

**Horizon School Division No. 67
ERIC JOHNSON ROOM**

Tuesday, June 16, 2015 – 1:00 p.m.

Regular Board Meeting Agenda
(Scott Reiling (VHS) will be joining the Board for Lunch at Noon)

A – Action Items

A.1 Agenda	
A.2 Minutes of Regular Board Meeting held Tuesday, May 19, 2015	ENCLOSURE 1
A.3 Payment of Accounts Report	ENCLOSURE 2
A.4 2015 – 2016 Budget	
A.4 Policy DGA <i>Authorized Signatures</i>	ENCLOSURE 3

D – Discussion Items

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I- Information Items

I.1 Superintendent Progress Report <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accountability Pillar	ENCLOSURE (ENCLOSURE)
I.2 Trustee/Committee Reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Zone 6 ASBA Report – Marie Logan<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ASBA Spring General Conference Report• June Admin. Meeting Report – Jen Crowson• Facilities Committee Report – Derek Baron	“HANDOUT ENCLOSURE *
I.3 Associate Superintendent of Finance and Operations Report – John Rakai	
I.4 Associate Superintendent of Programs, Services and Human Resources Report – Clark Bosch	HANDOUT
I.5 Associate Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Report – Erin Hurkett	HANDOUT

Correspondence

- From Education Minister Eggen re New Role
- From Education Minister Eggen re Restoration of Funding
- From HSD to Premier Notley re Congratulations on Election Results
- From HSD to Minister Eggen re Congratulations on Election Results
- From HSD to Minister Mason re Congratulations on Election Results
- From HSD to Scott Reiling re Excellence in Teaching Award
- Press Release re Delay with New Education Act
- HSD Press Release re Appointment of New Director of Learning
- May-June Education Law Reporter
- Newspaper Articles pertaining to HSD

ENCLOSURE +

Horizon School Division No. 67

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The Board of Trustees of Horizon School Division No. 67 held its Regular Board meeting on Tuesday, May 19, 2015 beginning at 1:00 p.m. in the Eric Johnson Room

TRUSTEES PRESENT: Marie Logan, Board Chair
Bruce Francis, Board Vice-Chair
Blair Lowry, Derek Baron, Jennifer Crowson, Terry Michaelis

ALSO PRESENT: Wilco Tymensen, Superintendent of Schools
John Rakai, Associate Superintendent of Finance & Operations
Clark Bosch, Associate Superintendent of Programs, Services & Human Resources
Erin Hurkett, Associate Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction
Barb McDonald, Recording Secretary
J.W. Schnarr, Taber Times

REGRETS: Rick Anderson, Trustee

ACTION ITEMS

- A.1 Moved by Bruce Francis that the Board approve the agenda as presented with the following addition and change:

Under Action Items:

A.8 D.A. Ferguson/W.R. Myers High School Capital Project Preliminary Design

Under Discussion Items:

Removal of Item D.1 - Budget

	Carried Unanimously	AGENDA APPROVED 70/15
A.2 Moved by Jennifer Crowson that the Board approve the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting held Tuesday, April 21, 2015 as provided in Enclosure 1 of the agenda.	Carried Unanimously	BOARD MEETING MINUTES APPROVED 71/15
A.3 Moved by Terry Michaelis that the Board approve the April/May Payment of Accounts report in the amount of \$7,956,409.62 as provided in Enclosure 2 of the agenda.	Carried Unanimously	PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS REPORT APPROVED 72/15
A.4 Moved by Derek Baron that the Board award the Hays caretaking tender to K.T. Maintenance for a two-year term with the option for Horizon School Division to extend the contract for five years.	Carried Unanimously	HAYS CARETAKING TENDER APPROVED 73/15
A.5 Moved by Derek Baron that the Board award the Vauxhall High School caretaking tender to Allan Matthews for a two-year term with the option for Horizon School Division to extend the contract for five years.	Carried Unanimously	VAUXHALL HIGH SCHOOL CARETAKING TENDER APPROVED 74/15

A.6 On October 23, 2012, the Board of Trustees of Horizon School Division approved its participation in the Bull Creek Wind Power Project and authorized the execution of a Direct Sales Agreement with BluEarth Renewables Inc. (the Vendor).

As contemplated under the Direct Sales Agreement, the Board agreed to execute the ancillary agreements, documents, consents, acknowledgement and instruments that are reasonably and customarily required by the lender of the project to allow the Vendor to obtain financing for the project.

All such ancillary documents have been negotiated and reviewed by legal counsel representing the School Division to ensure their legitimacy and compliance with the Direct Sales Agreement and that such documents do not make the School Division liable in any respect to the lender of the project, except regarding confirming the obligation to purchase electricity from the project under the terms and conditions already agreed to under the Direct Sales Agreement.

The Bull Creek Wind Power Project Resolutions are therefore presented to the Board of Trustees for approval, including the appointment of the authorized signatories for the Board to negotiate, execute and deliver each of those Ancillary documents discussed below as follows:

1. A Trustee's Certificate

Signed by a Trustee, the purpose of the Certificate is to certify that each Board exists as a corporation and has the capacity and authority to sign and enter into each of the documents to be executed. This includes signatures of each of the Authorized Signatories, a copy of the Order of the Minister of Education that establishes the Board, copies of the Board's Policies or other governing documents (if applicable) and a signed copy of the Resolution of the Board of Trustees.

2. An Agency Agreement

Signed by authorized signatories, this document appoints the Fort McMurray Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 32 as the Agent on behalf of all the Boards that are purchasers under the Direct Sales Agreements and recognizes that Bull Creek Wind Power Limited Partnership is the Vendor party under the Direct Sales Agreement.

3. A Consent and Acknowledgement Agreement

Signed by authorized signatories, this form acknowledges by the Board, that certain lenders have loaned money to Bull Creek Wind Power Limited Partnership for the purpose of constructing the wind farm contemplated in the Direct Sales Agreement and allows the lenders to step in to Bull Creek Wind Power Limited Partnership's shoes if Bull Creek Wind Power Limited Partnership defaults on its obligations under the Direct Sales Agreement.

Moved by Derek Baron that the Board of Trustees of Horizon School Division No. 67 authorize the signing of the Bull Creek Wind Power resolutions as provided in Enclosure 3 of the agenda.

Carried Unanimously

SIGNING OF THE
BULL CREEK WIND
POWER PROJECT
RESOLUTIONS
APPROVED
75/15

A.7	Moved by Bruce Francis that the Board approve second reading of Policy HK <i>Student Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting</i> as provided in Enclosure 4 of the agenda.	Carried Unanimously	SECOND READING OF POLICY HK APPROVED 76/15
A.7.1	Moved by Jennifer Crowson that the Board approve final reading of Policy HK <i>Student Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting</i> as provided in Enclosure 4 of the agenda.	Carried Unanimously	FINAL READING OF POLICY HK APPROVED 77/15
A.8	Moved by Derek Baron that the Board approve t moving forward with preliminary engineering, technical and blueprint design investigations at a cost of up to \$50,000.00 utilizing the D.A. Ferguson/W.R. Myers re-modernization project planning funds that have been provided by Alberta Education.	Carried Unanimously	CAPITAL PROJECT PLANNING FUNDS APPROVED FOR PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS

INFORMATION ITEMS

I.1 Superintendent's Progress Report

- Meetings and conversations have been ongoing regarding student welfare and school practices. Dialogue has included multiple agencies and legal counsel to discuss interventions that ensure the learning needs and safety of individual students is being met but that the safety of all students is considered in some cases.

Fiscal Responsibility

- Implications stemming from Budget 2015 and Alberta's May provincial election are ongoing. Budget discussion with CASSIX and CASS are also ongoing as is dialogue with school principals regarding school reserve expenditure requests for 2015-16.

Personnel Management

- Given the current directive from Alberta Education regarding frozen head count for 2015-16 a meeting was held with George Epp regarding summer activities and conversations with the LGSM population.

Policy and Strategic Planning

- Horizon was successful in acquiring an Alberta Education technology grant that allows us to build leadership capacity with regard to the new Learning and Technology Policy Framework. Five schools are part of the project and are providing further in-servicing to the remaining school leadership team.
- Conversations with Taber Adult Learning and the Lethbridge College are ongoing regarding the potential of offering adult trades programs in W.R. Myers after school hours. The hope is that as the community more regularly partakes in activities within the DAF/WRM complex that enrollment will be enhanced.

Organizational Leadership and Management

- Meetings with Sahuri, Alberta Education and Alberta Infrastructure are ongoing with regard to the Warner and Barnwell modernizations.

Communications and Community Relations

- A number of meetings and celebrations have taken place over the last month. These include but are not limited to
 - Meeting with the Council of School Councils representative attending the spring annual general meeting to clarify questions regarding Horizon's dual credit motion
 - Attending the APEX youth awards.
 - Met with parents of Hays school to discuss changes in classroom grading configurations

- Discussions with all staff at school staff meetings are ongoing. Conversations have tended to focus on Budget 2015 clarifications, staffing practice changes and board philosophical stances on items such as transportation, and ELL programming. Staff question and answer opportunities have been rewarding and provided insight into areas of concern for staff.
- Attended the DA Ferguson talent show
- Attended a number of graduations. A huge congratulation goes out to all of the Classes of 2015.
- Attended the Family Connection's resiliency celebration.
- Attended the Edwin Parr Awards banquet
- Attended the Vauxhall Baseball Academy fundraiser.

