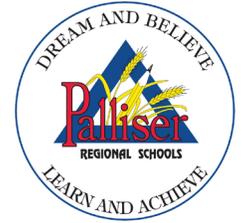


Highlights of the Board of Trustees Meeting



Tuesday, August 21, 2012

Board identifies priorities for 2012-2013 school year

The Board of Trustees of Palliser Regional Schools held its first meeting of the 2012-2013 school year on Aug. 21 at Palliser Centre in Lethbridge. This was the Board's first regular meeting since June. Trustee Robert Strauss was not able to attend.

This meeting was the first since the Board's annual self-evaluation held in June. At that time, the trustees met to discuss what they'd accomplished in the past year and what goals they wanted to identify for the coming year.

The trustees also decided to make their annual goals part of every regular board meeting agenda. The Board identified the following priorities for itself in 2012-2013:

- Re-establish a structured policy review.
- Create an orientation handbook for use by new trustees.
- Continue with the refinement of our Transportation operations.
- Investigate possibilities for Board development.
- Continue working on solidifying relationships with our alternative schools.
- Enhance communications amongst the Board.

The Board voted to approve both its self-evaluation report and the annual Superintendent's evaluation report, as developed June 20.

Zone 6 officials meet the new minister

Superintendent Kevin Gietz and Chairman Don Zech provided the Board with a verbal report about their meeting with new Education Minister Jeff Johnson. Gietz and Zech joined their counterparts from across southern Alberta in their first meeting with Johnson on June 19. Following that meeting in Lethbridge, Palliser had invited the minister to meet with the full Board of Palliser Regional Schools. The Board received a letter from the minister declining that invitation for the time being due to other commitments requiring Johnson's attention.



Don Zech

Superintendent thanks team for work on CASS-ASBOA conference

Superintendent Kevin Gietz reported on the Palliser-organized CASS-ASBOA Waterton Conference, held Aug. 14-17. This conference brings together the superintendents and business officials of school divisions across southern Alberta.

Gietz said he was pleased that the new deputy minister, Tim Wiles, was able to join the conference on the first night so he could meet and mingle with representatives from the various jurisdictions. Wiles also spoke to delegates on Aug. 15.

The conference used an open spaces concept, giving participants the opportunity to offer topics for discussion and then engage in the subjects most meaningful to them as individuals. Gietz said participants seemed to enjoy the opportunity to discuss what they wanted.

Gietz thanked the Central Office team, particularly Director of Learning Donna Dalby and executive assistants Linda Poirier and Anna Ell, for their work organizing the conference.

Staffing coming together for new year

Associate Superintendent (Human Resources) Kevin Garinger updated the Board on staffing for the new school year. Hiring of teaching staff is not yet complete and there's still a principalship to fill.

Garinger said the division expects to serve more than 7,000 students this year, the first time enrolment has reached that level. That will put Palliser in the top third of divisions in Alberta for student population.

Superintendent Kevin Gietz reminded the Board that it had a committee talking about a goal of one per cent growth back in 2005-2006. In that time, the division has nearly doubled its student population. At the same time, Palliser's results have improved significantly.

The growth can be attributed to the addition of faith-based alternative programs and the opening of alternative

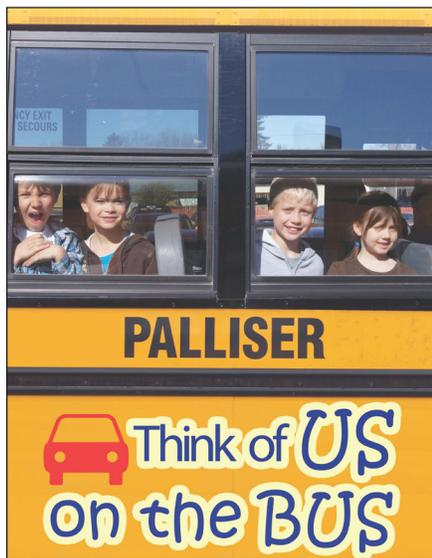


Kevin Garinger

programs for Low German Mennonite students.

