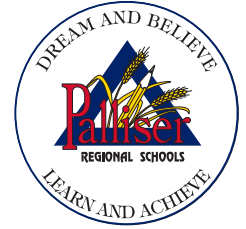


Highlights of the Board of Trustees Meeting

December 20, 2016



Board receives update on work to address report recommendations

Palliser's Board of Trustees continues to address recommendations which resulted from the independent organizational review it ordered.

Although the Board is still in negotiation with a potential facilitator to help oversee the coordination and implementation of some of the changes the review panel suggested, Acting Superintendent Dr. Garry Andrews said Palliser has been making headway with several of the recommendations.

He told trustees that Human Resources staff will meet with school administrators Jan. 18 to gain their perspective on the overall culture within Palliser. The information will provide a baseline from which to measure the impact on staff wellness. The session will include representatives of the Alberta School Employee Benefit Plan (ASEBP), which is Palliser's benefits provider.

The report recommended school administrators be provided with more information in advance of school goals meetings so they could better prepare. Andrews said a survey was distributed to school administrators to get their feedback on the process used this year, in order to determine what changes might be necessary in the future.

A draft policy on the personal use of Palliser vehicles is expected to come before the Board, likely in February, in response to a report recommendation.

The Board also heard how Palliser is looking into means to decentralize some of the decision making processes and allow schools a greater say in how they deal with certain needs and situations in their communities.

The meeting was also an opportunity for the Board and administrators to view an online tool which is being developed to allow the public to view the progress being made in meeting the review's recommendations.

The online tool can be viewed at <http://www.pallisersd.ab.ca/board-of-trustees/or-review>



Public meeting set Jan. 31 to discuss Coaldale school space needs

A public meeting has been scheduled for Jan. 31 in Coaldale to discuss school needs in the community.

The Board of Trustees approved a motion to seek public input on solutions to best serve all students in Coaldale and Sunnyside School, northeast of Lethbridge. The Coaldale Schools Facilities Planning open house is scheduled to begin 7 p.m., with a venue still to be announced.

Secretary-Treasurer Wayne Braun said based on enrolment figures at the end of September, Jennie Emery Elementary School is at 94 per cent of capacity, which is "basically full."

Principal Sherrie Nickel, who was joined by her Coaldale counterparts from R.I. Baker Middle School, John Davidson School and Kate Andrews High School – as well as Sunnyside School – pointed out the school has enrolled almost 30 more students since that time and now has classrooms with as many as 27 students. Two new housing developments in the area could put further strains on already crowded classrooms, she added.

There is room on school property to add another modular classroom but Braun said even if the province was to approve one, Jennie Emery's gymnasium, washrooms and library can't accommodate more students.

The utilization factor at the other Palliser schools in Coaldale and the feeder school at Sunnyside are not as high as at Jennie Emery. All of the principals were asked to prepare a report on the impact of any possible grade reconfigurations which might ease the space crunch at Jennie Emery.

The open house will be an opportunity for the public to review the status of each of the Palliser facilities and share ideas for solutions to accommodate community needs over the next several years.

Board approves training session on CSA psychological health training

Palliser Regional Schools is taking steps to improve the mental health of its employees in response to Recommendation 2 from the Organizational Review.

The Board of Trustees approved a motion to make training available to a group of administrators and trustees on the Canadian Standards Association's Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace standards.

With a goal of introducing the standards within the next two years, Palliser will bring in a CSA trainer in early 2017 to provide professional development promoting employees' psychological health and preventing psychological harm due to workplace factors.

The standard identifies psychological hazards in the workplace; assesses and controls risks associated with hazards that can't be eliminated; implements practices that support and promote psychological health and safety; provides a culture that promotes health and safety in the workplace; and implements measurement and review systems to ensure sustainability.

According to the Mental Health Commission of Canada, one in five Canadians experience a mental health problem or mental illness in any given year.