I.2 Trustee/Committee Reports

2.1 Zone 6 ASBA Report - Marie Logan, Zone 6 Representative, provided an update of the Zone 6 meeting that took place on Wednesday, May 13, 2015 in Taber which included information on the following topics:

- Conversations regarding the C2 Committee becoming part of the Collective Agreement
- The South Zone Comprehensive School Health Team – A survey template will be sent out to jurisdictions with questions regarding the advocacy of student health
- The Provincial ASBA Budget was presented. Some of the following information was provided:
 - There will be an overall 9% decrease in the ASBA Budget
 - There will be a 2% decrease in membership fees
 - ASBA contracting services have increased by 5%
 - Registration fees have increased by \$25.00 per person for the Spring and Fall General Meetings
 - There will be no increase to the per diem or honorarium rates
 - There will be no increase in staff salaries
 - The National School Board Association membership fee of \$16,500.00 will not be renewed
 - A decision as to whether or not ASBA will retain their Canadian School Board's Association membership will be decided upon at the Spring General Meeting in Red Deer in June
- The 2015 Edwin Parr Awards were once again a success with nine outstanding first year teachers from Zone 6 being nominated. The winning teacher this year was Sterling Hamilton from the Medicine Hat Public School District

2.2 Administrators' Meeting Report

Blair Lowry reviewed highlights of the Administrators' meeting which took place on 12, 2015

2.3 Facilities Committee Report

Derek Baron, Facilities Committee Chair, provided an update on work undertaken during the past month within the Facilities Department. The May Facilities Report was enclosed in the agenda and included the following highlights:

Horizon MAP – Vauxhall

Outstanding site work at Horizon MAP is complete. Three hard surface (paving stone) student picnic areas were added to be utilized by students during breaks. Decorative rocks, stones, bushes and trees were also added. A sports area was not installed behind the school due to lack of room and the proximity to the building facility. Consideration for erecting a sporting area on the north east corner of the parking lot is underway.

2015 Maintenance and Renewal (IMR)

Central School Retaining Wall – IMR Contingency

- Work on the Central School retaining wall has resumed. In addition to addressing safety concerns with removal of the wooden retaining wall, water displacement issues will also be addressed.

Chamberlain School Contingency Project

- Pricing for Stucco replacement with brick on the West gymnasium wall and the South side of the 2004 section have been received. The contract was awarded to the low bidding contractor. Stucco removal

and wall preparations will be done in house, while the brick installation and the stucco cap will be handled by the successful bidding contractor. Work is expected to be complete prior to the start of the 2015/16 school year

Enchant School

- Repointing and repair of exterior masonry is complete. Stucco walls will be strapped using CCA preserved lumber and finished using resilient synthetic polymer to enhance its esthetics appeal. Stucco replacement start time is forthcoming

Lomond School IMR Project 1

- Flooring for the classrooms and main floor corridor has been completed. Standard colors were selected by the facilities department along with new rubber base throughout. The remaining flooring including the lower 1961 corridor and the 1956 entry is now underway. Completion is expected prior to the end of the school year

Vauxhall Elementary School Exterior Columns

- Exterior column repair is complete. Water displacement improvement is underway to prevent further frost heaving and damage to structural columns.

Maintenance Projects

- Completed heating, ventilation and air-conditioning graphics for Vauxhall Elementary School modular classrooms.
- Installation of vehicle post in the Erle Rivers High School parking lot as requested by school administration and local law enforcement.
- Replaced concrete lifted and damaged landing on egress door at ERHS
- Set up irrigation for all schools.
- Fertilizing of all playing fields and green strips are underway. Additionally, spraying for weeds is primarily complete for the first round, ongoing spot spraying will be required throughout the summer months.
- Gopher control in rural schools in underway and ongoing.
- Built and installed shelving for DAF/WRM music room.
- In conjunction with the flooring replacement and upgrading through Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal in Lomond School, Horizon facilities crews are also continuing the process of repairing corridor and classroom walls. Replacement wall covering is underway.
- Inspection and repair / replacement of playground equipment is underway. This project is ongoing and is being undertaken by certified facilities staff.
- LED lighting upgrading in various schools. Particularly in exterior lighting.

Maintenance work During February and March

During the past month, a total of 74 new Service request and generated preventive maintenance requests were submitted through Horizons electronic service request generating software, Asset Planner. Requests included climate control, plumbing, electrical, access, painting requests etc.

Several other Maintenance repair projects and preventative maintenance projects were undertaken. Graffiti removal, wall repairs and painting, plumbing and heating repairs, installation of tack boards, additional shelving installed in the band room of WRM/DAF, construction and installation of mill work in Hays School, rooftop unit repairs etc.

Caretaking Tenders

Invitations for the supply of caretaking services for Hays School and for Vauxhall Junior / Senior High School were advertised. A mandatory site tour was held in Vauxhall on Friday May 1 and in Hays on Friday May 8.

Six contractors attended the mandatory contract review and site tour at Vauxhall Jr./Sr. High School, while two contractors attended the Hays School meeting. Bidding deadline for both tenders was Friday May 15, 2015.

I.3. Associate Superintendent of Finance and Operations Report

John Rakai provided the following report

- Mr. Rakai met with a representative of the Warner Community Hockey Society to review and update the Residence Lease, for the Students that are participating in the hockey school that are not residents of the area, and the Operating Agreement. A draft of the updates will be circulated to the society to identify the areas of change
- Participated in a Bull Creek Wind Power Project conference call regarding documents that were brought to the Board for approval and signing at today's Board meeting
- Travelled to Lethbridge to meet the new Facilities Technologist, Kimberly Murfin, from the Learning Facilities Branch of Alberta Infrastructure.
- Attended the ASBOA conference in Edmonton
- On May 12th, jurisdictions received a notice from the Deputy Minister, allowing school jurisdictions a one-month extension for their budget submissions to the province. School budgets will now be due June 30th rather than May 31st. This will allow the new government time to review the 2015-2016 school authority funding. Information will be shared with school jurisdictions as it becomes available so that budgets can be adjusted accordingly.

I.5 Associate Superintendent of Programs, Services and Human Resources Report

Mr. Bosch provided the following update in terms of staffing within Horizon School Division:

- Round one of the hiring/transfer round for internal teaching positions has been completed with two teaching staff transferred to new schools within the division. Since then, external postings have taken place with approximately 30 teaching positions advertised. Over 500 applications have been received for these 30 positions with interviews currently taking place. The intent is to have all positions filled by the end of May.

I.4 Associate Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction Report

Erin Hurkett's report was distributed as a handout and included the following information:

Literacy & Numeracy

1. Facilitated an adolescent literacy PD for teachers at VHS. Best practices, assessment, and intervention at the Jr./Sr. high level were discussed.
2. Numeracy Committee: Met with members of the Numeracy Committee to discuss recommendations in terms of assessment and direction for the 2015/2016 school year. The Committee recommends that schools use the testonline (Victoria, BC) assessment tool as a universal screen and then the Outcomes Based Mathematics Assessment developed by a teacher in Lethbridge School District for pre/post assessment and progress monitoring. The Committee would like to continue their work into 2015/2016 so they are able to discuss the implementation practice and move further into discussions in relation to instructional practices.
3. Rebecca Nelson from Chamberlain has agreed to chair the Numeracy Committee for 2015/2016. She will also facilitate PD for second year teachers on all division wide PD days in regard to best numeracy practices in the classroom.

Inclusive Learning

1. Instructional Support Plans (ISP) & Dossier: Ann Muldoon and I have been providing DOSSIER with input for customization of ISPs for Horizon.

21st Century Learning Competencies

1. Science Olympics: Jr. high students from across the jurisdiction met on April 29th at the Civics Centre to partake in science-related activities and competitions.

Technology

1. Interjurisdictional Resource Centre: Order forms and communication have been sent out to schools so teachers are able to order digital/online resources at a discounted price for the 2015/2016 school year.

Director of Learning: Amber Darroch

21st Century Learning Competencies

1. Blended Learning in high schools - exploration of best practices for delivering distance learning or online courses to high school students in small school settings is occurring. Effective use of available online coursework, referred to as blended learning, can complement the depth and breadth of course offerings in small schools, and is an aspect of High School Re-design.
2. CTF Implementation - In preparation for the implementation of Career and Technology Foundations in junior high/middle school in the fall, Amber is working with a committee of two teachers and an administrator to prepare some teacher resources. These CTF projects will be made available to all Horizon teachers who can use them.

Effective and Purposeful Use of Technology

1. Xerox Multi-function Business Machines - new equipment has been delivered the week of April 20th and training for staff is ongoing. Feedback from schools is being gathered right now to ensure a high satisfaction rate with the equipment and its functioning at each site. An option to purchase one of two recommended copiers is being extended to Hutterite colonies this week.
2. Lethbridge College Multimedia Students - the practicum for our two students has concluded. The two individuals, Kenneth Miller and Matthew Peleskey, produced the Edwin Parr nominee video, worked on many improvements to the structure of our division website, and developed a repository of Horizon photos available for use in future publications
3. Alberta Education Research Community of Practice - work is ongoing on this project focusing on implementing the Learning and Technology Policy Framework (LTPF). A session for all administrators was held in conjunction with the Administrators' Meeting on May 12, and the RCOP team will be attending a provincial session in Ponoka on June 1st.

Other

1. Online Substitute Teacher Dispatch/Teacher Absence Module - WR Myers and DA Ferguson continue the pilot of this service and all teacher absences are being managed this way within the two school communities. A recommendation about whether to extend this service to other schools will be made in June.

COMMITTEE ITEMS

Moved by Derek Baron that the Board meet in Committee.

Carried Unanimously

COMMITTEE
79/15

Moved by Derek Baron that the meeting reconvene.

