

# FROM THE BOARD

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE  
MARCH 28, 2024, BOARD MEETING



GSSD.CA

## March 28, 2024, Regular Meeting

The Regular Board meeting on March 28, 2024, was held at the Good Spirit Education Complex. The following trustees were present: Chairperson Jaime Johnson, Vice Chair Nicole Pohl, Jade Anderson, Christopher Balyski, Gord Gendur, Shannon Leson, Jan Morrison, Bob Simpson, Lois Smandych, and Steve Variyan. 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, and Superintendent of Indigenous Education Angella Pinay.

## Meeting Opening

Board Chair Johnson commenced the meeting at 10 am and reviewed GSSD's meeting norms. Johnson 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 February 29, 2024, 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](#) | [February 29, 2024](#)

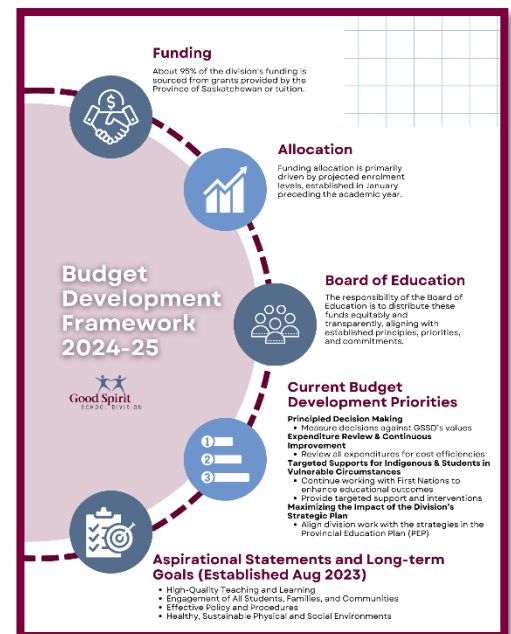
## Delegation

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 March 28, 2024.

## Accountability Report

### Allocating Resources to Improve Experiences for Students, Staff, and the Community/Utilization of Reserves and Budget Development Report

Keith Gervais, Chief Financial Officer, presented the accountability report on Allocating Resources to Improve Experiences for Students, Staff, and the Community/Utilization of Reserves and Budget Development Report.



During Gervais' presentation, he highlighted the intricate details of GSSD's financial management practices. The importance of transparency and stability, highlighting key components such as audited financial statements, long-term planning, and budget forecasting was emphasized. Gervais mentioned that budget forecasting is done throughout the year and is a very collaborative process with many stakeholders involved.

GSSD's objectives include achieving a balanced budget with clear reporting and making sure the Division has a clean audit report following accounting principles with no material errors. Gervais also discussed the meticulous process of budget development, involving stakeholder input, reserve utilization, and prioritization of key initiatives. Strategies employed included following the Board Development Framework and gathering feedback from stakeholders. Through these measures, GSSD ensures that resources are allocated efficiently to meet the diverse needs of the school community while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Gervais highlighted that the Division strives to spend today's money on today's kids. It's important the Division is using the funds to benefit students every single day. Although the Division is largely funded by the Government, the Division also needs to utilize savings and reserves to keep operations sustainable. Transportation costs have increased significantly over the years, which affects GSSD as a mainly rural school division.

To view the accountability report in its entirety visit: [GSSD | Board | Board Meetings | Board Accountability Report - Allocating Resources to Improve Experiences for Students, Staff, and the Community/Utilization of Reserves and Budget Development Report.](#)

## Board Development

### Athletics and Arts in the Good Spirit School Division

Amanda Kornaga and Kristen Myers, Superintendents of Schools presented five fast facts on athletics followed by five fast facts on the arts within GSSD, respectively.

