-2022. Teacher and other unionized support groups (CUPE 2843 & CUPE 290) have finalized their collective agreement up to the end of 2019-2020, which did not include wage increases. There are no wage changes for the non-union groups. Benefit rates are expected to increase from the prior year as the premium rates have increase.

The chart below compares the expenditures of the 2021-2022 Preliminary Budget, the 2020-2021 Operating Budget, and with the 2020-2021 Preliminary Budget:

Expenditures by Object	2021-2022 Preliminary Budget	2020-2021 Operating Budget	Variance from 21-22 Prelim Budget	Change %	2020-2021 Preliminary Budget	Variance from 21-22 Prelim Budget	Change %
Certificated Staffing	\$74,810,704	\$74,269,968	\$540,736	0.73%	\$73,149,763	\$1,660,941	2.27%
Uncertificated Staffing	\$28,110,711	\$27,771,842	\$338,869	1.22%	\$27,656,990	\$453,721	1.64%
Contracted and General Services	\$9,711,351	\$9,917,566	(\$206,215)	-2.08%	\$10,051,133	(\$339,782)	-3.38%
Supplies	\$9,363,757	\$11,276,376	(\$1,912,619)	-16.96%	\$11,218,091	(\$1,854,334)	-16.53%
Utilities	\$2,295,100	\$2,329,600	(\$34,500)	-1.48%	\$2,329,600	(\$34,500)	-1.48%
Capital and Debt Services	\$7,166,656	\$9,022,657	(\$1,856,001)	-20.57%	\$9,022,657	(\$1,856,001)	-20.57%
Transfers - Contingency/Other	\$90,016	\$575,669	(\$485,653)	-84.36%	\$265,718	(\$175,702)	-66.12%
<b>Total Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>\$131,548,295</b>	<b>\$135,163,678</b>	<b>(\$3,615,383)</b>	<b>-2.67%</b>	<b>\$133,693,952</b>	<b>(\$2,145,657)</b>	<b>-1.60%</b>
Transfers - Reserve Allocations	\$900,000	\$610,408	\$289,592	47.44%	\$611,908	\$288,092	47.08%
Transfers - Board Funded Capital	\$63,441	\$103,479	(\$40,038)	-38.69%	\$145,395	(\$81,954)	-56.37%
<b>Total Expenditures and Transfers</b>	<b>\$132,511,736</b>	<b>\$135,877,565</b>	<b>(\$3,365,829)</b>	<b>-2.48%</b>	<b>\$134,451,255</b>	<b>(\$1,939,519)</b>	<b>-1.44%</b>

### **Certificated Staffing – 56.46% of Division Spending**

Approximately \$74.8 million is expended on teaching staff (certificated staffing), which includes all staff that hold a teaching certificate (i.e., classroom teachers, principals, superintendents). Average teacher costs are projected to slightly decrease from 2020-2021 Operating Budget.

**Overall, there is a budgeted increase of 6.30 FTE (or 0.99%) in teachers than in 2020-2021.** Although the Division had a reduction in student enrolment in 2020-2021, the Division was able to utilize the Safe Return to Class grant (and other cost savings) to hold the schools “harmless” in 2020-2021 so that teaching staffing could be maintained. The 2021-2022 COVID Mitigation and Bridge funding has supported the Division in maintaining these staffing levels (with some growth); whereas, within the total 643.8 FTE of certificated staffing, there is 25.6 FTE of contingent staffing to support with addressing potential “hot spots” and to support schools that have additional student enrolment growth; in which, these positions may be allocated once more information is finalized relating to student enrolment levels.

### **Uncertificated Staffing – 21.21% of Division Spending**

Approximately \$28.1 million is spent on support staff (uncertificated staffing), which includes all other support staffing (i.e. educational assistants, administrative support/assistants, caretaking, maintenance, and other support staffing). The Division expects an increase in average support staff costs in 2021-2022, the majority is of the increase relates to the increased benefit costs for staffing with increase premium costs.

**Overall, there is a budgeted increase of 8.07 FTE (or 1.71%) in support staff than in 2020-2021,** including 5.3 FTE increase in actual educational assistants, 1.0 FTE increase in caretaking staff, and other support staff throughout the Division. Note that for 2020-2021 school year, the actual educational assistant staffing was slightly less than the operating budget as staffing was made based on actual student needs.

