



MEMORANDUM

December 19, 2023
Regular Board Meeting

TO	Board of Trustees
FROM	Shauna Boyce, Superintendent
ORIGINATOR	Dr. Meg Miskolzie, Associate Superintendent, Student Supports and Services
RESOURCE	Christine Ross, Division Principal, Wellness and Community Partnerships Cathy Traynor, Health and Wellness Facilitator Amy Goerzen, Director, Human Resources
GOVERNANCE POLICY	Board Policy 1: Division Foundational Statements Board Policy 2: Role of the Board Board Policy 12: Role of the Superintendent
ADDITIONAL REFERENCE	Administrative Procedure 390: Community, Equity and Belonging Administrative Procedure 702: Comprehensive School Health Administrative Procedure 730: School Counselling and Guidance
SUBJECT	STUDENT AND WORKPLACE WELLNESS REPORT

PURPOSE

For information. No recommendation required.

BACKGROUND

The Board of Trustees reviews and approves annual education goals for the Division and adheres to the Board Annual Work Plan. The Student and Workplace Wellness Report is in response to these responsibilities.

REPORT SUMMARY

Along with student success, the well-being of students in Parkland School Division is part of the foundational statement that directs the values and the learning opportunities provided. This report offers a comprehensive look at the wellness initiatives implemented across the Division to assist students, families, and staff. Additionally, the report delves into the details of the Divisional Workplace Wellness focus.

Administration would be pleased to respond to any questions.

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STUDENT & WORKPLACE WELLNESS REPORT

DECEMBER 2023

Presented to the Board of Trustees, December 19, 2023

Dr. Meg Miskolzie, Associate Superintendent, Student Supports and Services

Resources: Christine Ross, Division Principal, Wellness and Community Partnerships

Amy Goerzen, Director, Human Resources

Cathy Traynor, Health and Wellness Facilitator

Our Students Possess the confidence, resilience, insight and skills required to thrive in, and positively impact, the world.

BACKGROUND

Parkland School Division takes pride in its ongoing efforts to promote student and workplace wellness, aligning with the overarching objective of ensuring student success and well-being. The Division has made a deliberate commitment to prioritize wellness, forging collaborative partnerships with staff, caregivers, and the community to deliver comprehensive programming, support, and services aimed at nurturing health and wellness in children, youth, and families.

Recognizing the profound impact of student and staff wellness on their ability to engage and, consequently, succeed in both school and life, we have defined wellness within our schools as the creation of healthy, responsive, and innovative learning environments that adhere to evidence-based norms for healthy communities. To actualize this vision, our division intentionally integrates physical literacy, nutrition, and positive social-emotional supports and teaching into our learning environments. Our services encompass interventions and proactive measures to cultivate health and wellness practices.

It is acknowledged that each staff member and student brings their own unique set of circumstances, encompassing socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, talents, skills, and challenges. The Division is committed to fostering a culture of belonging and wellness that embraces a variety of learning experiences, providing a continuum of support and services for staff and students.

The ultimate goal of student success and well-being is a collective endeavor, supported by school-based staff, Division Principals, and the Wellness and Community Partnership (WCP) Team. The WCP Team comprises the Division Principal of Wellness and Community Partnerships, Division Psychologist, Health and Wellness Facilitator, two Divisional Family Support staff, and a Mental Health Nurse. Collaboratively with schools, they strive to enhance the overall well-being of our school communities.

STUDENT WELLNESS

Educational research supports the interconnection between student learning and student health and acknowledges the school system's role in creating and supporting healthy school communities as foundations for optimal learning. A healthy school community is one that supports the wellness of students and staff through the implementation of a Comprehensive School Health (CSH) approach.

The CSH Approach in Parkland School Division focuses on three Health & Wellness tenets:

- Active living,
- Healthy eating, and
- Mental well-being.

The Division, as well as individual school sites, have multiple initiatives, events, and procedures already in place that support the three tenets of CSH. [Administrative Procedure 702: Comprehensive School Health](#) supports a continued focus to grow CSH practices within our schools.