Carried Unanimously

RECONVENE
80/15

Moved by Bruce Francis that the meeting adjourn

Carried Unanimously

MEETING
ADJOURNED
11/15

Marie Logan, Chair

Barb McDonald, Secretary

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS REPORT

Board Meeting - June 16, 2015

General	May 12/15		434,709.68
General	May 20/15		92,450.26
U.S. Funds	May 22/15		110.83
U.S. Funds	May 22/15		1,396.14
General	May 26/15		1,427,101.10
U.S. Funds	May 28/15		22.03
General	June 2/15		125,221.33
"A" Payroll	May 2015	Teachers	1,606,213.77
	May 2015	Support	588,060.70
"B" Payroll	May 2015	Casual	20,197.74
	May 2015	Subs	69,435.40
Total Accounts			4,364,918.98
Board Chair	_____		
PJ:dd			
June 5/2015			

HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 67**POLICY HANDBOOK**

Policy Code: DGA
Policy Title: Authorized Signatures
Cross Reference:
Legal Reference: School Act, Sec. 60
Adoption Date: November 27, 1996
Amendment or Re: Sept. 18/03, Jan. 11/07
Affirmation Date: Apr. 19, 2011, June 16, 2015

POLICY

THE BOARD OF HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION REQUIRES SIGNATURES FOR CHEQUES DRAWN ON HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 67 BANK ACCOUNTS OF ANY TWO OF THE FOLLOWING DIVISION PERSONNEL:

- Superintendent of Schools
- Associate Superintendent of Finance and Operations
- Associate Superintendent of Programs, Services and Human Resources
- Associate Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
- Payroll/Personnel Coordinator

Or any other person who may be authorized by the Board from time to time.

Transactions in Horizon School Division No. 67 bank accounts that are required to be made on-line or at the bank shall require the signature of any one of the following division personnel:

- Superintendent of Schools
- Associate Superintendent of Finance and Operations
- Finance Director

Documents kept at the division office as a result of on-line or at bank transactions shall be verified and signed by any one of the two remaining employees upon completion of the transaction.

Superintendents Progress Report

June, 2015

Educational Leadership and Student Welfare

- Meetings and conversations have been ongoing regarding student welfare and school practices. Dialogue has included legal counsel.
- One knows it is the end of the school year, as High School Diplomas have begun.

Fiscal Responsibility

- Implications stemming from Budget 2015 and Alberta's May provincial election have been carried forward to the June Board meeting.

Personnel Management

- May and June have been exceptionally busy with hiring of new teachers, over 25 teachers have been hired for the 2015-16 school year.
- Meetings with the staff of the Warner Hockey School Program have occurred. Discussions have revolved around the student handbook and player contracts as well as employee contracts.

Policy and Strategic Planning

- Horizon was successful in acquiring an Alberta Education technology grant that allows us to build leadership capacity with regard to the new Learning and Technology Policy Framework. A follow up meeting with Apple occurred to discuss implementation of Alberta Education's framework.

Organizational Leadership and Management

- Meetings with Sahuri, Alberta Education, and Alberta Infrastructure are ongoing with regard to the Warner modernization given the fact that it is extensively over budget. Recommendations to bring the scope within budget are being considered including reducing the footprint.

Communications and Community Relations

- A number of meetings and celebrations have taken place over the last month. These include but are not limited to
 - VES, VHS, Colony, Warner, ERHS, and Hays staff meetings. Conversations have focused on Budget, staffing practice changes and board philosophy regarding transportation, and ELL programming. Staff question and answer were answered.
 - W.R. Myers and Warner graduation. ACE Place, Taber Mennonite School, and Horizon Mennonite Alternative Program's graduation celebrations are still to occur.
 - Met with the Hays School Council to discuss the profile for the new principal.
 - Alberta Health Services meeting that included a presentation and discussion around the correlation of education and health (social determinants of health).
 - Administrator's meeting
 - Division Office staff meeting
 - CASSIX meeting

Accountability Pillar Overall Summary
3-Year Plan - May 2015
Authority: 1045 Horizon School Division No. 67



Measure Category	Measure Category Evaluation	Measure	Horizon Sch Div No. 67			Alberta			Measure Evaluation		
			Current Result	Prev Year Result	Prev 3 Yr Average	Current Result	Prev Year Result	Prev 3 Yr Average	Achievement	Improvement	Overall
Safe and Caring Schools	Excellent	Safe and Caring	93.0	92.9	91.8	89.2	89.1	88.9	Very High	Improved	Excellent
Student Learning Opportunities	Excellent	Program of Studies	82.3	81.6	80.8	81.3	81.3	81.2	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
		Education Quality	93.5	92.5	92.1	89.5	89.2	89.5	Very High	Improved	Excellent
		Drop Out Rate	3.3	4.0	3.6	3.4	3.3	3.3	High	Maintained	Good
		High School Completion Rate (3 yr)	86.2	81.0	78.3	76.4	74.9	74.6	Very High	Improved Significantly	Excellent
Student Learning Achievement (Grades K-9)	Issue	PAT: Acceptable	77.1	76.3	77.9	74.0	75.3	75.5	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
		PAT: Excellence	15.5	18.1	18.0	19.0	19.1	19.6	Intermediate	Declined	Issue
Student Learning Achievement (Grades 10-12)	Good	Diploma: Acceptable	92.0	92.8	92.1	85.4	84.2	83.4	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
		Diploma: Excellence	19.8	22.5	21.0	21.0	19.5	19.1	High	Maintained	Good
		Diploma Exam Participation Rate (4+ Exams)	50.2	46.1	46.6	54.9	50.5	54.4	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
		Rutherford Scholarship Eligibility Rate	67.0	60.1	64.7	61.2	60.9	61.3	High	Maintained	Good
Preparation for Lifelong Learning, World of Work, Citizenship	Good	Transition Rate (6 yr)	53.0	58.7	60.5	59.8	59.2	59.0	Intermediate	Declined	Issue
		Work Preparation	88.2	88.7	87.3	82.0	81.2	80.4	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
		Citizenship	87.7	87.6	86.1	83.5	83.4	83.1	Very High	Improved	Excellent
Parental Involvement	Excellent	Parental Involvement	85.9	85.9	85.6	80.7	80.6	80.2	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Continuous Improvement	Excellent	School Improvement	87.0	84.1	85.4	79.6	79.8	80.1	Very High	Improved	Excellent

Notes:

- 1) Aggregated PAT results are based upon a weighted average of percent meeting standards (Acceptable, Excellence). The weights are the number of students enrolled in each course. Courses included: English Language Arts (Grades 6, 9, 9 KAE), Français (Grades 6, 9), French Language Arts (Grades 6, 9), Mathematics 9 KAE, Science (Grades 6, 9, 9 KAE), Social Studies (Grades 6, 9, 9 KAE).
- 2) Aggregated Diploma results are a weighted average of percent meeting standards (Acceptable, Excellence) on Diploma Examinations. The weights are the number of students writing the Diploma Examination for each course. Courses included: English Language Arts 30-1, English Language Arts 30-2, French Language Arts 30-1, Français 30-1, Chemistry 30, Physics 30, Biology 30, Science 30, Social Studies 30-1, Social Studies 30-2.
- 3) Overall evaluations can only be calculated if both improvement and achievement evaluations are available.
- 4) Results for the ACOL measures are available in the detailed report; see "ACOL Measures" in the Table of Contents.
- 5) Data values have been suppressed where the number of students is less than 6. Suppression is marked with an asterisk (*).
- 6) Please note that participation in Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests was substantially impacted by the flooding in June 2013. Caution should be used when interpreting trends over time for the province and those school authorities affected by the floods.
- 7) Please note that participation in Diploma Examinations was impacted by the flooding in June 2013. Caution should be used when interpreting trends over time for the province and those school authorities affected by the floods.
- 8) Survey results for the province and school authorities were impacted by changes in the number of students responding to the survey through the introduction of the Tell THEM From ME survey tool in 2014.

HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION NUMBER 67 - FACILITIES DEPARTMENT
Facilities Committee Report
Jake Heide

With summer break around the corner, the facilities crews are actively preparing for summer projects, major preventative maintenance procedures, major equipment shut down for preventative and corrective measures, thorough cleaning of facilities, preparing and maintaining school grounds as well as organizing major IMR projects. All while continuing the day to day operation of all Horizon schools.

The following is a summary of activities during the past month:

2015 Maintenance and Renewal (IMR)

Ace Place / Taber Mennonite School

- Window replacement for TMS is scheduled to begin immediately following the 2015 school year.
- Washroom upgrading has begun for the both Ace Place and TMS. New plumbing fixtures, vanities and repaired or replacement of partitions are included in the scope of the project.
- Sound proofing of councilors offices are complete.
- Pricing is underway for a paging system to be installed throughout the facility to address significant safety concerns brought forth by school administrations as well as by the Taber Police Services.

Central School Retaining Wall – IMR Contingency

- Work on the Central School retaining wall has resumed. In addition to addressing safety concerns with removal of the wooden retaining wall, water displacement issues will also be addressed.

Chamberlain School Contingency Project

- Pricing for Stucco replacement with brick on the West gymnasium wall and the South side of the 2004 section have been received. Work is expected to be complete prior to the start of the 2015/16 school year. A blue skin vapor barrier has now also been added to the scope of the project

Enchant School

- Ventilation and Air Conditioning improvements are underway for the original 1952 section, particularly the second floor.
- Repointing and repair of exterior masonry is complete. Stucco walls will be strapped using CCA preserved lumber and finished using resilient synthetic polymer to enhance its esthetics appeal. Stucco replacement start time is expected for the week of June 18

Lomond School IMR Project 1

- Flooring for the classrooms and main floor corridor has been completed. Standard colors were selected by the facilities department along with new rubber base throughout. The remaining flooring including the lower 1961 corridor and the 1956 entry is now underway. Completion is expected prior to the end of the school year

Hays School

- The primary Electrical distribution upgrades are scheduled to begin on June 29. A complete electrical shutdown of the school will last approximately two weeks.
- Barrier free accessibility project is underway. The main entry way doors and frames will be replaced with new steel doors with barrier free accessibility built into the door and framing.