### **Contracted and General Services** – 7.33% of Division Spending

Contracted and General Services are expected to decrease from 2020-2021 by \$206,200 (or 2.1%). The majority of this decrease relate to decreases in building maintenance and consulting costs for Occupational Therapists (partial moved to staffing position and partial reduction); whereas, these decreases were partially offset by increases to insurance costs and the costs of transportation/bussing.

### **Supplies** – 7.07% of Division Spending

Supplies have decreased by \$1.9 million (or 17.0%). The majority of the decrease related in the reduction in the School Generated Funds (SGF) activity costs (which correlates directly with the reduced SGF fee revenues). These was also decreases within the budgeted general supplies and computer purchases.

### **Utilities** – 1.73% of Division Spending

The Division has been able to generate some saving in utility costs over the past couple years as a result of replacing and upgrading of related infrastructure as part of the Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal (IMR) and Capital Maintenance & Renewal (CMR) programs.

### **Capital and Debt Services** – 5.41% of Division Spending

Capital and Debt Services are decreased from the removal of the capital portion of the Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal (IMR) grant (reallocated to the capital fund).

### **Transfers – Contingency/Other** – 0.06% of Division Spending

Contingencies and Commitments are projected to be reduced as the prior year included the outstanding commitments for each school. The 2020-2021 commitments were significantly higher than prior years as there were delays in receiving resources and equipment due to the COVID19 pandemic (to be updated in the fall Operating Budget).

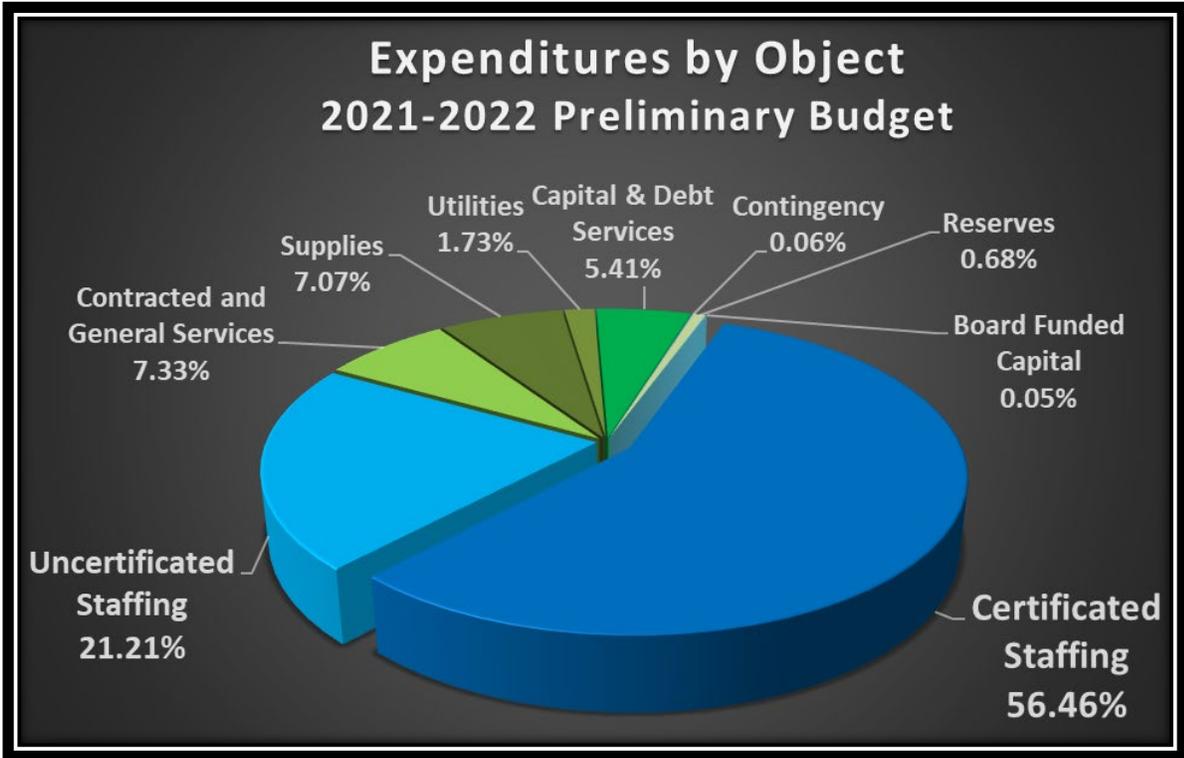
### **Transfers – Reserve Allocations** – 0.68% of Division Spending

Reserve Allocations includes the operating funding to be set aside for future use, including the \$900,000 funding saved for the technology evergreening capital reserves (saved for future large evergreening cycles). The Division is able to obtain significant cost savings by replacing technology in large evergreening cycles (economies of scale) compared to replacing technology on an annual basis; whereas, during 2020-2021 the Division enhanced this program to also include a Portable Devices phase for base levels of laptops and iPads throughout the schools.

