

November 2020 Regular and Organization Meeting

The regular meeting of the Board for November 2020 took place via Zoom on Thursday, November 19, 2020. All Trustees were in attendance at this month's meeting: Bob Simpson, Chairperson, Jaime Johnson, Vice Chairperson, Trustees Jade Anderson, Chris Balyski, Gilda Dokuchie, Gord Gendur, Shannon Leson, Jan Morrison, Lois Smandych, Nicole Pohl and Steve Variyan. Division office staff in attendance included Assistant to the Director Heather Morris, Director of Education/CEO Quintin Robertson, Chief Financial Officer Keith Gervais and Deputy Director of Education Donna Kriger.

Accountability Report

Audited Financial Statement for 2019-20

Chief Financial Officer, Keith Gervais, presented the 2019-20 Audited Financial statement to the Board of Education, thus achieving the following Quality Indicators (QIs):

- QI 3.1 - Generally accepted accounting practices are being followed
- QI 3.2 - Adequate internal financial controls exist and are being followed
- QI 3.3 - All collective agreements and contracts are being administered and interpreted so staff and contracted personnel are being paid appropriately and appropriate deductions are being made
- QI 3.5 - Board is informed annually about incurred liabilities and immediately regarding pending litigation

The audit was completed by Gary Kreklewich of Miller Moar Grodecki Kreklewich & Chorney. The opinion of the audit indicates the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Good Spirit School Division No. 204 as at August 31, 2020 and the results of its operations and accumulated surplus from operations, changes in net financial assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

The verbal report from the auditor indicated that the audit went very smooth and staff were prepared and enjoyable to work with.

All reports were filed on time with the Ministry of Education.

To view the accountability reports in their entirety, visit gssd.ca > Board > Board Meetings > 2020 11 19 Regular Board Meeting > [Accountability Report Audited Financial Statement](#).

Advocacy Session

The GSSD Board of Education hosted representatives from CUPE 4784, DPEA, and LINC for an annual Advocacy Session. It has become a practice of the Board to hear the voice of employee groups across the division to determine what things are working well and those areas that might require further attention or improvements.

Karla Sastaunik, President of the CUPE 4784 local, began the session by sharing her appreciation for the work done at the division level during the COVID-19 pandemic. Karla referenced her conversations with CUPE members from across the province and country and expressed her gratefulness for the communication and involvement GSSD has shown to her and her members regarding the planning around the pandemic. Karla highlighted the excellent relationship that CUPE 4784 has with the leadership team of GSSD and that in many ways this was unique from other CUPE locals and their employer. Karla credited the extra-ordinary amount of work invested by Director Quintin Robertson, Assistant to

the Director, Heather Morris and other members of the senior leadership team in keeping employees safe and in ensuring timely communication is shared across the school division.

Susan Avramenko, representing the Deer Park Employees Association (DPEA), shared some of the challenges that bus drivers were experiencing regarding the failure to use proper personnel protective equipment (PPE) by a small percentage of the student ridership. Director Quintin Robertson and the Board of Education expressed their commitment to ensuring that PPE was being worn consistently and properly to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission to both students and drivers.

Good Spirit Teachers Association (GSTA) President, Stuart Wilson, and LINC Chair, Ron Lutz, shared their appreciation for the measures put in place to ensure the safety of staff and students in schools. Stuart and Ron both identified that teachers are at times struggling with balancing the additional responsibilities and stresses that accompany life during a pandemic. Ron Lutz would have brought forth concerns regarding the many newly introduced technology platforms during the 2020-21 school year and asked that consideration be given to providing teachers with additional support with mastering the technology. Both Stuart and Ron expressed their genuine appreciation to Director Quintin Robertson, his leadership team and the Board of Education for the planning and communication that employees across the division have experienced since the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

New Business

2019-20 Annual Report

Assistant to the Director, Heather Morris, shared with Trustees that the first draft of the non-financial portion of the 2019-20 Annual Report was submitted to the Ministry for review on October 19, 2020. Feedback from the Ministry indicated that adjustments to the report were relatively minor therefore, a second review of the draft was not required. The annual report will be submitted and reviewed again once the completed financial reporting sections are included. The approved report will be submitted to the Ministry for presentation in the legislature. Morris indicated that once approved at the provincial level, the report will be posted on the GSSD website.