Continuum of Supports: A continuum of supports and service are in place throughout the division to support the identified health and wellness tenets, including:

- preventative and universal supports that available for all students,
- targeted supports for some students, and
- individualized services for those students requiring intensive support.



School Health Leads

Each school has identified a School Health Lead who serves as a primary contact for all PSD wellness initiatives. The School Health Leads work with school administration to develop and implement school CSH action plans. School Health Lead meetings are held 7 times throughout the year to share ideas and resources, and to build knowledge in the area of health and wellness.

Comprehensive School Health Action Plans

Each school within PSD creates an annual CSH action plan with a minimum of one growth initiative for each of the three tenets. PSD’s Health and Wellness Facilitator meets with each school to support the development and implementation of their plan throughout the year. Schools have identified a wide range of priorities including:

- Morning mindfulness after announcements.
- Development of social-emotional learning frameworks.
- Enhancing delivery of intentional and purposeful Daily Physical Activity (DPA), including student created videos, DPA bins for classrooms, etc.
- Creation of positive food environments through school wide approaches to accessibility and food neutral language.
- Supporting community, diversity, and belonging through professional learning and staff development.
- Strategies to support positive student-to-student peer relationships, including developing pro-social skill groups and recess buddies.
- Expanding intramurals.
- Artist in residence programs.
- Sharing of health and wellness information through school, parent, and home communication.

Examples of Student Wellness supports and services include, but are not limited to, the following:

In support of the *Active Living* tenet:

- A variety of **physical literacy strategies** in schools; such as yoga, movement breaks, participation in sports, and encouraging active travel.
- **Try-Me-Try-Athalon** has become part of the culture of Wellness in PSD over the years. It is an example of community partnerships and active living. We had approximately 300 participants at the 2023 Try-Me-Try-Athalon. We are in the early stages of planning the Try-Me-Try-Athalon for late Spring 2024.
- We arranged for a professional learning opportunity, hosted at Muir Lake School, to support the CSH tenet of Active Living, the Physical Education and Wellness curriculum, and the priority of Indigenous Perspectives and Ways of Knowing. The learning event was focused on Indigenous games, led by Mr. Lyndon Suntjens from Amiskwaciy Academy. School Health Leads were immersed in a rich learning experience through active participation as the facilitator guided staff through various games and activities that have been passed down through generations. Lyndon also shared his expertise and insights of the cultural and historical context behind each activity.
- A number of schools are planning to submit group grant applications to **Canadian Tire JumpStart** in January for equipment and specific activities (e.g. Horsemanship).

In support of the *Healthy Eating* tenet:

- Healthy Eating programming across PSD is a division-wide initiative delivered through the collaborative efforts of school staff, school leadership, the food security team, facilities, and various numerous partners, funders, and volunteers.
- **Breakfast Clubs of Canada (BCC)**: Through BCC, all Parkland Region schools have access to nutritious foods at the beginning of the school day. BCC provides allocations and egg coupons for schools and families.
- In addition to the ongoing BCC allocations, PSD was fortunate to receive additional **one-time support through a BCC pilot program** in the 2022-23 school year. The pilot provided food products to PSD for scheduled distribution to all Parkland Region schools. Knowing the pilot was coming to an end, we carefully planned the resources that could be safely stored over the summer and continued to distribute oatmeal, granola, applesauce, cheese, and oat bars for the first three months of the 2023-2024 school year. The delivery to school sites was supported by the PSD Facilities Department.
- **Toonies for Tummies**: Through our partnership with BCC, Parkland Region schools have been positively impacted by the Toonies for Tummies fundraising campaign. The Grocery Foundation, sponsor of this campaign, works in conjunction with Breakfast Club of Canada to ensure all donations find their way to local school food programs, often in the form of gift cards for local grocery providers.
- **Nutrition Nooks** are available at all Parkland Region schools, stocked with pre-packaged healthy snacks that students can access throughout the day. This is funded through the Alberta Nutrition Grant and BCC.
- **Food equipment**: From March 2023 until the writing of this report, we have been able to purchase the following food equipment to support food security programs: Instapots, toasters, coolers, prep tables, meat slicers, slush machines, and freezers. This is funded through the Alberta Nutrition Grant and BCC.
- **Community Pantry**: Through our partnership with the Spruce Grove Rotary Community Partners Society, schools access nutritious brown bag lunches from the 'Community Pantry' twice per week. Lunches are jointly funded through the Rotarians and Parkland School Division (through the Alberta Education Nutrition Grant and President Choice Children's Charity), and supported by St. Andrew's Church, local grocers, and volunteers. This program continues to grow year after year. For the 2023-2024 school year, this program will be supporting students at 18 school sites, delivering a minimum of 700 bagged lunches per week.

