



**PALLISER BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES - BT20210525**

DATE: May 25, 2021

Trustees in Attendance: Robert Strauss, Board Chair
Lorelei Bexte, Board Vice-Chair
Kristine Cassie, Trustee
Debbie Laturus, Trustee
Sharon Rutledge, Trustee

Staff in Attendance: Dave Driscoll, Superintendent
Tom Hamer, Deputy Superintendent
Audrey Kluin, Associate Superintendent
Dexter Durfey, Secretary-Treasurer

Recording: Joanne Siljak

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Robert Strauss called the meeting to order at 8:59 a.m.

2. ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA

Resolution # BT20210525 - 01

Moved by: Lorelei Bexte

That the agenda for the May 25, 2021 meeting be approved as amended. Postpone 9.2 School Division Four Year Plan 2021-2025, Year One to the June meeting.
Add 9.6 Rural Caucus. 9.7 Final Exam Update.

CARRIED.

3. MOVE TO IN-CAMERA

Resolution # BT20210525 - 02

Moved by: Sharon Rutledge

That the meeting move In-Camera, at 9:03 a.m., pursuant to Section S64(3) of the Education Act, and Division 2 of Part 1 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter S-3 and amendments thereto, to discuss Privileged Information with regards to identified In-Camera Items.

CARRIED.

Resolution # BT20210525 - 03

Moved by: Lorelei Bexte

That the meeting move out of in-camera at 10:30 a.m.

Chairperson: _____ Secretary Treasurer: _____

CARRIED

4. MOTIONS ARISING FROM IN-CAMERA

Resolution # BT20210525 - 04

Moved by: Debbie Laturnus

That the Board adjust the 2020-2021 school year calendar to change the June 28, 29 operational days to days off for staff for this year only. The last day for students will be June 25, 2021.

CARRIED

5. ADOPTION OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Resolution # BT20210525 - 05

Moved by: Lorelei Bexte

That the minutes of the April 27, 2021 meeting of the Palliser Board of Trustees be approved as presented.

CARRIED

6. CITIZEN'S FORUM

Natalie Townshend expressed appreciation to the Board and Administration for allowing them to work from home during the latest restrictions set by the provincial government. The Board Chair expressed the Board's appreciation to the staff.

7. PRESENTATIONS

7.1. COVID Update

Dr. Adam Browning shared the COVID report with the Board. Highlights of the report include:

- As of May 18th, Palliser has had 228 confirmed cases of COVID-19 amongst staff and students. There have been 3,843 instances of students and 309 instances of staff who were required to quarantine as close contacts.
- As of May 25th, there are no students or staff who are presently required to quarantine as close contacts.

The COVID-19 Response Process was updated to address changes in the guidance on responding to cases in school settings and an increasing number of cases that are reported to school administrators prior to us hearing from AHS. These changes were reviewed with administrators, as well as the process for school closures.

With recent updates to the Guidance for School Re-entry and changes to several other school guidance documents, the Palliser COVID-19 School Guidance Document will reflect these updates. This will include updated guidance for libraries, sports and physical activity. All the processes that schools follow are reviewed regularly and administrators are made aware of.

Recent updates to the Guidance for School Re-entry have included some parameters for graduations, which includes that:

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- We received a recent update from Alberta Education that indoor graduation ceremonies are no longer permitted. However, virtual ceremonies and outdoor drive-in ceremonies are permitted.
- Any indoor activities for graduating students would have all the safety measures that are in place for activities the individual cohorts already participate in.
- Graduation ceremonies involving community who are not students or staff will need to take place virtually or through outdoor drive-in ceremonies. This new [Guidance for Drive-In Events](#) contains a section on graduations and celebratory outdoor events and is the primary guidance for these events.

The overarching rules for graduation activities will come from the enhanced public health measures under outdoor social gatherings and performance activities. Palliser will continue to point people to the government website for the latest measures.

There was a meeting with a team responsible for coordinating rapid screening tests in schools and administration from Calgary Islamic School - Akram Jomaa Campus to set up rapid screening testing at the school in early May. We have not had any further information. Rapid testing is available if we see a need.

Dr. Browning was thanked for his report and his support for the schools during the pandemic.

Resolution # BT20210525 - 06

Moved by: Kristine Cassie

That the COVID Update be accepted as information.