Vauxhall Elementary School Exterior Columns

- Exterior column repair is complete. Water displacement improvement is complete and directed to the retention pond constructed during the school capital project.

Maintenance Projects

- Ongoing painting of Lomond School
- Irrigation setup and replacement of heads is ongoing
- Installation of vehicle post in the Erle Rivers High School parking lot as requested by school administration and local law enforcement.
- Replaced concrete lifted and damaged landing on egress door at ERHS
- Fertilizing of all playing fields and green strips complete. Additionally, spraying for weeds is complete for the first round; ongoing spot spraying will be required throughout the summer months.
- Gopher control in rural schools in underway and ongoing.
- Built and installed shelving for Chamberlain school caretaking space.
- Inspection and repair / replacement of playground equipment is complete
- Continuing LED lighting upgrading in various schools. Particularly in exterior lighting.

Maintenance work During May and June

During the past month, a total of 84 new Service request and generated preventive maintenance requests were submitted through Horizons electronic service request generating software, Asset Planner. Requests included climate control, plumbing, electrical, access, painting requests etc.

Several other Maintenance repair projects and preventative maintenance projects were undertaken such as graffiti removal, wall repairs and painting, plumbing and heating repairs, installation of tack boards, additional shelving installed for Chamberlain School, construction and installation of mill work in Hays School, rooftop unit repairs etc.

Vauxhall Junior, Senior High School

Under the direction of School and the facilities department, a group of high school students prepared several designs for the undeveloped courtyard space between the 1961 addition and the 1956 original building. As part of the preliminary work conducted by the courtyard development crew, they prepared pricing, arranged for volunteer labor and organized the use of heavy equipment complete with operators at a largely discounted price.

The team will now be completing a final design for submittal and approval to school administration and the facilities department. Plant operations and maintenance will absorb the cost of irrigation, some concrete work as well as any sod placement.

Barnwell Capital Project Decanting and preparation

A 53' trailer was moved onto the hard surface space at Barnwell School. Staff will begin the process of moving equipment and supplies out of the main building in preparation for the upcoming modernization.

Decanting planning is complete. The school administration area will be relocated to the existing school computer lab. A multi-use office will be constructed in the corner of the existing lab to be used primarily by the School principal as well as vice principal and others that may require it.

The reception desk and the copier equipment will be relocated into the computer lab as well. The expectation is to begin this process when school concludes for the current term.

DAF / WRM Capital Project

Alberta Education provided funding to enable Horizon School Division to move forward with the planning and preliminary design work for a potential upcoming capital project to modernize DA Ferguson and WR Myers Schools.

In order to proceed, Horizon School Division has engaged the services of an engineering firm out of Lethbridge to prepare the design work and continue with a more detailed structural review of the existing facilities.

Administration staff for both schools, senior administration, the engineering representatives as well as Horizon facilities will be meeting for an information gathering session on June 24th.

From: **Education Deputy Minister** <EducationDeputyMinister@gov.ab.ca>

Date: Thu, May 28, 2015 at 1:12 PM

Subject: 2015/2016 School Funding

To:

**To: All Superintendents of Public, Separate, Charter and Francophone School Boards
Executive Directors of Stakeholder Associations**

ACSTA (Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association)

ASBA (Alberta School Boards Association)

ASCA (Alberta School Councils' Association)

ATA (Alberta Teachers' Association)

AAPCS (Association of Alberta Public Charter Schools)

ACFA (Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta)

AISCA (Association of Independent Schools & Colleges in Alberta)

ASBOA (Association of School Business Officials of Alberta)

CASS (College of Alberta School Superintendents)

Federation des parents francophones de l'Alberta

Federation des conseils scolaires francophones de l'Alberta

PSBAA (Public School Boards' Association of Alberta)

Earlier today, the Honourable David Eggen, Minister of Education, provided school board chairs an update regarding government funding support for school boards for the 2015/2016 school year. I am pleased to provide you with additional information to assist you in the preparation of your budgets for the upcoming school year.

Funding for Enrolment Growth:

Funding for enrolment growth for the 2015/2016 school year will be re-instated and will be based on each board's September 30, 2015 funded enrolment count. The *2015/2016 Funding Manual for School Authorities* has been updated to reflect this and a revised version of the manual is now posted to Education's website.

Funding Reductions Restored:

Government will fully restore the previous reductions in grants to the 2014/2015 school year level and will increase the Base Instruction and Class Size grants. Government's funding decision means that it is no longer necessary to split the Base Instruction grant into teacher and non-teacher components (i.e., the previous Base A and B methodology).

Funding for Teacher Framework Agreement:

Government will continue to provide funding for the final year of the *Teacher Framework Agreement*, which includes a two per cent increase in teacher salaries in September 2015 and a one per cent one-time lump sum payment to teachers in November 2015. Funding of this increase will be provided through a 1.8% increase to the base instruction grant rate and a two per cent increase to the class size grant rates. Based on expenditure information for certificated staff provided by school boards, the 1.8% and two per cent grant rate increases to base instruction and class size respectively, will provide boards with sufficient additional funding to honour the final year of the agreement.

Removal of Restrictions on Use of School Board Reserves and Staffing Levels:

The previously communicated restrictions regarding the use of school board reserves and maintaining front-line teacher staffing levels have been removed. School boards have the flexibility to make programming, budgeting and staffing decisions that reflect the needs of your students and communities.

However, you can appreciate that Alberta is still facing a challenging economic environment. As referenced by the Minister, school boards are expected to make prudent decisions with respect to use of operating reserves. While previous restrictions have been lifted with respect to the use of reserves, boards are still required to use the budget report template prescribed by Alberta Education to ensure budget decisions and operational plans are sufficiently communicated to the public and to government. A revised 2015/2016 budget report template and guidelines will be sent to your secretary treasurer on Friday, May 29, 2015.

The deadline for school boards to submit their 2015/2016 budget reports to Alberta Education is June 30, 2015. The information above should allow operational planning and budgeting for the upcoming school year to be completed with greater certainty.

2015/2016 Funding Manual and Jurisdiction Funding Profiles:

For more details on the 2015/2016 school year funding, please refer to the *Funding Manual* at www.education.alberta.ca/admin/funding/manual.aspx. Jurisdictions' estimated funding profiles for the 2015/2016 school year have been updated with the above decisions and the latest available information from our systems. The updated *Jurisdiction Funding Profiles* are posted at: www.education.alberta.ca/admin/funding/2015jurisdictionfunding.aspx.

If you require additional information, please contact our Strategic Financial Services staff at [780-427-2055](tel:780-427-2055) (toll-free by first dialling 310-0000).

I appreciate your patience during this transition period and look forward to your continued collaboration and advice, and wish you and your students a successful 2015/2016 school year.

Sincerely,

Lorna Rosen
Deputy Minister

cc: School Divisions Communications Contacts

From: **Education Minister** <Education.Minister@gov.ab.ca>
Date: Tue, May 26, 2015 at 9:55 AM
Subject: Minister of Education and Minister of Culture and Tourism

**To: Board Chairs of Public, Separate, Francophone and Charter School Boards
Presidents of Stakeholder Associations**

AAMDC (Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties)
ACSTA (Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association)
AEFAA (Alberta Educational Facilities Administrators Association)
ASBA (Alberta School Boards Association)
AHEA (Alberta Home Education Association)
ASCA (Alberta School Councils' Association)
ATA (Alberta Teachers' Association)
AAPCS (Association of Alberta Public Charter Schools)
ACFA (Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta)
AISCA (Association of Independent Schools & Colleges in Alberta)
ASBOA (Association of School Business Officials of Alberta)
AUMA (Alberta Urban Municipalities Association)
CASS (College of Alberta School Superintendents)
CCSSA (Council of Catholic Superintendents of Alberta)
Federation des parents francophones de l'Alberta
Federation des conseils scolaires francophones de l'Alberta
Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta
PSBAA (Public School Boards' Association of Alberta)

The events of the past few weeks, including this week's swearing in ceremony, clearly demonstrate an enthusiasm for the change taking place here in Alberta. I am equal parts excited, honoured and humbled—as Minister of Education and Minister of Culture and Tourism—to play a role in this rejuvenation.

I look forward to meeting with many of you in the near future, but, in the meantime, I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself, as well as outline a few of my priorities.

As you may know, prior to representing the riding of Edmonton-Calder at the legislature, my background was as a public school teacher for two decades. I firmly believe that providing every child in Alberta with a high quality education is integral to the future of this province. Our children deserve the best education we can deliver.

Our government is committed to this vision and has established priorities which will receive my immediate attention:

- We will work to provide stable, predictable funding to school boards. Given Alberta's growing population and the need for quality education in our modern economy, this is essential.
- Our government will deal with growing enrolment in the K-12 system.

My job, as Minister of Education, is to serve Albertans by helping to ensure our children have the support to reach their potential. I believe Alberta has a quality education system, but we have an excellent opportunity to make it better—to make it something we are all truly proud of. The best way to do this is through partnerships between government, students, teachers, administrators, school boards and others.

I look forward to working together with you to achieve this goal.

