

2020-2021

ENHANCING STUDENT LEARNING REPORT

School District 6 Rocky Mountain is located on the traditional unceded shared territory of the Ktunaxa and Secwépemc peoples and the chosen home of the Métis.



Rocky Mountain
School District #6



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

School District No.6 Rocky Mountain is honoured to serve students and families in the communities located on traditional unceded shared territory of the Ktunaxa and Secwépemc peoples and the chosen home of the Métis along highway 93/95 from Golden to Kimberley.

Schools play an integral role within the community and the partnership between families and educators is a strength that supports the growth and development of the children we serve. This was never more evident than in the past school year, when educators, community and families came together in response to the global pandemic. The pandemic was a catalyst for significant change and challenge for our community. In partnership with families, we responded and continued to provide quality teaching and learning opportunities for our students.

Respecting the diversity of each community and the unique needs of each student is integral to the success of students. The District is committed to enhancing equity, to a renewed relationship with our Indigenous Partners based on recognition of rights, mutual respect, co-operation, partnership and an unwavering commitment to closing the gap for our Indigenous learners.

Ultimately, following all provincial requirements, the District's mandate is to create and enable the conditions that foster success for every child and student we serve. This work is a collective responsibility shared among the Board of Education, staff, families and community partners who, together, strive to fulfill the District's Vision of Opportunity, Equity and Success for Each Learner.

Amber Byklum, Board Chairperson | Rocky Mountain School District 6



MISSION

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

VALUES -

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

EQUITY - We strive to build learning environments that are equitable, honour diversity and inclusion, are safe, caring and healthy places to work and learn.

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

ACCOUNTABILITY - We are accountable to ourselves, our students and our communities for professionalism, transparency and quality results.

