

# FROM THE BOARD

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE  
NOVEMBER 21, 2024, BOARD MEETING



GSSD.CA

## November 21, 2024, Regular Meeting

The Regular Board meeting on November 21, 2024, was held at the Good Spirit Education Complex. The following trustees were present: Chairperson Jaime Johnson, Vice Chairperson Nicole Pohl, Christopher Balyski, Shannon Leson, Jan Morrison, Steve Variyan, Cara Makort, Kelly Palmer, Jay-Cee Brass, Kendra Stav and Jamie Smart-Sondergaard. Also in attendance were division office staff, including Director of Education/CEO Quintin Robertson, Chief Financial Officer Keith Gervais, Communications Coordinator Lauren Denysek, and Superintendent of Schools Amanda Kornaga.

## Meeting Opening

Board Chair Johnson commenced the meeting at 10 a.m. and Trustee Variyan reviewed GSSD's meeting norms and 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 10, 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](#) | [October 10, 2024](#)

## Delegation

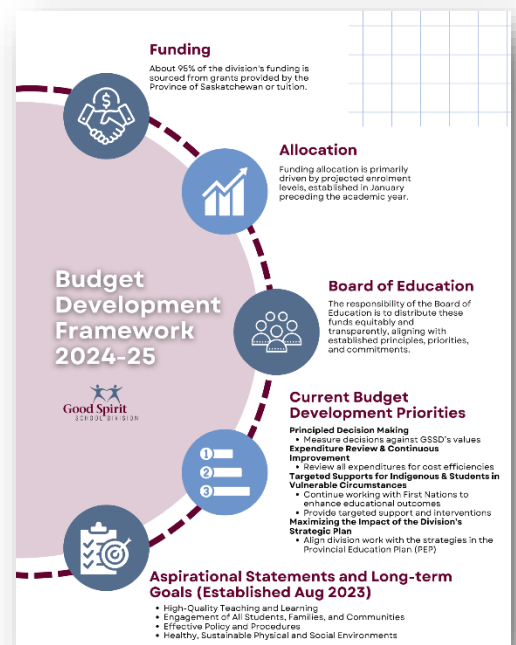
As outlined in Board Policy 7, the Board will make provision for a delegation to make a presentation at a Board meeting in the interest of improving the education provided in Division schools. There was one delegation.

## Accountability Report

### Reporting on Resource Allocation

Keith Gervais, Chief Financial Officer, provided the Accountability Report on Resource Allocation.

The Good Spirit School Division (GSSD) emphasizes "spending today's funds on today's kids" while maintaining transparency and efficiency in resource allocation. The report outlines key practices for managing resources effectively:



- **Budget Development:** A Status Quo budget is created in February to maintain existing operations and is adjusted after the provincial budget is released in March. Student enrollment drives funding decisions, and flexibility is essential to adapt to changes during the year.
- **Data-Driven and Equity-Based Decisions:** Resource allocation focuses on strategic priorities, such as student achievement, mental health, and inclusivity, while addressing the diverse needs of rural and urban communities.
- **Efficiency and Sustainability:** GSSD follows strict purchasing policies, seeks cost-saving partnerships, and ensures assets like buses are utilized to their full potential before disposal.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Regular financial updates, stakeholder communication, and adherence to Ministry timelines ensure public trust and informed decision-making.

The report confirms GSSD’s commitment to equitable, efficient, and strategic resource use aligned with its mission to support students’ success.

For a more comprehensive overview, please refer to the full report linked below. To view the accountability report in its entirety visit: [GSSD | Board | Board Meetings | Board Accountability Report – Resource Allocation.](#)

## Board Development

### Role of the Trustee

Quintin Robertson, Director of Education, presented the Board Development on the Role of the Trustee.

