



July 6, 2026

Trustee Newsletter

Board elects new Chair & Vice Chair

The Black Gold Board of Trustees is pleased to announce the election of Trustee Angie Charpentier as Board Chair and Trustee Christie Bergman as Vice-Chair. Both were congratulated by their fellow trustees at the Board's annual organizational meeting on June 22, 2026.



Angie Charpentier - Chair



Christie Bergman - Vice Chair

Celebrating leadership and service

The Board extends its deepest gratitude to outgoing Chair Devonna Klaassen for her dedicated service. Klaassen, who led the Board during a pivotal transition period, will remain a vital member of the Board, continuing her advocacy work on provincial committees, including her role as Vice-President of the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA).



Trustee Devonna Klaassen

"I would like to acknowledge the valuable work, great leadership, and strong governance demonstrated by our past Chair, Devonna Klaassen. Her commitment and guidance have helped build a strong foundation for our Board and created a meaningful path forward." - Angie Charpentier

"It has been an absolute honour and privilege to serve Black Gold School Division and this dedicated board of trustees as Chair.

"I am especially pleased to welcome Angie Charpentier as my successor. Her experience, wisdom, and leadership will be an asset to Black Gold, and I am confident the Board will continue to build on the strong foundation we have established."

- Devonna Klaassen

Black Gold supports career development

Black Gold is seeing considerable success - as you'll read below - in supporting students as they explore potential careers. Especially with the trades and the Collegiate Program we are seeing increasing interest with students. We recognize the value of these opportunities, and the Board is grateful for dedicated staff who create these learning experiences for students.



Why trades related learning matters for students:

- Because learning happens locally, students are able to start their career journeys at home, and *without the cost of post-secondary tuition* or the cost of living away from home.
- The experience helps students *clarify their goals and gain confidence* in their ability to perform well at the post-secondary level, making transitions more likely and successful.
- Students who participate in these programs find themselves *more engaged and successful* in their academic classes.

While these programs are valuable, they require adequate resources. The Board continues to advocate to the province for sustainable funding for the Collegiate program.

First Black Gold Collegiate grads get head start on careers



Black Gold is celebrating the first group of students to complete the division's Collegiate Program. Three students will leave high school with a head start on their career pathway in the skill trades - specifically carpentry.

“We’re pretty thrilled to have students reach this point,” says Justin Klaassen, Principal of Calmar Secondary Collegiate School, where the Collegiate program is hosted for the division. ***“We’ve had a vision of students having access to learning in the skilled trades. It’s great to see that vision come to fruition.”***

Read more about the first graduates, [here](#).

The Collegiate program intentionally moves students from exploratory experiences in Grade 10, to more refined and advanced opportunities in Grades 11 and 12. Read more about the Grade 10 program, that 40 students enrolled in this year, [here](#).

The three students completed their Period one in Carpentry post-secondary training this spring, each taking the written and practical exams required for post-secondary level students in the first year. As a result of their experiences, the students are two to three years ahead of peers that started training after high school.

Calmar Collegiate continues to see the number of students participating in the Collegiate increase. The program is open to any Black Gold high school student.



Board celebrates opening of trades focused addition



Earlier this year the Board celebrated the grand opening of a 5,000 square-foot addition to Calmar Secondary Collegiate School that will support skilled trades training for students from throughout Black Gold. The cost of the facility was \$3.3 million - funded by the province. It is home to industry-standard equipment, and plentiful learning opportunities for students.



BGSD student wins gold at National Skills Comp. Three students sweep podium at Provincials



As a result of the focus on skilled trades training... Black Gold students swept the podium in the Precision Machining category at the Provincial Skills competition earlier this spring. The three students who placed first, second and third were all from Calmar Secondary Collegiate School.

In total, 13 BGSD students competed in the event with several placements in the top 10 in a variety of fields.

The Skills Canada competition brings together students in a wide range of skilled trades and technology categories. These include areas such as machining, welding, carpentry, robotics, culinary arts, and design-based technologies. Each contest is evaluated by industry professionals who assess students based on accuracy, safety, efficiency, and overall workmanship.

Also, Adam Peterson, who placed first in provincials, qualified to attend nationals - and won first place there as well! This was the second time Peterson has earned a gold at nationals.

Congratulations to Peterson for his achievement, and to all of Black Gold students who competed in skills competitions this year.



Read more about the Provincial Skills Competition, [here](#). Learn more about Adam Peterson's experience at the national Skills Canada event, [here](#).

