



BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

April 8, 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

In-town Busing Fees:

The Board passed a motion to implement a new administrative procedure for a basic framework which prioritizes busing services. In an effort to manage a burgeoning deficit in Transportation, Chinook's Edge can no longer subsidize in-town busing to the extent as has been done in the past. Therefore, after studying the situation and consulting with neighbouring divisions, a fee will be applied to students who live within 2.4 km of their assigned school. This fee will be reduced by 50 percent for students in Kindergarten to Grade 5 who live between 1.6—2.4 km from their assigned school. There may be a limited number of spaces for students who live within the 2.4 km distance and the Transportation Director will be responsible for managing these spaces. Students utilizing these spaces will be charged a maximum of \$300 annually to a maximum charge of two students per family. Students whose primary residence is 2.4 km or further from their assigned school will not see any changes, as these students are grant eligible and Chinook's Edge receives provincial funding to offset busing costs. A letter is being distributed to parents of students who use Transportation Services in Chinook's Edge, and will be posted to the Transportation Department website.

School Viability Reviews:

A two-year viability study has concluded without any further action being required. Superintendent Kurt Sacher reported the review found that operating costs at Reed Ranch are not significantly higher than average, that enrolment numbers are increasing, and that "staff and parents at this school are doing very good things for kids." Reed Ranch Parent Council President, Dean Duquette, was present at the Board Meeting to provide trustees with a summary of the review. "I have nothing but good things to say about the whole process, and our parent community felt extremely supported by Superintendent Kurt Sacher and Liaison Superintendent Ray Hoppins. They worked hard to ensure that the school is operating as it should and that resources are being directed as they should be, and they were greatly supportive of everyone involved throughout the process. Reed Ranch parents felt the process went very well and we recognize that, as a smaller school, this type of process occurs as a matter of course." Reed Ranch School is located 17 km east of Olds and serves students from Kindergarten to Grade 6.

The Superintendent reported that he has met with the Parent Council at Benalto School, as the student enrolment has declined since the start of the school's two-year viability study. Central Office staff is working closely with staff and families at Benalto School, and will continue to monitor student enrolment.

School fees:

The Board passed a motion to keep school fees at current levels for the 2015-16 school year.

Access to high speed Internet in rural areas:

The Board received a response to their March letter to the Alberta School Boards' Association consultant. The Board's letter requested that a report being prepared by ASBA for the provincial government include a request that the government fulfill the original intention of the Alberta SuperNet to connect all Albertans with high speed Internet. "I concur with your views that access via the SuperNet is vital to any strategy to use technology to enhance education programming for all students. I will incorporate your recommendation into my report. You are not alone in this observation."

Trip Requests:

The Board approved in principle a request from Cremona School's high school band to travel to Disneyland, CA during spring break 2016.

The next meeting of the Board of Chinook's Edge School Division No. 73 is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, May 13, 2015.

For more information please contact:

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