



BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

September 23, 2020



BOARD WELCOME & UPDATE



Chair Klaassen welcomed everyone to the Black Gold School Division September Board Meeting which will continue to be live streamed due to the capacity of the meeting room.

- We are in week three of schools being open. At this time, there are no known cases of COVID-19 in any of our schools.
- Thank you to everyone in our communities for doing your part to keep our community transmission rates low.
- We acknowledge the resiliency of all our BGSD staff for the innovative and thoughtful preparations for student re-entry.
- Thank you to parents for supporting children with approaching all the new guidelines with a positive attitude.

Some noteworthy September events:

- With the beginning of the new school year, we are now officially in the **25th Anniversary** year for Black Gold School Division! You will see a commemorative logo for the year, and we are already working on some simple and exciting ways to celebrate.
- September is **Suicide Prevention Awareness Month** in an effort to increase awareness and understanding of those who are struggling with suicidal thoughts or have lost a loved one to suicide ... "you are not alone".
- September 18 (the 3rd Friday in Sept) was designated **Military Family Appreciation Day**, recognizing the sacrifices our Canadian military families make - we have students and staff in military families.
- This week is **Gender Equality Week**: BGSD is dedicated to addressing and reducing gender discrimination within our schools and workplaces.
- September 30 is **Orange Shirt Day** - in honor of increasing awareness about and the impact of residential schools in Canada. Schools across the Division will be engaging in various events and activities. Chair Klaassen is looking forward to participating in the community event in Devon that day.
- At the end of the month, schools will also be participating in the **Terry Fox Run** in some capacity - raising money and awareness for cancer research.



Covenant Christian School



Caledonia Park School



East Elementary School



École Champs
Vallée School



École Leduc
Estates School



WELCOME BACK & LONG SERVICE AWARDS CEREMONY

On September 18, 2020, Black Gold School Division Board of Trustees celebrated the start of the new school year with staff at the annual Welcome Back & Long Service Awards Ceremony. Due to the ongoing health crisis, this year's ceremony was held virtually.



The event included the unveiling of the Division's 25th Anniversary logo, appreciation for retiring ATA and support staff members, recognition of current staff long service milestones, the presentation of two special awards - the Superintendent's Service Award of Excellence and the Board of Trustees' Inspiring Success Award of Distinction, and wrapped up with a keynote address by famed international business speaker, Michael Kerr.

This year's recipient of the Board of Trustees' Inspiring Success Award of Distinction is Shane Slade, an outstanding Grade 9 teacher at École J.E. Lapointe School in Beaumont. Shane was recognized for his leadership in making a significant and positive difference in public education, and for going above and beyond in supporting and encouraging students and staff at his school.

Calmar Elementary School Pre-Kindergarten Education Assistant Nancy Martin received the Superintendent's Service Award of Excellence. She was recognized for her excellent work in the co-regulation of students with severe communication disorders, her passion and deep concern for the well-being of her young charges, and her many contributions to staff morale and spirit.

Congratulations to all the retirees, the long service and special awards recipients. A big thank you to all those who helped organize this virtual event, and to everyone who tuned in to celebrate and recognize our dedicated staff.

Trustee Eilander thanked all the retirees for their contribution to BGSD.



Chair Klaassen stated that as the ceremony was changed to a virtual event, hopefully the message was that BGSD truly value all of our staff. Thank you to the following staff who organized and made this such a successful event: Deven Kumar, Cindy Villeneuve, Darren Maltais, Annali Bennett, Larry Sherwood, Ray McCubbing, Barry Scheelar, Kelly Friesen, Michelle Unchulenko, Terri Reid, Sandy Fownes, Carol Pruneau and Gordon Engberg. Special thanks to ATA Local #8 for co-sponsoring Michael Kerr.



NOMINEE RECOGNITION

Chair Klaassen recognized nominees for the following awards:



Edwin Parr Nominees:

Megan Greenhough, Robina Baker Elementary School
Brianna Schultz, Covenant Christian School
Benjamin Zylstra, New Sarepta Community High School - recipient - recognized at small event on August 27th

Superintendent's Award of Excellence Nominees:

Lisa Romaniuk and Tammy Hutman, East Elementary School
Chris Stiles, New Sarepta Community High School
Nancy Martin, Calmar Elementary School – recipient

Inspiring Success Award of Distinction Nominees:

Donna Chalifoux, Willow Park School
Allison Hubenig, École Leduc Estates School
Terri Reid, Division Office
Shane Slade, École J.E. Lapointe School - recipient

CELEBRATION OF THE ARTS

Chair Klaassen stated that the Board had decided last spring to defer the decision on whether to proceed with the Celebration of the Arts until September.



