



MEMORANDUM

May 28, 2024
Regular Board Meeting

TO	Board of Trustees
FROM	Jill Osborne, Trustee
ORIGINATOR	Dr. Meg Miskolzie, Associate Superintendent
RESOURCE	Bryn Spence, Division Principal, Student Services
GOVERNANCE POLICY	Board Policy 2: Role of the Board Board Policy 7: Board Operations Board Policy 12: Role of the Superintendent
ADDITIONAL REFERENCE	<i>Jordan's Principal</i> <i>Jordan's Principal: Substantive Equality Principles</i>
SUBJECT	RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RRFI): JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE

PURPOSE

For information. No recommendation is required

BACKGROUND

The *2023-2024 Second Quarter Financial Report and Forecast* was presented at the April 9, 2024, Regular Board Meeting. Further information was requested of Administration by Trustee Osborne, regarding the Division's 2023-2024 Jordan's Principle request process and funding details. This report is in response to this request for information.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of Jordan's Principle requests process as well as a review of the 2023-2024 Parkland School Division requests to date.

Administration would be pleased to respond to any questions.

MM: kz



RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR INFORMATION RE: JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE

MAY 2024

Presented to the Board of Trustees, May 28, 2024

Dr. Meg Miskolzie, Associate Superintendent, Student Supports and Services

Resources: Bryn Spence, Division Principal, Student Services

Our Students Possess the confidence, resilience, insight and skills required to thrive in, and positively impact, the world.

BACKGROUND

The *2023-2024 Second Quarter Financial Report and Forecast* was presented at the April 9, 2024 Board of Trustees Meeting. Further information was requested of Administration regarding the Division's 2023-2024 Jordan's Principle request process and funding details. This report provides an overview of Jordan's Principle requests process as well as a review of the 2023-2024 PSD requests to date.

Jordan's Principle Overview

Jordan's Principle is a child-first initiative that ensures First Nations children in Canada have access to the products, services, and supports they require at the time they require them. Jordan's Principle is a needs-based initiative and is conducted through a lens of [substantive equality](#) with the understanding that not all children start off in the same position in life due to the unique circumstances they may face, making it more difficult for some to reach the same level of success as others. This lens takes into account the unique needs of an Indigenous child given circumstances such as historical disadvantage, inequalities, and the lack of services that may be experienced. Although Jordan's Principle requests can be made to address unmet needs in the areas of health, social services, education, and culture, School Division supported requests must be for services that are directly provided by the division. This does not prevent a parent/guardian or other authorized organization from making an individual request for other services required outside of the educational context.

Principle Intent and Funding

A central component of Jordan's Principle funding is that it is intended to fill gaps in support beyond what would normally be available within a school or division. It is important that all local resources are exhausted before applying to Jordan's Principle for additional funds. In practice, this means that if a student qualifies to receive a support through our Division processes (e.g., Occupational Therapy support), this support would be provided by the Division. However, if it is demonstrated that the student would benefit from increased access to these supports than what the Division can provide (e.g., frequency or intensity of service), the funding difference for this service increase can then be applied for through Jordan's Principle. In other words, all Jordan's Principle requests are in addition to what is provided as a standard in the division, which demonstrates the concept of *substantive equality* in action.

Parkland School Division (PSD) Process

Within PSD, access to Jordan's Principle Support is initiated through a conversation with the student's parent/guardian and their school's Administrator or Inclusive Education Lead (IEL). Before requesting Jordan's Principle funding, Administrators review individual student cases with the Division Principal of Student Services to discuss the request and to ensure that Specialized Learning Supports funding has been accessed for the student, as applicable.

Conversations between the school and the parent/guardian involve discussing the intent of Jordan's Principle, eligibility criteria, and determining which supports may benefit the student while at school. The level of support being requested is based on the individual needs of the student, based on documentation, observation and demonstrated need while at school. PSD has created a [parent information sheet](#) that includes relevant information for the family.

Supports vary by student; however, the following supports are the most typical: Speech Language Therapy Consult & Programming, Occupational Therapy Consult & Programming, Social Emotional & Behavioural Supports, Psychoeducational Assessments, Educational Assistant Support, and Assistive Technology and/or equipment

If a request meets eligibility criteria and the student is demonstrating a need based on documentation and observation, the IEL completes the necessary paperwork with the School Administrator, and submits it for review to the Student Services Department. Parents/Guardians work with the school to provide required information and consent in order for the request to move forward. After a thorough review, Student Services then submits the request to Jordan's Principle as an authorized representative. This meticulous process ensures that all requests align with the intent of Jordan's Principle, streamlining financial and reporting obligations.

Jordan's Principle Request Process

Historically, PSD has submitted individual requests for students attending our schools as they are received. During the current school year, request approvals and funding was stalled as Jordan's Principle's processes were changed across Alberta. This significant change involved how Jordan's Principle reviews and approves individual requests. In the interest of providing funding for support and services in a more timely manner, rather than having each individual request reviewed and approved by an adjudicator, Jordan's Principle has requested that school divisions transition to a Grouped Individual Request process. This requires the same individualized process to be completed by the schools with the parents/guardians, but rather than submitting each individually they are gathered together and submitted in grouped batches a couple of times throughout the school year. This process will support timelier approvals by minimizing the amount of paperwork required by the adjudicator during the approval process.

PSD has consistently managed Jordan's Principle funding through a central process overseen by Student Services. This alignment with our centralized submission process has supported the transition to the new funding model, reinforcing our commitment to efficiently address the needs of identified Indigenous students. After a very slow start to this process, Jordan's Principle process is now running smoothly.

PSD 2023-2024 Jordan Principle Requests

During the 2023-2024 School year 114 students have received support through Jordan’s Principle to date, resulting in approved funding of \$3,327,221. These funds have helped to provide additional support to these identified students throughout the division to support their educational success. 100% of Jordan’s Principle requests were approved this school year.

Request Type	# of Students Supported	Services Provided	Approved Funding*
Individual Requests	114	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Speech & Language Support ● Occupational Therapy Support ● Educational Assistant Support ● Behavioural Support ● Psychoeducational Assessment ● Tuition fee for out-of-district placement ● Dental travel cost ● Horsemanship Program ● Chromebook x 2 ● Intervention Teacher x 2 (Duffield only)** 	\$3,327,221

*Jordan’s Principle funding is determined through a Program Funding Agreement Application. If funds remain after the school year they are deducted from next year’s Program Funding Agreement.

**Duffield School has experienced historical challenges when hiring a large number of Educational Assistants, given its location. Given the number of Educational Assistant support that was being requested, in conversation with Jordan’s Principle, they approved the atypical request to hire two certificated teachers to work directly with identified students. This has ensured that these students are receiving additional targeted intervention to address identified learning gaps so that identified students do not continue to fall behind their same age peers.

Administration would be happy to answer any questions.

References:

Jordan’s principle: Substantive equality principles. (2019, November 21). Government of Canada. Retrieved April 25, 2024, from <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1583698429175/1583698455266>