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Directions Newsletter

Regular Meeting of the Board – June 12 & 26, 2017

Student Services Report

Presented by Bob Vavra, Superintendent of Learning

Student Services supports students that need more than what the average classroom can provide. Most of these students have an Inclusion and Intervention Plan (IIP) that helps guide their learning. The IIP is developed in May or June for the next year, and is created by support teams made up of school and division personnel, including student services teachers, teachers, coordinators, psychologists, speech language pathologists and occupational therapists.

In 2016-17, Chinook had 155 students receiving specialized supports in medical, behavior, academic, speech and language, or occupational therapy, among other areas. As successful students move out of IIPs, they progress to Individual Learner Profiles or classroom interventions. Intensive supports will also be provided in the areas of Early Literacy (2016-17) and Early Math (training planned for 2017-18).

Division Support Teams have been created in the areas of anxiety, autism and behaviour. Coordinators led planning groups to create teams to support schools in a nimble and effective manner. Teacher Assistance Teams (TAT's) have continued this year, with coordinators and specialists available to support teachers with students that need more. Technology will be utilized more frequently for TAT support in 2017-18.

Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) training continues to be provided to all counselors and school administrators. VTRA is a process that walks schools/teams through the appropriate response and supports in a violent and/or threatening situation. Our Student Services coordinators and a superintendent are now certified to provide Level 1 training to our staff internally, as well as others in southwest Saskatchewan, with the Train the Trainer program in place.

We are going through a restructuring process to maximize effectiveness with the reduced supports that came with our provincial funding. Supports will remain in place in all areas of Student Services, including educational psychology, speech language pathology, occupational therapy and counselling. Support team capacities will be built in each cluster of schools and technology will be utilized whenever possible.

2017-2018 Chinook Budget Approval

Chinook School Division has finalized a budget for the 2017-2018 school year. The planned expenditures will allow Chinook to continue to focus on their key priorities of student engagement and writing strategies, in alignment with the Division and Education Sector strategic plans.

The total School Division Operational Expenditures are approximately \$87.2M, which is a reduction of \$6M from previous budget. The revenues from grant taxes and other will be \$81.27M, which is a reduction of \$6.25M from the previous budget. In order to compile a budget with this significant reduction in provincial funding, the Chinook Board has had to look at major structural changes and will present estimates that include a \$2.6 million operational deficit.

Chinook has done an extensive and thorough review of programs, personnel and supports in anticipation of the decrease in funding. Various changes have been made to reduce expenditures in the following areas: Governance reduced by 29.5%; Administration reduced by 11.2%, including senior administration positions that were reduced by 25%; Instruction reduced by \$3.5M; Plant Operations reduced by \$500K; and Transportation reduced by \$1.1M.

Long Service Awards for 30+ Years

The Board presented Long Service Awards for the following Chinook employees:

Rhonda Siemens – 30 years

Rod Siemens – 30 years

Gary Lusk – 35 years