Sincerely,

David Eggen
Minister of Education and Minister of Culture and Tourism



Empowering all our people to excel

6302 - 56th Street
Taber, Alberta T1G 1Z9
Phone: (403) 223-3547
Fax: (403) 223-2999
www.horizon.ab.ca

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Our Learning Community

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Barnwell School
Phone: 403-223-2902

ENCHANT

Enchant School
Phone: 403-739-3770

GRASSY LAKE

Arden T. Litt Centre for Learning
(Outreach School)
Phone: 403-655-2211

Chamberlain School
Phone: 403-655-2211

HAYS

Hays School
Phone: 403-725-3755

HUTTERIAN BRETHREN SCHOOLS

Phone: 403-223-3547

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Phone: 403-223-2487

Taber Christian Alternative School
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Phone: 403-223-0179

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Vauxhall High School
Phone: 403-654-2145

WARNER

Warner School
Phone: 403-642-3931

May 26, 2015

Honourable Rachel Notley
Premier of Alberta
307 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Honourable Premier Notley:

On behalf of the Horizon School Division Board of Trustees, I would like to extend our congratulations on the results of the recent provincial election and your appointment as Premier of this fine province. We look forward to seeing the impact of your visionary leadership. As a locally elected school board, we also look forward to collaborative conversations and decision-making as we work to promote excellence in public education. As trustees charged with the governance of an education system, we recognize that quality education for our youth is central in meeting the goals of the vision for the future of our province. We consider ourselves your partner in doing what it takes to prepare them for the 21st Century.

Horizon School Division is a positive, dynamic and proactive organization that understands how partnerships can make a difference in shaping the future of our children and our future society when they possess a common mission, values and vision.

We look forward to continuing with our governance role within a province that recognizes the foundation of our future – our students!

Respectfully,

Marie Logan
Board Chair

COPY



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May 26, 2015

Honourable Dave Eggan
Minister of Education
320 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Honourable Minister Eggan:

On behalf of the Horizon School Division Board of Trustees, I would like to extend our congratulations on your recent appointment as Minister of Education. We look forward to your leadership in education and working with you collaboratively towards meeting the needs of our students. As trustees charged with the governance of an education system, we recognize that quality education for our youth is central in meeting the goals of the vision for the future of our province. We consider ourselves your partner in doing what it takes to prepare them for the 21st Century.

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Respectfully,

Marie Logan
Board Chair

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Warner School
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May 26, 2015

Honourable Brian Mason
Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation
404 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Honourable Minister Mason:

On behalf of the Horizon School Division Board of Trustees, I would like to extend our congratulations on your recent appointment as Minister of Infrastructure. We look forward to your leadership in infrastructure and working with you collaboratively towards meeting the needs of our schools and students. As trustees charged with the governance of an education system, we recognize that quality education for our youth is central in meeting the goals of the vision for the future of our province. We consider ourselves your partner in doing what it takes to prepare them for the 21st Century.

Horizon School Division is a positive, dynamic and proactive organization that understands how partnerships can make a difference in shaping the future of our children and our future society when they possess a common mission, values and vision.

We look forward to continuing with our governance role within a province that recognizes the foundation of our future – our students!

Respectfully,

Marie Logan
Board Chair

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May 20, 2015

Scott Reiling
P.O. Box 787
Vauxhall, AB T0K 2K0

Dear Scott:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of Horizon School Division, I would like to extend our congratulations on being nominated and selected as a finalist for the 2015 *Excellence in Teaching Awards*. It is truly an honor for you to be recognized for your success as an educator. Your excellence in teaching and leadership contributions make a significant difference in the lives of Horizon students. Talented and dedicated professionals such as you are the key to student success and well-being.

These awards provide Albertans with an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the many contributions teachers and principals make to student learning. The fact that you have been nominated speaks volumes about your professional practice and how you are valued by your school and community.

Sincerely,

Marie Logan
Board Chair

bm/ml

COPY

New Education Act delayed a year for review, says NDP Education Minister

Published on: May 29, 2015



Alberta Minister of Education David Eggen arrives for a cabinet meeting in Calgary, Alta., Thursday, May 28, 2015.

Alberta's new Education Act will "absolutely not" be proclaimed this fall as planned, Education Minister David Eggen said Tuesday.

Speaking to dozens of school board delegates in Red Deer, Eggen said the new NDP government will need time to review the legislation and regulations to ensure it aligns with the party's principles.

"It's the first major change in education legislation in a generation and we want to make sure we got it right," the MLA for Edmonton-Calder told reporters shortly after addressing a receptive crowd at the Alberta School Boards' Association spring meeting.

The Education Act received royal assent under the previous Progressive Conservative government in 2012 and was scheduled to be proclaimed in September.

The province unveiled the regulatory framework governing the new act late last year, giving the public and stakeholders just over a month to submit feedback.

Helen Clease, president of the Alberta School Boards' Association, said the delay was to be expected.

"We've been going this long without the formalization of the Education Act and we still have not done a final look at what the regulations are looking like," Clease said.

She welcomed the additional time to review the regulations and provide more feedback to the government.

"I see a willingness to work with us and I think it's fair to say there is hope," said Clease.

Eggen, who served two separate terms as an NDP MLA, said he didn't have any specific concerns about the Education Act but wanted to ensure it is thoroughly reviewed by caucus and cabinet.

"I will be responsible for the act when it is enacted and I want to make sure that it follows the principles that guided our last election," he said. "I think it's more realistic to see it enacted next year."

Delegates from school boards across the province peppered the new minister with questions following his speech on a range of issues, including stable funding, curriculum changes, full-day kindergarten and funding private schools with public dollars.

While in opposition, various NDP MLAs raised concerns over using public dollars to fund private and charter schools.

But Eggen said has no intention of changing the current structure that sees education delivered through several models such as home-schooling, charter and private schools, as well as the public system.

“Ideologically, we believe in a public model that allows each person to get the best education possible regardless of their ability to pay and, in fact, we know through economies of scale that is a logical way to go,” Eggen said.

“(But) I’ve inherited an education system that has other models that delivers education,” he said. “For the sake of security, for the sake of stability in our education at this point I have no plans to change that landscape here in the province of Alberta.”

On Monday, delegates passed a resolution calling for the government to launch a full review of the funding model for education.

School boards, which have seen per student funding decline for several years under the former Tory government, have demanded stable and predictable funding.

The budget introduced in March by the Tories slashed several grants and did not include money for 12,000 new kids expected to enter the system this fall.

Last week, Premier Rachel Notley announced her government would restore \$103 million in funding cuts to K-12 education for the 2015-16 school year.

“This last (PC) budget was like a stab to the heart,” Cleese said. “It was like no one was consulted and like it did not consider the needs of students. (A review) has to be done one way or the other. We can’t keep not knowing year to year what we’re going to get.”

Eggen said the NDP is committed to repairing the government’s relationship with educators, which had become adversarial over the past decade.

“For so long there’s been, not quite civil war, but a lot of animosity,” he said. “We aim to restore some faith to know that our government will finance education to the levels that it needs.”

thowell@calgaryherald.com



HORIZON SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 67

NEWS RELEASE

JUNE 4, 2015

DIRECTOR OF LEARNING



The Board of Trustees is pleased to announce that Terri-Lynn Duncan has been appointed as the new Director of Learning for Horizon School Division No. 67 effective August 1, 2015.

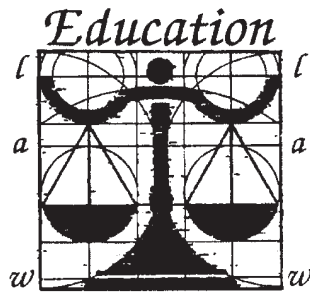
Marie Logan, Chair of the Horizon Board of Trustees, comments, “We were pleased to be able to offer Ms. Duncan a job following an extensive Canada-wide recruitment endeavour. We believe that Ms. Duncan’s organizational skills; strong work ethic, ability to build relationships, and her commitment to school improvement are clearly evident from her previous leadership experience and will assist in our efforts to empower and engage all our learners for success each and every day.”

Ms. Duncan graduated from University of Alberta with a Bachelor of Education minoring in Special Education and also holds a Master in Education Leadership through University of Lethbridge. She has been an educator for the past twenty years. During this time Ms. Duncan gained experience in Public, Christian and Low German Mennonite schools. She brings thirteen years teaching, seven years administrator and two years Coordinating Principal expertise with her to Horizon School Division.

Terri-Lynn and her husband Jeff have three children, all girls. In her spare time she likes to travel, read, and go to the gym.

Terri-Lynn states, “I am excited to be a part of the Horizon School Division Team, in that, my values and beliefs in education align so closely with Horizon's vision and mission. My career as an educator has always been about ensuring success for all students.”

Please help us in welcoming Terri-Lynn Duncan to Team Horizon.



Education Law

Reporter Elementary & Secondary

Vol. 26, No. 9, May 2015

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STUDENTS and THE LAW

Damages Awarded for Sexual Assault

Facts

On June 20, 2009, shortly after dismissal, KLP (the “Student”) was sexually assaulted by another student in a school washroom. The incident occurred shortly after dismissal. The Student and her assailant had been enrolled in a class to accommodate students with special needs. The school board (the “Board”) was not identified in the trial decision issued by the Ontario Superior Court of Justice. Following the assault, there was a complete failure to investigate and deal with the incident. The Board’s own policy and procedures were ignored.

The Student’s mother, acting as her Litigation Guardian, commenced an action against the Board. The claim alleged that the Board had failed to properly supervise the Student and her assailant (the “Other Student”) in the areas of the school where they went after dismissal, specifically the washroom. This failure resulted in the sexual assault. The claim also alleged that the Board’s post-incident acts and omissions adversely affected the Student and her family and claimed damages for various members of her family including her mother, her grandmother and her brothers.

