

**January 30, 2015  
Board Meeting  
Attachments**

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PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD

# HIGH SCHOOL REDESIGN

PRESENTED BY: TERRY LYNN COOK, PEDAGOGICAL SUPERVISOR

JANUARY 30, 2015

# Northland School Division

## High School Redesign

Informational session

T.L. Cook  
Jan 2015



**SCHOOL**

**LIFE**

Turn

TALK

and

Curriculum

Frames are mental structures that shape the way we see the world.



As a result, they shape the goals we seek, the plans we make, the way we act, and what counts as a good or bad outcomes of our actions.

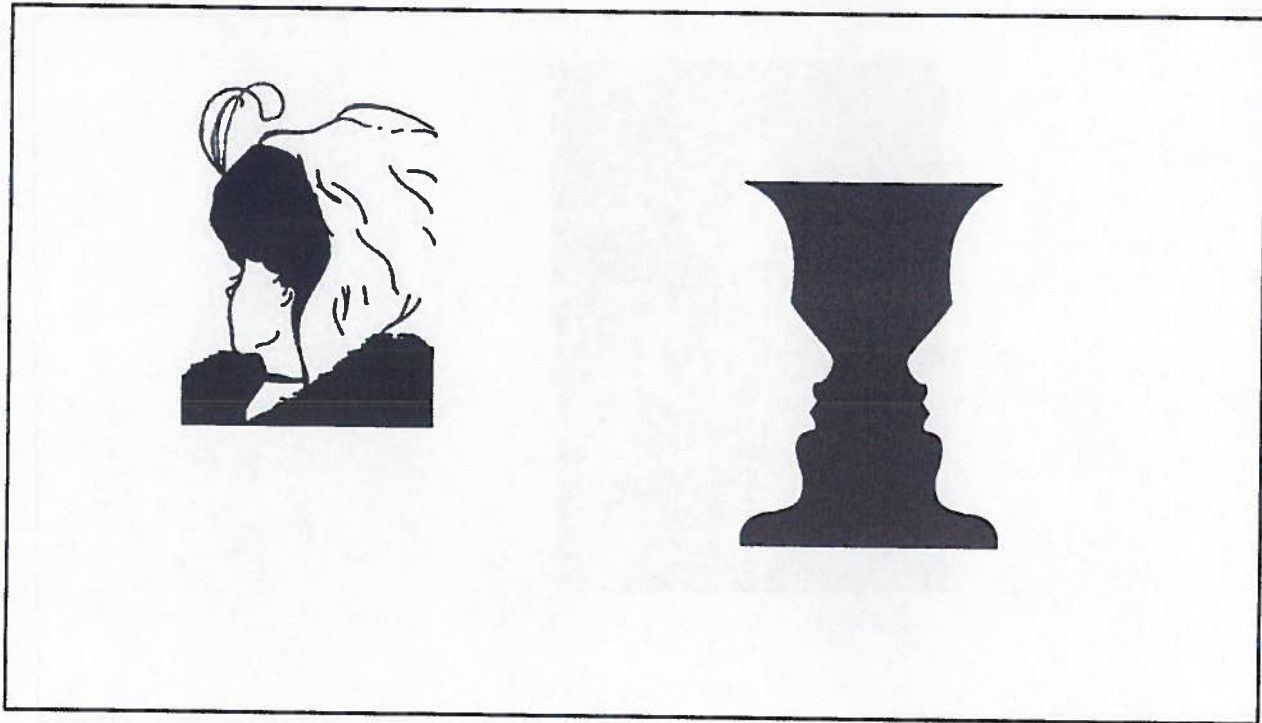
Curriculum

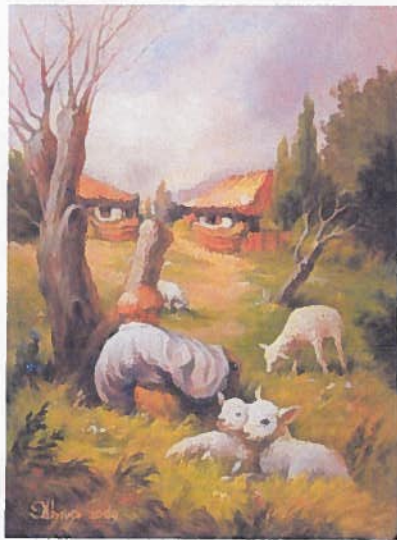
George Lakoff



PITTSBURGH ZOO  
& PPG AQUARIUM







At first people refuse to believe that a strange new thing can be done, then they see it can be done. Then it is done and all the world wonders why it was not done centuries ago.

Frances H. Burnett

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDZFcDGpL4U>

## In the beginning there was



Curriculum  
inspired by

Albertans  
said....

Alberta students have told us that they want to explore attitudes, skills and knowledge that are relevant to their world, and which will allow them to prosper and contribute meaningfully to our province's future.


Business and industry are telling us that they need students to enter the workforce with appropriate skills, including better literacy skills.

Albertans have told us that they expect students to develop the attitudes, skills and knowledge that will empower them to meet the challenges of the 21st century world after graduation.

Research on 21st century learners has shown that competencies must be central to the learning process, if students are to be competitive and successful in a global, knowledge-based society.


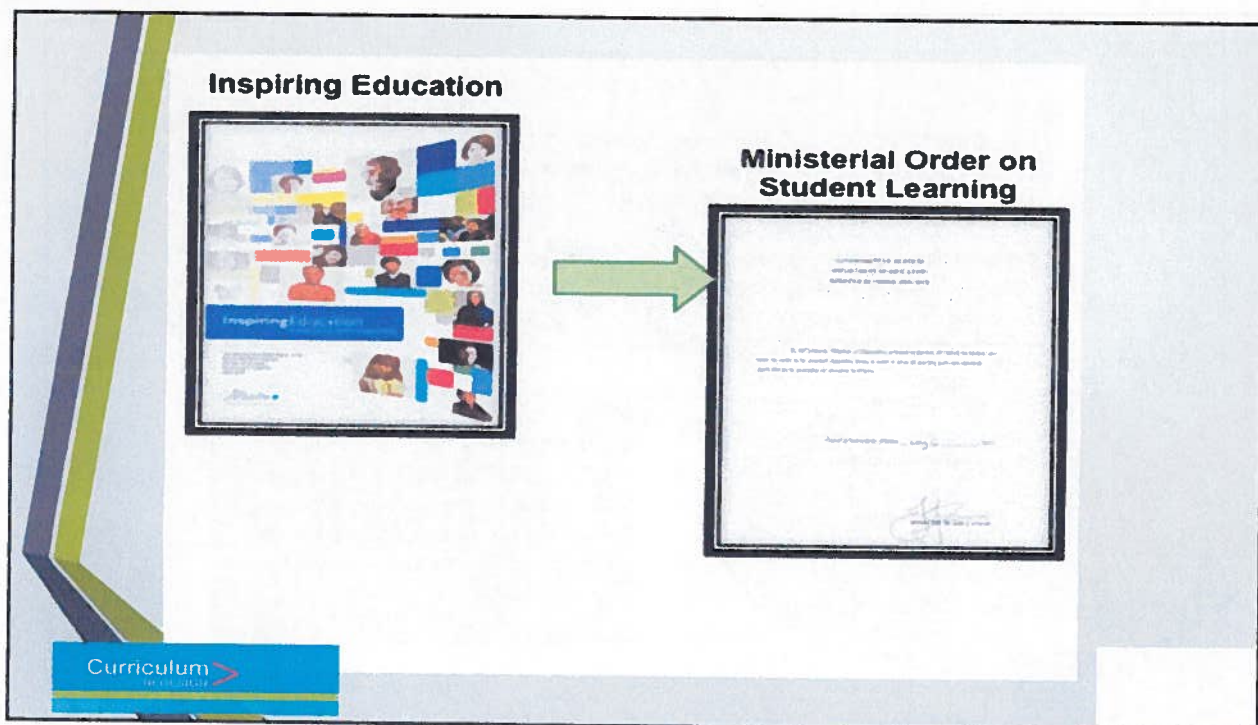
Curriculum  
inspired by





The vision of *Inspiring Education*:

All students are inspired to achieve success and fulfillment as engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit.





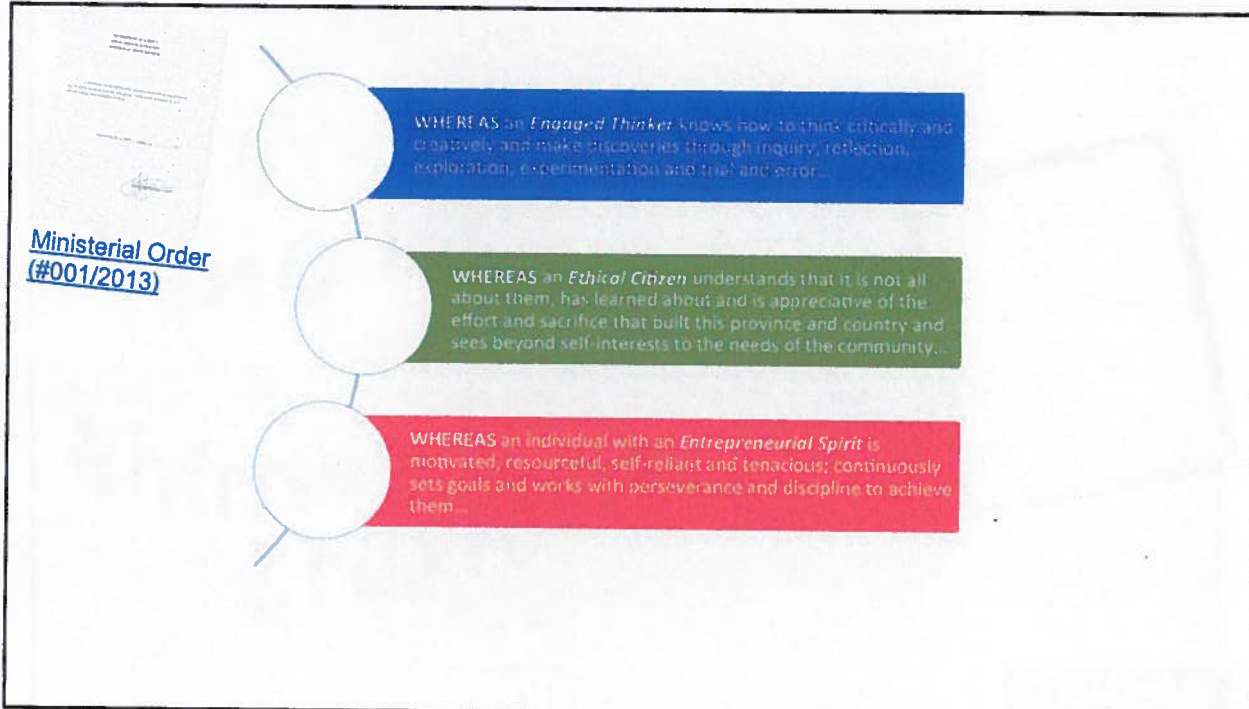
Curriculum &gt;

[illegible]

**think critically, adapt to change, life-long learner**

**build relationships, value diversity, assume responsibility**

**resourceful, self-reliant, confident to take risks**



Ministerial Order  
(#001/2013)

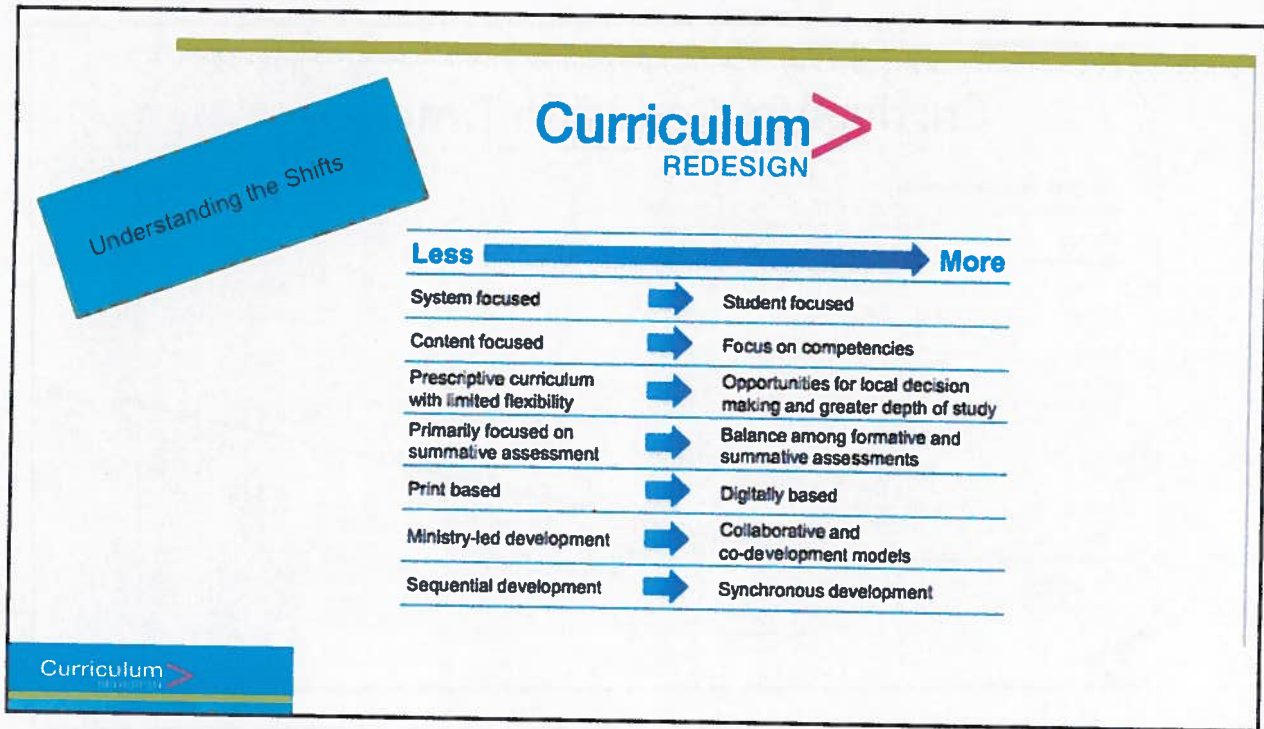
WHEREAS an *Engaged Thinker* knows how to think critically and creatively and make discoveries through inquiry, reflection, exploration, experimentation and trial and error...

WHEREAS an *Ethical Citizen* understands that it is not all about them, has learned about and is appreciative of the effort and sacrifice that built this province and country and sees beyond self-interests to the needs of the community...

WHEREAS an individual with an *Entrepreneurial Spirit* is motivated, resourceful, self-reliant and tenacious; continuously sets goals and works with perseverance and discipline to achieve them...


## Ministerial Order on Student Learning (page 2)

"....employ literacy and numeracy to construct and communicate meaning..."

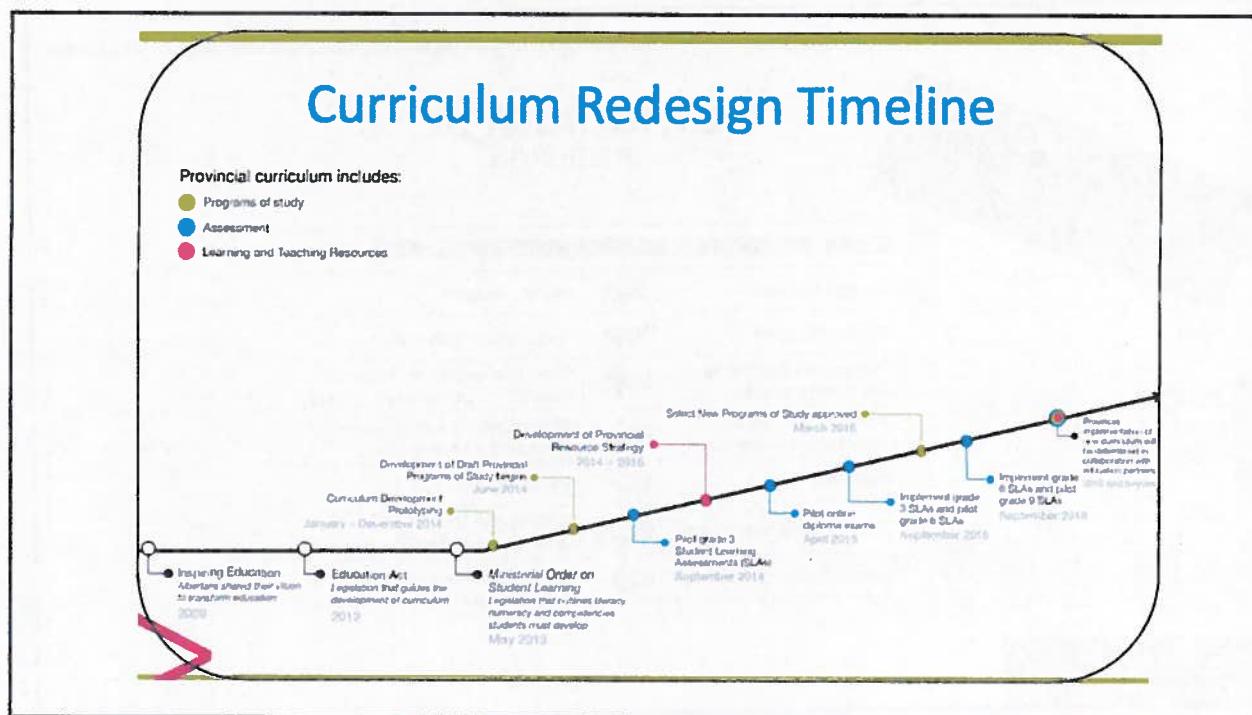


**Why cross-curricular competencies?**

- Growth of the whole child
- A student-centred approach
- Personalized learning
- Support teacher decision making
- Provide consistency across subject/discipline areas and in assessing and reporting







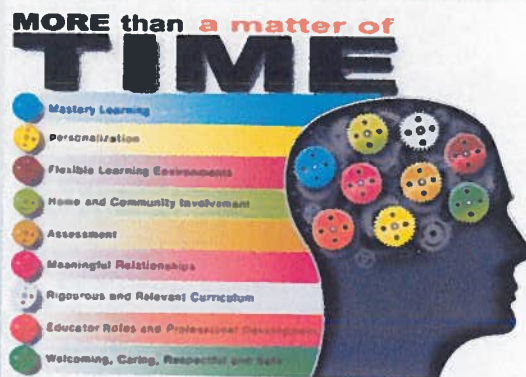
## High School Redesign: Moving Forward with High School Redesign



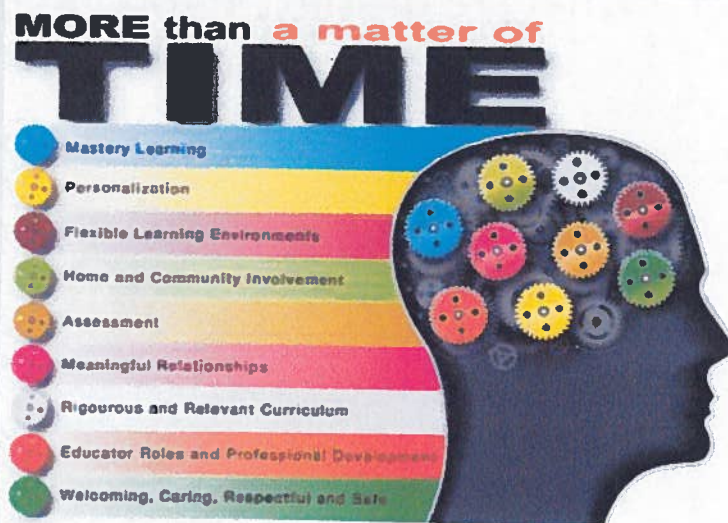
## High School Engagement A Student's 10 Expectations

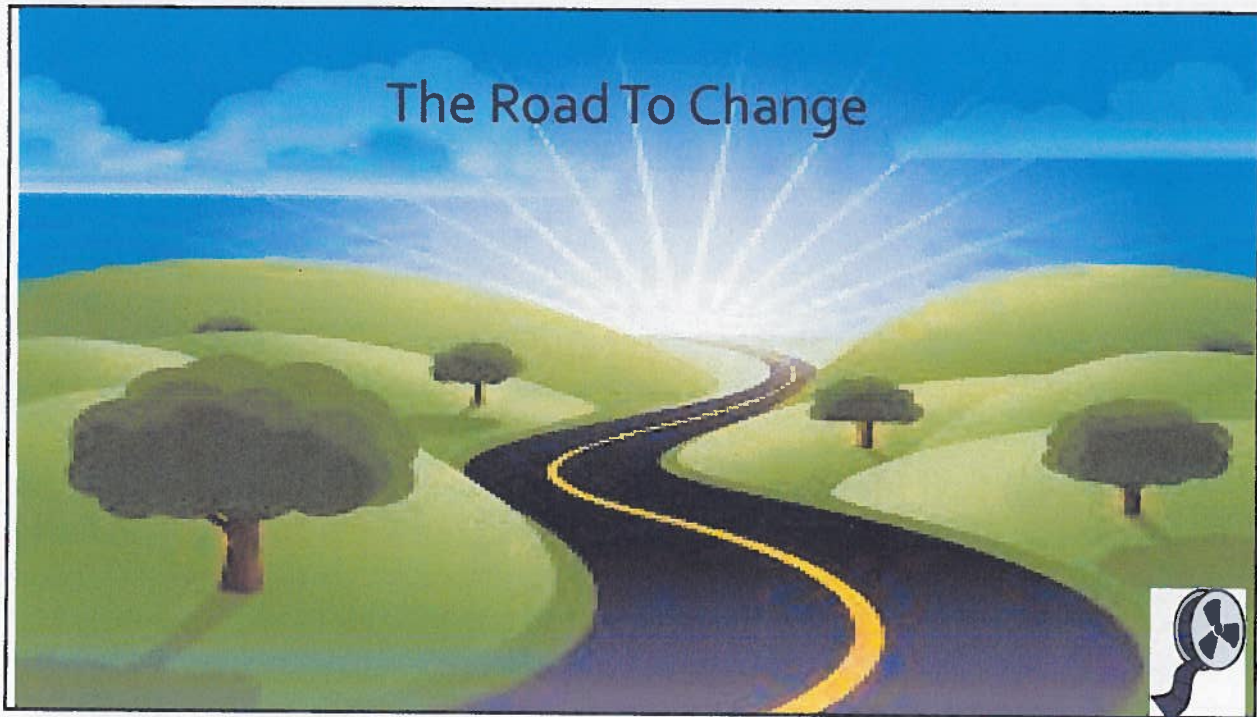
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kg6c-TGnSf4>

### Foundational Principles



### Foundational Principles Guiding High School Redesign





What are the next steps for your  
schools and your school  
jurisdiction?

**Draft Program**  
**Name: High**  
**School Redesign:**  
**“Making Every**  
**Day Count”**

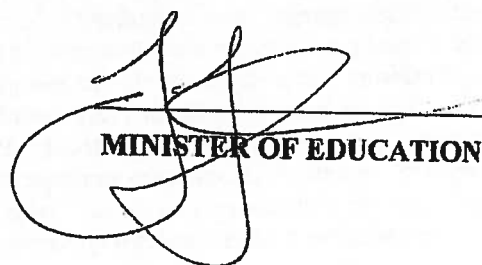




**GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
MINISTERIAL ORDER (#001/2013)**

I, Jeff Johnson, Minister of Education, pursuant to Section 39(1)(f) of the *School Act*, make the order in the attached Appendix, being an order to adopt or approve goals and standards applicable to the provision of education in Alberta.