**BOARD DEVELOPMENT**  
TOPIC: THE ROLE OF THE TRUSTEE  
NOVEMBER 21, 2024, REGULAR BOARD MEETING

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY**  
**EFFECTIVE POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

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

- 1 Accountability to the Provincial Government:** Trustees must ensure that the school division meets provincial standards and policies as mandated by law, funding rules and responsibilities outlined in the Education Act and Board policies.
- 2 Community Representation and Accountability:** Trustees represent community values within board decisions, ensuring transparency and public engagement through structured processes, including opportunities for community input and appeals as required by statute.
- 3 Strategic Planning and Division Direction:** Trustees play a critical role in setting and approving the division's four-year strategic plan, strategic priorities, outcomes, and annual goals. They are also responsible for evaluating the division's success in achieving these outcomes.
- 4 Policy Development and Oversight:** Trustees are responsible for developing, approving, and periodically reviewing board policies to ensure they align with divisional goals and create the intended impact. The board also delegates specific authorities to the Director.
- 5 Director and Board Relations:** Trustees select and provide direction to the Director of Education, who serves the division's daily operations. This relationship involves annual evaluations of the Director's performance based on defined goals and strategic priorities.
- 6 Fiscal Responsibility:** Trustees must approve the division's annual budget, ensure resource allocation aligns with divisional priorities, and manage large expenditures and borrowing responsibly. They are accountable for the financial health and transparency of the division.
- 7 Advocacy Role:** Trustees advocate for the division at the provincial level, building relationships with stakeholders, promoting public understanding of the board's role, and addressing broader educational issues that impact students and staff.
- 8 Board Development and Trustee Orientation:** New trustees are encouraged to attend orientation sessions to understand their roles, the division's structures, current policies, and procedures. Continuous development sessions help all trustees stay informed on governance practices and educational trends.
- 9 Board Member Duties and Ethical Standards:** Trustees must adhere to a code of ethics, maintain confidentiality, and demonstrate loyalty to the division. They are expected to uphold board decisions publicly, even if they personally disagreed during deliberations, under the principle of board solidarity.
- 10 Legal Compliance and Decision-Making Authority:** Individual trustees do not have the authority to act independently on behalf of the board. Decisions must be made collectively during official meetings, with trustees acting collectively in the best interests of the division.

LEARNING WITHOUT LIMITS...ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL

Trustees play a critical role in guiding the school division, balancing provincial requirements with community values. They provide strategic direction, oversee financial decisions, and advocate for students and staff, all while ensuring transparency and accountability.

Through collaboration, ethical governance, and ongoing learning, Trustees help shape policies and priorities that support student success. Their work bridges government mandates and local needs, ensuring resources are used effectively to create bright futures.

The Board makes corporate decisions collectively during official meetings, but individual Trustees do not have the authority to act independently on behalf of the Board.

Through a strong, trusting partnership with the Director of Education, the Board acts as a unified body to serve the best interests of the Division, ensuring transparency, fostering trust, and upholding the Division’s Mission, Motto, Vision, and Values.

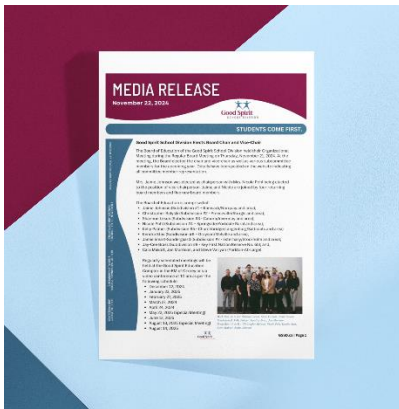
To access the full document of the 10 fast facts visit [GSSD | Board | Board Meetings | Board Development – Role of the Trustee](#)

Click here to enlarge the image!

## Organizational Meeting

The GSSD Board of Education held their Organizational Meeting during the Regular Board Meeting on Thursday, November 21, 2024. At the meeting, the Board elected the chair and vice-chair as well as various subcommittee members for the upcoming year. Details have been posted on the GSSD website indicating committee member representation.

Mrs. Jaime Johnson was re-elected as chairperson with Mrs. Nicole Pohl being re-elected to the position of vice-chairperson. Jaime and Nicole are joined by four returning board members and five new board members.



