

FROM THE BOARD

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE
NOVEMBER 16, 2023 MEETING



GSSD.CA

November 16, 2023 Regular Meeting

The Regular Board meeting on November 16, 2023, was held at the Good Spirit Education Complex. The following trustees were present: Chairperson Jaime Johnson, Vice Chair Nicole Pohl, Christopher Balyski, Gilda Dokuchie, Jan Morrison, Bob Simpson, Jade Anderson, Gord Gendur, Shannon Leson and Lois Smandych. Also in attendance were division office staff, including Director of Education/CEO Quintin Robertson, Chief Financial Officer Keith Gervais, Assistant to the Director Lauren Denysek, Superintendent of Learning Lisa Wotherspoon, Norquay School Principal Audrey Severson and Vice Principal Stacy Rubletz.

Meeting Opening

Board Chair Johnson commenced the meeting at 10 am and reviewed GSSD's meeting norms. Board Member Smandych then respectfully recognized that the meeting was taking place on Treaty 4 Territory; the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Assiniboine, and homeland of the Métis Peoples.

Approval of Minutes

The meeting package included the minutes for the October 12, 2023 Regular Board Meeting which were prepared by Chief Financial Officer Keith Gervais. The approved minutes can be accessed on the GSSD website: [GSSD](#) | [Board](#) | [Board Meetings](#) | [October 12, 2023 Minutes](#)

Delegation

As outlined in Board Policy 7, the Board will make provision for a delegation to make a presentation at a Board meeting in the interest of improving the education provided in Division schools.

There were no delegations at the Regular Meeting on November 16, 2023.

Accountability Report

Mental Health and Well-being for Students and Staff

Amanda Kornaga, Superintendent of Schools, and Michelle Goulden, Mental Health Capacity Building Coordinator, presented the accountability report on Mental Health and Well-being for Students and Staff.

Amanda and Michelle went in-depth with their presentation and looked at 2022-23 data that included "Students with Positive Relationships," "Students with a Positive Sense of Belonging," and topics such as levels of depression, anxiety

and positive self-esteem. Following a discussion of this data, they aligned GSSD's initiatives to mirror the Provincial Education Framework and Goals.

Amanda and Michelle also went through Tier 1, 2 and 3 Interventions. They highlighted that Dr. Nathalie Reid, Child Trauma Research Center at the University of Regina, is supporting staff in developing trauma integrated practices, which includes consistent language and best practices for students. The PowerPoint presented included a short and informative video which highlights the differences and relations of the different steps on the “Mental Health Pyramid” (pictured to the right). The Board recognized and was appreciative that schools are focusing on ways to help students overcome anxiety and self-regulate in many different ways. [To view the video, click here.](#)



To view the accountability report in its entirety visit: [GSSD | Board | Board Meetings | Accountability Report – Mental Health and Well-being for Students and Staff](#)

Board Development

Student and Family Engagement at the Early Years Level

The infographic is titled "BOARD DEVELOPMENT" and "TOPIC: STUDENT & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AT THE EARLY YEARS LEVEL NOVEMBER 16, 2023, REGULAR BOARD MEETING". It features a "STRATEGIC PRIORITY" badge for "ENGAGEMENT OF ALL STUDENTS, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES". The content is organized into 10 numbered fast facts, each with an icon and a brief description of a practice or initiative. The fast facts cover topics such as family engagement, communication, financial support, and examples of events. At the bottom, it reads "LEARNING WITHOUT LIMITS...ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL".

Instructional Consultant Kerrilyn Trost presented to the Board on the topic of Student and Family Engagement at the Early Years Level.

Emphasizing the Ministry of Education's perspective on fostering respectful relationships, the presentation highlighted the value placed on the diversity of families as a resource for building partnerships. Family engagement involves continuous communication between educators and families, where both parties share insights, concerns and information about the child’s progress.

At the beginning of the school year, building trusting relationships is prioritized. This creates a safe community to share information regarding a child’s development and learning. This also creates a safe space for celebrating successes together.

