

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Pembina Hills School Division was held on April 28, 2021 at Regional Office. In attendance by video-conferencing were Trustee J. Tuininga, K. McElroy, W. Scinski, J. Carson, J. Comeau and J. Lefebvre. Also, in attendance were Superintendent D. Garbutt, Assistant Superintendent of Education Services M. Thiesen, Treasurer T. Leigh, and Executive Assistant C. Watson.

Due to technical difficulties with the live streaming, the Board Meeting start time was delayed to 9:10 a.m.

Call to Order

Chair Tuininga called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

Acknowledge Statement

Chair Tuininga recited the acknowledgement statement from Administrative Procedure 60-20 Honoring First Nations, Métis and Inuit Culture.

Amendments to the Agenda

The following amendments were made to the Agenda.

Delete: Barrhead Elementary School – Long Service Awards

8035/04/21

Adopting the Agenda – April 28, 2021

Moved by Trustee Carson that the agenda be adopted as submitted and amended.

Carried

8036/04/21

Adopting the Minutes – April 14, 2021

Moved by Trustee Lefebvre that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Pembina Hills School Division held on April 14, 2021 be adopted as circulated.

Carried

Action Items

1. Review of Draft Curriculum

Assistant Superintendent Thiesen presented information on the review of the draft curriculum from Alberta Education. On March 29, 2021, Alberta Education revealed their Draft K-6 curriculum in a news release; [Renewing focus on essential knowledge and skills](#). Like others in the province, PHSD educators had been anticipating an announcement for some time. The response on both traditional news and social media has been active to say the least. Several boards in the province have stated publicly that they will not be piloting the curriculum.

Priorities of the Education Plan

On April 14th, our board of trustees adopted a motion to continue work on three specific priorities in the 2021-2024 Education Plan. Teachers, support staff, students and community members were consulted during the Education Planning process. The Priorities of the 2021-2024 Education Plan are:

- Student-Staff Relationships
- Literacy and Numeracy
- Support for Staff

The decision to pilot the draft curriculum will also take into consideration the impact on these priorities.

Professional Perspective of Classroom Teachers

The families in our communities' respect and trust our teachers. PHSD teachers have kept their kids safe during the pandemic. They have continued to adapt teaching styles and supported students through numerous changes and challenges.

Teachers are in a unique position to compare their real-life experiences and professional knowledge of children's' academic development to the expectations described in the Draft Curriculum. Their perspectives have been invaluable to the decision-making process regarding piloting the Draft Curriculum. We have consulted with them to help us determine if piloting the Draft Curriculum would be good for students.

Recommendation

After a very informative process of gathering feedback from teachers and considering how spending energy, resources and time on a piloting process would impact our students and teachers, senior administration recommends the following motion:

- **That Pembina Hills School Division does NOT participate in piloting any part of the Draft Curriculum.**

Key reasons for this decision. Impact on Education Plan Priorities:

Actions taken to pilot parts or all of the Draft Curriculum at any grade level is more likely to have a negative effect on student-staff relationships, literacy and numeracy goals, and our efforts to support staff with the diversity of learners in their classroom.

1. **Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student achievement:** Piloting the Draft Curriculum would distract teachers from their focus on actively addressing the interrupted trajectory of learning caused by the period of at-home-learning in spring 2020, the intermittent periods of isolation and the increased absenteeism during 2020-2021.
2. **Teacher well-being:** Teachers are already dealing with high rates of distress from students and parents on top of coping with their own COVID related fears and worries since March 2020 and during the entire 2020-2021 school year. An expectation to pilot is an unnecessary additional burden.
3. **Logistics of piloting:** The processes required for an effective pilot would be very demanding on teacher **time**. Issues related to **sequencing** and missing prerequisite skills would impact student learning. Finding or developing age appropriate **resources** to support instruction for vast arrays of new content would be a massive challenge.

