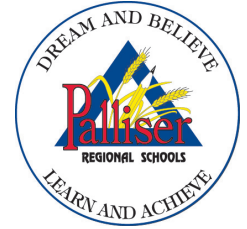


Highlights of the Board of Trustees Meeting

February 26, 2013



Board expresses condolences to Superintendent and his family

Board Chair Don Zech opened the meeting expressing condolences to Superintendent Kevin Gietz and his family. The meeting was adjourned mid-morning so trustees and staff could attend a funeral service for Gietz's sister-in-law. Associate Superintendent (Human Resources) Kevin Garinger expressed appreciation to the Board for the understanding and willingness to adjust the meeting schedule to give opportunity for staff to attend and pay their respects.

Trustee Esther Willms was absent from the meeting.

Early Childhood Development Mapping Project provides important data

Associate Superintendent (Education Services) Pat Rivard updated the Board on the Early Child Development Mapping Project which is collecting data on the learning



PAT RIVARD

readiness of five-year-olds across Alberta, socio-economic factors that influence a child's development and local services, programs and facilities for families with young children in communities across the province.

The five-year research project has identified that almost 27 per cent of young children experience difficulty in more than one of five areas: social competence; language and thinking skills; physical health and well-being;

emotional maturity; and communication skills and general knowledge. The survey has found 20.5 per cent of children in the County of Lethbridge are experiencing difficulties in one of more of the five areas. Rivard said Vulcan County has a smaller sample size. In that area, 23.41 per cent of children have been identified as have difficulty with language and thinking skills.

The survey results have been shared with kindergarten teachers and principals who attended a recent Palliser workshop on brain development and the mapping project.

Rivard said Director of Learning Laurie Wilson and Early Intervention Specialist Isabelle Plomp have been discussing the results to ensure Palliser programming addresses the difficulties children may have.

He said Palliser is well positioned to support young children because the division uses the Hanen program for language development in its early learning and kindergarten programs, and offers other supports to meet individual needs.

For more information about the mapping project, visit www.ecmap.ca.

Palliser's newest school, Trinity Christian, is reviewed

Director of Learning Dan Ryder was welcomed to the meeting to share the results of a school review conducted at Palliser's newest school, Trinity Christian School.

The kindergarten through Grade 9 school, located in south Calgary, joined Palliser at the start of the 2012-2013 school year as a faith-based alternative program.

A review team visited the school Jan. 17 to tour the facility, interview staff and conduct focus group meetings with students and parents. The review process also includes online surveys of students, teachers, support staff and parents/guardians.

Ryder said the review data indicates school strengths are a strong, caring staff; a deep support of faith; and solid focus on individual student success.

Areas of improvement are parent and staff communication; more challenging academics; and more options and extracurricular opportunities.

Overall, the vast majority of students, parents/guardians, teachers and support staff rated the school as very effective or effective.

The Board was scheduled to hear the results of the review of Brant Christian School, but that had to be postponed to a later date.



DAN RYDER



Kevin Cameron shares information on violence threat risk assessment with local law enforcement Feb. 11 at Palliser Centre in Lethbridge. Palliser will be organizing a full training session this spring for officers and other community partners.

Violence Threat Risk Assessment training session to be offered

Board Chair Don Zech commended Palliser administration and staff for the work the division is doing in the area of Violence Threat Risk Assessment, including the provision of an information session for local law enforcement and other partner agencies Feb. 11 featuring Kevin Cameron, executive director of the Canadian Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response.

Associate Superintendent (Education Services) Pat Rivard said the information session has served as a catalyst for Palliser providing a full VTRA Level 1 training session later this spring.

Rivard said Palliser is also working at building relationships and discussing safety protocols with the Calgary Police Service. A representative of Calgary Police Service will meet with principals of Palliser's Calgary schools in March to discuss information sharing and safety procedures.

Rivard said the division is also interested in establishing a common protocol for emergency response procedures, similar to the protocol adopted for responding to violence and threats. An initial meeting was held in Picture Butte to discuss that community's emergency response procedures.

In communities across Palliser, the school division buildings can serve as staging areas should an evacuation be necessary, buses may be required to move people from harm's way, and large numbers of students and staff may be impacted by an emergency such as a grass fire.

The Board will invite the emergency response co-ordinator to a future meeting to share information about the process.

ASBA survey of student, teacher and staff numbers shared with Board

Associate Superintendent (Human Resources) Kevin Garinger presented the results of the Alberta School Boards Association annual counts of students, teachers and staff. The list shows Palliser having 6,907 students, the second largest division in southern Alberta. Garinger explained that Palliser refers to having enrolment of more than 7,200 this year. The difference is that Palliser counts individuals, and the ASBA numbers refer to full-time equivalents. By FTE, each child in Early Childhood Services counts as only a 0.5 FTE.



KEVIN GARINGER

The survey shows Palliser has 438 teachers and 443 paraprofessional staff. The average teacher in Palliser has 4.83 years of training, compared to a provincial average of 4.88. Palliser teachers have an average of 7.6 years of experience teaching, compared to a provincial average of 8.01.

The survey finds there are 540,236.60 full-time equivalent students in the province, and 32,765.62 FTE teachers.

Calendars reviewed, approved

The Board continued to receive and review school calendars for the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years from its schools. The board approved calendars submitted by Barons School, Brant Christian School, Brant Christian ECS, Calgary Christian Elementary, Carmangay Outreach School, Sunnyside School and Sunnyside ECS. Each of the schools submitted calendars for next year and the year after.

Calendars will be posted on Palliser's website once approved. This is the first year Palliser schools have planned calendars two years in advance, in keeping with a Board effort to give parents more advance warning so they can plan holidays and other activities.

Palliser bands to unite for performance

Planning is underway for Palliser Band Day May 24 at Glenmore Christian Academy. Held every two years, the day brings together bands from across Palliser to share a workshop and then perform as a group. Associate Superintendent (Education Services) Dale Backlin encouraged trustees to mark the date because the mass performance of all the bands proves quite impressive.

School fee discussion tabled until budget information is known

The Board tabled the issue of school fees until its budget deliberations. Corporate Treasurer Michelle Gibb represented the current fee structure, but trustees said they want to wait until they have budget information before making any decision on school fees. The provincial budget is scheduled for release on March 7.

Since the BSE crisis hit the southern Alberta cattle industry in 2003, Palliser's Board has waived school fees for students in grades 1-6. The money is not collected from families, but an amount of \$39 per student is contributed out of Palliser revenue to elementary schools to help cover their supply costs. Fees for students from Grade 7-9 are \$49 a year, while students from Grades 10-12 are charged \$59 a year in school fees. An additional technology access fee of \$25 a year is charged to students from Grades 1-12, except those who attend Hutterian Colony schools and alternative programs for students from the Low German Mennonite community who do not use technology in the classroom.

Next meeting: March 26, 2013

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held at 9 a.m., March 26th at Vulcan Prairieview Elementary School in Vulcan.