



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, June 16, 2020

School Opening 2020-2021

Superintendent Dave Driscoll told trustees the Ministry of Education has indicated it will announce on Aug. 1 how the 2020-2021 school year will unfold under one of three possible scenarios. Palliser school administrators are working on details as to how school would look under each of those scenarios, as well as how they'll deliver a quality education to students whose parents decide they will not return to in-class learning in the fall. Whichever scenario is announced, he noted it is vital that schools decide how the process will work at their school as they know best what their particular community needs.

Associate Superintendent Tom Hamer pointed out Palliser has sent out a parent survey to determine their comfort level in sending children back to school under each of those scenarios, and their response will help determine what additional supports might be needed. An overwhelmingly number of the initial respondents support their child returning to in-class learning with face-to-face contact with teachers.

Palliser is also working with its facilities staff to ensure proper cleaning and safety measures for students and staff under those potential scenarios.

Support continues for Picture Butte area

The Palliser Board of Trustees will ensure school communities in the Picture Butte area will continue to receive full support and representation following the passing of Trustee Don Boras.

Don, who passed away in May after a lengthy battle with cancer, was first elected in 2017 as trustee of Ward 1, Subdivision 4, representing Picture Butte and surrounding area.

Three Palliser trustees representing neighbouring subdivisions – Kristine Cassie, Debbie Laturus and Sharon Rutledge – will now help serve Dorothy Dalgliesh School, Huntsville School and Picture Butte High School. They will ensure at least one trustee will represent the Board at school council meetings and other school-related events, and that the voice of the community is heard at Board meetings.

In keeping with provisions under the provincial Election Act – and given the ongoing challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic – the Board passed a motion that it will not hold a by-election to fill the vacant position for Ward 1, Subdivision 4 prior to the next municipal election, scheduled for October of 2021.

Choices in Education Act

The superintendent told trustees Palliser Regional Schools takes the matter of parental choice very seriously, as evidenced by the alternative programs it offers in the Calgary area. He said there are questions about the Act, however, in the area of charter schools, and “deep concerns” about the interpretation of Home Education and clarification is being sought.

The Board heard there is the potential for parents to confuse Home Education with the remote, on-line learning which has been going on since mid-March as an urgent response to a perceived, immediate threat in the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

Budget Update

Secretary-Treasurer Dexter Durfey provided the Board with a budget update to May 31, noting an anticipated deficit of about \$570,000. While much of that is attributed to increased insurance costs for the division, he pointed out a new arrangement in that regard should return Palliser to previous rates in future years. Palliser is in a position to put up to \$450,000 in Infrastructure Maintenance Renewal funding towards the deficit.

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