Dated at Edmonton, Alberta May 6, 2013.



**MINISTER OF EDUCATION**

**APPENDIX**  
**SCHOOL ACT**  
**MINISTERIAL ORDER (#001/2013)**  
**STUDENT LEARNING**

**An Order to Adopt or Approve Goals and Standards Applicable to the  
Provision of Education in Alberta**

WHEREAS the fundamental goal of education in Alberta is to inspire all students to achieve success and fulfillment, and reach their full potential by developing the competencies of Engaged Thinkers and Ethical Citizens with an Entrepreneurial Spirit, who contribute to a strong and prosperous economy and society.

WHEREAS education in Alberta is based on the values of opportunity, fairness, citizenship, choice, diversity, and excellence.

WHEREAS the educational best interest of the child is the paramount consideration in making decisions about a child's education.

WHEREAS education in Alberta will be shaped by a greater emphasis on education than on the school; on the learner than on the system; on competencies than on content; on inquiry, discovery and the application of knowledge than on the dissemination of information; and on technology to support the creation and sharing of knowledge than on technology to support teaching.

WHEREAS competencies are interrelated sets of attitudes, skills and knowledge that are drawn upon and applied to a particular context for successful learning and living, are developed over time and through a set of related learner outcomes.

WHEREAS students will study subjects; learn reading, writing and mathematics; and focus more deeply on a curriculum that allows for more interdisciplinary learning through competencies that are explicit in all subjects.

WHEREAS an Engaged Thinker knows how to think critically and creatively and make discoveries through inquiry, reflection, exploration, experimentation and trial and error; is competent in the arts and sciences including languages; uses technology to learn, innovate, collaborate, communicate and discover; has developed a wide range of competencies in many areas, including gathering, analysis and evaluation of information; is familiar with multiple perspectives and disciplines and can identify problems and then find the best solutions; as a team member, integrates ideas from a variety of sources into a coherent whole and communicates these ideas to others; adapts to the many changes in society and the economy with an attitude of optimism and hope for the future; as a lifelong learner, believes there is no limit to what knowledge may be gleaned, what skills may be accumulated, and what may be achieved in cooperation with others; and always keeps growing and learning.

-2-

## Appendix

## Ministerial Order (#001/2013)

WHEREAS an Ethical Citizen understands that it is not all about them, has learned about and is appreciative of the effort and sacrifice that built this province and country and sees beyond self-interests to the needs of the community; is committed to democratic ideals; contributes fully to the world economically, culturally, socially and politically; as a steward of the earth, minimizes environmental impacts; builds relationships through fairness, humility and open mindedness, with teamwork, collaboration and communication; engages with many cultures, religions and languages, values diversity in all people and adapts to any situation; demonstrates respect, empathy and compassion for all people; cares for themselves physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually; is able to ask for help, when needed, from others, and also for others; and assumes the responsibilities of life in a variety of roles.

WHEREAS an individual with an Entrepreneurial Spirit is motivated, resourceful, self-reliant and tenacious; continuously sets goals and works with perseverance and discipline to achieve them; through hard work, earns achievements and the respect of others; strives for excellence and personal, family and community success; is competitive and ready to challenge the status quo; explores ideas and technologies alone or as part of diverse teams; is resilient, adaptable, able and determined to transform discoveries into products or services that benefit the community and, by extension, the world; develops opportunities where others only see adversity; has the confidence to take risks and make bold decisions in the face of adversity, recognizing that to hold back is to be held back; and has the courage to dream.

WHEREAS graduation requirements, education delivery and standards for student learning are set out in other legislative and policy instruments.

- 1 Ministerial Order No. 004/98, dated February 10, 1998, is hereby repealed by this order.
- 2 The goal of this Student Learning Ministerial Order for an inclusive Kindergarten to Grade 12 education is to enable all students to achieve the following outcomes:
  - (1) be Engaged Thinkers and Ethical Citizens with an Entrepreneurial Spirit;
  - (2) strive for engagement and personal excellence in their learning journey;
  - (3) employ literacy and numeracy to construct and communicate meaning; and
  - (4) discover, develop and apply competencies across subject and discipline areas for learning, work and life to enable students to:
    - (a) know how to learn: to gain knowledge, understanding or skills through experience, study, and interaction with others;
    - (b) think critically: conceptualize, apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate to construct knowledge;
    - (c) identify and solve complex problems;

-3-

**Appendix**

**Ministerial Order (#001/2013)**

- (d) manage information: access, interpret, evaluate and use information effectively, efficiently, and ethically;
- (e) innovate: create, generate and apply new ideas or concepts;
- (f) create opportunities through play, imagination, reflection, negotiation, and competition, with an entrepreneurial spirit;
- (g) apply multiple literacies: reading, writing, mathematics, technology, languages, media, and personal finance;
- (h) demonstrate good communication skills and the ability to work cooperatively with others;
- (i) demonstrate global and cultural understanding, considering the economy and sustainable development; and
- (j) identify and apply career and life skills through personal growth and well-being.

3 This Order shall be effective on the date of signing.



**Program Name: High School Redesign: "Making Every Day Count"**

Oct 22/14

**Overall Strategic Objective:**

NSD61 Students will be Educated Albertans by being engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit.

**Outcome:**

NSD61 Students will graduate within a High School Redesigned program.

**Resources:**

What resources do we have to work with?

High School Redesign resources and videos, MFWHSR Cohort networks (Mr. Trevor Mitchel- St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Academy-Slave Lake, Mr. Art Shaye-Boyle School- Boyle), NRLC support and facilitation, Alberta Education High School Completion support, The NSD Communique, LST. School Staff, Communities, Parents,

Activities What happens in our organization?	Outputs What are the tangible products of our activities?	Short-term Outcomes What changes do we expect to occur within the short term?	Intermediate Outcomes What changes do we want to see occur after that?	Long-term Outcomes What changes do we hope to see over time?
<p>Provide 2-3 PD sessions on MFWHSR for Administrators and influencers at the 3 'pilot Schools' (Mistassiniy School, Kateri School, Paddle Prairie School).</p> <p>Providing opportunities for the 3 "pilot schools" to build networks and partnership with</p>	<p>3 'pilot schools' have a draft plans on the five principles: Mastery Learning, Personalization, Flexible Learning Environments, Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum, Educator roles and Professional development.</p>	<p>December 2014-The 3 "pilot schools" decide on and implement 1 or 2 actions towards fulfilling the 5 principles.</p> <p>Digitally Documented activities and</p>	<p>September 2015 -The 3 'pilot schools' implement actions for the 5 principles of High School Redesign: Mastery Learning, Personalization, Flexible Learning Environments,</p>	<p>Student centered learning</p> <p>Student attendance is in accordance with the NSD attendance policy are in attendance</p> <p>Every student has a personal education plan.</p> <p>All NSD High Schools are High School Redesign</p>

<p>schools that are part of the MFWHSR.</p> <p>Assist 3 "pilot school" Principals In providing PD to introduce MFWHSR to the school staff/ Local School Board and local communities.</p> <p>Enlisting the assistance of resources to provide Professional Development to gain awareness/ understanding/support for MFWHSR.</p> <p>Submit articles on MFWHSR into the weekly NSD communique.</p>	<p>The 3 "pilot schools" decide on 1 or 2 actions towards fulfilling the 5 principles.</p> <p>Staff meetings are collaborative working Professional Learning Communities.</p> <p>The 3 'pilot schools' inform and collaborate with their Local School Boards/communities and students in building awareness/ understanding and support for MFWHSR.</p> <p>Professional Development on specific activities related to the 5 principles, including but not limited to: PBL, PLC, unpacking the curriculum, team teaching, career plans, mentoring students, building relationships.</p> <p>Articles on MFWHSR in the weekly NSD communique increase awareness and knowledge throughout the NSD concerning High School Redesign.</p>	<p>learnings with MFWHSR.</p> <p>Teachers/staff are collaborating with the students' best interest as the center of all discussions, decisions and actions.</p> <p>Student personal profiles are created and are continuously updated in student mentored meetings.</p> <p>Learning Strategies Courses implemented.</p>	<p>Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum, Educator Roles and Professional development.</p> <p>Teachers and staff belong and attend the MFWHSR Cohort sessions.</p> <p>Credit recovery efforts are in place.</p> <p>Students have a student centered personal education plan in place and are knowledgeable about making good choices/goals for their futures.</p> <p>RAP, Dual credit programs, post-secondary tours are taking place.</p> <p>Each student has Career counselling and guidance.</p> <p>Questions on TTFM survey concerning MFWHSR</p>	<p>Schools.</p> <p>TTFM reports are positive in belonging, achievement.</p> <p>Accountability Pillars Survey results are positive as a result of MFWHSR.</p> <p>Students are graduating and transiting into College/University/trades training or future of their choice.</p>
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Heightened awareness of MFWHSR and its role in Inspiring Education, the Ministerial Order, Curriculum Redesign and Prototyping.	Administers and Influencers are attending the 2014 MFWHSR Cohort meetings.	April 2015- Alberta Education Application completed for 3 High Schools to be cohort group 2015 in the Moving Forward with High School Redesign.	All NSD High School staff/ parents/ communities have heightened awareness of MFWHSR and its role in Inspiring Education, the Ministerial Order, Curriculum Redesign and Prototyping.	All NSD High Schools complete MFWHSR application.  All NSD High Schools implement a MFWHSR plan.

<b>Rationale(s):</b> The explanation of a set of beliefs, based on a body of knowledge, about how change occurs in your field and with your specific clients (or audience).	<b>Assumptions:</b> Facts or conditions you assume to be true
Change takes time and resilience. Change creates fear of unknown. Every School will create a unique MFWHSR plan that is reflective of their communities and situations. MFWHSR will require a mindshift from: focused to the school to focused on education, centred on the system to centred on the learner, focused on content to building competencies, technology to support teaching to technology to support the creation and sharing of knowledge.	Everyone wants our students to succeed.



PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD

# ATTENDANCE INITIATIVE

PRESENTED BY: DON TESSIER, ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT

JANUARY 30, 2015



**NORTHLAND SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 61**



**ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT  
INITIATIVE – 'EVERY DAY COUNTS'  
FINAL REPORT**



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## Preamble

*The Northland School Division Inquiry Team Report* provides a framework and impetus for system-wide change and improvement. Since its release in November 2010, Northland School Division No. 61 (NSD61) has made significant progress in areas of leadership, curriculum and instruction. Division work has developed on several different fronts.

- First Nations Métis and Inuit (FNMI) language and culture is weaved daily into classrooms across NSD61 to ensure that students see themselves, parents and grandparents in the curriculum.
- The Division-wide Literacy Initiative is now in its third year of implementation with more students than ever before reading at grade level.
- Land Stewardship, Land-based learning – no matter the term used, classroom walls are falling away making way for learning opportunities on traditional hunting grounds for experiential hands-on learning for students. For example, Cultural Weaving Project in Peerless Lake, cultural camps organized through the Northland School Division-Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council partnership agreement, cultural camps organized through a partnership with the Sustainable Communities Initiative and the Calling Lake Project-based Learning.
- The expansion of junior and senior high school program offerings by means of Career and Technology Studies (CTS) and Career and Technology Foundations (CTF). Industry funding and grants provide the means to engage learners with exposure to real-life career related opportunities while earning credits leading to high school graduation.
- Aboriginal Teacher Education Program (ATEP) has enriched our classrooms with local home-grown teachers.
- A new *Northland Act* may soon usher in a governance structure to guide the Division into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Although system-wide improvement continues in earnest, attendance patterns have not improved over the past ten to fifteen years. Student attendance cannot continue to be the sole responsibility of the school – the school, parents and the community at large need to grapple with engaging and re-engaging youth in the educational process. More than ever before there is acknowledgement of the need to work together to affect positive sustainable change at all levels.

Together with the ongoing improvements in leadership, curriculum and instruction, this report – *Attendance Improvement Initiative – Every Day Counts*, acknowledges recommendation #3 of the *Northland Inquiry Team Report* by setting into motion actions that further support student engagement by building bridges with our parents and school communities.

## Background & Terms of Reference

With authority and direction from the Northland School Division No.61 (NSD61) Board an *Attendance Improvement Committee* was established in April, 2014 to review current Division attendance practices and offer recommendations for improvement. The committee met on seven separate occasions between April 2014 and January 2015. A final *Attendance Improvement Initiative – Every Day Counts Report* was presented to the Board on January 30, 2015.

Attendance Improvement Committee members include:

- Louis Cardinal, Board Advisory Committee Member, Peerless Lake
- Kim Courtoreille, Board Advisory Committee Member, Wabasca
- Robin Guild, Board Advisory Committee Member, Wabasca
- Elmer Gullion, Board Advisory Committee Member, Trout Lake
- Ken Shaw, Board Advisory Committee Member, Gift Lake
- Maureen Chernipeski, Pedagogical Supervisor
- Charles Greening, Teacher, Mistassiniy School
- Curtis Walty, Communications Coordinator, Central Office
- Peter Bailey, Teacher/Assistant Principal, St. Theresa School
- Bernard Woodfine, Teacher/Principal, Conklin Community School
- Nora Yellowknee, First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Curriculum Consultant
- Don Tessier, Associate Superintendent, Central Office

## Scope of Committee's Work

The *Attendance Improvement Committee* believes that any and all suggestions offered must be adapted locally to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) values and pedagogy including local traditional teaching, ways of knowing and community cultural practices.

The scope of the committee's work includes but is not limited to:

1. A review of *Procedure 301* and *Procedure 306*
2. A review of student attendance practices at the school-level with a focus on:
  - Who records daily attendance and when is it taken?
  - How is attendance information communicated to the school community?
  - Attendance practices around late arrivals and departure in the morning and afternoon
3. A review of attendance practices at Central Office with a focus on:
  - Examine current Division tracking and communication methods
  - In what ways could central office attendance gathering and communication be improved?
4. Identification of successful attendance strategies in other jurisdictions
5. An examination of survey results from administrators as to effective improvement practices around student attendance.
6. An examination of information from 'Tell Them From Me' student surveys
  - What insights can be gleaned from 'Tell Them From Me' information?
  - What insights can be gleaned from the Accountability Pillar Surveys?
7. An examination of feedback from students, parents, Elders, community members, Métis Settlement Chairperson and Council, First Nation Chief and Council, Municipal Districts, community agencies and industry leaders about how student attendance could be improved
8. An examination of the attendance literature about effective practices that lead to improved student attendance
9. An examination of the role and responsibilities of the School Community Liaison Worker
10. Do Division maintenance practices affect student learning and achievement?
11. What does it mean to be chronically absent from school? Is there an appropriate Northland S.D. definition for chronic absenteeism? What are the immediate and longer term implications of chronic absenteeism?

The *Attendance Improvement Committee* also offered guidance to the Northland Board in the following areas:

- A bus operating temperature during cold weather
- A Division-wide attendance target



## Key Components to School Attendance Improvement

The Committee believes any effort to improve school attendance must include the following:

- **Use of Data:** data helps identify where to focus attendance improvement efforts, which students to engage and to evaluate success.
- **Welcome Incentives:** schools should develop incentives to support and encourage attendance.
- **Involve the School Community:** students, staff, parents, Elders, community members, Métis Settlement Council, First Nation Chief and Council, Municipal Districts, community agencies and industry leaders.
- **Build Capacity:** Help students, parents, Elders, community members, Métis Settlement Chairperson and Council, First Nation Chief and Council, Municipal Districts, Child and Family Services, health agencies, local business and industry leaders understand the 'prevention and early intervention improvement plan'.

# Attendance Improvement Committee Recommendations

"Poor attendance is a major indicator of gradual alienation and disengagement, and may lead to a student dropping out permanently...."

(*Increasing Student Attendance: Strategies from research and practice*, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, June 2004, page 4)

The *Attendance Improvement Committee* report has tabled 29 recommendations to address attendance in the jurisdiction. Although there is overlap in a number of the recommendations, the recommendations are grouped according to division authority, namely:

- Schools & School Administration
- Central Office & Division Leadership

## Schools and School Administration

### Recommendation #1 – Division Attendance Goal

**The *Attendance Improvement Committee* recommends that NSD61 establishes a minimum base attendance goal of 95% for all students to strive to achieve.**

#### Background and Rationale:

"It is more necessary than ever before for schools to create a culture of high expectations that rewards effort that is supportive, welcoming and respectful for all ... students.... (*Increasing Student Attendance: Strategies from research and practice*, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, June 2004, page 5)

Students need to have a high rate of attendance in order to achieve academic excellence in school and complete Grade 12.

## Recommendation #2 – Community Engagement Framework

**The Attendance Improvement Committee recommends that schools employ the *Community Engagement Framework* to develop a process for involving their communities in a dialogue of how to improve student interest and engagement that results in improved school attendance rates. (See image on page 8).**

### Background & Rationale:

“... a single area for treatment is unlikely to be effective. It is suggest[ed] that success is more probable if community members and organizations, parents, students, and school staff share the task of identifying solutions ....” (*Increasing Student Attendance: Strategies from research and practice*, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, June 2004, page 7)

Student attendance is a community endeavour using local familiar resources involving Local School Board Committees, Elders, Chief and Council, Métis Settlement Council, Child & Family Services, Health agencies, industry and local businesses and NSD61 Central Administration and Leadership, students, parents and school administration and staff.







### Recommendation #3 – Quality Learning Experiences

**The Attendance Improvement Committee believes that everyone from students to parents, the community, school staff, administrators and central office have an important role to play in educating our children. Since teachers work directly with students in the classroom, they have a direct and obvious impact on student learning.**

**The Attendance Improvement Committee recommends that delivering quality learning experiences for students be a priority for school leaders and staff. An effective and engaging school and classroom environment with high expectations and strong teacher-student relationships is essential for learning, achievement and keeping students in school.**

#### Background and Rationale:

John Hattie suggests "... that we should focus on the greatest source of variance that can make the difference [on student learning and achievement] – the teacher. We need to ensure that this greatest influence is optimised to have powerful and sensationally positive effects on the learner. Teachers can and usually do have positive effects, but they must have exceptional effects. We need to direct attention at higher quality teaching, and higher expectations that students can meet appropriate challenges - and these occur once the classroom door is closed ...." (Hattie, *Teachers Make a Difference What is the research evidence?*, p. 3)

Hattie proposes that it is the classroom teacher that makes the greatest difference to student learning and that "excellence in teaching is the single most powerful influence on achievement". (p. 4)

Teachers need to focus on what Doug Willms (2009) states are four key factors that support healthy sustained student engagement –

- Quality of Instruction
- Teacher-student relations
- Classroom learning climate and
- Teacher expectations for success

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/leadership/Summer2011.pdf>

## Recommendation #4 – Elders Program

**The *Attendance Improvement Committee* recommends that a community Elders program be established in each school community to support student attendance and achievement efforts.**

### Background and Rationale:

Community Elders are highly respected and are community knowledge holders. An Elders program is an essential aspect of any school attendance improvement initiative.

DRAFT

### Recommendation #5 – Cultural Pride

**The Attendance Improvement Committee recommends that NSD61 schools develop strategies to increase cultural pride reflecting FNMI values, language, community traditions and history. By doing so, students, parents and the school community may better connect with their schools with a sense of pride and ownership.**

Background and Rationale:

Northland School Division “is re-defined as a special purpose system for Aboriginal education” (NSD Inquiry Team Report, November 2010, page 4).

## Recommendation #6 – School Attendance Committees

**The Attendance Improvement Committee recommends that NSD61 school-based leadership make attendance a high priority by leading the following initiatives:**

### **A. School Attendance Committees**

**In September of each year, schools will create a *School Attendance Committee*. This committee will meet once per month or as needed to establish guidelines relating to:**

- Attendance initiatives
- Discuss ongoing attendance concerns
- Discuss, support and follow-up on student early intervention efforts

**The principal (or designate) will chair the committee and assume responsibility for developing the agenda and maintaining minutes for each meeting. The agenda and minutes will be forwarded to the Associate Superintendent on a monthly basis. (Refer to Appendix 2 for a sample meeting agenda template.)**

**This group may consist of teachers, school administrators, parents, students, Elders, RCMP, and other outside support agencies. The Local School Board Committees will be kept apprised of attendance improvement efforts at regular board meetings.**

**Although individual student names and specific attendance histories cannot be discussed with outside agencies, the committee meetings should focus on attendance support and prevention strategies and early interventions.**

### **B. Establish and Communicate Attendance Incentive Programs**

- Reward programs should recognize both high levels of attendance and also growth and improvement.
- At the start of each school year, schools will receive an attendance budget to off-set and support attendance reward programs.
- School reward programs/systems will be communicated to the Division as part of the Annual Education Results Report.

### **Background and Rationale:**

**To institute change leadership is needed. There is an expectation that school administrators and their staff will support and direct student attendance improvement at the school community level.**



## Recommendation #7 – Attendance Tracking & Communication

**The *Attendance Improvement Committee* believes any effort to improve school attendance must include the analysis and communication of monthly school attendance information – both at the school and central office levels. Attendance data helps identify where to focus attendance improvement efforts, which students to engage and to evaluate success.**

**The *Attendance Improvement Committee* recommends school staff, with guidance from school administration, meet regularly (or as often as needed) in Professional Learning Community (PLC) sessions or staff meeting groups to discuss student attendance information, plan and strategize early intervention approaches. A monthly strategic planning session could include such topics as:**

- **Tracking and Communicating to the school community:**
  - **Students attending at levels of 90-94% and 95-100% for recognition at assemblies, newsletters and community recognition.**
  - **Solicit feedback and success stories from students/staff/parents/community as a way to celebrate school attendance successes.**
- **Tracking with staff and follow-up with the *School Attendance Committee*:**
  - **Students attending 80-89% for early intervention and support**
  - **Students attending below 80% to ensure that daily interventions (home visits, school organized meetings) have been undertaken and a follow-through plan developed**
  - **Chronic absenteeism**
  - **Patterns of non-attendance for focused intervention**
- **Evaluate school-wide student attendance improvement efforts.**

## **Recommendation #8 – Central Office Attendance Tracking & Awards**

**The *Attendance Improvement Committee* recommends central office continue to receive monthly school attendance information through Principal Monthly Reports (PMRs) and Maplewood for analysis to focus attendance improvement efforts and communicate Division successes to our school communities, education partners, interested supporters and agencies.**

**On a monthly basis, central office will integrate information supporting attendance for the Division *Achimowin* Newsletter and for upload to the new Northland website.**

**The “Every Day Counts ...” portion of the newsletter could include:**

- **Importance of attending school every day**
- **Students-on-track for Gold, Silver and Diamond Certificates at year-end**
- **Monthly Attendance Chart(s)**
  - **School-By-School Attendance**
  - **School Attendance by Division – ECS, Div. 1,2,3 & 4**
  - **Comparison of School Attendance and Division Goal (95%)**
- **School Attendance Success Stories**

## Recommendation #9 – Transitioning Students Back to School

**The Attendance Improvement Committee recommends that schools develop a transitioning/re-integration plan for students who have been identified as at-risk. Strategies associated with a return-to-school plan will include but not be limited to:**

- **Northland schools establish a strategy for students who have been identified as at risk/transient/chronically absent. These students require a ‘transitioning back to school’ intervention plan.**
- **The administration, in collaboration with the *School Attendance Committee*, will review student profiles and formulate a plan for integration. The student ‘return-to-school’ plan would incorporate strategies supporting the successful return of at-risk students to the school learning environment.**
- **Re-integration can be part of a student’s learning plan. The student ‘return-to-school’ plan could be signed by administration, student, and parent as evidence of a commitment and pledge to meet the goals of the return-to-school learning plan.**
- **Junior and High School interventions and return-to-school plans may include but not limited to:**
  - ✓ **Modular Based Learning**
  - ✓ **Inter-division sharing of information and online resources**
  - ✓ **Division wide Timetabling (common block)**
  - ✓ **Shortened day**
  - ✓ **Setting goals for attendance**
  - ✓ **Ongoing staff mentoring support**

### Background and Rationale:

Chronic absence leads to drop out and failure. Students with chronic absenteeism face many return-to-school challenges. There is an expectation that schools will create a return-to-school transitioning plan for chronic absence.