Family engagement is built into the GSSD calendar at the beginning of the year to ensure successful interactions and learning opportunities. Kindergarten Orientation is also held in May/June to support transitioning students and families into Kindergarten.

A few examples of family engagement events in GSSD include reading buddy adoption day, Brown Bear learning stations, self-regulation activities, getting to know your family placemats and inviting family members to share (beading, Pow Wows, etc.).

To access the full document of the 10 fast facts on Student and Family Engagement at the Early Years Level, visit [GSSD | Board | Board Meetings | Board Development – Student and Family Engagement at the Early Years Level.](#)

Advocacy Session

Relationship Building with School Community Councils

After lunch, the Board and members of the Good Spirit School Division (GSSD) School Community Councils (SCC) convened virtually for a session focused on family engagement.

During the session, Norquay School administrators, SCC members, and the GSSD Board of Education engaged in discussions using questions and prompts, covering various aspects of family engagement, including successes, challenges, barriers, supports, and resources.



Audrey Severson, Norquay School Administrator, highlighted that Norquay School hosts a family engagement event every third Thursday of the month, featuring activities like pumpkin carving and dodgeball. She emphasized the success of these events, attracting both returning and new families.

A SCC member from Churchbridge Public School shared positive feedback about their recent Chargerfest, noting a fantastic turnout from not only the school community but also the entire surrounding community, including aunts, uncles, grandparents, and friends. The member mentioned that larger events in the evening work better for their community due to the schedules of working families.

Additionally, it was mentioned that the Kamsack area, including Victoria School and Kamsack Comprehensive Institute, finds success in organizing a family meal during Christmas time as a means of involving families and fostering a safe and welcoming environment.

Communication emerged as a challenge, with an emphasis on the importance of prioritizing the creation of safe and positive relationships between schools and families. The Board and staff acknowledged the efforts of GSSD's Indigenous Student Success Leads and Indigenous Community Workers in reaching out to families and encouraging engagement. The conversation also covered student-led conferences and explored virtual methods of engagement to enhance accessibility.

In summary, it was emphasized that each school and community understands its families best, and there are diverse and effective family engagement strategies. All efforts contribute to creating safe and inclusive environments.

As a result of the session, the GSSD Board of Education gained a better understanding of how they can support family engagement and identified potential successful strategies to engage families.

New Business

Approval of the Draft 2022-23 Annual Report

Section 283 of *The Education Act, 1995*, requires that for each fiscal year, boards of education submit an annual report, including a financial statement, to the Minister of Education for tabling in the Legislative Assembly, in accordance with section 13 of *The Executive Government Administration Act, 2014*.

During the November 16, 2023, Regular Board Meeting the GSSD Board of Education reviewed the draft 2022-23 Annual Report that was sent into the Ministry for Review on October 20, 2023. Once financial portions of the document are added and the report is tabled by the Ministry (no later than December 29, 2023) the report will be available on the GSSD website for the public to view.



Before the commencement of the meeting, the Board Executive Committee met with the Board Appointed Auditor as stated in Policy 2 Appendix A Annual Work Plan. The Board also reviewed the 2022-23 Audited Financial Statements and Management Letter which will assist in the completion of the financial components for the 2022-23 Annual Report.

Policy Review

Board Policy 3 Role of the Board Member was brought forward again from the October 12, 2023, Board meeting with revisions made. During the November 16, 2023 Meeting a motion was passed to approve Board Policy 3 Role of the Board Member as presented. The updated Policy can be viewed on our website: [GSSD](#) | [Board](#) | [Board Policy Handbook](#) | [Policy 3 Role of the Board Member](#).

