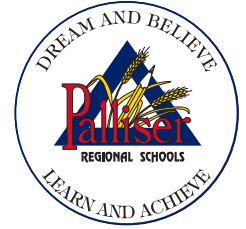


Highlights of the Board of Trustees Meeting

Tuesday, January 17, 2017



Discussions to begin on services to special needs preschoolers in city

The board authorized Palliser administration to begin discussions with school boards in Lethbridge about five private, preschool programs in Lethbridge. For several years, Palliser has provided support to children in these programs with identified learning needs. The children are eligible for Program Unit Funding (PUF). The board discussed the possibility of transitioning support for these programs to Lethbridge School District 51 or Holy Spirit Roman Catholic Separate Regional Division, whose schools these children will attend once they reach school age.

New fee system boosts cash to schools hosting international students

The Board of Trustees approved a new international student fee structure to increase the amount being shared with participating schools.

Under the fee proposal for 2017-2018, \$2,000 of the \$12,150 tuition paid by the international student would go directly to the community school the child attends. For international students attending a faith-based school, tuition of \$13,350 would be collected. Of that, \$2,000 would go to the society which oversees transportation, facility needs and faith program at the alternative school. Another \$1,200 would be allocated to the school itself.

The program has been operating at a small surplus and is expected to continue to do so.

Organizational review update shared

Acting Superintendent Dr. Garry Andrews updated the board on activities this past month in response to the Palliser Organizational Review recommendations.

Having impact on several of the recommendations related to governance was the hiring of Dr. Terence Weninger as a facilitator. The board had issued a request for proposals for facilitator services and awarded the contract to Weninger at a special meeting Jan. 10.

Weninger, who attended part of the Jan. 17 meeting, has proposed three, two-day workshops with the board to review and draft policy and address governance issues. He described governance as key to moving Palliser forward. The first workshops are scheduled for Feb. 13-14.

Andrews noted many recommendations in the review report relate to governance and policy.

In response to Recommendation 1, Andrews said he has been circulating weekly correspondence to staff focused on cultural wellness. The Administrators' Association plans to hold a wellness workshop, led by a representative of Palliser's benefits provider ASEBP (Alberta School Employee Benefit Plan), on Jan. 18.



In response to Recommendation 2, a workshop is scheduled March 16 on the Canadian Standards Association National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace.

In response to Recommendation 4, several Central Office staff were trained in the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Jan. 11-12. Palliser is considering incorporating "The Speed of Trust" as a program to help build trust among stakeholders in the jurisdiction.

Regarding Recommendation 9 and school goals meetings, senior administration completed this fall's goals meetings and followed up with a survey of school leaders seeking input on the process. According to the results, based on 23 administrators responding, all said the school goals process honoured or recognized their team's work and they felt supported in this year's school goals process. Ninety-one per cent of administrators said they felt prepared for this year's goals process, and 95.7 per cent said the process met their expectations.

In response to Recommendation 10 regarding additional Human Resources data and record keeping, Andrews said Palliser has been in contact with an independent organization which can work with Palliser's data to develop the required statistics. Two members of the Palliser HR team are pursuing Chartered Professional in Human Resources designation. The board approved providing financial support to two Human Resources administrators to obtain membership in the Human Resources Institute of Alberta and to prepare for and write the National Knowledge Exam. The cost is about \$1,300 per person.

Recommendation 11, related to job profiles and hiring processes, has prompted the creation of two new administrative procedures related to substitute teachers and casual support staff. Once approved by the acting superintendent, the new procedures will be posted online.

Andrews said in response to Recommendation 18, encouraging trustees to set aside time for professional development, the trustees were offered Seven Habits of Highly Effective People training in January. Weninger's work as facilitator will also serve as PD for the board.

The organizational review report [webpage](#) will be updated with these developments.

Policy 7 draft unchanged for now

The board continued its review of Policy 7: Board Operations, but did not make any changes to the draft because it will be part of the policy workshops facilitated by Dr. Terence Weninger.

Acting Superintendent Dr. Garry Andrews noted the board's policy review website has received feedback from two individuals so far which can be included in the board's review of Policy 7.

The policy review [website](#) was recently changed to accept attachments from people wanting to provide feedback.

Recognition of retirees discussed

The board will reconsider how it acknowledges retiring staff, after receiving the question from the Human Resources team.

Associate Superintendent HR Ken Garinger asked whether the board would like to hold a retirement dinner at the end of the school year, similar to the board's employee recognition dinner in honour of individuals nominated for or winning awards.

In the past, Palliser held a retirement dinner which was not always well attended. Trustees discussed the challenge of Palliser's size, and that if a dinner is held in Lethbridge, how some staff would have to drive more than two hours to attend.

Current practice is for the trustee to make a presentation to the retiree at the employee's school site. That can be challenging though, as the division may only become aware of retirement plans just before the end of the school year, so arranging for a gift and presentation can be difficult in a short time frame.

