

November 22, 2024

The Honourable Steven Guibeault,  
Minister of Environment and Climate Change  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario,  
Canada  
K1A 0A6

Re: Compensation for Insurance Deductible for 2024 Wildfires in Jasper National Park

Dear Minister Guibeault:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees for Grande Yellowhead Public School Division (GYPSD), I am requesting your ministry compensate our Board for the insurance deductible required to complete the remediation of our schools after the wildfires in the summer of 2024 in Jasper National Park. Canada's national parks are protected areas established by federal legislation to preserve Canada's natural heritage and are managed under your ministry, as well as having the main responsibility for wildland fire management.

Our Board has two schools, École Jasper Elementary School and Jasper Junior/Senior High School, within Jasper National Park. Although our schools were not destroyed by the wildfire tragedy in the park this summer, both facilities did receive substantial contamination from air and smoke particulates thus requiring millions of dollars of clean-up and a delay of the school year start-up. The majority of the expense is being covered by insurance and provincial funding; however, the Board has been required to use \$500,000 from its capital reserves to cover the insurance deductible.

As you can appreciate, this unexpected and substantial amount will cause a considerable hardship for our school jurisdiction and its desire to provide optimal learning support and services to our students. The expenditure of school funds is a public trust and the Board must ensure that all such funds are expended efficiently, economically and in the best interest of the students of the Division. School boards are expected to demonstrate stewardship of system resources with an emphasis on student success, transparency and fiscal accountability as per the *Education Act*. The Department of Education allocates funds to school authorities to fulfill their responsibility to provide education programs for Alberta's K to Grade 12 students. This funding targets resources to ensure student success – not only in their educational experience, but also in their after-school endeavours by investing in curriculum needs, health and wellness initiatives, technology, and infrastructure. For the 2024/2025 school year, a loss of \$500,000 to our capital reserves will diminish our Board's ability to move forward with important targeted projects.

Our Board appreciates your time and consideration of our request to assist us in continuing to provide a world-class public education for K-12 students. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you wish to discuss this further.

Sincerely,



[Dale Karpluk](#) (Dec 2, 2024 19:23 MST)

Dale Karpluk, Board Chair

Cc: Board of Trustees  
Dr. Parsons, Superintendent of Schools  
Mr. Ron Hallman, President and CEO of Parks Canada  
Mr. Alan Fehr, Superintendent, Jasper National Park  
Mr. Richard Ireland, Mayor, Municipality of Jasper  
Mr. Gerald Soroka, MP for Yellowhead  
Mr. Martin Long, MLA for West Yellowhead  
Alberta School Boards Association  
Public School Boards' Association of Alberta

