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Directions Newsletter Regular Meeting of the Board – January 2018

Technology Status Report

Presented by Rob Geiger, Manager of Information Systems

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.

Hardware

Our primary Windows desktop computers are now over 10 years old. The industry standard is to replace hardware on a 4-6 year cycle.

Chromebooks Hardware Refresh: The funding for Chromebook purchases, as part of the Hardware refresh plan, was split into two years. Last year we distributed about 1500 Chromebooks from March to June, along with a required professional development session for staff in each of those schools. Following a public tender process, Chinook purchased an additional 950 Chromebooks, which will allow us to finish the full deployment of Chromebooks in a 3:1 ratio, as planned. Many schools have chosen to purchase additional Chromebooks with their School Based Budgets as well. There are now approximately 2800 Chromebooks in regular usage and feedback from schools has been very positive.

Windows Hardware Refresh: Funding for Windows computer purchases was split into two years. New Windows computers purchased in Fall 2017 will be deployed as soon as our Windows 10 image has been tested fully. We will be using the funds from this year's budget to purchase Windows devices for students where they're needed for curricular reasons.

Hardware Future Plans: The recent hardware refresh required a significant budget allocation and our current Chromebooks have a life expectancy of 4-6 years. The best and most common financial practice for technology infrastructure is to financially plan for hardware renewal every 5 years by budgeting every year so that the cost is regular and expected.

Disaster Recovery

Azure DR is now running and almost all of the primary servers in our data centre are backed up daily to Microsoft's Azure cloud. This means that in the event of a significant disaster, we would be able to turn on our servers and continue to provide IT services, even if our data centre was completely destroyed. It will be tested and a report will be generated for our auditors.

Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS)

We are replacing our data centre UPS system with a new one. This UPS is critical to the safety of our data centre and core services.

Personnel

The Technology Information Systems department staffing consists of ten technicians, administrators and specialists, along with the Manager of Information Systems.

Financial Report to November 30, 2017

Presented by Sharie Sloman, Controller and Rod Quintin, CFO

Revenues: Property taxation has been adjusted to reflect collecting three out of four months of budgeted property tax revenue and the Ministry will begin collecting property taxes in January 2018, which is a change. Operating grant receipts of 13.9% are due to property tax collection for September to December being at \$2.88M per month, and will change to \$6.27M from January to August.

The annual operating grant decreased due to an enrollment decrease, which was somewhat offset by increased rates in the funding formula.

Overall year to date revenue of \$19.2M is 24% of budget.

Expenditures: Years to date expenditures for most areas including Governance, Administration, Instructional and Transportation are closely aligned with budget planning. Plant Operation and Maintenance costs are cyclical in nature dependent on weather and maintenance activity.

Overall, the year-to-date expenditures of \$22.4M are at 26% of budget.

Introduction to Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP)

Presented by Sharon Mayall, Curriculum Coordinator and Kyle McIntyre, Acting Director

In the Board's leadership role for the Division, they have committed to an annual strategic planning process that is aligned with the provincial education sector plan. As part of the yearly planning cycle, the 2017-19 school division strategic plan is being updated to identify priorities and give direction to our schools as they do their planning for the 2018-19 year. The Division level plan will be finalized and will be presented to the Board for approval at their meeting in February.

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.