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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Provincial budget/school fees announcements have minimal impact on Livingstone Range funding, programs

Claresholm, AB

Following recent announcements by the Alberta government regarding school funding and the reduction of school fees, Livingstone Range School Division (LRSD) has determined it will be able to continue operations with minimal impact to student services.

Bill 1, an act to reduce school fees, was introduced by Education Minister David Eggen and passed in the Alberta Legislature last Wednesday, March 15. The bill eliminates fees related to instructional supplies or materials, and transportation for eligible students who live more than 2.4 km away from their designated school.

“This legislation will make life more affordable for everyday Albertans by reducing the financial burden of school fees,” said Eggen.

The Alberta government has also promised significant increases in educational spending in the province, which will help balance the loss of revenue due to fee reduction in some areas.

According to LRSD Associate Superintendent of Business Services, Jeff Perry, the additional funding will help make up for any shortfall.

“The Division will receive an increase of about \$129,000 from the province, which will offset an equal loss of \$129,000 in fee revenue,” says Perry. “Any budget decrease for us will be due to declines in student enrollment. These figures are based on the 2015-2016 LRSD budget.”

The Alberta School Boards Association is pleased with the announcement of additional spending for schools in the province, but maintains a continued financial commitment is necessary to keep pace with cost-of-living increases and address increasingly complex student needs.

LRSD Board of Trustees Chair, Brad Toone, echoes a commitment to the best educational interests of students, saying, “The Division is always looking for ways to support families and maintain quality of programs for students.”

Adds LRSD Superintendent, Dave Driscoll, “Board members, school administrators and senior administration will continue to meet on a regular basis to provide clear direction for schools, further to provincial legislation, about what services or programs can and cannot be assessed fees.”

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