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



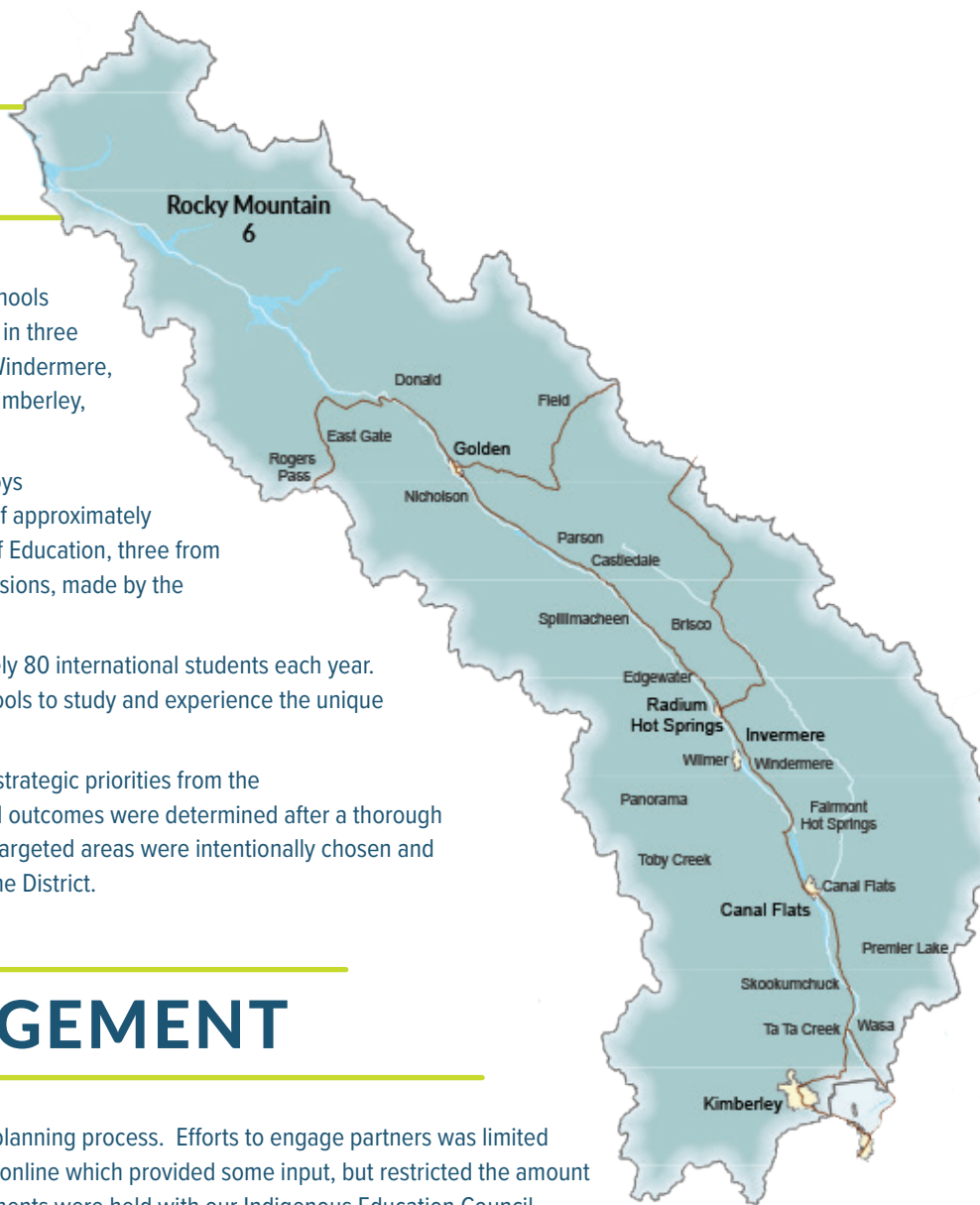
OUR CONTEXT

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

The District serves approximately 3500 students, employs approximately 550 staff, and has an operating budget of approximately \$54 million dollars. Nine Trustees make up the Board of Education, three from each zone: Its mission, vision, and values guide all decisions, made by the Board of Education.

Rocky Mountain School District also serves approximately 80 international students each year. These students from around the world enroll in our schools to study and experience the unique environment that we have to offer in British Columbia.

The Enhancing Learning Report 2021 reflects the three strategic priorities from the 2021-24 Strategic Plan. Goals, strategies, and expected outcomes were determined after a thorough analysis of provincial, district, and school based data. Targeted areas were intentionally chosen and resourced to support continuous improvement across the District.



PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

Engaging partners is an important part of the strategic planning process. Efforts to engage partners was limited by the global pandemic. Engagement efforts moved to online which provided some input, but restricted the amount of meaningful conversation. A series of online engagements were held with our Indigenous Education Council, District Parent Advisory Council, C.U.P.E., Rocky Mountain Teachers' Association, Principals, Vice Principals and the District Student Advisory Council. Input was collected and compiled into a "What We Heard" document. This input and a summary of School Success Plans informed the development of the District Operational Plan that articulates the goals, strategies, supports and expected outcomes for the District.

OUR DATA STORY

School District No.6 Rocky Mountain strives for a balanced approach to data collection and analysis to determine evidence of learning. Our data story highlights areas of learning where students demonstrate visible strengths and illustrates areas that inform our improvement targets for the upcoming year. Based on the principle that balanced evidence of learning comes from multiple authentic sources, data is collected at three different levels: the classroom, the district, and the province. A triangulation of data ensures reliability in reporting and calibrates our classroom level instruction with provincial expectations in curriculum.

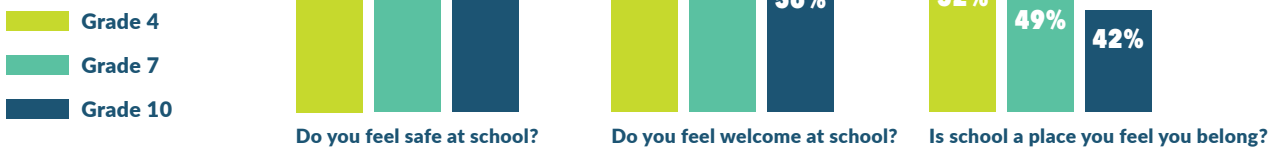
The data presented narrates an analysis of the learning and outlines goals and strategies connected to priorities in our 2021-24 Three Year Strategic Plan. Overall, the data affirms the achievements our students have made in literacy – especially in the area of written communication, and highlights the urgency to strive for improvement in the areas of reading. For our learners, who are Indigenous and those with diverse abilities, the data shows that the District must pay acute attention to closing the achievement gap between these learners and their grade level peers.

PRIORITY 1: EQUITY & INCLUSION

Our ability to ensure each learner has what they need to succeed defines our work in the area of equity and inclusion. The District measures student responses to specific questions to determine the extent to which students feel safe, included, and connected at school. Regular attendance, while not a goal in itself, can be a good reflection of whether students feel a connection to school. Feeling safe, welcome, and having a sense of belonging are important pre-requisites to learning. They are also areas on which we can exert strategic influence.

The District collects and analyzes these data to determine the nature of students' experiences at school in order to influence them in positive ways. The data presented in Figure 1, while promising for students in younger grades, shows a downward trend in safety, sense of belonging, and feeling welcome as students' progress through the grades. This concern highlights the need for equity and inclusion to be the Board of Education's first priority. This priority is founded on the premise that students are not able to achieve in academic areas without experiencing positive feelings of social emotional inclusion and security. School Success Plans include strategies to address student inclusion and social emotional well-being to ensure all students are comfortable and ready to learn. While this data is not filtered into unique populations, such as learners who are Indigenous or learners with diverse abilities, it is fair to assume that our most vulnerable students face additional challenges in this area.

