

June 2021 Regular Meeting

The regular meeting of the Board for June 2021 took place via Zoom on Thursday, June 17, 2021. Trustees who were in attendance included: Chairperson Bob Simpson, Vice Chairperson Jaime Johnson, Trustees Jade Anderson, Chris Balyski, Shannon Leson, Jan Morrison, Lois Smandych, Nicole Pohl and Steve Variyan. Division office staff in attendance included Director of Education/CEO Quintin Robertson, Chief Financial Officer Keith Gervais, and Assistant to the Director Heather Morris.

The Board Chair, Mr. Bob Simpson, delayed the start of the meeting to bring **thanks and acknowledgment** on behalf of the Board. Mr. Simpson began his acknowledgment by thanking the bus drivers and caretakers for their care and diligence this year. He went on by mentioning school-based educational assistants, administrative assistants, and executive assistants. Mr. Simpson referenced the division office staff, professional service providers, teachers, administrators, and senior leadership staff. He concluded his statement by acknowledging that the last 15 months have been highly challenging and that the love and sacrifices displayed by all GSSD staff ensured learning without limits... achievement for all.

Accountability Report

Transportation Report

During the Accountability Report Transportation Manager, Ryan Hall, highlighted information pertaining to tenders, the mechanics, routing, and partnerships.

The following tender information was shared by Hall:

- buses from the 2020 tender were received in mid-December and were ready for road use after the Christmas break;
- eight Thomas buses were ordered in late March and are expected to arrive in late August; and,
- fleet vehicles which were ordered in December arrived June 9.



The Transportation Department is analyzing the potential of using buses fueled by gasoline; preliminary talks with bus dealers and other school divisions are underway.

GSSD has been operating with the full complement of three employees in each bus garage for over six months. The mechanics have all taken part in an optional course facilitated by Auto Electric. In collaboration with Warner Industries and Cummins, the mechanics will begin several online courses and, when permitted, some in-person training. In April, the Yorkton Bus Garage welcomed a Shop Helper to their team. The new employee is a student who attends the Yorkton Regional High School; he has the opportunity to earn high school credits, apprenticeship trade credits, and gets paid while working. A Shop Helper will join the Melville Bus Garage team later in June. Since starting as the Yorkton Shop Foreman in November of 2020, Kelly Becker has shown initiative in looking at cost saving measures including:

- contacting vendors to question pricing;
- looking at more bulk orders of product;
- using parts from buses that will be auctioned off; and,
- going to great lengths to ensure work is completed at the Yorkton bus garage whenever possible.

Hall reported that there are 2,890 students transported by GSSD, 203 CTTCS students and 2,687 GSSD students, with an average ride time of 32 minutes. There is a decrease this year due to students attending the Digital Learning School and not utilizing bus transportation due to the pandemic. There are six urban routes and 94 rural routes driven daily. Fun

fact ---- GSSD buses travel 19,903 km! Most of the 2021-22 routes are constructed; information will be sent to the schools for the drivers to pick up before the end of June.

Hall acknowledged and shared his appreciation for the Technology, Payroll and Facilities departments. The Technology Department provides support with BusPlanner Web and BusPlanner Workflow on forms and attendance areas. They are always quick to assist the bus drivers with phone and password issues. The Payroll Department has improved the forms which are used for route summary and sub time sheets. The Facilities Department contributes to truck parts and products discussion and the two departments constructively collaborated when looking for usable space during the phase 2 construction.

To read the Accountability Report, visit gssd.ca > [Board](#) > [Board Meetings](#) > [2021 06 17](#) > [Accountability Report – Transportation](#).

Board Development

Distance Learning / Blended Learning

When the COVID-19 pandemic became a reality, GSSD quickly instituted a Kindergarten to Grade 9 Digital Learning School (DLS). Distance learning courses for students in Grades 10-12 have been offered previously. Susan Drader, Principal for Kindergarten to Grade 9, and Thad Swidzinski, Principal for Grade 10-12, presented the Board Development on Distance Learning and Blended Learning.

Blended Learning is an approach that combines online educational materials and opportunities for interaction online with a traditional face-to-face classroom. Drader and Swidzinski shared that prior to the pandemic, a lot of GSSD students had experience with the blended learning approach because many classroom teachers had already implemented that concept into their classroom structure. During the pandemic, teachers were able to keep students on track with their learning when their school or classroom was shut down due to a COVID-19 outbreak. The blended learning and online platforms are a definite benefit as students and parents can view their lesson, pause the lesson, and rewind the lesson when they need.

Drader and Swidzinski find that distance learning is beneficial to some students because they have flexibility to their day. Students who struggle with anxiety found DLS a positive, engaging experience. During the 2020-21 school year, GSSD had 315 students enrolled “full time” in remote/distance learning across the Kindergarten to Grade 9 classes. Over 135 Kindergarten to Grade 9 students transitioned back to a physical school throughout the year with an equal number transitioning into online. Swidzinski was pleased to share that there are 22 students graduating from DLS this year.

Next year GSSD will:

- Offer Grade 1-9 online learning with three teachers providing the instruction across these grade bands.
- Online teachers will be teaching from physical schools and attached to the staffing for that school.
- High school courses will once again be offered through the Distributed Learning model following a traditional timetable.
- Registration for high school courses is open and will remain open through the entire 2021-22 school year. To date, 20 students are already registered for full time distance learning for the upcoming school year.

The Board of Education and Senior Leadership would like to extend a huge thank you to Thad, Sue and all of the Coaches and Coordinators for responding so quickly in the fall and for providing excellent education to the students throughout the year.

To read more information on Distance Learning and Blended Learning, visit gssd.ca > [Board](#) > [Board Meetings](#) > [2021 06 17](#) > [Board Development – Distance Learning / Blended Learning](#).



