Board of Education
Highlights

Representatives from Habitat for Humanity (Prince Albert), Stobart Community School, Sask Housing and Prairie Spirit School Division were part of a special sod-turning event in Duck Lake on January 7. Stobart students will renovate duplexes into single family homes for Habitat for Humanity, as part of Prairie Spirit's Da Vinci Project. This opportunity is possible through a partnership between the Town of Duck Lake, Habitat for Humanity and Prairie Spirit School Division.

Strategic Directions reports to Board

Over the past six weeks, the Board of Education has received a number of annual Strategic Directions reports regarding specific areas of work within the school division.

Human Resources

At the Board's regular meeting on January 11, the Human Resources update and plan was presented to the Board.

"We want to achieve a highly engaged, diverse workforce that is healthy, well and emotionally committed to the success of the Division, allowing all students to learn without limits," said Bob Bayles, Superintendent of Human Resources. Bayles highlighted various programs in place throughout the Division to support these goals.

He explained the *Aspiring Leadership* program offered to individuals who are interested in in-school administration positions. The program has evolved to become a Masters elective, in collaboration with two other school divisions and the University of Saskatchewan. The course includes six modules focusing on leadership competencies and their application to a rural educational environment. This program supports the Division's overall goal of strong recruitment.

In developing a comprehensive HR strategy for the Division, five core initiatives were identified as the role of Human Resources: Recruitment, Bargaining and Labour Management, Staff Engagement and Wellness, Total Compensation and Benefits, and Employee Development.

Bayles reported that Prairie Spirit received a reduction in its Workers Compensation Benefits premiums this year as a result of a strong claims experience, which was better than the overall education sector.

The Division employs over 1300 full-time equivalent staff members, working in a variety of roles throughout the school division.

Technology

Clint Reddekopp, Learning Superintendent, presented an annual update on Technology to the Board at its meeting on December 17. Reddekopp explained the *FreshGrade* pilot program that uses online portfolios to provide up-to-date information to parents about their child's learning at school. This program provides an innovative approach to parent-teacher-student communication.

Reddekopp also provided an overview of Office 365, a free cloud product that is available to all Prairie Spirit staff and students. The program allows students and staff to access their files, as well as share and collaborate from any device.

Reddekopp commended the Board for its work in advocating for greater bandwidth for schools from the provincial government. Schools now have access to greater bandwidth than in the recent past, but the need for more bandwidth remains high.

Facilities

Kerry Donst, Facilities Planner, presented an update on the Division's Facilities at the Board meeting on December 17. Donst provided an overview of the variety of projects that have been completed by the Facilities Department over the past year, including: new construction and renovation at Martensville High School, relocatable classrooms for elementary schools in Martensville, structural restoration, roof replacement, temporary structural shoring, renovations and improvements in a number of schools.

The Division's top three priority capital projects have been submitted to the Ministry for approval and include:

• Rosthern High/Elementary
• Hague structural
• Colonsay structural

The Facilities Department has its own portal to provide information about policies and practices in the department and is accessible to staff.

First Nations and Métis Education

Kim Beaulieu, Learning Superintendent, presented an update on First Nations and Métis (FNM) education in Prairie Spirit at the Board's December 7 meeting.

"Our FNM story is built on the belief that all students are capable learners and that our best agency for change is in the classroom, where the pedagogy is relationship-based and responds to the voice of the students," reported Beaulieu. The Division's work is focused on supporting teachers to create and sustain those learning environments.

One of the Division's learning goals is in the area of FNM graduation rates. Prairie Spirit's current FNM grad rate is 72.5%, in contrast with the provincial rate of approximately 40%.

Prairie Spirit works with partners in Muskeg Lake, Beardy's and Okemasis and Mistawasis with the goal to know and meet the needs of students.

Prairie Spirit has engaged with the Ministry for the *Following Their Voices* (FTV) project. Blaine Lake Composite School participated in the pilot of this initiative in 2014/15 and this work is continuing.

FTV uses a model where in-school facilitators work with teachers in classrooms to support the development of positive relationships with First Nations and Métis students, set goals to support teacher growth and develop structures to support First Nations and Métis student achievement.

The 2015 FNM "self-declared" enrolment in Prairie Spirit was 993 students. The overall population of the school division is over 10,500.

