

Good News Items

- Trustee Maurice Richard thanked Lord of Glory Lutheran Church for their long-time support of the Christmas in November event at Vera M. Welsh Elementary School. Volunteers from the church organize the annual event which accepts donations of new and gently used items that students can select and have wrapped for family members for Christmas. The event has been happening at the school every November for 15 years.
- Trustees remarked on the quality of this year's school Remembrance Day ceremonies, many of which included speakers from 4 Wing Cold Lake. Hearing from service members has an enormous impact on students and helps to reinforce what they learn about Remembrance Day and its significance.
- Trustee Debra Lozinski congratulated J.A. Williams High School on a successful Hell's Kitchen event during the Festival of Trees. She noted that the high school students had received a lot of positive feedback on social media.
- The Board thanked the Cold Lake High School band for an amazing performance at the recent Public School Boards' Association of Alberta Fall General Meeting. They also commended the four students - two from Ecole Plamondon and two from J.A. Williams High School - that took part in the Student Voice session held at the same conference.

2017-2018 Budget Update

The Board's 2017-2018 budget was updated to reflect the division's official September 30th enrolment numbers and its audited financial statement for 2016-2017.

The Board will continue to draw down on its reserves and is projecting a deficit of \$3.9 million. This will put the division's accumulated operating surplus at \$2.7 million at the end of the year, which is approximately 3%. Secretary-Treasurer Paula Elock noted that the division will continue to review how it is spending money and looking for ways to hold the line on services once drawing from reserves is no longer an option.

AERR and Three-Year Plan

The Board approved its Combined 2016-2017 Annual Education Results Report and 2017-2020 Three-Year Education Plan. The Annual Education Results Report includes the division's Accountability Pillar, a series of measures that Alberta Education uses to determine how well the division is meeting the goals set out for it by the government.

The Three-Year Education Plan includes the strategies that the division has implemented or plans to implement over the next three years to meet the five goals Alberta Education has set for it, as well as to address the three priority areas the Board has identified: literacy and numeracy; communication, partnerships and engagement; and health and wellness.

For those who wish to read the full document, it has been posted on the division's website - www.nlsd.ab.ca.

2016-2017 Audited Financial Statement

The Board reviewed its audited financial statement from the 2016-2017 school year. The Board had planned for a \$5.6 million deficit with the goal of reducing the amount in its reserves to the levels recommended by Alberta Education - around 5%. The final deficit was \$5.1 million, mainly due to projects that couldn't be completed during the 2016-2017 school year. The remaining \$500,000 of projects has been carried forward to the 2017-2018 school year.

Bill-28

The Board reviewed the proposed amendments to the School Act. The amendments include removing the 2.4 kilometre walk limit that is currently used to determine eligibility for funding for busing. This is something the Board has advocated for many years. Northern Lights currently provides transportation to students within the 2.4 kilometre walk limit at no charge to parents despite receiving no funding from the government for that service.

Another proposed amendment is a common age of entry to Kindergarten - age 5 as of December 31. Currently, school boards have the ability to set their own age of entry. The current age of entry in Northern Lights Public Schools is age 5 as of March 1. Under the proposed Legislation, the change would not take effect until September 2020.

BCHS Modernization Update

Northern Lights administration has been asked to participate in a visioning session with the firm the government has contracted to do the architectural work on the BCHS Modernization Project. That meeting will take place next week in Edmonton

Next Board Meeting

The next Board Meeting of the Northern Lights Board of Trustees will take place on Wednesday, December 13 at the Lac La Biche Division Office.

For more information on Northern Lights and our schools, please go to:

www.nlsd.ab.ca

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