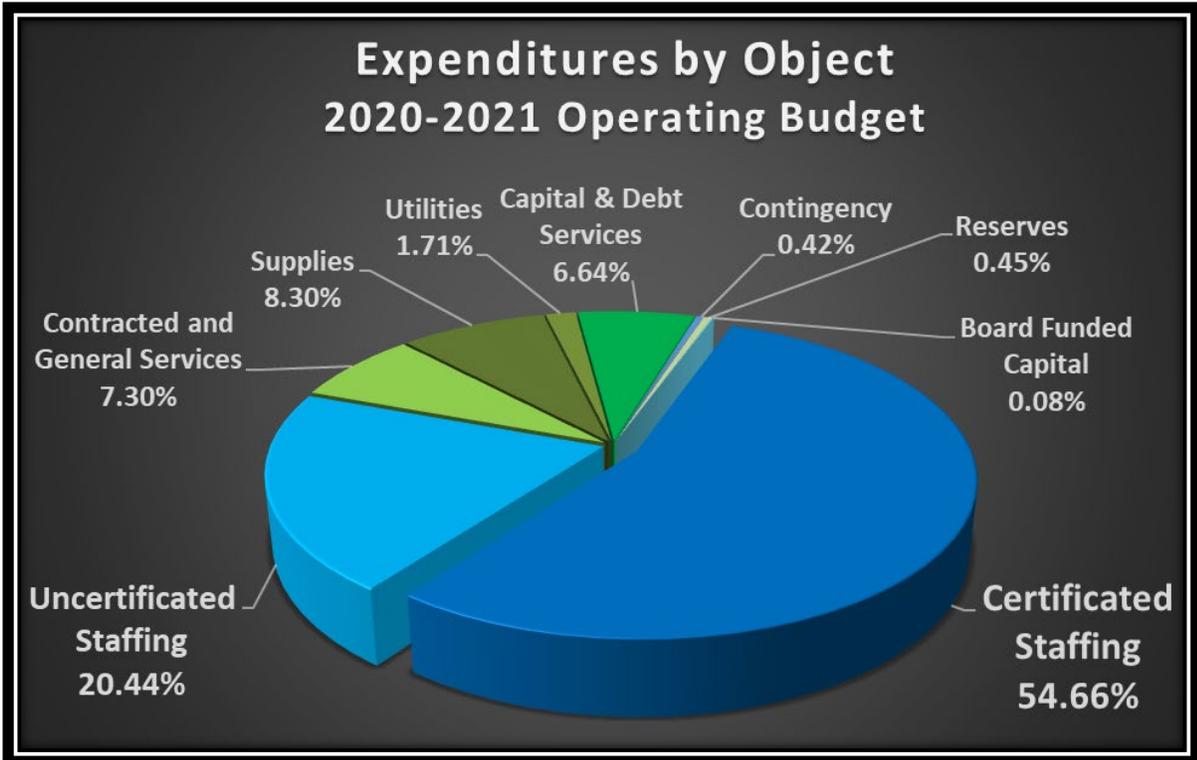
### **Transfers – Board Funded Capital** – 0.05% of Division Spending

Board Funded Capital includes the operating funding used for Division funded capital such as major furniture and equipment replacements.