Following a jury trial, the jury was asked to determine four questions. The judge’s instructions for the first two questions included the following:

1. “Your task is to determine what a careful and prudent parent would have done in the circumstances that existed on June 22, 2009 and in the aftermath of the incident and then decide... whether the school board failed to meet the standard of care...
2. If the answer to Question One is yes, please set forth... the way or ways in which the [Board] failed to meet the standard of care.

The jury’s verdict found that the Board had failed to meet the standard of care in relation to the Student. In response to Question Two regarding how the Board had failed to meet the standard of care, the reply of the jury was “in their duty to meet the standard of care after the incident on June 22, 2009, specifically: Safe Schools Policy 2.6 and Safe Schools Procedure, Section 12.”

The Board’s Safe Schools Procedure stated that schools should ensure that pupils were supervised in corridors and washrooms and other areas of the school.

Cause of Action

Counsel for the Student and her family made an application for judgment based on the jury's verdict. The Board opposed the request.

Decision

Judgment was entered for the Student and her family. Damages were awarded as follows:

1. To the Student, \$80,000;
2. To the mother, \$68,000; and
3. To the grandmother, \$8,000.

Reasons

The trial judge rejected the Board's argument that there was no evidence that the Board had failed to comply with Section 2.6 of its Policy and while there was evidence that the Board had breached Section 12 of its Procedure, there was no evidence that the breach caused any damage to the Student or her family.

This case provides an interesting assessment of how the trial judge should consider a jury's verdict when the Defendant opposes an application for judgment. What is of note from the perspective of teachers and school boards, however, is the consideration of post-incident conduct.

Post-incident conduct

The Board failed to follow its own policies and procedures after the assault took place. In particular, it failed to obtain witness statements and failed to properly investigate the incident. Board employees did not tell the Other Student that his conduct was a violation of school policies. The Other Student was not disciplined for the incident and was allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony that occurred a few days later. Staff did not inform the Board superintendent about the incident or inform any other teachers about the incident. The Board failed to arrange counseling for the Student and failed to facilitate her return to the special needs program.

These actions by the Board could and should have minimized the effects of sexual assault on the Student and her family. The trial judge ruled that the jury had considered the Board's conduct and accepted one of the theories advanced by the Student and her counsel. The Board inadequately responded to the incident and that response caused damage to the Student, her mother and her grandmother. Because of what occurred, their trust in the school system and its administrators was irrevocably broken.

The evidence of the family was that the Student continued to be fearful about the events. Driving by the school or the mere mention of the school made her fearful. She had to enroll in a less attractive program offered by Community Living London. In her grandmother's

words, before the assault, the Student's "life was rosy." Afterwards, "it wasn't rosy anymore."

The jury's response to Question Two that the Board had not complied with its procedure was a sufficient explanation in the view of the trial judge. The jury's focus was on the substance of the Board's procedure, not the mere fact that it had been written. The jury seemed to have concluded that nothing was done to prevent a recurrence of a sexual assault or to make the school safer. Therefore, the Student and some of the members of her family suffered damages.

KLP v. _____ Board, Ontario Superior Court of Justice, 2015 ONSC 636

Authored by
Donna Wickens, B.A., LL.B.



Unpaid School Fees Bar Students From Graduation

Background

May is the time of graduation for Grade 12 students across Canada. Graduation is a rite of passage for students, recognition that they have completed their secondary studies and are entitled to a high school diploma. It is a once-in-a-lifetime ceremony and there is no do-over.

In Alberta, some schools have adopted a policy barring Grade 12 students from attending their graduation celebrations if their school fees are unpaid. While this may be a useful enforcement mechanism, it raises a number of issues. Should schools be permitted to charge fees? Who is responsible for payment of the fees? And should a student be barred from their graduation if they have outstanding fees?

Are Alberta schools entitled to charge fees?

Alberta individuals between certain ages and who meet citizenship or residency requirements are entitled to have access to an education program in accordance with the *School Act* (the "*Act*"). School

boards are prohibited from charging tuition fees under the *Act*, with some exceptions for special programs.

However, boards are entitled to charge some fees. Section 60 (2) of the *Act* provides as follows:

A board may....

- (j) charge a parent of a student fees with respect to instructional supplies or materials.

Fees or indirect taxes

The effect of the decision made in *Peace River School Division No. 10 v. Whitaker* means that it is well-settled law in Alberta that schools may charge fees.

Provincial authorities are only able to impose direct taxes, not indirect taxes. The same rule applies to school boards. In reviewing the words "fees with respect to instructional supplies or materials," the judge ruled that the amounts charged by the Peace River School Division for use of textbooks and instructional supplies were a fee and not a tax because there was a connection between the amount charged and the cost

of the service provided. Therefore, even if a surplus for the fees existed, it was not a tax.

The court went on to decide that textbooks were included in the phrase “instructional supplies or materials” because “it would be difficult to think of a supply or material more essential to the instruction or teaching of students than their textbooks.”

Is the student responsible for payment of the fees?

The *Act* is clear that it is the parent who is responsible to pay the fees. However, boards appear to be trying to shift that responsibility to students by denying them the privilege of attending their graduation.

Are boards entitled to apply discipline to students for the behaviour of their parents?

Boards are entitled to make rules about how a graduation ceremony is conducted. Under Section 40 (3) (a) of the *Act*, a board may make rules respecting activities sponsored or approved by the board. Therefore, a board is entitled to decide who may attend a graduation ceremony or celebration. One requirement is that the student is actually entitled to graduate from Grade 12, and that they will have the necessary number of credits in the correct combinations by the end of the school year. The rationale for such a rule is readily apparent.

Refusing to allow a student, who otherwise is entitled to graduate, to attend his or her graduation is disciplinary in nature. Schools are penalizing students if their parents cannot pay or simply refuse to pay.

The Section 12 of the *Act* sets out a code of behaviour for students. Under the Code of Conduct certain requirements are placed on students as follows:

“A student shall conduct himself or herself so as to reasonably comply with the following code of conduct:

(a) be diligent in pursuing the student’s studies;

(b) attend school regularly and punctually;

(c) co-operate fully with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services;

(d) comply with the rules of the school;

(e) account to the student’s teachers for the student’s conduct;

(f) respect the rights of others.”

The Code of Conduct does not set out a requirement that the student ensure that their parents pay the school fees assessed for the student. A student may be suspended under Section 24 (1) of the *Act*, if the student has failed to com-

ply with the Code of Conduct or “the student’s conduct is injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school.”

A student could argue that being denied permission to attend grad amounts to a suspension, a disciplinary penalty applied over the failure to pay fees. It is fair to conclude that boards are using the rules about who can attend grad in a manner that is not consistent with the Code of Conduct set out in the *Act* and disciplining students for reasons not contemplated by the *Act*. Boards should reconsider this policy.

RSA 2000 Chapter S-3 SCHOOL ACT

Authored by
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SCHOOL BOARDS and THE LAW

Video Surveillance in Schools

Facts

In June 2011, the Halton Catholic District School Board (the “Board”) approved the Proposed Secondary Schools Video Surveillance Camera System Project for implementation in all of its secondary schools. Video surveillance systems were installed in all of the Board’s secondary schools during 2011 and 2012. The St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School (the “School”) in Oakville was one of the schools where video surveillance was installed. The School installed 53 internal video cameras and nine external video cameras.

One of the parents, (the “Parent”) whose child attended the School, became aware of the use of the video surveillance cameras. She complained to the Board, to the school trustees and the School over her concerns with the use of video surveillance at school and the lack of consultation with parents and students before its implementation.

Cause of Action

The Parent made a privacy complaint to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario.

Decision

The video surveillance was not in accordance with Section 28 (2) of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (the “*Act*”). The Board should conduct an assessment of the video surveillance system at the School in a matter consistent with the *Act*, its own policy and the report of the Investigator. However, the Board may bring the video surveillance into compliance with the *Act*, so the Investigator made a number of recommendations regarding the manner in which the Board uses, discloses and retains the information collected under the video surveillance system.

Reasons

Personal Information

The Investigator concluded that the information collected through the use of the video surveillance system was “personal information” under Section 2 (1) of the *Act*. The information collected contained a video record of identifiable persons. As a result, the Board was required to comply with Section 28 (2) of the *Act*.

Section 28 (2) of the *Act* provides as follows:

No person shall collect personal information on behalf of an institution unless the collection is expressly authorized by statute, used for the purposes of law enforcement or necessary to the proper administration of a lawfully authorized activity.

The Board was carrying out a lawfully authorized activity pursuant to Section 170 (1) of the *Education Act* to operate a school. The operation of the School includes responsibility for the safety and security of students and property.

Collection Necessary for the Operation of the School

The Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario has developed a set of guidelines for using video surveillance cameras in schools which is available on their website. In it, the Office provides direction regarding how to determine whether video surveillance is necessary in a school. The Guidelines recommend that school boards consider the following factors before deciding to implement a video surveillance system in a particular school:

- Whether less intrusive means of deterring security problems such as increased monitoring by teachers are ineffective or unworkable;
- Whether the board consulted with the school community and has outlined to the community, the less intrusive means that the board has considered and the reason why those means are not effective;
- Whether a board is able to demonstrate a history of incidents concerning the specific school considering the physical circumstances of the school and whether it provides ready access to unauthorized individuals; or
- Whether there is a history of intrusion by unauthorized individuals

and whether there are specific safety issues involved in the school;

- Whether video surveillance programs would be effective in dealing with or preventing future incidents of the type that have already occurred;
- Circumstances must have shown that the surveillance is necessary for providing for the safety of students and staff or deterrence of destructive Acts;
- The surveillance must not be preemptive;
- Boards must be able to provide justification for the use based on specific and significant concerns about safety, theft or destruction of property;
- Boards should conduct an assessment into what effects the surveillance system will have on personal privacy and the ways in which such adverse effects may be mitigated;
- Boards should openly consult with parents, staff, students and others members of the school community as to the necessity of the proposed video surveillance program and its acceptability to the school community;
- Stakeholders should have an opportunity to comment on the actual location of cameras on school property if the projects proceed; and
- Finally, Boards should ensure that the proposed design and operation of a video surveillance system minimizes privacy intrusion to that which is necessary to achieve the appropriate goals through lawful activities.