4. **Issues with the Draft Curriculum:** Teachers identified multiple issues with the Draft Curriculum and were of the unanimous opinion that piloting would have no benefit to students.
- a. Teachers provided many examples of critical learning outcomes that have been removed and developmentally inappropriate outcomes that have been added.
 - b. Teachers identified these issues with the Draft Curriculum:
 - I. **Volume** of outcomes,
 - II. **Lack of recognition for the diversity** of learners and **inclusion**,
 - III. Poor integration of **indigenous perspectives**, and
 - IV. **Reduced flexibility to adapt pedagogy** to the needs of their students.

The Board and Senior Administration thanked the panel of teachers who engaged in the analysis. They were essential in the development of the recommendation not to pilot the Draft Curriculum. The panel was also wary about not providing any feedback to the province. While they found ample evidence why piloting would be disruptive to student learning, they also identified very few elements in the Draft Curriculum that were palatable, and in a few cases, even appreciated. They acknowledged that Pembina Hills should be open to providing feedback to the province in other ways and were willing to share their findings as needed.

8037/04/21 Moved by Trustee Comeau that the Board approves that Pembina Hills School Division does not participate in piloting any part of the draft curriculum. Carried

8038/04/21 Moved by Trustee Carson that the Board Chair Tuininga draft a letter on behalf of the Pembina Hills School Division to our local MLA's, the Education Minister and the Premier communicating our decision against piloting the draft curriculum. Carried

2. Financial Statements: September 1, 2020 to February 28, 2021

- a) PHSD Quarterly Financial Review
- b) PHSD Reserve Review
- c) ADLC Quarterly Financial Review

Treasurer Tracy Leigh presented the financial statements and reserve review for Pembina Hills School Division and the financial statements for Alberta Distance Learning Centre for the six-month period ending February 28, 2021.

8039/04/21 Moved by Trustee Carson that the Board acknowledge receipt of the Pembina Hills School Division Financial Statement for the six-month period ending February 28, 2021 for information purposes. Carried

8040/04/21 Moved by Trustee Scinski that the Board acknowledge receipt of the Pembina Hills School Division Reserve Review for information purposes.

Carried

8041/04/21 Moved by Trustee Comeau that the Board acknowledge receipt of the Alberta Distance Learning Centre Financial Statement for the six-month period ending February 28, 2021 for information purposes.

Carried

3. Policy Committee Recommendations

- a) Policy 10 – Policy Making
- b) Policy 13 – Appeals and Hearings Regarding Student Matters
- c) Policy 25 – School Year Calendar
- d) Policy 27 – Division Citizenship Awards

8042/04/21 Moved by Trustee Carson that the Board adopt the revised Policy 10 – Policy Making as presented by the Policy Committee and amended.

Carried

8043/04/21 Moved by Trustee McElroy that the Board adopt the revised Policy 13 – Appeals and Hearings Regarding Student Matters as presented by the Policy Committee.

Carried

8044/04/21 Moved by Trustee Lefebvre that the Board adopt the revised Policy 25 – School Year Calendar as presented by the Policy Committee.

Carried

8045/04/21 Moved by Trustee Carson that the Board adopt the revised Policy 27 – Division Citizenship Awards as presented by the Policy Committee.

Carried

Executive Assistant Charlotte Watson left the meeting at 10:47 a.m.

Assurance Report and Information Updates

1. 2021 PHSD Satisfaction Survey Summary
 - Mark Thiesen, Assistant Superintendent of Education Services

Why do we do a satisfaction survey?

Measurement:

- The intent of the survey is to monitor the perceptions of our students, staffs and parents relative to the outcomes in the Education Plan.
- Survey questions are one source of measurement.

- Measures help to assess the impact of strategies and to inform decisions about outcomes that need attention.
- This survey enhances the data from Alberta Education’s survey.
- PHSD’s survey provides increased specificity, thereby increasing the value of survey data.

PROCESS

- School staff and students in Grades 4-12 completed the survey online in December/January.
- Emails were sent to all parents who provided an email address during school registration.