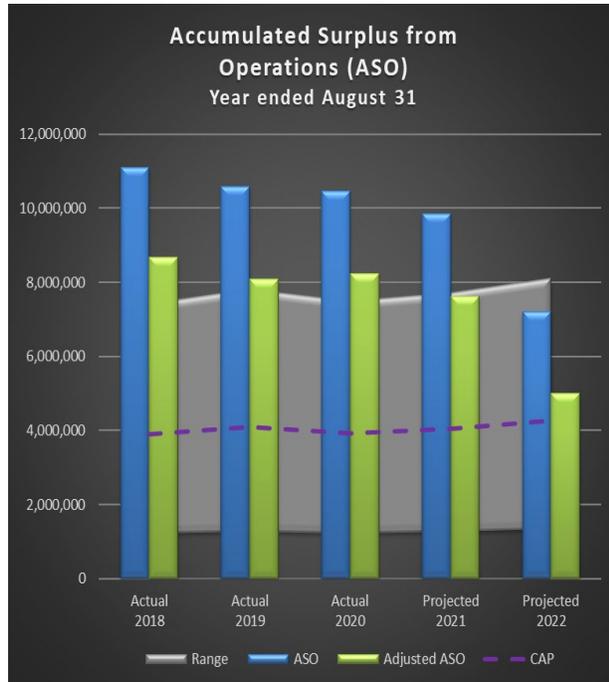
In 2018-2019, the cost was approximately \$11,932 to educate a full time equivalent (FTE) student in Lethbridge School Division as compared to the provincial average of all public school authorities of \$11,667 per student (most recent info available). In 2019-2020 the cost is projected at \$11,999 per FTE student, in 2020-2021 budget the cost is projected to be \$12,623 per FTE student, and in 2021-2022 budget the cost is projected to decreased to \$11,918 per FTE student. The Board implements a responsible fiscal plan to ensure that resources entrusted to the Division are spent efficiently, effectively, and reflects the Board's priorities to provide the best learning opportunities for Lethbridge School Division students.



Expenditures for the 2021-2022 budget are compared with budgeted expenditures from 2020-2021 to illustrate the similarity between the two years.



## Financial Impact



The Division has been able to build the Accumulated Surplus from Operations (ASO) as the Division has been fiscally responsible and set funds aside for long-term planning and future projects.

In accordance with Public Sector Accounting Standards, the unspent school generated funds (SGF) is included in the Division's ASO. The "Adjusted ASO" excludes these unspent SGF funds which are held at the schools. The Adjusted ASO is typically reviewed and compared to expenditures to review the financial health of the Division (recommended ratio is between 1% and 5%).

The Province currently is looking to put a limit/cap on reserves with a maximum Adjusted ASO of 3.15% by the end of 2022-2023. This actual limit is still to be finalized by the Province; however, the Division is planning on the establishment of these limits.

School Year	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
Adjusted ASO ratio	7.01%	6.23%	6.61%	5.93%	3.69%

In budget 2020-2021, there was a total of \$2.65 million in reserve funds planned to be utilized to balance expenditures. The Division planned \$397,500 to assist with the Funding Framework changes to minimize the effects on the classroom, \$550,000 to assist with the effects of WMA Adjustment from student reductions, \$275,000 for resourcing and the start-up costs of the Dr. Robert Plaxton Elementary School (opening for the 2021-2022 school year), and operating reserves were also used to address priority areas such as Spanish resources and other carry-forward funding for specific projects. Overall, the Division was retained some staff savings, unused school contingency, and carryforward of specific project costs; therefore, the Division only was required to utilize approximately \$609,700 of these reserves. As a result, August 31, 2021 has a total projected ASO of \$9.8 million or 7.65% of planned expenditures and a projected Adjusted ASO of \$7.6 million or 5.93% of planned expenditures.

In budget 2021-2022, there was a total of \$2.64 million in reserve funds planned to be utilized to balance expenditures. The Division planned \$467,100 to assist with the Funding Framework changes to minimize the effects on the classroom, \$140,600 to support with enhanced E-Learning programming, \$220,000 to support Operations and Maintenance with funding reductions, and operating reserves were also used to address priority areas and other carry-forward funding for specific projects. There is a projected \$1.8 million of carry-forward funding from 2020-2021 that may be used in the 2021-2022 budget. The use of one-time reserves will reduce the Adjusted Accumulated Surplus from Operations (ASO) of the Division to approximately \$5.0 million or 3.69% of operating expenditures.

The Division will need to monitor the ASO 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 ASO will be dependent on future financial resources from Alberta Education and expenditure decisions made by the Division.

## Human Resources

Division staffing has the greatest impact on the educational opportunities provided to students within Lethbridge School Division and consequently makes up 77% of the Division’s budget. The Division will employ 643.78 full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers and 478.85 full-time equivalents (FTE) support staff in 2021-2022.