The board tabled the discussion to the February regular meeting of the board.

Coaldale open house planning continues

Planning continues for an important open house event in Coaldale to discuss Coaldale and area school facilities.

Acting Superintendent Dr. Garry Andrews said the Coaldale Community Centre is booked from 7 to 8:30 p.m., Jan. 31, for a Coaldale School Facilities Planning Open House. Information about each school in Coaldale and Sunnyside will be shared and the public will be invited to share their ideas for improving how facilities are used to best meet the needs of students. Growth in and around the community is precipitating a need to reexamine how existing space is used.

It's expected each school, including Sunnyside, which feeds into Coaldale's middle and high schools, will be represented with information about enrolment trends and facility strengths and challenges. The public will be able to peruse information and ask questions of school leaders to get a big picture sense of each school. Stakeholders will be able to share ideas in writing or verbally.

Societies' meeting not set yet

The board discussed scheduling a meeting with representatives of all of its society partners at its faith-based alternative programs. In the past, the board would have met with all of its society representatives in early December but that meeting did not happen this year. The board deferred the matter to a special meeting Jan. 24.

Huntsville School tops capital plan

The board approved Palliser's 2018-2021 capital plan with only one minor change from last year.

The top priority continues to be Huntsville School, but instead of a "mini modernization," the new plan refers to a major modernization. Palliser and community representatives had earlier met with Alberta Education and Infrastructure officials to discuss the school's facility needs, and the project is already on the province's list of priorities that have not yet received capital funding. Huntsville school was built in 1941, with additions in 1951 and 1958. The school is located in Iron Springs.

The second priority is Barons School, with a focus on creating barrier-free access to classrooms and washrooms, as well as usable administration space. Barons School was built in 1929, with additions in 1960 and a substantial upgrade to the heating system was completed in 2015.

The plan identified Kate Andrews High School modernization as a third priority. Population growth in Coaldale and the age of the high school are contributing to the need to modernize. The school was built in 1959 with additions in 1964, 1970, 1987 and 2004.

The final project on Palliser's capital plan is Coalhurst High School modernization. The school was built in 1957, with additions in 1973 and 1975. A modernization would address drainage problems on the site and replace a cast iron plumbing system which is nearing the end of its

lifecycle. The community is also experiencing growth.

School calendar reflects flexibility for provincial achievement tests

The board approved the division's 2017-2018 school calendar, which reflects Alberta Education's decision to create a flexible window of time in which Provincial Achievement Tests are administered, rather than set dates. Palliser will be asking its principals whether they prefer to set their PAT dates themselves or have a common schedule across the division.

The calendar for 2017-2018 has students starting school Tuesday, Sept. 5, and taking Christmas break from Friday, Dec. 22 through Friday, Jan. 5, 2018 inclusive. The last day of school for students would be Wednesday, June 27, 2018.

Individual schools have some flexibility for their own calendars to set site-based professional development days and to acknowledge religious holidays unique to their student populations.

Trustees discuss conference attendance

The board discussed trying to reduce the cost of trustees attending conferences by only having one or two trustees attend, then report back to the larger group. Upcoming opportunities include the Alberta Rural Education Symposium, March 5-7 in Edmonton, the National Congress on Rural Education in Saskatoon March 26-28, the Canadian School Boards Association Congress in Whistler, B.C., July 5-8 and the National School Boards Association Conference March 25-27 in Denver, Co. In recent years, trustees had only attended the Saskatoon conference.

The board deferred a discussion on which trustees would attend which conferences until a special meeting

Jan. 24.

Trustees were also invited to the Alberta Iqra Arabic Conference at the Delta Kananaskis March 31. The conference for teachers of Arabic language is being organized by Palliser Regional Schools in partnership with the Horizon Academy Institute, Almadina Language Charter Academy and the Muslim Community Foundation of Calgary.

The board congratulated Associate Superintendent Education Service Pat Rivard, who has been invited to present with Lonnie Slezina, director of Southeast and South regions of Human Services, to the Alberta Rural Education Symposium. They'll be discussing their work to create a Southern Alberta Children Advocacy Centre and the importance of integrated practice to meet the needs of children and youth victims of sexual abuse.

Noble Central modernization update and price of Internet surfing goes down

The agenda included several information items, including an eighth price reduction for Internet to Palliser since 2012. The new rate from Cybera's Internet Buying Group as of Jan. 1 is \$3.75 per megabyte per second, reduced from \$5 per Mbps. In 2012, the price was \$14 per Mbps. This latest reduction will save Palliser \$262.50 per month.

Noble Central Schools junior and senior high students have been relocated from classrooms in the gymnasium into the newly renovated south wing. The new wing opened to students immediately following Christmas break, thanks to the hard work of school staff, the Palliser Facility and Technology Services teams and the contractor. The move not only puts students back into classrooms and clears the way for work to begin in the north wing, but it means the gym will be available for Physical Education classes and team sports.