

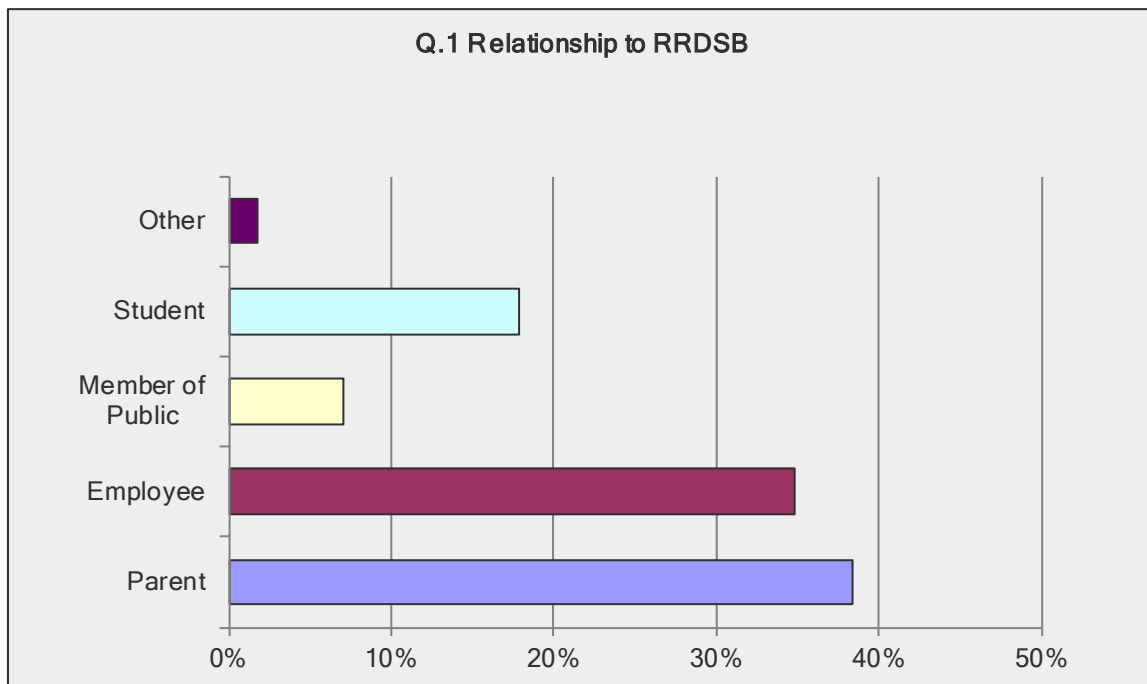
Rainy River District School Board

Following are the results of the survey for input into the 2014-15 budget.

2014-2015 Budget Consultation

**Q.1 What is your relationship to the Rainy River District School Board?
Pick one.**

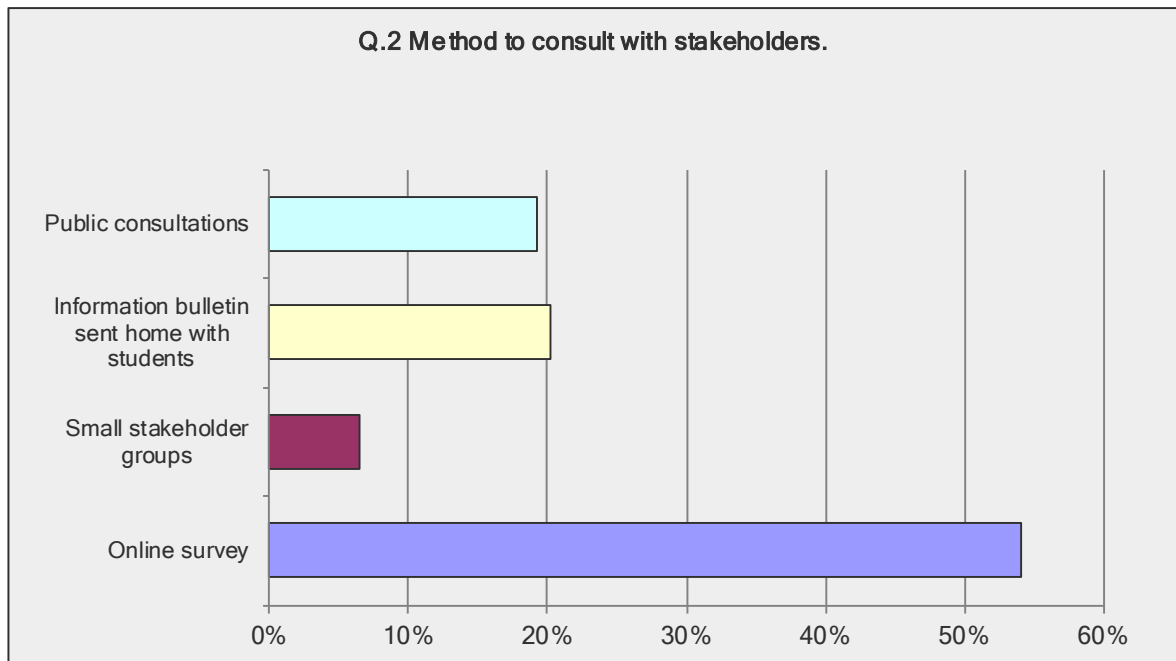
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Parent	38.4%	43
Employee	34.8%	39
Member of Public	7.1%	8
Student	17.9%	20
Other	1.8%	2
<i>answered question</i>		112
<i>skipped question</i>		0



