



AGENDA

District Council of School Councils

DATE: Thursday, Oct 10, 2019

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Grant Henderson Learning Centre @ Central Office: 601 – 1 Avenue S.W.
Medicine Hat, Alberta

1. CALL TO ORDER / INTRODUCTIONS – Bob Burgess

Bob Burgess called the meeting to order at 7:01

Introductions / In Attendance: Bob Burgess Chair/MHHS, Karen Johnson (George Davison), Mark Davidson (SD76 Superintendent), Desirea Agar (AHS), Mike Flieger (Principal – Elm Street), Taneill Selinger (River Heights), Julia Stewart (Elm Street), Gina Miller (Alexandra), Shannon Welsh (Crestwood), Lee Krasilowez (Central Office), Tanya Buckshaw (Herald), Rebeca Rothfus (MHHS Co-chair)

2. ORGANIZATION ITEMS 2019-2020 – Bob Burgess

Election of Chair – Bob Burgess offered to stand as Chairperson for one more year. All in favour.

Appointment of Recording Secretary – Karen Johnson offered to stand as Secretary for one more year. All in favour.

Representative for Coordinating Committee – Aaron Myradon (Elm Street) was contacted and accepted the position again for one more year.

3. COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL HEALTH – Desirea Agar (AHS)

Desirea Agar, the AHS School Health & Wellness Coordinator for our region, presented. She works with Tracy Hensel from Central office and they work on making healthy school environments. They are approaching schools to have a parent council representative be a Health Champion and would like one parent per school. The Health Champions would be on an email list and be given information to share with their parent council.

They are looking at a province wide initiative for comprehensive school health including social and physical well being for the entire school community (staff and children).

She walked us through the PowerPoint presentation (link on agenda) and described the biggest local initiative, Moving and Choosing. They are also having all 4 school divisions of SE AB “rethinking recess” as they have determined that that is the time when kids are not only getting physical exercise but also learning social lessons. As a result, they want to have recess include mental health as well as physical. They are offering a large list of strategies to schools and the schools can choose the ones that work for them.

Mark Davidson then discussed Policy 808 (Use of Tobacco, Cannabis, and Smoking Materials) which is being recommended to be put together with Policy 634 (Alcohol, Narcotics, Drugs).

These are being revised to discuss new problems like e-cigarettes and vaping which AHS says is causing an increase in smoking among teens for the first time in decades.

The plan is to revise the policy (draft included in agenda) and to have a stand on it. Central Office would like to have schools communicating the risks of using and modifying these materials to students and parents/guardians.

They are collaborating with AHS on the policy and how to communicate the risks (including mental health risks). This entails building scope and sequence on awareness of risks starting with Grade 4 and moving through grade 9. There will be presentations to each grade, starting in Grade 4 every year.

They will also be lobbying city councilors, MLAs, MPs etc. for ticketing youth in possession of vapes and other prohibited materials.

Question – What is plan to monitor vaping on busses?

Answer – Central Office is working with Southlands Transportation on how to report on problems.

Question – Will the policy be shared electronically?

Answer – Yes.

It is requested that this policy be taken back to school councils for discussion and feedback, questions, or concerns be emailed directly to Mark Davidson.

4. ASCA SCHOOL COUNCIL REFERENCE GUIDE – Mark Davidson

The most significant change to the regulation is the principal of each school having to share their budget and three-year plan with school council. This can be done a number of ways including discussing the school's goals and priorities.

5. COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT – Bob Burgess

Every school council is required to complete a report and submit it to Central Office prior to Sept 30. Bob is requesting that these come in earlier (June 30th) to prevent loss of information due to “retired” council members. Template included as a link on the agenda.

6. TRUSTEE COMMENTS

N/A as none of the trustees were available to attend.

7. SUPERINTENDENT COMMENTS – Mark Davidson

Election Implications / Budget Contingencies: Mark reported that ASCA has laid off a number of their staff due to the anticipated budget. Their budget comes in when the school budgets do. October 24th is the expected date for the budget and the expectation is that the budget will remain the same even though enrollment may increase.

In March 2020 another budget will be announced (all dependent on the elections) and it is expected that there will be more lump sum grant money and less monthly reporting on the money. This allows for more flexibility on how to use the money but less money overall.

Mark has heard that there may be up to 40% cuts in some ministries and as low as 5-7% cuts in others. He is hopeful that Education will be one of the 5-7% ones. It is expected that government will take measures to limit expenses/costs in line with reduced revenue.

Education Act Summary / Highlights:

The Minister used to hold Boards accountable but now the Boards can disqualify a trustee if they violate the code of ethics. The Boards can also use Natural Person and Powers to borrow money for large purchases, excluding buildings.

Student led organizations changed from “principal shall immediately allow” to “principal shall allow”. The clear language involving parents being informed about the organizations was also removed.

In the Education Act a Catholic elector can now decide to vote and run-in public-school elections although the reverse is not allowed.

Student fees are still being allowed to be charged with appropriate notification but now includes Charter schools as well. This includes charging for “School of Choice” bussing.

Curriculum – Where are we now? A panel from new government examined the curriculum to make sure it wasn’t “too far to the left”. They will start rolling it out next year or the year after.

8. POLICY UPDATES AND REVISIONS

Policy 720 P 001 Off Site Activities has been updated. PowerPoint presentation is available on SD76 website (Publications – Forms – Off Site Activities) and a link is included on agenda.

Procedures updated to reflect industry best practices (e.g. occupational health and safety, insurance requirements).

The Green, Yellow, and Red activities have been added to procedure 722 P001 – School Physical Activities and apply to both on-site and off-site activities.

Off-site activities have been coded for risk management and to reduce the risk of litigation. Updated policies included as attachments to agenda and available on district website.

9. MINI-CONFERENCE – Bob Burgess

Trustee Deborah Forbes had said that she was going to take the idea of an ASCA mini-conference to the Board. Bob will contact her to see how it went.

10. ADJOURNMENT – Bob Burgess

Bob adjourned the meeting at 8:30pm.

FUTURE MEETING DATES / NOTABLE DATES

Thursday, Nov 21, 2019 – 7pm

Thursday, March 5, 2020 - 7pm

ASCA Annual Conference – April 2020

Thursday, May 14, 2020 – 7pm