CARRIED

7.2 English as a Second Language Report

Dr. Adam Browning shared the ESL summary report with the Board. Highlights of the year included:

- Palliser currently has 3,292 identified English Language Learners (ELLs) enrolled in Palliser schools. This is an increase of 137 students from 2019-2020.
- During the 2020-2021 School year, \$2,246,068 was funded for ELL students with eligible years of funding. A total of 8.25 FTE teaching staff and 28,1720 support staff hours were allocated to Palliser schools specifically for ELL support.
- Palliser established an ELL assessment team to better support early language assessment and reporting outcomes for ELLs. As a result, the Division led the development of an early language assessment being shared with other school divisions and Alberta Education.
- Palliser continued to offer professional development for staff specific to the diverse groups of learners supported, and have extended the focus on literacy and language for ELLs to support more academic uses of English across subjects.

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- Palliser continues to engage multiple agencies to support newcomer families and professional development to support diversity. Schools regularly utilized services through Lethbridge Family Services and Calgary Catholic Immigration Society to support newcomer families.
- Palliser celebrates the diversity of its schools and will continue to highlight this aspect of the division.

Dr. Browning was thanked for his report and for his support of the English Language Learners in the Division.

Resolution # BT20210525 - 07

Moved by: Sharon Rutledge

That the English as a Second Language Report be accepted as information.

CARRIED

7.3 Inclusive Education Report

Shane Cranston shared the inclusive education summary report with the Board.

Highlights of the department include:

- Maintaining high level of service throughout transitions between home and school.
- Providing services virtually.
- Successful capacity building through ongoing, virtual learning opportunities.
- Successful transition from RCSD to SWCSS.
- The May 2020 Alberta Education Accountability Pillar.
- Making Connections Workers up to 5 FTE.
- Over \$35000 in successful grant application (nutrition/outdoor classroom etc.).
- Social Emotional Learning resources in 21 schools.
- New threat assessment framework in place: Administration/FSLC/MCW all trained. The division has shifted from the VTRA to the CSTAG model, which is more streamlined.

Challenges this year were:

- Transitioning back and forth between home and school for our students with needs.
- Transition in specialized services from Alberta Health to contracting (SLP/OT/PT).
- Greater number of non attending students.

Opportunities that presented themselves this year:

- Assurance Framework model. Community engagement is important.
- Budget: Changes to the funding model and additional coding (code 48).
- Capacity building with classroom staff: specifically related to rehabilitation services.

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- Diversity and Anti-Racism focus.
- Ensuring mental health supports are in place for students after a challenging year.
- Continued emphasis on mental health promotion and prevention.
- Continued emphasis on collaboration with community partners.

Mr. Cranston was thanked for his presentation and his support of the students and staff in the Division. It has been a very challenging year.

Resolution # BT20210525 - 08

Moved by: Kristine Cassie

That the Inclusive Education and Wellness Report be accepted as information.

CARRIED

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

8.1. *SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Attached to the agenda was the Superintendent's monthly activities report.

8.2. *SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

Attached as information is the Secretary Treasurer's monthly activities report.

8.3. *ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT, HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

Attached to the agenda was the Associate Superintendent's monthly activities report.

8.4. *DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT, LEARNING SERVICES REPORT

Attached to the agenda was the Deputy Superintendent's monthly activities report.

8.5. *TRUSTEE REPORTS

Attached to the agenda were the Trustees' monthly activities reports.

8.6. *SCHOOL FIELD TRIP REPORT

Due to COVID-19 all international or out-of-province school trips have been postponed at this time.

9. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

9.1. 2021-2022 Budget Approval

The 2021-2022 budget was presented for approval. Highlights of the budget include:

- The 2021-2022 budget will see the maintenance of services at present levels but with a deficit projected to be approximately \$1.5 M dollars. The Board will request permission from Minister LaGrange to utilize its reserves to bring the budget to a balanced state.
- Revenues for the 2021-2022 school year remained the same as the funding profile supplied by Alberta Education in the Spring of 2020. The Palliser School Division is pleased there was no funding reduction but is concerned that student growth and increases in costs are not being met

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and putting a strain on the funds available. Palliser is projecting modest student enrollment growth next year, this compiled with an 8 percent increase in the Employee Benefit Plan and the yearly staff salary grid increases have led to a deficit budget.

- The Board has maintained the philosophy of limiting any negative funding impact on the classroom. Mental wellness supports that were added during the last year have been maintained, ensuring students have a wide variety of supports in place as they enter the new school year.
- The Board has maintained the current allotment of teaching staff within the division. To offset some of the inflationary cost pressures, some central positions have been left vacant or will not be filled this budget year.
- Administration will continue to pursue cost saving efficiencies and will report back to the Board in June.

Resolution # BT20210525 - 09

Moved by: Lorelei Bexte

That the 2021-2022 budget for the Palliser School Division be approved as discussed with a \$1.5 M deficit, and that the Board request the ability to use reserves to cover the deficit.

CARRIED

9.2. Palliser School Division Four Year Plan 2021-2025, Year One

This matter was removed and will be brought back in June.