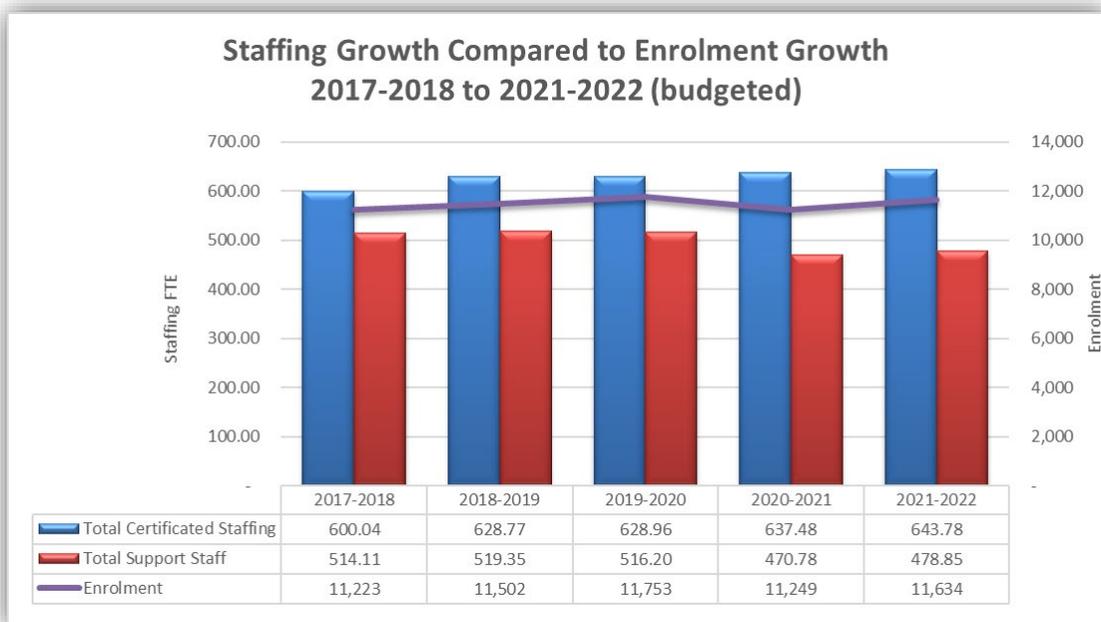


The Division spends 56% of the budget on teaching staff. Teaching staff will result in a slight increase by 6.30 FTE. The 2021-2022 COVID Mitigation and Bridge funding has supported the Division in maintaining these staffing levels (with some growth); whereas, within the total 643.78 FTE of certificated staffing, there is 25.6 FTE of contingent staffing to support with addressing potential “hot spots” and to support schools that have additional student enrolment growth; in which, these positions may be allocated once more information is finalized relating to student enrolment levels.

Teacher Staffing (Certificated):				
	2021/2022	2020/2021	FTE Change	% Change
Elementary Schools	244.25	245.75	(1.50)	(0.61%)
Middle Schools	110.75	112.70	(1.95)	(1.73%)
High Schools	159.23	158.40	0.82	0.52%
Inclusive Learning	18.60	18.65	(0.05)	(0.27%)
Other Instructional (including contingent)	43.35	36.38	6.97	19.17%
<b>Classroom Teachers</b>	<b>576.18</b>	<b>571.88</b>	<b>4.30</b>	<b>0.75%</b>
Other Certificated Staffing	67.600	65.600	2.00	3.05%
<b>Total Teacher Staffing</b>	<b>643.78</b>	<b>637.48</b>	<b>6.30</b>	<b>0.99%</b>

The Division spends 21% of the budget on support staff positions and resulted in an overall increase by 8.07 FTE in 2021-2022 including 5.4 FTE increase in actual educational assistants, 1.0 FTE increase in caretaking staff, and other support staff throughout the Division. Note that for 2020-2021 school year, the actual educational assistant staffing was slightly less than the operating budget as staffing was made based on actual student needs.

Support Staffing (Uncertificated):				
	2021/2022	2020/2021	FTE Change	% Change
Elementary Schools	131.76	133.55	(1.79)	(1.34%)
Middle Schools	37.88	38.72	(0.84)	(2.17%)
High Schools	47.49	45.71	1.78	3.89%
Program Unit Funding (PUF)	30.80	24.26	6.54	26.96%
Early Education Program (EEP)	4.00	4.35	(0.35)	(8.05%)
<b>Educational Assistants</b>	<b>251.93</b>	<b>246.59</b>	<b>5.35</b>	<b>2.17%</b>
Other Support Staffing	226.92	224.19	2.73	1.22%
<b>Total Support Staffing</b>	<b>478.85</b>	<b>470.78</b>	<b>8.07</b>	<b>1.71%</b>



