



Palliser Regional Schools

Palliser Centre

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Highlights of Board of Trustees Meeting Tuesday, May 21, 2019

Capital Plan

Secretary-Treasurer Dexter Durfey said after a detailed inventory of all school properties owned by Palliser Regional Schools – including any issues which might need to be addressed at each of those as well as population trends in their respective communities – the list of priorities for the top four have not changed. Those are, in order, an overall solution for Coaldale, Country Central High School in Vulcan, a Coalhurst solution involving both elementary and high school, and Sunnyside School.

The Board accepted the updated Capital Plan for 2019-2022, with Chair Robert Strauss noting he was very appreciative of the detailed and long-term approach taken by Durfey.

Financial Update

Trustees heard from Dexter Durfey, Secretary-Treasurer, that as of April 30 Palliser was facing a projected deficit of about \$380,000 for the end of August, 2019. On a positive note, plant operations and maintenance has a projected surplus of almost \$200,000 despite a heavy workload in catching up with work needed inside schools and continued beautification for many school yards. Transportation has a projected surplus of almost \$165,000, while board and system administration has a projected surplus of more than \$65,000 after running a deficit the last couple of years previous.

English Language Learners

Director Adam Browning provided the Board with the 2018-2019 report on the English Language Learners (ELL) program, also known as English as a Second Language. The ELL enrolment numbers have gone up from 2,424 in 2015-2016, to 3,132 at the most recent count. With more than a third of Palliser students falling under that category, the division likely has one of the highest ELL populations in the province by percentage. While much of that increase is found in the alternative programs in Calgary, he said numbers have also grown in rural areas including those offering programs to Low German-speaking Mennonite students.

Browning said a better job is being done now in assessing those students' level of proficiency and Palliser is leading the way as far as professional development for staff who serve those students. He added efforts are also being made with the help of community partners to offer support for students at an earlier age, and greater stakeholder engagement has led to the expansion of high school programs for those serving the LGM community.

Inclusive Education

Trustees heard that the number of coded students who require additional classroom supports is growing, but they still account for less than 10 per cent of the entire student population. Director Shane Cranston said priorities in the area include supporting students in their academic endeavours, building partnerships in the community to provide greater support, and building capacity in staff to support inclusive practices.

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

Palliser continues to score above the provincial average for student inclusion and supported families, he noted. Cranston said those students and their families are even better served with the addition of a Coordinator of Counselling this past year, a Family Connections Worker supported by outside agencies and a wellness framework in the works.

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