## Recommendation #10 – School Climate

**The Attendance Improvement Committee recommends that in-service opportunities are offered to school staff in relation to the theory and practice of school climate. These staff training opportunities could be supported by industry funds and Division budget allocations.**

**Areas of school community professional development that support a welcoming, healthy, respectful school climate that should be considered:**

- **School-wide anti-bullying campaign**
- **Safe & Caring Schools Initiative (SACS)**
- **School-wide Tribes TLC program**
- **School-wide boys and girls clubs**
- **School-wide Wellness Initiatives**

### Background and Rationale:

"School climate impacts how students feel, their willingness to get involved, their excitement to contribute and their sense of self and others. School climate matters and our commitment to broadening the vision of inclusion and engagement requires school climates to reflect the characteristics of respect, equity, dignity, honesty, justice and safety. This type of school climate requires the engagement of all education stakeholders, not just students and not teachers alone; but from all administrators, school staff, parents and community partners. Thus every stakeholder is given the opportunity and expected to contribute to creating and sustaining an effective quality school climate...."

[http://media.specialolympics.org/soi/files/resources/Project\\_Unify/TheImportanceOfSchoolClimate.pdf](http://media.specialolympics.org/soi/files/resources/Project_Unify/TheImportanceOfSchoolClimate.pdf)



## Recommendation #11 – ‘Tell Them From Me’ Student Surveys

**The Attendance Improvement Committee recommends that all NSD61 schools with Grade 4 to Grade 12 programming participate in the ‘Tell Them From Me’ (TTFM) student engagement surveys.**

**There is an expectation that school principals will guide staff through an in-depth analysis of the TTFM surveys in order to develop a yearly school strategic improvement plan that increases what Doug Willms, developer of *Tell Them From Me*, refers to as *social, intellectual and institutional engagement*. (See an explanation of the three engagement types below.)**

**The TTFM Strategic Improvement Plan will form part of the AERR report due in November of each school year.**

### Background and Rationale:

Any school attendance improvement initiative must include student input. Student voice ensures that their needs and wants are heard and included in school improvement strategy efforts.

Since 2009, a select number of Northland schools participated in ‘Tell Them From Me’ surveys. In February 2014 nine Northland schools participated in these surveys.

According to Doug Willms (2009), schools and school staff can increase learning by focusing on three areas of student engagement, namely: social, institutional and intellectual.

- *Social engagement* refers to a student’s sense of belonging, participation in sports and clubs and positive friendships at school.
- *Institutional engagement* includes such measures as attendance, positive behaviour, study habits and the degree to which school outcomes are valued.
- *Intellectual engagement* includes a student’s level of interest & motivation, effort and whether the student is suitably engaged and challenged.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/leadership/Summer2011.pdf>

## Recommendation #12 – Standardizing Attendance Procedures

The *Attendance Improvement Committee* recommends that NSD61 ensures that attendance information is accurate by standardizing the following processes:

- A person with Maplewood expertise needs to be hired or trained to act as Division contact for all processes and procedures involving Maplewood.
- Continue to provide relevant annual training/information sessions for school staff who require Maplewood training, skill enhancement and upgrading.
- Monitor and review school attendance monthly at the school and central office level.
- Ensure attendance records are accurate and stored on Maplewood.
- Ensure teachers are taking daily attendance and the recording procedures for students arriving late to school and leave early are recorded consistently across the division.
- Work with the school community to develop initiatives to address attendance.
- Incorporate monthly attendance, chronic absenteeism and suspension data into school planning and reporting.
- Students who are frequently late will be referred to school administration and the local *School Attendance Committee* for immediate intervention.

To ensure accurate ongoing school attendance information, the *Attendance Improvement Committee* further recommends that school-based administrators implement the following attendance routines and practices:

- Student attendance is entered into Maplewood on a daily basis.
- Teachers must enter their own student attendance into Maplewood using their ConnectED profile. Principals are asked to ensure that teachers have a ConnectED profile. The Records Management Clerk will assist with teacher profile set up and, if necessary, the resetting of teacher passwords.
- When the principal is certain that a student no longer attends the school, he or she must report the exit date into Maplewood which will then show the student is not attending school.
- At month end, the following Maplewood attendance reports are due at Central Office: (a) Principal Monthly Reports (PMRs), (b) Student Admissions, (c) Student Retirements and (d) Daily Attendance Registers.

### Background and Rationale:

It is imperative that the collection and reporting of attendance data is accurate and that the monitoring of attendance patterns for improvement purposes is routinized.

## Recommendation #13 – Attendance Action Protocol

The *Attendance Improvement Committee* recommends that NSD61 schools use the following protocol (or a variation thereof) when working with daily and longer term absences.

### Attendance Action Protocol

#### Level 1 Action Standard Action EXCUSED/UNEXCUSED

- Make a personal phone call to parent/guardian.
- Document reason for absence.
- Enter appropriate absent code into Maplewood.
- Update student contact information.

#### Level 2 Action (include Level 1 action)

EXCUSED	UNEXCUSED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule parent conference (at home/school)</li> <li>• Implement strategies outlined in site attendance support plan</li> <li>• Alert <i>School Attendance Committee</i></li> <li>• If needed, refer family to appropriate school-based resources or support agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom teacher phones home and if no contact, conducts home visit using an established protocol</li> <li>• Flag students on the first Notice of Truancy letter log</li> <li>• If needed, refer family to school-based resources and/or support agencies</li> <li>• Alert <i>School Attendance Committee</i></li> </ul>

#### Level 3 Action (include Level 1 action)

EXCUSED	UNEXCUSED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule parent conference (at home/school)</li> <li>• Implement strategies outlined in site attendance support plan</li> <li>• <i>School Attendance Committee</i> Meeting convened</li> <li>• If needed, refer family to appropriate school-based resources or support agencies</li> <li>• Action plan for student in place</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom teacher phones home and if no contact, conducts home visit</li> <li>• Flag students on the 2nd Notice of Truancy letter log</li> <li>• If needed, refer family to school-based resources and/or support agencies</li> <li>• <i>School Attendance Committee</i> Meeting convened</li> <li>• Hold a intervention meeting</li> <li>• Action plan for student in place</li> </ul>

EACH DAY  
ABSENT

3RD DAY  
ABSENT

6th DAY  
ABSENT



10<sup>th</sup> DAY  
ABSENT

#### Level 4 Action (include Level 1 action)

EXCUSED	UNEXCUSED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule parent conference (at home/school)</li> <li>• Implement strategies outlined in site attendance support plan</li> <li>• <i>School Attendance Committee</i> Meeting convened</li> <li>• If needed, refer family to appropriate school-based resources or support agencies</li> <li>• Action plan for student in place               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i)Ease Back strategy outline in plan</li> <li>(ii)Learning modules in place for student</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Mail chronic absence letter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>School Attendance Committee</i> representatives (Liaison worker, elder, principal) schedule meeting with parent (and child if appropriate)</li> <li>• Flag students on the third Notice of Truancy letter log</li> <li>• <i>School Attendance Committee</i> Meeting convened bringing together all available agencies (health, child and health services, school, elder and parents if possible)</li> <li>• Hold a intervention meeting</li> <li>• Action plan for student in place               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i)Ease Back strategy outline in plan</li> <li>(ii)Learning modules in place for student</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Mail chronic absence letter</li> <li>• Referred to Superintendent (or designate) / Attendance Board</li> </ul>

#### Background and Rationale:

To support schools, an attendance action protocol is needed to offer guidance and direction to staff when working with daily and longer term absences.



### Recommendation #14 – Engaging Students with CTF and CTS

**To heighten interest and engage students in the learning process, the *Attendance Improvement Committee* recommends that schools create alternative options/programming emphasizing hands-on and land-based learning opportunities.**

**School administrators and teachers will work with the CTS School/Industry Partnership Administrator to develop and implement Career and Technology Studies (CTS) and Career and Technology Foundations (CTF) program opportunities for students.**

**Schools will work with our First Nations, Métis and Inuit Director of Education and local community experts and resources to continue to strengthen languages (English and Aboriginal), Aboriginal cultural content within the curriculum, and the processes of developing land-based curriculum aligned learning opportunities for all students.**

**Background and Rationale:**

**"The world around us is evolving at an unprecedented rate and the speed of change is increasing every day.**

**We need to prepare Alberta's students for their future—not our past. The way in which we've previously delivered education is no longer sufficient. So, together, we're changing our way of thinking. ...**

**We're shifting our focus and putting students first.**

**We want to expand on traditional methods of teaching, not replace them.**

**We're investing in our students and giving educators license to be more creative. To inspire innovation and excellence...."**

**<https://inspiring.education.alberta.ca/what-is-inspiring-education/>**

### **Recommendation #15 – Importance of Early Childhood Services**

**The *Attendance Improvement Committee* recommends that NSD61 schools recognize the importance of early childhood programming (Early Child Services and Kindergarten) by supporting the following actions:**

- **Northland schools actively seek the support of community agencies/parents to promote kindergarten attendance.**
- **Develop engaging messages and materials to encourage kindergarten attendance using parent handbooks and key messages in school newsletters.**
- **Employ the Early Years Evaluation (EYE) to screen pre-kindergarten students offering support interventions when and where needed.**
- **Schools work to develop an 'Early Grades Attendance Strategy' for kindergarten through to grade three.**
- **Schools work closely with the NSD61 Student Services Supervisor to implement an 'Early Grades Attendance Strategy'.**

## Recommendation #16 – Maintaining School Facilities

**The Attendance Improvement Committee believes that school facilities are a home away from home for students. Since our schools are often the hub and centerpiece of our communities, school buildings need to clean, warm and inviting learning spaces for the school community. The school environment should reflect the culture of the students, have positive messages of hope, and showcase evidence of student success such as examples of student work and other accomplishments.**

**The Attendance Improvement Committee recommends that NSD61's caretaking staff and maintenance department commit to ensuring our schools are clean inviting community learning settings.**

### Background and Rationale:

"The focus on school environments has evolved from an initial discussion on indoor air to a comprehensive view recognizing that total environmental quality is related to teaching and learning performance.... school officials must recognize the value of cleaning and maintenance programs to positive educational performance.

A school's interior climate, appearance, and cleanliness send either a positive or negative message to students, teachers, and staff. Emerging evidence suggests that environmental conditions that create a sense of "well-being" and send a "caring message" contribute directly to positive attitudes and elevated performance as measured by fewer health complaints, improved student attendance, teacher retention, and higher test scores.

Schools are special environments that exist for the purpose of teaching and learning.  
... Schools are high activity environments that need constant attention in the form of cleaning, maintenance, and repair. ...

... There is a direct connection between environmental quality, comfort, health and well-being, positive attitudes and behaviour, and higher levels of educational performance.

The quality of the school environment shapes attitudes of students, teachers and staff. Attitudes affect teaching and learning behaviour. Behaviour affects performance. Educational performance determines future outcomes of individuals and society as a whole.

Recent studies of high performance schools find that an academically successful school radiates a sense of "well-being". This sense of "well-being" is the essence of a healthy environment. For school environments to be healthy there must be a serious, if not passionate desire accompanied by positive action, to keep the environment sanitary or to restore non-performing schools to a constant healthy state...."

Source: (Berry, Michael, A. *Healthy Schools are Clean, Dry, and Productive*)

[http://www.canadiancarpet.org/carpet\\_in\\_schools/pdf/7.%20HealthySchoolCleanDry.pdf](http://www.canadiancarpet.org/carpet_in_schools/pdf/7.%20HealthySchoolCleanDry.pdf)

## Recommendation #17 – Alberta Attendance Board

**The *Attendance Improvement Committee* recommends that NSD61 schools employ the services of the *Alberta Attendance Board* (or *Local Attendance Boards* for Federal students) as a last resort and on a case-by-case basis after all local attendance efforts have been exhausted.**

### Background and Rationale:

School jurisdictions have access to the *Alberta Attendance Board* in matters of chronic absenteeism.

“Truancy is a serious concern of parents and teachers since it leads to school dropout and failure. In today's society, the opportunity for employment and a career is severely limited without an education. The Attendance Board was established by legislation in 1988 to help students who were developing a record of truancy. When a student who is under 16 years of age fails to attend school as required by law, the school board may ask for a panel of the Attendance Board to deal with the matter. Truancy is often the first visible sign of other problems a student may be experiencing. In most cases, truancy problems are resolved at the local school level where students, parents and school board employees can work together before there is a need to involve the provincial Attendance Board. Where a truancy problem cannot be resolved locally, school boards may refer the matter to the provincial Attendance Board for assistance and a ruling.”

<http://education.alberta.ca/parents/role/workingtogether/board.aspx>



### Recommendation #18 – LSBC Ratification of Attendance Report

To ensure division-wide ongoing commitment, the *Attendance Improvement Committee* recommends:

- The final approved *Attendance Improvement Report* is ratified by local school board committees at the first LSBC meeting following the Report's approval in January 2015;
- School-based administration present and discuss the final approved Report with school staff and local school board committee members,
- School-based administration present and discuss the final approved Report with students, parents and the school community in school sponsored community engagement events,
- 'Student Attendance' be placed on LSBC agendas for review and discussion.

The Attendance Improvement Committee further recommends that

- School-based administration, in collaboration with the school community, develop and present an action plan for implementing the report's recommendations commencing at the Principals' meeting in May 2015.

#### Background and Rationale:

Report recommendations require ongoing school staff and local school board committee commitment to ensure that student attendance improvement remains ever-present on school community agendas.

## Central Office and Division Leadership

### Recommendation #19 – Tracking Chronic Absences

**The Attendance Improvement Committee recommends that NSD61 develop and implement the following attendance procedural actions:**

- **That a common definition for chronic absence is established and that it is tracked. By way of example, chronic absenteeism means missing 10 percent or more of the school year for any reason.**
- **That beginning in kindergarten, student attendance is tracked and timely interventions embarked on when absence becomes a problem.**
- **That chronic absence is considered a Division policy priority with clear direction for schools to identify contributing factors and outline interventions in Annual Education Results Report (AERR) improvement plans.**
- **That non-specific case attendance data is shared with social service agencies to focus appropriate interventions.**
- **That a search be undertaken to identify possible grants to support the tracking of attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism.**

#### Background and Rationale:

“... Students need to attend school daily to succeed. ... Educators and policymakers cannot truly understand achievement gaps or efforts to close them without considering chronic absenteeism.

Chronic absenteeism is not the same as truancy or average daily attendance....Chronic absenteeism means missing 10 percent of a school year for any reason. A school can have average daily attendance of 90 percent and still have 40 percent of its students chronically absent, because on different days, different students make up that 90 percent....” (p. 3)

<http://new.every1graduates.org/wpcontent/uploads/2012/05/FINALChronicAbsenteeismReportMay16.pdf>

### Recommendation #20 – Bus Operations in Inclement Weather

**The *Attendance Improvement Committee* recommends that when inclement weather conditions are questionable, the principal consult with the local school bus driver(s).**

**It is also recommended that barring unforeseen extenuating local circumstances, school buses will operate up to and including -40 Celsius (ambient air temperature).**

**Background and Rationale:**

**A consistent standard for operating buses during the winter months should be established across NSD61.**

## Recommendation #21 – Transportation Committee Support

**The *Attendance Improvement Committee* supports the recommendations set out by the Transportation Committee and recently supported by the Advisory Committee and approved by the Official Trustee.**

**The *Attendance Improvement Committee* is recommending that:**

- **NSD61, in partnership with local industry, will create a *Bus Driver Incentive Program* that incorporates monetary incentives for individuals pursuing bus driver training and employment with the Division.**
- **That Northland Bus Drivers receive competitive wages comparable to industry norms for drivers to ensure a consistent, safe, and reliable transportation system for the students.**
- **That the transportation budget includes provision for one emergency bus per community in the event of bus breakdown and for school-based field trips. By way of example, an extra bus could be used to support and extend classroom instruction to land stewardship experiential learning.**

**Background and Rationale:**

**A reliable bus transportation system is needed to ensure students are able to access schooling opportunities as required by the *School Act*.**



## Recommendation #22 – Attendance Awards & School Recognition

The *Attendance Improvement Committee* recommends that NSD61 formally recognize the importance of schooling and regular attendance by:

- Establishing a yearly attendance recognition program whereby deserving students are presented with 'attendance certificates' at the first school assembly in September.

By way of example, certificates of attendance could be presented to students accordingly:

1. *Silver Attendance Certificate*: Awarded to students with a yearly attendance of 90-94%
2. *Gold Attendance Certificate*: Awarded to students with a yearly attendance of 95-100%
3. *Diamond Attendance Certificate*: Awarded to students with the greatest % growth in attendance over the course of the school year or the previous school year

Schools will forward the above mentioned attendance information to the Records Management Clerk in June.

- To provide yearly recognition to a Northland school (or schools) for creativity and innovation resulting in attendance improvements. The Long Service and Recognition Awards Banquet in May would be an appropriate venue to acknowledge schools.

### Background and Rationale:

There is a general consensus by the *Attendance Improvement Committee* that students respond favourably to attendance reward programs. Since school attendance is a division-wide priority, all authority levels have an attendance improvement role to play.

### **Recommendation #23 – School Community Liaison Worker**

**To ensure alignment with Northland School Division's Attendance Improvement Initiative and the Community Engagement Framework, the *Attendance Improvement Committee* recommends the following changes to the School & Community Liaison Worker's job description. (Refer to page 30)**

**The *Attendance Improvement Committee* recognizes that School & Community Liaison Workers are paraprofessionals and not trained counsellors.**

- **The role of 'student counsellor' should not be imposed upon the School & Community Liaison Worker (SCLW). SCLW have knowledge of the community and families and can therefore advocate for children by listening and engaging with students about overcoming barriers to school success.**
- **The role of the SCLW needs to be clearly defined.**
- **The SCLW should utilize the current resources at NSD61 to assist in the development of a communication plan to convey a positive image of the school to the community.**
- **The many roles of the SCLW may need support (financial and otherwise) for successful implementation of school based intervention and motivational strategies focused on improving school attendance. It is recommended that NSD61 provide the SCLW with the necessary level of support and training to carry out their responsibilities.**

**The role of the SCLW is to assist with building positive and trusting relationships between students and their families and school staff.**

**POSITION TITLE:** School & Community Liaison Worker  
**CLASSIFICATION TITLE:** Paraprofessional  
**DEPARTMENT:** Instruction  
**IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR'S TITLE:** Principal  
**REASON FOR SUBMISSION:** \_\_\_\_\_ X \_\_\_\_\_  
Creation Change Update

Date: May 2013

Reflecting Board policy and procedures, the School and Community Liaison Worker will work with the school staff and parents to coordinate a school based counseling service, which supports the personal and academic growth of each student, and to help set up a network of agencies to provide community support for the students and the school. A valid Class 4 Driver's License is required for the performance of these duties.\* The School and Community Liaison Worker shall maintain strict confidentiality where appropriate in the performance of his/her duties.

\*In special circumstances that would permit the transportation of students in privately owned vehicles, Procedure 312 Transportation of Students in Private Vehicles, shall be adhered to.

## 1. General Responsibilities

- 1.1. Develop programs and activities to promote personal development and self-esteem for students.
- 1.2. Work with parents, school and community to provide support for bussing and boarding home students attending school in other jurisdictions.
- 1.3. Work with students and staff in setting up beneficial “work experience” programs in the community. (RAP, Career Counsellor)
- 1.4. Work with staff to provide parents and students necessary information about existing school and community programs and activities.
- 1.5. As part of regular communication with students/parents, work with staff, parents and students to develop and implement an action plan to address attendance.  
  
As a school attendance committee member, work with staff, parents, and students to investigate and address any attendance concerns utilizing a school-based attendance committee model where possible.
- 1.6. Work with staff to develop and implement an orientation system for new students/staff into the school.



- 1.7. Provide support and assistance for any school based intervention and/or motivational strategies to keep students in school.
- 1.8. Assist in developing and conveying a positive image of the school and community.
- 1.9. Adhere to a personal conduct contract, as well as a confidentiality agreement.
2. Career Counselling (In absence of/ in conjunction with Career Counsellor)
  - 2.1. Provide students with information and contact with universities, technical schools, colleges, and industry.
  - 2.2. Work with the principal to facilitate the delivery of career workshops that are relevant to students' needs and aspirations.
  - 2.3. Provide information to parents and students regarding post-secondary education grants and assist them with applications for financial assistance, if requested.
  - 2.4. Work with the staff to distribute career information into all relevant grades.
3. Office Duties:
  - 3.1. Maintain accurate, up-to-date confidential files on all contacts.
  - 3.2. Maintain a file of agencies and service providers.
  - 3.3. Attend all staff meetings and relevant divisional initiatives.
  - 3.4. Attend in-services as approved by the school principal.
  - 3.5. Continue education through upgrading pursuant to the role of liaison and review of current related literature.
  - 3.6. Prepare, in consultation with the principal, a flexible personal timetable, which allows for regular home visits and agency contacts necessary to fulfill duties.
  - 3.7. Prepare reports as requested by the principal, which will be provided to the Local School Board Committee, for discussion and action.
4. Bussing, Boarding and Home Schooling Students
  - 4.1. Assist parents in the process of requesting boarding home applications and with selecting boarding homes for approved students, as requested.
  - 4.2. Work with parents, principals, and counsellors in registrations and student orientations to receiving school and/or receiving home.
  - 4.3. In cooperation with the principal, monitor and report on the status of home schooling students.
  - 4.4. Set up informal ways and means for the home school and community to maintain contact and support for boarding students.
  - 4.5. Maintain regular written and verbal contact with the counsellors at the receiving school regarding the students' progress and development.



4.6 Liaison workers will work with the school and home to address bussing concerns especially as they relate to attendance.

5. Other Considerations

5.1 Other duties as assigned by the principal such as

(i) Delivering school related documents

(ii) Translation services

NOTE: Revisions are labeled blue.

Background and Rationale:

The *Attendance Improvement Committee* believes the School Community Liaison Worker's job description needs to be updated to align with the Community Engagement Framework.