Nutrition Matters

Parkland School Division maintains a universal nutrition program through diverse partnerships with the community.

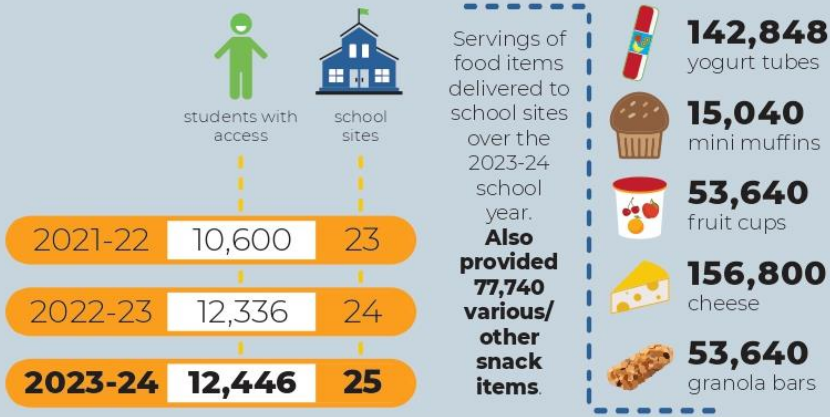
Breakfast Clubs

providing reliable access to nutritious foods at the start of the school day



Nutrition Nooks

providing students with access to healthy snacks throughout the school day with the help of a nutrition grant from Alberta Education



PC Children's Charity

providing funds that contribute to the cost of healthy snacks



Community Pantry

providing healthy brown bag lunches to students



New Equipment 2023-24

purchased with support from The Breakfast Club of Canada



In support of the *Healthy Eating* tenet (*continued*):

- **Fort Chipewyan nutrition programs:** All students at Athabasca Delta Community School are provided with morning snacks and a hot lunch program. Breakfast is also available by student request. These nutrition supports are funded through Alberta Education and BCC.
- **Food for families:** Identified families within the Parkland region are provided with links to community programs to support food security.

In support of the *Mental-Well-being* tenet:

- Schools use a variety of **social-emotional programs and exercises** to meet the social-emotional and mental health needs of their students. Zones of Regulation, Mind UP, social thinking, Rainbows (for students experiencing grief), mindfulness, yoga, and movement breaks.
- **Counselling Services:** Counselling Services are available to students in all PSD Schools through staffed School Counsellors. PSD currently employs 20 School Counsellors, with 14 serving students enrolled in Kindergarten to Grade 9 and at Connection for Learning sites, and 6 serving students in High School. A contracted Counsellor provides services to students in Athabasca Delta Community School in Fort Chipewyan. School Counsellors in Kindergarten to Grade 9 receive clinical supervision through PSD's Division Psychologist.
- **Health and Wellness Facilitator:** This facilitator supports the implementation of CSH by assisting School Health Leads in executing their school's CSH action plans.
- **Complex Needs Facilitators:** These facilitators support school staff in the areas of Positive Behaviour Supports, Trauma-Informed Practices, and Social-Emotional Learning Competencies. This helps to build staff capacity to support students with social-emotional needs in the area of mental well-being.
- **School-based Youth Mental Health Clinics:** The WestView Primary Care Network (PCN) operates the Youth Mental Health Clinic (YMHC) for youth aged 11 to 24 who live in the Tri-Region. The main clinic is located at the Queen Street Medical Facility in Spruce Grove and is supported by a multidisciplinary team consisting of Physicians, Registered Social Workers, a Behavioral Health Consultant, Youth Therapists, and a Community Connector. In early 2023, Westview PCN partnered with PSD to establish weekly YMHCs at Memorial Composite High School, Spruce Grove Composite High School and Connections For Learning Outreach sites. Staffed with a Social Worker and Physician, these clinics provide comprehensive mental health support to students enrolled at these schools. Upon obtaining parental consent, referred students receive comprehensive mental health support, starting with an initial assessment and triage process. Support offered include risk assessments, safety plans, and referrals to internal and external resources, such as therapists, psychiatrists, or youth mental health-focused community organizations. The YMHC team collaborates with school staff and community organizations to enhance student goals, engage parents, and connect families to needed services, significantly reducing wait times, which currently sit at two-weeks to a month. A summer wait-listing referral process through the Queen Street clinic further streamlined access. The Clinic Social Worker remains the main contact for coordinating between parents, students, and school and clinic personnel.
- **School-based Suicidal Ideation (SI) Response Protocol:** Each school has trained selected staff and have designated a SI Point person. All schools use the Protocol when an individual presents with suicidal ideation and are supported by the Divisional Psychologist.