Some businesses or institutions may use the voluntary standard to create policies and processes to promote mental health, while others may use it to build upon existing efforts.

CSA Group is an independent, not-for-profit, member-based association dedicated to advancing safety, sustainability and social good.

Work continues on creating more common school calendars

Central Office continues to work on a division-wide calendar for the 2017-18 school year with an eye on providing expanded programming for students.

Pat Rivard, Associate Superintendent, Education Services, told trustees that administrators are looking at opportunities for common calendars between Palliser schools to allow more students to take advantage of Career and Technology Studies facilities like the mobile, industrial arts classrooms, which are used by students from more than one school.

Trustee Debbie Laturus said she's received input from parents on a desire to return to Palliser's previous practice of approving calendars for two consecutive years at a time to enable them to plan better.

Central Office is also working with school leaders to ensure their individual site-based calendars meet the



prerequisite number of instructional hours.

Palliser will collect feedback using OurSchool survey tool

Palliser Regional Schools will offer students a greater opportunity to provide input on the quality of education they are receiving.

The Board of Trustees approved a motion which will see the OurSchool satisfaction survey offered on a voluntary basis this school year, with plans to make participation mandatory starting in the 2017-18 school year.

Associate Superintendent Pat Rivard said the OurSchool survey is more comprehensive than the provincial accountability pillar survey conducted annually. That accountability pillar survey allows school divisions to measure their success and identify areas in need of improvement, with the data shared with the community.

Rivard said the new survey should be especially helpful for the four Palliser schools seeking greater input on the provincial high school redesign initiative to be more student-centred and responsive. In that it is a national survey, he said it should also provide some good, comparable data.

The OurSchool survey also allows a division to add specific questions of its choosing, and the data is available for analysis within days rather than months.

The cost of offering the OurSchool survey will be supplemented by Alberta Education.

Facility work this year will top \$1.7 M

The Board of Trustees approved an Infrastructure, Maintenance and Renewal (IMR) Plan which will see almost \$2.2 million spent on school improvements this year.

Secretary-Treasurer Wayne Braun said Palliser received \$1.7 million in funding from the province this year and carried over more than \$850,000 from last year's allotment.

Projects totalling \$1.78 million were identified, with the scope of the work broadened by using labour provided by Palliser maintenance staff where possible. That will leave about \$375,000 for any emergency repairs which might be required during this school year.

Among the big ticket items are: a gym roof replacement at Barons School (\$140,000); stabilization work at Carmangay School (\$75,000); changes to classroom flooring at Champion School (\$50,000); construction of a bus loop (\$175,000) and new parking lot (\$150,000) at Coalhurst Elementary School; window replacement at Sunnyside School (\$80,000); and in Coaldale, improved underground ventilation at Jennie Emery Elementary

School (\$75,000), boiler work (\$150,000) and outside drainage at Kate Andrews High School; and interior doors and frames at R.I. Baker Middle School (\$50,000).

The plan also includes installation of security camera systems at Vulcan Prairieview and Picture Butte's Dorothy Dalgliesh elementary schools. Braun said the cameras, intended to improve the safety of staff and students, were first installed in Palliser high schools, then junior highs and now elementary schools.

Various improvements were also approved for Arrowwood, Milo, Huntsville and John Davidson schools, as well as high schools in Coalhurst, County Central, and Picture Butte.

The IMR plan does not include ongoing modernization work at Noble Central School. Braun told trustees that Huntsville School is Palliser's top priority for future

modernization.

Palliser supports Vulcan Daycare Society grant application

The Board of Trustees will write a letter of support for the Vulcan Daycare Society in its efforts to get funding to support early learning child care centres.

In addition to the letter of support, the society indicated it was interested in working with Palliser to relocate its child care centre.

The society currently runs a daycare program out of a modular unit attached to County Central High School. It would like to move its daycare and after-school care programs into Vulcan Prairieview Elementary School, where many of the students attend.

Next regular meeting: January 17, 2017