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Q.2 What do you feel is the most effective method to consult with stakeholders? Pick one.

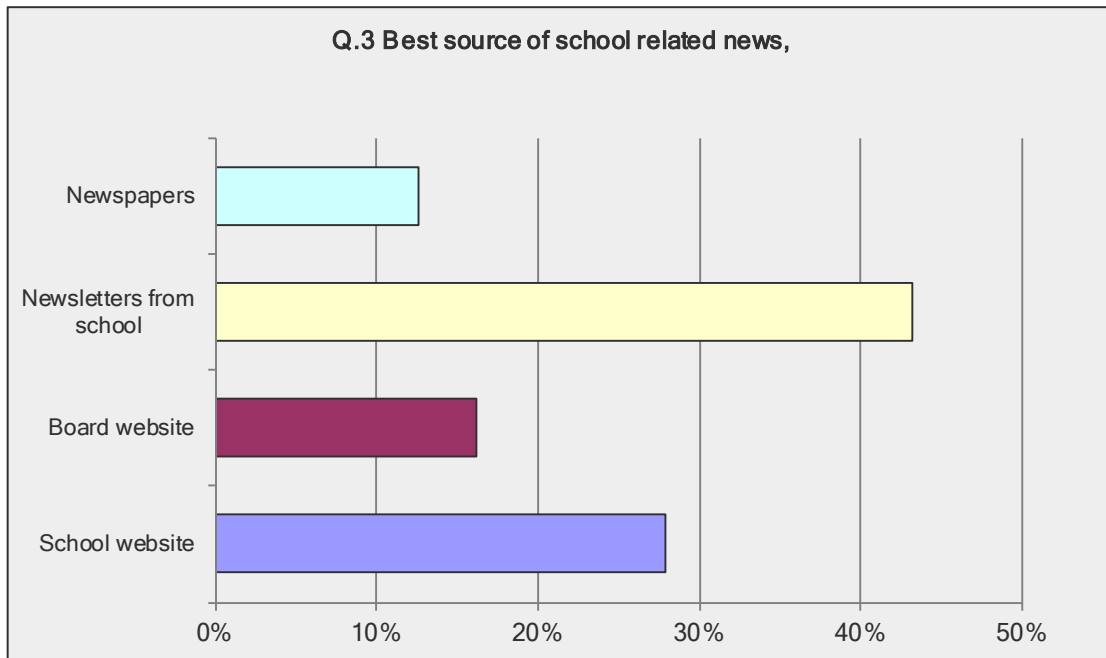
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Online survey	54.1%	59
Small stakeholder groups	6.4%	7
Information bulletin sent home with students	20.2%	22
Public consultations	19.3%	21
Other Other (please specify)		4
answered question		109
skipped question		3