## Recommendation #24 – Division Attendance Improvement Officer

**The Attendance Improvement Committee recommends that a “Division Attendance Improvement Officer” role be created to oversee division-wide improvement efforts. At the present time, the superintendent assumes the role of “Division Attendance Officer”.**

### Background and Rationale:

Division-wide initiatives that are designed to improve attendance require concerted effort, planning, collaboration and coordination. A full time position may need to be created to oversee and coordinate the division’s attendance improvement program. The alternative is to designate someone at the division level to assume this important role.

### Recommendation #25 – Student Services

**The *Attendance Improvement Committee* recommends that NSD61 continues to work with our local community agencies and Regional Collaborative Service Delivery (RCSD) partners to provide additional mental health service supports for identified high needs schools. By way of example, students 'on the spectrum' with high learning needs require teachers with a specialized skill set. In certain circumstances these teachers will require specialized support (i.e. training and/or professional development) and access to appropriate assistive technology.**

#### Background and Rationale:

There is a general consensus that NSD61 will utilize student services to support attendance issues and inclusion as per policy.

## Recommendation #26 – Partnering with Community Agencies

**The Attendance Improvement Committee recommends that schools, in collaboration with NSD61 Supervisor of Student Services, work closely with local, provincial and federal agencies in the delivery of appropriate learning and early intervention supports for students.**

**Specifically, Child and Family Services and the R.C.M.P. are two community support agencies with mandates to work closely with schools in support of children and their families.**

**The Attendance Improvement Committee recommends:**

- **Schools, in partnership with Child & Family Services, could work to implement school supports for students in foster care. Regular meetings between the school and this agency could be a platform for early intervention in support of families in crisis.**
- **Schools, in partnership with local RCMP detachments, could work to support student learning through the delivery of Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) programs which focus on such topics as the responsible use of personal technology (i.e. cell phones, i-pads, & personal social networking), forms of bullying and the legal implications, involvement in gangs, and drug & alcohol abuse. Regular opportunities for the RCMP to meet with school staff and students in the delivery of important messaging for youth are beneficial and support student awareness and personal growth.**

**Background and Rationale:**

**Partnering with Community Agencies makes sense given that -**

- **Child & Family Services is responsible for the well-being of children in foster care and for the prevention of abuse and neglect.**
- **Success is dependent on partnerships with organizations that are already in children's lives – such as the school system.**
- **The use of technology as a form of bullying is increasing - students must be made aware of the dangerous/tragic consequences associated with such behaviour and the possible criminality of such actions.**
- **Simple data sharing approaches help both community agencies and schools better care for vulnerable children.**



## Recommendation #27 – Procedure 301 - Student Attendance

**To align Procedure 301 – Student Attendance (original found in Appendix 1 of this report) with the Community Engagement Framework, the Attendance Improvement Committee recommends the following changes:**

### Background

*“Poor attendance is a major indicator of gradual alienation and disengagement, and may lead to a student dropping out permanently....” (Increasing Student Attendance: Strategies from research and practice, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, June 2004, page 4)*

Student attendance is a community priority involving the local school, Elders, First Nations Chief and Council, Métis Settlement Chief and Council, Child and Family Services, health agencies, industry and local businesses and Northland Central Office. There is an expectation that schools employ the Community Engagement Framework to develop a process for involving their communities in a dialogue of how to improve student interest and engagement resulting in improved school attendance rates.

Regular attendance by students in all of their classes enhances their performance and contributes substantially to their educational progress. While students have a right to access an educational program they also have a responsibility to attend classes regularly.

The *School Act* requires students to attend school regularly and punctually, and requires School Boards to follow procedures outlined in the Act. The Superintendent (or designate) has been designated as the attendance officer for the division.

### Procedures

**1. The principal shall ensure that an accurate record of student attendance is maintained for every registered student.**

**2. Teachers will record attendance daily.**

**3. Schools will follow the Attendance Protocol as outlined in Recommendation #9 of this report. This protocol details specific actions and expectations within a four tiered set of action objectives involving school staff, community resources and agencies. The attendance protocol operates with a philosophy dictating:**

- Attendance is a whole community responsibility.
- Schools are expected to maintain home contact at all levels of absentee concern.
- Tiered actions are targeted for elementary students missing 1-3-6-10 days.
- Tiered actions are targeted for Junior, Senior High students missing 1-4-7-10 days.
- Specific school actions are expected at each level and beyond.
- Students missing more than 10 days will be referred to school administration for further action.

**4. Each school shall form a School Attendance Committee including but not limited to the following roles:**

- Meet monthly to discuss attendance data trends.
- Meet as needed to formulate initiatives to support students and families of students showing higher levels of absenteeism.
- Involve the community at large using agencies and local resources in enacting positive and proactive attendance action plans for students.
- Establish a rewards system for attendance based upon the philosophy that not only students meeting attendance goals are rewarded but also students showing improvement.

5. Student attendance issues will be responded to in a proactive manner within the following level of increasing actions:

- I. *School Attendance Committee* planning
- II. Teacher response (recording data, establishing cause, home contact)
- III. Principal response (in coordination with teacher and School Community Liaison Worker and the School Attendance Committee)
- IV. Referral to Superintendent or designate
- V. Referral to Alberta Attendance Board

6. Each school will develop attendance targets based on the divisional target of 95%.

6.1 It is understood that the *School Attendance Committee* can set targets as per specific student cases that may include attendance levels lower than the Division target. These goals may be individualized and based upon significant improvement.

6.2 Schools will report monthly attendance rates, incentives and initiatives related to improving attendance to central office.

7. Local School Board Committees will be advised monthly of school attendance data.

Background and Rationale:

There is a general consensus by the *Attendance Improvement Committee* that *Procedure 301 – Student Attendance* needs to be reworked and aligned with the Community Engagement Framework and the recommendations outlined in this report.

NOTE: Suggested revisions are labeled blue.

## Recommendation #28 – Procedure 306 – Suspension and Expulsion

**To align Procedure 306 – Student Suspension and Expulsion with Northland School Division’s Attendance Improvement Initiative and the Community Engagement Framework, the Attendance Improvement Committee recommends the following changes:**

### Background

To ensure a satisfactory climate for learning, school rules and regulations must be observed by students and teachers and principals must be empowered to enforce those rules and regulations. Students who do not conform to the behavior code and discipline policy may negatively affect the school’s learning environment.

The suspension or expulsion of a student from school is a very serious matter and should only be taken when other measures have proven to be ineffective or when the seriousness of the offense warrants such action. *Under certain circumstances, a restorative justice model could be used as an alternative.*

Section 12 of the *School Act* identifies expectations for student conduct and sections 24 and 25 deals with student suspensions and expulsions.

### Procedures

1. The school discipline policy shall describe the suspension procedures to be followed in the school.
2. The principal shall review, and become familiar with, the provisions in the *School Act* that provide the legal framework governing student suspensions and expulsions.
3. The following circumstances may be considered as reasons for student suspension when all other disciplinary actions have been ineffective:
  - 3.1 Habitual neglect of duty.
  - ~~3.2 Chronic truancy.~~
  - 3.3 Open opposition to authority.
  - 3.4 Use of improper or profane language.
  - 3.5 Disruptive behaviour.
  - 3.6 Deliberate and wanton destruction of property.

- 3.7 Violation of the Local School Board Committee's smoking, alcohol and the use or possession of illegal drugs **procedure policy**. Actions that are injurious to the moral tone or well-being of the school or other individuals.

**3.8 — Chronic non-completion of schoolwork**

4. A teacher may suspend a student for a class period subject to the following:
  - 4.1 The teacher confers with the principal prior to making the suspension;
  - 4.2 The teacher informs the student about the suspension, its consequences and the reasons the suspension is being given;
  - 4.3 The student is provided with the opportunity to offer an explanation for his/her action;
  - 4.4 The teacher directs the student to the principal to remain under the supervision of the school until the student's normal dismissal time from that class;
  - 4.5 The teacher reports all of the circumstances surrounding the suspension to the principal in writing;
  - 4.6 The teacher informs the parents of the suspension and the circumstances surrounding it as soon as possible; and
  - 4.7 The teacher recommends follow-up designed to resolve the issue which led to the suspension.
  
5. A principal may suspend a student from class, from school, or from riding on a school bus subject to the following:
  - 5.1 The principal shall confer with the affected staff members or other individuals involved with the student to gather information about the student's misbehaviour.
  - 5.2 The principal shall prepare a written record of all actions taken in regard to the incident.
  - 5.3 The principal will inform the student about the proposed suspension, its consequences and the reason the suspension is being considered.
  - 5.4 The student will be given an opportunity to offer an explanation for the behaviour.
  - 5.5 If the principal is of the opinion that a suspension is warranted, the principal will inform the student of the reasons for the suspension and the length of the suspension.
  - 5.6 The principal shall inform the parents by telephone of the suspension, including reasons and length, and shall immediately report in writing all the circumstances of the suspension to the parents with a copy to the superintendent.



- 5.7 The principal shall, if requested, provide an opportunity to meet with the parents, and the student if the student is 16 years of age or older, to discuss the reasonableness of the suspension.
- 5.8 If the student is not to be reinstated within five school days of the date of suspension, the principal shall immediately report in writing all the circumstances of the suspension and provide a recommendation, ~~to the to the Local School Board Committee and to the Board office of the Superintendent.~~
- 5.9 The Principal may recommend that the board expel the student if the student has:
  - 5.9.1 Displayed an attitude of wilful, blatant and repeated refusal to comply with the provisions of the *School Act*; or
  - 5.9.2 Engaged in conduct that is injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school.
- 5.10 The ~~Board Local School Board Committee~~ shall within ten school days after the date of the suspension either re-instate or expel the student.

## 6. Expulsion of Students

- 6.1 Upon receiving the report from the principal and the principal's recommendation as noted in procedure 5.8 above, the ~~Board Local School Board Committee~~ shall within ten school days after the date of the suspension either reinstate or expel the student. ~~If the chairperson of the Local School Board states that the committee does not wish to deal with the matter, the matter will be dealt with by the board. The Superintendent shall immediately contact the Chairperson of the Local School Board Committee to determine if the Local School Board will be proceeding with the hearing in accordance with the School Act and the procedures as outlined in sections 2, 3, and 4 below.~~
- 6.2 Prior to the ~~Board board~~ making a decision on the recommendation of the principal, the student's parents and the student if the student is 16 years of age or older, shall be advised of the date, time and location of the board meeting at which the decision will be made and of their right to make a representation to the ~~Board board~~ with respect to the principal's recommendation. The student and the student's parents will also be advised of their right to attend the hearing with, and be represented by legal counsel.

7. The procedure to be followed in conducting the hearing into the recommendation will be as follows:

- 7.1 ~~The Board Local School Board Committee chair or a designated member of the board~~ will chair the meeting; outline the purpose of the meeting and the procedure to be followed.
  - 7.2 The principal will present the report documenting the details of the case and the recommendation to expel the student.
  - 7.3 The student and the student's parents will be given an opportunity to respond to the information presented and to add any additional information that they feel is relevant.
  - 7.4 ~~The Board members of the Local School Board Committee~~ will have the opportunity to ask questions of clarification from both the principal and the student and the student's parents.
  - 7.5 ~~The Local School Board Committee will meet, without either the administration or the student and the student's parents present, to discuss the case and the recommendation.~~
  - 7.6 ~~Should the Local School Board Committee require additional information, both parties will be requested to return in order to provide the requested information.~~
  - 7.7 ~~The Board Local School Board Committee~~ will then make a decision to either reinstate or expel the student.
  - 7.8 ~~The Board's Local School Board Committee's~~ decision shall be communicated in writing to the student and the student's parents with copies being provided to the principal and the superintendent.
8. If the ~~Board's Local School Board Committee's~~ decision is to expel the student; the following information must be included in the letter to the student and the student's parents:
    - 8.1 The length of the expulsion, which must be greater than 10 school days.
    - 8.2 The educational program to be provided to the student and the name of the individual to be contacted in order to make the necessary arrangements.
    - 8.3 The right of the student and the student's parents to request a review of the decision by the Minister of Learning. The Minister's telephone number and the mailing address of the Minister's office should be provided.
    - 8.4 That if the student had completed two-thirds of a course or program, the student may write the final exam(s) and receive a grade for the course or program. It is the responsibility of the student to become informed regarding the time and place where the examination will be written
  9. The Board ~~Local School Board Committee~~ may re-enrol a student that has been expelled.

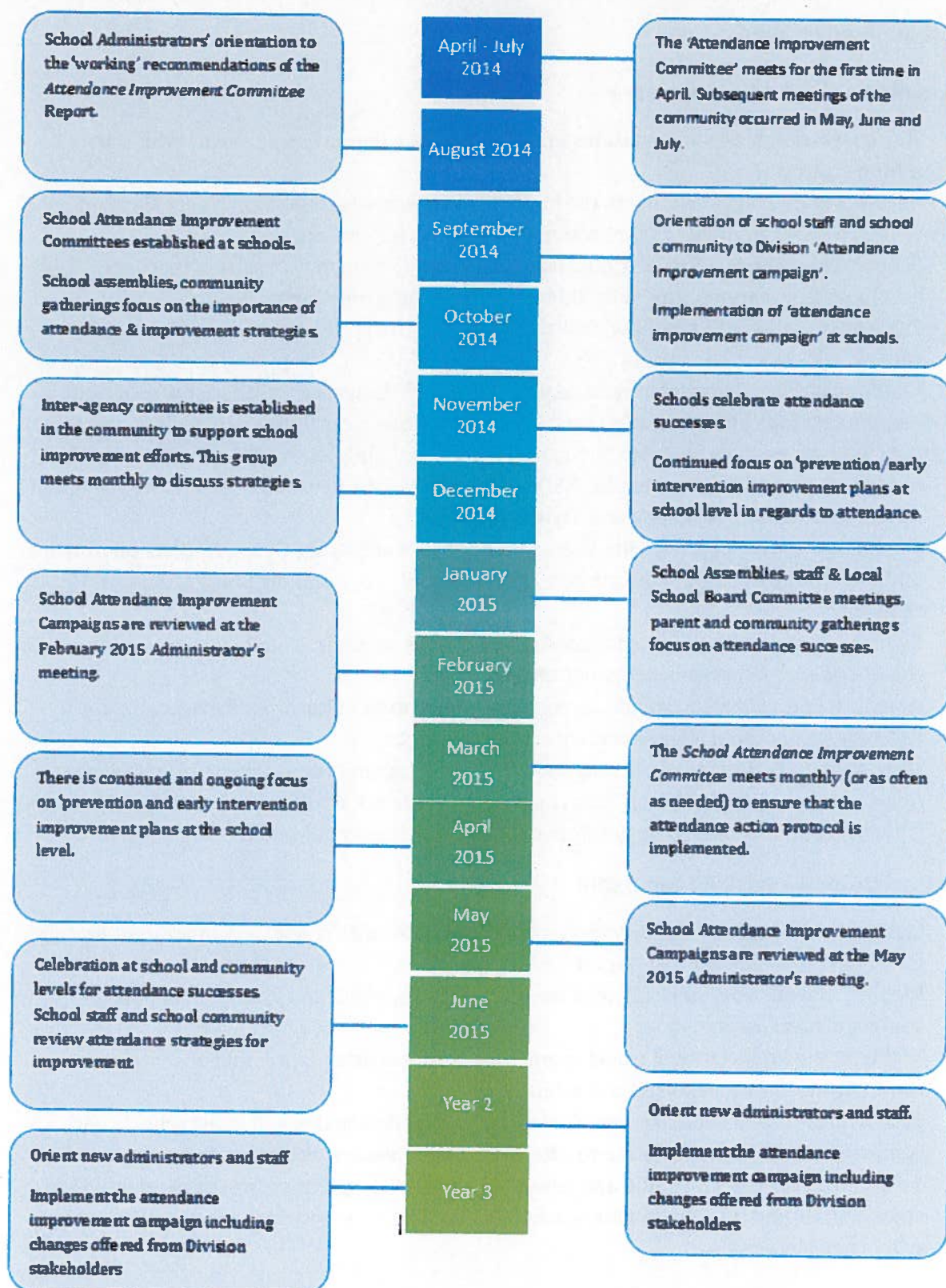
### Recommendation #29 – Attendance Improvement Budget

**The Attendance Improvement Committee recommends that a budget line be created to provide yearly financial support at the Division and school levels in order to carry out ongoing attendance improvement initiatives. It is further recommended that the following line items be included in a 'best-guess' attendance improvement budget for the remainder of the 2014-2015 school year:**

- **Radio Advertising**
- **Newspaper Advertising**
- **Brochures**
- **Promotional Materials**
- **Yearly Certificates for gold, silver and diamond Awards**
- **Year-end Recognition for Schools**
- **School-based Attendance Initiative Funding**
- ***Attendance Committee Travel/Expenses***

**Moving forward, the allocation of monies to support division-wide attendance improvement will need to be tracked, reviewed and adjusted on a yearly basis to align with the Division's fiscal reporting requirements and long-term funding sustainability.**

## Attendance Improvement Initiative Timeline-at-a-Glance





# Attendance Improvement Initiative Timeline

## August-September 2014

### Schools & School Administrators

- Review working recommendations of the *Attendance Improvement Report* with school administrators.
- Layout key messages relating to the importance of school attendance "Every Day Counts ..." at first student assembly (Share common definition for chronic absence).
- Schools to establish a *School Attendance Committee* (group may consist of teachers, school administrator, parents, students, Elder and community members).
- Develop or build onto school-wide attendance incentive programs (refer to toolkit for ideas).
- Communications Coordinator and central office staff designates will assist schools with a communications plan in relation to *Attendance Improvement Initiative* (creating posters, developing messages for radio and newspaper advertising, letters, brochures, pamphlets, news articles, and information for NSD61 website, NSD61 newsletter, school websites and school newsletters, Facebook and Twitter pages).
- School staff to work closely with literacy supervisors and leads, CTS/CTF Division principal and the FNMI Director of Education to ensure school programming is engaging and relevant.
- Familiarize staff with the *Attendance Action Protocol* as outlined in Recommendation #13 of the *Attendance Improvement Committee Report*.
- At month end, schools to submit attendance information to Records Management Clerk (average daily school attendance, chronic absence, etc.).
- Use Community Engagement Framework to garner community support for *Attendance Improve Campaign* (i.e. this process could begin at the school's first community engagement gathering and continue to be developed throughout the school year).

### Central Office & Division Leadership

- Share work of the *Attendance Improvement Committee* with school administrators during New Teacher Orientation in August.
- Identify 'chronic absenteeism' as an issue and its immediate and long term impact on student achievement.
- Highlight the importance of tracking and monitoring of attendance; that absenteeism is routinely measured, reported and acted upon.
- Communications Coordinator and central office staff designates will assist schools with a communications plan in relation to *Attendance Improvement Initiative* (creating posters, developing messages for radio and newspaper advertising, letters, brochures, pamphlets, news articles and information for NSD61 website, NSD61 newsletter, school websites and school newsletters).

- Discuss and familiarize staff with the *Attendance Action Protocol* as outlined in Recommendation #13 of the *Attendance Improvement Committee Report*.
- Explain what is included in the attendance toolkit and how to use it.

## October 2014

### Schools & School Administrators

- Layout key messages relating to the importance of school attendance “Every Day Counts ...” at second assembly with staff, students and parents.
- Communications Coordinator and central office staff designates will assist schools with a communications plan in relation to *Attendance Improvement Initiative* (creating posters, developing messages for radio and newspaper advertising, letters, brochures, pamphlets, news articles, information for NSD61 website and NSD61 newsletter, school websites and school newsletters, Facebook and Twitter pages).
- *School Attendance Committee* creates a mechanism for gathering baseline data that could be used as a comparison for tracking attendance success.
- Work to create an Elder’s program to support attendance and achievement efforts.
- School administrators will be responsible and hold staff accountable for tracking and monitoring attendance and addressing issues when they arise.
- *School Attendance Improvement Committee* meets on a monthly basis (or as needed) to ensure that *Attendance Action Protocol* is being implemented.
- School staff and the *School Attendance Committee* work to develop a return-to-school transitioning plan for students who have a history of chronic absenteeism.
- School administrators will inform Local School Board Committees of attendance progress and successes monthly.
- Schools continue to reach out to the school community to support school attendance by organizing gatherings and opportunities for members to connect and dialogue about how attendance be improved. At the end of this gathering, another planning meeting is organized for the following month.
- The school administrator meets with key members of the community to talk about how best to organize monthly inter-agency meetings with a focus on school attendance, achievement and community wellness.
- Select schools administer ‘Tell Them From Me’ (TTFM) surveys. The fall/winter survey window is October 14 – December 5, 2014. The administration, TTFM School Coordinators and staff work together to glean insights from student data to improve programming.
- Annual Education Results Reports (AERR) to be completed by school and forwarded to the Superintendent of Schools identifying key attendance improvement strategies.
- Discussion commences between administrators, kindergarten teachers/instructors and the Supervisor of Student Services to develop strategy for improving kindergarten attendance.
- At month end, schools to submit attendance information to Records Management Clerk (average daily school attendance, chronic absence, etc.).

### Central Office and Division Leadership

- Administrators reflect on school attendance 'successes and challenges' at the October Administrators' Meeting.
- *Attendance Improvement Committee* seeks feedback from Northland School Division stakeholders on 'working' recommendations within the *Attendance Improvement Initiative – Every Day Counts Report*.
- Communications Coordinator and central office staff designates will assist schools with a communications plan in relation to *Attendance Improvement Initiative* (creating posters, developing messages for radio and newspaper advertising, letters, brochures, pamphlets, news articles, information for NSD61 website, NSD61 newsletter, school websites and school newsletters).
- Central office staff designates to work with schools to make sure they monitor and track attendance properly and address issues when they arise.
- Central office staff designates to assist schools with Annual Education Results Report (AERR) are to be submitted to the Superintendent of Schools and the report must include key attendance improvement strategies).
- Supervisor of Student Services will assist schools to develop a kindergarten attendance strategy.
- Select schools administer 'Tell Them From Me' (TTFM) surveys – fall/winter survey window is October 14 – December 5, 2014. The administration, TTFM School Coordinator and staff work together to glean insights from student data to improve programming.

### November-December 2014

#### Schools & School Administrators

- Continue to reinforce the importance of school attendance at assemblies.
- Continue to celebrate success stories at staff meetings, Local School Board Committee Meetings, assemblies, parent and community gatherings, newsletters, website, Facebook and Twitter.
- Communications Coordinator and central office staff designates will assist schools with a communications plan in relation to *Attendance Improvement Initiative* (creating posters, developing messages for radio and newspaper advertising, letters, brochures, pamphlets, news articles, information for NSD61 website, NSD61 newsletter, school websites and school newsletters, Facebook and Twitter pages).
- School Administrators' will be responsible and hold staff accountable for tracking and monitoring attendance and addressing issues when they arise.
- *School Attendance Improvement Committee* meets on a monthly basis (or as needed) to ensure that *Attendance Action Protocol* is being implemented.
- *Division Attendance Improvement Committee* seeks feedback from Northland School Division stakeholders on 'working' recommendations.
- At the monthly staff meeting, engage staff in an attendance strategy planning session with a focus on 'What's working?' 'What's not working?' – with the idea of reflecting on progress thus far and 'twiggling' in areas for improvement and effectiveness.

