

# EIPS

## QUARTERLY UPDATE

### VOL. 24 NO. 3

## EIPS NEWS IN THE NEWS

### Where AI meets book learning

| *Radio Active, CBC Radio*

### EIPS reserves stretched as inflation hits budget

| *The Sherwood Park and Strathcona County News*

### Nearly 400 projects on EIPS' summer to-do list

| *The Sherwood Park and Strathcona County News*

### EIPS crafting AI protocol

| *The Sherwood Park and Strathcona County News*

### Wes Hosford's inclusive playground expansion nearing the finish line

| *The Fort Saskatchewan Record*

### Local students compete in Skills Alberta competition

| *Heartlandnews.ca*

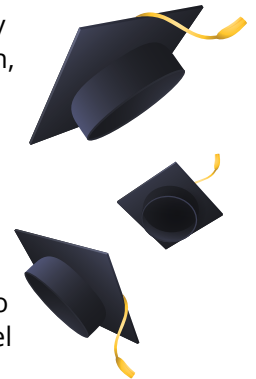
### Pride Week 2024: EIPS Students and Staff

**Celebrate Diversity and Inclusion** | *EIPS News*

## FOR STARTERS —

**June is always one of my favourite times of the year. Students are excited about completing another grade, schools are hosting end-of-year celebrations, and the Division gets to celebrate all its amazing graduates—this year, the class of 2024.**

Over the last decade, through tenacity and hard work, they've learned, grown, overcome challenges, gained new skills, tested their limits and realized their potential. That's what public education is all about. To provide all students with the skills, knowledge and tools they need to succeed and guide them through a life they want to live—be it post-secondary, work, travel or something entirely different.



One way the Board ensures this is through informed decision-making. Take, for example, the Division's 2024-25 budget, which we just recently approved. As a Board, we spent countless hours combing through a tighter-than-normal budget. While provincial funding does cover enrolment growth, it falls short of meeting rising inflationary costs. That, in turn, impacts available student programming and services.

Despite the challenges, EIPS developed a conservative spring budget that will ensure all students—from early learning to senior high completion—will continue receiving high-quality, student-centred education. Read more about the EIPS 2024-25 budget, starting on Page 2, including details about revenues, expenses, programming, reserve usage and new strategies to support students. Enjoy!

**Cathy Allen,**  
Board Chair, Elk Island Public Schools

## INBOX

### Does EIPS still expect the Sherwood Park replacement school to open in the 2026-27 school year?

Yes. EIPS still anticipates the new Sherwood Park replacement school opening in 2026-27. Already, Strathcona County has approved the building's development permit, and the province recently awarded the construction contract—to Edmonton-based AMAN Builders Inc. All good news. That means construction should start in late summer or early fall. The Division also plans to host the official groundbreaking ceremony in early September. Stay tuned for more.

# AT A GLANCE: EIPS BUDGET 2024-25

## EVER WONDER WHAT GOES INTO MAKING EIPS' BUDGET?

### Here's a brief look at the Board's budget process and what's ahead for 2024-25

Every spring, Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) prepares a budget for the upcoming year. It's based on provincial funding, the *Funding Manual for School Authorities*, projected student enrolment, expense estimates, the Division's key priorities and belief statements, and stakeholder feedback. The goal: To ensure a budget that maintains the Board's commitment to student achievement and provides system stability.

For the 2024-25 school year, EIPS' operating budget is \$208.07 million. Of that, \$206.26 million will come from the Division's annual revenue—mainly made up of funding from Alberta Education. That revenue is



based on projected enrolment and specifically targeted grants, such as student supports, school nutrition, transportation and building operations. Other revenue comes from donations, facility rentals and school generated funds—collected on a cost-recovery basis for optional courses, alternative programming, lunch supervision, extracurricular opportunities and field trips. Meanwhile, the remaining \$1.81 million of the budget comes from the Division's accumulated surplus and used to support schools and departments, classroom complexity, mental health, career pathways, and artificial intelligence and digital tools.

**Provincial Revenue**  
(2024-25 school year)

**\$195.79 M**

Revenue from the province is based on the Weighted Moving Average for student enrolment.

**INCLUDED IN THE REVENUE:**

- \$0** for rising inflation—utilities, employee benefits, custodial, insurance
- \$17.05 M** for student transportation
- \$5.05 M** for facility maintenance

**EIPS 2024-25 Spring Budget: \$208.07 Million**

ALBERTA EDUCATION	FEES	OPERATING RESERVES	OTHER
<b>94.1%</b> 17,813 students targeted grants	<b>2.3%</b> school fees transportation fees administration fees	<b>0.9%</b> supports and services career pathways mental health	<b>2.7%</b> donations facility rentals miscellaneous

**EIPS Four-Year Education Plan Priorities:**  
TO PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY, STUDENT-CENTRED EDUCATION.