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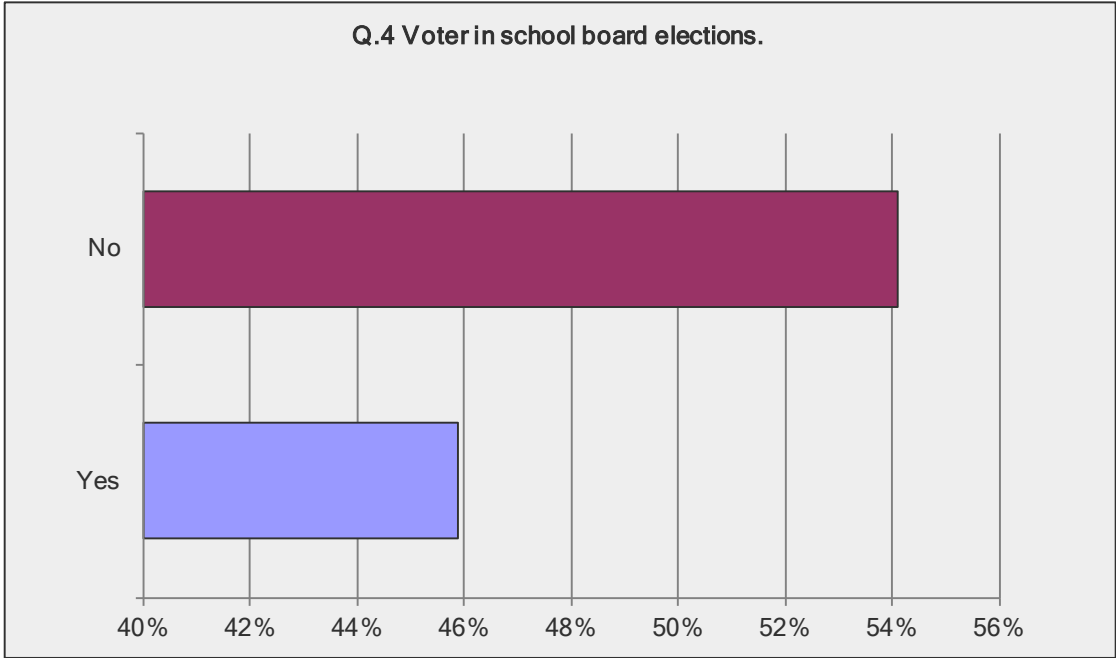
Q.3 What is your best source of school related news? Pick one.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
School website	27.9%	31
Board website	16.2%	18
Newsletters from school	43.2%	48
Newspapers	12.6%	14
<i>answered question</i>		111
<i>skipped question</i>		1



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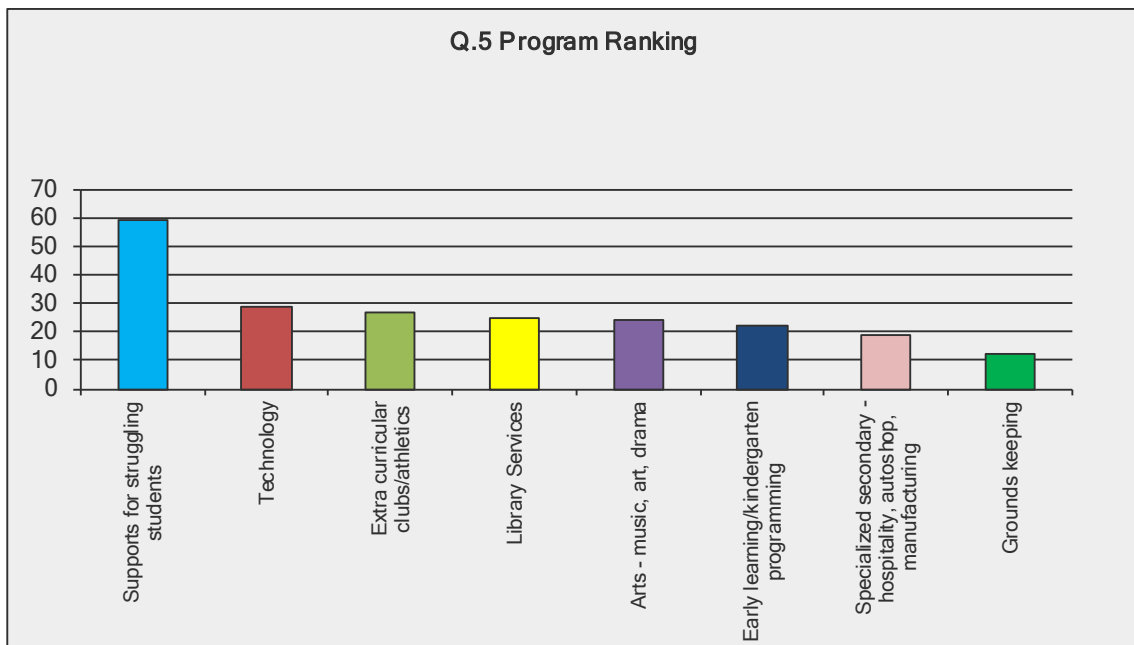
Q.4 Are you a regular voter in school board elections?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	45.9%	50
No	54.1%	59
<i>answered question</i>		109
<i>skipped question</i>		3



