



**Good Spirit School Division No. 204**

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~ MEDIA RELEASE ~

**July 3, 2013**

**GOOD SPIRIT SCHOOL DIVISION BOARD APPROVES BUDGET**

The Good Spirit School Division Board of Education passed the 2013/2014 budget at its regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, June 20, 2013. This year's budget includes anticipated revenues and expenditures in excess of \$75 million.

"Our priority in terms of budgeting is to allocate resources to maintain current operations with a special focus on identified strategic plan priorities," states Bryan Cottenie, Board Chair. "We are headed into year two of our five-year strategic plan and it is extremely important to ensure targeted investments reflect these goals."

"Transparency plays a key role in discussions and included numerous meetings with both senior administration as well as board members before determining the finalized budget," maintains Sherry Todosichuk, Superintendent of Business Administration. "Administration has taken the board directive that the budget include a defined focus on realigning resources so that areas such as staffing, supports for learning, and health and safety are targeted to ensure dollars meet identified needs."

Highlights of the 2013/2014 budget include the following:

- Continued investment in literacy with expansion of resources available beyond the primary levels;
- Appointment of a First Nations Metis Achievement Coordinator to work towards addressing improved capacity to work with First Nations people as well as improving student learning outcomes;
- An anticipated enrolment increase of approximately 86 students resulting in additional permanent teaching staff as well as a commitment to permanent positions in student counseling, occupational therapists and speech-language pathologists to enhance student well-being and strengthen staff and student engagement;
- The hiring of a Human Resource Coordinator to ensure we are achieving efficiencies and adherence in terms of operational procedures;
- Targeted dollars to the Comprehensive School Community Health Pilots;
- Year 1 of a 2-year intranet communications solution to work towards improving both internal and external communication channels;
- Preventative Maintenance and Renewal (PMR) funding allocated by the Ministry to address facilities needs;
- Continuation of our bus fleet renewal plan (purchase of 10 buses per year) as well as continuation of placement of GPS units and cameras in buses; and,
- An investment in building updates to various bus garages.

“The Government of Saskatchewan’s Vision 2020 played an important part in budgeting for the coming year,” asserts Dwayne Reeve, Director of Education. “With key targets as part of the Saskatchewan Growth Plan including reducing the difference in graduation rates between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students by 50 per cent by 2020 as well as leading the country in Grade 12 graduation rates by 2020, we need to make key investments now to make these goals a reality. We have worked towards ensuring enhanced business processes in this budget and, as with all else, our motto of “Students Come First” was front and center numerous times when it came to making the hard decisions of how and where to allocate funds.”

For further information, contact Dwayne Reeve, Director of Education at 306-786-5500.

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**July 9, 2013**

**ARCHITECT CHOSEN FOR LANGENBURG SCHOOL PROJECT**

The Board of Education of the Good Spirit School Division is very happy to announce the appointment of an architect for the Langenburg school project. The successful applicant is aodbt architecture + interior design from Saskatoon, SK. They are a firm with recent experience in multiple Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 facilities who boasts an in-house sustainable team with rural experience.

“We were very excited with the announcement in this past spring’s provincial budget of monies dedicated to investigate the design phase of the Langenburg school project,” states Teresa Korol, Facilities Manager. She goes on to say, “The first step was to go through the tendering process of finding an architect who shared in our vision of how we see the process unfolding. Aodbt architecture + interior design impressed our selection committee with their ability to portray innovation blending traditional facility design with 21<sup>st</sup> century ideas.”

Good Spirit School Division staff and aodbt architecture + interior design will work to engage the community of Langenburg and area in a dialogue to ascertain unique perspectives and key requirements of a facility that will best suit current and future needs. Groundwork will be prepared over the summer months to initiate conversations early this fall.

