

MEMORANDUM

PARKLAND SCHOOL DIVISION	September 14, 2021 Regular Board Meeting
то	Board of Trustees
FROM	Shauna Boyce, Superintendent
ORIGINATOR	Mark Francis, Deputy Superintendent
RESOURCE	Board of Trustees and Executive Team Jordi Weidman, Director of Strategic Communications
GOVERNANCE POLICY	Board Policy 2: Role of the Board Board Policy 3: Role of a Trustee Board Policy 7: Board Operations Board Policy 12: Role of the Superintendent
ADDITIONAL REFERENCE	Brenda Zimmerman, From Lifecycle to Ecocycle: Renewal via Destruction and Encouraging Diversity for Sustainability
SUBJECT	BOARD LEGACY DOCUMENT (2017-2021)

PURPOSE

For approval. Recommendation required.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Trustees approve the Board Legacy Document (2017-2021), as presented at the Regular Meeting of September 14, 2021.

BACKGROUND

The role of the Trustee is to contribute to the Board as it carries out its mandate in order to achieve its mission and goals. The oath of office taken or affirmation made by each Trustee when assuming the role binds that person to work diligently and faithfully in the cause of public education. Once a Board term has concluded, there may be a change in membership following an election. To ensure continuity and facilitate smooth transition from one Board to the next, trustees must be adequately briefed concerning existing Board policy and practice, statutory requirements, initiatives and long-range plans. This report is in support of this responsibility.

REPORT SUMMARY

During the 2020-2021 school year, and the final year of the current Board of Trustees, the process of drafting a legacy document for future Parkland School Division Boards began. The Board Legacy Document (2017-2021) provides the context of events, economics, government agencies, and much more, at the time of this Board taking office. It also summarizes some of the work initiated by this Board and many of the accomplishments during their term. This document will provide context and direction for the incoming Board in October 2021, following elections, and memorialize the legacy of this particular Board of Trustees.

A final review of The Board Legacy Document (2017-2021) was conducted at the Governance and Planning Session, held August 31, 2021, and will be submitted for Board approval at the September 14, 2021, Regular Board Meeting.

Administration would be pleased to respond to any questions.

MF:kz



Top Row (left to right):

Trustee Eric Cameron (Ward 5) Trustee Ron Heinrichs (Ward 1) Trustee Paul McCann (Ward 4)

Bottom Row (left to right): Trustee Anne Montgomery (Ward 5) Trustee Sally Kucher-Johnson (Ward 3) Trustee Lorraine Stewart (Ward 2) Trustee Darlene Clarke (Ward 5)



Board Chair: Trustee Eric Cameron (2017-2019) Trustee Lorraine Stewart (2019-2021)

Board Vice-Chair: Trustee Ron Heinrichs (2017-2018) Trustee Lorraine Stewart (2018-2019) Trustee Eric Cameron (2019-2021)

Context:

- The Board of Trustees was elected in October 2017. Returning trustees included Eric Cameron (Ward 5), Ron Heinrichs (Ward 1) and Sally Kucher-Johnson (Ward 3). New trustees included Darlene Clarke (Ward 5), Paul McCann (Ward 4), Anne Montgomery (Ward 5) and Lorraine Stewart (Ward 2).
- At the time of this Board forming, the New Democratic Party (NDP) formed the provincial government under Premier Rachel Notley and the Minister of Education was David Eggen.
- The United Conservative Party (UCP) under Premier Jason Kenney was elected in the fall of 2019. Adriana LaGrange was appointed Minister of Education.
- The School Act was rescinded and the Education Act became effective September 1, 2019.
- After extensive lobbying from Alberta school boards, the provincial government reviewed and implemented a new funding framework for Education in 2020.
- In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic caused the closure of all in-person learning for the remainder of 2019-2020.
- The reopening of schools for the 2020-2021 school year was under strict pandemic safety measures. A significant number of students were learning online at home. There were multiple temporary closures of schools throughout the school year.
- The Board began its tenure with the NDP government's commitment to funding enrollment growth in Budget 2017. With the transition to the UCP in 2019, the province committed to flat educational funding for the following four years while enrollment in the Division continued to increase prior to the COVID-19 global pandemic. The economic realities of oil prices and the pandemic have resulted in provincial economic challenges.
- Parkland School Division (PSD) experienced growth in enrolment, from 10,750 students in 2017, to 11,600 (projected) in 2021.