- Select schools administer 'Tell Them From Me' (TTFM) surveys – fall/winter survey window is October 14 – December 5, 2014. The administration, TTFM School Coordinators and staff work together to glean insights from student data to improve programming.
- The principal organizes an informal/formal gathering with parents and members of the community to discuss the school's achievement and attendance successes and challenges.
- Discussion commences between administrators, kindergarten teachers/instructors and the Supervisor of Student Services to develop strategy for improving kindergarten attendance.
- Schools to submit attendance information to Records Management Clerk (average daily school attendance, chronic absence, etc.).
- The school administrator meets with key members of the community to formalize the establishment of an inter-agency group. The group will decide on setting a common meeting time once a month and venue.

### **Central Office and Division Leadership**

- Communications Coordinator and central office staff designates continue to work with schools to develop an effective communications plan in relation to Attendance Improvement Initiative (creating posters, developing messages for radio and newspaper advertising, letters, brochures, pamphlets, news articles, information for NSD61 website, NSD61 newsletter, school websites and school newsletters, Facebook and Twitter pages).
- Central office staff designates to work with schools to ensure attendance is monitored and tracked and that absence issues are being addressed.
- Supervisor of Student Services works to assist schools with their kindergarten attendance strategy.
- Select schools administer 'Tell Them From Me' (TTFM) surveys – fall/winter survey window is October 14 – December 5, 2014. The administration, TTFM School Coordinators and staff work together to glean insights from student data to improve programming.
- Work with schools on providing school-based professional development in the area of 'building a positive school climate'.

## **January-February 2015**

### **School Administrators**

- Continue to reinforce the importance of school attendance at assemblies.
- Continue to celebrate success stories at staff meetings, Local School Board Committee Meetings, assemblies, parent and community gatherings, newsletters, website, Facebook, Twitter.
- *Attendance Improvement Initiative* reviewed at February Administrators' Meeting.
- School Administrators' will be responsible and hold staff accountable for tracking and monitoring attendance and addressing issues when they arise.
- *School Attendance Improvement Committee* meets on a monthly basis (or as needed) to ensure that *Attendance Action Protocol* is being implemented.
- The principal organizes an informal/formal gathering with parents and members of the community to discuss the school's achievement and attendance successes and challenges.



- The inter-agency group meet to develop strategies/initiatives to support attendance, achievement and community wellness efforts.
- Schools reflect on ways to improve on attendance improvement efforts at the school level.

#### **Central Office and Division Leadership**

- Central office staff designates to work with schools to make sure they monitor and track attendance properly and address issues when they arise.
- Establish a feedback system for ongoing input into streamlining and improving the division-wide attendance.
- Communicate with principals and the school communities our attendance successes with division-wide successes.
- *Attendance Improvement Initiative* reviewed at February Administrators' Meeting
- Communications Coordinator will work with schools to showcases successes in relation to student attendance.
- *Division Attendance Improvement Committee* submits the *Attendance Improvement Initiative – Every Day Counts Report* to the Northland Board for approval.

#### **March-April 2015**

##### **School Administrators**

- Continue to reinforce the importance of school attendance at assemblies.
- Continue to celebrate success stories at staff meetings, Local School Board Committee Meetings, assemblies, parent and community gatherings, newsletters, website, Facebook, Twitter.
- *School Attendance Improvement Committee* meets on a monthly basis (or as needed) to ensure that *Attendance Action Protocol* is being implemented.
- The principal organizes an informal/formal gathering with parents and members of the community to discuss the school's achievement and attendance successes and challenges.
- The inter-agency group meet to develop strategies/initiatives to support attendance, achievement and community wellness efforts.

##### **Central Office and Division Leadership**

- Central office staff designates continue to work with schools to ensure attendance is monitored and tracked and that there are interventions for absences.
- Establish a feedback system for ongoing input into streamlining and improving the division-wide attendance.
- Communicate with principals and the school communities our attendance successes with division-wide successes.
- Communications Coordinator will work with schools to showcases successes in relation to student attendance.

#### **May-June 2015**

##### **School Administrators**

- At Administrators' Meeting in May 2015, there is critical reflection on the attendance improvement efforts – 'What's working? What's Not Working?
- Continue to reinforce the importance of school attendance at assemblies.
- Continue to celebrate success stories at staff meetings, Local School Board Committee Meetings, assemblies, parent and community gathering, newsletters, website or Facebook.
- School Administrators' will be responsible and hold staff accountable for tracking and monitoring attendance and addressing issues when they arise.
- *School Attendance Improvement Committee* meets on a monthly basis (or as needed) to ensure that *Attendance Action Protocol* is being implemented.
- The principal organizes an informal/formal gathering with parents and members of the community to discuss the school's achievement and attendance successes and challenges.
- The inter-agency group meet to develop strategies/initiatives to support attendance, achievement and community wellness efforts. This group participates in year-end celebrations at the school.
- Schools and students are rewarded with their attendance improvement efforts at year end celebrations.

#### **Central Office and Division Leadership**

- Central office staff designates continue to work with schools to ensure attendance is monitored and tracked and that there are interventions for absences.
- Establish a feedback system for ongoing input into streamlining and improving the division-wide attendance.
- Communicate with principals and the school communities our attendance successes with division-wide successes.
- Communications Coordinator will work with schools to showcases successes in relation to student attendance.

#### **Year 2015-2016**

- Orient new administrators and staff
- Implement the Attendance Improvement Initiative for the new school year including approved changes offered from division stakeholders

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# Appendix 1

## Procedure 301 – Student Attendance

### Background

Regular attendance by students in all of their classes enhances their performance and contributes substantially to their education progress. While students have a right to access an educational program they also have a responsibility to attend classes regularly.

The *School Act* requires students to attend school regularly and punctually and identifies circumstances under which an absence may be deemed as excusable. The superintendent has been designated as the attendance officer for the division.

### Procedures

1. The principal shall ensure that an accurate record of student attendance is kept for every student enrolled in the school.
2. Teachers will monitor the attendance of students on an ongoing basis.
3. It is the responsibility of the teacher to make every reasonable effort to inform the parent as soon as a student's attendance becomes a concern. This could be done by a telephone call or by sending a note home.
4. If a teacher judges the attendance of a student to be unacceptable, or if the student is absent 20% of the days in any one-month or more, the teacher will report this attendance information to the principal.
5. Once the principal receives a report of poor attendance on the part of a student, the principal will, in consultation with the teacher and/or school/ community liaison worker and/or parent and/or Local School Board Committee, take appropriate actions to attempt to improve the student's attendance.
6. If the local school attempts at improving a student's attendance fail, the principal shall report the case to the superintendent. This should happen no later than two months after the problem was first identified.
7. The superintendent will contact the parents of the student with poor attendance and inform them of their responsibilities and encourage them to ensure acceptable attendance on the part of their child. The superintendent shall also inform the parents of the consequences of the continuation of poor attendance by the student.
8. If after a reasonable amount of time, attendance remains at an unacceptable level, the matter may be referred to the Attendance Board or other appropriate authority.
9. The principal shall advise parents of the following:



- 9.1 The need, if possible, to schedule medical, dental or other such related appointments at times that do not conflict with the regular hours of instruction.
- 9.2 That students are responsible to cover the material taken in class during their absence.
- 9.3 The need to phone or send a written explanation to the school to give reasons for the student's absence from class.

**10. The following shall apply to students enrolled in high school programs:**

- 10.1 Students who accumulate ten unexcused absences in a class shall be advised that they are in danger of not receiving credits in the class. The parents of the student and the superintendent shall also be notified in writing, that the student has accumulated ten unexcused absences.
- 10.2 A student who has been absent for over 30% of the days in a semester for any reason shall be eligible to receive credits for the courses only after a special review of their cases by the superintendent and principal.

**BM: #21321/04 (Aug. 28/04)**

## Appendix 2

### SCHOOL ATTENDANCE COMMITTEE Sample Agenda

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Meeting Focus (i.e. school attendance incentives, review of student absences and follow-up interventions etc.):

\_\_\_\_\_

Person responsible for recording minutes and forwarding to Central Office \_\_\_\_\_

#### AGENDA:

1. Meeting Attendees
2. Review / Discuss Previous Meeting Minutes for follow-up actions
3. Report on Communication Messaging with the School Community and Community
  - a. Importance of Regular Attendance
  - b. Report on most recent inter-agency meetings by principal
  - c. Up and coming parent / community gatherings
4. Review / Discuss Current Attendance Successes
5. Review / Discuss Current Attendance Issues
  - a. General review of student red flags and follow-up actions needed and staff responsible
  - b. Are classroom and school attendance protocols working? If not, why not? Change or refine if necessary
  - c. Other
6. Future Actions of the Committee
  - a. Up and coming school events and parent and community gatherings – decide on messaging to students at assemblies, parents at school gatherings, community gatherings and events
7. Next Meeting
  - a. Set date, time and place

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**COLIN KELLY**  
**TRUSTEE OF THE BOARD**

**DATE: JANUARY 30, 2015**

**PRESENTED BY:** DONNA BARRETT, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

**SUBJECT:** POLICY 10, BOARD DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

**ORIGINATOR:** TRUDY RASMUSON, SECRETARY TREASURER

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Board of Trustees accept the attached changes to Policy 10, Board Delegation of Authority, in principle.

\*\*\*\*\*

**CURRENT SITUATION:** Policies and Procedures related to the governance and day to day operation of School Food Services need to be revised to align and better reflect current direction set by the Northland School Division Review Team Recommendations, priorities and goals. NSD has two policies that govern School Food Services:  
Policy 10 – Board Delegation of Authority (6)  
Policy 15 – School Lunch Programs  
These procedures are out of step with revisions to Policy 7 – Local School Board Committees.

**BACKGROUND:** The first School Lunch Program started at Conklin School in October 1973. Four native communities were selected as a result of a request by the Metis Association of Alberta to the Alberta Government to fund a nutritional hot lunch program for children in northern Alberta.

The Program was founded on a community development concept allowing individual programs to be managed and operated by people in each of the designated communities. It

initially operated under Alberta Health, transferred to Alberta Education, then was absorbed by Northland School Division in the 1990s. There are currently 26 School Lunch Programs operating in 29 communities.

School Food Services operates as a separate entity within Northland School Division. It provides consulting services for 26 hot lunch programs (24 of which are Northland schools) and employs approximately 65 kitchen staff / book keepers, 3 office staff and 1 driver.

**OPTIONS:**

Receive as information



**Board Delegation  
Of Authority**

The *School Act* allows for the Board to delegate certain of its responsibilities and powers to others.

1. The Board authorizes the Superintendent to do any act to exercise any power that the Board may do, or is required to do, or may exercise, except those matters which in accordance with section 61 (2) of the *School Act*, cannot be delegated. This delegation of authority to the Superintendent specifically:
  - 1.1 Includes any authority or responsibility set out in the *School Act* and regulations as well as authority or responsibility set out in other legislation or regulations;
  - 1.2 Includes the ability to enact Administrative Procedures, practices or regulations required to carry out this authority; and also
  - 1.3 Includes the ability to sub-delegate this authority and responsibility as required.

Notwithstanding the above, the Board reserves to itself the authority to make decisions, on specific matters requiring Board approval. This reserved authority of the Board is set out in Board policies, as amended from time to time.

Further, the Board requires that any new provincial, regional or local initiatives must be initially brought to the Board for discussion and determination of decision-making authority.

2. The Superintendent is authorized to suspend a teacher from the performance of the teacher's duties or to terminate the services of a teacher. The suspension or termination shall be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the *School Act*, and the decision shall not be appealable to the Board.
3. The Superintendent is delegated the authority to develop Administrative Procedures that are consistent with provincial policies and procedures for the following program areas:
  - 3.1 Locally Developed / Acquired and Authorized Junior and Senior High School Complementary Courses
  - 3.2 Special Education

**Board Delegation  
Of Authority**

---

- 3.3 Services for Students and Children
  - 3.4 Home Education
  - 3.5 Early Childhood Services
  - 3.6 Outreach Programs
  - 3.7 Integrated Occupational Programs
  - 3.8 Off-Campus Education
  - 3.9 English as a Second Language
  - 3.10 Guidance and Counseling
  - 3.11 School-Based Decision Making
  - 3.12 School Authority Accountability
  - 3.13 Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation
  - 3.14 **School Food Services**
4. The Superintendent is delegated the authority to deal with appeals in accordance with the requirements of the *School Act* with the exception of the following which will be delegated to the Personnel and Education Committee of the Northland Board or another body.
- 4.1 Placement of a student in a special education program
  - 4.2 The expulsion of a student
  - 4.3 The amount and payment of fees and costs
5. The Superintendent is delegated the responsibility for developing role descriptions and staffing below the senior levels in the Division.
6. The Superintendent is delegated the authority to develop Administrative Procedures in those operational and administrative areas of the Division that the Northland Board has not chosen to retain for itself.
- 6.1 The Superintendent is required to develop an administrative procedure to fulfill Board obligations created by any federal legislation or provincial legislation other than the *School Act*.

**Board Delegation  
Of Authority**

- 
- ~~7. The Local School Board Committee is delegated the authority to develop the overall policy under which the Local School Lunch Program Association will operate within the school facility. It is to be understood that such policies will be consistent with those of the Northland Board and the Administrative Procedures established for the Division.~~
7. The Personnel and Education Committee is delegated the authority to serve as the Northland Board's Appeal Committee for those matters not expressly retained by the Northland Board, or delegated to the Superintendent or another body.
8. The Northland Board has delegated its signing authority to individuals holding designated positions in the Division and in accordance with the following:
- 8.1 Cheques for specified items shall be under signature plate.
    - 8.1.1 All cheques prepared to accommodate provincial and federal regulations will be under signature plate.
    - 8.1.2 All electronic transactions issued to Chartered Banks/Trust Companies, that are prepared to accommodate direct deposit of payroll earnings, and Accounts Payable Vendors, will be under signature plate.
    - 8.1.3 Electronic transfers shall be pre-approved by the Assistant Secretary-Treasurer.
    - 8.1.4 All Accounts Payable submissions shall be approved by the Department Head or Principal and included as a standing agenda item for review and ratification by the Northland Board.
  - 8.2 Positions designated to sign contracts are as follows:
    - 8.2.1 Superintendent for contracts with individual teachers.
    - 8.2.2 Human Resources Department upon the recommendation of the Principal for school instructional assistants.
    - 8.2.3 Human Resources for hiring of central office support staff.
    - 8.2.4 Secretary-Treasurer and Board Chairman for corporate contracts.

**Board Delegation  
Of Authority**

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- 8.2.5 Secretary-Treasurer and Board Chairman for contracts with the Alberta Teachers' Association.
  - 8.2.6 Secretary-Treasurer for contracts to purchase supplies and materials.
  - 8.2.7 Human Resources Department upon the recommendation of the principal for support staff, caretakers and bus drivers.
9. The Superintendent is delegated the authority to maintain a comprehensive and efficient system of personnel records.

Legal Reference: Sections 123, 61, 105, School Act – RSA 2000  
Section 11, Northland School Act



## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**TO: COLIN KELLY,  
TRUSTEE OF THE BOARD**

**DATE: JANUARY 30, 2015**

**PRESENTED BY: DONNA BARRETT, SUPERINTENDENT**

**SUBJECT: PROCEDURE 104, EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURE DUE TO EXTREME  
WEATHER CONDITIONS.**

**ORIGINATOR: TRUDY RASMUSON, SECRETARY-TREASURER  
CARMEN GEISSER-SMITH, TRANSPORTATION MANAGER**

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
That the Board of Trustees accept the attached changes to Procedure 104 Emergency School Closure Due to Extreme Weather Conditions, as information.

\*\*\*\*\*

**CURRENT SITUATION:** Procedure 104 Emergency School Closure Due to Extreme Weather Conditions contains wording that is outdated with regards to Northland School Division School Buses.

**BACKGROUND:** Northland School Division Transportation standardized the use of school buses in 2004 when last of the horses and wagons were retired. Northland has not reviewed Procedure 104 to reflect the change.

**OPTIONS:** The proposed change would remove reference to wagon drivers and insert wording to ensure the safety of students. Please see attached.



## Emergency School Closure Due to Extreme Weather Conditions

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### Background

There are times over the course of the year that extreme weather conditions create unsafe conditions for students to attend and/or remain at school.

### Procedures

1. The principal and Local School Board Committee shall advise parents that they are responsible for the decision to keep students at home when weather conditions are sufficiently hazardous and they believe that their children would be at risk.
2. The Local School Board Committee shall develop a local policy and procedures regarding student attendance during extreme weather conditions. The development of a local policy must be made in consultation with the principal and procedures be developed for informing parents, bus ~~and wagon~~ drivers and the principal of the school.
3. Schools shall remain open with staff on duty regardless of weather conditions and the number of students in school.
4. Should children arrive at the school ~~even though the Local School Board Committee has decided that parents may keep their children at home,~~ the children arriving at school are to be instructed for the day.
5. Students and staff may be sent home after commencement at the discretion of the principal if:
  - 5.1 Weather conditions may threaten their safety if they remain longer in school (this is a concern with students who live some distance from school).
  - 5.2 Failure of plumbing, heating or ventilation installations occur, of a nature likely to be detrimental to the safety of students or staff.
  - 5.3 The health or safety of students is endangered.
6. In case of 5, above, the principal shall:



**Emergency School  
Closure Due to  
Extreme Weather  
Conditions**

---

- 6.1 Attempt to contact the parents of the students to advise them of the early return of their children. A telephone fan out system is recommended. **In such cases, the Principal will NOT permit any elementary students to leave the school until the parents/guardians have been contacted.**
- 6.2 Notify the superintendent of this decision by telephone if possible.
- 6.3 In any event, immediately notify the superintendent as soon as possible in writing of the circumstances leading to the decision.

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**COLIN KELLY  
TRUSTEE OF THE BOARD**

**DATE: JANUARY 30, 2015**

**PRESENTED BY:** DONNA BARRETT, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

**SUBJECT:** ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION – FOLLOW UP  
LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE MINUTES RECEIVED

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**ORIGINATOR:** DONNA BARRETT, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

That the Board of Trustees approve of the follow up action taken by Administration with respect to local board minutes received, as attached.



Meeting	Date of Meeting	Agenda Item	Task
LSBC (09/16/2014)	11/13/2014	Trout Lake	Motion 895649 To sell the tube style TVs for \$20 each
LSBC (09/16/2014)	11/13/2014	Trout Lake	Motion 895648 To dispose of broken chairs, school desk and broken TV
LSBC (10/20/2014)	11/13/2014	Janvier	ECS position Motion 14-40 motion to keep Denise Janvier on as ECS instructor.
LSBC (11/04/2014)	11/13/2014	J.F. Dion	Business arising from minutes: 346-11/14 Motion to have the NSD repair our playground to bring it up to code, as per the OH and S safety report.
LSBC (08/25/2014)	9/24/2014	Gift Lake	Motion #380.14 Gordon moves to accept and receive as information the discussion regarding head lice and the request to implement a survey in the community which will provide information and gather data regarding a possible head lice policy for Gift Lake School. The response will decide whether a policy will be implemented for Gift Lake School.
LSBC (09/15/2014)	10/24/2014	ADCS	Principal's Report b: Motion 521.14.09 Administrators' Days In lieu
LSBC (10/23/2014)	10/24/2014	Gift Lake	Motion 385.14 Gordon moves to set as per policy (10 days) as days in lieu for Gift Lake school administration for the 2014-2015 school year.

## Superintendent's Report January 30, 2015

### November, 2014

24	Wabasca	Literacy Priority Focus Group Meeting at St. Theresa School
26	Peace River	Teleconference with Office of the Auditor General

### December, 2014

1	Athabasca	Outreach/Virtual School Meeting
2	Wabasca	Long Term Education Planning Meeting for Wabasca-Desmarais
4	Peace River	KTC-NSD Regional/Virtual High School Meeting and Joint Learning Services Team Meeting
11	Fort McKay	Fort McKay First Nation Meeting
	Fort Chipewyan	Community and School Visit
12	Fort Chipewyan	Community and School Visit
15	Peace River	KTC-NSD Regional Virtual/High School Meeting
17	Fort Chipewyan	Funeral
19	Anzac	Anzac Community School and Bill Woodward School Visit
	Janvier	Father R. Perin School Visit
	Conklin	Conklin Community School Visit
20	Edmonton	Housing Meeting with Alberta Education

### January, 2015

12	Atikameg	KTC-NSD Regional Virtual/High School Meeting
13	Peace River	Division Leadership Team Meeting
14	Grouard	Gift Lake Jr. High Visit
	Wabasca	Long Term Education Planning Meeting for Wabasca-Desmarais
16	Peace River	Teleconference with Office of the Auditor General
	Grouard	Grouard School Visit
19	Peace River	Committee Meetings and Agenda Review
20	Grande Prairie	Meeting with the Education Minister
21	Gift Lake	Gift Lake New School Planning and Old School Demolition Planning Meeting
22	Edmonton	Meeting with the Office of the Auditor General
23	Fort McMurray	Meeting with Athabasca Tribal Council
26	Edmonton	Meeting with Alberta Education
27	Grande Prairie	Transition Planning Meeting
28	Grande Prairie	ASBA
29	Peace River	KTC-NSD Principal Meeting
30	Peace River	Corporate Board Meeting

### Committed Dates

#### February, 2015

1-6	Hay River and Fort Smith, NWT	South Slave Divisional Education Tour - Literacy Priority Focus Group
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ALBERTA  
SENIORS

*Office of the Minister*  
*MLA, Athabasca – Sturgeon – Redwater*

NOV 04 2014

Dr. Donna Barrett  
Superintendent of Schools  
Northland School Division No. 61  
9809 - 77 Avenue  
P.O. Bag 1400  
Peace River, AB T8S 1V2

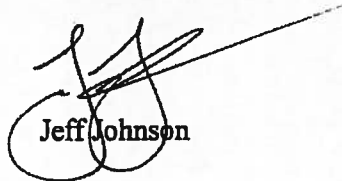
Dear Dr. Barrett:

I wanted to take a moment to express my gratitude for your invaluable contributions during my time as Minister of Education.

Your dedication to improving Alberta's education system and ensuring our children have every opportunity to reach their full potential has been noted by both me and my staff. I know the new Minister of Education will appreciate your hard work as much as I did, and will consider himself lucky to have someone as diligent and bright as you working for the Alberta's next generation.

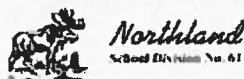
I'm grateful for having the opportunity to work with you and I wish you the best in all your future endeavours.

Sincerely,



Jeff Johnson

**FILED IN  
DOCUSHARE**



Donna Barrett &lt;donna.barrett@nsd61.ca&gt;

---

## Release of Pilot Student Learning Assessment Results

1 message

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Education Deputy Minister <EducationDeputyMinister@gov.ab.ca>

Wed, Dec 3, 2014 at 3:38 PM

**To: Superintendents of Public, Separate, Francophone and Charter School Boards**

As you know, the Grade 3 Student Learning Assessment (SLA) pilot administration took place September 29 to October 24, 2014. Alberta Education wishes to thank all those involved in piloting this new and innovative assessment. The pilot administration proved to be an excellent learning experience for students, teachers, administrators, school jurisdictions and Alberta Education staff.

