

Highlights of the Board of Trustees Meeting

February 28, 2017



Horizon Academy Institute approved as faith-based alternative program

The Board of Trustees gave its approval to the creation of a new faith-based alternative program to open in southwest Calgary for the 2017-2018 school year.

Horizon Academy Institute is a leadership-focused school offering Islamic and Arabic studies.

The board had given approval in principle at its Feb. 7 meeting, pending a review of the master agreement by Palliser's legal counsel and a visit to the school's proposed site to ensure its suitability.

With those steps completed, the board unanimously approved a draft master agreement. The agreement requires signing by both Palliser and the Horizon Academy Institute's board. The academy has offered weekend classes since 2006. The academy was more recently approved to offer a for-credit high school course on Arabic language and culture.

Its proposal would see creation of a kindergarten through Grade 6 school in space capable of accommodating 300 students.

For more information on Horizon Academy, please [see http://www.horizonacademy.ca/](http://www.horizonacademy.ca/)

Retirement event to be offered

Palliser will introduce a new retirement celebration as part of its staff recognition dinner. The board voted unanimously to expand the celebration to retirees.

The board had earlier discussed the challenges of holding a dinner for staff across the geographically large division.

The details of the new staff celebration have yet to be determined.

New ad hoc committee created to address Master's agreement

The board will strike a new ad hoc committee to review and propose amendments to the master agreement with Master's Educational Society. The master agreement sets the terms for the alternative programs at Master's Academy and College in Calgary.

An earlier committee created in December 2015 and consisting of Trustees Craig Whitehead, Debbie Laturus and Esther Willms met with Master's society representatives once but did not reach any conclusions.

The new committee will consist of Vice-Chair Debbie Laturus, Alternative Vice-Chair Craig Whitehead and Central Office support as determined by Acting Superintendent Dr. Garry Andrews. Andrews, who previously served as mediator between Palliser and Master's, will act in an advisory capacity.

Terms of reference for the ad hoc committee will be considered at the next board meeting of March 14.

Changes to meeting schedule

The board will not schedule weekly meetings as it did in February. It did approve the holding a regular board meeting from 4 to 5:30 p.m., March 14, a date the trustees had already set aside for the second of three workshops with facilitator Dr. Terry Weninger. Those workshops are addressing review of policies in relation to the findings of the Palliser organizational review.

By the end of the March 14th meeting, trustees expect they'll have several draft policies available for public review and input. The polished drafts will be posted on the board's [Policy Review webpage](#) to provide stakeholders an opportunity to provide comment.

Several policies were discussed at the board's first workshop with Weninger Feb. 13-14.

The board also voted to reschedule its April 18 meeting to April 25. The earlier date fell in the Easter break.

Superintendent's contract ended

Palliser Regional Schools Board of Trustees passed a motion concluding the employment of Superintendent Kevin Gietz, effective immediately without notice or payment in lieu of notice. Acting Superintendent Dr. Garry Andrews will continue in the acting role as Palliser Regional Schools moves forward in the process for the hiring of a new superintendent.

Because this is a personnel matter, the Board of Trustees will make no further comment.

Next meetings: March 14 and 21.