Transportation

Prairie Spirit's Conveyance (Transportation) Department provided its annual report to the Board on January 11. Bill Steckler, Conveyance Manager, and Nicol Moody, Conveyance Assistant, reported that their department has been focusing on ensuring regulatory compliance and meeting the requirements of SGI and the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure. In addition, there has been a focus on ensuring bus drivers know and understand what is expected of them as commercial drivers.

Moody described the bus driver training regimen in place for all drivers. "There's much more than just passing the driver's test," she explained. Training involves a minimum of 15 hours of driving in addition to classroom theory. She added that driving with six mirrors on a school bus requires considerable practice and training.

"Our motivation for our extensive training program is to enhance safety and support driver retention," she said.

GPS technology was added to all buses in the school division in 2014. The GPS device provides the Conveyance Department staff with the real-time location of buses and also assists service technicians when a driver has a mechanical issue. The service technician can access the on-board computer to conduct a diagnostics of the bus, similar to reading codes when the bus is in for service.

The GPS is an important tool to capture data in the event of questions about a specific route. The GPS is helpful for new drivers or spare drivers if they are unsure of their route as they can be guided to their next pick up in "real time".

The *My Stop* program provides parents and students with details on the anticipated arrival time of the bus at their stop and is being piloted in Hanley and Dundurn this year. This GPS program is expected to be used at all schools by the start of the next school year.

Next Board of Education meeting:
Monday, February 8, 2016, Division Office, Warman

Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol signatories at a special event in Saskatoon on January 13. Larry Pavloff, Board Chair, signed the agreement on behalf of Prairie Spirit (front row, third from the right).

Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol

Prairie Spirit School Division has renewed its commitment to building safer communities by joining with 18 other agency partners to re-sign the Saskatoon and Area Community Threat Assessment and Support Protocol (CTASP) during an event held January 13.

The community protocol is guided by the principle that violence prevention in schools and neighbourhoods is a community responsibility. As a result of joining this protocol, the community partners are able to share information and advice and to use their broad range of expertise to provide supports to youth and families in the community.

Each organization that has signed the protocol has committed to ensuring their leaders are fully trained in violence threat risk assessment (VTRA). All Prairie Spirit administrators are receiving professional development to assess violence threat risks in their schools.

Since all community partners receive the same training, they will benefit from a shared understanding and common language in assessing possible violence.

"The protocol offers support to our staff in dealing with complex situations with the clear communication, expectations and processes that have been developed," said Larry Pavloff, Board Chair, who signed the agreement on behalf of Prairie Spirit School Division.

Prairie Spirit Board of Education

Subdivision 1
Pam Wieler
Blaine Lake
Laird
Leask
Waldheim
Green Leaf, Riverbend
and Leask Colonies

Subdivision 2
Keith Wagner
Duck Lake
Hague
Rosthern

Subdivision 3
Ken Crush
Borden
Langham

Subdivision 4
George Janzen
Dalmeny
Hepburn
Osler

Subdivision 5
Larry Pavloff
Board Chair
Asquith
Perdue
Eagle Creek Colony
Sunnydale Colony

Subdivision 6
Bernie Howe
Delisle
Pike Lake
Vanscoy
Willow Park Colony

Subdivision 7
Dawne Badrock
Clavet
Dundurn
Hanley
South Corman Park
Hillcrest Colony
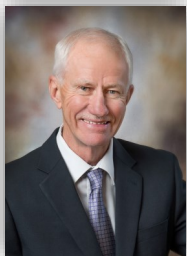*Lost River Colony*

Subdivision 8
Joanne Brochu
Aberdeen
Allan
Colonsay
Riverview Colony

Subdivision 9
Bonnie Hope
Martensville

Subdivision 10
Sam Dyck
Board Vice-Chair
Warman

Subdivision 11
Deanna Greyeyes
Muskeg Lake
Cree Nation

Subdivision 12
Shantelle Watson
Mistawasis
First Nation

PRAIRIE SPIRIT
SCHOOL DIVISION
Learners for Life

PUBLIC SCHOOLS
OF SASKATCHEWAN
Where everyone can grow.

Prairie Spirit is on Twitter
@prairiespiritsd #pssdlearn