

Medicine Hat Public School Division

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COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Members:	Val Browne	Lyle Cunningham
	Mark Davidson	Leanne Dulle
	Carolyn Freeman	Boris Grisonich
	Dalyce Harrison	Tracy Hensel
	Jerry Labossiere	Jason Peters – not in attendance
	Jan Petersen	Corey Sadlemyer
	Cheryl Scholly	Courtney Scott
	Sharon Stolz	Richelle Thomas

Date and Time: Monday, March 22, 2021 @ 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Location: Virtual Zoom Meeting

AGENDA ITEMS

1. **Call to Order** 1:00 p.m.

2. **Treaty Land Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge that we are on Treaty 7 territory, the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Nations, including Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai, the Tsuut'ina Nation and Stoney Nakoda First Nations. We acknowledge all the many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit whose footsteps have marked these lands for centuries.¹

3. **Adoption of Minutes**

The minutes of the Coordinating Committee meeting held on January 25, 2021 were adopted. [January 25, 2021 CC Minutes](#)

4. **Items for Information**

Welcome V. Browne welcomed the New Teacher Welfare Chair, Dalyce Harrison. Dalyce has served many roles within the ATA and brings a lot of experience to the Committee.

Grad 2021

Both of our traditional high schools are planning alternative models for graduation that align with what is currently possible due to the level of restrictions.

M. Davidson advised that some school divisions are not planning any type of grad celebration. March 13, 2020 was the last time an outdoor gathering of 200+ was permitted in our region. Although staff and students look forward to having a

¹ <https://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca/about/indigenous-awareness/treaty-land-acknowledgement>

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meaningful celebration for our graduates the level of restrictions due to COVID-19 will unfortunately continue to be a factor. Outdoor space has been tentatively booked in case restrictions are lifted.

High School Hub

MHPSD Executive, PRSD Executive, high school administrators, Jason Peters and his team, along with Coulee Collegiate staff, are working to develop an alternative that provides something of a hybrid model for Grades 10-12. The committee is considering the feasibility of this plan and possible implementation this fall. MHPSD currently has 35 students wanting to take online high school courses and another 150 that have expressed interest and are still undecided.

The plan is to develop asynchronous lessons, have video lessons developed by teachers compiled and stored in a google environment. The student would review the lesson and then have an hour with a teacher to answer questions and assist them in completion. The online resources could be compiled and shared with all teachers in the three partner systems.

One option for staffing is to assign a portion of a teacher's FTE to support online learners. It is difficult to know how to plan for staff 6 months from now as COVID-19 cases continue to vary, which could affect the number of online learners.

We also must consider the implementation of the new curriculum when investing time and funding into building these resources.

Alberta Distance Learning Centre (ADLC) Course Materials

The Board wrote a letter to Pembina Hills School Board to express concerns over losing access to ADLC course materials that were publicly funded. [Enclosure No. 1](#)

The ADLC will cease to exist after the 2020-2021 school year. While we are still able to make use of coil booklets, the Pembina Hills School Division is planning to only share online resources (labs etc.) at a cost. The loss of those resources impacts our outreach school, our students that use these sources as a backup as well as rural schools.

When addressed, the government suggested that school divisions be innovative in providing online learning resources. It has not indicated intention of requesting access to the publicly funded resources that Pembina Hills School Division housed as ADLC.

Smaller school divisions will find it more challenging to compete for enrolment when it comes to offering online learning.

Board Correspondence

The Board has sent letters to the Minister of Health regarding teacher vaccination and Premier Kenney regarding Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund (ATRF).

[Enclosure No. 2](#) – Letter to Health Minister Shandro was sent advocating for teachers and school workers in the province to be vaccinated prior to the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year.

[Enclosure No. 3](#) – Letter to Premier Kenney was sent expressing concern over the management and security of the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund.

V. Browne expressed appreciation on behalf of the ATA for advocating on these issues.

5. Items for Discussion

Teachers' Voice Update

On March 4, 2021 the Teachers' Voice Committee held their meeting. A summary was provided [Enclosure No. 4](#). Some of the main topics discussed were:

- Early Dismissal Wednesday or Friday, to accommodate collaboration and CTMS

There was a conversation that some schools are having difficulties scheduling collaborative time. Our focus on COVID-19 protocols, including smaller class sizes and maintaining cohorts, has reduced opportunities for this collaboration. This item will be brought to the Board for further discussion.