Policy 2 Appendix A Annual Work Plan

Director of Education/CEO, Quintin Robertson, presented the 2020-21 Annual Work Plan to the Board. The Annual Work Plan is used to guide the functioning of the Board.

To view the Board approved, Board of Education Annual Work Plan, visit gssd.ca > Board > Board Policy Handbook > [Policy 2 Appendix A Annual Work Plan](#).

Central Office Closure

The Board of Education unanimously agreed to close the Good Spirit Administration Office during Christmas. The Good Spirit Education Complex will be closed at noon on December 24, 2020 and will reopen on January 4, 2021. Director/CEO Robertson shared his gratitude on behalf of the employees working at the Good Spirit Education Complex for the Board's generosity.

Audited Financial Statements and Management Letter

CEO Gervais shared that the audited financial statements have been submitted to the Ministry for final review and are pending minor changes to formatting. Gervais provided a detailed report highlighting the financial position of the school division and bringing clarity to the complex statement.

The Board of Education passed the motion to receive and approve the Management Letter and Audited Financial Statements for the year ending August 31, 2020 pending minor changes made after Ministry of Education and Finance format review and approval. In doing so, Director/CEO Robertson fulfilled the following Quality Indicators as listed in the

Director/CEO Evaluation:

QI 3.1 Generally accepted accounting practices are being followed

QI 3.2 Adequate internal financial controls exist and are being followed

QI 3.3 All collective agreements and contracts are being administered and interpreted so staff and contracted personnel are being paid appropriately and appropriate deductions are being made

QI 3.5 Board is informed annually about incurred liabilities and immediately regarding pending litigation

Upon receipt of the final audited financial statements, the documents will be made available on the GSSD website.

Organizational Meeting

The Board of Education conducted its organizational meeting for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year. Bob Simpson was named Board Chairperson and Jaime Johnson was named Board Vice-Chair through acclamation. Committees of the Board were also determined, based on the interests and strengths of the trustees. Board indemnities and remuneration were discussed and will remain unchanged for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year.

Director's Report

Board Policy Review

Director/CEO Robertson engaged the Board in a review of [Policy 2 Role of the Board](#) and [Policy 3 Role of the Board Member](#). The Director and Board of Education as part of their annual work plan review all eighteen policies and appendices each year, making revisions to these policies as the Board sees fit.

Saskatchewan School Board Association 2020 Fall Assembly

The Board of Education will virtually participate in the Saskatchewan School Board Association (SSBA) AGM which is being held on November 25-26, 2020. Board members have committed to reviewing all resolutions and position statements prior to the Annual General Meeting. Director/CEO Robertson will join the Board of Education in attending Fall Assembly through a virtual format.

Service Recognition and Sea Star Awards

The Board of Education engaged in discussion regarding the presentation and awarding of the GSSD annual service recognition awards and Sea Star awards. The Board expressed their appreciation for the many years of service, the outstanding accomplishments and dedicated service which GSSD employees have provided the division with. The annual event is one of several ways in which the GSSD Board of Education celebrates the work and dedication of its employees.

Education Week

A reminder that November 22-28, 2020, is Education Week in Saskatchewan and this year's theme is *Connecting and Learning in New Ways* with November 23, 2020 being designated as Bus Driver Appreciation Day. Celebrations highlighting the collaboration that takes place among stakeholder groups will occur across Good Spirit during this week.

Governance Training

As means of committing to function as a healthy governance board, the GSSD Board of Education will participate in governance training led by Ben Grebinski, Executive Director of the League of Educational Administrators Directors and Superintendents (LEADS). Ben has served education in the province of Saskatchewan in numerous roles and brings with him a wealth of knowledge that will assist the GSSD Board of Trustees to continue increasing its organizational capacity.

Financial Update

Chief Financial Officer, Keith Gervais, presented the Board of Education with an updated financial report the current operational year 2020-21.

Utilizing GSSD Communiques with SCCs

Director/CEO Robertson led the Board of Education through a discussion regarding the six main roles of School Community Councils (SCC). Robertson highlighted that:

- SCCs should have a community profile that describes the economic, social and health conditions of their community as well as identifies the community's needs and aspirations related to children and youth learning and well-being.
- SCCs are to take part in the development of School Level Plans by working with the principal and staff to assess the needs of the school, identify goals, create an action plan with supports, submit the plan to the Board for approval and evaluate its effectiveness throughout the school year.
- SCCs can offer the Board of Education advice that falls into three broad categories:
 - Division-wide governing policy, operational procedure, and decisions including the school division's strategic plan, budget, and other specific initiatives;
 - Educational programming delivery and on religious observances and language of instruction within the school; and,
 - The formation, structure, and operations of the SCC.
- The central purpose of SCCs is to encourage and support the involvement of parents and community as partners to improve student learning and well-being.
- SCCs are an important part of school division governance and a critical connecting link between the school and community.
- SCCs are responsible for their own growth and improvement.