In terms of validity, all SLA test items undergo rigorous field testing, teacher validation processes and review by Alberta Education curriculum staff to ensure the content validity of the assessment instrument. As well, the SLAs were scored using Item Response Theory (rather than the Classical Test Theory used for Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Examinations), thereby resulting in student scores that are more precise than those for Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Examinations. I am also pleased to let you know SLA pilot results demonstrated that the digital assessment meets the higher boundary of psychometric standards for reliability. This indicates we are on the right track as we move forward.

While every effort was made to ensure the success of this pilot, we realize there were variations in classroom experiences. I am aware of local issues that impacted the administration of the SLAs. In some cases, these issues may have impacted the student's ability to demonstrate knowledge and skills. Given this limitation, report interpretation for the pilot is best accomplished through conversation between parent, student and teacher.

On December 3, 2014, SLA results will be available to teachers through the SLA digital dashboard. I encourage teachers to share these results with parents through conversations. If there were local administration issues during the pilot, these should also be communicated to parents for their awareness. It is incumbent upon teachers to share the SLA student results with parents.

Parent, school and authority reports, originally planned to be released in mid-December, will not be released by the ministry during the first year of the Grade 3 pilot. Should parents or guardians request their child's results from the ministry, a hard copy of the SLA digital dashboard will be provided to them.

We want to ensure that during the two-year pilot, the focus remains on improving the assessment instrument. The second year of the Grade 3 pilot administration will allow further opportunities to ensure that the SLA is a valuable tool that meets its three purposes:

- improve student learning (primary purpose);
- enhance instruction for students; and

P. 284

- assure Albertans the education system is meeting the needs of students and achieves the outcomes of the *Ministerial Order on Student Learning*.

In communicating with teachers about the SLA pilot, you may wish to use the sample content provided below:

*Your students recently participated in the SLA pilot administration of the Grade 3 Student Learning Assessment. Alberta Education indicates student results are now available through the SLA digital dashboard for use by teachers.*

*The primary purpose of the SLA is to improve student learning. The SLA is also intended to help enhance instruction and assure Albertans the education system meets the needs of students and achieves the outcomes of the Ministerial Order on Student Learning. While every effort was made to ensure the success of this pilot, we realize there were variations in classroom experiences. Given this limitation, report interpretation for the pilot is best accomplished through conversation between parent, student and teacher. I ask that you have a constructive conversation with your students and parents about the students' results so you can collaboratively continue to support their learning.*

You may wish to use this sample content in communicating with parents:

*Your child participated in the pilot administration of the Grade 3 Student Learning Assessment.*

*The primary purpose of the Student Learning Assessment is to improve student learning. The SLA is also intended to enhance instruction and assure Albertans the education system meets the needs of the students and achieves the outcomes of the Ministerial Order on Student Learning. While every effort was made to ensure the success of this pilot, we realize there were variations in classroom experiences. Given this limitation, report interpretation for the pilot is best accomplished through conversation between parent, student and teacher. I encourage you to have a constructive conversation about your child's results with your child's teacher, centred on how we can continue to work together to support your child's learning.*

I appreciate your assistance in sharing this information.

Sincerely,

Gene Williams

Acting Deputy Minister of Education

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## New schools remain 'top priority' despite looming fiscal hole, says education minister

BY TREVOR HOWELL, CALGARY HERALD DECEMBER 23, 2014



Gavin Young, Calgary Herald CALGARY, AB: DECEMBER 22, 2014 - Alberta Education Minister Gordon Dirks speaks with the Calgary Young/Calgary Herald) (For City section story by Licia Corbella) Trax# 00061342A

Photograph by: Gavin Young, Calgary Herald

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Alberta's Education Minister says school construction will remain a top priority for the provincial government despite dire warnings by Premier Jim Prentice that a looming "fiscal hole" could postpone capital projects.

"It's understandable that in that kind of an environment that all capital projects would be reviewed that shouldn't be a surprise to anybody," Gordon Dirks said Monday in a year-end interview with the Herald editorial board.

"We're committed to do everything we can to follow through on our commitments for new school construction," he added. "Clearly that needs to be in context of fiscal prudence, but our commitment is to follow through."

That commitment includes an ambitious three-stage plan to build and modernize 230 schools by 2018, including the final phase announced during the October byelections in which the premier, Dirks and Infrastructure Minister Manmeet Bhullar announced the allocation of \$43 million to kick-start planning of 55 new schools and 20 modernizations that could cost \$2 billion.

But last week saw Prentice suggest plummeting oil prices could result in a \$6.25-billion "fiscal hole" in the upcoming budget and a \$5-billion shortfall the following year and force the province to defer construction of new schools promised during the October byelection campaign.

"We're going to do everything we can to deliver on the commitments that we've made while managing on a prudent, fiscal manner," said Dirks, adding the government was open to "reasonable managed debt" for capital projects.

"We have a province that has got almost 650,000 students, a projected enrolment increase of three per cent for next year," he continued. "And even if Alberta's growth rate diminishes somewhat because of the energy world we're still going to have new students coming to our province and we're going to continue to have to build capacity to meet the growing student enrolment needs."

In addition to building new schools, Dirks said the province would continue to phase out provincial achievement tests (which were "never helpful and never should have been used to actually assess individual students," he said) for students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 in favour of student learning assessments over the next three to five years.

He also said discussions with stakeholders about gay-straight alliances (GSAs) in schools would continue after Prentice suddenly hit pause on the contentious Bill 10, legislation that could have forced students to hold alliance meetings off school property if local school boards objected to their presence.

Bill 10 was introduced by the Tory government to counter Liberal MLA Laurie Blakeman's Bill 202, which would have mandated gay-straight alliances at a student's request.

Dirks, who was heavily criticized during the Bill 10 debate, said he has clearly expressed his support for gay-straight alliances since he was appointed education minister this fall, but added school boards play

a significant role in determining what "happens in the schools that are under their legal and supervisory jurisdiction."

Since Prentice put Bill 10 on pause, Dirks said he's met with stakeholders, including LGBTQ and child advocates, who have reiterated "GSAs are valuable for students."

"Students should be able to benefit from having access to a GSA," he said.

But perhaps the biggest challenge facing the Alberta government will be improving high school graduation and drop out rates among the province's First Nations, Metis and Inuit students.

Provincially, the three-year high school completion rate has steadily improved since 2009, from 71.5 per cent to 74.9 per cent. Similarly, dropout rates fell to 3.3 per cent. But Alberta's First Nations, Metis and Inuit students continue to lag behind on both categories, with the high school graduation rate of 43.6 per cent and a dropout rate of 7.8 per cent.

Prentice, who also serves as minister of aboriginal relations, promised in the throne speech to close the "unacceptable gaps in education achievement between aboriginal and non-aboriginal students."

"We know the funding envelope coming from the federal government does not equate to the funding envelope that we provide to boards, it's about \$2,000 less per student," Dirks said. "It is very, very troubling and unacceptable and we need to do a better job as a country because much of what happens with aboriginal education takes place on reserves."

[thowell@calgaryherald.com](mailto:thowell@calgaryherald.com)

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WE'RE CHANGING THE WAY WE THINK  
BECAUSE THE WORLD IS CHANGING.



Alberta.ca > Education > Inspiring Education > Career Explorations Camp

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## CAREER EXPLORATIONS CAMP

This past October, more than 40 Grade 10-12 students from Little Buffalo, Atikameg and Red Earth Creek participated in an innovative Career Explorations Camp. This offers students an opportunity to earn credits for high school graduation and experience in careers such as:

- Carpentry
- Media studies (photography)
- Culinary Arts
- Oil and gas training
- Electrical
- Millwright
- Welding



"The camp took place over five days at Northern Lakes College and was *such a positive experience for the kids*. To see the hands-on experience, the socialization, and the projects they worked on from beginning to end.... like building an ice shed... *was inspiring*. This camp happened because of the support from everyone involved: everyone got behind it."

*Brian Dewar, Career Explorations Camp Facilitator*

"It was awesome to learn more about the technical aspects of photography. I realized I can take better pictures by utilizing lighting to bring out the happiness in people. It was intriguing to hear about students building an ice shed in carpentry class. All of my uncles are into construction and I thought it would be cool to get some personal experience in that field as well. I would highly recommend the Career Explorations Camp to other students because it was great experience. You can go out and learn these things [careers] but its better take grasp of it now while you're in school."

*Adam Muskwa, Grade 12 Student, Little Buffalo School*

Talks are currently underway for next year's Career Explorations Camp.

*The Career Explorations Camp was made possible through a partnership between Northern Lakes College (NLC), Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council (KTC), Peace River School Division (PRSD), Alberta Distance Learning (ADLC), Alberta Education and Northland School Division No. 61 (NSD61).*

[SUBMIT A STORY](#)



# A L B E R T A SWEETGRASS

THE ABORIGINAL NEWSPAPER OF ALBERTA

## WHAT'S INSIDE:

Three Alberta First Nations continue to defy FNFTA

Page 3

Culture, economics play role in diabetes control

Page 5

JANUARY 2015

VOLUME 22 • NUMBER 2

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### Literacy gets a boost at Little Buffalo

Students from Little Buffalo enjoyed books donated to them when Associate Minister of Aboriginal Relations David Downard visited the community. The collection included picture books, early readers and chapter books. Little Buffalo School is one of 24 schools in Northland School Division.



## DIVISION ATTENDANCE NOVEMBER 2014

	95% - 100%	90% - 94%	80% - 89%	70% - 79%	Below 70%	Total
<b>ECS</b>	102	45	62	31	52	292
<b>Gr. 1</b>	91	49	69	29	54	292
<b>Gr. 2</b>	105	42	63	27	42	279
<b>Gr. 3</b>	82	54	53	25	31	245
<b>Gr. 4</b>	77	52	43	29	33	234
<b>Gr. 5</b>	73	52	50	23	44	242
<b>Gr. 6</b>	75	54	48	16	38	231
<b>Gr. 7</b>	56	33	57	35	37	218
<b>Gr. 8</b>	33	28	53	28	63	205
<b>Gr. 9</b>	32	23	24	19	58	156
<b>Gr. 10</b>	25	10	30	22	92	179
<b>Gr. 11</b>	22	8	12	16	82	140
<b>Gr. 12</b>	21	8	17	21	84	151
<b>PUF</b>	5	0	0	0	0	5
<b>Student Totals</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>710</b>	<b>2869</b>

## DIVISION ATTENDANCE DECEMBER 2014

	95% - 100%	90% - 94%	80% - 89%	70% - 79%	Below 70%	Total
<b>ECS</b>	47	48	66	36	95	292
<b>Gr. 1</b>	61	40	57	54	80	292
<b>Gr. 2</b>	66	52	61	39	62	280
<b>Gr. 3</b>	54	52	48	43	48	245
<b>Gr. 4</b>	60	53	51	17	53	234
<b>Gr. 5</b>	65	49	38	32	58	242
<b>Gr. 6</b>	58	46	44	27	56	231
<b>Gr. 7</b>	49	28	52	27	62	218
<b>Gr. 8</b>	35	31	30	23	86	205
<b>Gr. 9</b>	33	14	29	18	73	167
<b>Gr. 10</b>	34	9	21	19	96	179
<b>Gr. 11</b>	18	10	16	12	84	140
<b>Gr. 12</b>	17	9	23	16	89	154
<b>PUF</b>	5	0	0	0	0	5
<b>Student Totals</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>942</b>	<b>2884</b>

## Staffing Update - January 23, 2015

Bulletin 5

	Certified Staff	Certified Staff - NL	Early Childhood Instructors	ECS - PUF	Teacher Assistants	Special Assistants	School Community Liaison Worker	Family Community Liaison Advisor	Library Assistant	Native Language Instructor	Clerical	Total by School
Anzac	5.5	0	0	0	0.5	0	0	0.25	0.5	0.25	1	8
ADCS	18	1	0	0	1	3	1	0	0.95	1	1	26.95
Bill Woodward	9	0	0	0	0	3.2	1	0	0.5	0	1	14.7
Bishop Routhier	5	0	0	0	0	3.4	0	0	0	0	1	9.4
Calling Lake	11	0	0	0	1	2.4	0	0	0	0.6	1	16
Career Pathways	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Chipewyan Lake	2	0	0.67	0.4	0	0	0	0	0	0.33	0.3	3.7
Conklin	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0.5	0.5	6
Dr. Mary Jackson	2	0	1	0	1	1.5	0	0	0	0	0.5	6
Elizabeth	10	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	1	1	16
Father R. Perin	7.5	0	1	0	0	2.4	0	0	0	0.6	0	11.5
Fort McKay	7	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	1	1	15
Gift Lake	13	0	1	0	2	4	0	0	0	1	1	22
Grouard	7	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	13
Hillview	3	0	0	0	0	0.5	0	0	0	0	0.5	4
J.F. Dion	6	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	10
Kateri	7	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	12
Little Buffalo	12	0	0	0	0	4	0.8	0	0	1	1	18.8
Mistassiniy	23	0	0	0	3	1	0	2	0	1	2	32
Paddle Prairie	8	0	0	0.4	1	1	0	0	0	0.5	1	11.9
Peerless Lake	9	0	0.5	0	1.5	1	0	0	0	1	1	14
Pelican Mountain	1	0	0	0	0.75	0	0	0	0	0.25	0	2
St. Theresa	22.8	0	1	3	6	7	0	1	1	2	2	45.8
Susa Creek	3.6	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0.4	0.85	6.85
<b>Totals</b>	<b>198.4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5.17</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>29.75</b>	<b>39.4</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>3.25</b>	<b>3.95</b>	<b>14.43</b>	<b>20.65</b>	<b>327.6</b>

### November, 2014

19 (PM)	Edmonton	Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) Education Partners Task Force: First Nation, Metis and Inuit Students Success and Wellbeing
20 (PM)	Peace River	Travel Office
21	Peace River	Northland School Division No. 61 Corporate Board Meeting
22	Peace River	Northland School Division No. 61 Corporate Board Meeting
24	Edmonton	Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA); Legal Services
	Little Buffalo	Local School Board Committee (LSBC) Meeting
	Slave Lake	Travel/Overnight
25	Driftpile	Meeting with the Band Administrator, Driftpile First Nation
26	Edmonton	Office of the Auditor General of Alberta (OAGA); Exit Conference, Northland School Division 2013/2014 Audit
		Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA); Legal Services
		McLennan-Ross Legal Services; Joint Development Agreement

### December, 2014

1 (PM)	Wabasca	Travel
2	Wabasca	Meeting with the Bigstone Cree First Nation Chief and Council
		Wabasca Community Education Planning Committee Meeting
	Leduc	Travel
4	Edmonton	Meeting with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council
		Meeting with Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA); Legal Services Re: Local School Board Committees
		Meeting with Aboriginal Relations Re: Northland School Division Update
6	Peace River	Travel Northland School Division No. 61 Staff Christmas Party
8 (PM)	Edmonton	Meeting with the MLA, Lesser Slave Lake, Pearl Calahasen
		Meeting at McLennan-Ross; Legal Services
		Special Meeting, Northland School Division No. 61 Corporate Board Re: Furniture Bids, Gift Lake Community Education Centre
9	Peace River	Travel Office
10	Peace River	Office
	Fort McMurray	Travel/Overnight
11	Fort McKay	Meeting with the Director of Education, Fort McKay First Nation
	Leduc	Travel
15 (PM)	Edmonton	Meeting with MLA's Assistant
16	Fort Chipewyan	Travel Community Healing Circle Session





# Chairman's Report January 30, 2015

17	Fort Chipewyan	Funeral
	Fort McMurray	Travel/Overnight
18	Anzac	Meeting with the Chairperson, Anzac Local School Board Committee School Visit
	Janvier	School Visit Conversation with Chairperson, Janvier Local School Board Committee and Band Counsellor
	Conklin	School Visit
	Edmonton	Metis Settlements General Council Christmas Function
19 (AM)	Edmonton	Meeting with Alberta Education

## January, 2015

14	Peace River	Travel Office
15	Peace River	Office Preparation of Documents for Presentation
	Leduc	Travel
16	Edmonton	Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) Task Force: First Nation, Metis and Inuit Student Success and Wellbeing
		ASBA Legal Services
		Office of the Auditor General of Alberta, Initial Findings Re: Attendance
		Meeting with MLA's Assistant
18 (PM)	Peace River	Travel Preparation of Presentation to Minister of Education
19	Peace River	Committee Meetings and Agenda Review
	Grande Prairie	Travel
20	Grande Prairie	Alberta School Boards Association Zone 1 Meeting with the Minister of Education
	High Prairie	Travel/Overnight
21	Gift Lake	New School Planning Meeting
	Leduc	Travel
22	Edmonton	Meeting with MLA's Consultant
		Meeting with Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council CEO and Director of Education
		Meeting with the Office of the Auditor General of Alberta Re: Attendance Findings/Report
23	Fort McMurray	Meeting with the Chief, Mikisew Cree First Nation
	Anzac	Meeting with the Chairperson, Anzac LSBC

## Committed Dates, January, 2015

27 (PM)	Grande Prairie	Travel
28	Grande Prairie	Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) Zone 1 Meeting
	Grande Cache	Susa Creek Visit/Update
30	Peace River	Northland School Division No. 61 Corporate Board Meeting
31	Peace River	Northland School Division No. 61 Corporate Board Meeting





# Chairman's Report

## January 30, 2015

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### Committed Dates, February, 2015

2	Grouard	Local School Board Committee Meeting
6	Edmonton	Meeting with Kee Tas Kee Now CEO and Director of Education
18	Peace River	Committee Meetings and Agenda Review
19	Wabasca	Community Education Planning Committee
23	Gift Lake	New School Planning Meeting



ALBERTA  
EDUCATION

*Office of the Minister  
MLA, Calgary-Elbow*

AR87144

December 15, 2014

Dr. Colin Kelly  
Board Chair  
Northland School Division No. 61  
Bag 1400 Station Main  
Peace River AB T8S 1V2

Dear Dr. Kelly:

The Government of Alberta is aware that our province's increasing student population is putting pressure on the education system. We have listened to the concerns of Albertans and responded with an investment of \$232.6 million over two years to plan 55 new schools and modernize 20 existing schools. These projects are in addition to the 155 school projects underway or already completed, creating more than 78,000 student spaces in total.

This is a significant undertaking – one that will require a co-operative and collaborative approach from all stakeholders. While full approval of the latest projects is expected in the new year, we encourage you to work closely with the ministries of Education and Infrastructure to ensure planning for your project(s) begins as soon as possible, so that construction can begin immediately once full funding is in place. School jurisdictions should consider using standardized designs to help expedite the process.

In order to help streamline processes and ensure school opening targets are met, Honourable Jim Prentice, Premier of Alberta, created a four-member Ministerial Oversight Committee. As members of this committee, we are dedicated to the progress of these projects. We will work with school boards, municipalities and the construction industry to expedite permits and other approvals and to strengthen the capacity to deliver these projects as quickly as possible. If and when concerns arise, we will work diligently to facilitate movement.

Thank you for your co-operation and your ongoing commitment to Alberta's students.

Sincerely,

Gordon Dirks  
Minister of Education  
MLA, Calgary – Elbow

Manmeet S. Bhullar  
Minister of Infrastructure  
MLA, Calgary – Greenway



# Communications Now

## December 2014

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Teaching kids about money	

## Developing a community crisis communications plan

What if a case of Ebola was identified in your community? Or E.coli was found in the municipal water system? What if extreme weather killed people and damaged your town?

Are you prepared to respond to a community-wide crisis that will cause concerned parents to come to you with questions about how the jurisdiction is dealing with it?

Is there a community-wide crisis communication plan to help guide your response? If not it may be time to develop one.

### Getting started

If there isn't a plan, you may need to take the lead in developing one.

Gather stakeholders together. Include police and fire representatives and other emergency responders in your community, Alberta Health Services, transportation, utilities, and media and others who need to be a part of a team that develops a chain of command for community-wide crisis management, and communication and the logistics of sharing

information. Ideally, these partners will commit to participate for however long it takes to develop a plan.

You could host the first meeting at the school jurisdiction office and move subsequent meetings to different stakeholder locations. That way, committee members will become familiar other participants' facilities and resources.

It is impossible to plan for every crisis that might hit, but general guidelines can be developed that could be adapted to specific situations:

- health issues (such as possible epidemics)
- safety issues
- severe weather events.

Agencies will likely have their own communications plans, so the process might be simplified by reviewing these plans and using parts of each to create a community-wide plan.

### What you need to decide

In addition to having a plan that addresses messages, timelines and the agency responsible for sharing information, the committee should also:

- Identify an agency contact for each organization. Those individuals will be the crisis communication liaisons and act as their agency's spokesperson. Develop a contact list with names, with both land line and mobile numbers, and distribute to all designated agency contacts.

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**Communications Now** is prepared for the Alberta School Boards Association by the Washington State School Directors' Association and edited for use in Alberta. Members of the ASBA may reproduce and distribute this package as part of a local communications program. Contact ASBA Communications at 1.780.482.7311.



## Communications Now

- Agree to share information with each agency before releasing it to the public, so that each agency is equipped to answer any questions or concerns the information release creates.
- Determine how information will be released under normal operating circumstances as well as in the event of a major disruption to telephone land lines or cell phone towers, traditional media or social media outlets.
- Research potential legal roadblocks to the communications plan and address them. You won't have time to get legal counsel during a crisis.
- Get a commitment from media representatives about public service information they can help disseminate, beyond regular news stories, about the event and how often they can do so.

### The school jurisdiction's role

The committee will want to know the level of support the jurisdiction could provide in an emergency.

For instance:

- Can schools be used as temporary shelters, school buses used for evacuations, cafeterias for emergency feeding stations?
- How long could your school house students and staff if they are unable to leave? Do schools have bottled water and food on site?
- Could the jurisdiction's emergency communication system broadcast messages about a community-wide situation even if the jurisdiction has no responsibility to respond to it?

### Keep parents informed

Inform parents about your jurisdiction's crisis plan each year and remind them how you will send out emergency notifications and updates. Have parents provide a contact name and number, and keep it on hand at the child's school and jurisdiction office.

Keep parents up to date on the work of the community crisis communications team. Once it is in place, include that in your annual notifications regarding emergencies.

### While you develop the plan...

A crisis doesn't wait until plans are neatly in place. In the event something does occur in your community and you need to alert parents or respond to parents' questions, the following sample notice to parents will help you create an information sheet that can be used as a take home flier, email or jurisdiction website and/or Facebook post.

Remember:

- State only the facts you have obtained from a source in the responsible agency.
- Don't rely on media reports or information from social media unless it has come from an official source.
- Don't speculate on what is happening or what might happen.



## Communications Now

### **Sample notice to parents:**

Important parent information regarding  
(insert name of incident or emergency)

**WHAT:** In two or three sentences state what the situation is. Do not use words 'crisis' or 'epidemic' unless the authority in charge – Alberta Health Services – for example, uses this language.

Avoid jargon, so no medical-ese, legal-ese or education-ese. Be clear and to the point.

