

January 16, 2019

► New Year Highlights

Grande Yellowhead Public School Division (GYPSD) held its first Public Board meeting of the New Year on January 16, 2019. The meeting began with a moment of silence and condolences were extended to the Edson family who lost their young son, who attended École Westhaven School, in a tragic accident.

Trustees welcomed incoming local A.T.A. Evergreen Local 11 President, Jessica Smeal, and Vice-President, Matthew Everitt. The Board also recognized local C.U.P.E. representative, Mrs. Mary Auriat, who retired after twenty years of service to GYPSD. Chair Rosadiuk presented Mary with a bouquet of flowers and noted, "Mrs. Auriat has been the union's representative at public board meetings over the last several years, and on behalf of the board, we wish her all the best."



The trustees shared highlights from their December school visits, which included attendance at Christmas concerts and school council meetings. Trustees voiced appreciation for the extensive community support and family involvement in the multitude of activities taking place in GYPSD schools.

Secretary Treasurer, Ms. Cindy Wang, presented the Board with the Quarterly Financial Report and answered questions about projected revenues and expenses for the first quarter. Transportation Director, Mr. Corey Halabi, report-

ed that for the 2018/19 school year over 2,700 students are being transported, on a daily basis, across the division. In addition, Mr. Halabi answered questions regarding ride times, the effectiveness and efficiency of routes, and potential costs to the division in regards to the new provincial Mandatory Entry Level Training (MELT) program.

Trustees rejected a recommendation to apply for the recently announced grant by the Minister of Education to install solar photovoltaic systems on existing school facilities. After a detailed review by Facility Services Director, Ken Baluch, it was determined that the program would have significant negative cost implications for the division. Based on estimates for the eligible school facilities within the division, it was calculated that it would take ten years to pay back the \$300,000 the board would have to invest. Chair Rosadiuk expressed her disappointment on behalf of the Board. "Originally, the board was very excited to hear about the new grant, but once the costs for the investment were considered, we could not in good conscience move forward. The division's budget is in a deficit position so the board is focused on making decisions that are financially viable. The board will voice its disappointment and concerns to the Minister and local MLAs, about the actual financial cost to school boards to support the program in its current structure."

Superintendent of Schools, Carolyn Lewis, provided her bi-monthly report addressing how her work incorporates Alberta Education's Superintendent's Quality Standard. In particular, she shared highlights of her instructional walk-throughs in schools and her participation at both government and community stakeholder meetings; all of which support the board's priorities of student learning, teacher and leadership excellence, and community engagement. Superintendent Lewis identified that her December 13, 2018 meeting, with the twenty-five high school students who compose the Superintendent's Youth Council (SYC), was an outstanding opportunity for her to hear student perspective about their educational experiences in GYPSD schools. Superintendent Lewis was also excited to note that members of the SYC will help facilitate upcoming community engagement sessions, which will target feedback on the development of the GYPSD Three Year Education Plan.