



# Board Highlights

January 12, 2022

**Trustees (left to right):**

***Vice Chair Melissa Copley, Linda Wagers, De Anne Hutchison, Sherry Cooper, Chair Holly Bilton, Terry Leslie, Jackie Swainson, Kathy Kemmere, Gord Kerr***

## **Specialized mental health supports for schools:**

Dr. Marcie Perdue, Associate Superintendent of Student Services, provided a detailed presentation regarding the escalating prevalence of disruptive student mental health issues that are impacting teachers, administrators, school staff and classrooms. Dr. Perdue outlined a detailed strategy to address this growing mental health challenge, which is creating significant barriers in classrooms in virtually every school in the division. The strategy, which was approved unanimously by the Board, involves a three year project that would allow six Social Emotional Specialists to be hired through the use of reserves. The Specialist roles will be specifically placed throughout the division and will work collaboratively with the Student Services team. They will provide expertise and direction with specific classroom interventions to support the complex social emotional needs of these students, in order for learning to move forward successfully for all students. The division's investment for the project is approximately \$1.2 million over three years. A separate media release is also being issued on this.

## **Advocating to Government:**

Following the motion to establish Specialized Social Emotional supports in the division, the Board made a motion directing the Board Chair to write a letter to the provincial government. This letter will share the mounting concerns and use of division reserves in order to support moderate to severe mental health challenges in a number of students. Chinook's Edge Dr Marcie Perdue, who is a strong voice at the provincial level, has worked to develop a solution that will begin implementation immediately. The advocacy of CESD is to highlight to all levels of government the increasing need and complexity of these situations. The goal is to engage all levels and areas of government in becoming a unified front in moving Alberta students forward.

## **COVID update:**

The Superintendent indicated that, as the Central Office Leadership Team assists schools in navigating numerous details as students return to in-person learning, a difficult decision was made to cancel athletic tournaments for the month of January. Interschool league competition is able to continue, but teams are not able to host or travel to tournaments during this time.

## **Financial Update:**

Treasurer Shauna Kaiser provided a first-quarter update. Although revenues and expenses are coming in as expected, one anomaly is an increase in substitute teacher costs over previous years at this time. This was anticipated, due to the current status of COVID-19.

## **Support for Music Festival:**

The Board provided financial support in the amount of \$700 to the Olds & District Kiwanis Music Festival for the 2022 festival, which was able to proceed as a virtual festival last year.

---

**The next meeting of the Board of Chinook's Edge School Division  
is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, February 2, 2022.**

MEDIA for more information please contact:

**Kurt Sacher, Superintendent**  
(403) 227-7070

**Sandy Bexon, Communications**  
(403) 227-7085