

# BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

October 13, 2020

For Immediate Release

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## ***COVID Response Activity Plan***

Occupational Health and Safety inspectors from Ministry of Labour and Immigration were assigned to audit COVID-19 safety practices in a number of schools across Alberta.

Percy Baxter School, Elmer Elson Elementary School and Rich Valley School were selected to be audited for NGPS. All schools received outstanding reviews, so strong in fact, that the inspectors asked if they could take pictures of the processes that are currently in place.

Slight adjustments have been made to the [COVID Re-entry Manual](#). Updated version on the NGPS webpage.

## ***Transportation Report***

Director of Transportation reported on the following:

- There is a shortage of school bus drivers again this year. Transportation is looking at ways to accommodate riders who need school bus transportation.
- Many Divisions are experiencing bus driver problems in the Province of Alberta, now more exasperated by COVIS, CERB and aging drivers.
- Requested an extension to the permit to operate a school bus without S-endorsement or the elimination of the requirement that S-endorsement remain a pre-employment requirement
- Requested the elimination of the MELT program and suggested that the training become mandatory but not a pre-employment requirement.
- Early in September, bus drivers performed two evacuation drills, a front and rear door.

## ***Technology Overview***

Director of Information Technology reported on the following:

*Major Milestones:*

- Pandemic
- Year 3 of 4 Year Evergreen Cycle
  - Completed year 3 this summer. Waiting on remaining Chromebook order.
  - Gave all students and staff access to reliable technology.
- VOIP Completed Across all of NGPS
  - With the VOIP – Division Wide installation there will be a \$72,000 savings a year.



- Installed were 464 phones, 96 modules, 16 Bogen converters, 14,000 meters of cat 6 cable.
- 4 digit dialing – no longer distance between schools, technology support extension, hour zero.
  
- Power School
  - Implemented a process for cleaning student physical records, organizing them and then scanning and uploading to PASI. Approximately 4700 students' physical files went through this process – at around 6 separate scans per student that was over 28,200 scans the Administrative Assistants processed in 3 ½ months.
  - Started sending more data from PowerSchool to Busplanner so that both systems have the same information.
  
- Boardroom Tech Upgrade
  - Upgraded to a powerful communication and collaboration center.

### ***School Viability Report***

Administration presented the School Operational Viability report to the Board of Trustees. The report is on the viability of individual school site operations according to the criteria outlined in Board Policy 15 [“School Operational Viability”](#).

Any site that presents a concern in two or more of the review criteria may result in the Superintendent recommending a further study of the possibility of school closure or the discontinuation of grade levels in a school.

The Board of Trustees passed the following motion:

“Moved by Trustee Maddigan – that the Board direct viability studies be completed for Sangudo Community School and Harry Gray Elementary School consistent with the parameters outlined in Board Policy 15: “School Operational Viability”.

### ***Virtual School Council Reports***

The Board of Trustees received via Zoom – two School Council reports.

Darwell School – Bobby Yoeman, Assistant Chair and Lorna Vardy, School Principal  
Onoway Jr/Sr High School – Janine Mickey – Chairperson and John Lobo, School Principal

### ***Virtual School Council Reports***

The Alberta government is providing students and parents with the option of choosing if they write their diploma exams for the November administration.

At the time, diploma exams for the balance of the 2020/21 school year are expected to proceed as usual.





Alberta's government will continue to monitor the situation and potential adjustments to future diploma exam administrations will be considered one administration at a time.

The Board of Trustees passed the following motion:

“Moved by Trustee Hailes – that the Board ask the Minister of Education to extend this option of parents and students choosing if they write their diploma exams for the remainder of 2020/21.”

### ***Next Meeting***

The next meeting of the Board will take place on **October 27, 2020** commencing at **10:00 a.m.** at the **Division Office in Whitecourt**. Members of the public are welcome to attend virtually, or in-person. Please contact Board Secretary Wendy Robertson at the Division Office, 780-778-2800 or 1-800-262-8674, to confirm your attendance so we may accommodate physical distancing. Masks are required.

