

AGENDA

June 11, 2024

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7. BOARD POLICY REVIEW	Board Policy Committee Meeting – Revised Policies for Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board Policy 15 – Financial Management• Board Policy 17 – GPPSD School Closure• Board Policy 20 – Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Working and Learning Environments	Andre
8. ADVOCACY & ENGAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advocacy and Engagement Committee Meeting 2024 06 11 Update	Chris
9. CULTURE AND ENGAGEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indigenous Graduation Ceremony	Trustees
10. BUSINESS SERVICES	Business Services Report <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3rd Quarter Budget Update• Annual Summer Operations and Maintenance Report	Norm
11. ASBA /PSBAA	Public School Boards' Association of Alberta (PSBAA) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spring General Meeting Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spring General Meeting	Donna Joan/Rob/ Donna
12. ALBERTA EDUCATION		
13. COMMITTEE REPORTS	Student Advisory Committee Meeting	Donna/ Joan/Rob
	School Council Year-End Report <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alexander Forbes School Council	Trustees
	Non-Instructional Liaison Committee Meeting – Minutes Submitted as Information	Donna/ Chris
14. PRESENTATION OR DELEGATION BUSINESS		
15. CORRESPONDENCE		Trustees
16. NEW IDEAS/NEW ISSUES		Trustees
17. IN CAMERA SESSION		Trustees
18. ADJOURNMENT		Joan

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Board of Trustees Regular Board Meeting

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

Prepared by Sandy McDonald, Superintendent of Schools



**Grande Prairie
Public School
Division**

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

ALBERTA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION INDIGENOUS STUDENT AWARDS

Several students from the division have been recognized by the Alberta School Boards Association for their leadership, effort and commitment, and the manner in which they honour their Indigenous heritage and serve as role models for other students in their school.

Paige Aubichon, a grade 9 student at the Grande Prairie Composite High School was selected as a winner of the Honouring Spirit Indigenous Student Award, and the following students received honourable mention:

- Isabelle Surowaniec, grade 2, Parkside Montessori
- Mariah Hudson, grade 3, Aspen Grove School
- Kairoh Winiandy, grade 6, Hillside Community School
- Mairyn Broderson, grade 8, Derek Taylor Public School
- Blayze Willard, grade 11, Grande Prairie Composite High School
- Chloe Hedges, grade 12, Charles Spencer High School

In addition, Kairoh Winiandy was also recognized as one of 9 provincial recipients of the Lieutenant Governor's Award, for his determination, initiative and independence, and success both academically and personally.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Continuing the work to support increasing high school completion rates and to prepare students for their transition to life after high school, administration has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Northwestern Polytechnic (NWP), the Peace Wapiti Public School Division and the Grande Prairie and District Catholic School Division to explore the potential of shared development of a regional Collegiate School.

The potential focus of the Collegiate being explored is science, technology, and health sciences, which align with programming offered at NWP. The exploration will also focus on creating opportunities for students from the local region that would allow them to participate in focused programming in the Collegiate while also remaining in attendance at their existing school.

A committee of representative from each organization, including Deputy Superintendent James Robinson and Director of System Planning Kim Frykas will be working into the fall to assess student interest level and the feasibility and structure of a new program.

2024-2025 WELLNESS PLANNING

To support staff wellness, establish clarity about practice, and ultimately to improve communication practices, system leadership is exploring development of standard guidelines about internal and external communication. The increasing growth of digital communication practices has been observed

to have a significant increase in the amount of communication that occurs after the regular workday has concluded. The development of guidelines for how after-hours communication will be addressed, and the awareness of the impact on staff and parents, is intended to support wellness and manage expectations.

Feedback from staff, student, and parent surveys this year illustrated the importance of clear and consistent communication practices. The development of communication guidelines and ongoing refinement of other practices is intended to improve the effectiveness of updates between home and school to home. More information will be shared within the division and school community at the start of the new school year.