**HOW:** Use a short paragraph to explain the history if you know it. Don't speculate. Include how it happened, where it came from and how it is affecting – or NOT affecting the schools, the jurisdiction, or student and staff.

Another "how" would provide information on the ways parents can help alleviate their children's fears or prevent the spread of disease or explain what is happening.

**WHEN:** When it arrived in the community, when it occurred, when it happened. How long it might continue. When parents can expect the school operation to return to normal or when the jurisdiction anticipates being impacted by the event or situation.

**WHERE:** Where it is located, where it happened, and the proximity to the jurisdiction. Include the likelihood of an impact on the jurisdiction if, for instance, an epidemic has been identified in the municipality where your schools, or some of your schools, are located. Explain exactly where it is located and what steps are being taken to disinfect or sanitize the infected areas.

**WHY:** There may be no reason 'why' for the situation, so use this space to assure parents 'why' their child is safe, 'why' they need to take certain precautions or 'why' something isn't operating as usual because of the situation.

**WHO:** Give parents contact information. Give them the name, email address and phone number of a real human who will answer the phone and take their questions and get back to them, even if that person doesn't have all the answers. If there are other places to get information, list them here: websites for the jurisdiction, municipality, and Alberta Health Services local offices.

*Contributed by Jackie Smith, communications consultant*





## Communications Now

### Tips for a one-person PR shop

No matter who you ask – staff, parents or community members – communications nearly always tops the list of what schools need to do better and more often.

The challenge in many jurisdictions is that the communications department is a one-person shop where the communications specialist is tasked with doing it all.

That can be a daunting prospect because communications done well encompasses a lot of different platforms and involves as much strategizing as communicating. And in this era of school choice, it typically involves marketing as well. One person can only be stretched so far.

Luckily, there are tools and strategies to make it easier. Here are some of the top ways to get the most bang for your buck in a one-person PR shop.

### Take advantage of your network

Reach out to other school communications professionals. Are you thinking about the way you'll communicate about Inspiring Education? Are you wondering whether you should develop a Facebook page?

Whatever challenges you're facing, you can bet your colleagues in other jurisdictions have already tackled it at one time or another. School communications people are usually fairly generous, and happy to share ideas and even materials, so you don't have to reinvent the wheel when you're looking to do something they have already done.

Also, the Canadian Association of Communicators in Education has an Alberta chapter. CACE's Alberta chapter holds meetings where you can network and find support and ideas. CACE also holds a national conference each year. In addition, an American organization: National School Public Relations Association has a number of resources available.

### Create a communications plan

Having a written plan helps you stay focused on doing specific tasks that you have identified to get you the most mileage for your effort. It's easy to get scattered and pulled in different directions as the year goes along.

Your plan should list specific targets or audiences, objectives for each audience, strategies, a timeline and how you'll evaluate success.

### Start with staff

Your staff members are your most effective – and cost effective – tools in communicating with the community. They're constantly sharing information about their schools and the jurisdiction as they visit with parents, wait in the grocery line or sit in a chair at the hair salon / barber shop.

Make staff your first stop in communicating about new jurisdiction initiatives, issues you're facing and good news that's happening. A weekly email update to staff is a critical piece of a good communication plan.

### Enlist your staff to help

You can't communicate about what's going on in the jurisdiction if you don't know what's happening, so it's important to cultivate relationships with your teachers and other staff members and encourage them to keep you in the loop.

Send them regular email reminders to let you know when they're doing something interesting in their schools or classrooms, so you can share their stories on your jurisdiction website and with the media.

Another idea is having school based administrators sign up for a particular time period(s) annually where they provide one image of something positive happening in their school, and a short caption to go with it. This can be placed on your website. Depending on the number of schools in your jurisdiction, you can have a new item to post on your website once or twice a week.



## Communications Now

### Embrace social media

Facebook, Twitter and other platforms can be great tools because they allow for two-way communication. Your followers can respond to your posts, giving you valuable feedback.

While some jurisdictions are fearful about the possibility of negative comments, jurisdictions generally find that the posts are positive. Often, other followers respond to negative comments.

The fact that social media is free is a boost for jurisdictions with a small communications budget.

### Emphasize your web page

As more people rely on the Internet for information, jurisdiction websites are more important than ever. If you do nothing else, make sure you keep the home page up to date with current news and calendar events.

Give people a reason to come back often by regularly adding new updates, photos, short video clips, etc. Refer people back to the webpage through your posts in newsletters or on social media, reinforcing that your website is the number one place to get the latest, most detailed news about your schools and jurisdiction.

### Go electronic with newsletters

Newsletters are still around, but printed newsletters are going the way of the typewriter. Many jurisdictions have moved to electronic versions, both to save printing costs and because they offer more immediacy.

A newsletter can be sent to subscribers and simultaneously posted on your website, almost as soon as an event happens. There are companies such as 'Constant Contact' that make producing attractive newsletters easy. They provide a variety of design templates and allow people to self-subscribe to your mailing list, avoiding the need for you to manage the subscriptions.

### Cultivate relationships with the media

Even though newspaper readership has dropped dramatically, your local paper is still a valuable part of your toolkit. Make it a weekly practice to email your local reporter or editor with story ideas or a list of events worthy of a photo or news coverage.

*Contributed by Connie Potter, chief of staff, Forest Grove School District, Ore.*



## Communications Now

### What does your audience thinks

#### Research first

Building a communication plan is a lot like building a house. Without a firm foundation, all of the cosmetic work is a huge waste of time and money. In communications work, research is the concrete that the rest of the house sits on.

The National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) promotes the concept of RACE – Research, Analyze, Communicate, Evaluate. Research always comes first.

Often, the factual research has already been done by your secretary treasurer, facilities and maintenance group, curriculum department, etc. They can give you the facts and figures pertaining to many aspects of the school jurisdiction's work. That is important research because it will help you explain to taxpayers: what you are doing, why you are doing it, and what it costs.

#### Don't base decisions on one opinion

But research also includes finding out what opinions and attitudes your patrons hold about a particular issue. You may hear trustee or superintendent say something like, "Well, the business community is not happy with this idea." Or they may say: "Parents don't care about that." A little digging sometimes reveals this opinion research is based on a sample size of one.

Perhaps one person bent the administrator's ear at the Rotary luncheon and the parent voice comes from one parent who cornered a trustee at the football game.

The sample size should never be one, but it also cannot be everyone. You can't interview your whole target audience, but if your sample is big enough and truly representative of the group you are interested in, you will get enough information to move forward.

### Hiring a professional to do research

The best way to get accurate opinion information is to pay for a scientific survey – a real poll. It isn't something you'd always do, but if the issue is big enough, hiring a professional can be well worth the investment.

By paying an opinion research firm, you get assistance in narrowing the focus of your questions and writing the questionnaire. You also get the assurance that the poll will be conducted using state-of-the-art sampling and survey methods. The final product will be high-quality opinion research that you can use to build a major information campaign with confidence.

Really, the only downside to hiring a firm to do a survey is cost. But the cost might be worth it for an annual check-in with your community. At the same time, it is not realistic to pay for polling on every issue. The cost would be prohibitive.

### What about the rest of the time?

About 99 per cent of the time you need opinion research, you don't have a lot of money to spend on it. Fortunately, there are a lot of low-cost alternatives that are better than the "sample size of one" but a lot cheaper than hiring a firm to do the poll.

### Computer surveys

Email and internet are convenient ways to gather public opinion. A short online survey is quick and easy. Survey Monkey is probably the best known and most widely used online survey tool. It is user-friendly, very inexpensive and can provide helpful feedback.

Online surveys are not ideal for identifying general public opinion from a wide, random sample because they are hard to get in front of people. Not everyone will see your website and choose to take the survey. And not everyone opens their home email on a regular basis. Therefore, it is difficult to get a random sample that is representative of your community as a whole.



## Communications Now

Online surveys are best suited for gathering feedback from a narrow audience. For instance, you may want to hear specifically from the business community. In that case, you could develop an online survey and send it to your Rotary chapters and chambers of commerce. The superintendent could mention it at meetings of business groups. Your sample would be purposely narrow and your results would be specific.

Ironically, one way to drive people to your online survey is through print media. Include links in hard-copy newsletters, newspaper ads and on school materials.

Be aware that these results, while helpful, are still not representative of the whole population. The responses from an online survey usually only include people who are comfortable with technology. You may miss some patrons who still rely more on phones than computers.

### Lower cost phone surveys

Not all phone surveys have to come from consultants and call centers. Volunteers or paid jurisdiction staff can conduct phone surveys too. The key is to provide training so that your callers do not skew the results by engaging the patrons they call. Every word should be scripted and every caller should stick to the script.

Volunteers can be recruited to come to the jurisdiction office after work hours and use jurisdiction phones. If volunteers are not available, jurisdiction staff could be offered the opportunity to make some overtime pay by coming in late to make calls.

Whether the callers are volunteer or paid, they need to be cared for during the calling. Someone needs to remain with them and provide snacks, beverages, moral support and encouragement. If a patron chews out one of your callers, you need to be there shoring them up and getting them back on the phone. You also need to help your callers stay on task as the evening progresses.

### Comment cards

A live audience is a great resource that often goes untapped. During forums and town-halls, consider passing out comment cards. You could use a half-sheet of paper with blanks for name and contact information (optional) and some prompts such as: "What did you think of this forum?" or "What does the school jurisdiction need to know as we move toward a decision on this issue?"

The cards and a pen should be handed to each person as they enter and collected as they leave. The speaker should tell people why the information is needed and what will be done with it. Results can be tabulated by themes and published on the jurisdiction website or in print.

### Printed surveys

People lack patience for lengthy questionnaires. But a short, concise written survey is sometimes a good idea. They can be mailed out as part of, or alongside, other publications and materials.

The key is to minimize the work for the patron. Let them simply check boxes or put numbers next to priority statements. Don't expect them to write long answers to open-ended questions, but always leave space for additional comments.

### Take action - publicly

It is important to actually do something with the feedback you receive. Yes/no results are easy to tabulate and publish. Those types of results should be discussed in meetings or written about in newsletters so the participants know the jurisdiction really did want to hear from them.

Open-ended comments should be grouped by theme and reported out. If trust is low, consider grouping comments by theme but also publishing them verbatim as an appendix. That way, doubters can see for themselves and determine if you have fairly represented the feedback you received.



## Communications Now

### **Set appropriate expectations**

Patrons should understand up front that giving their opinion is not the same as voting. Your customers need to know that the jurisdiction will listen to their opinions and consider them, but that ultimately the decision still rests with the officials.

That understanding will lead to less incentive for anyone to stack the deck or recruit members of their interest group to organize a response to what is supposed to be a more random survey of the community.

### **Find your feedback channels**

With a little planning and work, your jurisdiction can find the right feedback channels for your budget and your situation. With a solid foundation, based on a good sample of community opinion, you can move forward with building a communication plan that will do what you need it to do for your jurisdiction and the community you serve.

*Contributed by Jay Remy, communications director, Salem-Keizer Public Schools, Salem, Ore.*





## Communications Now

### Building parent partnerships

Every educator knows that the partnership between parents and schools is essential to students' success at school. With high demands on parents' time, making that partnership meaningful for parents and beneficial for schools is a challenge. And keeping parents engaged in supporting schools from kindergarten through high school graduation is even harder.

Parent groups vary in their effectiveness, too. Some schools have high numbers of parents participating, while many others, especially at the middle/junior high and high school levels, have almost no parent participation in classroom and school activities.

Parent engagement is usually high in jurisdictions with few schools and in smaller communities. In smaller jurisdictions, schools are the center of community activity, and teachers and administrators often know all students and their parents by name.

This 'small town' level of participation can also flourish in schools that are welcoming. Schools that invite parent involvement and address specific parent needs with flexible event scheduling, bring parents into their children's schools in meaningful ways.

### Tips for successfully involving parents

#### Set expectations

Work with your school staff to set expectations for parent participation that include flexibly scheduled parent education opportunities on a regular basis.

For example, in the fall, take time to plan back-to-school nights that include an orientation to the core curriculum for each grade. Provide handouts that list what parents can do at home and the specific ways they can be involved at school to support their students' education during the school year and in that grade level. Throughout the year, consider ways of keeping parents in the loop about what's ahead and how they can help support their child.

### Make it easier for working parents

Work with local businesses to promote the idea of release time for parents to volunteer, attend school conferences, or participate in special school activities.

At the same time, provide parents who can't volunteer during the school day with volunteer opportunities at other times or from home.

### Consider the "three for me" model

Consider using the "three for me" model of asking parents to pledge just three hours of volunteer time over nine months ([www.pta.org/three\\_for\\_me.asp](http://www.pta.org/three_for_me.asp)).

The two American moms, Dee Keywood and Kris Thompson who designed this program and introduced it at their children's school, generated more volunteers and volunteer hours than they thought possible.

The program is now being promoted in the United States as a "fail-safe method" for bringing parents into their children's schools in mutually beneficial ways.

### Realize parent involvement is important for older kids too

Find ways to build bridges between elementary schools and middle/junior high schools, and between middle/junior high schools and high schools.

Research shows that engaging parents in their children's education at the secondary level is as important to students' success as their involvement at the primary and intermediate levels.

Parents with high involvement in middle and high school tend to have students with higher grades and test scores regardless of the level of family income or background according to recent research.

<http://www.iowaparents.org/files/involvingparentsmhstch.pdf>



## Communications Now

According to the study, at the middle school level it is especially important for parents to:

- Discuss school activities
- Contact school staff
- Volunteer and attend parent-teacher conferences and other school events

At the high school level, parents' volunteering and attendance continues to be important along with:

- Guiding their students toward post-secondary education
- Making sure their students read and do their homework
- Stressing the value of education

### What one jurisdiction is doing to encourage involvement

North Clackamas School District in Oregon has enlisted the aid of its foundation to bring parent groups together in ways they hope will bridge these inter-level gaps and help the district's entire parent organizations grow and be more effective.

The district's foundation started this initiative by building an up-to-date database of the 19 elementary, four middle and six high school parent groups. Then for two years, the foundation hosted a fall wine and cheese event to bring parent leaders from all of the schools together to get to know each other in an informal setting and give them time to share organizational and fundraising ideas.

This effort has now expanded to add an August workshop with opportunities for participants to meet and work in high school attendance area groups as well as participate in workshop sessions for building membership, fundraising, budgeting and grant-writing.

The groups were organized by high school attendance area to help foster friendships and working relationships that will bring parent leaders together at the middle and high school levels. The goal is to foster connections and skills among parents that can help keep the parent groups at these levels viable and active.

### Parent involvement is important!

Parent involvement is and always will be key to a student's success in school. These suggestions from successful school-parent involvement programs can help you think of ways to expand the parent involvement programs in your jurisdiction's schools.

They may also inspire new ways to look at your involvement programs and make adjustments for greater success in bringing parents into schools in ways that make a difference for your students and their parents.

*Contributed by Jeanne Magmer, communications consultant*



## Communications Now

### Weblinks

#### International Volunteer Day

December 5, 2014

A day to celebrate and promote the contributions of volunteers. The day was established by the United Nations in 1985.

For more information, as well as resources:

<http://volunteer.ca/content/international-volunteer-day>

#### Nominations: "Great Kids Award"

The Government of Alberta is now accepting nominations for its 2015 "Great Kids" award. The purpose of the award is to recognize Alberta's children and youth between the ages of 5 and 18, for their outstanding determination, generosity, and compassion.

Winners and nominees will be honoured at a ceremony in Edmonton.

Nomination deadline: December 9, 2014 at 4 p.m.

For more information: [www.greatkids.alberta.ca](http://www.greatkids.alberta.ca)

#### Family Literacy Day

January 27, 2015

The initiative was first celebrated in Canada in 1999. Parents are encouraged to spend at least 15 minutes together with their children in a learning activity.

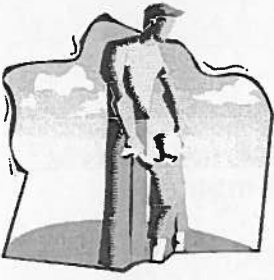
For more information: [www.familyliteracyday.ca](http://www.familyliteracyday.ca)

#### Indigenous Shining Student Award

Annual recognition is awarded to a grade 10 to 12 student of First Nations, Metis or Inuit heritage who demonstrates leadership and inspires others, through embracing and respecting an aboriginal perspective.

Nomination deadline: March 30, 2015

For more information: [www.asba.ab.ca](http://www.asba.ab.ca)



A monthly publication provided by your child's school in recognition of your role as a partner in education.

# Resources for Families

## Teaching kids about money

The holiday season is a great opportunity to check in with your kids about money issues and responsible financial choices. Greater consumer spending for gift giving opens the door to conversations about budgeting, credit card debt and savings.

The holidays call extra attention to the need for greater financial literacy, but it's an important topic that deserves more education all year round and at all ages.

## The financial knowledge gap for adults

Many people live paycheque to paycheque. Unemployment, credit card and student loan debt are factors that affect finances to some extent for many adults. When combined with a lack of financial education, many adults' personal finances are weaker than they should be. Consider the following statistics:

- At the end of 2013, the average Canadian owed \$27,368 on such things as lines of credit, credit cards and car loans.  
<http://business.financialpost.com/2014/02/26/canadians-on-target-for-record-year-of-personal-debt-despite-better-end-to-2013-transunion/>
- As of September 2014, research showed more Canadians are living paycheque to paycheque, most are saving less than they should, and many are not adequately preparing for retirement.  
<http://business.financialpost.com/2014/09/10/more-canadian-workers-are-living-paycheque-to-paycheque-saving-less-survey/>

Why is this happening? According to an American source, "The absence of a budget, insufficient savings, spending beyond what can be responsibly repaid, confusion around credit reports and scores, and an admitted lack of knowledge pertaining to personal finance are red flags that

demand attention and the need for financial education."

[www.c360m.com/online/2014\\_financial\\_literacy\\_infographic.html](http://www.c360m.com/online/2014_financial_literacy_infographic.html)

## Post-secondary students and graduates

Many adults lack financial skills because they never learned them at school or at home. Post-secondary students undoubtedly have a higher average earning potential (<http://www4.brsdc.gc.ca/3ndic.1t.4r@-eng.jsp?iid=54#a2>), but many have substantial debt behind their college degrees and few financial skills.

According to the vice-President external for the University of Calgary Students' Union, quoted in a Calgary Herald article, average total debt is about \$24,500 per student.

<http://www.calgaryherald.com/Post+secondary+students+brace+high+debt+loads/10128874/story.html>

According to the same article, 60 per cent of students who were surveyed thought they would be able to pay back their debt within five years.

## Financial education should start early

Fortunately there are many helpful resources online to cover the basics, such as balancing a cheque book, credit card interest, fees and repayment, budgets and savings.

## Tips for teaching kids about money

CNN Money has 23 Money Essentials lessons, including one on Kids and Money. The tips include:

### Start early

Experts agree that introducing the concept that money is a result of work, not an ATM, is key to kids' understanding finances. In addition, teaching kids while they are young will have a lasting effect – even when they are teenagers and less likely to listen to you.



### **Making the case for an allowance**

There are many schools of thought about whether children should receive an allowance. Allowances can be an effective learning tool for handling money.

Consider these suggestions:

- Children should be old enough to count money.
- Share your expectations when you set the allowance: Will it be tied to chores, are they required to save some, which expenses do you expect them to pay for?

### **Teaching budgeting skills**

Setting and keeping a budget is an introduction to paying bills. One way to help kids understand the challenge of paying bills with a finite salary is to count out a reasonable amount of play money and write outstanding bills with the amount and date due. If there is money left, talk about savings.

### **Talking to teens about credit**

As students get older and closer to eligibility for a credit card, they will need a good understanding of how credit cards work. Credit cards can be a good way to begin building a credit history, or a risky path to debt.

Be sure your child understands interest and fees and what the actual cost of an item is after paying those additional expenses. Teach them to use a credit card responsibly by paying the balance off each month. Be sure that they have a chequing account and a few years' experience balancing their account before signing up for a credit card.

### **The importance of investing**

If your child understands the concept of paying interest, they should also understand how earning interest works. If they have some savings, talk to a financial advisor or your financial institution about financial investments for your child. That way your child can learn about investments, especially low-fee mutual funds, such as index funds.