RESPONSE RATES

	Students Grades 4-12	School Staff (incl Support Staff)	Parents
Responses (this yr)	1944	314	681
Possible (this yr)	2290	366	2933
Rate (20/21)	85%	86%	23%
Rate (19/20)	81%	76%	14%
<i>In 2019-2020, we switched from phone calls to email for our collection of feedback from parents. In 2020-2021, we also utilized SchoolMessenger texts to encourage responses to the emails we had sent.</i>			
Rate (18/19)	73%	89%	53%
Rate (17/18)	67%	76%	58%
Rate (16/17)	70%	81%	62%
Rate (15/16)	86%	77%	51%
<i>In 2007/08 we switched to direct telephone contact and fully electronic data collection via online survey applications. The data below represents the baseline response rate before this change.</i>			
Rate (06/07)	77%	72.5%	28%

Themes were adjusted from ten to four.

Previous Themes

1. Administration / Leadership
2. Safe & Caring Environment
3. Character Education
4. Satisfaction with Instruction
5. Assessment and Inclusion
6. Extra-Curricular Activities
7. Special Education Services
8. Educational Technology
9. School / Community Partnerships
10. Overall Quality of Education

New Themes

1. Safe and Welcoming Learning Environment
2. Satisfaction with Leadership
3. Instruction, Assessment and Inclusion
4. Overall Quality of Education

Satisfaction with Leadership

This theme is a collation of questions about: satisfaction with the school administration, role of parent council, opportunities to contribute to decision making, community interactions, the presence of administration in classrooms and recognition of the contributions of staff and students.

- Staff satisfaction was sustained at 99% for the second year, while over the past two years, parent satisfaction increased 4% and student satisfaction increased 9%.
- Staff satisfaction with the recognition they receive for their contributions increased steadily over the last few years while students appear to feel more appreciated for the good things they do at school.
- The increased satisfaction of students and parents on this measure also contributed to the overall increased satisfaction with school leadership.
- Perceptions of the school’s contribution to the community remains quite high.
- While staff and parent satisfaction remained stable, the students’ 4% increase in this category contributes to the overall increased satisfaction with leadership.
- After several years of slight decline, satisfaction has improved significantly over the last three years. (Current 87.3% is highest in over 10 years)

Safe and Welcoming Learning Environment

This theme is a collation of questions about: schools being safe & caring, character development, schools’ approaches to student discipline and behavior expectations, and students feeling safe in all areas of the school.

- The increasingly positive perspective of students on this question has been one of several that have contributed to positive growth on this theme.
- It seems very apparent that staff and students have noticed the efforts made to ensure all areas of the school are safe. This year marks the highest rate in 10 years for all three of the responding groups.
- Both staff and parents continue to be very satisfied and with the gain from students, this measure is very positive.
- While the adults continue to report a positive perception about concern for how students feel at a much higher rate than students, the student rate increased 5% from last year (from 66.3% to 71.3%).
- 93.5% of students agree that there is at least one adult in their school who knows them well, which is about 3% more than last year, and the highest rate we’ve seen to date.
- At the request of the transportation department, we’ve been asking parents if their children feel safe on the bus.
 - In 2018-2019 the response was 91.2% positive.
 - In 2019-2020 the response was 93.7% positive.
 - In 2020-2021 the response was 94.0% positive.
- When students are asked the same question, their responses were as follows:
 - In 2019-2020 the response was 85.9% positive.
 - In 2020-2021 the response was 89.2% positive.

Impact of Social Media

The survey item stated: "I have had hurtful comments said about me on social media."

Response choices included: *Never *3 or less times *More than 3 times

- While the frequency of "More than 3 times" has gone down, increasing numbers of students have experienced some hurtful comments on social media.
- If we extrapolate this data to our student population, more than 800 grade 4-12 kids who have read negative comments about themselves on social media.

Instruction, Assessment and Inclusion

This theme is a collation of questions about: the use of educational technology, student engagement, assessment practices, strategies that promote inclusion, parent and student satisfaction with their teachers, satisfaction with communication of student progress, and satisfaction with extracurricular.