- Promote growth and success for all students
- Enhance high-quality learning and working environments
- Enhance public education through effective engagement

# EIPS EXPENSE BREAKDOWN 2024-25

After determining the annual revenue, the Board develops a plan to cover its annual expenditures. For 2024-25, the biggest expense is for classroom instruction. After that, it's costs to operate school buildings—utilities, insurance, maintenance and custodial services. Meanwhile, the rest of the budget covers things such as student transportation, system administration and contracted services. The complete EIPS 2024-25 Budget Report is available at [eips.ca](https://eips.ca)

## 77.8% INSTRUCTION (\$9,362 PER STUDENT)

Includes teacher and support staff salaries for schools. School allocations—increasing by 0.2% because of higher standard costs.

## 11.2% OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Includes school building maintenance, utilities, insurance and custodial services. Costs are higher because of rising inflation.

## 8.2% STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Costs to transport EIPS riders—funding is up from last year, thanks to the new student transportation funding model.

## 2.2% SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION

Includes Board costs and central administration costs (central services, IT, legal and financial services). Expenses are below the \$6.55 million grant provided by Alberta Education. Unused funds can go toward other divisional uses.

## 0.6% EXTERNAL SERVICES

Includes contracted services, secondments, facility rentals, and before-and-after school care.



## Budget Process Timeline



### JANUARY

EIPS projects enrolment for the upcoming school year and submits it to Alberta Education



### FEBRUARY

The province announces its Budget 2024

- EIPS conducts its Returning Student Registration Process—used for budget allocations
- The Board updates its Four-Year Education Plan and develops its budget priorities



### MARCH

The province releases its *Funding Manual for School Authorities*—used to develop a budget built on two key principles:

- equitable distribution of funds and programs
- transparent and understandable allocations



### APRIL

The Board approves:

- budget assumptions
- transportation fees

EIPS approves school fees



### MAY

The Board approves:

- budget allocations
- administration fees

Schools and departments use the projected allocations to plan for the 2024-25 school year



### JUNE

The Board approves the Division's spring budget



### NOVEMBER

The Board approves the Division's fall budget—updated to reflect any changes

*NOTE: Any changes to funding, reserve usage, enrolment numbers and standard costs can affect the initial budget. In fall 2024, EIPS will update the budget with the final student-enrolment numbers, revenue and expense variations, carryforward amounts and any reserve spending changes.*



## WHAT'S AN ACCUMULATED SURPLUS?

The accumulated surplus is the primary indicator of the Division's financial resources available to provide future services. By the end of the 2024-25 school year, EIPS projects an accumulated surplus of \$9.56 million. That includes the asset retirement obligation (-\$9.98 million), investment in tangible capital assets (\$8.33 million), capital reserves (\$560,000) and operating reserves (\$10.65 million). As well, EIPS' operating reserve limit is \$12.45 million, which the Division will make sure not to exceed. Meanwhile, reserve spending in 2024-25, will go toward supporting EIPS schools and departments—related to classroom complexity, mental health, and artificial intelligence and digital tools.

## More Students Eligible for Busing

### GOOD NEWS FOR RIDERS!

Thanks to a new provincial funding model for student transportation, some fees are decreasing in 2024-25. The new funding includes expanded distance eligibility, allowances for students attending a school or program of choice, and added money for fuel coverage and inflationary costs. [Learn more](#)



## EIPS COMPLETES ITS THREE-YEAR ENGAGEMENT PLAN: A RECAP

After a three-year endeavour, the Division successfully completed its Three-Year Engagement Plan, which was divided into four key projects. First launched in 2021-22, the plan aimed to address areas of concern to improve operations and best serve students, staff and families. Now complete, the decisions made will ensure EIPS continues providing high-quality education to all students.

### PROJECT 1

Addressed student accommodations in Strathcona County, primarily at the secondary level and French Immersion programming. After an exhaustive review, the Board decided to relocate the senior high French Immersion program to Salisbury Composite High and balance senior high enrolment by adjusting attendance boundaries—redesignating students in Lakeland Ridge to Bev Facey Community High—both effective in 2026-27.

### PROJECT 2

Addressed the enrolment pressures at James Mowat Elementary. After extensive engagement, the Board introduced a random selection process for new students and added an alternative designated school to the attendance boundaries—Fort Saskatchewan Elementary.

### PROJECT 3

Addressed the declining enrolment in the elementary Logos Christian program. Through public consultations and a comprehensive review of data and trend information, EIPS made the decision to consolidate the program at one school site, Brentwood Elementary.

### PROJECT 4

Addressed the low utilization rates at EIPS' two Vegreville-based schools. Through a value scoping session, the community determined the best solution is modernizing Vegreville Composite High to accommodate a consolidated program, kindergarten to Grade 12—now formally requested through the *EIPS Three-Year Capital Plan*.