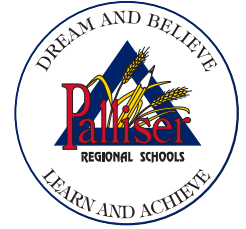


Highlights of the Board of Trustees Meeting

August 23, 2016



New chair, vice-chair selected

The board of Palliser Regional Schools held its annual organizational meeting Tuesday, Aug. 23. Traditionally this meeting has been held in fall, but the board opted to schedule it earlier to more closely align it with the start of a new school year.

Robert Strauss was named board Chair by acclamation, taking over the role from Colleen Deitz.

The board discussed having a first and second vice-chair to encourage succession planning. Strauss said he believed an additional position would be cost neutral because the other vice-chair would serve in a backup capacity.

The board passed a motion by a vote of 4-2 to have a vice-chair and an alternative vice-chair for 2016-2017.

Following a nomination process and a secret ballot, Debbie Laturus was elected as vice-chair. Craig Whitehead was named alternate vice-chair by acclamation.

The following committee assignments were also established:

- Alberta School Boards Association: Craig Whitehead, with Colleen Deitz as alternate;
- Public School Boards' Association of Alberta: Don Zech, with Colleen Deitz as alternate;
- Board Teacher Advisory Committee: Esther Willms, Debbie Laturus, Board Chair Robert Strauss;
- County of Vulcan Adult Learning Council: Colleen Deitz;
- Lethbridge County Community Learning Council: Esther Willms;
- Coaldale Community Services Committee: Debbie Laturus;
- Vulcan and District Recreation Board: Robert Strauss;
- Vulcan and District Joint Use Committee: Robert Strauss;
- Audit Committee: Colleen Deitz, Craig Whitehead; Board Chair Robert Strauss;
- The Facilities Committee, which had not met in several years, was dissolved and its purpose of strengthening community and achieving collaborative relationships with school and community facilities was added to the

Communications Committee, which will be open to all trustees.

- Labour Relations Negotiating Committee: Debbie Laturus and Colleen Deitz;
- Policy Advisory Committee: Open to all trustees.
- Technology Advisory Committee: Colleen Deitz and Esther Willms;
- Wall of Fame Committee: Don Zech and Craig Whitehead.

The board set its schedule of regular meetings as the third Tuesday of each month except for November and May. Those meetings were set for Nov. 24 and May 30.

Trustees also voted to leave their remuneration unchanged.

Board seeks options for handling volunteers' criminal record checks

Following the organizational meeting, the board moved on to regular business.

The board discussed Palliser's requirement that volunteers in schools provide a criminal record check annually. For some parents, the record check can be time consuming and expensive, depending on which police service has jurisdiction. The board directed administration to look into what other jurisdictions do and to offer some options for consideration. The requirements are outlined in Administrative Procedure 470 found online at <http://www.pallisersd.ab.ca/about-us/procedures/755>

Internet provider offers speed, service

Palliser's use of Cybera, a not-for-profit Internet provider, has resulted in cost savings as more public agencies join.

Associate Superintendent Human Resources Ken Garinger, who oversees Palliser technology, said the price per megabyte was \$11.50 in October 2014, but had fallen to \$5 per Mbs in July 2016. In addition to price, students and staff in Palliser benefit from improved service as traffic to popular content providers, such as Google and Microsoft, is diverted, making more bandwidth available to other services.

Palliser's newest schools, Calgary Islamic Omar Bin Al-Khattab campus and Akram Jomaa campus are not yet on

Cybera. OBK was to move over within the week, while AJ is expected to be added to Cybera in November.

Summer reading program expands

Associate Superintendent Education Services Pat Rivard updated the board on a summer reading program. There were 65 students in several Palliser schools who volunteered to participate in the program for three weeks. They took part in reading activities led by Central Office staff, two summer students or, at Jennie Emery Elementary, Principal Sherrie Nickel and Vice-Principal Kristi Van Doesburg, who volunteered their time.

Last summer, the program started as a pilot project for just a few students in one school.

The camp encouraged daily reading, which is shown to help students retain or gain reading skills in summer, compared to students who stop reading during the break.

Rivard said students enjoyed the fun activities.

Brazilian students coming to Palliser

Palliser will welcome 21 students from Brazil this fall at high schools in Coaldale, Coalhurst, Picture Butte and Nobleford, said Pat Rivard, Associate Superintendent Education Services.

He said the international program is enjoying fantastic growth as more schools and communities have an opportunity to experience the cultural benefits of the international student program.

Vulcan Outreach to move to CCHS

The board voted to relocate the Vulcan Outreach

school from leased space on First Street in Vulcan into space at County Central High School.

Secretary-Treasurer Wayne Braun said Lethbridge College, which once used the space, was consulted and said it no longer needed room in the school. Palliser expressed interest in other possible partnerships with the college.

Several students at County Central also take courses through the outreach program, which offers a flexible schedule. Relocating the outreach would save them time walking between schools.

At one time, outreach campuses were separate from the traditional high school, but that's no longer the case in all schools.

Palliser Superintendent placed on leave, unassigned duties

Following the completion of the regular board agenda, the board passed two motions arising from its in-camera session.

The board voted to place Superintendent Kevin Gietz on paid leave, unassigned to duties, pending completion of the Organizational Review. The board also passed a motion to appoint Dr. Garry Andrews as acting superintendent effective immediately, pending ministerial approval, until the completion of the organizational review.

The organizational review was requested by Gietz in January and is being conducted by two independent consultants. It is expected the review will be completed by the end of October.

The Board of Trustees did not comment further on this personnel matter.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Sept. 20, 2016