- Parents and students report a high degree of confidence in knowing what they are supposed to learn; a rate that has increased slightly over time.
- A significant increase (about 9%) in student's recognition that their teachers are responding to their unique needs.
- There continues to be very high levels of satisfaction with the use and integration of educational technology.
- Parents, teachers and students consistently agree that teachers in their school challenge them to do their best.
- There is a decline in satisfaction is very likely a direct reflection of the reduced access to extracurricular as a result of COVID 19 restrictions.
- After a few years of declining satisfaction, the parent rates increased sharply (+9%) and while student rates increased 3%, they remain lower than what they were several years ago.
- Parents have adapted to using online digital tools to follow their child's progress. Many parents who commented stated that they rely on teachers' notifications or their kids, to remind them to look. We also asked students if they check, and they do, even more so than their parents.

Despite the downward pull of this year's reduced satisfaction with extracurricular opportunities, this theme continues to progress in a positive direction mostly on the strength of increased student satisfaction with other related elements. In 2020-2021, the average in this theme is 92.3%; this is the highest it's been in more than 10 years.

Overall Quality of Education

This theme is a collation of questions about: the satisfaction with program choice, the overall quality of education in PHSD and the grade given (Excellent (A), Very Good (B), or Acceptable (C)).

- After two years of decline beginning in 2018-19, parent satisfaction with choice has rebounded to previous levels; around 91%.

- There has been 2 consecutive years of improvement, even though these rates are already very high. Student satisfaction has increased 5% since 3 years ago. Parent satisfaction has increased 3.5% in the same period.
- All groups surveyed continue to convey very high levels of satisfaction with the overall quality of education in Pembina Hills.
- The overall average: 96% (highest in more than 10 years!)

2046/04/21

Moved by Trustee McElroy that the Board accept the 2021 PHSD Satisfaction Survey Summary as information.

Carried

Information Items

1. Administrative Procedure AP 30-21 Operating and Capital Reserves
2. Administrative Procedure AP 70-116 Bus Driver Certification and Training
3. Administrative Procedure AP 80-15 Technology Evergreening Strategic Plan

Committee Meetings – April 14, 2021 – April 27, 2021

1. Alberta School Boards Association – Zone 2/3 General Meeting
2. Barrhead Community Awareness Resource Education Services (CARES) Coalition Meeting
3. Barrhead Composite High School – School Council Meeting
4. Busby School – School Council Meeting
5. Dunstable School – Long Service Awards
6. Neerlandia Public Christian School – Long Service Awards
7. Neerlandia Public Christian School – School Council Meeting
8. Pembina Hills – Policy Committee Meeting
9. Pembina North Community School – Long Service Awards
10. Rural Caucus Members Spring Meeting
11. Superintendent Hiring – Preliminary Meeting
12. Superintendent Hiring – Survey Compilation
13. Teacher-Board Advisory Committee Meeting
14. Westlock and District Community of Networking Excellence (CONEX) Meeting

Celebrations

1. 2020 Terry Fox Run Results
2. Andrea Robin receives the Exemplary Teacher Award
3. Karla Montgomery receives the Exemplary Teacher Award

Land, Legal, Labour (In-Camera)

8047/04/21
11:45 a.m.

Moved by Trustee Carson that the meeting convene as an In-Camera Session to discuss land, labour, legal matters.

Carried

Superintendent Garbutt left the meeting at 12:13 p.m.

Superintendent Garbutt returned to the meeting at 1:02 p.m.

8048/04/21
1:06 p.m.

Moved by Trustee Carson that the meeting reconvene as a Regular Meeting.

Carried

8049/04/21

Adjournment

Chair Tuininga declared the meeting adjourned at 1:07 p.m.



Jennifer Tuininga (Jul 5, 2021 20:36 MDT)
Jennifer Tuininga
Board Chair



Charlotte Watson
Executive Assistant