“As a Board, this now means we can start our work with not only the architect but the community to bring our vision to life of a brand new school located in Langenburg,” exclaims Bryan Cottenie, Board Chair. “We see this as an opportunity to follow a step-by-step process that will provide us the ability to view this project from many facets including the creation of a design for a facility that will meet the needs of many community partners. We look forward to open, honest conversations with staff, students, SCC members, community members and local businesses to see what the best fit for education and the surrounding community will be.”

For further information, contact Teresa Korol, Facilities Manager, at 306-786-5500.

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**October 7, 2013**

**GSSD Board of Education to Undertake School Reviews**

At its regularly scheduled Board meeting of Thursday, October 3, 2013 the Good Spirit School Division Board of Education passed a motion to undertake the school review process at two schools - Calder School and Fort Livingstone School (Pelly).

Both Calder and Fort Livingstone Schools have been identified for review of future school viability based upon the criteria established in Board Policy 17 and *The Education Act, 1995*. Numerous criteria such as enrolment figures, location, transportation considerations, grade configuration, staffing, operational costs, facility standards, program offerings, and extra-curricular activities are considered before a school is placed under review. The findings are used as a basis to undertake dialogue and open discussions in regards to appropriate options for the future.

"The review of a school's viability is not a process undertaken lightly by our Board members," states Bryan Cottenie, Board Chair. "Data was brought forward by senior administration that we thoroughly reviewed, and, at this time, it was decided that we need to investigate the sustainability of these two schools. The school review process is important as this next step simply means that we want to review more information."

At the same meeting, the Board of Education passed a second motion for the establishment of a Review Committee in each of the two communities. Committee representatives will be identified by October 31<sup>st</sup>.

"The communities of both Calder and Pelly will now become a very important part of the decision making process. Being accountable and transparent is our definite priority in these important discussions. Our number one interest is without a doubt making sure that the best future for students is the focus of this process," declared Cottenie.

For further information, contact Mr. Dwayne Reeve, Director of Education, at 306-786-5500.

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~ MEDIA RELEASE ~

**December 9, 2013**

**STUDENTS COME FIRST: A Defined Focus on Student Achievement**

The 2013-2014 school year has seen many positive initiatives implemented towards our focus on providing a high level of learning for all students.

Good Spirit School Division believes in “**Learning Without Limits**” and “**Achievement For All**”. Teachers employ responsive teaching strategies with a belief that each and every student can learn and succeed. These strategies support students to become self-directed learners who look at any given situation as an opportunity to learn and who problem-solve to achieve their goals. Central to this theme is differentiation.

Differentiation is a philosophy of teaching and learning that puts the needs of individual students at the center of all instructional opportunities. Learning experiences are planned around each student’s interests, learning preferences, and readiness levels to achieve their individual curriculum outcomes. Teachers are continually assessing students to ensure each is provided with unique pathways to achieve at the highest level with their own personal learning abilities.

In the GSSD strategic plan feedback (released in August, 2012), staff indicated a need for a cohesive “big picture” look at how all of the initiatives and work we are doing for students ties in to complement one another. This is a direct link with our strategic goals of improving student learning, enhancing student well-being, strengthening instruction, enhancing levels of qualified staff and strengthening staff engagement and morale. In the fall of 2013, senior administration, after a year of developing an action plan, developing targets and a thorough implementation plan, the GSSD Five-Year Professional Development Continuum Plan was released.

The PD Continuum Plan will work on consistency in teaching practice division-wide with a unique focus in each of the five years of the plan. In the first year, Response to Intervention (RtI) strategies will be key along with environmental supports like the look and feel of the classroom environment. RtI is not new to our division but rather is becoming a central focus in how we can ensure student needs are best met. The purpose of RtI, and ultimately the creation of RtI teams, is to provide early, targeted support to students through preventative strategies and focused interventions.

Another large part of this year is Understanding by Design (UbD). UbD is a framework that uses the backwards by design model to unpack outcomes and objectives, design assessment, and plan instruction for deeper understanding by students. Basically, once you know where you need to be, you can plan how best to achieve the goal.