During the Term of the Board:

- The Trustees developed and implemented a new Vision and Mission.
- The modernization of Woodhaven Middle School was announced in March 2017. Construction began in the Spring of 2019. Students moved into the new area of the school after Christmas 2020 which will allow for the modernization of the original building to take place in 2021.
- The replacement school for Stony Plain Central was announced in the Spring of 2018 and construction began in the Spring of 2021.
- The Board hired Superintendent, Shauna Boyce in May, 2018.
- Copperhaven School opened in the fall of 2018.
- Board formed Ad-Hoc Sub Committees: Transportation; Support for Diversity and Inclusive Environments; and Community Engagement.
- In 2018-2019, the Board provided four transportation stakeholder engagement events to review the \$900K transportation deficit Administration reviewed this in detail and provided four actions to help eliminate the deficit, including:
 - Changes to cooperative busing arrangements;
 - An increase transportation fees;
 - o A review and change to school start and end times; and
 - Potential changes to service levels.
- In the 2018-2019 school year, significant revisions were made to the K-9 Reporting and Assessment (Report Card) in response to stakeholder and teacher feedback.
- In 2018-2019, Trustees and Executive Team met with the Alberta Minister of Education, Honourable Adriana LaGrange, Spruce Grove Member of Legislative Assembly, Honourable Searle Turton and staff for discussion. Topics included: Choice in Education, Provincial Budget Impact, School Division Collaboration/System Efficiencies and Assurance Model for Planning & Reporting.
- As a result of significant deficits in Student Transportation and changes provincially, PSD implemented an increase in fees and made significant changes to the transportation system in 2019.
- As a result of the economic situation in the Province of Alberta, funding/revenues decreased \$4,712,165 or 3.5% from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020. The Government of Alberta has implemented a freeze in education funding for a period of 4 years. This has resulted in significant challenges, budget adjustments and other changes including the introduction of a new remuneration model for PSD trustees in 2020-2021.
- At a Special Board Meeting March 17, 2020, PSD's Board of Trustees voted 5 2 in favour of
 permanently closing Seba Beach School, effective June 30, 2020. The closure is a result of the
 ongoing reality that includes declining enrollment at the school combined with very little
 projected growth in the area. As outlined in the Seba Beach School Viability Report, many
 factors weighed into the decision including, but not limited to, enrollment, maintenance
 costs, school capacity, as well as the financial aspect involved.

During the Term of the Board (cont'd):

- The Board and administration met with the Provincial Transportation Task Force on Regional Transportation Agreements to inform province-wide practice.
- In 2020-2021, the Board of Trustees initiated a review of school boundaries to address future needs and capacity of the region.
- PSD successfully supported over 1,200 students in 'at-home' learning as a result of COVID-19 and implemented significant safety measures for students and staff for in-school learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- PSD engaged in joint committees with Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) on topics including:
 - Self-directed Professional Development (PD);
 - o Teacher Mentorship; and
 - o Staff Wellness
- PSD continued to provide historical understanding through the implementation of a number of Division PD activities such as the following: Indigenous Games, the Blanket Exercise, landbased teaching (Voyageur Paddling, Gathering Sage), Bare Icebi (gathering together). The "gathering together" involved participants enjoying traditional teachings.
- The Regional Collaborative Service Delivery (RCSD) partnership between Health, Education and Children's' Services was discontinued by the Alberta government, resulting in significant changes in PSD when it came to the delivery and support of students with complex needs.
- The Board expanded and enhanced the relationship with ATA Local, MLA's, Municipal Partners, and partner school divisions (Separate, neighbouring division, and local private schools).
- Implemented a number of new programs-of-choice including:
 - Nature Kindergarten Program (2017-2018)
 - o (Y)Our Program (2017-2018)
 - My Path Program (2017-2018)
 - Virtual Learning (through Connections for Learning CFL) (2019-2020)
 - Junior High Outreach (2019-2020)
 - o Full-time French Immersion Kindergarten (2019-2020)
 - Parkland Student Athlete Academy (2020-2021)
 - Building Futures Program (2020-2021)

Process:

In preparation of this Legacy Document, the Board of Trustees engaged in a process to reflect on the term of the Board. The intent of this process and the subsequent Legacy Document is to provide guidance and advice to the subsequent Board of Trustees in subsequent terms and to provide a reflection on the accomplishments and challenges. This activity and organizational reflection use the analogy of the lifecycle of the forest. While an old growth forest appears to have reached a point of "static" maturity, it has actually continued to undergo a series of changes to maintain a healthy balance.

The evolution and sustainability of complex adaptive systems includes the natural and necessary processes of destruction and renewal. The ecocycle framework invites leaders to think about what they need to deliberately destroy or stop doing to facilitate the renewal of their work.