Figure 1 -
STUDENT
LEARNING SURVEY



Students' level of social emotional well-being is correlated to the quality and frequency of adult relationships students experience at school. The data in Figure 2, informs us that across the grade levels, about twenty-five percent of students do not feel that an adult cares about them at their school.

Figure2 - Student Learning Survey



ATTENDANCE DATA

In order to learn and become included in school experiences, students must attend school regularly. Although recognizing that students miss school for a variety of reasons and with the added impact of the pandemic, we use attendance data as an additional marker for student engagement and sense of belonging in school. *Research* shows us that even a 10% aggregate rate of absenteeism can predict some negative learning outcomes. The district will continue to measure attendance habits for students as one of the gauges for progress in the Board of Education's priority of equity and inclusion.

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WITH > OR = TO 10% (19) DAYS MISSED = 34%

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WITH > OR = TO 20% (38) DAYS MISSED = 10%

The data, when considered together, suggests a focus on the quality and frequency of adult/student relationships may impact feelings of belonging, feeling welcome and feeling safe. Many school success plans identify strategies to support these relationships.

GOAL #1

Remove Barriers to Equity

STRATEGIES

- Establish a district level Indigenous Education Vice Principal position to support capacity building of staff and relationship building with Indigenous Partners.
- Implement the priorities of the Equity in Action scan.
- District wide professional learning strategy focused on the Calls to Action: Truth and Reconciliation Commission, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and First Peoples' Principles of Learning.
- Embed First Peoples' Principles of Learning in all subject area age appropriately

EXPECTED OUTCOME

- Increased partnership between Indigenous communities, the District and schools.
- Increases engagement of Indigenous Partners in education decision making.
- Staff demonstrate a commitment to Truth and Reconciliation.
- Increased capacity of teachers to implement the First Peoples Principles of learning into curriculum.

GOAL #2

All Learning Environments and Opportunities are Inclusive

STRATEGIES

- Foster a culture of belonging for ALL students and staff across the district.
- Establish a Mental Health strategy to address the post pandemic mental health needs for students and staff.
- District wide professional development that support the implementation of inclusive learning strategies and the establishment of inclusive learning spaces.
- Remove barriers to learning for vulnerable students, students in care, and students with diverse abilities.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

- District leaders work with staff to develop strategies that address students' sense of belonging.
- A Mental Health Strategy is developed and implemented.
- ALL classrooms/schools are inclusive.
- ALL students have equitable access to learning.

GOAL #3

Student, Parent and Partner Engagement

STRATEGIES

- Develop and implement an engagement plan that invites input from students, parents and education partner groups.
- Redevelop district and school websites to improve overall communication.
- Establish a Student Advisory Council.
- Establish an Indigenous Education Council.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

- An engagement plan is implemented to provide students, parents and education partner groups an opportunity to provide input into the district strategic plan.
- District and school websites are primary sources of information.
- The Student Advisory Council is established and student voice is valued in decision making.
- The Indigenous Education Council is actively engaged in SD6 education decision making.

PRIORITY 2: SUCCESS FOR EACH LEARNER

LITERACY

Literacy refers to students' ability to understand various forms of information, process that information, and create meaningful personal responses in a number of different forms. Being literate involves solving problems, interpreting real life situations, and making meaning from the world around us.

For many years, the District has had a strategic focus on literacy especially in the area of writing. As a result, our data shows that all students are doing better in writing than reading. In fact, in all data sources analyzed, students in School District No. 6 performed well above the provincial average in writing achievement.

Reflected in Figure 3 is the gap between reading and writing performance in provincial assessment. Figure 4 reveals a similar, but wider gap, as measured by District assessments of writing and District reading benchmarks. This is not surprising given the past writing focus in the district. The district wide writing assessment provides consistent information regarding student writing achievement.

As we shift a focus toward improving reading, currently the District does not have a consistent comprehensive reading assessment. Such an assessment would allow for triangulation between report card achievement and provincial assessment achievement and would assist school staff in understanding reasons for significant differences between the two sources of data. District strategy addresses the need to evaluate available reading assessment tools to develop an assessment model similar to the district writing assessment.

Figure 5 shows overall improvement at both grades 4 and 7 over time. These figures also suggest that students develop their reading and writing ability over time. Consistently greater numbers of students make considerable improvements in reading and writing between grade 4 and grade 7. By the time students reach grade 7, many of them are performing proficiently in reading and in writing. Since there is still a large portion of students not represented by these numbers, the District must continue to pursue improved achievement in literacy. Specifically, students with diverse abilities and students who are Indigenous require specific attention under this priority to close gaps in achievement with grade level peers. While Indigenous learner data is not available for the District, these students typically experience a 10-point gap compared with grade level peers.