Kornaga, speaking about athletics, mentioned several important facts including the attendance of coaches at module one of the Aboriginal Coaching Module (ACM), that a coach's toolkit is in draft form to support evidence-based practices and administrative procedures, and that Dan Alspach has been a strong ECDAA Athletic Director, representing GSSD well. Board Members and GSSD staff echoed this statement about Dan. The main highlight of Kornaga's presentation was the success of many GSSD teams:

- Esterhazy, Kamsack and Yorkton Regional High School football teams all advanced to playoffs
- the YRHS girls won bronze at provincials in soccer
- the EHS boys captured gold in volleyball and the sportsmanship banner at provincials

**BOARD DEVELOPMENT**  
 TOPIC: ARTS & ATHLETICS IN GSSD  
 MARCH 28, 2024, REGULAR BOARD MEETING

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY**  
 ENGAGEMENT OF ALL STUDENTS, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES  
 HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTS  
 HIGH QUALITY TEACHING AND LEARNING

**Information for the Board - 10 Fast Facts**

- Coaches from across our division attended module one of the Aboriginal Coaching Module (ACM). It was a good launching point as SHSAA moved towards increasing diversity awareness. More than 30 plus coaches from East Central received certification.
- A coach's toolkit has been developed and is in draft form. Resources were shared by ECDAA coaches and our athletics director. The toolkit has been designed to support new coaches, evidence-based practices, and administrative procedures.
- There are many teams to celebrate this season already. EHS, KCL and YRHS football teams all advanced to playoffs; the YRHS girls won bronze in soccer, the EHS boys captured gold and the sportsmanship banner at provincials, the YRHS hosted a 5A girls' volleyball and curling provincials, and most recently, NOR girls' and boys' basketball teams won bronze at Hoopla and PRE won gold!
- Dan Alspach is in his third year as the ECDAA Athletic Director. The position has improved the communication and collaboration between GSSD, CTCIS, and ECDAA. His position on the SHSAA board of directors has improved collaboration with the provincial association.
- Upcoming events: The ECDAA Spring AGM is on April 30, ECDAA will host a track and field coach's clinic in May, and finally Esterhazy will host 3A volleyball provincials in November.
- GSSD students participate in many curricular opportunities in the arts. In K to Grade 9, Arts Education is one of the 7 required areas of study. All students receive instruction in dance, drama, music, and visual art. Students in Grade 5 and up can also enroll in the band program. At DRB, a performing arts academy and a visual art academy is offered for students in Grades 5 to 8. In high school, several arts electives are offered across GSSD including Dance, Drama, Visual Art, Band, Choral, and Instrumental Jazz. High school students require 2 credits in either Practical & Applied Arts or Arts Education to graduate.
- GSSD students also participate in extra-curricular arts programs. School offer opportunities such as art club, drama club, improv, musical, choir, jazz band, guitar club, indigenous cultural arts, and others.
- Student artwork is displayed in rotation at CSIC. Every 2 months, teachers have the opportunity to submit student artwork for display. A variety of grade levels and schools are featured throughout the year.
- Schools engage in many arts partnerships and events, including OSAC School Tours, "Artists in Schools" grants, LIVE Arts, local performing arts festivals, Saskatchewan Drama Association Regional and Provincial Festivals, Optimist Band Festival, Brandon University Jazz Festival, uSing uAsk Choral (uofS), Saskatchewan Music Educators Association Honour bands, and others. Recent accolades include the YRHS choir being selected to perform at the Yorkton Musica Festival HI-Lites Concert, EHS band being selected to perform at Musiciens Canada, and EHS drama production winning the 2023 award for best overall performance at the provincial drama festival.
- Many students continue to incorporate the arts into their lives after high school, through post-secondary and beyond. Students in various university and college programs can continue to participate in the arts. Opportunities to participate in community theater, dance, band, choir, or art are plentiful in the Parkland region and beyond. A recent report published by the Saskatchewan Arts Alliance (2019) states that there is "an expressed connection between those who take arts education in school and the skills they bring to the workplace, including creativity, teamwork, and perseverance," and that "arts education benefits students' overall well-being including improved resilience, confidence, cognition, communication, and self-understanding."

