

The Honourable Julie Dabrusin
Minister of Environment and Climate Change
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Re: Follow Up to Request for Compensation for Insurance Deductible for 2024 Wildfires in Jasper National Park from November 22, 2024

Dear Minister Dabrusin:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees for Grande Yellowhead Public School Division (GYPSD) we want to congratulate you on your recent appointment as the Minister of Environment and Climate Change. Our school board values strong working relationships with municipal, provincial, and federal elected officials in carrying out its stewardship for strong public education and its responsibility to ensure world-class educational experiences for students in Grande Yellowhead Public School Division.

On November 22, 2024, our Board forwarded a letter to the former federal minister, the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, whose portfolio included Parks Canada, and requested compensation for the \$500,000 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. They are managed under this ministry, and they have the main responsibility for wildland fire management. Up to the date of this letter, we have not received a response to our request.

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 last summer, both facilities received substantial contamination from the 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 reimburse the \$500,000 insurance deductible we had to expend in order to complete the remediation of our schools after the wildfires in the summer of 2024 in Jasper National Park. This reimbursement will 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 request further.

Sincerely,



[Dale Karpluk](#) (Jun 16, 2025 11:55 MDT)

Dale Karpluk, Board Chair and Jasper Trustee

Cc: Board of Trustees
Dr. Parsons, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Ron Hallman, President and CEO of Parks Canada
Ms. Kendra Van Dyk, Superintendent, Jasper National Park
Mr. Richard Ireland, Mayor, Municipality of Jasper
Mr. William Stevenson, MP for Yellowhead
The Honourable Martin Long, Minister of Infrastructure and MLA for West Yellowhead
Alberta School Boards Association
Public School Boards' Association of Alberta