Ongoing work and Next Steps to Support Student Wellness:

The **Mental Health in Schools Pilot** Program through Alberta Education was submitted in collaboration with the Westview PCN. The first year of this two-year pilot program (January 2023 to December 2024) is coming to a close. Supports that have been developed and accessed through this pilot include:

- Administration of the Student Orientation to School Questionnaire (SOS-Q):** This voluntary questionnaire is an evidence-based tool which measures student’s perceptions of the following: *safe and caring schools, peers, self-confidence, external resilience, internal resilience* for students in Grades 4-12, and additionally measures *utility of schools* and *extracurricular activities* for students in Grades 7-12. 361 students from 5 schools participated in the SOS-Q during the March-April 2023 administration, which grew to 609 students from 10 schools participating in the October-November 2023 administration. We will continue to administer surveys throughout the remainder of this school year. Schools are utilizing their SOS-Q data to help support the delivery of individual, targeted, and universal supports as a component of their Continuum of Supports and Services at their school site. Schools have appreciated having a more comprehensive perspective of individual student needs. Schools currently participating in this pilot include: Parkland Village, Greystone, Entwistle, Forest Green, Memorial Composite High School, Connections for Learning, Woodhaven, Broxton Park, Blueberry, and Spruce Grove Composite High School. More information regarding the SOS-Q can be found [here](#). Divisional areas of strength and focus are detailed in the table below.

SOS-Q Results	Areas of Strength		Areas to Focus	
	Spring 2023	Fall 2023	Spring 2023	Fall 2023
Grades 4-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe and caring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe and caring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External resilience Internal resilience Extracurricular 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Handling of work pressures
Grades 7-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extracurricular activities Handling of school work pressures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe and caring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal resilience Utility of school School work integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utility of school Handling of work pressures

- Teacher Facilitator and a Clinical Educator:** These staff curate and develop Universal and Targeted mental health resources and tools to support student mental health. Areas of need are determined through SOS-Q data as well as youth needs shared by Westview PCN. To date, approximately 35 lessons have been created for staff to access including lesson plans, slide shows, activities and follow-up resources. This number continues to grow. Lessons are being used at the pilot school sites before they are rolled out across the division for students in grades 4-12. Feedback from pilot schools has been very positive, with teachers identifying their appreciation of the lesson design, ability to be flexible within their instruction, and have reported high student engagement during the activities.
- Social Worker supporting the In-School Youth Mental Health Clinics:** This Social Worker supports students referred to the YMHC within our two high-schools as well as our Connections For Learning Outreach sites. The Social Worker is onsite in the schools four days per week and onsite at the Westview PCN one day per week. The addition of this role eliminates barriers to access and facilitates pathways to mental health services that exist within the school, clinic, and community, in order to facilitate equitable access to necessary mental health supports for students.