LEARNING WITHOUT LIMITS...ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL

- the YRHS hosted 5A girls' volleyball and curling provincials
- the Norquay girls and boys basketball teams won bronze at Hoopla and Preeceville girls won gold

Kristen Myers then highlighted some enriching facts about arts within the Division:

- Students in the Good Spirit School Division (GSSD) are immersed in a rich array of arts education and extracurricular activities throughout their academic journey. From Kindergarten to Grade 9, Arts Education is a core component of the curriculum, covering dance, drama, music, and visual art, with additional opportunities for band enrollment in Grade 5 and up.
- Dr. Brass School offers specialized academies for performing arts and visual arts in Grades 5-8.
- In high school, a diverse range of arts electives such as Dance, Drama, Visual Art, Band, Choral, and Instrumental Jazz are available, with graduation requirements including two credits in Practical & Applied Arts or Arts Education.
- Extracurricular arts programs including art clubs, drama clubs, musicals, choirs, jazz bands, and Indigenous cultural arts further enrich students' experiences.
- Student artwork is showcased at the Good Spirit Education Complex, while schools actively engage in arts partnerships and events like OSAC School Tours, performing arts festivals, and provincial drama competitions.
- Beyond high school, many students continue to pursue the arts through post-secondary education and community involvement, leveraging the skills and benefits gained from their arts education for personal and professional growth.

Kristen finished her presentation by highlighting that both athletics and arts prepare students for life beyond school. "Arts education benefits students' overall well-being, including improved resilience, confidence, cognition, communication and self-understand." -*Saskatchewan Arts Alliance (2019)*

To access the full document of the 10 fast facts on Athletics and Arts in GSSD, visit [GSSD](#) | [Board](#) | [Board Meetings](#) | [Board Development – Athletics and Arts in GSSD](#).

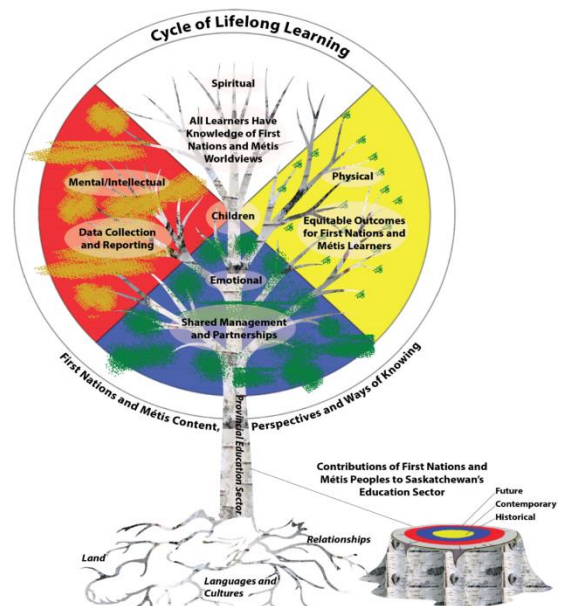
## Advocacy Session

### Memorandum of Understanding with Local First Nations Chief & Council (The Key, Cote, & Keeseekoose)

The advocacy session commenced with warm welcomes extended to esteemed guests, including Kevin Musqua from Keeseekoose First Nation, Loretta Friday from Cote First Nation, and Felice McKay from the Saskatchewan School Boards Association. Additionally, key GSSD staff members, Angella Pinay, Superintendent of Indigenous Education, and Robert Severight, Indigenous Cultural Advocate, were present.

After introductions, Angella Pinay initiated the proceedings with a prayer, setting a tone of gratitude and starting the meeting in a good way. Board Member Johnson then acknowledged the significance of Treaty 4 land, grounding the meeting in acknowledgment and respect for the land on which it took place.

Central to the meeting was the discussion on fostering partnerships at the governance level. Johnson emphasized the importance of collective advocacy efforts, highlighting that by aligning voices, tangible change can be achieved, particularly in supporting First Nation students within



the public school system. The focus was on nurturing intentional reciprocal relationships between governance bodies, aimed at creating sustained impact beyond operational collaborations.

Felice McKay elaborated on governance-to-governance partnerships and outlined the mutual benefits of such relationships. She introduced the idea of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) as a tool to formalize and strengthen these partnerships, emphasizing the need for continuity and structure in fostering enduring relationships.

Kevin Musqua expressed gratitude for initiating the relationship-building process, accenting the significance of supporting students from Keeseekoose attending Kamsack Comprehensive School. Similarly, Loretta Friday conveyed appreciation for the invitation to represent Cote First Nation, emphasizing the importance of acknowledgment and respect for the land and advocating for increased involvement with children in educational initiatives.