Central to this year is the classroom environment with the specific goal of creating a calm setting and welcoming atmosphere with changes such as natural colors and quiet reading corners in a “homey” comfortable setting. This will not be an overnight change but one which schools and classroom teachers have been asked to view with a critical eye as to the effect it has on student learning and a purposeful student-centered environment.

In looking for ways in which to complement our goal of ensuring each and every student gets the best learning experience possible, a program called Review360 is in the implementation stage. Good Spirit is the first division in Canada to utilize the behavior tracking system and we are very excited to work with Pearson in making Canadian adaptations to the product.

Pearson shared that research shows that early and appropriate identification and intervention of behavioral concerns is key to improving outcomes for everyone: students can concentrate on learning, parents are better informed, teachers focus more on teaching and administrators can be more proactive. Review360, a tracking and support tool, will provide a unified approach division-wide in working towards better outcomes for students. It provides a seamless fit with programs already in place including non-violent crisis intervention training and threat-risk assessment procedures. One of the major positives of the program includes actual videos showing how strategies are used and implemented rather than simply providing suggestions.

This year, year one, includes the introduction of behavior tracking plans and a call for schools to volunteer to pilot the program. Year two will see full implementation division-wide including behavior and assessment tracking. Year three will focus on the addition of data walls where the important facts gathered will allow schools to see at a glance how best to strategically isolate supports for different students and be able to share and celebrate success stories.

The Ministry of Education’s announcement of Student First as a guiding force for education will have a major impact on all school divisions’ delivery of education into the future. It is an approach to unify and re-orient the education system on what matters most – the students. Once a strategic framework for the province is established, the Good Spirit School Division will take a critical eye to our own strategic plan to ensure that goals align both locally and provincially. Our initiatives to date reflect the Student First approach and Students Come First is and continues to be our central guiding force.

For further information, contact Quintin Robertson, Deputy Director of Education, at 306-786-5500 or by email at [info@gssd.ca](mailto:info@gssd.ca).

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**~ MEDIA ADVISORY ~**

**March 12, 2013**

**Annual General Meeting of Electors**

The Good Spirit School Division will be hosting the Annual General Meeting of Electors on Thursday, March 14, 2013 at the Yorkton Regional High School.

“This meeting is our opportunity to share news of what has been happening in our division for the 2011-2012 school year,” states Dwayne Reeve, Director of Education. “It is a snapshot of where the division is at in terms of both education and business initiatives and a great opportunity for community members to get to know us better.”

“Strategic planning was the highlight of the past year’s operations with many other exciting happenings,” Mr. Reeve explains. “For example, the evening will feature a presentation by the YRHS Robotics Team who have successfully competed on the national and international stage.”

Mr. Reeve goes on to comment, “We are also extremely happy to share with our staff and community members the opportunity to tour *The ActivClassroom In Motion*. The Promethean ActivBus has graciously agreed to join us for 2 hours prior to the meeting to share some of the newest classroom technology advances. We are looking forward to this being one of the main highlights of the evening and encourage everyone to come out and see it first-hand.”

Please accept this as your invitation to attend as follows:

When: **Thursday, March 14, 2013**  
Where: **Yorkton Regional High School**  
**Edwin Patzer Student Centre (Cafeteria)**  
**150 Gladstone Avenue North, Yorkton**  
Time: **6:00 pm - Supper**  
**7:00 pm - Annual General Meeting**

Attached is a press release from Promethean detailing their visit and what the ActivBus has to offer as it will be at the AGM as well as booked at both Columbia and Dr. Brass Schools in Yorkton. For further information, contact Lynel Martinuk, Communications Coordinator, at 306-786-5501 or via email at [lmartinuk@mail.gssd.ca](mailto:lmartinuk@mail.gssd.ca).

