

| reminder |

Spending Considerations in Challenging Financial Times

January 30, 2015

Dear leaders,

As you are aware, Alberta is facing significant financial challenges on the road ahead. As the Province's challenges in turn become our challenges, we need to be extra mindful of our processes and spending.

The Government of Alberta recently issued a letter addressing this, titled "[Alberta takes action to control spending.](#)" In this communication, the Province states that many publicly funded sectors, including ours, will soon be asked to implement cost containment measures.

Fiscal challenges and belt tightening such as this enable us to showcase the strength of our team. Now is the time to work together, collaborate, and focus on our core values. These values continue to be that students come first, learning is our central purpose, and public education serves the common good. These values will guide us as we put several measures into place today.

We know that making careful financial decisions has been our practice for years and I am grateful to all leaders for that focus. Given current financial realities, I am asking leaders to pay particular care and attention to financial management in the areas outlined below.

For schools:

- Principals continue to be approved to spend funds from their RAM allocation. As always, we trust principals to be diligent in the expenditure of the public monies entrusted to them.

For service units and area offices:

- **Hiring:** All hiring decisions must be approved by the relevant superintendent in advance of posting. Superintendents are expected to ensure that any hiring is critical to support the continued functioning of the CBE.
- **Travel:** Superintendents are to review and approve all requests for travel. Only travel that is critical to the achievement of the CBE values and the objectives set out in the three-year education plan should be approved.
- **Procurement:** All procurement decisions must be assessed by directors or superintendents against the impact on the achievement of the Three-Year Education Plan objectives.
- **Training/professional development:** Superintendents have been advised that only training and professional development critical to the maintenance of professional designations and practices, or critical to advancing the Three-Year Education Plan, shall be approved.

- **Meals:** The purchase of meals should be carefully considered and done only when critical meetings extend over the lunch hour.
- **Hosting:** Hosting of external individuals or groups shall be limited to those that are critical to the success of the CBE.

After many years of declining budgets, we know that there are very few -- if any -- discretionary dollars left in your budgets. Thank you for acting prudently with the public dollars that have been entrusted to you. I look for your support in ensuring that every dollar we spend continues to support our core values in the current fiscal situation.

The Province has indicated that the upcoming budget may be later than usual this year. We do not know what this budget holds for us, but we will continue to keep you informed and updated during the process. Superintendents have started the budget planning process and will be prepared for the challenges it may present. Additionally, our Trustees are actively advocating to the Province regarding the importance of public education.

Thank you for your assistance in these measures. We have a strong team, and I appreciate your continued commitment to success for each student.

David Stevenson
Chief Superintendent of Schools
Calgary Board of Education | www.cbe.ab.ca