BGSD Board approves \$187.3 million budget

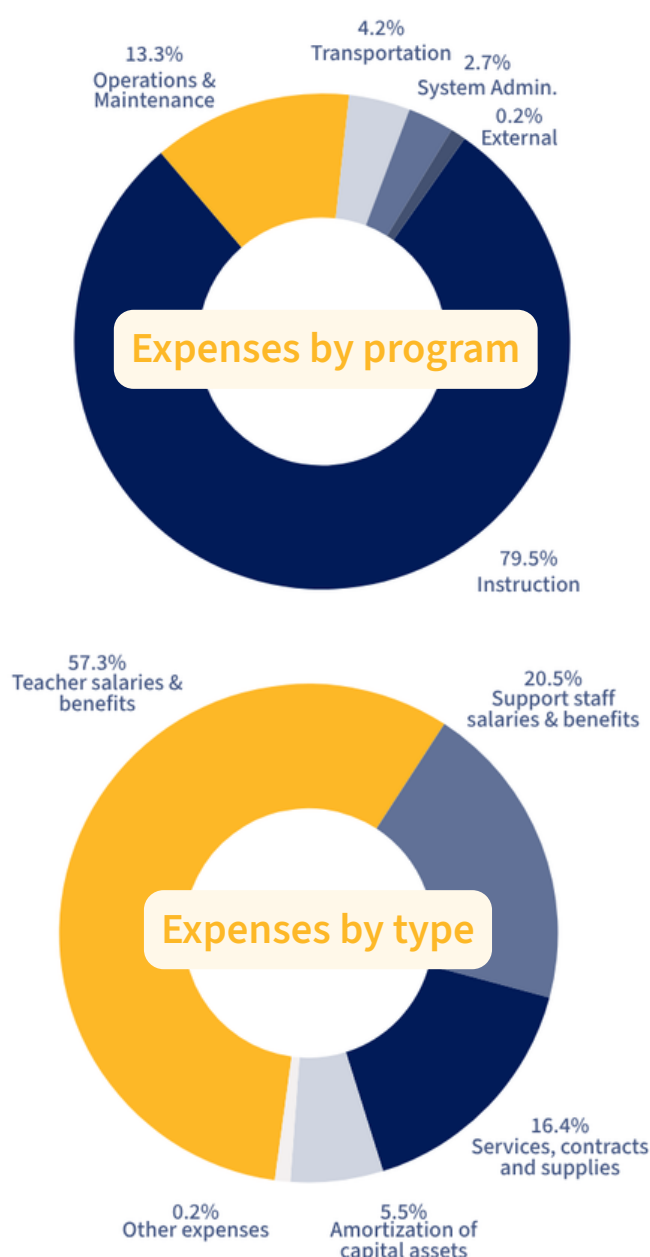
The Black Gold Board of Trustees has approved a \$187.3 million budget for the 2026-27 school year. Revenues are expected to be \$185.6 million, resulting in a planned operating deficit of \$1.7 million. The deficit will be funded through the use of operating reserves.

+ \$185.6 million revenues
- \$187.3 million expenditures
= \$ 1.7 million deficit



How the division will spend its resources

Budgeted expenditures of \$187.3 million in 2026-27 are pictured below, and grouped in two different ways for transparency. The division spends 79.5% of its resources on instruction. Also, the division spends 77.8% of its budget on salaries and benefits.



Anticipated student enrolment



Student enrolment is projected to be 13,815 in September 2026, representing an almost two percent growth over the 2025-26 school year. Welcome to all of our new and returning students!

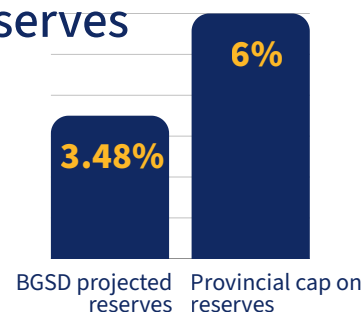
Planned operating deficit of \$1.7 million

BGSD's planned deficit will support:

- Staffing levels in small and rural schools to maintain programming
- Diverse needs of students
- Operating costs associated with the new Collegiate program

The deficit will come from the division's reserves.

Projected impact of budget on reserves



The division's operating reserves are anticipated to be \$5.97 million in August 2027. This number does not include School Generated Funds. The expected level of reserves is 3.48 percent of projected expenses. This is well under the provincial cap for reserves, which is 6 percent.

Did you know?

Reserves of \$5.97 million might sound like a large number. In reality, it is enough to run Black Gold School Division for 5.7 school days.



Future use of reserves



Just like families, school divisions save for future needs. Black Gold's reserves are earmarked for projects such as:

- Technology evergreening
- New Beaumont High School expenses not covered by construction funding:
 - staffing costs for the year before the school opens
 - consumables, technology and other supplies
- Replacing cameras and GPS equipment on school buses

For a look at the full budget, visit our website, [here](#).