Drawing from biological systems, the ecocycle also suggests a need for a "healthy" organization or system to have parts (or aspects) of the organization in every phase of the ecocycle. (From Lifecycle to Ecocycle: Renewal via Destruction and Encouraging Diversity for Sustainability, Brenda Zimmerman, Schulick School of Business, York University, Toronto Canada).

This reflective model used by the Board of Trustees is adapted from *From Lifecycle to Ecocycle: Renewal via Destruction and Encouraging Diversity for Sustainability, by* Brenda Zimmerman.

A full description of the process and model can be found at: http://www.plexusinstitute.org/edgeware/archive/think/main_aides9.html

The Phases:

Emerging/New Growth: During this phase, the forest has open meadows, plenty of resources and room to grow. In human organizations it is a time of renewal, creativity and exploration of new ideas.

Developing: Like the new growth in a forest, some ideas have taken root and need time for further growth, development and nurturing. Resources, whether sun, water and nutrients in a forest, or finances, time, or professional development, these emerging ideas need to be allocated for ideas to grow and develop.

Maturity: Like an old growth forest, the ideas, systems, or processes have taken root and have developed to maturity and sustainability. Healthy organizations, like healthy forests, have well established systems that serve to keep the organization functioning.

Creative Destruction: Healthy forest ecosystems need to go through a natural period regrowth; some changes are small (death of a mature tree) and some changes are more drastic like a forest fire. A human organization such as PSD, also has to go through periodic and continual periods of "creative destruction" where some of the mature processes/systems/components of the organization are examined and changed to meet the emerging needs of the school system.

EMERGING / NEW GROWTH (Gestation): These items require investment of time and effort to discover if they are valuable ("sowing").

What has been accomplished	Next Steps (What might the new board consider?)
 Division of work between Trustees The Board divides representation for the various committees between Trustees. In typical (non-COVID) years, the Board decides in advance which Trustees will attend each conference - Trustees bring back a report to the next scheduled Board Meeting. 	 The new Board will need to discuss and determine which PD sessions or conferences add value, overall, to individual trustees and the Board. The Board may want to explore the efficiencies of virtual vs in person sessions/meetings. The Board should discuss the need and potential limiting of trustees attending the same event.
Community Partnerships	 The Board should explore new community partnerships to build on existing partnerships (i.e. Programs of Choice, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary clubs). Continue to present/engage with partner associations (Rotary, Municipalities, Chamber of Commerce).
 Fiscal Understanding With the Weighted Moving Average funding model introduced in the 2019 provincial budget, the Board focused advocacy efforts for a funding model that helps school boards best meet their students' needs. COVID-19 has resulted in fewer students, thus less revenue for boards. 	 The new Board considers its fiscal responsibility with respect to fees and funding What priorities will yield the greatest results? What are the service levels (i.e. transportation) that must be maintained/changed? What form of stakeholder input will be needed to identify priorities and increase stakeholder knowledge of the funding framework?
 Expansion of Virtual Learning (CFL) (allowing greater attendance) The full-time equivalent (FTE) student enrolment in virtual delivery program (Gr.1-12) operating out of CFL increased to 300 in 2020-2021 (+200 FTE increase). 	• The new board should review the societal context contributing to a rise (or potential decline) in demand for virtual education. Will this become a growth area in the future?

 This trend began prior to the pandemic and does not include the 1,200 students selecting "at-home" leaning due to the pandemic. 	 The new Board will need to determine how to best support distance learning as numbers of students accessing distance education increase, i.e.: Funding levels to support CFL Supports needed for students choosing distance learning
 International Partnerships (i.e. travel) The Board has supported and participated in exchanges in the Town or Stony Plain's Shikaoi Exchange Program. 	 What are the stakeholder demands for international travel experiences for students? The new Board will need to determine the global readiness for travel experiences for students.
 Partnerships with other Boards and School Authorities The Board meets annually with Evergreen Catholic Separate School Division Collaboration regarding Division calendar and transportation The Board continues to connect with private school authorities within PSD boundaries Sends Board highlights to education partners monthly 	 New Board reaches out to neighboring Boards to determine similarities in advocacy or approach. To what degree will we partner with neighboring Boards? The new Board will need to consider the relationship with local private schools.