Palliser initiates bus safety effort

Associate Superintendent (Education Services) Dale Backlin updated the Board on a Palliser initiative called Think of Us on the Bus. This school bus safety effort was spearheaded by Palliser and now has the support of the Office of Traffic Safety, Alberta Sheriffs, RCMP and Commercial Vehicle Enforcement.



The campaign will include a public awareness effort in print and radio, assemblies with elementary students the week of Sept. 10th and an enforcement blitz the week of Sept. 17th that will see officers riding some bus routes to identify offenders.

Information about the campaign, including a quiz for kids about

Meeting at Noble Central School to discuss potential modernization

Associate Superintendent (Education Services) Dale Backlin reported on meetings planned at Noble Central Aug. 23-24 with representatives of Alberta Education Infrastructure to discuss the facility.

The school has five levels accessed by stairs, which creates accessibility issues.

A representative of the community has been invited to attend as an observer. The meetings are expected to begin with a visioning process, including a discussion of Palliser's anticipated future programming, demographics and needs.

Modernization of Noble Central was identified as the No. 1 priority on Palliser's three-year capital plan.

Student Speak Out report discussed

The Board discussed results from the 2010-2011 Alberta Education Speak Out initiative. For the past three years, Palliser's Grade 9 students have been given opportunity to provide their thoughts on their learning during forums Palliser staff conducted across the region.

(An annual report on the 2011-2012 provincial initiative is expected at a later date.)

In 2010-2011 students responded to the following questions:

Question #1: What does it look like when you are learning at your best?

- Flexibility in student learning 33%
- Positive state of mind and enjoying school 14%
- Comfortable learning environment 11%
- No distractions 11%
- Effective teachers 11%
- Responsibility for own education 7%
- Interesting and relevant lessons 6%
- Good student-teacher relationships 4%
- Understanding the material 3%

Question #2: What is holding you back from learning at your best?

- Distractions 40%
- Ineffective teaching styles 29%
- Stress 15%
- No interest in curriculum 7%
- Negative environment 3%
- Lack of self-motivation and discipline 3%
- Poor relationships with adults 2%
- Poor health 1%

Question #3: What actions can adults take to improve how education looks and feels?

- Provide positive support and encouragement 24%
- Create fun environment 22%
- Improve communication 21%
- Use a variety of teaching styles and methods 17%
- Place less pressure on students 8%
- Be respectful 6%
- Place less emphasis on the diploma exam 3%

Question #4: What actions can students take to improve how education looks and feels?

- Be respectful 20%
- Make an effort in our education 19%
- Take initiative and be responsible 18%
- Have a positive attitude 13%
- Participate and get involved 12%
- Communicate 7%
- Help others 7%
- Manage time effectively 3%

Superintendent Kevin Gietz said at Speak Out forums and at student focus groups during school reviews, Palliser students mention distractions as a key detriment to their learning.

Technology issues tackled over summer

Associate Superintendent (Education Services) Pat

Rivard attended his first official Board meeting in his new role. Last year, Rivard served as Director of Learning in Central Office.

One of his areas of responsibility is Technology Services. He shared with the Board some of the work that has occurred, including creation of wireless service at Barons School and addressing wireless issues at Calgary Christian School.

September meeting date changed

The Board voted to change the date of the September Board meeting to Sept. 25.

That meeting will begin at 9 a.m. at Palliser Centre in Lethbridge.

Trustees invited to meet new teachers

Associate Superintendent (Human Resources) Kevin Garinger invited trustees to drop in any time to Palliser Centre during Aug. 22-24 for meetings of the Beginning Teacher Induction Program.

Teachers who are new to Palliser or new to teaching take part in an orientation program to support them in their work in their first three years. The program includes matching beginning teachers with mentors and providing professional development opportunities.