Where the collection of personal information would merely be helpful to the Board, it is not “necessary” within the meaning of the *Act* and therefore, not permissible.

The Board had developed its own Board wide policy for the implementation of a video surveillance system with the objectives of ensuring (1) that the collection was lawful, (2) that less intrusive means of deterrence had been ineffec-

tive and (3) that an assessment had taken place regarding the effects the surveillance system would have on personal privacy. The goal of the Board’s policy was minimizing the intrusion on personal privacy to the extent necessary to achieve its security objectives. Policies specifically prohibited surveillance in locations where staff and students have a reasonable expectation of privacy such as washrooms, shower rooms and change rooms. Surveillance in class rooms was also prohibited.

One problem that the Investigator identified with the video surveillance at the School was that the Board did not make the decision to install it in a single school. It was part of a larger initiative to implement such systems in all of the Board’s secondary schools. The objective of the decision was to “improve the safety and security of students, staff and visitors on Board property.”

The Board confirmed that it did not complete a privacy impact assessment or any kind of study relating to the program at the School. Without the benefit of a privacy impact assessment for the School in question, there is no information to suggest that the Board considered less intrusive means of deterrence such as increased monitoring by staff or whether less intrusive means were ineffective or unworkable. As well, there was no information indicating that the Board considered the effects of the surveillance system on personal privacy. Also, there was no information about whether the design or operation of the video surveillance system minimized privacy intrusion to the extent which is necessary, as opposed to, simply helpful.

As for consultation with students, staff, parents and the broader school community, the Investigator ruled that updates regarding the implementation of the program at Parent Council Meetings did not amount to sufficient consultation.

The Board pointed to seventeen incidents at the School that involved the use of the video surveillance system

following its implementation in 2012. In twelve of the incidents, the Board determined that the video cameras provided useful information regarding physical or verbal altercations between students, one incident of drug use on school property, thefts, and student pranks.

The Investigator regarded the installation of the system as pre-emptive rather than in response to specific security concerns. After reviewing the information provided by the Board, the Investigator ruled that the Board had not demonstrated that the collection of personal information was necessary for the proper administration of a lawfully authorized activity as required by the *Act*.

Privacy Complaint Report MC13-46, 2015 CanLII 13372 (ON IPC)

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Implications and Applications

In implementing a video surveillance system in Ontario schools, boards should keep in mind the requirement to comply with the Information and Privacy Commissioner's guidelines. In particular, implementation should be considered on a school by school basis. Implementation of the system must be necessary for school safety and security. Before a board can show this is the case, the board will be required to carry out an assessment process that explains why other less intrusive methods are not sufficient. In addition, boards are required to consult with the school community and allow meaningful input regarding the acceptable use of video surveillance and the actual location of cameras on school property.

Once a video system has been installed in accordance with the *Act*, the report goes on to make useful observations about how such a system should be operated including how to comply with notice requirements, and use, storage and retention of the video images obtained.

GOVERNMENT/FINANCE and THE LAW

Minority Language Education Rights in Hay River

Facts

The Commission Scolaire Francophone du Nord-Ouest (the "Board") operates two schools in the Northwest Territories, École Boréale in Hay River and École Allain St-Cyr in Yellowknife. In 2005, École Boréale opened in Hay River with 68 children enrolled in Kindergarten to Grade 8. It was constructed by the territorial government ("NWT"). In 2002, the Board adopted an admission policy that allowed for admission of the following categories of students:

1. Any child of a Section 23 rights holder as defined by Section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (the "*Charter*"),
2. Children of third-generation Francophones,
3. Children of permanent residents who speak and understand French,
4. Children of non-rights holders who attend a pre-kindergarten francization program who were then eligible for the full education program offered by the Board.

By 2008, the student number had increased to 115 including the pre-kindergarten children and the Board began proceedings to compel the NWT to construct more minority language facilities in Hay River on the grounds that NWT had breached its obligation under Section 23 of the *Charter*. Also in 2008, the Minister of Education (the "Minister") adopted a directive that limited new enrollment of children to students where the Board certified that the student was eligible for French first language instruction under Section 23 of the *Charter*. This would exclude all those students in the final three categories above unless permission was granted by the Minister to permit a child to attend the French language program.

The Board amended its cause of action to ask for an order declaring the Minister's directive unconstitutional.

At trial, the trial judge directed that the Board had the discretion to administer admissions and the Minister's directive was unconstitutional. She ordered the NWT to construct more minority language school facilities in Hay River to have a capacity for 160 students. She required the NWT to provide more classroom space, a gym with locker rooms, showers, bleachers and an office, a home economics lab, a multipurpose music and art room, an English as a second language classroom, a science lab and a closed room to accommodate children with learning disabilities. She ruled that the right to a pre-kindergarten program was not a protected right under Section 23, but directed that the NWT, under Section 24 (1), to provide sufficient space to ensure that the pre-kindergarten program had space to accommodate 15 children.

Cause of Action

NWT appealed the decision of the trial judge.

Decision

The appeal was allowed. The trial judge had erred in determining that NWT had breached its obligation under Section 23 of the *Charter*. She erred in declaring the Ministerial directive to be invalid and her analysis of whether the numbers warranted the expansion of École Boréale was flawed. She also erred in allowing a remedy under Section 24 of the *Charter* in relation to the pre-kindergarten space.

Reasons

Section 23 of the *Charter* sets out the minority language education rights in Canada and provides as follows:

23. (1) Citizens of Canada

- a) Whose first language learned and still understood is that of the English or French linguistic minority population of the province in which they reside, or
- b) Who have received their primary school instruction in Canada in English or French and reside in a province where the language in which they received that instruction is the language of the English or French linguistic minority of the province,
- c) Have the right to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in that language in that province.

23. (2) Citizens of Canada of whom any child has received or is receiving primary or secondary school instruction in English or French in Canada, have the right to have all their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in the same language.

The right under subsections (1) and (2) applies subject to the following provisions: [the right]

- (a) applies wherever in the province the number of children of citizens who have such a right is sufficient to warrant the provision to them out of public funds of minority language instruction and
- (b) includes, where the number of those children so warrants, the right to have them receive that instruction in minority language educational facilities provided out of public funds.

The provision for enforcement of the rights and freedoms set out in the *Charter* is granted under Section 24 which provides as follows:

24.(1) Anyone whose rights or freedoms, as guaranteed by this *Charter*, have been infringed or denied may apply to a court of competent jurisdiction to obtain such remedy as the court considers appropriate and just in the circumstances.

Was the Minister's Directive Unconstitutional?

The 2002 admission policy adopted by the Board resulted in much of the increase in the student population by admitting students whose parents were not rights holders under Section 23. The trial judge concluded that Section 23 was remedial in nature. The purpose of the admission policy was to enhance the language and culture of the minority language group. Therefore, it was the role of the Board and not the NWT to determine admission policy. She recognized that the Board's policy would create new holders, but ruled that this was contemplated by Section 23 to revitalize the community and recapture children whose parents or grandparents had been assimilated. The Court of Appeal disagreed. This interpretation of Section 23 inflated the powers of the Board, elevating it to a government institution. The provincial governments must retain the power to ensure the criteria of Section 23 are respected.

The effect of the trial decision was to permit members of the English community in the territory to attend minority language institutions without any government oversight. This has been expressly prohibited by decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in decisions regarding the application of Section 23 in Quebec. Section 23 cannot be applied in such an inconsistent manner across Canada.

Section 23 is the result of a political compromise. To extend the application to all students who desired a French language education, the framers could have drafted a "free choice" section, so that any child in Canada could elect to have an education in either English or French. They elected not to do so. Instead, Section 23 is a compromise to protect the children of those whose first language learned and still understood is the minority language. The rights do not "trickle down" to all descendants, they apply only to children of rights holders.

Interpreting Section 23 to allow for new rights holders would make the "first language learned and still understood" test redundant. Giving the Board exclusive control of admissions has financial consequences on the government. It is not for school boards to dictate how public funds are allocated. As such, the trial judge erred in law in finding the directive unconstitutional.

Was the expansion of the school warranted?

The trial judge believed that an expansion of École Boréale was warranted based on her conclusion that the appropriate capacity of the school was 160 students. The Court of Appeal ruled that although her finding of fact attracted appellate deference, she was wrong in her determination of the relevant numbers for the purposes of Section 23. The estimate of the protected enrollment included the non-rights holders. Therefore, the prediction of 160 students could not stand.

By 2013, there were 113 students in the school. It was reasonable to conclude that at least one-half of the students were non-rights holders admitted through the school board's policy. All these students are now rights holders. The school has a capacity of 126 students. At the time of the trial, even considering the non-rights holders, the school enrollment was only at 67% of capacity. The numbers do not warrant expansion at the time of the appeal hearing. The Court of Appeal ruled, however, "a school is a dynamic institution, and the required capacity will have to be reassessed from time to time."

Pre-kindergarten

The trial judge erred in granting a remedy under Section 24 (1) requiring sufficient space in the school to ensure

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that the pre-kindergarten program had a capacity of 15 children. She should not have used this Section to grant a remedy that effectively created constitu-

tional status for the pre-kindergarten program.