ALBERTA SCHOOL COUNCILS' ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FEES

Payment has been made for our school councils to maintain their membership in the Alberta School Councils' Association for the 2024-2025 school year. Membership fees for each of the 17 school councils (note: as an Outreach program the Bridge Network does not have a School Council) have increased by \$25 this year, from \$100/school to \$125/school, raising the total from \$1700 to \$2125. School Council Chairs and school principals have been notified and informed about the early-bird discounts available now for professional learning activities booked for next year.

ADMINISTRATOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND PRINCIPALS MEETING

The focused team learning time at the June 5 Administrator professional learning time was again on the deliberate planning for each school's 2024-2025 professional learning plan and the ongoing team review of division staff, student, and parent assurance survey results.

The focus of the principals' business meeting in the afternoon was to review the latest updates from Alberta Education re: curriculum implementation and provincial testing and to receive updates from each of the Educational Directors. An environmental scan of school communication practices occurred as well. The schedule for school startup, shown below, was finalized as well:

- Aug 19 - Admin Assistant 1st day in school. Schools closed to the public.
- Aug 20 - Admin Assistant Training. Schools closed to the public.
- Aug 21 - Schools open to the public
- Aug 22 - Full day All Admin Professional Learning and Meeting
- Aug 28 PM - Superintendent Address and Guest Speaker (all staff)

STUDENT REGISTRATION VIDEOS

Appreciation is extended to Communications Officer Shannon Stambaugh and the staff and students who were part of the team to prepare the 2024-2025 Kindergarten Student Registration Videos. Three videos, featuring current GPPSD students and staff, are available on the division's YouTube channel:

- <https://youtu.be/unlBtuqV9Sg>
- <https://youtu.be/AIOKJjdNn-M>
- <https://youtu.be/aX7rSBjrqDO>

BOARD WORKPLAN REVIEW

An updated version of the Board's Workplan is attached and submitted for information.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE ACTION

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION RE: BOARD SOCIAL PLANNING

In response to the request at the May 28 meeting, an updated plan that estimates the cost of extending an invitation to the event for casual staff is attached for the Board's consideration.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION RE: TRANSPORTATION

In response to the request at the May 28 meeting, a report in response to correspondence received from the Avondale School Council is attached for the Board's consideration.

AUGUST 2024 BOARD ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING AND FIRST BOARD MEETING

The annual Superintendent Performance Evaluation and Board Self-Evaluation surveys have been distributed.

The first meetings of the Board for the 2024-2025 school year, to conduct the annual Organizational Meeting of the Board followed by the first regular public meeting of the Board for the year is proposed for the evening of Tuesday, August 20, 2023, beginning at 5:00 PM.

Administration is seeking confirmation of the following proposed schedule for August 20, 2024:

- 2:00 PM to 3:15 PM Review Board Self-Evaluation Results
- 3:15 PM to 3:30 PM Break
- 3:30 PM to 4:30 PM Review Superintendent Evaluation Results
- 4:30 PM to 5:00 PM Break/Supper
- 5:00 PM Annual Organizational Meeting
- 6:00 PM First Regular Board Meeting of 2024-2025