PSD's Family Support Model

PSD's Family Support Model is a caring, nurturing, supportive approach where families are welcomed without judgment, and therefore are more likely to be engaged in working to improve their lives and the lives of their children. Navigating systems and accessing supports can be difficult especially during times of high stress.

PSD offers support to families through:

Individualized Family Supports

The PSD Family Supports team provides individualized supports to families through:

- **Parkland School Division Family Supports:** Two Family Support Workers work with families who would benefit from individualized support. These families are generally identified and referred by schools. The Family Support Workers connect families to supports and services within the community and supports them in accessing these services.
- **Sunrise Supports:** The Sunrise Support Team is made up of several local partners: AB Justice (Probation Officer), AHS Mental Health Services, Children and Family Services, RCMP Community Liaison, Family Services for Children with Disabilities, AHS Mobile Substance Abuse Therapist and Alberta Parenting for the Future. Partners meet with referred families to offer their expertise regarding community support and strategies. Together an action plan is developed. The Family Support Workers work alongside the family to assist them in accessing the supports and strategies within the plan.

Preventative and Universal Family Supports

The PSD Family Supports team also provides preventative and universal supports to families through:

- **Strong Families Education Series (early years focus):** 17 sessions for parents scheduled for the 2023-2024 school year, with topics including: parent advocacy, co-regulation and sleep, active living for young learners, Seeds of Literacy, etc.
- **Strong Families Education Series (school age focus):** 13 sessions for parents scheduled for the 2023-2024 school year, with topics including: Off to a good start - supporting your children and teens at school, ADHD, video game and screen time limits, self-care, emotional regulation, kindness/empathy, anger/depression in teens, healthy family relationships, and trauma and addiction.
- **Stronger Together Newsletter:** A monthly newsletter for parents highlighting local resources for families. This year, in addition to being shared with schools, this newsletter is also being shared with School Council Chairs. Past and current editions of the newsletter can be found on PSD's website.

WORKPLACE WELLNESS

Healthy organizations and workplaces are strongest when their employees are healthy and experience a strong sense of belonging to their school community. When school authority leaders allocate time, provide resources, and demonstrate a commitment to a comprehensive and integrated approach to workplace wellness, the staff, organization, and community benefit (CASS Workplace Wellness Playbook for Alberta School Authorities, 2021).

13 Workplace Wellness Factors

13 factors have been shown to prevent harm to mental health and promote psychological wellbeing of staff in the workplace. Together, these 13 factors form the *National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace*. As PSD works at building a long-term Workplace Wellness strategy these 13 factors will be at the core of the work.



- 
Organizational Culture
 The workplace is characterized by trust, honesty, and fairness.
- 
Psychological & Social Support
 Coworkers and supervisors are supportive of employees' psychological and mental health concerns and respond appropriately.
- 
Clear Leadership & Expectations
 Leadership is effective. Employees are supported so they know what they need to do, how their work contributes to the organization & if there are upcoming changes.
- 
Civility & Respect
 Employees are respectful & considerate in their interactions with one another, as well as with students, parents, and the public.
- 
Psychological Demands
 There is a good fit between employees' interpersonal and emotional competencies and the requirements of their job.
- 
Growth & Development
 Employees receive encouragement and support in the development of their interpersonal, emotional, and job skills.
- 
Recognition & Reward
 There is appropriate acknowledgement & appreciation of employees' efforts in a fair and timely manner.
- 
Involvement & Influence
 Employees are included in discussions about how their work is done & how important decisions are made.
- 
Workload Management
 Tasks and responsibilities can be accomplished successfully within the available time.
- 
Engagement
 Employees feel connected to their work, and are motivated to do their job well.
- 
Balance
 There is a recognition of the need for balance between the demands of work, family, and personal life.
- 
Psychological Protection
 Employees feel safe asking questions, reporting problems, or proposing a new idea without fearing negatives consequences to themselves or their job.
- 
Protection of Physical Safety
 Management takes appropriate action to protect the physical safety of employees.

Adapted from Have THAT Talk for Workplaces, Ottawa Public Health & Mental Health Commission of Canada.