## Capital Plan

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

Lethbridge is experiencing increased growth on the west side of the city, with significant growth projected. To address the growing concern for capacity challenges and future growth, in 2018, a review of west Lethbridge Boundaries started. Current utilization and future growth in west Lethbridge and possible solutions to address growth and capacity concerns were reviewed. The boundary review recommendations were presented in January 2021 and approved for the 2021-2022 school year. These changes recognized that space needed to be made available at the elementary and high school levels. The opening of Senator Joyce Fairbairn Middle School in 2018-2019 reduced capacity concerns at middle school in west Lethbridge. Every boundary in west Lethbridge was adjusted. Significant adjustments occurred with French Immersion programming being moved from Ecole Nicholas Sheran to Ecole Agnes Davidson school in south Lethbridge. This change created an additional 220 student spaces that could be reallocated from other west Lethbridge elementary schools. With growth continuing to grow at the high school level and Chinook High School would be over capacity within a few years, the decision was made to allocated part of west Lethbridge high school boundaries to the Lethbridge Collegiate Institute (LCI) in south Lethbridge which has excess capacity. Other boundary changes impacted south Lethbridge with the opening of Dr. Robert Plaxton Elementary school, and Ecole Agnes Davidson becoming a single-track French Immersion school. Northside boundaries were also adjusted to create better alignment and balance enrolment amongst the northside elementary schools. New school boundary maps may be found on the Division Website.

The Division was pleased to receive news in February 2021 that it's number one priority in the Capital Plan, a new 900 student K-5 elementary school in west Lethbridge, was approved. The new school is planned for an opening of September 2025 and will address the significant growth challenges in west Lethbridge Elementary schools and provide for a second elementary school in the north end of west Lethbridge.

Lethbridge School Division is excited about the opening of Dr. Robert Plaxton Elementary School, a 600 student K-5 elementary school in southeast Lethbridge opening in August 2021. This should also assist in reducing the high-capacity utilization rates and create capacity for future growth in south Lethbridge.

The Division, number one modernization priority in the Capital Plan is the modernization of Galbraith Elementary School, the Divisions oldest elementary school that resides in north Lethbridge.

In 2021, the Division developed a comprehensive Three (3) Year Capital Plan (2021-2022 to 2023-2024), which provides details on the Division's capital planning processes and priorities, reviews utilization, and provides details on the Division's plans for capital projects and modernizations. The Capital Plan is available to the public on the Division's website [www.lethsd.ab.ca](http://www.lethsd.ab.ca)



## **Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal (IMR) and Capital Maintenance and Renewal (CMR) Planned Spending: March 2021 to April 2022**

In the fall of 2021, the School Division will be completing an Energy Improvement Project of approximately \$4.1 million. This project will provide for upgrades of aging infrastructure such as chillers, cooling towers and heat pumps along with LED lighting upgrades across six schools within the Division. This project is funded through IMR and CMR funding.

The Division plans to undertake a further \$2.5 million in other projects that include parking lots, sidewalks, change rooms, flooring, painting, ventilation, and other mechanical and electrical upgrades. The Division is also replacing all the Key Fob entry access points at all facilities. The above projects are funded through IMR funding.

### **Parental Involvement**

Parents are involved in the process of planning on several different levels. First, schools have School Councils that actively engage in providing input at the school level. School Assurance Plans are developed with input from School Councils. All schools share finalized Assurance Plans and Annual Results Reports.

At a Division level, a Division School Council meets monthly. The final draft of the Assurance Plan is shared with the Division School Council as is the Annual Results. Division School Council sends parent representatives to sit on the Division Policy Advisory Committee, Community Engagement Committee, and Wellness Committee.

The Board hosts an annual Town Hall meeting where stakeholders, including staff, parents, students, and community members provide input into the strategic priorities for the next school year. This Assurance Plan reflects the input provided during the Town Hall meeting held in February 2021.

The Board of Trustees reviews and approves the Assurance Plan at the May Board meeting to comply with Alberta Education requirements of a May 30 submission date for the province.

### **Whistleblower Protection**

There were no disclosures of wrongdoing nor complaints of reprisal during the 2020-2021 school year.

### **Fraud Prevention, Identification, and Reporting**

There were no disclosures of identified or potential frauds during the 2020-2021 school year.