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## **Students and Teachers in Yorkton Take a Tour of the Classroom of the Future**

*Promethean ActivBus features latest in multi-user technology to motivate and boost student collaboration*

**March 11, 2013** – A visit from the Promethean ActivBus will give educators and administrators from Good Spirit School Division an opportunity to experience a collaborative classroom using the latest multi-user surface technologies, including the 46-inch [ActivTable](#). This new classroom tool is part of Promethean's integrated instructional delivery system designed to improve the ability of teachers to deliver the best lessons in any learning modality – whole class, small group or individualized learning.

In addition to the ActivTable the ActivBus, a 36-foot RV-styled bus that has been transformed into a mobile classroom of the future, features interactive whiteboards with projectors (ActivBoard), hand-held learner response systems (ActivExpression and ActiVote) and other supporting technology products such as document cameras. During the training session in both Columbia School (Thursday, March 14) and Dr. Brass School (Friday, March 15), educators and administrators will have an opportunity to gather additional instructional strategies to engage students using interactive tools.

**What:**            **Interactive Learning Sessions; Hands-On Live Lessons,  
PD/Training Sessions**

**Locations:**   **Thurs, March 14<sup>th</sup>: Columbia School, 119 Bradbrooke Drive  
10:00 am to 1:00 pm**

**Thurs, March 14<sup>th</sup>: Yorkton Regional HS, 150 Gladstone Ave North  
5:00 pm to 7:00 pm (prior to Annual Mtg)**

**Friday, March 15<sup>th</sup>: Dr. Brass School, 19 Darlington St. West  
10:00 am to 4:00 pm**

**Local Press Contact: Lynel Martinuk, Communications Coordinator**

Reporters interested in photos, quotes or additional information about Promethean solutions should contact Jodie Pozo-Olano at: 540-270-781 or [Jodie.Pozo-Olano@Prometheanworld.com](mailto:Jodie.Pozo-Olano@Prometheanworld.com).

During the ActivBus sessions, educators will also have an opportunity to experience first-hand how contemporary classroom practices when augmented with multi-user, multi-touch technology can increase teaching and learning productivity and create an immersive and engaging educational experience. The ActivBus tour supports the company's on-going conversation with educators around the [21<sup>st</sup> Century Education Themes that Matter](#). These themes – collaborative and personalised learning, student achievement, teacher effectiveness, data driven decision-making – are key to achieving global education success. Join the conversation about education transformation efforts around these themes via Twitter by simply following hash tag: #LearningMatters.

**- ENDS -**

**About Promethean**

Promethean. Spark Inspiration.

Promethean (LSE: PRW) is a global education company. We create, develop, supply and support interactive education and training solutions for schools, businesses and governments. Our products and services are raising learning standards, revolutionizing the way people learn and collaborate, making them more engaged, empowered and successful and thereby unleashing human potential. Headquartered in the UK, Promethean World Plc is listed on the main market of the London Stock Exchange. More information about Promethean is available at: [www.PrometheanWorld.com](http://www.PrometheanWorld.com)

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~ **MEDIA RELEASE** ~

**January 22, 2014**

**GSSD Board of Education Holds Special Meeting to Discuss School Reviews**

At a special meeting called for Tuesday, January 21, 2014, the Good Spirit School Division Board of Education heard presentations from both the Calder and Fort Livingstone (Pelly) Schools' respective School Review Committees. Further to the motion passed in early October, 2013, both schools are currently part of the school review process to determine viability of future operations.

"Both School Review Committees put forward excellent presentations," states Bryan Cottenie, Board Chair. "They provided us with data, detailed observations and varied reasons as to why their school should remain open. We took note of the fact that each committee was made up of a cross-section of SCC and community members who all helped to provide a picture of their school as part of their respective communities."

Both Calder and Fort Livingstone Schools have been identified for review of future school viability based upon the criteria established in Board Policy 17 and *The Education Act, 1995*. Numerous criteria such as enrolment figures, location, transportation considerations, grade configuration, staffing, operational costs, facility standards, program offerings, and extra-curricular activities are considered before a school is placed under review.

