

## MINUTES

### THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF PALLISER SCHOOL DIVISION

#### REGULAR MEETING

BT20241210

DATE: December 10, 2024

9:00 a.m. - Palliser Meeting Room B

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**Trustees in Attendance:** Lorelei Bexte, Chair  
Tony Montina, Vice Chair  
Debbie Laturus, Alternate Vice Chair (virtual)  
Mike Oliver, Trustee  
Sharon Rutledge, Trustee  
Louise Schmidt, Trustee

**Staff in Attendance:** Dave Driscoll, Superintendent  
Tom Hamer, Deputy Superintendent  
Cindy Rogers, Associate Superintendent, Business Services

**Recording:** Michelle Taylor

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Lorelei Bexte called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**2. ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA**

**Resolution # BT20241210 - 01**

**Moved by: Trustee Sharon Rutledge**

That the agenda be adopted as presented.

**CARRIED**

**3. MOVE TO *IN-CAMERA***

**Resolution # BT20241210 - 02**

**Moved by: Trustee Mike Oliver**

That the meeting moves *In-Camera*, at 9:01 a.m., pursuant to Section S64(3) of the Education Act, and Division 2 of Part 1 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter S-3 and amendments thereto, to discuss Privileged Information with regards to identified In-Camera Items.

**CARRIED**

**MOVE OUT OF *IN-CAMERA***

Chairperson: *Loulei E Bexte*

Secretary Treasurer: *[Signature]*

**Resolution #BT20240910 - 03**

**Moved by: Trustee Tony Montina**

That the meeting moves out of *in-camera* at 10:30 a.m.

**CARRIED**

**4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM *IN-CAMERA***

There was no business arising from in-camera.

**5. ADOPTION OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**Resolution # BT20241210 - 04**

**Moved by: Trustee Mike Oliver**

That the Minutes of the November 12, 2024, Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Palliser School Division be approved as presented.

**CARRIED**

**Resolution # BT20241210 - 05**

**Moved by: Trustee Tony Montina**

That the Minutes of the November 26, 2024, Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Palliser School Division be approved as presented.

**CARRIED**

**6. PRESENTATIONS**


**6.1. Early Learning Report**

Dr. Adam Browning, Director of Learning, and Sherri Rogerson, Coordinator of Learning, presented the Early Learning Report.

Palliser Early Learning Programs (ELPs) provide access to quality programming for primarily 3 and 4-year-old children focused on learning through play, language enrichment, emerging numeracy skills, development of social skills, and self-regulation. Palliser School Division currently has 235 students enrolled in its ELPs and supports ELPs at Barons School, Champion School, Coalhurst Elementary School, Dorothy Dalgliesh School, Huntsville School, Jennie Emery Elementary School, John Davidson School, Noble Central School, Sunnyside School, and Vulcan Prairieview Elementary School. A significant achievement is the recent establishment of an ELP at Champion School.

The Early Learning Program (ELP) team, including the Coordinator, Early Learning Educators (ELEs), and Educational Assistants (EAs), has collaboratively developed high-quality programming. This program is based on the Flight Framework and emphasizes play-based learning, literacy and numeracy skills, and integrated social-emotional development. The team is focused on the continuity of programming, committed to integrating the best and

Chairperson: 

Secretary Treasurer: 

most current practices and consistency across Palliser Early Learning Programs and providing clear direction for ELEs.

In February 2024, a review of ELPs was conducted to identify necessary revisions to program standards. This review process successfully increased the involvement and input of administrators and ELEs in shaping the future direction of ELPs. Professional learning opportunities, such as Early Childhood conferences, Summit days, and other relevant training, were highly valued by all ELEs and there has been a request for more support for professional learning opportunities. In response, collaborative efforts are ongoing to provide targeted professional learning. As well, speech-language pathologists and occupational therapists are now more frequently involved in providing professional learning support to staff.

The ELP team is actively working to increase program enrollment. This includes building and maintaining strong relationships with community organizations and utilizing local advertising strategies. The team continues to use the feedback from the February 2024 program review as a guiding principle. This ensures consistent implementation of the early learning vision and framework, addresses program fees, specialized programming, and clarifies the roles and responsibilities of ELEs, along with the support they receive from other school staff.

Overall enrollment in ELPs has remained relatively stable over the past four years but there has been a significant rise in the number of students with mild to moderate disabilities and those with severe disabilities or delays. Factors impacting enrollment include: 1). increased availability of private ELPs and licensed preschools and, 2). growing government subsidies for families opting for licensed preschool programs.