DEVELOPING (Birth): These items require time and effort to become valuable ("growing")

What we have Accomplished	Next Steps (What might we continue to grow?)
Options for programming	 PSD has implemented many new and innovative programs. Are there other programs that could be considered? Does the funding framework support alternative/programs of choice? What is the role of fees in Programs-of-choice?
 Support for improved student reporting (i.e. report cards) A new Director was hired for Instructional Services / working with schools for student reporting / reframing report cards. Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, the Division implemented a simplified report card that provides parents and students with grade equivalents following an extensive review process that began in June of 2018 in response to stakeholder/teacher engagement, Council of School Councils - COSC, ATA Local, Teacher Advisory, etc.) in May of 2018. 	 Continue to support the new Divisional Principal organizational structure. The Report Card is well-received by stakeholders, and will require continual growth as we improve our ability to connect with parents of all grades through PowerSchool (improved school to home communication methods). As assessment practices and reporting technologies change and improve, system approach to parent teacher interviews etc. will need to be evaluated and changed accordingly.
 Programs of Choice PSD's advocacy efforts included the key message of promoting choice in public education. In PSD, this includes programs of choice like: Maranatha Christian Program; Building Futures; Parkland Student Athlete Academy; and Virtual Learning 	 It will be important to continue to nurture the new programs, recently implemented. The new Board will need to consider how to support growth in areas of choice as a component of boundary reconfiguration. In 2020-2021 the Board and executive presented to the Chamber of Commerce and Rotary Club(s)/local private schools and Evergreen Catholic on Choice in Education. The Board should continue to reach out to community partner organizations to promote choice within PSD. With the increase and expansion of programs of choice, the Board will need to consider how to balance those with existing programs of choice.

 Student Advisory PSD's Board of Trustees meets with students in the jurisdiction to learn of issues important to them and to seek their advice on a variety of topics. Traditionally this involved handpicked students from across the Division gathering centrally to meet with Trustees. This evolved into its current format where smaller groups of Trustees would visit various full classes of students representing at a number schools throughout the Division. 	 How will the new Board continue to ensure that all students are heard? The new Board will want to continue to engage students. This may involve reaching out to students more often, or to different "interest groups" from among the student body. The new board may want to engage students on specific matters, possibly at board meetings to ensure student voice is heard and reflected in the public decisions of the Board of Trustees (i.e. a student delegation on weighting of Provincial Diploma Exams). The Board may want to consider how to receive feedback over time (i.e. same group of students in grades 3, 6, 9).
 Supports for reliable connectivity and technology access The cancellation of classes in March dramatically changed the service model for Technology Services. PSD had to move to a remote support model for students and staff. This included making laptops available for staff, and enabling the loaning of PSD devices to students for athome learning. PSD's strong BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) initiative enabled many students to be prepared for athome learning. In April 2020, PSD joined the Mayor's Task Force (Social Stream - Community Wi-Fi)in enabling open Wi-Fi at all sites to provide free Wi-Fi for public use within range of the wireless signal of PSD buildings. 	 The new Board will review and nurture growth for online learning as this approach continues to be preferred by some stakeholders. How will fiscal resources be applied to assure stakeholders that students' technological needs (in school and out of school) are adequately met? How will the Board support municipal/provincial/federal efforts to enhance internet connectivity in rural areas? What opportunities may exist to increase our students' access to technology and online learning? What are the opportunities to make school spaces available beyond the regular hours to support student access to technology/internet?
 Model of remuneration: The Board approved a 10% reduction to Trustee base remuneration for the 2020- 2021 school year. At the September 1, 2020 Board Meeting, the Board approved changes to the Remuneration Model. 	 The new Board will continue to evaluate remuneration as an aspect of fiscal responsibility. The new Board will continue to discuss how it demonstrates accountability to our public, including fiscal accountability. The Board may want to consider a new model to determine Board Remuneration (i.e. external panel, committee).

 Understanding of Policy / Rules apply to purpose Board continues to evaluate and refine policy on an ongoing and regular basis ensuring that all policies are current and effective. 	 The new Board will need to continue to: evaluate Board Policy on an ongoing basis and ensure that policy requirements continue to meet current needs; Alter or rescind policies that are no longer applicable; Review every policy during the 4-year term of the board; and Align work and priorities with Board Policy.
 Virtual Meetings - expanding for public access (i.e. Board meetings) The Board improved the technology in the PSD Board Room to enable and improve virtual/online meetings. 	 The new Board will pick up and continue the initiatives of the previous Board to communicate effectively and transparently with stakeholders. The new Board should evaluate the increased access of some online meetings/engagements.
Communication Tools / Social Media	 The Board should consider and evaluate how PSD is engaging with stakeholders through social media (new platform etc.). The Board should consider its collective and individual trustees' use of social media.
Role of Trustees	 New Board should continue to deepen understanding of the relationship of governance with operations. Trustee Orientation will be utilized to orient new Trustees with work of previous Board and returning Trustees. The new Board will need to consider how the role of the board, the work of the board, and the issues facing education can be effectively communicated to stakeholders.
Review of transportation fees / ride times	 New Board will continue to monitor stakeholder satisfaction with transportation as balanced against fiscal restrictions/challenges. The Board will need to be transparent in the discussion, decision and application of the transportation fees.