After thorough review and analysis, it was the decision of the Board to repeal Board Policy 4 Board Member Code of Ethics and Policy 4 Appendix Trustee Code of Conduct Sanctions and replace both policies with the Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA) Code of Conduct Policy Advisory. The new policies include:

- [Policy 4 Board Member Code of Conduct](#)
- [Policy 4 Appendix A Code of Ethics](#)
- [Policy 4 Appendix B Code of Conduct Sanctions](#)
- [Policy 4 Appendix C Conflict of Interest Protocol](#)
- [Policy 4 Appendix D Annual Declaration of Potentially Conflicting Interests](#)
- [Policy 4 Appendix E Online Presence and Social Media Guidelines](#)

The updated Policies can be viewed on our website: [GSSD](#) | [Board](#) | [Board Policy Handbook](#)

Director's Report

Professional Development Opportunities

Quintin Robertson, Director of Education and CEO of GSSD reviewed the professional development activities that have taken place through the school year so far, and what opportunities are upcoming for GSSD staff. So far over 20 professional development opportunities have occurred since the start of the school year, including three Division wide days. On Friday, November 10, 2023, the latest professional development (PD) day provided schools with a chance for collective teamwork. Given the bustling beginning of the year, it was a rare occasion for school staff to come together. Additionally, on the same date, the Good Spirit Education Complex hosted the Division's first Professional Development session on the Aboriginal Coaching Model, specifically tailored for GSSD Coaches.

A breakdown of all PD Sessions that have occurred during November and December of 2023 will be available in GSSD's upcoming November/December In Focus Media Release! This media release will be available around December 22, 2023 and will be posted to GSSD's socials and website.

Facilities Updates and School Tour

Facilities Manager Pat Morrison provided a facilities update to the Board which included a Facilities Summer Projects Report, highlighting all the hard work of the team that occurred over the summer while students and staff were enjoying the sunshine and a well-deserved break. [Check out the report here!](#) Pat also led the Board members through a virtual school tour of Davison School, highlighting their classrooms and learning environments along with mentioning recently completed projects and planned projects



for the future. The [Davison School Tour](#) can be found on our website. Make sure to check out GSSD's facilities page to see all the amazing projects our team has completed and is working on.

[GSSD](#) | [Facilities](#) | [Facilities Summer Project Report 2023](#)

Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA) Presents their 2023 Award of Distinction to GSSD Board Member Lois Smandych

Please join us in congratulating GSSD Board Member Lois Smandych on being the recipient of the 2023 SSBA Award of Distinction. The Award of Distinction was first presented in 2003. It is now presented annually to a school board member who has demonstrated outstanding service and made a significant contribution to enhance education. The award recognizes current or former board of education members who have provided outstanding service to education on local and/or provincial levels.

Make sure to check out [Lois' Featured Board Member](#) write up and stay tuned for an article in the upcoming November/December In Focus!

Conclusion

Indigenous Advisory Committee Report

Board Chair Johnson and GSSD Director of Education Quintin Robertson reported on the recent Indigenous Advisory Committee Meeting that took place on October 25, 2023.

Board Chair Johnson, Director of Education Quintin Robertson and Superintendent of Indigenous Education Angella Pinay from the Good Spirit School Division (GSSD) came together with representatives from Cote, Keeseekoose, The Key, and Yorkton Tribal Council to discuss crucial aspects of Indigenous education. The meeting consisted of various discussion points, fostering collaboration and a commitment to enhancing educational opportunities for Indigenous students.

The proceedings opened with a prayer led by Dustin Brass, setting a tone of respect and inclusivity. Following the prayer, the committee reviewed the terms of reference, ensuring a shared understanding of its overarching purpose and specific objectives.

The meeting featured a presentation on the "Inspiring Success: First Nations and Métis PreK-12 Education Policy Framework." This framework was meticulously explored, drawing attention to its integral connections with the provincial Education Plan and GSSD's overarching strategic plan.

The composition of the Indigenous Education Team was outlined during the meeting, spotlighting key roles such as the Indigenous Cultural Advocate, Indigenous Student Success Leads, Indigenous Community Workers, the Invitation Shared Services Initiative's Cultural Coordinator, and the Superintendent of Indigenous Education. Notably, the committee sought input on the role of Kici Anishinaabek ikwe (women/matriarch) in future engagements, emphasizing the importance of diverse perspectives.

