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## **Directions Newsletter Regular Meeting of the Board – May 2017**

### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Student Engagement Status Report**

*Presented by Dan Kerslake, Superintendent of Schools and Sharon Mayall, Curriculum Coordinator*

We are in year one of a two year Hoshin:

*“By June 2019, strategies and structures will be researched and implemented across the Division to engage the 21st Century Learner.”*

With a goal of focusing on improving the high school experience for students, a committee was formed that included representation from principal and teacher school teams, central office staff and technology support personnel. The committee meets once a month.

The committee has looked at many definitions of student engagement. Our definition was selected based on a recognition that there are many factors to consider when working on engagement and we wanted to tie our work to the OurSCHOOL student survey. This definition is based on the work of Doug Wilms.

Student engagement is a student’s frame of mind towards learning, working with others, and functioning in a social institution. It includes a students’ sense of belonging at school, the extent to which they value schooling, and their investment in the learning process. Measures of these aspects of engagement can be classified into 3 categories: Social Engagement, Institutional Engagement, and Intellectual Engagement.

Our current data indicates the same trend over time: student interest and motivation decreases as students move through high school. This trend over time would be the same across the province, country and world.

Focus groups were formed that included students, teachers and parents. The overarching principles of engagement are a result of a triangulation of what we learned from data, the focus groups, as well as a literature review and research. Research has identified teaching practices that have a higher chance of engaging students intellectually.

An Engagement Framework was developed that includes six overarching principles of student engagement, based on our research and focus group feedback, that make up the components. The top half is focused on developing a Collaborative Culture and includes: Authentic Relationships, Students as Partners, and Supportive Environment. The bottom half is focused on Student-Centred Learning and includes: Responding to Diverse Learners, Planning for Deeper Learning, and Assessment for Learning.

During 2017-18, year one with our high school teachers (9-12), we are focusing our professional development on Collaborative Culture. We will be asking teachers to reflect on their practice and work to improve their classroom culture. We also have a team of seven teacher leaders who will be provided with additional professional development and coaching support to dig deeper into planning and focus on student centred learning. The reflection and focus of improvement are based on these key questions. We are currently creating a teacher leadership group to support year 2 of our implementation plan.

***Anticipated Benefits of Higher Student Engagement:***

*Students*

- Participation in and enjoyment of their learning
- Development of 21st Century learning skills

*Teachers*

- Increased job satisfaction
- Collaborative working environment

*School*

- Increased student attendance
- Higher levels of credit attainment and achievement

*Division*

- Increased Graduation Rates

## **Declaration of Oath**

New Chinook Board member, Katelyn Toney, was officially sworn in as a Trustee. Katelyn recently won the By-election for Subdivision 4, which includes schools in Wymark, Gull Lake and Tompkins as well as numerous Hutterian schools.

Katelyn obtained a degree in Agriculture from the University of Saskatchewan and has had her own successful photography business for the last six years. She still owns her own business as well as ranches, alongside her husband Paul, north of Tompkins. Katelyn is very involved in her community. Her and her husband have four young children: the older two attending school in Tompkins. Growing up in the rural community of Simmie, Katelyn has a passion for the quality education of rural students and believes it is essential to make decisions in the best interest of the kids. She plans to work passionately to ensure that your community has a voice and has every opportunity to thrive and grow, starting where it matters most - with the education of your children.