The criteria for students to qualify for extra support through Program Unit Funding (PUF) for severe language delays changed in the 2020-2021 school year. Despite this change, the number of students needing support continues to rise. To address this growing need, the division is providing increased support, working closely with the learning services team to prioritize the support provided by speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, and family-oriented programs.

Dr. Browning and Shari were thanked for their presentation and the tremendous efforts of all staff involved in the Early Learning Programs.

Chairperson:

*Louise E. Berte*

Secretary Treasurer:

*[Signature]*

**Resolution # BT20241210 - 06**

**Moved by: Trustee Sharon Rutledge**

That the Board receives the Early Learning Report as information.

**CARRIED**

6.2. International Student Program Report

Tom Hamer, Deputy Superintendent, presented the International Student Program Report.


The International Student Program allows domestic students to experience cultural diversity and enrichment within their classrooms and the opportunities offered for reciprocal exchanges offer unique and rewarding educational experiences. The program is also an opportunity for revenue generation for the division.

The 2023-2024 school year saw a planned reduction in the total number of international students as a result of feedback from principals regarding their capacity for student placements and the challenges with short-term students at the senior high level. Fewer short-term students were accepted in high school programs, and Spanish student enrollment was also reduced in full-year and semester programs. In the fall of 2024, Coalhurst High School enrollment was reduced due to limited capacity in their senior high classes.

To enhance support, a shared service model for the Homestay Coordinator role was established with Holy Spirit School Division. This full-time position provides increased support and follow-up for students. The Homestay Coordinator has improved communication between homestay families, students, and schools, leading to quicker issue resolution and minimized problems. Increased student check-ins allow for timely feedback collection and adjustments to ensure a rewarding experience. We continue to expand upon the activities we provide our international students and currently have a student participating in the dual credit program.

The International Student Program has built upon the success of its previous English Language Learning program by enhancing support for short-term Japanese students. An immersive program developed by the Home Education Teacher combining classroom learning with outdoor activities, effectively helps students adapt to the Canadian academic environment and develop practical language skills. The use of an English Language Assessment tool ensures accurate student placement in appropriate classes, providing them with the necessary support to succeed.

Chairperson: 

Secretary Treasurer: 

The program is pleased with the continued growth in applicants from around the world and this year has welcomed students from Chile, China, Colombia, Egypt, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Nigeria, the Philippines, Spain, Taiwan, the United States, and Uganda. This year to date, the program has hosted 86 students, including 39 full-year, semester, seven one-semester students, and 27 short-term students from Columbia and France. Two groups of Japanese students stayed for one month and another group will be hosted in mid-January. There continues to be increased interest from agencies to send students to Southern Alberta, leading to increased student numbers. This continues to expose Albertan students to a variety of cultures and is inspiring them to travel as well. Applications for the 2025-2026 school year are already underway, indicating continued growth in the program.

Palliser continues to be a member of the Alberta Association For Public Schools International (AAPS-i), a group of Alberta school divisions working collaboratively to provide information about education opportunities for international students within Alberta to recruitment agencies around the world. This year the association organized a recruitment mission to Frankfurt and Paris attended by agents from Germany, France and the Netherlands.

The International Program is experiencing an increase in opportunities for reciprocal student exchanges, with upcoming exchanges planned with Milan, Italy, and potential exchanges being explored in Argentina, Spain, and Sweden. A group of 5 students from Ri Baker and Kate Andrews High School participated in a spring 2024 exchange to Teruel, Spain, experiencing Holy Week celebrations and sampling traditional Spanish cuisine. One student even joined their host family on a trip to Northern Spain and France. The reciprocal exchange program has generated significant interest among Canadian students.

Tom was thanked for his presentation. The Board is excited to learn of the exciting opportunities for our students as International students are welcomed into our division.

**Resolution # BT20241210 - 07**

**Moved by: Trustee Tony Montina**

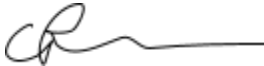
That the Board receives the International Student Report as information.

**CARRIED**

*The meeting paused for lunch from 12:04 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.*

**7. INFORMATION ITEMS**

Chairperson: 

Secretary Treasurer: 

7.1. **\*SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Attached to the agenda was the Superintendent's monthly activities report.

7.2. **\*DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT, LEARNING SERVICES REPORT**

Attached to the agenda was the Deputy Superintendent's monthly activities report.

7.3. **\*ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT, HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT**

Attached to the agenda was the Associate Superintendent's monthly activities report.

7.4. **\*ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT, BUSINESS SERVICES REPORT**

Attached to the agenda was the Associate Superintendent, Business Services' monthly activities report.

7.5. **\*TRUSTEE REPORTS**

Attached to the agenda were the Trustees' monthly activities reports.