Figure 5 - FOUNDATION SKILLS ASSESSMENT - READING GRADE 4 AND 7.

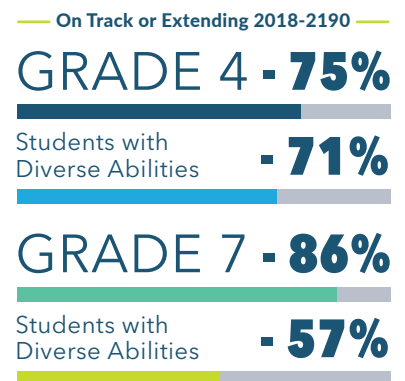
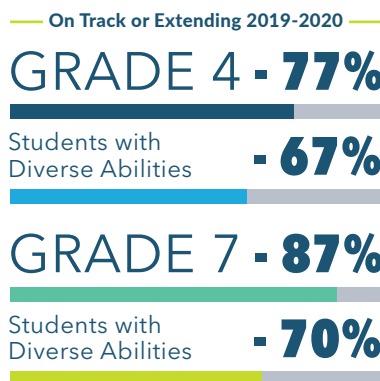
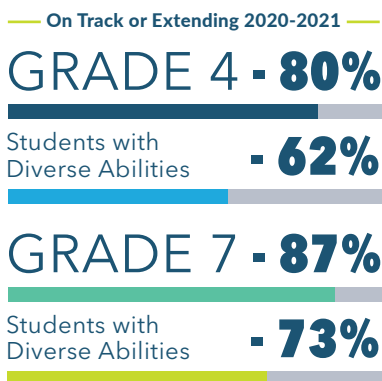


Figure 3 - FOUNDATION SKILLS ASSESSMENT

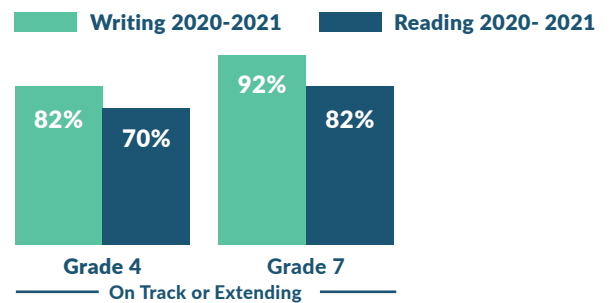
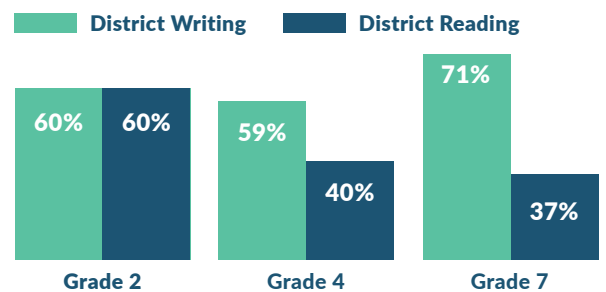


Figure 4 - PROFICIENT OR EXTENDING - WRITING AND READING DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS

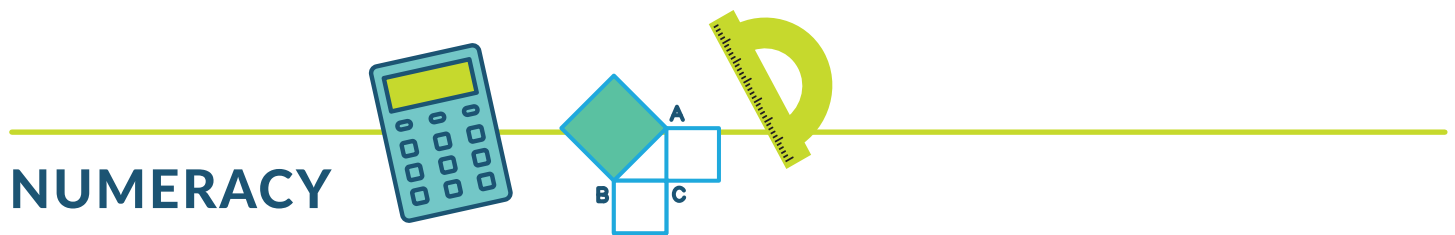


With the implementation of the Grade 10 Literacy Assessment (Figure 6), the District is able to see how senior students compare with peers throughout the province. This assessment also helps us to determine whether students are acquiring the concepts and competencies to be successful with literacy based learning. This assessment is administered in two sittings each year, one in Winter and one in Spring. Most students in the District write this assessment in the Spring. This was the case in 2020-2021. For this reason, data is not yet available for 2020-2021. Figure 6 reflects assessment data from 2019-2020

Figure 6 -
2019-2020 GRADE 10
LITERACY ASSESSMENT



Although students are achieving above provincial average on the Grade 10 Literacy Assessment, we expect these numbers to increase as schools implement specific Literacy strategies in a variety of curricular areas. As this assessment measures students' literacy competency nearing the end of their school career, increasing achievement on this measure is a goal toward which the District is committed.



