

## Board Development Topic: Understanding Staff and Student Mental Health

### Date of Board Meeting:

January 27, 2022

### Strategic Priority:

- High Quality Teaching and Learning
- Engagement of All Students, Families, and Communities
- Effective Policy and Procedures
- Healthy, Sustainable Physical & Social Environments

### Quality Indicator(s):

QI 6.2 – The Director keeps the Board informed about Division operations.

QI 6.3 – The Director provides the Board with balance, sufficient, concise information and clear recommendations for actions items in agendas.

QI 6.6 – The Director ensures high quality management services are provided to the Board.

### Information for the Board (fast facts):

1. **GSSD Workplace Wellness** - We are exploring a national initiative, *Well at Work*, to help guide our wellness work for GSSD. Part of these efforts will include creating a wellness committee to provide voice and direction for our various employee groups in developing a healthy workplace culture.
2. **Administrative Procedures** – APs that support staff and student well-being are supported while others are revisited and updated to reflect a focus on wellbeing of students and staff. Some of these include AP 165 (Safe Schools), AP 319 (Gender and Sexual Diversity), AP 332 (Therapy Dogs in Schools), AP 164 (COVID Safety for School Division Employees and Other Individuals), AP 225 Smudging
3. **Mental Health Training, Education and Support** – Accessing grant money from the Ministry of Education to provide continued Mental Health First Aid training to a cross-section of GSSD staff. This training is a collaborative partnership with our local mental health workers and supports staff who work with youth to identify, intervene, and refer to appropriate resources for youth struggling with mental health impacts.
4. **School Counsellors/Educational Psychologists** – Good Spirit School Division continues to prioritize the work of school counsellors and educational psychologist in providing mental health supports for staff and students.
5. **Prioritizing Expectations of Staff** – Expectations, such as final exams will not occur for the third year in a row. Teacher Observations/Evaluations have been postponed for the month of January.
6. **Strategic Planning** – The inclusion of goals that position mental health and wellness in Good Spirit School Division strategic plan highlights the importance of staff and student wellness. These goals include staff and students feeling welcome, mentally fit, and a sense of belonging at school/work.
7. **Anti-bias Education** – Research shows that perception of racism, homophobia and transphobia impacts peoples' mental health almost as deeply as experiencing/witnessing it. Anti-bias learning is part of every Student Achievement meeting.
8. **Wellness Resources** – A list of wellness resources are identified and communicated to GSSD staff. Examples include the School Counsellor monthly wellness calendar, a section on the GSSD Website

devoted to mental health resources, and a staff information poster for accessing resources for mental wellness.

9. **Mental Health Collaboration, Referrals and Supports** – School Counsellors regularly collaborate with local Mental Health therapists for referrals, programs, and information. An example of this collaborative manner to support youth is the *Teen Boost* program, which is delivered in schools virtually by Mental Health workers and supported by School Counsellors.

Respectfully submitted,

Quintin M. Robertson, Director/CEO  
Good Spirit School Division