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Q.5 In addition to core curriculum, please rank the following programs, services, activities and/or initiatives in order of maintaining highest priority. Number 1 is highest priority, Number 8 is lowest priority.

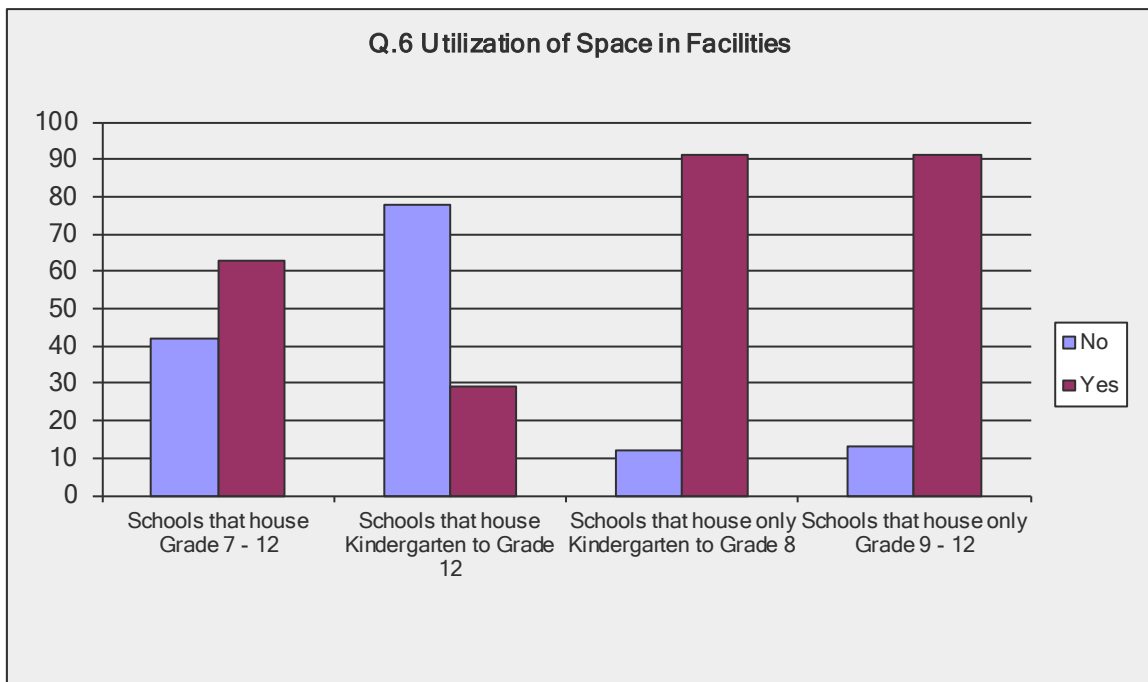
Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Response Count
Supports for struggling students	59	18	11	7	5	4	3	5	112
Technology	29	25	24	13	5	5	3	8	112
Extra curricular clubs/athletics	27	23	12	14	11	10	10	5	112
Library Services	25	8	19	15	8	14	17	6	112
Arts - music, art, drama	24	19	23	18	7	12	4	5	112
Early learning/kindergarten programming	22	15	14	9	21	7	5	19	112
Specialized secondary - hospitality, autoshop,	19	16	17	15	13	13	6	11	110
Grounds keeping	12	9	19	16	7	13	12	24	112
<i>answered question</i>									112
<i>skipped question</i>									0



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Q.6 The Rainy River District School Board faces the prospect of having 2,237 surplus spaces by 2023 - empty seats for which the Board receives no funding, despite having to operate the same underutilized schools. Currently, the Board offers separate facilities for elementary and secondary students, with the exception of Atikokan, where the high school facility also houses Grade 7 and 8 students. Would you support any of the following scenarios where appropriate to utilize space in our facilities?

