



Palliser Regional Schools

Palliser Centre

#101, 3305 - 18 Avenue North, Lethbridge, AB T1H 5S1

Phone: 403-328-4111 Toll-free: 877-667-1234

Fax: 403-380-6890 www.pallisersd.ab.ca

Highlights of Board of Trustees Meeting Tuesday, Jan. 21, 2020

Occupational Health and Safety

Mark Stolte, Palliser Regional Schools' Occupational Health and Safety Co-ordinator, updated trustees on some recent and ongoing tasks including full site safety inspections of a dozen facilities including colony schools, Palliser schools and alternative program schools owned by societies. Fifty facilities in all are to be inspected.

The Board also heard that the school division tested all Palliser-owned facilities for lead contaminated drinking water, after the issue became public on a national level. The federal government had reduced acceptable lead levels by half, and Stolte said all schools met those new guidelines. A lead filtration system was installed at the one school which showed the highest levels, which were again within the set limits.

Trustees were told that an incident reporting system for student aggression towards staff has been developed and employees are being urged to file reports as required so trends can be tracked and the appropriate corrective measures can be implemented.

Financial Update

Dexter Durfey, Secretary-Treasurer, said it is projected Palliser Regional Schools will have a deficit of about \$1.5 million by the end of the fiscal year, with rising insurance costs accounting for about \$817,000 of that.

The remainder of that deficit can be attributed to a shortfall in provincial funding – from projections provided by Alberta Education – of more than \$820,000 for instructional and transportation costs. He noted a surplus of about \$200,000 in the Board and administration budget, which helped reduce that projected deficit.

While Palliser has the option of redirecting Infrastructure, Maintenance and Renewal funds to cover any deficit, Durfey said he will be working with all departments to find efficiencies to balance the budget.

Transportation Services Accountability Report

David Shaw, Transportation Services Supervisor, praised his drivers, dispatcher and mechanics for their part in getting students to and from school safely despite the challenges presented them this year, including early snowfall and more recently, frigid temperatures.

He told trustees that four additional buses have been equipped with video cameras, which provide evidence of drivers illegally passing school buses and also aid in any issues involving student behaviour. The addition of Global Positioning Systems on buses has also proved beneficial in the area of early diagnosis of mechanical problems, and gathering information on vehicle idling times. 7

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 25, 2020.