Efforts to address Workplace Wellness include:

- The [Guarding Minds at Work](#) staff survey was administered in March/April 2023. This confidential tool was used to survey PSD employees to help effectively identify and address organizational issues related to psychological health and safety in the workplace. An encouraging 58% of PSD staff engaged in this survey. Staff were asked to identify themselves as a member of the ATA, CAAMSE, IUOE, Lead Team, or NUG in order to better identify actions to support staff within each of these areas. This survey will be readministered in spring 2024.
- A thorough review of the Guarding Minds data was conducted over the summer looking at Overall Survey results, as well as results by identified groups.
 - **Areas of strengths:** *Clear Leadership & Expectations, Civility & Respect, Growth & Development, Engagement, Psychological Protection, and Protection of Physical Safety.*
 - **Areas requiring consideration and attention:** *Organizational Culture, Psychological and Social Support, Involvement & influence, and Workload Management*
 - **Areas needing timely attention:** *Psychological Demands & Competencies, Recognition & Reward, and Balance.*
- Several sessions are being held this year to review results and inform action planning. These include:
 - **Lead Team meeting series:** A series of sessions is being held with School and Department Leaders to review staff responses and support action planning at their schools and sites. The first session was held at the September Lead Team meeting focused on two of the workplace wellness factors: *Balance* and *Organizational Culture*. Administrators and Directors are in the process of implementing strategies with their staff to support these areas.
 - **Lead Team Summit:** While Administrators and Directors dedicate efforts to bolster the workplace wellness of school and site-based staff, the Executive team is concurrently committed to fostering the well-being of Administrators and Directors. During the October Lead Team Summit, selected Guarding Minds Survey questionnaire responses were reviewed with Lead Team staff to help formulate an action plan aimed at enhancing their workplace wellness. Staff members were tasked with collaborating in groups to provide specific recommendations regarding actions the division could undertake to support their workplace wellness. These included recommendations for what the division should continue doing, stop doing, and consider implementing within each of these areas.
 - **Superintendent's Teacher Advisory:** On October 25th, the Executive team met with the Superintendent's Teacher Advisory. One of the topics on the agenda was a discussion around workplace wellness. Guarding Minds survey results specific to teaching staff were shared, followed by a feedback activity to gather input on how we can bolster their workplace wellness.
- The Wellness and Human Resources teams within PSD have engaged the services of a Well At Work Advisor through the Ed Can Network. This advisory collaboration is aimed at obtaining an impartial evaluation of our data, with a primary focus on deriving actionable and practical recommendations. The objective is to identify measures that can be implemented at the divisional level and subsequently by leaders within their respective departments, facilitating meaningful progress in this important work.

In addition to these efforts to address Workplace Wellness, the following supports are in place:

- **Employee and Family Assistance Programs (EFAP)** provide counselling and a variety of other services for employees and their dependents through an independent, professional agency. Employees who take part do not jeopardize job security, promotional opportunities or reputation and participation is *100% confidential*. These services are offered completely free of charge to employees and their dependants. Services available include a variety of counselling, career coaching, and advisory services covering topics such as:
 - work-related stress
 - marital or family problems
 - emotional problems
 - alcohol or drug dependencies
 - life crisis and bereavement
 - retirement
 - eldercare and childcare
 - financial and legal assistance

Parkland School Division has two Employee and Family Assistance Programs (EFAP):

- [Inkblot](#): All Teachers and Athabasca Delta Community School Staff
 - [Homewood Health](#): All IUOE, CAAMSE, and Non-Union Group Staff
- **Wellness-Related activities:** The Division provides opportunities for staff to engage in wellness related activities over the course of the school year, which have included facilitated Book Studies.
 - **Staff Wellness Sponsorships:** The Division partners with community organizations to support a variety of wellness activities to support staff physical and mental well-being. These activities occur outside of school hours and are offered at a discount to staff.
 - **Staff appreciation:** At various times throughout the school year, the WCP team shows their appreciation for the dedication shown by staff throughout the division (e.g. coffee and a sweet treat).