<http://money.cnn.com/magazines/moneymag/money101/lesson12/index.htm>

### **Additional Canadian sources for teaching children about money**

<http://talkwithourkidsaboutmoney.com/>

<http://www.kidzone.ws/geography/money/>

[http://www.canadianliving.com/life/money/the\\_dos\\_and\\_donts\\_of\\_teaching\\_your\\_kids\\_about\\_money.php](http://www.canadianliving.com/life/money/the_dos_and_donts_of_teaching_your_kids_about_money.php)



**NORTHLAND SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 61  
LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE REPORT  
2014/2015 SCHOOL YEAR  
PERIOD ENDING - JANUARY 23, 2015**

	<b>Future Pay Out</b>	<b>Paid During Yr.</b>	<b>Total Pd. &amp; Committed</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Difference</b>	<b>Percent Expended</b>
<b><u>Anzac</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	4,405.19	743.33	5,148.52	4,920.00	(228.52)	
Travel & Subsistence		-	-	5,032.00	5,032.00	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards		-	-	250.00	250.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,405.19</b>	<b>743.33</b>	<b>5,148.52</b>	<b>10,202.00</b>	<b>5,053.48</b>	<b>50.5%</b>
<b><u>Athabasca Delta</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	3,646.19	980.67	4,626.86	4,920.00	293.14	
Travel & Subsistence		767.51	767.51	5,340.00	4,572.49	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards		-	-	250.00	250.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,646.19</b>	<b>1,748.18</b>	<b>5,394.37</b>	<b>10,510.00</b>	<b>5,115.63</b>	<b>51.3%</b>
<b><u>Bishop Routhier</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	3,689.25	1,229.75	4,919.00	4,920.00	1.00	
Travel & Subsistence			-	1,992.00	1,992.00	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards		-	-	250.00	250.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,689.25</b>	<b>1,229.75</b>	<b>4,919.00</b>	<b>7,162.00</b>	<b>2,243.00</b>	<b>68.7%</b>
<b><u>Calling Lake</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	4,198.81	823.76	5,022.57	4,920.00	(102.57)	
Travel & Subsistence			-	3,060.00	3,060.00	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards			-	250.00	250.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,198.81</b>	<b>823.76</b>	<b>5,022.57</b>	<b>8,230.00</b>	<b>3,207.43</b>	<b>61.0%</b>
<b><u>Chipewyan Lakes</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	2,494.75	747.25	3,242.00	4,920.00	1,678.00	
Travel & Subsistence			-	2,740.00	2,740.00	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards			-	250.00	250.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,494.75</b>	<b>747.25</b>	<b>3,242.00</b>	<b>7,910.00</b>	<b>4,668.00</b>	<b>41.0%</b>
<b><u>Conklin</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	4,428.61	988.50	5,417.11	4,920.00	(497.11)	
Travel & Subsistence			-	4,144.00	4,144.00	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards			-	250.00	250.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,428.61</b>	<b>988.50</b>	<b>5,417.11</b>	<b>9,314.00</b>	<b>3,896.89</b>	<b>58.2%</b>

	Future Pay Out	Paid During Yr.	Total Pd. & Committed	Budget	Difference	Percent Expended
<b><u>Dr. Mary Jackson</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	3,930.50	1,229.75	5,160.25	4,920.00	(240.25)	
Travel & Subsistence			-	2,184.00	2,184.00	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards		210.35	210.35	250.00	39.65	
Total	3,930.50	1,440.10	5,370.60	7,354.00	1,983.40	73.0%
<b><u>East Prairie</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	3,689.25	1,229.75	4,919.00	4,920.00	1.00	
Travel & Subsistence		-	-	2,128.00	2,128.00	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards		-	-	250.00	250.00	
Total	3,689.25	1,229.75	4,919.00	7,298.00	2,379.00	67.4%
<b><u>Elizabeth</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	3,895.25	1,218.00	5,113.25	4,920.00	(193.25)	
Travel & Subsistence			-	3,816.00	3,816.00	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards		-	-	250.00	250.00	
Total	3,895.25	1,218.00	5,113.25	8,986.00	3,872.75	56.9%
<b><u>Father R Perin</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	3,689.25	1,229.75	4,919.00	4,920.00	1.00	
Travel & Subsistence		3,018.38	3,018.38	4,144.00	1,125.62	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards		-	-	250.00	250.00	
Total	3,689.25	4,248.13	7,937.38	9,314.00	1,376.62	85.2%
<b><u>Fort McKay</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	2,206.50	735.50	2,942.00	4,920.00	1,978.00	
Travel & Subsistence			-	4,144.00	4,144.00	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards			-	250.00	250.00	
Total	2,206.50	735.50	2,942.00	9,314.00	6,372.00	31.6%
<b><u>Gift Lake</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	3,654.00	1,617.59	5,271.59	4,920.00	(351.59)	
Travel & Subsistence		298.48	298.48	2,292.00	1,993.52	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards			-	250.00	250.00	
Total	3,654.00	1,916.07	5,570.07	7,462.00	1,891.93	74.6%
<b><u>Grouard</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	3,448.00	854.25	4,302.25	4,920.00	617.75	
Travel & Subsistence		43.56	43.56	2,028.00	1,984.44	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards			-	250.00	250.00	
Total	3,448.00	897.81	4,345.81	7,198.00	2,852.19	60.4%

	Future Pay Out	Paid During Yr.	Total Pd. & Committed	Budget	Difference	Percent Expended
<b><u>J.F. Dion</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	2,965.50	988.50	3,954.00	4,920.00	966.00	
Travel & Subsistence		-	-	4,052.00	4,052.00	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards		-	-	250.00	250.00	
Total	2,965.50	988.50	3,954.00	9,222.00	5,268.00	42.9%
<b><u>Kateri</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	4,424.75	976.75	5,401.50	4,920.00	(481.50)	
Travel & Subsistence		-	-	2,416.00	2,416.00	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards		-	-	250.00	250.00	
Total	4,424.75	976.75	5,401.50	7,586.00	2,184.50	71.2%
<b><u>Little Buffalo</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	4,377.75	976.75	5,354.50	4,920.00	(434.50)	
Travel & Subsistence		353.21	353.21	1,880.00	1,526.79	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards		-	-	250.00	250.00	
Total	4,377.75	1,329.96	5,707.71	7,050.00	1,342.29	81.0%
<b><u>Mistassini</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	3,654.00	976.75	4,630.75	4,920.00	289.25	
Travel & Subsistence		-	-	2,836.00	2,836.00	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards		-	-	250.00	250.00	
Total	3,654.00	976.75	4,630.75	8,006.00	3,375.25	57.8%
<b><u>Paddle Prairie</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	3,689.25	1,068.92	4,758.17	4,920.00	161.83	
Travel & Subsistence		270.00	270.00	2,288.00	2,018.00	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards		-	-	250.00	250.00	
Total	3,689.25	1,338.92	5,028.17	7,458.00	2,429.83	67.4%
<b><u>Peerless Lake</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	3,654.00	1,229.75	4,883.75	4,920.00	36.25	
Travel & Subsistence		-	-	2,340.00	2,340.00	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards		291.36	291.36	250.00	(41.36)	
Total	3,654.00	1,521.11	5,175.11	7,510.00	2,334.89	68.9%
<b><u>Pelican Mountain</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	2,483.00	747.25	3,230.25	4,920.00	1,689.75	
Travel & Subsistence		326.71	326.71	3,096.00	2,769.29	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards		-	-	250.00	250.00	
Total	2,483.00	1,073.96	3,556.96	8,266.00	4,709.04	43.0%

	Future Pay Out	Paid During Yr.	Total Pd. & Committed	Budget	Difference	Percent Expended
<b><u>St. Theresa</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	3,689.25	1,229.75	4,919.00	4,920.00	1.00	
Travel & Subsistence		-	-	2,860.00	2,860.00	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards		259.86	259.86	250.00	(9.86)	
Total	3,689.25	1,489.61	5,178.86	8,030.00	2,851.14	64.5%
<b><u>Susa Creek</u></b>						
Quarterly Honorarium	4,171.75	893.34	5,065.09	4,920.00	(145.09)	
Travel & Subsistence			-	2,984.00	2,984.00	
In - Service			-		-	
Prior Year Carryover			-		-	
Casual Labour, Supplies & Awards		229.86	229.86	250.00	20.14	
Total	4,171.75	1,123.20	5,294.95	8,154.00	2,859.05	64.9%
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>80,484.80</b>	<b>28,784.89</b>	<b>109,269.69</b>	<b>181,536.00</b>	<b>72,266.31</b>	

TOTAL NUMBER OF LSBC WITHIN BUDGET	22	72,266.31
TOTAL NUMBER OF LSBC OVER BUDGET	0	-
TOTAL NUMBER OF LSBC	22	72,266.31

**NORTHLAND SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 61**  
**BOARD REPORT**  
**2014/2015 SCHOOL YEAR**  
**PERIOD ENDING - JANUARY 23, 2015**

**ELECTIONS**

	ACTUAL	BUDGET	VARIANCE
REMUNERATION TRUSTEES	-	-	-
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS-TRUSTEES	60.00	-	-
LEGAL FEES	6,167.64	-	-
POSTAGE-ELECTIONS	-	-	-
INSERVICE-ELECTIONS	-	-	-
RENUMERATION-ELECTIONS	2,116.25	80,000.00	77,883.75
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE-ELECTIONS	652.03	-	(652.03)
PRINTING & BINDING-ELECTIONS	958.62	-	(958.62)
ADVERTISING-ELECTIONS	4,917.18	-	(4,917.18)
OFFICE SUPPLIES-ELECTIONS	-	-	-
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>14,871.72</b>	<b>80,000.00</b>	<b>71,355.92</b>

**COMMITTEES**

RENUMERATION TRUSTEES	-	-	-
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS - TRUSTEES	-	-	-
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE-PERSONNEL	-	-	-
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE-EDUCATION	-	-	-
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE-FINANCE	-	-	-
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE-NEGOTIATION	-	-	-
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE-PAC	-	-	-
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE-AD HOC	5,786.53	60,000.00	54,213.47
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE-QUALITY OF WORK LIFE	350.24	-	(350.24)
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE-KTC PARTNERSHIP	-	-	-
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE-MARTIN ABORIGINAL INITIAT	-	-	-
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE-POLICY REVIEW	-	-	-
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE - NCET-NSD ENGAGEMENT	-	-	-
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE - RED EARTH TRANSFER	-	-	-
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>6,136.77</b>	<b>60,000.00</b>	<b>53,863.23</b>

**OTHER EXPENSES**

REMUNERATION TRUSTEES	-	-	-
RENUMERATION - RECRUITMENT	-	-	-
REMUNERATION TRUSTEES - RETREAT	-	-	-
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS - TRUSTEES	1,186.36	4,000.00	2,813.64
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS - RECRUITMENT	-	-	-
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	20,367.93	200,000.00	179,632.07
IN-SERVICE - BOARD	186.24	90,000.00	89,813.76
IN-SERVICE - BOARD (ORIENTATION)	-	-	-
IN-SERVICE - N.S.D. P.D. - TRUSTEES	-	-	-
LEGAL FEES - BOARD TRUSTEES	2,416.81	25,000.00	22,583.19
RENUMERATION ALTERNATES	-	-	-
VISA PURCHASES - TRUSTEE	158.58	-	(158.58)
TELEPHONE - TRUSTEE	461.86	3,000.00	2,538.14
TELEPHONE - VICE CHAIRMAN	-	-	-
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE - BOARD/OTHER	21,229.71	80,000.00	58,770.29
TRAVEL & SUBSISTANCE - PSBA	-	-	-
TRAVEL & SUBSISTANCE - ASBA	-	-	-
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE - TRUSTEE	-	-	-
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE - VICE CHAIRMAN	-	-	-
TRAVEL & SUBSISTENCE - RECRUITMENT	1,302.29	-	(1,302.29)
A.S.B.A. & P.S.B.A. FEES - BOARD	29,040.88	38,000.00	8,959.12
PRINTING & BINDING	1,663.10	3,500.00	1,836.90
INSURANCE - BOARD OF TRUSTEES	169.14	250.00	80.86
ADVERTISING - BOARD	172.87	3,000.00	2,827.13
OFFICE SUPPLIES	436.10	5,000.00	4,563.90
AWARDS	272.54	25,000.00	24,727.46
POSTAGE - BOARD	55.18	4,000.00	3,944.82
FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT	-	1,000.00	1,000.00
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>79,119.59</b>	<b>481,750.00</b>	<b>402,630.41</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100,128.08</b>	<b>621,750.00</b>	<b>527,849.58</b>



## **Secretary-Treasurer's Report**

### **For the Period Ending December 31, 2014**

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

Happy New Year! In our year-to-date, for the period ending December 31, 2014, Northland School Division's operating costs are in line with the operating budget. The Federal Revenue may still be adjusted, depending on the finalization of the nominal role (confirmation of federal student numbers). We are not expecting any substantial adjustment to our provincial revenues.

#### **REVENUE**

- Revenue received to date is in line with historical numbers.
- YTD revenue represents 32% of the June budget (and we are 33% into the fiscal year).

#### **EXPENSES**

- Expenses are also in line with historical data (\$18.4 m this year, \$19.5 m last year).
- YTD expenses represents 30% of the June budget, but maintenance expenses are lower until the summer.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

##### **Receivables**

- Mikişew is continuing to pay the current invoices, but is behind two payments (\$500,000) on the previous outstanding balance. They plan on having the \$500,000 caught up by the end of the month.

##### **Financial Management System**

- The fixed asset information will be imported from the previous software into the new software soon. When that is complete, the finance department will be able to manage fixed assets more efficiently.

##### **Truck Tenders**

- Unit 628 required replacing – the unit had 204,000 km. The successful bid was accepted from Peace River Ford in the amount of \$33,669.00 + GST for the supply of one 2015 F-150 Extended Cab Truck. Other bids received were:

Windsor Ford	\$36,107.45 + GST
Tercier Motors	\$34,919.00 + GST
Whitecap Motors	\$38,480.72 + GST
Edmonton Motors	\$33,693.00 + GST

- Unit 601 required replacing – the unit had 344,000 km. The successful bid was accepted from Peace River Ford in the amount of \$34,779.00 + GST for the supply of one 2015 F-250 4x4 Super Cab Truck. Other bids received were:
  - Windsor Ford \$39,129.50 + GST
  - Tercier Motors \$42,072.00 + GST
  - Whitecap Motors \$42,660.51 + GST
  - Edmonton Motors \$38,111.00 + GST
- Funds for both trucks will come from the 2014-2105 Capital Budget.

**Conclusion**

- Our priorities over the next month will be the preparation of the January update and the start of the 2015-2016 budget process

School Jurisdiction Code: 1280

## STATEMENTS OF OPERATIONS

For the Period Ending December 31, 2014 (in dollars)

	Actual 2011-2012 (Restated)	Actual 2012-2013	Actual 2013-2014	Actual YTD Dec 31 2014-2015	Budget 2014-2015 June Approved	Budget 2014-2015 Nov. Revised	Balance to be received or spent
<b>REVENUES</b>							
Alberta Education	\$37,455,386	\$37,200,087	\$34,930,635	\$11,051,764	\$36,668,698	\$37,011,527	\$25,959,763
Other - Government of Alberta	\$1,095,583	\$966,929	\$699,650	\$155,474	\$930,824	\$930,824	\$775,350
Federal Government and First Nations	\$20,845,936	\$20,862,392	\$20,962,847	\$8,017,000	\$20,966,622	\$23,696,172	\$15,679,172
Other Alberta school authorities	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Out of province authorities	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Alberta Municipalities-special tax levies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Property taxes	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Fees	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other sales and services	\$565,572	\$656,887	\$3,631,096	\$69,202	\$1,274,650	\$1,494,069	\$1,424,867
Investment income	\$39,891	\$10,292	\$67,600	\$0	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
Gifts and donations	\$693,754	\$665,555	\$154,469	\$139,189	\$450,000	\$450,000	\$310,811
Rental of facilities	\$1,000,651	\$973,522	\$832,864	\$307,330	\$957,530	\$957,530	\$650,200
Fundraising	\$347,164	\$251,134	\$489,715	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Gains (losses) on disposal of capital assets	\$1,260	\$156,458	\$200	\$8,608	\$0	\$0	(\$8,608)
Other revenue	\$0	\$0	\$1,365,154	\$33,435	\$0	\$0	(\$33,435)
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$62,045,197</b>	<b>\$61,743,256</b>	<b>\$63,134,231</b>	<b>\$19,782,002</b>	<b>\$61,288,324</b>	<b>\$64,580,122</b>	<b>\$44,798,120</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>							
Certificated salaries	\$21,544,783	\$21,031,068	\$20,878,113	\$7,014,574	\$20,940,642	\$21,919,528	\$14,904,954
Certificated benefits	\$4,218,552	\$4,092,469	\$4,390,192	\$1,258,776	\$4,351,911	\$4,172,140	\$2,913,364
Non-certificated salaries and wages	\$13,536,225	\$13,282,741	\$12,583,963	\$4,323,066	\$13,306,691	\$13,602,297	\$9,279,231
Non-certificated benefits	\$2,959,078	\$2,916,643	\$2,805,020	\$917,500	\$3,642,980	\$3,473,654	\$2,556,154
<b>SUB - TOTAL SALARIES AND BENEFITS</b>	<b>\$42,258,638</b>	<b>\$41,322,920</b>	<b>\$40,657,288</b>	<b>\$13,513,916</b>	<b>\$42,242,224</b>	<b>\$43,167,619</b>	<b>\$29,653,703</b>
Services, contracts and supplies	\$16,204,273	\$15,450,160	\$16,819,789	\$4,977,592	\$14,683,930	\$16,882,421	\$11,904,829
Amortization of supported tangible capital assets	\$3,138,632	\$3,192,543	\$3,526,233	\$0	\$3,272,623	\$3,272,623	\$3,272,623
Amortization of unsupported tangible capital assets	\$995,957	\$1,609,872	\$2,232,457	\$0	\$1,208,400	\$1,208,400	\$1,208,400
Supported interest on capital debt	\$40,429	\$23,193	\$9,178	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Unsupported interest on capital debt	\$650	\$433	\$216	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other interest and finance charges	\$4,690	\$29,008	\$2,430	\$0	\$45,162	\$45,162	\$45,162
Losses on disposal of tangible capital assets	\$33,167	\$67,735	\$52,002	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other expense	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$62,676,435</b>	<b>\$61,695,864</b>	<b>\$63,299,592</b>	<b>\$18,491,508</b>	<b>\$61,452,339</b>	<b>\$64,576,225</b>	<b>\$46,084,717</b>
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>(\$631,238)</b>	<b>\$47,392</b>	<b>(\$165,361)</b>	<b>\$1,290,494</b>	<b>(\$164,015)</b>	<b>\$3,897</b>	<b>(\$1,286,597)</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>							
Instruction	\$40,504,149	\$39,872,808	\$39,459,882	\$12,223,295	\$39,379,882	\$41,553,778	\$27,156,587
Plant operations and maintenance	\$9,968,293	\$9,696,288	\$11,636,159	\$2,572,610	\$9,438,207	\$10,187,496	\$6,865,598
Transportation	\$3,753,651	\$3,721,237	\$3,578,213	\$1,092,310	\$3,572,676	\$3,555,872	\$2,480,367
Administration	\$3,173,874	\$3,233,159	\$3,532,499	\$1,066,996	\$3,774,411	\$3,933,415	\$2,707,415
External services	\$5,274,639	\$5,172,372	\$5,092,839	\$1,536,298	\$5,287,162	\$5,345,664	\$3,750,863
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$62,674,606</b>	<b>\$61,695,864</b>	<b>\$63,299,593</b>	<b>\$18,491,508</b>	<b>\$61,452,339</b>	<b>\$64,576,225</b>	<b>\$42,960,830</b>
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>(\$629,409)</b>	<b>\$47,392</b>	<b>(\$165,361)</b>	<b>\$1,290,494</b>	<b>(\$164,015)</b>	<b>\$3,897</b>	<b>\$1,837,290</b>



Northland School Division  
Federal Accounts Receivable

### Aged Summary

Months Outstanding	ACFN	Indian Education Authority	Mikisew	Peerless Kateri First Nation	Bigstone	Chip Prairie	Lesser Slave Lake	Lubicon Cree	Indian Affairs	Woodland Cree	Aging by Month
Dec-14	-	-	248,573.14	-	695,373.98	-	6,705.70	-	0.10	63,541.24	1,014,194.16
Nov-14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.10	63,541.24	63,541.34
Oct-14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.10	63,541.24	63,541.34
Sep-14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.10	63,541.24	63,541.34
Aug-14	70,366.40	-	246,074.20	78,688.60	216,791.96	23,120.50	-	37,753.80	39,586.81	(387,280.68)	325,101.59
Jul-14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00	0.00	-
Jun-14	-	-	248,573.14	-	-	-	-	0.30	-	63,541.24	312,114.68
May-14	-	-	248,573.14	-	-	-	-	-	-	63,541.24	312,114.38
Apr-14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	63,541.24	63,541.24
Mar-14	-	-	243,116.62	-	-	-	-	-	-	(176,120.18)	66,996.44
Feb-14	-	-	249,482.56	-	-	-	-	-	-	103,485.51	352,968.07
Jan-14	-	-	249,482.56	-	-	-	-	-	-	103,485.51	352,968.07
Dec-13	-	-	249,482.56	-	-	-	-	-	-	43,485.51	292,968.07
Nov-13	-	-	157,337.48	-	-	-	-	-	-	116,109.45	273,446.93
Oct-13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,172.94	7,172.94
Sep-13	5,208.60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,172.94	12,381.54
Aug-13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(112,840.40)	(112,840.40)
Jul-13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jun-13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(115,756.16)	(115,756.16)
May-13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,172.94	7,172.94
Apr-13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,172.94	7,172.94
Mar-13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.37	7,172.94	7,173.31
Feb-13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,820.01	7,172.94	11,992.95
Jan-13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,172.94	7,172.94
Dec-12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,172.94	7,172.94
Nov-12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,172.94	7,172.94
Oct-12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,172.94	7,172.94
Sep-12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,172.94	7,172.94
Dec 2005 & older	-	61,333.22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	61,333.22
	75,575.00	61,333.22	2,140,695.40	78,688.60	912,165.94	23,120.50	6,705.70	37,754.10	44,407.59	98,459.58	3,478,905.63
Current	-	-	248,573.14	-	695,373.98	-	6,705.70	-	0.10	63,541.24	1,014,194.16
30 days	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.10	63,541.24	63,541.34
60 days	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.10	63,541.24	63,541.34
90 days	-	-	246,074.20	-	-	-	-	-	0.10	63,541.24	309,615.54
120 days	70,366.40	-	248,573.14	78,688.60	216,791.96	23,120.50	-	37,753.80	39,586.81	(387,280.68)	327,600.53
180 days	-	-	248,573.14	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00	248,573.14
181 - 365	-	-	1,148,901.78	-	-	-	-	0.30	-	395,415.40	1,544,317.48
1 yr - 2 yr	5,208.60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(163,840.10)	(153,811.12)
Over 2 yr	-	61,333.22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00	61,333.22
Current	75,575.00	61,333.22	2,140,695.40	78,688.60	912,165.94	23,120.50	6,705.70	37,754.10	44,407.59	98,459.58	3,478,905.63
Long Term	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Aging	75,575.00	61,333.22	2,140,695.40	78,688.60	912,165.94	23,120.50	6,705.70	37,754.10	44,407.59	98,459.58	3,478,905.63

## Northland School Division No. 61

Accounts Receivable  
Federal Government and First Nations

9-Jan-15

Monthly Billing REG rate ECS Rate

13-14 Student Count Reg E.C.S.	Student Counts	Prior to & 2004/2005	Outstanding Aug-2011 2010/2011	Outstanding Aug-2012 2011/2012	Outstanding Aug-2013 2012/2013	Outstanding Aug-2014 2013/2014	Outstanding Dec-2014 2014/2015	Mths O/S	Total Outstanding	Monthly Billing	REG rate	ECS Rate
111	26	-	(0.00)	0.00	4,820.01	39,587.18	0.40	0.2	44,407.59	230,027.84	1,868.86	868.63
6	4	-	-	-	(0.00)	-	6,705.70	1.0	6,705.70	6,924.96	1,154.16	465.93
360	26	-	(0.00)	0.00	0.00	216,791.96	695,373.98	1.3	912,165.94	695,373.98	1,868.86	868.63
0	0	61,333.22	-	-	-	70,386.40	-	-	61,333.22	-	-	-
40	2	-	-	-	5,208.60	1,994,826.56	-	1.1	75,575.00	71,773.40	1,750.93	868.10
138	8	-	0.00	-	(102,704.30)	(51,865.28)	248,573.14	8.6	2,140,695.40	248,573.14	1,750.93	868.10
54	3	-	-	(0.00)	(103,840.10)	(51,865.28)	254,164.96	1.0	98,459.58	103,524.33	1,868.86	868.63
72	11	-	-	-	-	37,754.10	-	0.3	37,754.10	144,112.85	1,868.86	868.63
57	8	-	0.00	0.00	0.00	23,120.50	-	0.2	23,120.50	113,474.06	1,868.86	868.63
201	21	-	-	(0.00)	0.00	78,688.60	-	0.2	78,688.60	393,882.09	1,868.86	868.63
1039	109	61,333.22	(0.00)	0.00	(196,515.79)	2,409,270.02	1,204,818.18		3,478,905.63			

Total Outstanding

3,478,905.63

Altabasca Chip	71,773.40	Dec 2014
Peerless Trout	392,881.86	Dec 2014
INAC	230,027.74	Dec 2014
Lubicon	184,095.94	Dec 2014
Chipewyan Prairie	113,474.06	Dec 2014
LSJIRC	20,117.10	Sept-Nov 2014
Bigstone Cree	695,373.98	Nov 2014
Mikisew Cree	248,573.14	Nov 2014
Woodland Cree	240,000.00	Sept 2013-Dec 2013
	<u>2,196,317.22</u>	

Bigstone #'s does not include Career Pathways  
 Career Pathway is being paid by CEU's earned by the students  
 Liaison - Bigstone Cree  
 Liaison - Mikisew paid by INAC