The data from both Foundational Skills Assessment, local numeracy assessments and report card data shows that as a whole, the district needs to implement a strategic focus on numeracy. This is especially important to close the achievement gap for our Indigenous learners.

The available data points us in two important directions. The first direction is toward adding a focus on numeracy to our instructional priorities. Report card assessment K-7, and transition rates at secondary, suggest students are doing relatively well in numeracy. Local data analysis at schools identified number sense, problem solving and real world connections as targeted areas for improvement. However, provincial sources of data seem to suggest the opposite is true. When collecting numeracy data, we discovered that the District has a data gap at the system level for student achievement in numeracy. This gap supports the need for a K-9 district level assessment in order for school teams to know how to equip students with numeracy skills for advanced grades and life beyond the classroom.

Unlike District data about literacy, numeracy achievement data follows an opposite pattern (Figure 7). In numeracy, as students age through the system, of note is a pattern of worsening achievement results. These results are compounded for specific groups of students, such as, learners who are Indigenous and learners with diverse abilities. Carried forward to grade 10 (Figure 8), this trend results in the need to urgently equip all learners in the area of numeracy with the competencies required to show growth over time. We expect a reversal in this pattern to see students achieve better as they age.

Figure 7 - FOUNDATION SKILLS ASSESSMENT - NUMERACY GRADE 4 AND 7

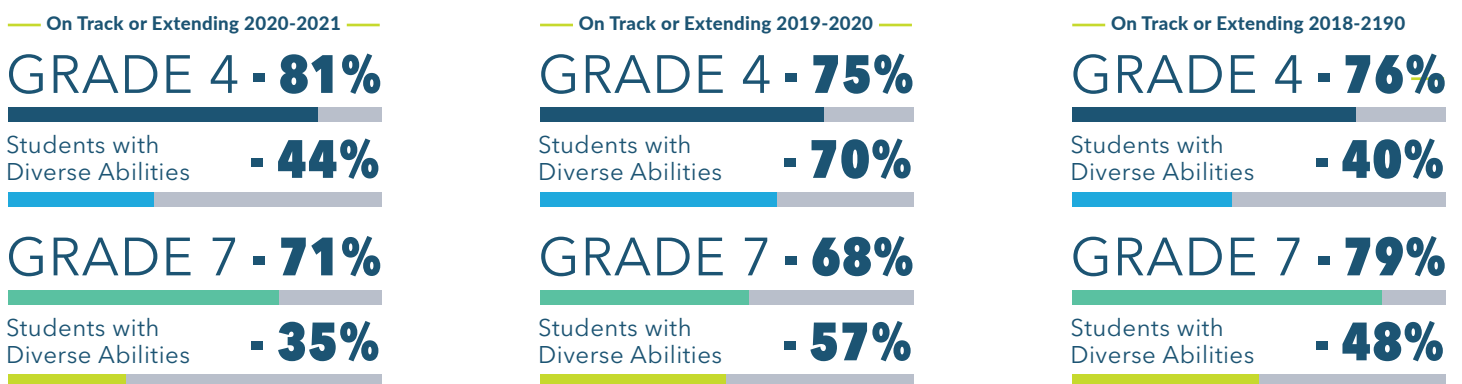
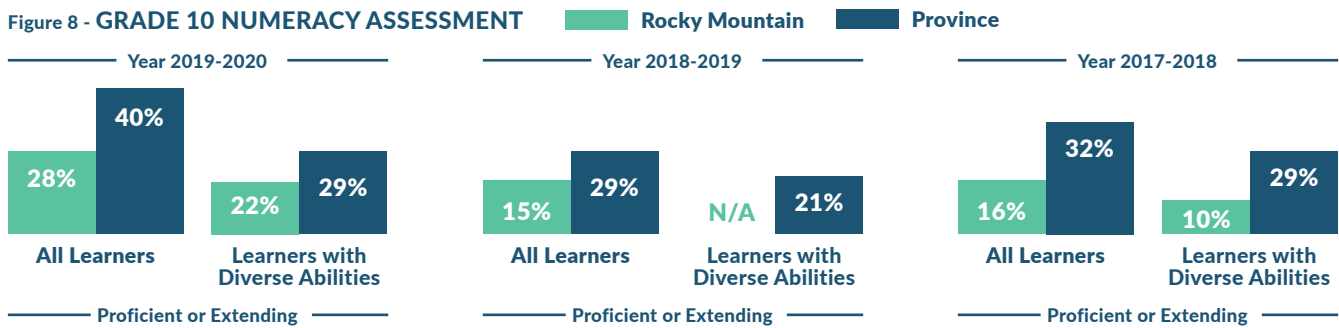
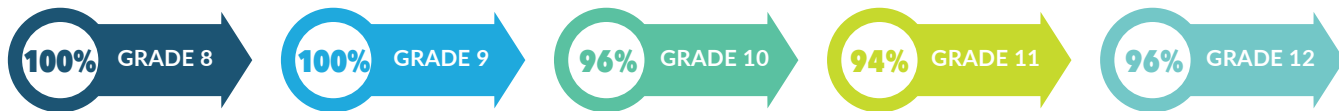