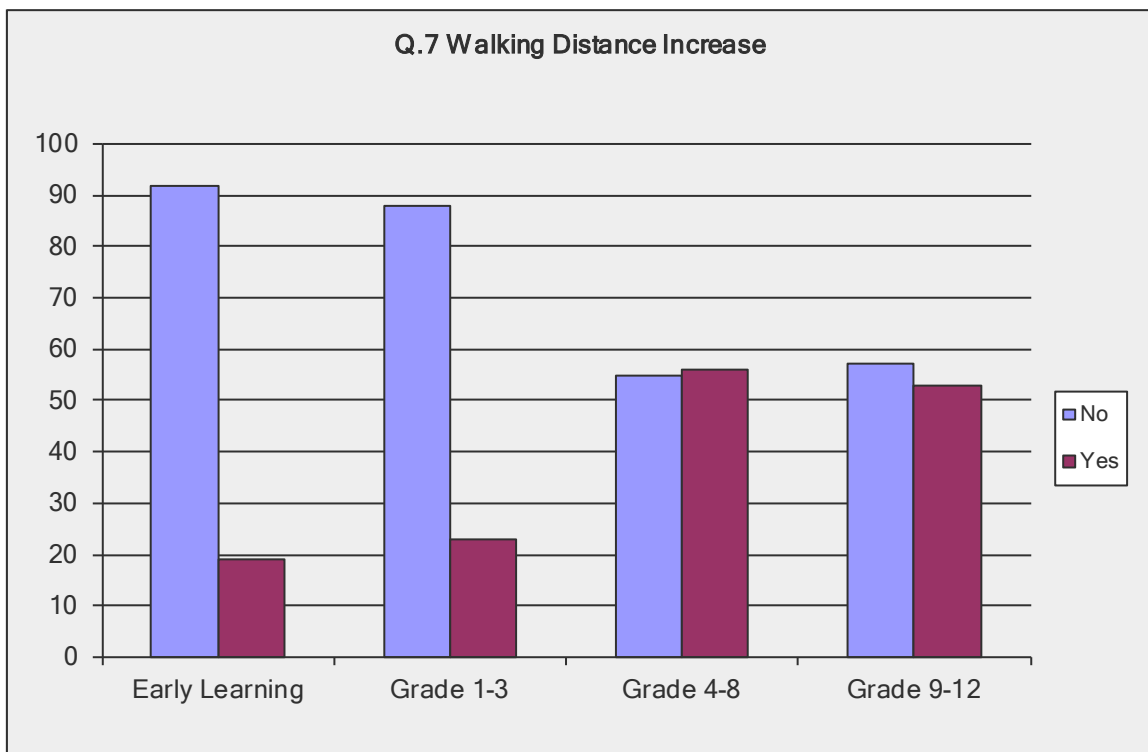
Answer Options	Yes	No	Response Count
Schools that house Grade 7 - 12	63	42	105
Schools that house Kindergarten to Grade 12	29	78	107
Schools that house only Kindergarten to Grade 8	91	12	103
Schools that house only Grade 9 - 12	91	13	104
<i>answered question</i>			111
<i>skipped question</i>			1



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Q.7 Currently, the Ministry of Education funding for transportation does not cover the costs incurred to provide it. Would you support an increase in walking distances for students to decrease transportation costs? Current walk distances are: - Early Learning (JK/SK) door to door where feasible - Grade 1-3 have 1.0 km walk distance - Grade 4-8 have 1.6 km walk distance - Grade 9-12 have 3.2 km walk distance

Answer Options	Yes	No	Response Count
Early Learning	19	92	111
Grade 1-3	23	88	111
Grade 4-8	56	55	111
Grade 9-12	53	57	110
If Yes, what distance is acceptable to you:			43
<i>answered question</i>			111
<i>skipped question</i>			1



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Q.8. What areas(s) of the budget would you like to receive more information about and how would you like to receive it (e.g. Transportation information communicated through school councils and newsletters).

Thank you for your feedback to this question. The methods most requested for receiving information were through the website, school newsletters and through school councils. The additional comments in this section have been summarized.

a) How can I learn more about transportation services?

The Rainy River District Transportation Consortium, which services both the Rainy River District School Board and the Northwest Catholic District School Board, communicates with parents and guardians through the following methods:

- Transportation Newsletters and pamphlets. These items are also posted on the Rainy River District Transportation Consortium webpage at <http://rrdtsc.rrdsb.com>.
- School newsletters.