**Grande Prairie Public School Division
2023 – 2024 Board Work Plan**



	PUBLIC MEETING DATES	MONTHLY GOVERNANCE ACTIONS	PROFESSIONAL LEARNING
AUGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023 08 22 Organizational Meeting • Regular Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Self-Evaluation 2023 08 22 • Board Evaluation of Superintendent 2023 08 22 • <i>Summary reports for each due September 30 for review October 10 in Camera</i> 	2023 08 09 – 11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSBC
SEPTEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023 09 12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy & Engagement Committee (11:00 am) 2023 09 12 	2023 09 18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBA – ASEBP Webinar
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023 09 26 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Evaluation Committee (10:00 am) 2023 09 18 • Trustee Student Advisory Members Meeting (1:00 pm) 2023 09 21 • Board Policy Committee (11:00 am) 2023 09 26 • Review Board Workplan 2023 09 26 	2023 09 20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBA Zone 1 • Awards Luncheon 2023 09 27 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBA – Matt Solberg, Virtual 2023 09 29 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSBAA Franklin Covey, Virtual
OCTOBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023 10 10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy & Engagement Committee (11:00 am) 2023 10 10 • Audit Committee (4:30 pm) 2023 10 10 • Review Annual Student Enrollment Summary 2023 10 10 • Review Annual Exit Survey Report <i>In Camera</i> 2023 10 10 • PD Committee Meeting 2023 10 11 • Board Social 2023 10 14 • TTLC Meeting (3:45 pm) 2023 10 17 	2023 10 23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Patrick Catholic Re-Opening 1:00 • Minister’s Tour of GPCHS 2:15 • Meeting with Minister of Ed – PWSD 4:30
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023 10 24 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Policy Committee (11:00 am) 2023 10 24 • Non-Instructional Support Staff Committee (4:15 pm) 2023 10 25 • Review Board Workplan 2023 10 24 	2023 10 19 – 20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSBAA FGM

			<p>2023 10 30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Webinar AB and Rural Municipalities
NOVEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023 11 14 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy & Engagement Committee (11:00 am) 2023 11 14 Review Annual Student Attendance Report 2023 11 14 Bi-Annual Division Risk Management Update <i>In Camera</i> 2023 11 14 Bi-Annual Human Resources Update <i>In Camera</i> 2023 11 14 	<p>2023 11 08</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Zone 1
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023 11 28 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Assurance Retreat 2023 11 23 (Moved from Nov 30 - Trustees to review the Results Report prior to approval on 2023 11 28) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review draft Annual Education Results Report Presentation of Educational Director Work Plans Board Policy Committee (11:00 am) 2023 11 28 Audit Committee (4:30 pm) 2023 11 28 Approve Annual Education Results Report 2023 11 28 Approve Audited Financial Statements 2023 11 28 Fall Budget Update 2023 11 28 Council of School Councils (7:00 pm) 2023 11 30 	<p>2023 11 09</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSBAA Franklin Covey, Leader in Me - Virtual <p>2023 11 17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSBC <p>2023 11 19 – 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA FGM
DECEMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023 12 12 Committee of the Whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TTLIC Meeting (3:45 pm) 2023 12 05 TEBA Engagement Session 2023 12 08 Advocacy & Engagement Committee (11:00 am) 2023 12 12 Review Annual Class Size Report 2023 12 12 Review draft 2024-25 School Year Calendar 2023 12 12 Review Annual Finance Department Workplan 	<p>2023 12 11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Speaker's Corner <p>2023 12 13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Zone 1 Virtual
JANUARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 01 09 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy & Engagement Committee (11:00 am) 2023 01 09 Review Annual Student Profile and Specialized Learning Services Report 2024 01 09 Review Annual Student Transportation Update 2024 01 09 Council of School Councils – Workshop – 2024 01 18 	<p>2024 01 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Zone 1 Virtual