Figure 8 - GRADE 10 NUMERACY ASSESSMENT



Despite specific priorities in academic areas outlined in the data above, students continue to transition between grades as expected. All students K-7 transition at a rate of 100%. District policy and practice 5010 emphasizes the importance of grade to grade transition. Prior to grade 10, retention for any course would be out of the ordinary and would require in depth consultation between the school, District, and parent. Figure 9, below, shows students in the district also transition very well throughout secondary school.

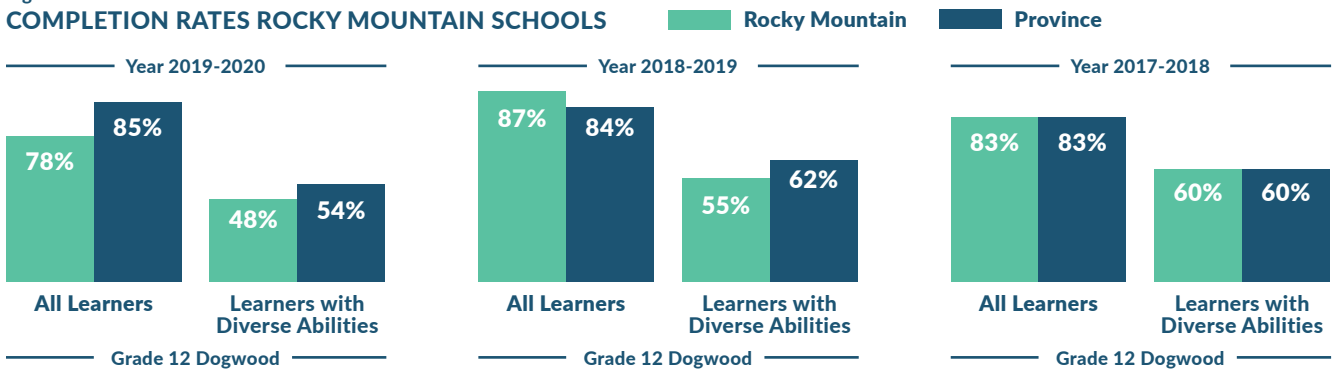
Figure 9 - TRANSITION RATES GRADE 8-12, 2020-2021



Though there are high numbers of students transitioning successfully between grades, the district experienced a slip in our completion rates in 2019-2020. This slip is accounted for by a counting and classification error for some international students who the district knew would be with Rocky Mountain for a limited duration. These students who were expected to leave the district were mistakenly counted in the completion rate for 2019-2020 and account for the slip. Considering this error, and our locally reported graduation rates from each school, Rocky Mountain graduated more students in 2019-2020 than in the year previous.

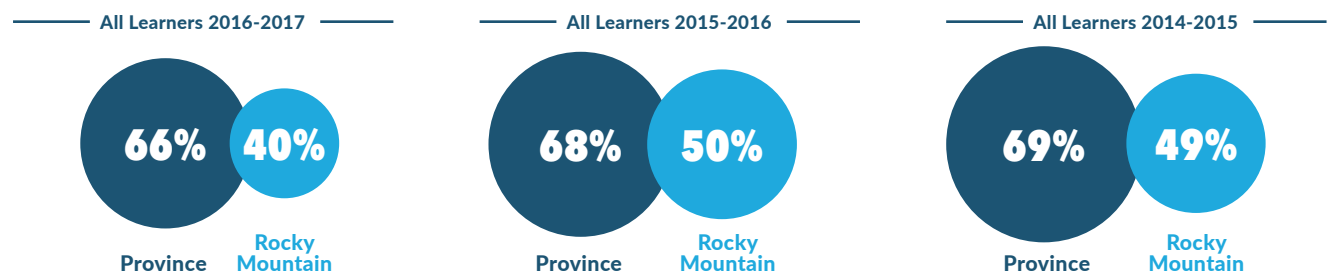
Unfortunately, fewer of our Indigenous and vulnerable students, graduate with a Dogwood. Reaching parity for these students is the primary reason for the Board of Education's number one priority, Equity and Inclusion.