Throughout the meeting, board members shared uplifting stories and memories, highlighting the importance of positive experiences in building connections and relationships. Quintin expressed gratitude for the collaborative efforts and friendships forged, emphasizing the collective journey towards a better future.

The session concluded with a prayer led by Robert Severight, echoing the sentiment of unity and collaboration. As Sitting Bull once said, "Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children," encapsulating the shared commitment to creating brighter futures for all students.

## New Business

### Approval of the 2024-25 School Year Calendar

In January 2024, a committee developed two calendar options for the 2024-25 school year. A survey conducted from January 15 to 26, 2024, showed a 65% preference for Option 1. The Board reviewed both options, emphasizing factors like instructional time and holidays. The Option 1 calendar presented to the Board meets Ministry of Education requirements and was approved by the Board. By May 1, it will be submitted for final approval from the Ministry. Following this, specific dates will be identified and shared with the public. This collaborative effort ensures an inclusive and compliant calendar for the upcoming school year.



### Out of Scope Salary Review

Keith Gervais, Chief Financial Officer, provided an update on the Out-of-Scope Salary Review at the recent board meeting. The review process, outlined in AP 450, occurs every four years to ensure transparency and fairness for out-of-scope employees. Key points of discussion included the use of comparable school divisions for salary comparisons, with adjustments considered if salaries fall outside 5% of the median. Gervais has collected salary information from eight comparable divisions, acknowledging the complexity due to organizational differences. Recommendations based on this data will be presented to the Board in April, with historical decisions typically implemented in September. The Board's responsibility, as per Board Policy 2 Role of the Board Section 8.13, is to establish compensation guidelines for out-of-scope staff, recognizing the importance of valuing and retaining a skilled workforce.

### Policy Review

The Board reviewed Board Policy 12 Director/CEO Roles and Responsibilities and its appendices, Policy 13 Appeals and Hearings Regarding Student Matters, Policy 14 Hearings on Teacher Matters and Policy 15 Recruitment and Selection of Personnel. Minor adjustments have been implemented, and all revised policies are now accessible for viewing on [GSSD.ca](https://www.gssd.ca):

- [Policy 12 Director/CEO Roles and Responsibilities](#)
  - [Policy 12 Appendix A Director Evaluation Process, Criteria and Timelines](#)
  - [Policy 12 Appendix B Director/CEO Role Expectations](#)
  - [Policy 12 Appendix C Leadership Practices Interview Guide](#)
- [Policy 13 Appeals and Hearings Regarding Student Matters](#)
- [Policy 14 Hearings on Teacher Matters](#)
- [Policy 15 Recruitment and Selection of Personnel](#)

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

## Director’s Report

### Facilities Update

Keith Gervais, Chief Financial Officer, shared the latest Facilities Update with the Board.

The presentation covered a range of current projects, detailing those in the design and planning stages as well as those scheduled to commence in the upcoming summer months. Key highlights included the nearing completion of the Saltcoats and Yorkdale roof replacement projects, with the Canora Kitchen project progressing steadily at approximately 65% completion. Additionally, an update on the Yorkton Regional High School (YRHS) Substantial Completion status, achieved on February 29, 2024, was shared.

Service requests received from January to March were also listed, highlighting the ongoing maintenance and operational activities across all GSSD schools. Furthermore, it was noted that GSSD Staff are actively engaged in various projects and initiatives to enhance school facilities.

In addition to the facilities update, Director of Education Quintin provided insights into the future utilization of the Yorkton Bus Garage, offering a glimpse into potential upcoming projects and developments within the division.



## Financial Update

Keith Gervais, Chief Financial Officer, shared the latest Financial Update with the Board.

A main highlight was that given the time of year, financials are on-track and within budget. Gervais noted a potential slight overage in facilities expenditure, primarily due to ongoing roofing projects throughout the year. On a positive note, savings were observed in bus repairs, attributed to milder weather conditions.

## Professional Development Opportunities

Quintin Robertson, the Director of Education/CEO, provided an overview of the professional development (PD) initiatives undertaken during the current school year and highlighted upcoming opportunities for GSSD staff. To date, more than 35 professional development sessions have been conducted since the commencement of the school year. He also mentioned that the planning process for next year's PD opportunities has already commenced.

