

May 24, 2011

Fort McMurray students benefit from new schools

Fort McMurray... Students in Fort McMurray will benefit from two new schools to be constructed and modernization of Fort McMurray Composite High School as a result of an investment in local school infrastructure. Premier Ed Stelmach made the announcement at Fort McMurray's Holy Trinity High School, which is under construction and scheduled to open in September.

"This is part of a government investment to address pressing and growing student enrollments in one 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."

The new Kindergarten to Grade 6 schools will be built in Fort McMurray to serve the students of the Fort McMurray Roman Catholic Separate School District and the Fort McMurray School District. Fort McMurray Composite High School will undergo a phased modernization and addition to meet current program requirements.

"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."

These new infrastructure dollars are 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.

"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.

Backgrounders: Fort McMurray School Projects and provincial student enrolment overview

Media inquiries may be directed to:

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Fort McMurray school projects and provincial enrolment overview

Fort McMurray Public School District

- A new Kindergarten to Grade 6, 600-student-capacity school, the new Christina Gordon Elementary School, will be built in the growing Timberlea area.
- While the imminent completion of the new Ecole McTavish 800-capacity junior high school will help provide additional student spaces, Kindergarten to Grade 6 enrolment is growing and supports the need for this new elementary school.
- Fort McMurray Composite High School will undergo modernization of the school's mechanical systems, including the replacement of aging mechanical, electrical and lighting systems to meet current safety and building code requirements.

Fort McMurray Roman Catholic Separate School District

- A new Kindergarten to Grade 6, 600-student capacity school in the Eagle Ridge neighbourhood of Timberlea is the highest capital priority for the Catholic Separate School District.
- The new school will serve students from areas soon to be developed in Timberlea and neighbourhoods to the north.

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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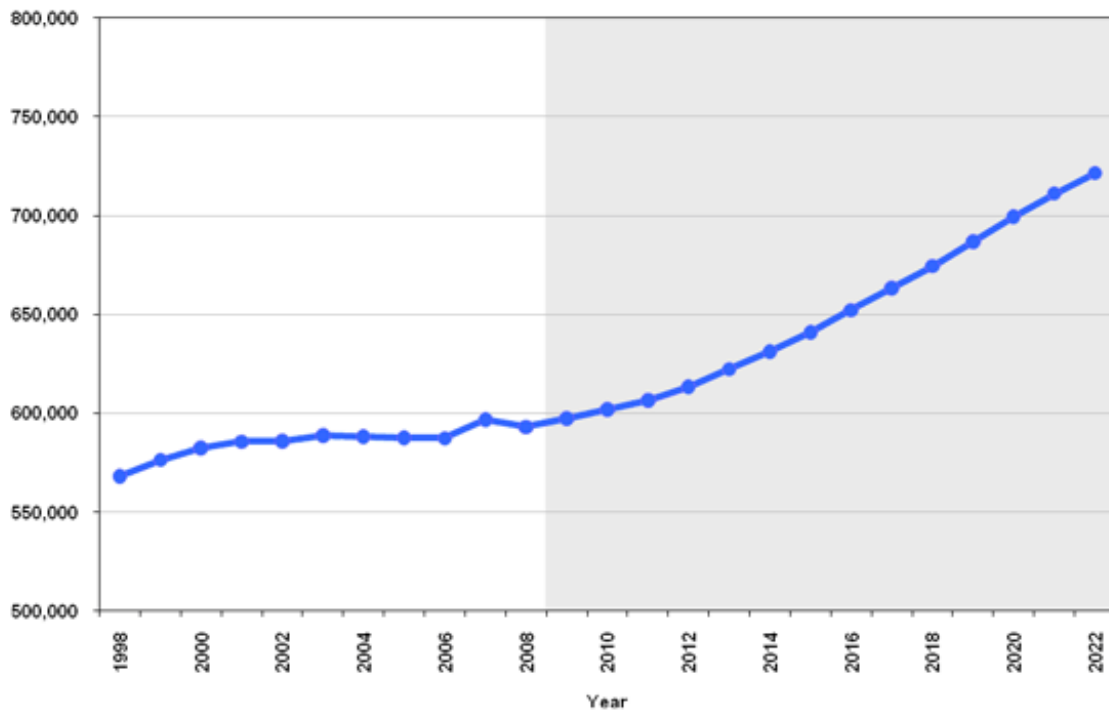
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Alberta Student-Aged Population Projection

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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