Participants were guided through a presentation shedding light on GSSD's collected data related to Indigenous enrolment, attendance, achievement, and overall well-being. This data-driven approach underscored the commitment to informed strategies and proactive community involvement in shaping the educational landscape for Indigenous students.

The meeting concluded with a strong affirmation of the shared vision of GSSD's motto: "Students Come First." This motto echoes the collective dedication to constructing robust foundations that pave the way for the promising futures of Indigenous students. As the collaborative efforts continue to unfold, the commitment to advancing Indigenous education remains at the forefront, fueled by a resolute belief in the potential of every student and the transformative power of informed, community-driven initiatives.

School Community Councils and Celebrations

The November 16, 2023 Regular Board Meeting concluded with Board Members sharing information about their school community councils. With many annual general meetings (AGM) taking place at the beginning of November, Board members brought back feedback, support, and celebrations to the meeting.

Board member Morrison has Yorkton Regional High School's AGM quickly approaching and is excited and eager to engage with their community. Board member Pohl highlighted that it was great to see SCC representatives of both returning and new families at meetings. Board member Smandych and Anderson both commented on the strong SCCs that encompass their schools. Board member Simpson mentioned that his schools have very active and engaged communities. He also spotlighted Melville Comprehensive School's (MCS) Students Against Drinking and Driving (SADD) group, as they are creating change and taking action in their work (check out the May/June 2023 Edition of our In Focus)! Board member Balyski provided updates on his SCCs and school meetings and Board member Gendur commended Dr. Brass School's coffeehouse that welcomes visitors and provides a space to converse and be welcomed into the school with open arms. Lastly, Board member Johnson highlighted the quad system at Kamsack Comprehensive School and the great work that is going on within schools.

Upcoming Important Dates

November 24, 2023	Open Office Time with Quintin Robertson – 9:00am-12:00pm
December 4, 2023	Board Chairs Council Meeting – via Zoom, 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.
December 14, 2023	Regular Board Meeting
December 16, 2023	Round Dance for Truth & Reconciliation – 5:00pm – YRHS Gymnasium
December 25, 2023	Christmas Day
January 1, 2024	Happy New Year!
January 4, 2024	National Ribbon Skirt Day
January 25, 2024	Regular Board Meeting
February 19, 2024	Family Day
February 15, 2024	Public Section Executive Meeting – 1:00p.m. – 2:30 p.m. – via zoom
February 29, 2024	Regular Board Meeting
March 28, 2024	Regular Board Meeting
March 29, 2024	Good Friday
April 1, 2024	Easter Monday
April 11, 2024	Public Section Executive Meeting – Time TBD (SSBA Spring Assembly April 11/12, Saskatoon)

April 25, 2024	Regular Board Meeting
May 20, 2024	Victoria Day
May 23, 2024	Special Board Meeting
June 6 & 7, 2024	Public Section General Meeting and Professional Development Event June 6 – 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. June 7 – 8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Saskatoon – Location TBD
June 13, 2024	Regular Board Meeting
June 21, 2024	National Indigenous Peoples Day
August 15, 2024	Regular Board Meeting



Information

Board Meeting Attendance

Board meetings are held throughout the school year (excluding July). At times, and only as needed, special meetings of the board may be called. Regular meetings are open to public attendance except for the in-committee (closed) portion of discussions. To address the Board an [Application for Delegation to Board Meeting](#) must be filled out and returned at least seven days prior to the meeting. If you have any questions, please contact our Administration Office via phone (306) 786-5500 or through email at info@gssd.ca.

Upcoming Board Meetings: December 14, January 25, February 29, March 28, April 25, May 23 (Special Meeting), June 13, August 15

Location & Time: Good Spirit Education Complex at 10am. 5B Schrader Drive, Yorkton, SK S3N 3Z4

To review Board Policy 7 Board Operations, [GSSD](#) | [Board](#) | [Board Policy Handbook](#)

Submissions and Feedback

To submit photos or stories regarding the Board of Education or an individual Trustee in your school community, please contact lauren.denysek@gssd.ca.

Contact Us:

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For more information related to the Board of Education, visit our website at: GSSD.CA | Board