



Palliser Regional Schools

Palliser Centre

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Highlights of Board of Trustees Meeting Tuesday, Oct.15, 2019

Student Enrolment

Secretary-Treasurer Dexter Durfey told trustees that as of the official count on Sept. 30, there were a total of 8,662 students enrolled in Palliser from kindergarten to Grade 12. Those figures equate to an increase of 251 students in Grades 1-12 and an additional 21 in kindergarten.

Among the schools seeing significant increases were both R.I. Baker Middle School and Kate Andrews High School, both in Coaldale. Durfey said administration will be looking to the provincial budget Oct. 24 to see what those increases will mean financially for the school division.

Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Exams

Associate Superintendent Tom Hamer shared the 2018-2019 Accountability Report and Summary and noted Palliser Regional Schools performed as a division at a "very high" level in provincial achievement tests. He added It's important not to get complacent, however, and administration must work with school principals to address any areas of concerns.

Palliser's PAT results for English Language Arts, Math and Science were above provincial averages and results in Social Studies were also very favorable. Results in English Language Arts 30-1, Math 30-1 and Chemistry 30 Diploma Exams were below the provincial level.

Audit Committee

The Board appointed two external members to the Audit Committee, Michelle Lutz and Tony Montana. Under the provincial Education Act, a volunteer from each of the business community and adult learning community were required. Their duties will include a recommendation of external auditors, a review of annual financial statements and reporting to the Board.

Modular Classroom Submissions

The Trustees approved a motion to request from the provincial government three modular classrooms for the new Huntsville School and one for Sunnyside School. Each would cost Palliser about \$50,000 to cover transportation of the units and other associated expenses.

It was noted this year's enrolment at Huntsville School already exceeds the capacity for the replacement school now under construction.

Budget Preparation

The Board was told projections for the 2019-2020 operating budget for Palliser Regional Schools call for a deficit of about \$400,000, with current enrolment numbers factored in. That picture will become clearer after the provincial budget is announced Oct. 24.

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

Secretary-Treasurer Dexter Durfey added the deficit doesn't include a 217 per cent increase in property insurance costs for a number of school divisions including Palliser. That increase – the result of damages to school properties across the province in floods and fires the past few years – will mean an additional cost of about \$300,000 for Palliser.

Student Engagement

Director Jason Kupery informed the Board of Palliser's ongoing efforts to increase student engagement and provide them with practical learning opportunities to go along with classroom theory. The overall goal is to develop the students' skills in such areas as critical thinking, problem solving, creativity and innovation, collaboration and both cultural and global citizenship.

In an effort to further engage those students there has been a significant increase in dual credit and off-campus programming being offered, he noted, as well as other innovative courses and technology. The latter includes 'myBlueprint,' software which allows students to take more ownership in their learning and ensure they are taking the proper courses to meet possible career interests.

Palliser Education Upgrades

The Board has authorized administration to arrange financing to complete Phase 1 that includes mechanical and electrical upgrades to the Palliser Education Centre as per the tender. Trustees had earlier asked administration to put out tenders for the necessary upgrades once Palliser's surplus property was sold, with the understanding that no instructional or classroom funding will be impacted.

The next regular Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 26, 2019