

The Board [approved](#) its \$140 million budget for the 2024-25 school year, on May 28. The Board anticipates revenue next year of \$139.5 million, with a budget deficit of \$571,336. The division will use reserves to balance the budget, anticipating that reserves at the end of the 2024-2025 school year will be \$4.7 million. Also on May 28, the Board approved its Education Plan. Both documents are posted on the division's website, [here](#).

The Board decided it [will add a second vice chair](#) to the Board structure to help with the responsibilities currently shared by the Chair and Vice-Chair. The Board will elect one trustee to this position at its annual organizational meeting in June.

On May 28, the Board [approved](#) an application from Chinook's Edge for federal funding through Jordan's Principle, which is available to support Indigenous students. The division estimates between 5 and 40 students at each of its schools may be eligible for funding.

On May 24, the Board [hosted a sod turning event](#) at the site of Penhold Waskasoo Middle School, which will open in the fall of 2025. Future students, trustees, local administrators, Town of Penhold staff and elected officials as well as Alberta Transportation Minister Devin Dreeshen were [in attendance](#).

The Board [selected two recipients for its 2024 Roy E. Cope Award](#). [The award is given annually](#) to any person who has made a significant contribution to the welfare of students. Ray Hoppins, an Associate Superintendent who is retiring from a 32 year career in education, and Kirk Wassmer, who is retiring after a 35 year teaching career, including 23 years as the band teacher at Didsbury High School, [are both recipients](#) of the award.

Trustees were thrilled to see the division's nominee for the Edwin Parr Award for exceptional first year teachers [selected as the winner](#) of the Zone, on May 27. [Emily Wilson](#) is a teacher at Carstairs Elementary School.

At its May 7th meeting the [Board congratulated](#) Tyshia Bessey, a Grade 12 student from Didsbury High School, who achieved 100% on her Math 30-1 Diploma Exam in January. Also, the Board sends congratulations to Hugh Sutherland student, Jules Owen-Pole, who will [receive](#) a \$100,000 Schulich Leader Scholarship. Congratulations from the Board also go to Innisfail Middle School teacher, Erin Holt, who is a [recipient of the Mentor of the Year Award](#) for the Town of Innisfail. Also, the Board was pleased to see the Hugh Sutherland School council [receive provincial recognition for its work](#), which presented at the Alberta School Councils Association Conference.

Trustees send congratulations to the [Didsbury High School band](#), which [received a gold](#) at MusicFest, a national band competition, and to the band's director, Kirk Wassmer, who [received a national band director award](#). And, recognition goes to three Chinook's Edge bus drivers who [claimed the top spots](#) at the Central Alberta Bus Rodeo.

The Board is pleased to see that a [new career pathway](#) has [opened up for students](#). In April, [six Chinook's Edge students](#) got to participate in ground school at Sky Wings Aviation, at the Red Deer airport. [All of the students](#) completed the training and [are interested](#) in taking the next step towards becoming a pilot.

Trustees also appreciate seeing career learning opportunities underway in schools, such as the first annual [three-day internship program](#) launched at Hugh Sutherland. Grade 10 students at the school were partnered with community businesses and organizations based on career interest.

The focus of the Board, and division, on career connections is having an influence. Two Chinook's Edge students were able to [meet Alberta Premier Danielle Smith](#) and share their dual credit experiences. Also, K-12 leaders from across Canada [visited the Community Learning Campus](#) in Olds to learn more about the division's journey. Trustees are committed to this key focus and are pleased to see its impact on students.