

MINUTES: DIVISION COUNCIL OF SCHOOL COUNCILS

DATE & TIME: Thursday, May 13th, 2021 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Broadcast Virtual via Zoom due to COVID Restrictions

1. CALL TO ORDER: Rebeca Rothfus

-Rebeca called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

-In attendance: Jennifer Stang (Connaught School), Karen Saffran (Crescent Heights High School), Courtney Scott (Crescent Heights High School + Rep for the coordinating committee), Shannon Welsh (Crestwood School), Joni Hunter (Elm Screen School), Karen Allen + Connie Grove (Medicine Hat Christian School), Rebeca Rothfus (Medicine Hat High School and co-chair of DCSC), Taneill Selinger (River Heights School and secretary of DCSC), Elizabeth Gebhardt (Ross Glen School), Chelsey Cowan (co-chair of DCSC), Val Browne (ATA Representative), Mike Flieger (Principal Representative), Catherine Wilson (school board Chair and representative), Deborah Forbes (Trustee) Mark Davidson (Superintendent), Jerry Labossiere (Secretary Treasurer), Lee Krasilowez (Communications Coordinator)

2. ROLL CALL FOR ATTENDANCE: Rebeca Rothfus

- Rebecca did a role call of the schools in attendance as well as positions/committees represented in attendance.

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES: Rebeca Rothfus

- Motion made by Shannon Welsh to adopt minutes from DCSC meeting on March 25, 2021. Karen Saffran seconded. Motion passed.

4. TREATY LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Rebeca Rothfus

5. BUDGET: Jerry Labossiere

- Budget breakdown will be found on the division website within 2 weeks of meeting. J. Labossiere presented the 2021-22 budget. Discussed how enrolment is up slightly from last year, but on a decline phase overall. Went through the grants, expenses, salaries, revenues in the 2021-22 budget. Shared where there are shortcomings and how they are coping with it. Basically, rearranging the budget - taking from one part to add it to another to make it balance and so students are affected as minimally as possible. Also shared how with an enrolment loss, there will be 5 less teachers and 14.7 less staff total. Insurance policies also cost more this year. The provincial government is "holding harmless" and holding amounts in place for students despite an enrolment loss.

- Deborah commented that she was thankful for all of Jerry's hard work putting together and balancing the budget.
- Catherine spoke to the lack of funds from the government. A new government would mean a new budget. Although sometimes a new government puts the budget on hold for one year.
- Mark mentioned how the Premier ejected Drew Barnes and one other from his caucus today. Things are very unsettled government wise.

6. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION: Rebeca Rothfus

- Public School Board Association Spring General Assembly: PSBAA has extended an invitation to 5 School Council members to attend the Spring General Assembly June 3 and 4, 2021. Email Joni Treen + cc: Catherine Wilson if you can attend virtually.
- Update on ASCA Conference + AGM - The Alberta School Council Association Conference and Annual General Meeting was held virtually on April 23 - 25, 2021. An update was provided by two of our chairs that attended: Karen Saffran and Joni Hunter. Karen attended most of the three days went to sessions on curriculum, school budgets, assessment, parent engagement, among others. A great variety of topics were discussed. Many mentioned how grateful they were to attend online. On Friday the Honourable Adriana LaGrange spoke, however there was not time for any question and answers. The AGM was 14 hours in length and a long day. Joni talked about the Friday and Saturday sessions. She said they were interesting and was grateful to go. * Reminder to submit expenses for reimbursement if you attended the conference to Joni Treen. Original signed copies can be sent in school mail or dropped off at Central Office.
- Annual Reporting - Fundraising Groups: Mark Davidson
An annual update has been requested to be submitted by fundraising groups. All funds held that are related to MHPSD schools are to be submitted annually.
[Clarification and Frequently Asked Questions](#) - note: when future reporting needs to happen, they will give a heads up in advance to councils and communicate directly. Elizabeth asked whether councils can hang onto surpluses that couldn't all get spent due to COVID. The answer was absolutely.
- Annual Reporting – School Council: Mark Davidson
All School Councils are to submit an Annual Report by September 30. A [Template](#) is on the MHPSD website.
- COVID-19: Mark Davidson
Shared how they were directed to transition schools, staff, and students to at home

learning. Hoping that students will return to schools for in-person learning on May 25th. Currently there are 4 schools with outbreak status with others on alert. Initially ESL, PUF and specialized learning continued to attend school, but staff are trying to do as much as possible virtually to keep students and staff safe. Discussed contact tracing and thanked the team and AHS for all their hard work. Parents also thanked the contact tracing team. Hired 27 teachers as substitutes straight out of college. They didn't have much time in the classroom but hopefully will be back soon. Thankful for teachers, staff, and support.

- **New Draft Curriculum:** Mark Davidson

Mark discussed how it is fatally flawed and how there are now 54 boards not piloting the new curriculum. Catherine then shared that she is so proud of our Division for taking a stand. She thanked Mark and his team. Deborah said it is wrong in so many ways and considered and not good for children. It would've been better to improve some areas of the current curriculum than start from scratch. Mark then shared how Jason Peters is building a package for collaborate with school councils to gather feedback from parents regarding the new curriculum. Kind of a virtual coffee house idea. Will happen in the coming couple of months and maybe over the summer.

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION: Rebeca Rothfus

- **Trustee Elections** - Reminder of trustee and municipal elections on October 18, 2021. Chelsey mentioned that the ATA usually sponsors an all candidate's forum, maybe DCSC co-host the event or at least host the candidates in a virtual format like this meeting. Val Browne will be in contact with Chelsey.
- **Organizational Meeting** - The Organizational Meeting for Division Council of School Council will be held in October of the new school year. Positions include: Chair (Vice Chair or Co-Chair), Coordinating Committee Parent Representative and Secretary. For more information see the Division Council [Operating Procedures](#).
- Karen mentioned that Courtney Scott has been the coordinating committee rep and it hasn't been included in the operating procedures or the agenda. Might be an idea at the first meeting next year to add in an amendment.
- Elizabeth thanked the DCSC team for all the time and effort this year. Rebeca then thanked Elizabeth for her kind words as well as parents, teachers, staff, and attendees.

8. MOTION TO ADJOURN: Rebeca Rothfus

- Elizabeth Gebhardt motioned to adjourn at 8:45 p.m.
- Future meeting dates: mid October 2021

School Council Parking Lot Conversations

- Division Council Chairs stayed online afterwards for an opportunity to share ideas, processes and build relationships.