7.6. **\*SCHOOL FIELD TRIP REPORT**

A list of national and international field trips planned in the division was included in the agenda.

**8. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**8.1. Policy Committee Report**

The Board reviews and revises its policies on a rotational basis which provides for all policies being reviewed at least once per term of office. The Policy Committee met on November 12, 2024, and reviewed four policies:

- Policy 1: Role of the Board of Trustees
- Policy 2: Role of the Superintendent
- Policy 3: Role of the Trustee, Board Chair
- Policy 9: Appeals and Hearings Regarding Teacher Matters

Policies 3 and 9 are ready to distribute for stakeholder information. The next meeting of the Policy Committee will take place in March 2025.


**Resolution # BT20241210 - 08**

**Moved by: Trustee Mike Oliver**

That the Board directs Administration to share the drafted amendments of Policy 3: Role of the Trustee, Board Chair and Policy 9: Appeals and Hearings Regarding Teacher Matters for stakeholder information.

**CARRIED**

Chairperson: 

Secretary Treasurer: 

- 8.2.** Appointment of Returning Officers for Election 2025  
There is a municipal election on October 20, 2025. In accordance with *The Local Authorities Election Act*, section 13(1), the elected authority may, by resolution, appoint a returning officer for the purposes of conducting elections under the Act. In accordance with Section 13(2.1), an elected authority must, by resolution, appoint a substitute returning officer.

**Resolution # BT20241210 - 09**

**Moved by: Trustee Louise Schmidt**

That Michelle Taylor, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, serves as returning officer for the October 20, 2025, Election.

**CARRIED**

**Resolution # BT20241210 - 10**


**Moved by: Trustee Debbie Laturus**

That Cindy Rogers, Associate Superintendent Business Services, serves as substitute returning officer for the October 20, 2025, Election.

**CARRIED**

- 8.3.** Review 3-Year Capital Plan  
Every year, Alberta school boards create a 3-Year Capital Plan which is a list of projects that are important to their communities. Annually, boards review the current plan with a consideration for changes or redirection for the next year's plan. The Board reviewed 2024-2027 Capital Plan and provided direction to Administration for the 2025-2028 Capital Plan. Administration will present the final draft of the new Capital Plan at the March Regular Meeting of the Board.

- 8.4.** Identifying Board Budget Priorities  
Palliser School Divisions' annual budget is driven by the goals and strategies of its 3-Year Plan while addressing the operational needs of the jurisdiction. The Board balances their fiduciary responsibility with the need to ensure Palliser students receive an excellent education in a safe and caring environment. The Board discussed budget priorities for the 2025-2026 school year. Administration requested that the Board's priorities from last year be sustained for the next school year. The budget priorities for 2024-2025 are accessible here:

 [Palliser School Divison Board of Trustees Priorities for the 2024-2025 budg...](#)

**Resolution # BT20241210 - 11**


**Moved by: Trustee Tony Montana**

That the Board continues to work with the budget priorities identified in the 2024-2025 school year for the 2025-2026 school year.

**CARRIED**

- 8.5.** Resignation of Superintendent

Chairperson: 

Secretary Treasurer: 

Dave Driscoll, Superintendent of Schools, has submitted his resignation to the Board. The Board is immensely grateful for Dave's leadership and unwavering support of students and staff during his time with the division. His commitment to student success, ensuring every student feels valued and supported, advocacy for inclusion and visionary leadership in respecting the cultural context of every school community have had a profound and positive impact on the lives of Palliser students, staff, and the entire community. The Board will begin the process of the search for a new Superintendent.

**Resolution # BT20241210 - 12**

**Moved by: Trustee Tony Montina**

That the Board accepts the resignation of Dave Driscoll, Superintendent of Schools, with his superintendency ceasing July 31, 2025.

**CARRIED**

**Resolution # BT20241210 - 13**

**Moved by: Trustee Mike Oliver**

That the Board engages the services of a consultant to lead the search for a new Superintendent of Schools.

**CARRIED**

**9. MOVE TO *IN-CAMERA***

**Resolution # BT20241210 - 14**

**Moved by: Trustee Sharon Rutledge**

That the meeting moves *In-Camera*, at 1:27 p.m., pursuant to Section S64(3) of the Education Act, and Division 2 of Part 1 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000, Chapter S-3 and amendments thereto, to discuss Privileged Information with regards to identified In-Camera Items.

**CARRIED**

**MOVE OUT OF *IN-CAMERA***

**Resolution # BT20241210 - 15**

**Moved by: Trustee Debbie Laturnus**

That the meeting moves out of *in-camera* at 2:15 p.m.

**CARRIED**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Chairperson: 

Secretary Treasurer: 