



Palliser Regional Schools

Palliser Centre

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Highlights of Board of Trustees Meeting Tuesday, April 21, 2020

Learning Services Presentation

Director of Learning Shane Cranston provided trustees with the priorities identified in the area of inclusive education and accomplishments to date after the COVID-19 pandemic forced closure of in-school learning. School staff connected with students and their families to ensure their safety and address their needs, with Family School Liaison Counsellors continuing regular check-ins with those on their caseload and other vulnerable families through online technology and surveys. Family Connections workers are also helping families access supports available to them.

Cranston said reasonable expectations have been established in the area of learning, with a greater focus on the “big ideas” within the curriculum. Both teachers and educational assistants, meanwhile, have been taking advantage of regular professional development opportunities to better meet student needs under remote learning. Superintendent Dave Driscoll praised Palliser staff – from teachers to caretakers and other support staff – for providing the best learning environment possible.

Carmangay Outreach School Change

The Board of Trustees approved a motion to remove the outreach designation of Palliser’s school in Carmangay. Outreach schools provide an educational alternative for students whose needs are not being met through traditional school settings, and include flexible attendance expectations. Secretary-treasurer Dexter Durfey said that was the original intent for Carmangay Outreach School, but that is no longer the reality given that the school now functions as a regular school site and the flexibility provided in high school programming.

Capital Maintenance and Renewal Funding

Trustees received a list of capital projects Palliser Regional Schools has submitted for consideration under Capital Maintenance and Renewal funding the province is providing to keep Albertans employed during these challenging times. Eligible projects had to be shovel-ready and could not include those already approved under the division’s capital budget. Palliser priorities ranged from school grounds paving and landscaping projects, to lighting upgrades and gym floor resurfacing. It was noted Palliser’s submission is just one the province will consider, with every other school jurisdiction and municipality also looking for funding.

Financial Update

The Board was provided with an update on the 2019-2020 finances, with an anticipated deficit of about \$517,000 for Aug. 31. This deficit can be covered by funds from the Infrastructure Maintenance Renewal funding, which has been approved by the Ministry for the current year.

Mr. Durfey said Palliser Regional Schools lost about \$1.6 million when the province recently reduced funding for instruction and transportation due to COVID-19. Through temporary layoffs for support staff and other efficiencies found, this reduction in funding will not contribute to the 2019-2020 deficit.

Trustees also heard how funding formula changes will impact Palliser in the 2020-2021 school year. While the school division will receive an additional \$1 million over funding provided this year, it was noted a significant portion of that is earmarked for various support services which previously received direct funding and the annual inflationary items.

*Together we will ensure learning success for all students
to develop their unique potential as caring citizens in a changing world.*

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 19, 2020.

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