Figure 10 - COMPLETION RATES ROCKY MOUNTAIN SCHOOLS



In Rocky Mountain, district staff work diligently to help students plan for a future orientation. Given our geographical location and the lifestyles of people in the region, successful students do not always aspire to attend a post-secondary institution in order to accomplish their career goals. Many students pursue promising careers in fields related to tourism and the outdoors. It is possible the COVID pandemic had an impact on the three year window from 2017 to 2020. Given the restrictions and changes to post-secondary educational delivery, we know many students opted to wait a year to enter post-secondary. This would account for a lower entry rate to post-secondary for the period of 2016-17 to 2019-2020. The Rocky Mountain School District No. 6 goal is for all students to have acquired the tools and competencies required to pursue all options upon completion of Grade 12. This data is reflected in Figure 11.

Figure 11 - TRANSITION TO POST SECONDARY WITHIN 3 YEARS OF COMPLETION



GOAL #1

ALL Students are Ready to Learn

STRATEGIES

- Explore early learning options for all students in all communities.
- District wide focus on wrap around supports to meet the individual learning needs of students.
- Professional learning opportunities focused on developing student and staff agency.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

- An Early Learning strategy is developed to meet the needs of each community.
- Increased capacity of School Based Team to identify and meet the needs of students.
- Staff have the capacity to help students understand and develop agency.

GOAL #2

Success for ALL Learners in Literacy and Numeracy

STRATEGIES

- Identify and implement a district wide, performance based reading assessment.
- Target Literacy supports at the middle years.
- District wide professional learning strategy focused on Literacy and Numeracy.
- Establish district support positions for Literacy and Numeracy.
- Identify and establish district wide Numeracy assessments at all levels.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

- A consistent approach to assessing reading is implemented across the district.
- Middle years students demonstrate increased achievement level in literacy.
- Increased teacher capacity in literacy and numeracy instruction and assessment.
- Teachers have access to Numeracy and Literacy supports and expertise.
- A consistent approach to Numeracy assessment is implemented across the district.

GOAL #3

Success Beyond Classroom

STRATEGIES

- Ensure that all teachers and students have access to current teaching and learnings resources about the history of Indigenous Peoples.
- Establish partnerships in each community to enhance the delivery of supports and services for students.
- Provide seamless transitions for all students at each stage of their growth and development.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

- Teachers and students have access to up to date resources regarding Indigenous Peoples providing multiple perspectives.
- Improved community partnerships strengthen the delivery of services to children and families.
- Student transition experiences are improved at all levels.

PRIORITY 3: TEACHING & LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE



Teaching and leadership excellence is a cornerstone of a strong education system. The District is taking a proactive approach in supporting teachers and leaders because research shows that quality teachers and leaders have an important impact on student success.

A focused approach on instructional leadership through generative dialogue and an instructional rounds method is shifting to a culture of learning in all schools.

GOAL #1

Develop a Coordinated Approach to Professional Learning

STRATEGIES

- Develop and implement professional learning that will further advance the goals of the district and school plans that are cyclical and foster a continuous growth mindset.
- Establish an Aspiring Leaders program to address succession planning.
- Provide a variety of professional learning opportunities for teachers and support staff to support student learning.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

- Increased capacity of staff to further the goals outlined in the School Success Plan and District Strategic Plan.
- The aspiring leaders program is fully subscribed and learnings are evident in leadership practices across the district.
- Student achievement is increased.

GOAL #2

Building Leadership Capacity through a Culture of Collaboration

STRATEGIES

- Continue monthly District Leadership Team meetings that build collective capacity of school leaders.
- Continue to build Instructional Leadership capacity with Principals and Vice Principals using an “Instructional Rounds” method.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

- Principal and Vice Principal capacity is enhanced through meaningful learning opportunities.
- Increased capacity of school leader to conduct instructional rounds and coach teachers.

GOAL #3

Engagement Through Innovative Practices

STRATEGIES

- Principals and Vice Principals model and encourage a culture of supported risk taking when coaching and mentoring staff.
- Offer a variety of professional learning opportunities for teachers and support staff that fosters innovative and creative learning opportunities for students.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

- Innovation is evident in classrooms.
- Student engagement is increased as a result of innovative teaching and learning opportunities.

OTHER SUPPORTS

TRANSPORTATION

Rocky Mountain School District No. 6 transports approximately 1600 students on 21 bus routes in and around the three major communities in our school district, Golden, Invermere and Kimberley. Our District spans over 270 km from one end to the other.



