Medicine Hat Public School Division

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DIVISION COUNCIL OF SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Date and Time: Thursday, May 9, 2024 @ 7:00 p.m.

Location: Central Office – Learning Centre

AGENDA ITEMS

1. **Call to Order** 7:01

2. **Roll Call for Attendance**

Alexandra Middle School	Heidi	Mack
Crescent Heights High School	Tonielle	Pavlovic
Crestwood School	Amy	Leprieur
George Davison School	Gicela	Cardona
Medicine Hat Christian School	Jenna	Brost
Board Representative	Catherine	Wilson
Superintendent	Mark	Davidson
A.T.A. Teacher Representative	Michael	Jerred
Communications Coordinator	Lee	Krasilowez
Principal Representative	Ashton	Weisgerber
Secretary Treasurer	Leanne	Dulle

3. **Adoption of Minutes**

Vice Chair, Heidi Mack, presented the minutes of the Division Council of School Council Meeting held on March 7, 2024 for adoption. A motion was made by Amy Leprieur to adopt the minutes, second by Jenna Brost; all in favor.

4. **Treaty Land Acknowledgement**

Vice Chair, Heidi Mack, shared a Treaty Land Acknowledgement.

5. **Budget 2024-2025 Spring Release**

Leanne Dulle, Secretary Treasurer, provided an overview of the draft budget for the 2024-2025 school year.

Enrolment is projected to increase 30 students for next year from 7,022 to 7,052, but long-term data from the Government of Alberta projects a decline in enrollment for our city.

Pre-pandemic changes to the grant funding model, coupled with our decline in enrolment during the pandemic has resulted in reduced grant revenues. Alberta Education provided Hold Harmless funding which cushioned our decrease for a few years, but in 2023-2024 it was eliminated, and the full impact of the reduction was felt. A two-year plan was

developed to use operating reserves to spread the reduction over a two-year period to lessen the impact.

Revenues for the Spring Budget 2024-25 are $93,636,700

- The 2024-2025 budget announcement shared that the province would be increasing spending on education by 4.4%. This reflects the increase in spending required to fund enrollment growth for new students arriving in Alberta. The funding rate per student remains the same from 2023-2024 to 2024-2025, which is a 0% increase from the previous year.
- Funding for Wage Settlements – There will be incremental funding for any ATA negotiated settlements; however, there will be no incremental funding to cover any negotiated increase for other non-certificated staff.
- The instruction socioeconomic grant calculation was updated based on more current data and resulted in an unexpected decrease in funding.
- Transportation funding has increased due to increased ridership eligibility rules; however, this funding is limited to be used only for transportation.
- Other non-grant revenues increased in a few areas with most also having matching increases in expenses.

Expenses for the Spring Budget 2024-25 are $94,436,700

- Instructional block spending is 79% of the budget.
- Unfunded wage settlements (CUPE and Non-organized staff), staff grid movement and benefit rate increases account for significant cost pressures.
- Rising costs combined with no increase to grant rates result in a required reduction in staffing. The spring budget includes a reduction in central supports of 4.76 FTE and 22.65 FTE in school staffing. Staff attrition through retirements will cover most of the reduction. Final staffing will not be complete until September when the exact composition of hired teachers and education assistants is known.
- Purchased services and supplies will increase by 10.7% in instruction, 3.4% for operations and maintenance and 16.9% for transportation.
- The priority was to keeping funding in the classroom for staffing; therefore, there were no increase to school mini-budgets despite the rising cost of supplies.

The Spring Budget 2024-25 includes a planned deficit of ($800,000) which is funded out of operating reserves.

The Board has reviewed the draft Spring Budget and will approve the final budget May 28, for submission to Alberta Education on May 31, 2024.

6. Items for Discussion

Updated Procedures

Policy 406 Site Based Instructional Budgets outlines the distribution of the majority of our funding. This year a committee was formed to provide feedback and update these administrative procedures to ensure we are making the most effective use of our resources.

406 AP 002 – Site Based Staffing Allocations (Draft)

For 406 AP 002 there was a small adjustment to the student to teacher ratio. Schools are funded based on this ratio, but they can allocate the funds based on their student population and needs.

406 AP 003 – Specialized Learning Support Allocations (Draft)

This administrative procedure uses socio-economic data and a formula to allocate funds based on the school's student learning support (SLS) profile.

Specialized Programming reduced the educational assistant to student ratio. Students that currently require one on one support in a school setting will have more support available within the program.

628 E 001: Elementary Schools' Fee Schedule (Draft)

This exhibit was updated to reflect our current fees. There were no comments from the committee.

628 E 002: Secondary Schools' Fee Schedule (Draft)

Each year, schools submit any changes in fees for optional courses, these changes are reviewed to keep costs consistent throughout schools. Any updates are approved by the Board.

628 E 003: International Schools' Fee Schedule (Draft)

This schedule was updated to due to an increase in costs for both programming and staffing. Our costs are in line with what other divisions are charging.

7. Update ASCA Conference & AGM

The Alberta School Council Association Conference and Annual General Meeting was held on April 26, 27 and 28, 2024. Neither of the parents that attended the conference were able to attend this meeting. Gicela Cardona, Council Chair from George Davison provided an update on their behalf.

ASCA website Session Handouts

- The education minister was in attendance.
- He was pleased with the participation in the survey on the cell phone usage.
- There was a request to reinstate funding for the ASCA.
- Request for reduced screen time in classrooms.

School Council is an advisory council and should seek to represent their school and community views. The role is to advise the school principal on parental views.

The group discussed areas where their school council could take on more of an advisory role. School Council Chairs provide feedback on items such as the division calendar, education plan/AERR, budget/staffing and surveys. It was suggested that ASCA workshops could be an educational resource for school councils.

The group discussed establishing operating procedures, fundraising opportunities and how to increase parent engagement.

8. Items for Information

Appreciation Dinner

School council chairs have been invited to the annual appreciation dinner on Thursday, June 6, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. Please RSVP.

Reminder: Parent Engagement Grant

This grant is available to all schools. There are specific guidelines for the use of the funds that can be found on the ASCA website.

- If your school makes use of the $500 grant you will have to report it.
- If your school does not make use of the grant, it is returned to the government.

School Council Annual Reporting

This report is due on September 30 every year. If you are not planning to continue as Chair in the next school year, please work with your principal to complete this form before June 27.

All School Councils are to submit an Annual Report by September 30. A **Template** is on the MHPSD website.

Trustee School Allocations 2023-2024

Yvonne Sissons	Connaught School, Elm Street School, Crestwood School
Pat Grisonich	Crescent Heights High School, Dr. Ken Sauer School, Vincent Massey School, Webster Niblock School
Rick Massini	River Heights School, Herald School, Medicine Hat High School, Medicine Hat Christian School
Deborah Forbes	Dr. Roy Wilson Learning Centre, Ross Glen School, Southview School
Catherine Wilson	Alexandra Middle School, George Davison School, The Hub/Pathways, Coulee Collegiate, Central Office, Warehouse

Future Meeting Date: October 2024

ADJOURNMENT 8:26 p.m.