

May 24, 2011

Airdrie and Chestermere students to benefit from new schools in their communities

Airdrie... Students in Airdrie and Chestermere will benefit from four new schools to be built in their communities as a result of an investment in local school infrastructure. Premier Ed Stelmach made the announcement at a student rally at Airdrie's George McDougall High School on May 24.

"This is part of a government investment to address pressing and growing student enrollments in two of the fastest growing communities in Alberta and responds to concerns we've been hearing for some time," said Stelmach. "Education is foundational to the success of our students who will contribute significantly to the future prosperity of the province, and this is a sound investment in our children's future."

In Airdrie, three new schools will be built, two in the Rocky View School Division and one for the Greater Southern Public Francophone Education Region, as well a new school will be built in Chestermere for Rocky View students.

"Education is fundamental to the future of our communities and our province. With this investment, we are ensuring that our students have safe, caring, respectful and modern learning environments," said Education Minister Dave Hancock, "It is important that we continue to build positive atmospheres for learning which helps every child succeed and realize their potential."

Part of an ongoing provincial investment in school infrastructure, this new funding is being distributed for top school infrastructure priorities and to ensure dollars are directed to critical areas.

This is in addition to the Alberta Schools Alternative Procurement (ASAP) project phase two which includes 10 new schools in Okotoks, Langdon, Calgary and Edmonton, opening September 2012. Four new high schools will also open in Edmonton, Calgary, Spruce Grove and Sherwood Park in 2013.

"Alberta Infrastructure will deliver high quality schools that are bright, welcoming spaces, equipped with the latest technology, and designed to adapt to changing educational needs. These will be buildings that work - for students, for teachers, and for the entire community," said Ray Danyluk, Minister of Infrastructure. "We will move forward on these projects immediately, and our goal is to open the doors for students by 2014."

Projects will be delivered through a combination of public-private partnerships and regional bundles. This approach allows projects to be completed faster than would otherwise be possible, while taking full advantage of core school designs, economies of scale and private-sector innovations.

The Alberta government is working to build a better Alberta by fostering economic growth, strengthening our health and education systems, investing in infrastructure, supporting safe and strong communities and ensuring a clean and healthy environment.

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Airdrie and Chestermere school project and provincial student enrolment

Greater Southern Public Francophone Education Region

- A new 400 student-capacity Kindergarten to Grade 12 facility, including a gymnasium and other required amenities such as a library, will be constructed on a permanent site in Airdrie. This will provide access to enhanced educational programming opportunities and allow for future growth for Francophone students in Airdrie. The current Francophone school in Airdrie consists entirely of modular classrooms, with no gym, library or other services. With enrolment exceeding 150 students and growing annually, the new permanent facility will ensure students have access to the same services and educational programming enjoyed by most Alberta students.

Rocky View School Division

- A new Grade 6 to 8 school with capacity for 900 students will help alleviate enrolment pressures in Airdrie's growing community. With the approval of a new Grade 6 to 8 school in Sagewood, enrolment pressures will be reduced on the existing Kindergarten to Grade 8 school facilities.
- The new Grade 9 to 12 school with capacity for 1,200 students will reduce the pressure on the existing Airdrie high schools: George McDougall and Bert Church. Both existing high schools are at full student capacity and are located on sites with limited room for expansion.
- A new Kindergarten to Grade 9 school with capacity for 900 students will be built in Chestermere to accommodate future student growth and provide additional space at the junior high level.

Provincial Student Enrolment Overview

- According to Statistics Canada, Alberta is the only province that continues to see growth in student enrolment.
- The student-aged population (4-18) in Alberta is forecast to grow from just over 600,000 in 2010 to about 700,000 in 2020, an increase of almost 98,000 or 16 per cent in ten years.
- The number of students currently entering Kindergarten to Grade 3 is significantly higher than the number of students in the upper grades. As these students move up, overall enrolment will increase correspondingly.

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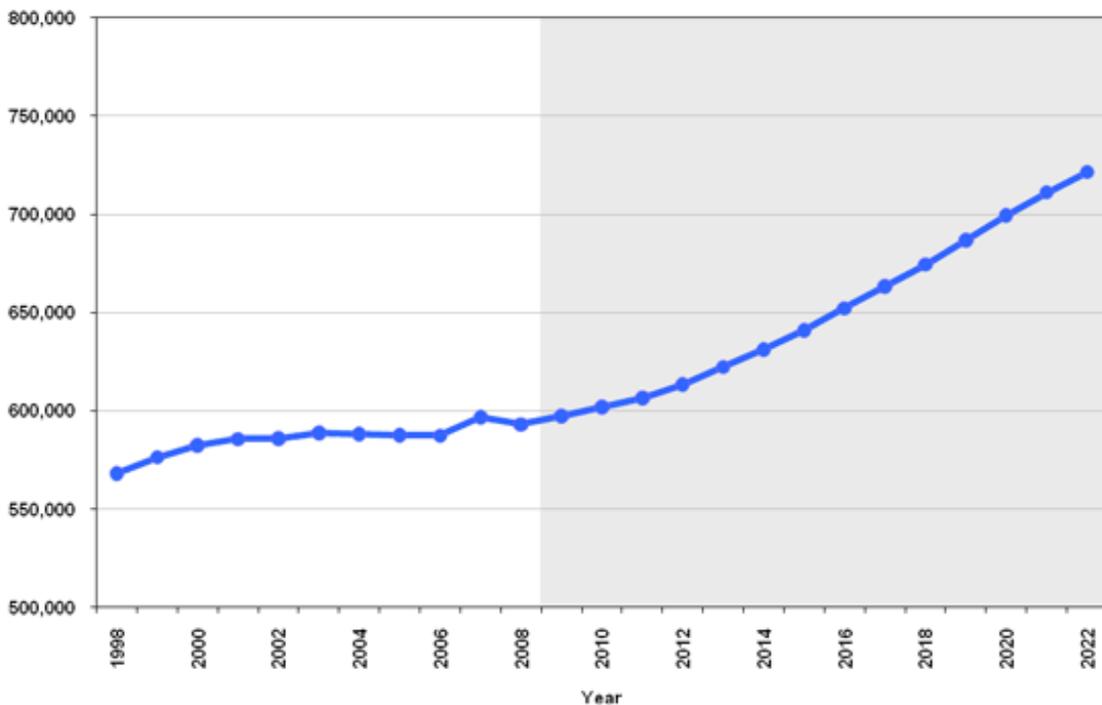
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Alberta Student-Aged Population Projection

Alberta's age 4 to 18 population is projected to increase by nearly 98,000 in the next 10 years, from just over 600,000 in 2010 to almost 700,000 in 2020.

Source: Student Population Projection and Teacher Forecasting Model, Workforce Planning, Alberta Education. This projection was calculated on June 25, 2010 using the "Historical Average" method, based on ten-year historical average data.



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