The Board approved to postpone the Celebration of the Arts for the 2020 – 2021 school year, and to review this decision in March 2021.

The Board approved the assignment of funds from the budget for the Celebration of the Arts to be spent on exploring other options of the arts for this year with a theme of commemorating the BGSD 25th Anniversary.



WEST END REVIEW UPDATE

Superintendent/CEO Romanchuk updated the Board on the West End Review. The work on quantitative analysis will begin in October. The qualitative work will begin at a later date.

OFF-CAMPUS EDUCATION PROGRAM

Associate Superintendent Dargis requested that the Board approve the Off-Campus Education Programs (Work Study, Work Experience, Registered Apprenticeship Program, Green Certificate). Associate Superintendent Dargis distributed a listing of the Off-Campus sites, and explained the Off-Campus Programs provide students the opportunity to earn high school credits while gaining valuable real world experience. Trustees commented that they are supportive of the Off-Campus Programs for our students and the communities.



The Board approved the involvement of students in the Off-Campus Education Program (Work Study, Work Experience, Registered Apprenticeship Program, Green Certificate) for the 2020-2021 school year.

The Board designated Off-Campus Coordinators as the authority to sign that work sites/work stations have been visited and approved, and the Associate Superintendent, Learning Services, to cosign the approvals as the designee.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The following policies were reviewed and approved:

1. Policy 3 - Role of the Trustee
2. Policy 7 - Board Operations
3. Policy 7 Appendix - Bylaw 1-2020 (First and Second Reading)
 - Bylaw 1-95 is replaced by Bylaw 1-2020. BGSD will continue with seven trustees in four wards as laid out in the new Bylaw. The Wards will roughly follow the attendance areas of the high schools in each Ward.
 - Ward 1 – One Trustee (Including the Village of Warburg and the Town of Thorsby)
 - Ward 2 – One Trustee (Including the Town of Devon and the Town of Calmar)
 - Ward 3 – Three Trustees (Including the City of Leduc and surrounding area)
 - Ward 4 – Two Trustees (Including the City of Beaumont and the area formerly known as the Village of New Sarepta)



Trustee Steed commented that there was a lot of work by the Administration team and consultant on the establishment of the new wards. The Board gave second reading to Policy 7 – Appendix – Bylaw 1-2020.

DIVISION OFFICE 25 YEAR SERVICE AWARD RECOGNITION

Trustees welcomed the two 25 year service award recipients from Division Office: Sandy Fownes, Administrative Assistant to the Associate Superintendent, Business & Finance and Barry Scheelar, IT Manager. Trustee Martinson presented the two recipients with their gift and 25 year service pin. Trustees and administration thanked Sandy and Barry for their years of dedicated service.



COUNCIL OF SCHOOL COMMUNITIES UPDATE



Trustees discussed the logistics of holding the Council of School Communities event virtually, and explored options for topics to connect with strategic planning process.

Superintendent/CEO Romanchuk stated that the event will be virtual this year, and will involve members of the school councils, students and teachers. Local businesses, municipal and provincial politicians will also be invited to participate. School administrators will act as facilitators. The event is scheduled to take place October 21st.

PROGRAM UNIT FUNDING (PUF) ADVOCACY UPDATE

BGSD has written a draft letter that will be targeted communication for MLAs, Ministry officials and parents/communities in relation to funding changes and the impact of those changes to the PUF program in Black Gold. Superintendent/CEO Romanchuk commented that last spring, the Board had a presentation by Niki Gill, ECS Coordinator, who spoke on all the changes made to the PUF program. As a result of these changes, BGSD had to reduce the number of programs, and are no longer able to have community children attending to act as peer mentors. BGSD continues to meet the needs of the children identified as needing supports even though it is causing BGSD to run a deficit in this area.



AUDIT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Vice-Chair O’Gorman stated that the Selection Committee held interviews and have recommended candidates number 2, 3 and 4 to be approved by the Board of Trustees for appointment as public members to the Audit Committee. The term of the appointment to the Committee is two years. The candidates were discussed in the in-camera portion of the meeting. Trustees thanked all the members of the public who applied to be a member of this Committee. The recommended candidates are from both rural and urban areas of the Division. Associate Superintendent Volkman will contact all candidates who applied.



The Board approved the Selection Committee’s recommendation and appointed candidates 2, 3 and 4 to the Black Gold School Division Audit Committee.