Advocacy

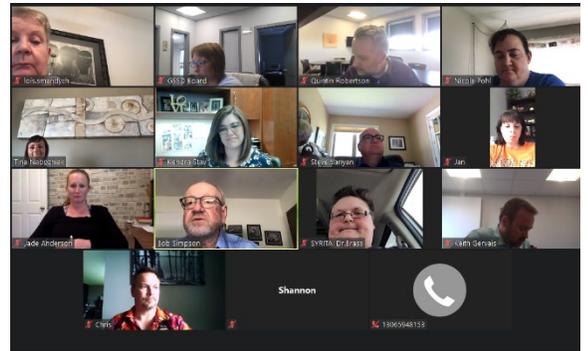
GSSD School Community Councils

The Board and Senior Leadership were pleased to have three School Community Council (SCC) members from across the Division join the meeting for an advocacy session. Kendra Stav from Davison School in Melville, Syrita Emery from Dr. Brass School in Yorkton, and Tina Nabozniak from Saltcoats School shared what their experiences have been like in the school and community during the 2020-21 school year, as we have lived through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Quintin Robertson, Director of Education/CEO, invited Kendra, Syrita and Tina to share some positive experiences or celebrations that occurred during the last 16 months. They shared that when their class or school was required to transition to remote instruction due to a positive case of COVID-19 in the school, the teachers/staff made the experience positive. Robertson would have shared that *“This experience showcased how amazing and resilient teachers and staff are.”* The SCCs appreciated that different formats of instruction were provided, dependent on the grade level, for example: students in the lower grade levels were given packages while the older grade levels used the online platforms. The Division was complimented on the quick response to the disinfecting issue experienced early in the fall of 2020. The SCCs found that the transparency of the Division was comforting and reassuring during this difficult time.

When Robertson asked what they found to be most challenging, the three unanimously agreed that the SCCs and their students all miss the social interactions and extra-curricular activities which the pandemic has prevented. At times, when the Division was notified of a positive case of COVID-19 in a school, the communication that a class or school was moving to remote was shared late in the evening therefore, it was challenging to find childcare.

In closing, Director Robertson thanked the SCC members for “fighting the good fight along with the Division”.



Director’s Report

Board Policy Review

As part of the Board of Education Annual Work Plan, Trustees reviewed Policies 15, 16, 17 and 18. Some minor technical edits occurred in Policy 15 and 16.

To access the Board Policy Handbook, visit gssd.ca > [Board](#) > [Board Policy Handbook](#).

Financial Update

Chief Financial Officer, Keith Gervais, informed the Board that due to restrictions associated with the pandemic, GSSD has actualized savings in the areas such as professional development, travel expenses, and substitute costs. Substitute caretaker costs is an area which exceeded budget. Revenues associated to facility rentals are expected to be under budget.

Scan Card Update

Ryan Hall reported that in January 2021, eight GSSD buses staggered the implementation of the scan cards. Five rural routes have operated very well, providing a lot of data, and only having minor inconveniences, which are expected with any technology. The two urban routes (one each in Yorkton and Melville) are showing the student scan data accurately. Additional testing will occur in July and August, when all buses are at the garages. The project has allowed the transportation department to identify unregistered urban students, resulting in increased funding for GSSD.

Hall further reported the following information regarding the Electronic Verified Inspection Reporting (EVIR):

- Bus circle checks are completed daily with the tablets, documenting any defects.

- Bus garages are able to view defects and edit them as they are dealt with, marking them as completed. When the driver performs the next inspection, they can see the defects that have been fixed since the previous inspection.
- When a problem on the bus develops and enables a code to illuminate the check engine light, the system sends an email to the transportation department. This allows the shop to know which code is shown and potentially diagnose the problem without the need to have the bus present.

August Special Board Meeting

The Board of education passed a motion to hold a special board meeting on August 18, 2021 at 4:00 pm to review the Director/CEO Evaluation and the Board Self-Evaluation.

Upcoming Important Dates

June 18, 2021	Sturgis Composite Graduation
June 21, 2021	Dr. Brass School Grade 8 Farewell, 7:00 pm
June 21 & 22, 2021	Victoria School Grade 4 Farewell, pre-recorded video for staff and families
June 22, 2021	SCC Zoom Meeting, 6:45pm
June 24, 2021	Invermay School Kindergarten Graduation, 10 am
June 24, 2021	Miller School Kindergarten Graduation
June 25, 2021	GSSD Virtual Retirement Banquet
June 25, 2021	Esterhazy High School Graduation 7:00 pm
June 25, 2021	Miller School Grade 4 Transition
June 25, 2021	Preeceville School Graduation
June 25, 2021	Esterhazy Grade 12 Grad Diploma Pick up and Pictures
June 28, 2021	Invermay School Graduation
June 29, 2021	Melville Comprehensive School Graduation
June 29, 2021	Yorkton Regional High School Graduation – Drive-Thru
June 29, 2021	Canora Composite School Graduation
June 29, 2021	Kamsack Comprehensive Institute Graduation
June 30, 2021	Churchbridge Public School Graduation
July 1, 2021	Canada Day
July 7-9, 2021	CSBA Equity and Inclusion Conference 2021
August 2, 2021	Saskatchewan Day
August 18, 2021	Director/CEO Evaluation, 9 am – 12:30 pm
August 18, 2021	Board of Education Evaluation, 1-4 pm
August 18, 2021	Special Board Meeting, 4-4:30 pm
August 19, 2021	Regular Board Meeting (Organizational Meeting)

Upcoming Board Meetings: August 18 (Evaluation & Special Meeting), August 19.

Location: Zoom

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

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](#)

Contact Us

Good Spirit School Division
#204

Phone: (306)786-5500

Visit us online at

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Create Bright Futures*