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 01 23 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Policy Committee (11:00 am) 2024 01 23 Approve 2024 – 2025 School Year Calendar 2024 01 23 Review Annual Information Technology Workplan and Report 2024 01 23 Review Annual Student Intervention Programming Report 2024 01 23 Review 1st Quarter Budget Update 2024 01 23 School Assurance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 01 25 2024 01 30 2023 02 22 PD Committee Meeting 2024 01 31 	<p>2024 01 22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Speaker's Corner Education Commission of the States <p>2024 01 23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AB Ed Stakeholder Session – Social Studies Curr.
FEBRUARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 02 13 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy & Engagement Committee (11:00 am) 2024 02 13 Review GPPSD Optimum Learning Framework 2024 02 13 Review Annual Programs of Choice Report 2024 02 13 TTLIC Meeting (3:45 pm) 2024 02 20 Non-Instructional Support Staff Committee (4:15 pm) 2024 02 21 	<p>2024 02 08 - 09</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSBC <p>2024 02 14</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Zone 1 Virtual <p>2024 02 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Virtual Session – Enterprise Canada <p>2024 02 26</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASBA Speakers' Corner Advancing Education for Reconciliation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 02 27 Committee of the Whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Policy Committee (11:00 am) 2024 02 27 Develop Budget Process and Budget Development Principles 2024 02 27 Review Annual Division Occupational Health and Safety Report 2024 02 27 Review Annual Division Operations & Maintenance Workplan and Report 2024 02 27 Review Annual Leadership Staff Demographics Succession Planning Report <i>In Camera</i> 2024 02 27 Council of School Councils Meeting 2024 02 29 	
MARCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 03 12 Committee of the Whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Advocacy & Engagement Committee (11:00 am) 2024 03 12 Review draft 3-Year Capital Plan 2024 03 12 Review Annual Indigenous Programming Report 2024 03 12 	<p>2024 03 02</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSBAA – Choice in AB Ed – virtual

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 03 26 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Professional Learning Retreat 2024 03 25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strategic Plan Development Workshop • Board Policy Committee (11:00 am) 2024 03 26 • Approve Annual Division 3-Year Capital Plan 2024 03 26 • Approve Edwin Parr Nomination • Approve Friends of Education Nomination • Bi-Annual Division Risk Management Update <i>In Camera</i> 2024 03 26 • Bi-Annual Human Resources Update <i>In Camera</i> 2024 03 26 	<p>2024 03 13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBA Zone 1 High Prairie <p>2024 03 18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBA Speaker's Corner – Putting Data to Work
APRIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 04 23 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy & Engagement Committee (11:00 am) 2024 04 23 • Review 2nd Quarter Budget Update 2024 04 23 • Review Annual Division Wellness Report 2024 04 23 • Review Annual Division Compensation Report <i>In Camera</i> 2024 04 23 	<p>2024 04 06 – 08</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSBA New Orleans, LA <p>2024 04 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBA Zone 1 GP Catholic <p>2024 04 11 – 12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSBC <p>2024 04 15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBA Speaker's Corner TBA

06.2 Board Workplan Review

MAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 05 14 • Committee of the Whole 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Spring Governance Retreat 2024 05 01 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review Draft 3 Year Educational Plan ○ Review Draft Division Assurance Summary ○ Review 2024-2025 Division Budget Development Process • Council of School Councils Meeting 2024 05 02 • TTLC Meeting (3:45 pm) 2024 05 07 • Advocacy & Engagement Committee (11:00 am) 2024 05 14 • Approve 2024 – 2025 School Fees – deferred from April Meeting • Review draft Division 2024-25 Budget 2024 05 14 • Student Presentation – Bamfield Marine Station 2024 05 14 • Non-Instructional Support Staff Committee (4:15 pm) 2024 05 22 • GP Composite High School Graduation - 2024 05 17 	<p>2024 05 08</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBA Zone 1 Fort Vermilion <p>2024 05 13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBA PD Event – Parent Choice • ASBA Speaker’s Corner TBA
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 05 28 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Policy Committee (11:00 am) 2024 05 28 • Approve Division 3-Year Education Plan 2024 05 28 • Approve Division 2024-25 Budget 2024 05 28 • Approve Locally Developed Course Requests 2024 05 28 • Presentation: Student Advisory Committee 	<p>2024 05 30-06 01</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSBAA SGM Calgary, AB
JUNE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 06 11 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy & Engagement Committee (11:00 am) 2024 06 11 • Review 3rd Quarter Budget Update 2024 06 11 • Review Annual Summer Operations and Maintenance Report 2024 06 11 • Indigenous Graduation Ceremony 2024 06 06 • Bridge Network Graduation – Solo Format – 2024 06 14 • Charles Spencer Commencement - 2024 06 26 	<p>2024 06 02 – 04</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBA SGM Calgary, AB <p>2024 06 12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASBA Zone 1 CSNO
JULY			<p>2024 07 02 - 05</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSBA Congress Toronto, ON