- Teacher fatigue and workload

This is an ongoing theme for a challenging year. Teaching is a difficult job and proven more challenging with COVID-19. It is tiring for everyone, not only teachers, wearing masks and dealing with all the changes this year. Most staff are looking forward to the return to informal social times!

The conversational theme seems to be shifting from staff being overwhelmed to being more proactive - planning ahead to reduce stress and workload. It is important to recognize teachers and all of the hard work they do.

- Update on Google Classroom expectations and future planning

Our Leveraging Digital Committee is planning to develop baseline resources in line with the Teaching Quality Standard (TQS). Students will access these resources through Google Classroom to stay connected when unable to attend school in-person.

- Quarter System vs. Semester System

When the pandemic forced closure of our schools we worked hard to provide all students with access to devices and internet services as required.

Next, we began planning for this year, scenarios 1, 2, and 3, and quickly realized that cohorting was manageable at the elementary level but less manageable at the high

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school level. The quarter system reduced the number of students teachers were required to work with.

There are 2 main reasons we are entering next year with the quarter system:

1. Cohorting and gathering restrictions may still be a requirement;
2. There are some divisions that have always used the quarter system. At this time next year our teachers will have taught for 6 quarters. This experience will help us make an informed decision as to whether we will continue with the quarter system or return to semesters.

There was discussion of the various pros and cons of the quarter system including the potential of some courses being offered as semestered and some classes quartered.

Budget 2021-2022

Minister Toews announced Budget 2021 on February 25, 2021 which was followed by a meeting with the Education Minister. An update was provided to the Committee.

J. Labossiere advised the Committee that the Minister didn't table any details for Education. They have decided to hold us harmless, but without further information on what this will include we really have no idea what our funding will be for next year. Planning will begin once we receive more information which is expected prior to March 31.

Once the budget details have been delivered the Board and Executive plans to reach out to Coordinating Committee members to schedule a budget focused meeting.

6. Policy, Procedure and Exhibit Updates

L. Dulle went over the fee schedule exhibits 628 E 002 and 628 E 003, both updated to reflect current fees.

[628 E 002 – Secondary Schools' Fee Schedule](#) was revised to reflect current fees. Previously there was a column for each school and our attempt was to simplify. A footnote was added to indicate that fees are based on instructional time and not all courses are available at all schools.

The exhibit was accepted as presented.

[628 E 003 International Students' Fee Schedule](#) was revised to reflect current fees. There was no change to tuition but an increase in activity fee, insurance and transportation.

The exhibit was accepted as presented.

[Policy ~~812~~-724 – School and Program Closure and Relocation](#) [Enclosure No. 7](#)

J. Labossiere went over the changes to School and Program Closure and Relocation. This policy was renumbered to fall under the Educational Program – section 700 instead of the prior location in Facilities – section 800 of the policy manual. Mainly the updates were made to align with the Education Act.

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The Board is required to follow a process as prescribed in legislation when considering the closure of a school. The only exception where the closure process would not apply is when the Minister directs a school closure. The guidelines were updated to outline when the Board may consider closure or relocation of a school.

M. Davidson indicated that the review was due to the potential closure of Saamis REAL and McMan REAL programs, due to no enrolment, and wanting to ensure we follow guidelines indicated in the Education Act. It was noted that the closure of these 2 programs will not affect our funding for Outreach.

812-724 P 001 School Closure or Grade Relocation [Enclosure No. 8](#)

J. Labossiere briefly went over the consultation process for a school closure or grade reconfiguration.

812-724 P 002 Program Relocation or Closure [Enclosure No. 9](#)

J. Labossiere reviewed changes to this administrative procedure, which provide clarity for the closure of a program and compliance with new legislation.

This policy and administrative procedures apply only to programs that hold a school code with Alberta Education for enrolment.

The changes to the policy and administrative procedures for 724 were accepted by the committee as presented. The changes to this policy will be brought to the Board for consideration in April.

814 – Disposal of Real Property [Enclosure No. 10](#)

J. Labossiere went over the amendments to this policy that were made to align with the Education Act. New Schools are now on 'educational reserve land', most of our schools are on land owned 'fee simple'.

This policy was accepted as presented. These changes will be brought to the Board for consideration in April.

7. Motion to Adjourn 2:37 p.m.

Future Meeting Dates:

- TBD budget focused meeting
- Monday, May 17, 2021