All bus routes are part of a five year tender that began in the 2011-12 school year. Contracts are consistent in their terms. For instance, the bus operators carry and pay for their own insurance, in accordance with contract requirements.

b) Why do we have to adhere to the current practices [within Transportation]?

The Joint Transportation Policy and the Consortium's procedures are in place to ensure that safe, equitable, consistent and cost effective transportation is provided throughout the District. Our practices and procedures are reviewed regularly, and through the Ministry of Education, we have had Efficiency and Effectiveness Reviews which have resulted in the current practices being incorporated in order to secure further funding.

c) How can we learn more about funding for transportation, Special Education, etc.?

The 2013-2014 budget is posted on the Finance Department page of the Board website, which outlines the spending and the types of funding received by the Board. Included in this presentation is a section on Special Education funding and its expenditures. [include link to budget here]

A similar budget presentation will be presented to trustees for 2014-15 and subsequently posted to the Board website.

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d) How can I learn more about trustee spending?

The 2013-14 and the 2014-15 budgets included on the Board website have a section for trustee funding allocation and spending. The Board has taken your feedback and is presently working to publish trustee spending on its website.

e) How can I learn more about the various positions within the Board Office?

The Board website outlines the organizational chart and lists the staff within the Education Centre that work to support schools. [include link here]

The School Support Services Department includes positions which support administrators, teachers, and students; these positions are funded through specific grants received from the Ministry of Education's Education Program - Other Grants. The funding is specifically for the following positions:

- E-Learning/MISA Coordinator
- K-12 Math Coach
- Elementary Numeracy Facilitator
- Student Work Study Teachers (2 positions)
- Early Learning Lead (Principal of School Support Services currently has this portfolio)

The Board also specifically allocates funding received from the Grants from Student Needs to support key areas of the Board's Strategic Plan. For the 2013-14 school year, the following positions supported the areas of Purposeful Learning, Capacity Building, Engagement of Students and Parents, and Student and Staff Well-Being:

- First Nation, Metis, Inuit Supplement supports the areas of Purposeful Learning and Student and Parent Engagement through the following positions and initiatives:
 - Aboriginal Curriculum Coordinator
 - Native Language Coordinator
 - Aboriginal Early Learning Liaison
- Learning Opportunities Grant supports the areas of Purposeful Learning, Capacity Building, Student Well-being, and Student and Parent Engagement through the following positions and initiatives:
 - Reading Recovery Leader (and the Reading Recovery teachers in many of the elementary schools)
 - Student Success Coordinator (Superintendent of Education contains this portfolio)
 - School Effectiveness Lead (Superintendent of Education contains this portfolio)
 - Mental Health Lead
- Special Education funding supports the areas of Student Well-being and Student Engagement through the following positions and initiatives:
 - Behavior Expertise Lead
 - Special Education Administrator

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f) *Where can I learn more about programs and services offered by the Board?*

Your child's school principal is a resource to learn more about programs and services offered by the school and the Board. For further questions, you can also contact the Education Centre (<https://www.rrdsb.com/board-information/general-information/administration-contact-us>).

The Board's website has a section on Initiatives which outlines the various programs and services to students (<https://www.rrdsb.com/initiatives>).

The Departments Section lists programs and supports to students through the School Support Services Department (<https://www.rrdsb.com/departments/school-support-services>) and the Special Education Department webpages (<https://www.rrdsb.com/departments/special-education-services>).

The Director's Annual Report lists the various programs offered to students from the previous school year (<https://www.rrdsb.com/sites/www.rrdsb.com/files/brdadmin/pdf/DR%202012-13.pdf>).

g) *How can I learn more about the salaries earned by staff?*

The Collective Agreements for the Rainy River District School Board are posted on the Rainy River District School Board website under the Human Resources Department. Non-union salaries are not posted due to privacy laws. However, salaries over \$100,000 are posted by the Ministry of Finance every March 31st. The link to the Public Sector Salary Disclosure is:

<http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/publications/salarydisclosure/pssd/>

h) *How can I learn more about the cost of running the Board Office?*

The costs associated to Administration of the Rainy River District School Board are located in the Budget for each year. Budgets are posted on the Board's website under Departments, Finance (<https://www.rrdsb.com/departments/finance>).

i) *What is in the reserve funds and how can the reserves be used?*

Reserve funds are accumulated surplus which are funds available for use by Board resolution. The Board has identified allocations for:

- Capital
- Retirement gratuities
- Extended health benefits
- Professional development
- Reinvestment initiatives

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The balances of the accumulated surplus can be found in the Budget documents and Financial Statements which are posted on the Board's website under Departments, Finance (<https://www.rrdsb.com/departments/finance>).

j) Why is Special Education funding tied to school population instead of individual students with special needs?