AUGUST			2024 08 07 – 09 • PSBC Meeting Grande Prairie, AB
SEPTEMBER			2024 09 18 • ASBA Zone 1 Meeting and Awards – GPPSD Hosts

Board Social Planning Update**Board of Trustees Regular Board Meeting**

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

Prepared by Sandy McDonald, Superintendent of Schools


**Grande Prairie
Public School
Division**
PURPOSE

This report is an update to the Board Social Planning Update report provided to the Board at the May 28 regular meeting of the Board. The intent of this report is to update the logistical and expense estimates by taking the following 3 factors into consideration, as requested by the Board:

- (1) Extending the invitation to the event to casual staff within the division
- (2) Changing the cost per ticket from \$10 to \$15.
- (3) Extending the cost to attend to retirees and their guests as well.

1. EXTENDING INVITATIONS TO CASUAL STAFF

The division currently has approximately 520 teaching staff on contract and 480 non-instructional staff on contract. There are approximately 250 casual staff and over 60% of them have worked fewer than 25 days in the current school year.

The roster of casual staff includes substitute teachers, non-certificated classroom supervisors, substitute educational assistants, substitute administrative assistants, casual caretakers, and other casual non-instructional staff.

Given the purpose of the event is to acknowledge staff for their exemplary service, long service, and to celebrate retirees, is the Board interested to include casual staff in those categories? Would it be equitable to also develop a process to identify exemplary staff from the roster of casual staff and to recognize casual staff for their long-service in some manner as well?

2. BOARD SOCIAL ATTENDANCE and ESTIMATES OF FUTURE ATTENDANCE

Attendance for the event during the past three years is shown in the table below.

Year	Attendees	Staff Recipients	Staff Other	Total Staff	Guests	Retirees
2019	569	74	287	361	151	57
2022	518	63	267	330	111	77
2023	562	73	296	369	193	73

It is important to note that as our staffing complement has grown considerably over the years, attendance at the event has largely remained the same. The table above illustrates that approximately 30% of all staff have attended the event each of the past three years.

Casual staff approach their work with the division in different ways, depending on their personal situation. Some are available to be called in daily and work as frequently as they can, while others prefer to work less frequently and/or on specific days. Given the uncertain nature of some of their employment, it is a challenge to identify how many would accept an invitation to attend.

For this report, the assumption is that approximately 15% of casual staff (37) would consider attending and all subsequent calculations will use 48 as an estimate of the increased attendance of casual staff and guests attending.

3. REVIEW OF EXPENSES

- The cost per plate for approximately 562 people is \$51.00.
- Adding additional attendees will increase both the fixed costs associated with the rental of the venue and planning for the event and the variable costs of the meal.
- The additional estimated cost to increase the number of attendees to 610 is approximately \$1500, to account for the added catering costs charged by the venue and the increased cost of tickets, soft drinks for designated drivers, table decorations, etc., plus \$2448 for the added meal costs
- Total expenses for the event for the past seven years are shown in the table below

Year	Staff Recognition	Event	Total
2017	17,097.85	40,571.60	57,669.45
2018	12,881.76	40,326.24	53,208.90
2019*	16,507.05	31,441.95	47,949.00
2020	16,448.00	0	16,448.00
2021	19,153.04	0	19,153.04
2022	20,271.69	35,023.27	55,294.27
2023	20,334.31	44,123.33	64,457.64
2024 est'd	21146.32	52227.58	73,373.90*

**note: the estimate for 2024 shown above includes the increased cost of adding 48 casual staff and guests, but does not account for any revenue from ticket sales.*

4. ESTIMATES OF TICKET SALE REVENUE

Beginning with the 2019 event, staff were charged \$10 per ticket to help offset the increasing cost of the event. Retirees have not been charged for their tickets. The total cost shown in the table above for each of the 2019, 2022, and 2023 events has been reduced by approximately \$4000 generated by ticket sales. The change to charging for staff and guest tickets has been identified in feedback as a concern from some staff.