SCHOOL VISIT REVIEW

Trustees indicated it would be against protocol for them to conduct in-person school visits during the health crisis and would appreciate if Administration could plan virtual visits for this year instead.

Superintendent/CEO Romanchuk proposed a draft schedule of visits as well as a draft format for those visits. The proposed format would be a 45 minute long virtual tour, with the first 20-25 minutes having the school present what makes our school special/great/unique. Following the presentation, the Board would then meet with the school’s administrative team to engage in meaningful dialogue. There would be four school visits per day by the dates scheduled. Trustee Steed expressed thanks for all the planning. The schedule will be sent out as a draft.



TOWN OF DEVON

Chair Klaassen welcomed to the meeting virtually, Tony Kulbisky, Chief Administrative Officer and Mayor Ray Ralph from the Town of Devon.

Mr. Kulbisky announced that the Town of Devon has received \$13.5 million in funding from the federal and provincial governments to expand the current Dale Fisher Area into a multi-use recreation facility. Once the Town has an architect in place, they will involve BGSD for the planning of the north area parking lot which could include a bus loop and parent drop-off on the area that is currently occupied by the grass area outside of Robina Baker Elementary School. The Town is grateful that BGSD is willing to work with them to make this project happen. They hope to get into more detailed planning soon.

Trustees and Administration congratulated the Town on receiving the funding, and will be available to help move forward on the project.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Superintendent/CEO Romanchuk provided an update on the following construction projects in BGSD:

- École Bellevue School – bus lane completed
- Caledonia Park School – final date of substantial completion - October 1st, and the parking lot will be paved on October 1st
- École Secondaire Beaumont Composite High School – construction underway, two months behind in the project
- New High School in Leduc - still a P3 model project. The process is on schedule with the RFP submitted for a construction company to build five schools. Construction is slated to begin in one year.



COVID-19 UPDATE



Associate Superintendent Monty provided a COVID-19 update. Staff and principals have stated that the re-entry plan is going really well. BGSD is continuing to hire more custodial staff for enhanced cleaning. All safety protocols are being implemented. Staff are happy to be back. Superintendent/CEO Romanchuk expressed a ‘shout out’ to the maintenance staff on the extra work at schools to flush water lines and increase air flow in order to have the buildings meet the challenges on re-entry.

FEDERAL FUNDING UPDATE

Associate Superintendent Volkman provided an update on the Federal Funding for Alberta for a Safe Return to Class. Associate Superintendent Volkman stated that BGSD's allocation of this funding is \$4.52 million. BGSD is planning to use this funding to support:



- increased custodial hours for enhanced cleaning
- projected substitute costs for teachers, support staff and custodians related to COVID-19
- additional staffing and supports required for schools and the Distance Learning Program
- cleaning and sanitation supplies
- personal protective equipment
- support for engineered and administrative controls in the schools

SCHOOL OPENING COMMENTS

Superintendent/CEO Romanchuk shared comments received from principals, teachers, education assistants, and custodians. The school opening has gone very well. The extra week of planning was very much appreciated, and the staggered start aided in this success. Teachers are loving being back with the students. Associate Superintendent Monty commented that school staff are all happy to be back.



Associate Superintendent Dargis indicated that the Distance Learning Program is fully functioning and he has had several positive comments from parents. He thanked all the parents for working with the Division as we began the year under unprecedented conditions.

Associate Superintendent Volkman stated that the Transportation Department was thankful for the staggered week, and the maintenance and custodial staff appreciated the extra time in getting the schools ready.

Trustees also have heard positive comments from parents.



**As a scarecrow,
people say I am
outstanding
in my field.
But hay, it's
in my jeans!**

A group of students were asked to list what they thought were the present "Seven Wonders of the World." Though there were some disagreements, the following received the most votes:

1. Egypt's Great Pyramids
2. Taj Mahal
3. Grand Canyon
4. Panama Canal
5. Empire State Building
6. St. Peter's Basilica
7. China's Great Wall

While gathering the votes, the teacher noted that one student had not finished her paper yet. So she asked the girl if she was having trouble with her list. The girl replied, "Yes, a little. I couldn't quite make up my mind because there were so many."

The teacher said, "Well, tell us what you have, and maybe we can help."

The girl hesitated, then read, "I think the 'Seven Wonders of the World' are:



1. To See



2. To Hear



3. To Touch



4. To Taste



5. To Feel



6. To Laugh



7. To Love

The room was so quiet you could have heard a pin drop. The things we overlook as simple and ordinary and that we take for granted are truly wondrous! A gentle reminder – that the most precious things in life cannot be built by hand or bought by man.