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## Directions Newsletter Regular Meeting of the Board – January 2016

### Technology Status Report

*Presented by Rob Geiger, Manager of Information Systems*

#### School/Facility Upgrades

As of November 2015, all Chinook facilities with the exception of the bus garages in Maple Creek and Shaunavon, have been upgraded with new servers, networking, and technology infrastructure. We're investigating possible ways to connect the bus garages to our network in the future.

#### Email

In July 2015, we converted our email system from Zimbra to Microsoft Office 365. Our Active Directory accounts are now linked with Office 365. This changeover required all of Chinook employees to start using our new active directory logins because email is an essential service for everyone.

#### Hardware (current)

We distributed new laptops to all non-Hutterian teachers working 0.5 FTE positions or higher. The laptops will be deployed to Hutterian teachers over the next few months and this will complete the new laptops deployment. In order to provide computer access for students in Irwin School after the renovation, we also deployed 85 student laptops.

#### Hardware (future)

Our current fleet of desktop computers are over 8 years old. The industry standard is to replace hardware on a 4-6 year cycle because total cost of ownership increases significantly after 5 years and newer software tends to require more powerful computers. We will continue to work on optimizing our current hardware as we plan for our next-generation device.

#### Wireless Networking

In the last 12 months, Chinook has gone from an environment where we relied on wireless access for less than 10% of our networking connectivity to our current state where every teacher has a laptop and some schools use wireless networking for over 90% of student access. In addition to these Chinook-owned devices, on any day we have around 1200 devices connected to our BYOD network and this number is growing rapidly. These devices are almost exclusively non-Chinook devices, meaning owned by students and staff.

These changes have put pressures on our wireless networking infrastructure that have revealed challenges that will take time to address. In order to improve our wireless infrastructure, we have invested in powerful, specialized software that allows us to optimize wireless infrastructure.

### **Professional Development**

Professional development is a major focus in TIS right now. After spending 18 months upgrading our technology infrastructure in Chinook, our staff needs to learn how to best configure, maintain, and improve our new technology. Our TIS staff has embraced this professional development and their knowledge and skills have grown tremendously in a short time. TIS staff have been tremendously positive about our new technology infrastructure and the challenges that come with learning how to use new hardware, software, and systems.

### **Team-Building and Visioning Retreat**

In October, TIS spent a full day and evening at a retreat in order to develop a Mission and Vision as well as set goals for the future. Our new vision and mission will guide us in all major technology decisions:

*Vision: We create secure, safe, reliable, and easy-to-use Technology Information Systems that support the learning needs of students and staff.*

*Mission: We plan and deploy technology services and maintain Technology Information Systems by providing friendly support in a timely manner.*

The retreat was an excellent opportunity to develop future IT plans and grow as a team.

### **Financial Report to November 30, 2015**

*Presented by Sharie Sloman, Controller and Rod Quintin, CFO*

**Revenues:** The cycle for property tax collections is unbalanced with a larger proportion of collections during the first quarter. Operating grant receipts of 25.1% are tracking to budget and align with the portion of the year expired. Capital grant receipts are difficult to accurately budget within a given period as they are dependent on the timing of capital work completions.

Overall year to date revenue of \$30.8M is 35% of budget.

**Expenditures:** Years to date expenditures for most areas including Governance, Administration and Transportation are closely aligned with budget planning. Plant Operation and Maintenance costs are cyclical in nature dependent on weather and maintenance activity. There are some variances in Instruction due to benefits, sick leave, sub salaries and sub plans.

Overall, the year-to-date expenditures of \$22.2M are at 25% of budget.

## **Chinook School Division Strategic Plan**

*Presented by Sharon Mayall, Curriculum Coordinator and Liam Choo-Foo, Director of Education*

In the Board's leadership role for the Division, they have committed to an annual strategic planning process. As a result, they have created a school division strategic plan for 2016-17, giving direction to our schools as they do their planning for the 2016-17 year. These plans are also aligned with the provincial education sector plan.

*Within the 2016-17 Division Strategic Plan, the Board has highlighted the following areas for Chinook to focus on:*

- Implementing *Saskatchewan Reads* leading to improvements within Balanced Literacy.
- Implementing high impact writing instructional strategies.
- Developing a high school (grade 10-12) model to improve the grad rate and student engagement.

*The long term outcomes for the overall Division Strategic Plan are:*

- By June 2020, 90% of students will be meeting or exceeding Chinook expectations in reading, writing and math.
- By 2017, 100% of SCC's will be actively engaged and aligned with the ESSP.
- By 2020, Chinook's graduation rate will be 90%.
- By 2020, 90% of Chinook students exiting kindergarten will score within the appropriate range in the cognitive domain, language and communication domains as measured by the Early Years Evaluation (EYE).
- By June 2017, the Board will have implemented strategies that will annually ensure efficiency of budget, compliance to policy and legislation, as well as alignment to the ESSP.

The provincial education sector plan was developed collaboratively with public school divisions, Catholic school divisions, Conseil des écoles francsaskoises, First Nations, Métis, Ministry of Education, school boards and students. The goal of the strategic plan is to enhance the experience and achievement of all Saskatchewan students using a Student First approach to focus our work on what matters most...the student.