MATURITY: These items generate value (are valuable) with little or no effort ("harvesting").

What we have Accomplished	Next Steps (What continues to work well?)
 Leadership in Division Office / Superintendent: Hired new Superintendent, Secretary- Treasurer and Deputy Superintendent Reorganization of Division Office 	 The Executive Team is working well - Division Principal Reorganization will add to this success. The new Board will need to continue to be informed about the work of Executive Team. The new Board should be aware of the importance of the Board/Executive relationship.
 Relationship with School Councils / Interactions: COSC Regular Trustee reports to full Board on School Council meetings attended Regular reports from Board at School Council meetings 	 The new Board should increase participation in all Trustees attending a COSC meeting. The Board should encourage participation of school council members at COSC. The Board should continue to offer a mix of in-person and virtual meetings to accommodate participant needs with both methods of participation .
Responsiveness to parent queries	 The present system is working well. The Board identifies concerns to the Office of the Superintendent - matters are triaged and responded to and the Board is informed. Multiple parent concerns/inquiries may require a more robust discussion at Trustee/Senior Admin level (e.g. transportation, curriculum, boundary reorganization). Board is accessible to parents and parent perspectives at School Council meetings.
 Board delegations - students / guests sharing The Board continues to welcome delegations to their regular board meetings involving students and staff who are eager to share their learning and school experiences. 	 Delegations continue to be appreciated as they provide a deeper understanding of the product of the Board's assurance endeavors. The new Board will determine what avenues to explore with respect to delegations/education. The new Board should continue to send notes of thanks and appreciation to the delegates providing an example of 'what we learned' and 'what we will do with what we learned' as a way of continuous improvement.

	 The Board may want to explore other possibilities of delegations to inform Board decisions.
Stakeholder Engagements / Engagement Events	 New Board should continue to expand engagement opportunities with specific focal areas (i.e., Indigenous Education). The Board may want to consider how the results of engagements are relayed/used in the decisions of the Board to ensure public trust.

CREATIVE DESTRUCTION: These items need to be stopped or destroyed to create space for innovation ("plowing").

What we have Accomplished	Next Steps (What items may benefit from a different approach?) in identifying
West End / Small school support	 With the continued decline in rural enrolment, the Board will need to determine, "How do we best support our smaller schools"? The new Board will continue conversations with our municipal partner, Parkland County, as they work towards their Social Development and Recreation/Arts Development plans. The Board may want to investigate partnerships with neighboring divisions/education authorities to provide service and support for students, regardless of boundaries (i.e. partnerships with Paul First Nation, Evansburg/Entwistle).
 Board Committee's The PSD Tomorrow (Committee of the Whole) and Education Committee are under review in 2021. 	 The new Board should work with the Superintendent to implement and refine the new Policy 8 - Board Committees. The Board should review and determine how best to learn about educational initiatives and successes within the Division to inform their decisions.
Board Professional Development (PD)	 New Board will consider how best to improve Trustee competencies through PD. The new Board must consider public accountability when it comes to Trustee access to and expenditure of funds on PD.
 Attendance Area Review PSD is rapidly approaching capacity at a number of schools and has surplus capacity due to new construction (Stony Plain Central School), renovations (Woodhaven Middle School) or declining enrolments. 	 The new Board must continue with the Attendance area review currently underway. The new Board should take the recommendations of the review under advisement to ensure the future access of students to community schools. The new Board should consider access to programs of choice when considering the attendance area recommendations.

	 The new Board will need to consider how to best "right size" catchment areas for schools that are underutilized. Any change to school attendance boundaries may need to consider families, ability to "grandparent" existing students, impact on programming, and travel times.
Relationships with levels of government, other school authorities	 Relationships are a product of the people in the roles - many new individuals will be "at the table" after the municipal elections and new relationships will need to be created.
Building relationships as a Board (to each other)	 With the potential of new Trustees, the absolute importance of quickly establishing an effective and respectful working relationship with the new Board is paramount. The Board will be discussing emotional and critically important matters and will be tasked with making difficult decisions. The working relationship of the Board Members must be a priority to ensure effective governance.
Relationships with Board Professional Associations (Alberta School Boards Association - ASBA, Public School Boards' Association of Alberta - PSBAA)	 With potential change of membership/leadership at ASBA/PSBAA, the new Board will need to quickly establish a positive working relationship with the partner organizations.