A breakdown of all PD Sessions that will have occurred during March and April of 2024 will be available in GSSD's March/April In Focus Media Release. Keep an eye out for its release around the end of April.



## Administrative Procedures

The Board was informed of the Administrative Procedures that have undergone revision and review since the Regular Board Meeting on February 29, 2024. These procedures are now available on the [GSSD website](#):

- [318 App A Letter for Parents/Guardians in a Classroom with a Confirmed Case of Head Lice](#)
- [318 App B Letter for a Suspected Case Of Head Lice](#)

## Conclusion

### School Community Councils and Celebrations



Board Member Johnson highlighted that on March 20th, basketball players from Norquay, Sturgis and Preeceville schools attended the Budget Address at the Legislative Buildings in Regina. The students had an opportunity to speak with Education Minister, Jeremy Cockrill, STF President, Samantha Becotte as well as several media outlets about the potential cancellation of Hoopla. The students voiced their opinions and concerns demonstrating courage and leadership. It was an invaluable learning opportunity that they won't soon forget!

Board Member Pohl expressed pride in her vibrant community and announced that despite the cancellation of the student-teacher hockey game, \$5,000 was successfully raised for a family in her subdivision. Additionally, Pohl commended Springside School for its innovative approach to learning and education, particularly during the challenging incident of a water main break.

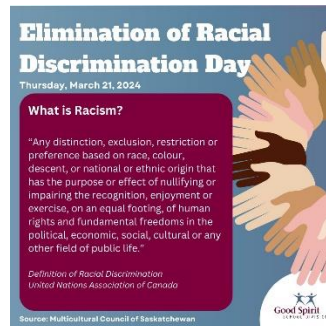
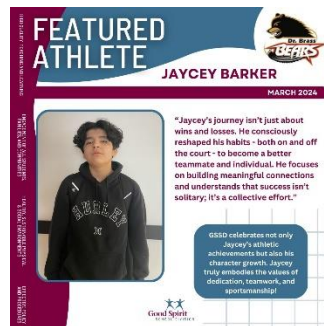
Board Member Leson shared plans for dinners and community meals organized by his schools and also highlighted Canora Junior Elementary School's continued leadership throughout the year.

Board Member Smandych provided an update on GSSD students who have received support for medical treatments and assistance through community events.

## Upcoming Important Dates

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| April 11, 2024     | Board Chairs Council Meeting   |
| April 11, 2024     | Public Section Executive Meeting   |
| April 11-12, 2024  | Spring Assembly – Saskatoon, Sheraton Cavalier Hotel Downtown  |
| April 25, 2024     | Regular Board Meeting  |
| May 20, 2024       | Victoria Day   |
| May 23, 2024       | Special Board Meeting  |
| May 27, 2024       | Board Chairs Council Meeting – via Zoom, 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.  |
| June 5, 2024       | GSTA and GSSD Retirement Banquet   |
| June 6 & 7, 2024   | Public Section General Meeting and Professional Development Event  |
| June 13, 2024      | Regular Board Meeting  |
| June 21, 2024      | Indigenous People’s Day  |
| August 15, 2024    | Regular Board Meeting  |
| September 26, 2024 | Board Chairs Council – In-person, Regina, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.  |
| September 30, 2024 | Deadline for Submissions for the 2024 Premier’s Board of Education Award for Innovation and Excellence & the 2024 Award of Distinction – 4:30 p.m. |
| October 16, 2024   | Deadline for Bylaw Amendments (for the AGM) – 4:30 p.m.  |
| October 21, 2024   | Board Chairs Council Meeting – via Zoom, 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.  |
| October 31, 2024   | Deadline for Resolutions (for the AGM) - 4:30 p.m.   |
| December 1, 2024   | Board Chairs Council Meeting – In-person before Fall Assembly, Regina, timing TBC - Directors are invited to this meeting                          |
| December 1-3, 2024 | Fall General Assembly and AGM – Regina, Delta Hotel  |

## Follow us on Facebook and Instagram to Stay Up to Date on the Latest Celebrations and News from the Division



**Upcoming Board Meetings:** 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](mailto:lauren.denysek@gssd.ca).

### Contact Us:

Good Spirit School Division #204

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**Students Come First.**