Special Education funding is part of the Grants for Student Needs. The funding is based on overall Board enrolment. Boards can then offer programming and services across the system to address need. Across Ontario, there has been a trend toward integrating special education students into regular classes and not attaching funding to specific students. This trend is consistent with our philosophy of providing service and support for students as much in the classroom as possible. Our belief is that as students progress through their education, we will work collaboratively with the students and their parents to enhance the students' opportunities and abilities to function independently.

The Ministry of Education supports integration whenever possible, but requires school boards to maintain a range of special education placements. Within the Rainy River District School Board, more and more of our students with special needs remain in the regular classroom. We work with parents and children to tailor the learning program that is suited to each child through the following settings:

- the regular class, with specifically designed accommodations and modifications;
- small group instruction within the regular classroom;
- small group instruction in an alternate setting, such as a withdrawal class or special education contained class;
- individual instruction in a regular class or alternate setting (e.g., Speech Language support, Reading Recovery).

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Q.9. Do you have any suggestions for cost savings and/or for increasing efficiency measures?

Thank you for feedback. A summary of the comments provided are as follows:

a) *Transportation should stay within funding allocation.*

Transportation services are provided by the Rainy River District Transportation Consortium, which is controlled by both the Rainy River District School Board and the Northwest Catholic District School Board. The Consortium was directed by the Ministry to operate with best practices from consortiums across Ontario in order to obtain further funding. By incorporating more efficiencies into its practices, it also incurs further costs. However, the majority of the costs are the bus routes that were tendered and are currently within a five year contract. The Consortium finds cost efficiencies where it can to continue to reduce the funding deficit. The Board and the Consortium work to balance the funding received with the needs of our students, and the Board has recently advocated for and begun the process of addressing Early Learning student ride times where possible.

b) *Look to a more effective manner for delivering workshops so that teachers do not have to travel, or be out of classroom as much, through actions such as the use of Early Dismissal Days for to use for Professional Development, training for staff after school is dismissed, and technology, such as video conferencing.*

The return to Early Dismissal Days is a good suggestion. The Board has explored and will continue to explore this option; however, to implement this, all school boards within this region must also offer Early Dismissal Days, as the boards share transportation.

Staff meetings regularly occur at all schools after students are dismissed. Similarly, training occurs on the professional development days scheduled throughout the year.

The Board does regularly rely on video conferencing and other technologies (e.g., Adobe Connect, Skype, SmartBridgit, teleconferencing, etc.), wherever possible, to support meetings and training.

To reduce the amount of time away from the classroom, the Board has worked to have co-teaching/co-learning professional development opportunities for all educators with the support of the School Support Services Department. These central positions are out in schools regularly, working alongside teachers to support them in their learning, as opposed to always bringing teachers in centrally to do the training. By working alongside the teacher in his/her classroom, no release time is required; the teacher is still there to work with his/her students, while being supported through on-the-job training.

Staff is already working to complete online training modules related to health and safety and safe schools.

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c) Do not offer Early Learning.

Early Learning is a Ministry of Education-mandated program that must be offered by all school boards across the province. Early Learning is still Kindergarten; only now, JK students attend full days, every day, as opposed to only two days a week. The Rainy River District School Board has offered full day senior kindergarten since 2006 and as of 2014/15, will be having both JK and SK students attend together, every day.

d) Schedule secondary classes so that increased numbers are in classes.

Secondary principals work to timetable the school according to students' needs. Due to declining enrolment as well as to ensure that students have the necessary prerequisites for post-secondary programs, there are times when smaller classes must occur. During the fall consultations on the future of education, stakeholders across the Board provided feedback on next steps and asked that the Board try to offer courses, even with small class sizes, in order to support secondary students, especially those students within the smaller high schools of the Board, to obtain the prerequisites.

e) Reduce Board Office Staff and Support Services and leave teachers in classrooms to reduce class size.