Northwest Territories (Attorney General) v. Commission Scolaire Francophone,

Territoires du Nord-Ouest, 2015 NWTCA 1

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Minority Language Education Rights in Yellowknife

Editor's note:

In a companion case, the Court of Appeal for the Northwest Territories rendered a decision regarding minority education rights in Yellowknife where the Commission Scolaire Francophone du Nord-Ouest (the "Board") operates École Allain St-Cyr. This case was brought by a parents' association and some parents. The Board was not a party to the litigation.

The analysis with respect to Section 23 rights under the "Charter" was the same as in the decision for École Boréale in Hay River. The difference between the two cases was that there was a larger number of prospective students for the École Allain St-Cyr and the "where numbers warranted" analysis produced a different result.

Facts

At trial, the trial judge ruled that École Allain St-Cyr did not meet the minimum constitutional standards and ordered the NWT to construct further facilities for the school. The NWT should construct more classroom space, a gym with locker rooms, showers, bleachers, an office, a home economics lab, a multi-

purpose music and art room, an English as a second language classroom, a science lab and a closed room to accommodate children with learning disabilities. Further, she ruled that the sharing of underused facilities at the neighbouring William McDonald Middle School was not a constitutionally acceptable solution.

Cause of Action

NWT appealed the decision of the trial judge.

Decision

The appeal was allowed, however the Court of Appeal ruled the parents' association and others who brought the litigation were entitled to the following relief:

1. A declaration that the School does not include all of the facilities that the number of students warrant and required a suitable gymnasium and a teaching space that can be used for teaching students with special needs.
2. A declaration that long-term arrangements be made to provide access to specialized facilities, a science lab, an ESL classroom, and

a space for teaching home economics. The access must be enforceable and cannot be varied except with the consent of principal of the School.

Reasons

The right to minority language instruction and facilities is subject to the "when numbers warrant" provisions as set out in the decision above.

Was the expansion of the school warranted?

The test to determine whether the numbers warrant was set out in *Mahe v. Alberta*. The test is to determine a "range" between the exiting student population currently enrolled in the minority language program and the potential student population. Within that range is the relevant number of students who are reasonably likely to take advantage of the minority language program within a reasonable period of time. *Mahe* was decided in the context of whether a new school in Edmonton should be constructed for French language instruction. The *Mahe* test still applied in the Yellowknife decision, however, the known demand is easier to establish because the school already exists. Poten-



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tial demand can also be more easily calculated because one can examine the existing school to determine if there are barriers to entry. Once the numbers are known, a “sliding scale” using a cost benefit analysis is used to determine what services the numbers warrant.

The trial judge concluded that an expansion of École Boréale was warranted because she found that the appropriate capacity of the school was 250 students. The Court of Appeal ruled that although her finding of fact attracted appellate deference, she was wrong in her determination of the relevant numbers for the purposes of Section 23. The estimate of the projected enrollment included the non-rights holders.

The existing enrollment at the school was 110 in a school with capacity for 160 students. There was nothing on record to support the claim that there were rights holders waiting to get into the school. The evidence did not disclose any known demand that was not being met. The effect of the trial decision was to order the NWT to establish capacity that will be underused in the foreseeable future. The Court of Appeal observed that “[the] *Charter* does not require the government to build an empty school.”

With an enrollment of only nine students in the high school program, the court observed that an argument could be made that these numbers do not warrant a high school program at all.

Sharing Space with William McDonald Middle School

At trial, the pursuit of linguistic homogeneity of the school was allowed to

prevail over all other considerations. Section 23 does not guarantee a self-contained school where only French is spoken, desirable as that may be. One must also be realistic. There is a distinct place for the students, which is their own school. The fact that in some specialized aspects, they may have to share space is simply a compromise that occurs when using the “numbers warrant” analysis. In each case, a cost-benefit analysis must be carried out.

Gymnasium

There was evidence on the record that attempts at sharing the gymnasium had failed and the School had resorted to using a community centre. As well, there was no satisfactory space in the school for holding school assemblies or parent meetings. The Court of Appeal ruled that there was sufficient evidence to support the conclusion that substantive eq-

uity respecting the minority language education experience provided by a gymnasium would not be met by the other solutions proposed.

Other Specialized Spaces

With respect to the other specialized spaces ordered by the trial judge, with the exception of the special needs area, the Court of Appeal ruled that no cost-benefit analysis had been carried out and so there was no factual basis on which to conclude that the numbers warranted the provision of these rooms, when shared facilities were available for use.

Northwest Territories (Attorney General) v. Association des parents ayants droit de Yellowknife et al, 2015 NWTCA 2

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Lord's Prayer issue heating up again

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The battle continues over the Lord's Prayer at Dr. Hamman Elementary School in Taber. After two years without it, the school will bring back the morning tradition in the fall, and not everyone is happy about it. The Horizon School Division board of trustees unanimously passed the motion at their meeting on April 21.

The Dr. Hamman School Parent Council had sent out surveys asking whether parents would be in support of the motion to reinstitute the prayer. At least 70 per cent of surveys needed to be returned with at least 70 per cent of those in favour.

According to administration, 140 families responded out of 175. From the responses, 12 families said they did not want the practice in their school.

A decision to end the prayer was made in 2013 after the board fielded several complaints from parents. The controversy shone a national spotlight on the issue of religion in public schools. The board created a policy last year which would allow parents to choose whether their children participate in the prayer. The options include having the child step out of the classroom during the prayer, or remaining in the room but not participating.

Superintendent Wilco Tymensen has said the board believes in religious tolerance and wants to acknowledge diversity, but they want to be receptive to the desires of the community. He also stated the board has a legal obligation to maintain a safe and caring environment for all students to ensure they aren't ostracized for non-participation.

Glenda Richards is an advocate for the Dr. Hamman Children's Equality Group. She has worked as an advocate for human rights issues for a number of years. The group's mandate is against bullying, and Richards said they've received overwhelming support.

"We don't want those children to be segregated. My concern is for these kids, and any children who enroll who are also non-believers."

They are running a public awareness campaign through social media and in connection with larger groups throughout Canada, including the Society of Edmonton Atheists. She said that group is pursuing legal action, and she believes they've been successful removing the Lord's Prayer from other Alberta schools in the past.

Once the new Minister of Education is sworn in, Richards said she will approach him/her about the issue, which appears to come under the “bullying” mandate within the Department of Education’s current procedures.

“This issue will come under that as well because these children are being ostracized because of their non-participation.”

The Dr. Hamman Children’s Equality Group has taken preliminary action with the Human Rights Commission, and Richards said they will pursue court if needed.

Alberta is the only province where the right to say the prayer is guaranteed by legislation. She said while Canada may have been built on Christian beliefs, it is also built on First Nations.

“The funny thing is it’s being removed everywhere else ... It’s about diversity. It doesn’t matter what your religion is ... why do they not do the Blackfoot prayer? Why not the Muslim or the Hindi prayer? With multiculturalism comes diversity, and with diversity we cannot flex our public display for what scholars call ‘Christian privilege.’”

Richards said she has been in touch with the Horizon School Board, but that they’re not interested in their cause.

Richards believes the survey was deceptive because the school board knew the majority would want it, and thinks that was their way to get it reinstated.

“They were still not considering the people that didn’t want it,” said Richards. “I have nothing against people sending their children to Christian or Catholic schools. If you want religion for your children, please pay the money. In a public school, you can’t have the government indoctrinating children into religion.”

School Board Advised to Re-visit Lord's Prayer Plans

BY MABELL, DAVE ON JUNE 3, 2015. - LETHBRIDGE HERALD

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A legal battle that started in Quebec could reopen a contentious debate in Taber.

In a recent decision, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that reciting the Lord's Prayer in a public school violates Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

On Tuesday, religious studies professor James Linville outlined some of the repercussions of that decision during a special session of the Southern Alberta Council on Public Affairs.

Despite the ruling, he noted, the Horizon School Division has decided that students at one of its elementary schools in Taber will be expected to recite the prayer when classes resume in the fall. Those who are not Christian – or not religious – will be allowed to leave the room.

“The Horizon board says it wants to be inclusive and welcoming,” he says. “But how can you have a prayer that's Christian that claims to be inclusive?” “They should abandon those plans.”

That was one of the questions the nation's top judges examined before handing down their decision. Those who disagree with the court should read the whole decision before condemning it, suggests Linville, a faculty member at the University of Lethbridge.

“It's a far more sensitive document than some people thought it would be,” he says. “A lot of the fears and objections people have had about the school prayer were already anticipated in the court decision.”

Linville says some advocates of using Christian prayer in schools – and at city council meetings – fear their faith is under attack by those who disagree. “They say secularism is out to destroy religion.”

But by requiring public institutions to be religiously neutral, he points out, the courts are actually protecting Canadians' rights of religious freedom – and minority faiths in particular.

The judges also considered the dangers of bullying, Linville said. Children from a non-Christian family would – if they had to leave the class before every prayer – be in danger of becoming the target of schoolyard bullies.

“That's something the Supreme Court has noticed,” and it cites that probability in its decision.

That's a concern parents in Taber – and in any other school jurisdiction that doesn't respect the high court's decision – may consider taking to court to challenge school trustees' approval, he suggested.

“I'm not sure it will blow up into a court fight,” but Linville predicts other school boards will be watching Taber to see if a peaceful resolution is possible. “There will be a lot of news about this, at least in Alberta, for the next little while.”

Now that the Supreme Court decision has been handed down, Linville hopes parents and school administrators can find a middle ground.

“There really is a lot to talk about here.”