



BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

Dec. 9, 2015 Board Meeting

Trustees: (back row) Sherry Cooper, Ron Fisher (Vice Chair), Colleen Butler (Chair), Superintendent Kurt Sacher, Connie Huelsman
(front row) Sheldon Ball, Trudy James, Jackie Swainson, Holly Bilton, Gordon Kerr

School Travel:

The Board discussed at length the status of school trips planned for this school year, in light of recent tragic world events. As there are no pending trips scheduled before Winter Break, at this time the Board and Central Office staff will continue to monitor the situation and consult with other school divisions. The principles guiding Board direction are the status of international warnings from Foreign Affairs and the advice being received from the division's insurance provider. The Board acknowledges that travel provides valuable learning opportunities for our students, but restates that the safety of our students and staff is the highest priority in Chinook's Edge. The division is vigilant in considering both the short term situation and longer term challenges regarding school trips, including looking ahead to the 2016-2017 school year. Central Office is working closely with schools that have trips planned and the Board directed the Superintendent to write a letter to parents reminding them to ensure they have proper cancellation insurance in place pertaining to school trips. The Board will discuss this situation again at the January 13th Board Meeting.

Penhold Elementary School:

The Board approved the renaming of Penhold School to Penhold Elementary School to more clearly delineate each school in Penhold.

Representative:

The Board voted to appoint Chair Colleen Butler to the provincial government's new Teachers' Bargaining Association, as required by Bill 8.



Festive entertainment: Students with the Hugh Sutherland School elementary choir provided the annual holiday entertainment at the Board Meeting, under the direction of their teacher, Alex Gardner. Hugh Sutherland school administrators also showcased a video, created by their High School media arts students to celebrate their great school culture. Colleen Butler, Board Chair, shared her appreciation (and a festive treat!) with the Carstairs students following the recital.

New School Boundaries in Sylvan Lake:

Associate Superintendent Shawn Russell, along with other Central Office staff, led three public meetings and three surveys over the fall to gather input into various options for new school attendance boundaries in Sylvan Lake, in preparation for the opening of Beacon Hill Elementary School in fall 2016. The Board reviewed two final detailed scenarios that were created from that extensive data and determined the following:

- For the 2016-2017 school year, C.P. Blakely Elementary School, École Steffie Woima Elementary School and Beacon Hill Elementary School will all have grade configurations of Kindergarten-Grade 5, and École Fox Run will be Grades 6-8. This alleviates the need for any Grade 5 students from having to switch to new schools twice in as many years, and will support a smooth transition to the new school arrangements in the community.
- For the 2017-2018 school year, C.P. Blakely, École Steffie Woima and Beacon Hill will house Kindergarten to Grade 6 students, and École Fox Run will house Grades 7-8. A letter is being sent to all parents in the Sylvan Lake area, to ensure there is clarity on the map outlining the new school attendance boundaries. The boundary maps and information will also be posted to the division website.
- The attendance boundaries are set to address a number of priorities, and Sylvan Lake Trustee Jackie Swainson thanked everyone for the extensive work in engaging the public to such a great extent. “Their input made a difference and focuses on future growth expected in that community. This plan captures our vision for all our great schools in Sylvan Lake. Our school administrators are tremendous in working together in that community and ensuring decisions are made in the best interest of our students.”

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity:

The Board thanked the Associate Superintendent of Student Services, Wanda Christensen, for leading discussions and studying research as the division works towards finalizing an Administrative Procedure specific to supporting LGBTQ students and staff. This will be discussed further at the January 13th Board Meeting.

Transportation Update:

The new buses that were purchased are now fully part of the division fleet, and the new bus route that was added in the Sundre area has made a positive impact on the bus travel times in that area. Staff continues to closely monitor a handful of routes that require slightly over one-hour travel times for certain students. As well, a meeting has been scheduled to continue discussing arrangements for joint-busing between Chinook’s Edge and Red Deer Catholic.



The Board extends best wishes for a happy holiday season and thanked everyone in each of our school communities for another wonderful year of working together in Chinook’s Edge, where students come first.

The next meeting of the Board of Chinook’s Edge School Division No. 73 is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, January 13, 2016.

For more information please contact:

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