Robertson concluded his discussion by sharing the many formats that GSSD has used to communicate with School Community Councils, endeavoring to keep them apprised of the ever-evolving business within the division.

GSSD Remote Learning

Donna Kriger, Deputy Director of Education, updated the Board on the GSSD Distance Learning School which was created as a response to families requesting online learning opportunities during the pandemic. To date approximately 380 students are enrolled in the Kindergarten – Grade 12 Distance Learning School. Aside from dedicating the services of 18 full time equivalent teachers to the remote students, additional supports such as Educational Assistants, an Administrative Assistant, an Interventionist, School Counselor, and Speech Pathologist time have been reassigned to the online school. Val Ruf (Student Services Coordinator), Mark Forsythe (Superintendent of Education) and Donna Kriger (Deputy Director) oversee the services provided and the day to day operations of the school.

Edsby and MySchool Sask

Heather Morris, Assistant to the Director, provided background and an update regarding MySchoolSask (MSS) and Edsby, two newly implemented platforms to manage student information and reporting of grades and assessments.

Morris provided the Board with an explanation of what each platform is capable of accomplishing, the strengths, weaknesses and complexities of each. Morris highlighted the enormous amount of work which was done by numerous members of the technology team to move the project forward. Though the implementation of the platforms has brought some challenges, Morris is confident that they will bring overall improvement to the security necessary for housing student information, for reporting student grades and increasing communication through an improved parent portal.

Transportation Scan Cards

The Board of Education was given an update regarding the implementation of a pilot project which will see eight GSSD buses use student scan cards to track ridership in various locations across the division. The scan card project will enable the Transportation Department to track when and where students board and disembark buses. The project will allow the division to make informed decisions regarding out of attendance area requests, courtesy ridership and future fleet requirements. Most importantly, the real-time data provided by the scan cards would supply important information in the event of a lost child or bus accident.

Communication will be forthcoming to families who will be impacted by the new technology. Cards will be distributed to student riders through the school in which they attend.

Upcoming Important Dates

November 22-28, 2020	Education Week – <i>Connecting and Learning in New Ways</i>
November 23, 2020	School Bus Driver Appreciation Day
November 25-26, 2020	SSBA Fall Assembly – Via Zoom; Location TBD
November 27, 2020	Board Chairs Council, 10 am – 12 pm
December 4, 2020	Governance Training, Location TBD
December 17, 2020	Regular Board Meeting
January 27, 2021	Family Literacy Day
January 27, 2021	International Holocaust Remembrance Day
January 28, 2021	Regular Board Meeting
February 2021	Aboriginal Story Telling Month
February 16, 2021	Public Section Executive Meeting 2:00 pm-3:30pm Teleconference
March 4, 2021	Regular Board Meeting
April 1, 2021	Regular Board Meeting
April 15, 2021	Public Section Executive Meeting, Saskatoon
April 15 & 16, 2021	SSBA Spring Assembly, Saskatoon
May 6, 2021	Regular Board Meeting
May 27, 2021	Special Board Meeting
June 3 & 4, 2021	Public Section General Meeting and PD Event, Travelodge, Saskatoon
June 17, 2021	Regular Board Meeting
August 19, 2021	Regular Board Meeting

Upcoming Board Meetings: December 17, January 28, March 4, April 1, May 6, May 27 (Special Meeting), June 17, August 18 (Evaluation & Special Meeting), August 19.

Location: Zoom

To review Board Policy 7 Board Operations, visit gssd.ca > Board > Policy Handbook > [Board Operations](#)

Contact Us

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Visit us online at
www.gssd.ca

*Building Strong Foundations to
Create Bright Futures*

Submissions & Feedback

To submit photos or stories regarding the Board of Education or an individual Trustee in your school community, please contact Heather.Morris@gssd.ca.

For more information related to the
Board of Education, visit our website at
gssd.ca > [Board](#)