9.3. Policy Review

The following policies will be reviewed.

Policy 24 - Board Delegation of Authority

Policy 6 - Managing Board of Trustees Annual Plan

Policy 7 - Monitoring Board of Trustee Performance

Policy 17 - Student Achievement

Policy 1 - Role of the Board of Trustees

Policy 2 - Role of the Superintendent

Policy 8 - Monitoring and Evaluation of the Superintendent

Resolution # BT20210525 - 10

Moved by: Kristine Cassie

That Draft Policy 24 be approved for sharing as discussed and that it be shared with stakeholders for review.

CARRIED

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Resolution # BT20210525 - 11

Moved by: Kristine Cassie

That Policy 2 - Role of the Superintendent be approved for sharing as discussed and that it be shared with stakeholders for review.

CARRIED

Resolution # BT20210525 - 12

Moved by: Debbie Laturus

That Policy 6 - Managing Board of Trustees Annual Plan be deleted, as this is covered in Policy 1 - Role of the Board of Trustees.

CARRIED

Resolution # BT20210525 - 13

Moved by: Lorelei Bexte

That Policy 7 - Monitoring Board of Trustee Performance be incorporated into Policy 1 - Role of the Board of Trustees and then deleted.

CARRIED

Resolution # BT20210525 - 14

Moved by: Kristine Cassie

That Policy 17 - Student Achievement be deleted as this is covered in Policy 1 - Role of the Board of Trustees.

CARRIED

Resolution # BT20210525 - 15

Moved by: Sharon Rutledge

That Policy 8 - Monitoring and Evaluation of the Superintendent be incorporated into Policy 2 - Role of the Superintendent and then deleted.

CARRIED

Resolution # BT20210525 - 16

Moved by: Debbie Laturus

That Draft Policy 1 - Role of the Board be approved for sharing as discussed and that it be shared with stakeholders for review.

CARRIED

9.4. Provincial Student Transportation Task Force Report

The Student Transportation Task Force was created in 2020 to review student transportation across the province. Alberta's government held 74 meetings with school authorities and other stakeholders and heard from Albertans through written submissions, emails, surveys and meetings. The task force provided its recommendations to the government in late 2020 in a [report](#).

These recommendations are focused in the following areas:

- Mandatory Entry Level Training (MELT)
- Service Delivery Model
- Funding Model

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- School Bus Safety
- Transportation for Students Who Require Specialized Supports and Services
- Regional Cooperation Between School Jurisdictions
- Current Eligibility Criteria, Fees and Ride Times
- Provincial Purchasing

Based on the valuable work of the Student Transportation Task Force, Alberta Education has a plan to make improvements to student transportation while ensuring the safety of both drivers and students.

There will be an audit done by members of the task force of the transportation departments that will begin soon. The Committee will then work with divisions to review areas of coordination of services. The last phase will look at the funding framework for transportation.

Resolution # BT20210525 - 17

Moved by: Kristine Cassie

That the Provincial Student Transportation Task Force Report be received as information.

CARRIED

9.5. Board of Trustee Orientation

The Municipal Elections will be held on October 18, 2021 and a new Board of Trustees will be elected. An orientation will be scheduled for the trustees. Trustees will offer input into the orientation process by giving suggestions and these will be presented to the Board at the June meeting.

Resolution # BT20210525 - 18

Moved by: Lorelei Bexte

That the Board directs Administration to prepare an orientation program for the Board of Trustees following the October election.

CARRIED

9.6 Rural Caucus

Lorelei Bexte shared the budget for the Rural Caucus and the caucus is requesting a membership fee of \$200.

Resolution # BT20210525 - 19

Moved by: Kristine Cassie

That the Board continue its membership with the Rural Caucus of Alberta, an arm of the Alberta School Boards' Association, at the cost of \$200.00.

CARRIED

9.7 Final Exam Update

Lorelei Bexte shared an article about exams at the end of the school year during COVID. Administration shared the way that Palliser schools and teachers will be assessing students this year. Palliser high schools have been advised to lessen

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the traditional exam period as well as weighing of final exams and provide ongoing instructions and learning opportunities until June 18. During the last week of school, final exams or assessments may occur that reflect the learning that occurred in the classroom. While no hard cap has been placed on the weighing of final exams, all staff have been asked to use their professional judgment, understanding of the learning that occurred this school year and to take into account the emotional stress students have been under over the last year. Students learned differently this year and assessments should reflect this.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business before the Board, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:48 p.m.

Original Signed By Chair

Original Signed by Secretary-Treasurer

Board Chair

Secretary-Treasurer

Chairperson: _____ Secretary Treasurer: _____