The class sizes for the Board are in compliance with the Ministry regulation for Primary Class Size Cap of 90 per cent of primary classes (Gr. 1 to 3) being 20 students or less, and the elementary and secondary teacher collective agreement. The School Support Services includes positions which support administrators, teachers, and students, through specialized funding from the Ministry of Education's Education Program - Other Grants. The funding is to be used only to fund these specialized positions. The positions specifically funded are:

- E-Learning/MISA Coordinator
- K-12 Math Coach
- Elementary Numeracy Facilitator
- Student Work Study Teachers (2 positions)
- Early Learning Lead (Principal of School Support Services contains this portfolio)

The Board also specifically allocates funding received from the Grants from Student Needs for areas in its Strategic Plan. First Nation, Metis, Inuit Supplement funding supports the positions of Aboriginal Curriculum Coordinator, Native Language Coordinator, and Aboriginal Early Learning Liaison.

The Learning Opportunities Grant is for programs that support students at-risk; this funding is used for the Reading Recovery Leader and the Reading Recovery teachers within many of the elementary schools; the Student Success Leader (Superintendent of Education contains this portfolio); and the School Effectiveness Lead (Superintendent of Education contains this portfolio); and the Mental Health Lead.

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Special Education funding supports the Behavior Expertise Lead/Special Education Administrator, as well as Special Education Resource Teachers within the schools.

All of the above specialized positions work regularly in schools, supporting educators in their work with students. The School Support Services Department staff work in a co-teaching/co-learning model, whereby the majority of their time is spent in classrooms, working directly with teachers to support their professional learning. This model ensures that teachers spend more time in their classrooms, as opposed to having training held centrally.

f) Use non-union labor to keep repair/maintenance costs down.

The Board is a unionized environment and work must be completed in accordance to its collective agreements.

The Board is also a signatory to, and bound by, the Provincial Collective Agreement between The Carpenters United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America (C.D.C). This requires that the Rainy River District School Board engage or use only general contractors who utilize sub trades and/or employees which are in contractual relations with this union for work on Board property.

g) Offer Community Use of Schools for weddings and socials during the summer months to gain a profit for the Board.

The Board, through funding from the Ministry of Education, supports not-for-profit programming for youth with little to no fees involved. For profit and private events can be booked through the Community Use of Schools Coordinator; these events do have surcharges to cover the custodial costs, use of equipment/furniture, and overall, use of the school. However, the sale or consumption of alcohol shall not occur on Board property as per Board policy. Similarly, smoking is prohibited on all Board sites, as per the *Smoke Free Ontario Act 2006*.

h) Reduce the number of classes with multiple teachers.

Staffing of schools is per the collective agreements as well as enrolment. Teachers are afforded various leaves within their collective agreements, such as part-time leaves, job-sharing, etc. Also, funding for specialized staffing, for instance Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT) or Reading Recovery Teacher, is based on the school enrolment. As such, these positions are not staffed full-time, and thus, require that a teacher have other roles within the school (e.g., half time classroom, half time SERT).

i) Prohibit high school students leaving and re-entering the building during class time.

We are not sure how this would be a cost-savings measure. Students leave the building for many reasons such as medical, cooperative education, etc. We want students to attend class and therefore, welcome them to return to school as soon as possible, after an absence.

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j) Reduce grounds keeping in country schools off of the highway.

Please note that grounds keeping for our rural schools has been a priority of municipalities and the Board. The level of grounds keeping is kept to a standard priority across the Board and throughout the calendar year.

k) Include a parent component to Reading Recovery and have parents and/or volunteers do the training with students.

There is a parent component already to Reading Recovery, whereby the students read with their parents nightly to build on foundation reading strategies. Reading Recovery is a standardized program that has to be delivered by teachers who receive over a year of focused training and who have a degree in education and years of primary teaching experience.

l) Have students bring all of their supplies to school instead of the school providing supplies.

As per the Ministry of Education Student Fee Guidelines and the Rainy River District School Board policy, "Every student has the right to attend a publicly funded Ontario school without the payment of fees for learning materials, supplies, activities or textbooks that are needed to graduate." We recognize that the expectation that students purchase all of their learning materials (e.g., textbooks) would not be possible for many students based on socio-economic reasons.

However, there are materials that schools annually request - supplies that support or enhance the students' learning at school (e.g., pencil crayons, binders, backpacks) and supplies that are necessary (e.g., indoor shoes).