

RI Baker Middle School Council  
Meeting Minutes for  
Tuesday, May 5, 2020 - 6:30pm Via Google Meet

1. Call to Order at 6:33
2. Introductions/Attendance - Shannon Little, Tanya Johnson, Josh Martens, Debbie Laturnus, Krista Gaskell, Jason Prebushewski, Amy Kerr, and Shauna Pauls
3. Review of and Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes from November 19, 2019
  - Approved as distributed
5. Approval of Minutes from January 21, 2020
  - Approved as distributed
6. Reports - Trustee report
  - Debbie Laturnus
    - **May 2020**
    - Director of Learning Shane Cranston provided trustees with the priorities identified in the area of inclusive education and accomplishments to date after the COVID-19 pandemic forced closure of in-school learning. School staff connected with students and their families to ensure their safety and address their needs, with Family School Liaison Counsellors continuing regular check-ins with those on their caseload and other vulnerable families through online technology and surveys. Family Connections workers are also helping families access supports available to them. Cranston said reasonable expectations have been established in the area of learning, with a greater focus on the “big ideas” within the curriculum. Both teachers and educational assistants, meanwhile, have been taking advantage of regular professional development opportunities to better meet student needs under remote learning. Superintendent Dave Driscoll praised Palliser staff – from teachers to caretakers and other support staff – for providing the best learning environment possible.
    - Trustees received a list of capital projects Palliser Regional Schools has submitted for consideration under Capital Maintenance and Renewal funding the province is providing to keep Albertans employed during these

challenging times. Eligible projects had to be shovel-ready and could not include those already approved under the division's capital budget. Palliser priorities ranged from school grounds paving and landscaping projects, to lighting upgrades and gym floor resurfacing. It was noted Palliser's submission is just one the province will consider, with every other school jurisdiction and municipality also looking for funding.

- The Board was provided with an update on the 2019-2020 finances, with an anticipated deficit of about \$517,000 for Aug. 31. This deficit can be covered by funds from the Infrastructure Maintenance Renewal funding, which has been approved by the Ministry for the current year. Mr. Durfey said Palliser Regional Schools lost about \$1.6 million when the province recently reduced funding for instruction and transportation due to COVID-19. Through temporary layoffs for support staff and other efficiencies found, this reduction in funding will not contribute to the 2019-2020 deficit. Trustees also heard how funding formula changes will impact Palliser in the 2020-2021 school year. While the school division will receive an additional \$1 million over funding provided this year, it was noted a significant portion of that is earmarked for various support services which previously received direct funding and the annual inflationary items.
  
- Debbie has been receiving lots of praise from parents regarding how well the schools are handling the online learning; all feedback is positive.

#### Chairperson Report – Shannon Little

- Nothing to report

#### Principal's Report – Jason Prebushewski

- Mr. Prebushewski wants to praise RI Baker staff in the building as they are rocking it! Among the staff there are many different levels of tech savvy and comfort with the online platforms, but everyone has stepped up and they are doing well. The Math teachers have really done well as Math is difficult to deliver online, but they are making it work.
- Emphasized the importance of communication between parents, students, and teachers because, unlike in the classroom, teachers cannot physically see if a student is struggling with the work or assignment they have been given. This makes communication with the teacher paramount.
- The school had to temporarily lay off the support staff about a week ago. Those still working are manning phones in the school ready to help students with any questions or difficulties they are having with their schoolwork. If a student requires assistance they just need to communicate with teachers to arrange for assistance.
- Close to 300 students filled out the survey that Jason sent to them. This has provided good feedback and helped to shape another survey. This one is being designed to be done by parents and students together. This will provide an

opportunity to open a dialog between parents and students so that they can discuss how the new learning environment is working for them. The survey should be coming out within the week.

- Mr. Prebushewski is proud of the communication spreadsheet designed by the teachers. It can be accessed by all the teachers and allows the teachers to record and rate their connections with the students every week. This is working very well for tracking attendance and engagement with the students and it allows teachers to follow up with students.
- Assessment and how it will look for the student's final grade.
  - Ms. Gaskell – This is a grey area and looks different. Currently it is less about the grade and more about providing feedback to the student regarding their work and support in improving their understanding. Palliser has mandated that a student's final grade cannot be lower than it was when they started the online learning platform. This is due to the fact that the school and the teacher do not know the student's situation at home and what supports they do and don't have. Assignments are being marked but they likely won't be included in the final marks.
  - Mr. Prebushewski – Currently it is more about getting kids engaged and gauging their learning through feedback from the students.
- End of Year Farewells
  - Usually have a farewell at the end of every year for each grade that can include awards and year in review.
  - For the Grade 8's it's a more formal event and Mr. Smith has a plan and is trying to make it as real for the kids as possible. He is planning an online digital farewell that will include all grade levels and will likely include farewells to any teachers that are leaving. Look for communication from the school regarding that.
- When will school be back and what will it look like?
  - Mr. Prebushewski has been in communication with the central office regarding the hockey program as it would not be able to run with current restrictions in place. They are accepting registrations for the program but are not taking payment as they are waiting on guidance from AHS. He is also meeting with KAHS to discuss how they can improve the program. All the athletic programs at RI Baker are in the same position as social distancing is not possible and may not be available right when school resumes. The school wants to provide these experiences but needs to make sure that everyone is safe. Different provinces are approaching reopening differently and it is unclear right now how school will look when it resumes. They continue to plan for next year as usual while also preparing for restrictions that may still be in place.
- Mr. Prebushewski thanked parents for all the positive feedback and encouragement that the school has received.

7. Business Arising from the Minutes

- Turkey Dinner
  - Will revisit in the fall.

8. New Business

- No new business.

9. Bouquets

- Shannon Little – Thanks to RI Baker staff for their immediate response, communication, and their continuing care for the students.
- Tanya Johnson – Agrees with Shannon’s sentiments, the staff has been amazing.
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10. Next Meeting Date is September 15, 2020 – AGM and regular meeting. Possibility of one more Google Meet before the end of the 2019/2020 school year.

11. Adjournment at 6:58 pm.