Supporting priority one equity and inclusion, the Transportation Department provides financial transportation assistance for parents of those children where bussing is not available. The District strives to provide inclusive learning environments and has purchased a wheelchair accessible bus that will provide students with diverse abilities access to school.

A transportation agreement has been developed in collaboration with our Indigenous partners to adjust our school bus routes to enhance the service level for our Indigenous students. Extracurricular transportation will be provided for the Indigenous students with the goal of increasing participation in after school and community activities.

As part of our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint, the district has purchased the first of two electric school busses. The first bus is serving the Golden community and the second bus will service the Kimberley community. This initiative helps model environmental stewardship and provides learning opportunities for students supporting priorities two and three.

FACILITIES

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

In an effort to support the priorities of the Board of Education, the School Operations Department enhance the learning environment by keeping our buildings, grounds and equipment safe, clean and in good condition providing healthy school facilities for our students and staff.

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

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

As the school district begins to think about the new Ministry mandate for early learning, we are engaging community partners to determine the needs of the community. The District has the opportunity to explore options for before and after school care as well as early learning opportunities for pre-school learners. This new programming will potentially impact school facilities and school configurations. These conversations will continue throughout the year so that the school district is well positioned to capitalize on this new opportunity.

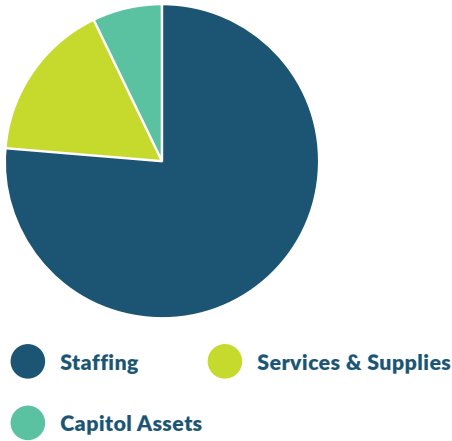
Opportunities, to offer early learning programming in collaboration with community partners, would enhance transition to kindergarten for our young learners and their families. It would also allow for early intervention of learning needs to increase student success in school.



FINANCE

The School District operates on a budget of approximately \$54 million dollars annually. The budget breaks down into three main areas, staffing, services and supplies, and capital as shown in Figure A

Figure A - 2022 ANNUAL BUDGET



Staffing costs are determined based on student enrollment, and make up the majority of the budget expenditures and are broken down as shown in Figure B.

Services and Supplies are further broken down into the following areas as shown in Figure C.

Figure B - STAFFING

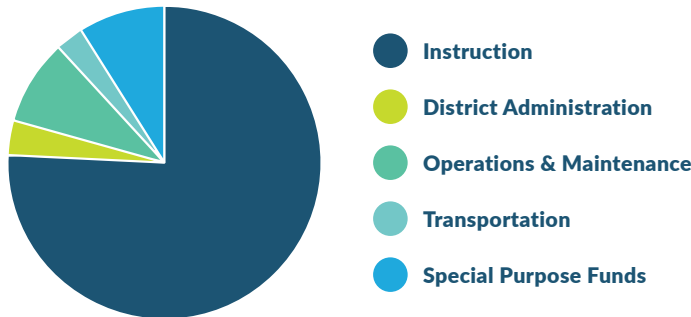
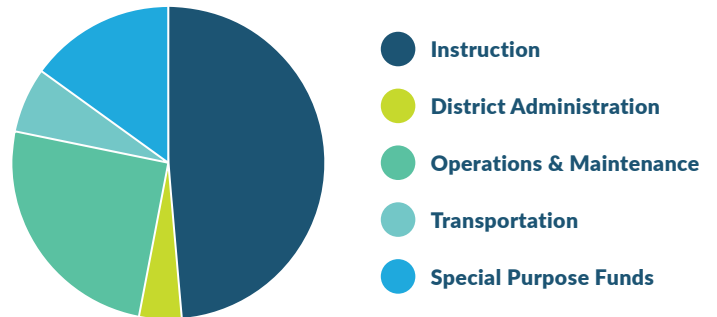


Figure C - SERVICES & SUPPLIES



Instruction services and supplies are funds allocated to support learning. District administration, operations, maintenance and transportation allocations support the overall operations of the school district. Special purpose funds are grants provided by the province and are targeted funds that support ministry identified priorities. For example, this year the District received addition funds to support mental health. A plan for these funds will be made in partnership with schools and communities to further the equity and inclusion priorities of the District that target mental health of students and staff post pandemic. Other special purpose funds and targeted funds add supports for Indigenous learners, English language learners, and learners with diverse abilities/disabilities, capacity building, early learning and French programming and have been allocated to support the Board of Education priorities articulated in the 2021-24 Strategic Plan.