



Good Spirit School Division No. 204

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MEDIA RELEASE

August 31, 2015

A NEW SCHOOL YEAR BRINGS MANY CHANGES

The Board of Education of the Good Spirit School Division is looking forward to the upcoming 2015-2016 school year with optimism and enthusiasm. The first day for staff was August 27th with students to start on Tuesday, September 1st.

The beginning of August saw a new Director of Education begin with the division. "I am excited in my new role as director with Good Spirit and looking forward to the upcoming school year," states Rhae-Ann Holoien. She goes on to say, "I am fortunate to work with a Board of Education and staff members that are truly enthusiastic about working to ensure students excel. Even in my short time here, it already feels like home and I know will be an excellent environment for us to collaborate in actualizing goals that see us all grow together."

The Good Spirit School Division strategic plan is our guiding force in all we do, specifically in four main focus areas including student and family well-being, internal processes, people capacity and financial stewardship. "We have done a tremendous amount of work these past few weeks working to refine and refocus our goals," comments Mrs. Holoien. "As we head into the fourth year of the five year strategic plan, and with the introduction last year of the provincial Education Sector Strategic Plan, we wanted to do a review to make sure we are focused and working together to achieve results. We are particularly focusing on how work plans are targeted to reach division goals."

Within the student and family focus area, division goals have been established including:

- By June 2020, at least 85% of GSSD students will read at or above grade level by the end of Grade 3.
- By June 2020, at least 85% of GSSD students will read at or above grade level by the end of Grade 5.
- By June 2020, at least 80% of GSSD students in Grades 6 to 8 will read at or above grade level.
- By June 2020, at least 80% of GSSD students in Grades 1 to 5 will be at or above grade level in math.
- By June 2020, children aged 0-6 within GSSD will be supported in their development to ensure that 95% of students exiting Kindergarten are ready for learning in the primary grades.

- By June 2020, GSSD will achieve a three-year graduation rate of 85%.
- By June 2020, collaboration between First Nation Metis (FNM) and non-FNM will result in significant improvement in FNM student engagement and will increase three-year graduation rates to 65%.
- By June 2018, all GSSD teaching staff will use the Indicators of Responsive Teaching to reflect on their teaching practices and set professional growth plan goals in target areas.

“Results do not happen overnight and department work plans will be instrumental in ensuring a structured approach to goals for overall success,” concludes Mrs. Holoien.

The Good Spirit School Division invested in a massive technology overhaul this past summer with the last division-wide upgrade occurring in the fall of 2011. “After a year of careful planning and gaining an understanding of our technology needs today and into the next few years, the GSSD Technology Services Department worked in conjunction with IBM and MicroAge Regina to complete this project in two short months,” states Darran Teneycke, Superintendent of Education and supervisor of the technology department. “Engaging our students with current and appropriate learning tools are cornerstones of this project.” To meet this demand, GSSD has deployed over 1000 ChromeBooks, light-weight laptops that use the Google Chrome operating system, and 500 more iPads to bring the GSSD total to just over 1,100 iPads deployed. Staff laptops were also upgraded. Supporting this new, mobile-rich environment led GSSD to invest in a more robust infrastructure. New wireless access points were installed to accommodate the numbers of wireless devices now deployed in our schools. Additional investments were made in networking with new switches and firewalls added to each school. Finally, the GSSD Data Centre was upgraded with additional file storage capacity added to support the growing need for data storage and retrieval.

Mr. Teneycke points out that, “The updated technology, combined with an increase in teacher professional development, will provide students in GSSD with second to none access to technology to support student learning in the classroom. Throughout the process, we continually circled back to the fact that any investment in technology must work with our strategic plan and ultimately improve student achievement.”

The Good Spirit School Division strives to provide safe, caring, welcoming schools for children. Our primary objective is to foster a respectful learning environment to achieve student success and well-being in each of our 29 public schools throughout East-Central Saskatchewan. Our values of belonging, respect, responsibility, learning and nurturing ensures “Students Come First”. Visit us at www.gssd.ca; contact 306-786-5500 or 1-866-390-0773.

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