Different considerations for charging attendees were discussed at the May 28 Board Meeting. The following models are offered for consideration:

- \$10 per ticket for all attendees: 610 attendees x \$10 = \$6100.00 revenue
- \$15 per ticket for all attendees: 610 attendees x \$15 = \$9150 revenue
- \$10 per ticket for all staff and guests (assuming 70 retirees): 540 x \$10 = \$5400 revenue
- \$15 per ticket for all staff and guests (assuming 70 retirees): 540 x \$15 = \$8100 revenue

Based on feedback collected from post-event surveys from previous years indicating a concern about the ticket cost, it is possible that an increase in the cost per ticket to attend may result in a reduction in the number of attendees.

SUMMARY

It is a challenge to estimate the increased total cost of the Board Social that would result from extending invitations to casual staff, and **the numbers presented in this report are estimates** based on past attendance trends and best guesses.

Using the estimate of approximately \$74,000 total cost for 610 staff, retirees, casual staff and guests to attend, and a range of \$5400 to \$9150 of revenue generated from ticket sales, an estimated total cost for the 2024 Board Social is from \$64, 850 to \$68 600.

The purpose of this report is to consider if the current invitation list is appropriate. Another consideration for the Board may be to explore if the current event aligns with their vision for celebrating staff for their efforts and long service. Considering this perspective, it may be relevant to highlight the price range for the gifts awarded to staff receiving long-service awards has not been addressed since at least 2012.

Trustees are asked to consider the feedback collected from the recent post-event surveys re: the cost to attendees, the total cost of the event, and other relevant factors when considering providing direction to the event planners.

BOARD REQUEST FOR TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

Prepared by Alexander (Sandy) McDonald, Superintendent of Schools


**Grande Prairie
Public School
Division**
BACKGROUND

The May 28 Regular meeting of the Board included correspondence from the School Council at Avondale Elementary School requesting division-funded transportation for all grade 7 and 8 students in the Avondale area to Roy Bickell Public School (RBPS). That letter is attached to this report for reference.

The basis for the request is parental concern about the risks faced by students in grades 7 and 8, who are ineligible for bussing because they live less than 2.4 km from the school, when walking across 116th avenue to and from school. Included in the letter was a reference to busing practices for students attending other schools and a request for equitable consideration for students in the Avondale Neighbourhood. Following discussion of the correspondence at the meeting, Trustees asked division administration to explore the concern and report back to the Board about the issue.

This report provides information about the current transportation funding eligibility in the [Transportation Regulation](#), describes the general approach to transportation funding for students that require crossing larger roads, describes the current transportation practices for students in the Avondale neighbourhood, and provides information about transportation practice in other schools referenced in the letter. Trustees can access additional information about transportation on the division's website, at: <https://www.gppsd.ab.ca/transportation>.

ALBERTA EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION REGULATION

The current Transportation Regulation stipulates that provincial funding is provided to the division to transport students who reside a distance greater than 2.4 km from the school. Beginning in September of 2025 new transportation regulations are proposed which would change the funding eligibility for Kindergarten to Grade 6 students to those greater than 1 km from their school will and to 2 km for Grades 7-12 students.

CURRENT TRANSPORTATION PRACTICES***General Practice***

- To the greatest extent possible, eligibility for funded transportation to and from school is limited to students who qualify for funding under the Transportation Regulation. There are exceptions for students in some areas.
- The funding for exceptions comes from general revenues. The current cost for a bus is \$66,000 per year.
- There is no standard approach to applying exemptions to the Transportation Regulation. Any exceptions, as for those schools described below, are reviewed on the basis of the situation in each neighbourhood. There have been exceptions made in addition to the ones described below that are no longer in place due to changes in the local context.