At the conclusion of the presentations, Board members held a closed session to digest and discuss information presented as well as determine next steps going forward. Two options for each school were reviewed. One option would be to make a motion to discontinue the school review process effective immediately or the second option would be to make a motion to continue to review the possible grade discontinuance or full closure of the school.

The Calder School review demonstrated that consideration of grade discontinuance or school closure is not warranted at this time. The Board of Education made a motion to remove Calder School from review status; the school will remain in operation and the school review process is complete.

Fort Livingstone School will continue into the next stages of review to consider grade discontinuance or full closure. A motion was passed to indicate the aforementioned and now, as part of the process, the Board will look at gathering more information.

"We will be working with the Fort Livingstone School Review Committee to determine a date for a public meeting to be held in Pelly at the end of March," declares Bryan Cottenie. "Our Board wants to ensure we have all relevant information in making this critical decision. Talk of school closure is a very emotional time for a community and these discussions are not entered into lightly. As Board members, we take into account many factors according to both board and Ministry guidelines to ensure the future

viability of a school. No one has all the answers. We've reviewed the data many times and now want to hear from the community and the School Review Committee again to make sure we haven't missed anything."

Going forward, information will be made available in the community of Pelly, to parents and staff members as well as on our website at [www.gssd.ca](http://www.gssd.ca).

"Discussions surrounding possible school closure are always extremely difficult. As a board, we want to make sure we have listened and exhausted every avenue available to us to ensure quality education for students. Again, as I stated at the outset of this process, our number one interest is without a doubt making sure that the best future for students is the focus of this process," acknowledged Cottenie.

For further information, contact Mr. Dwayne Reeve, Director of Education, at 306-786-5500.

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~ MEDIA ADVISORY ~

**March 26, 2014**

**GSSD FOCUSES ON STUDENT WELL-BEING WITH INDOOR TRACK MEET**

The Good Spirit School Division will be hosting the sixth annual division-wide Standards Track Meet on March 31, April 1 and April 2 at the Gallagher Centre Flexi-Hall in Yorkton. Approximately 1500 students from 26 schools in Grades 4 through 6 will be participating in various indoor track and field events including 50 metre run, 600 metre run, high jump, long jump, shot put, and relays.

For the last 5 years, a group of dedicated teachers, administrators and retirees from all corners of the GSSD have come together to plan the Indoor Track Meet. Jason Trost, GSSD track committee chair states, "The Good Spirit School Division has made student's well-being a priority. If we truly want our children to grow and develop into well rounded citizens, we need to provide them with opportunities to become involved in extracurricular activities that promote physical, mental and social health. Our track meet does exactly that; it's designed for all students, not just elite athletes, and over the past 5 years we have seen children cheering each other on, trying their very best and celebrating their accomplishments."

Trost goes on to say that, "It's our hope to pique the student's interest in exercise and get them involved in a sports discipline. Hopefully this interest in athletics will carry on throughout their high school careers and even into adulthood. However, just as important, student well-being is increased when they experience success. Watch a child's face after they clear a high jump bar, win a sprint race or throw the shot further than they thought they could. It's the look on their face that tells us just what children are capable of in life."

The top 24 finishers in each event will be invited to attend the Showcase Event being held on Friday, April 4th at the Gallagher Centre Flexi-Hall. Trost explains that, "The Showcase Event is always fun. The energy of children is contagious. You can't help but be excited for the competitors when they experience success."

Please accept this as your invitation to attend both the Standards Track Meet (10:00 am to 2:00 pm each day of March 31, April 1 and April 2) as well as the Showcase Event (4:00 to 9:00 pm April 4) at the Gallagher Centre Flexi-Hall in Yorkton. **Please note: Students with yellow name tags at the event do not have permission to have pictures published.** If you need clarification, please approach any of the volunteers in attendance.

For further information, contact Mr. Jason Trost at 306-792-2080 or Mr. Alan Sharp, Superintendent of Schools at 306-786-5500.

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