- Note there is no standard definition for ‘major roadway’ or a standard for major arterial roads in the City that drives transportation practice. The safety of the students required to walk is the primary consideration given by administration when considering budgeting for an exception.
- Some students from other areas of the city and attending other schools not mentioned in this report are also required to cross roadways with a 60 kmh speed limit.
- Depending on seating and bus availability, students who do not qualify for funded transportation may access transportation for a fee of \$32 per month.

Hillside School

- Some Kindergarten to Grade 6 students who live in the Smith subdivision and do not qualify for transportation because of the distance they live from the school are provided free transportation. This exception is new in the past three years and affects 77 students who are transported on two buses.
- The rationale for providing division-funded transportation is primarily the age of the elementary students (typically 5-12) and the nature of the roadway (100th Avenue) they are expected to cross. The roadway has seen pedestrian related accidents on a number of occasions in recent years.

Aspen Grove School and Ecole Montrose School

- All K-8 students attending Aspen and Ecole Montrose who live on the east side of Resources Road, but are within the 2.4 km limit, are provided division-paid transportation to attend Aspen Grove School and Ercole Montrose School.
- The rationale for providing division-funded transportation is primarily the 70 km/h speed limit of the roadway the students are expected to cross.

Avondale Elementary School to RBPS

- The primary rationale for not providing a transportation exemption for students attending RBPS is the age of the students (generally 12 – 14) who would cross 116th avenue.
- There are currently 32 students from the Avondale neighbourhood who attend RBPS. 16 of the students qualify for bussing based on the location of their house.
- 10 of the 16 students who do not qualify are currently paid riders.
- There are currently 31 students in Grade 6 in the Avondale neighborhood scheduled to attend RBPS next year 11 of those students would not be eligible for funded transportation.
- It is not possible at this time to estimate how much space will be available for paid riders from the Avondale area to RBPS for next year. Parents are currently registering their children for bus passes for the 2024-2025 school year, and more information will be available in mid-to late August.

The Impact of Regulation Changes beginning in 2025-2026

- The proposed reduction in limits for September of 2025 will have a significant impact on transportation funding and practice in the division.
- It is expected that as many as 50% more students, from approximately 2400 students to greater than 3000 students, will be eligible for funded transportation. The increase in the number of buses will address situations where concerns similar to those identified in the Avondale School Council's letter.
- The route planning for the 2024-2025 school year was completed earlier in the year. Route planning takes into consideration the ridership from our partner division in the interest of maximizing the number of shared buses to minimize costs. There are no additional economies to be found through sharing at this time. Adding an additional bus at this time would result in the entire cost needing to be absorbed by the division.
- It is expected the funding received by the division from the province will be significantly less than the expense required to add additional buses.
- The detailed work to calculate the impact on the division will be completed in the fall of 2024, in preparation for the following year, however it is estimated the transportation deficit could be as much as \$600,000 and may require a user fee for all riders.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to address the concerns identified in the letter from the Avondale School Council and provide background information to support Board discussion of the request. The practice of assessing each potential exemption to the walk limits identified in the Transportation Regulation relative to the context impacting student safety is intended to provide maximum flexibility while also minimizing the impact on the division budget. An addition of another bus at this time would result in the full cost of the additional bus being assigned to the division.

The practice has been largely effective over the years, supporting a balanced transportation budget while transporting approximately 20% of the students enrolled in the division. The proposed changes to the Transportation Regulation for 2024-2025 year are expected to result in a significant increase in ridership, and positively impact students in the Avondale neighbourhood. The details are currently unknown, however significant uncertainty and concern exists about the impact on the division's budget.