The Board of Education is comprised of:

- Jaime Johnson (Subdivision #1 – Kamsack/Norquay and area);
- Christopher Balyski (Subdivision #2 - Preeceville/Sturgis and area);
- Shannon Leson (Subdivision #3 - Canora/Invermay and area);
- Nicole Pohl (Subdivision #4 – Springside/Yorkdale Rural and area);
- Kelly Palmer (Subdivision #5 - Churchbridge/Langenburg/Saltcoats and area)
- Kendra Stav (Subdivision #6 – Grayson/Melville and area);
- Jamie Smart-Sondergaard (Subdivision #7 - Esterhazy/Stockholm and area);
- Jay-Cee Brass (Subdivision #8 - Key First Nation Reserve No. 65); and,
- Cara Makort, Jan Morrison, and Steve Variyan (Yorkton-At-Large).

Click here to read the full media release and view school and committee representation: [GSSD | Division | Media Room | 2024 11 22 Election of Board Chair and Vice Chair - November Organizational Meeting](#)

## New Business

### Approve the Draft 2023-2024 Annual Report & Financials

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 21, 2024, Regular Board Meeting the GSSD Board of Education reviewed and approved the draft 2023-24 Annual Report that was sent into the Ministry for Review on October 15, 2024. Once financial portions of the document are added and the report is tabled by the Ministry (no later than December 29, 2024) 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 2023-24 Audited Financial Statements and Management Letter which will assist in the completion of the financial components for the 2023-24 Annual Report.

## Saskatchewan School Boards Association's (SSBA) Fall Assembly

From December 1-3, 2024, several GSSD Trustees will attend the Saskatchewan School Boards Association's Fall General Assembly in Regina. For many, this will be their first time participating in the event.



In preparation, the Board appointed voting delegations and reviewed SSBA position statements and resolutions. This ensures Trustees attend with a solid foundation while gaining valuable insights and connecting with board members from across Saskatchewan.

### Policy Review

The Board reviewed and passed motions for Board Policy 2 Appendix A Annual Work Plan, Board Policy 3 Role of the Board Member, and Board Policy 3 Appendix B Board Member Visits to Schools. Board Policy 3 Appendix A Services, Materials and Equipment Provided to Trustees will undergo further revisions and be brought back to the December 12, 2024 Regular Board Meeting. The updated Policies can be viewed on our website:

- [Board Policy 2 Appendix A Annual Work Plan](#)
- [Board Policy 3 Role of the Board Member](#)
- [Board Policy 3 Appendix B Board Member Visits to Schools](#)

[GSSD](#) | [Board](#) | [Board Policy Handbook](#)

## Director's Report

### Facilities Update & School Tours

Pat Morrison, Facilities Manager, joined the Board Meeting to provide the Board with a Facilities Update. During the meeting, Trustees had the opportunity to introduce themselves, helping Pat get to know the new members and fostering a sense of connection within the group.

During his update, Pat shared insights about his team and highlighted ongoing collaborations with Administration to ensure schools are welcoming and inclusive environments for all cultures. He emphasized the importance of listening to the voices of the community to guide these initiatives.

He also highlighted the school tours page on the GSSD website, which offers an interactive way to explore over 15 schools and gain a deeper understanding of the division's facilities and environment.

In addition, Pat provided an update on the division's projects, from those currently underway to those scheduled or recently completed. He shared progress on service requests and brought attention to the [summer project report](#), celebrating the significant work accomplished during the summer months to enhance the division's facilities.

Check out our school tours:

- [Canora Junior Elementary School](#)
- [Churchbridge Public School](#)



- [Columbia School](#)
- [Davison School](#)
- [Dr. Brass](#)
- [Esterhazy](#)
- [Grayson School](#)
- [Invermay](#)
- [Kamsack Comprehensive Institute](#)
- [M.C. Knoll](#)
- [Miller School](#)
- [Norquay School](#)
- [Sturgis Composite School](#)
- [Saltcoats School](#)
- [Springside School](#)
- [Victoria School](#)
- [Yorkdale Central School](#)



## Professional Development Opportunities



The 2024 school year is off to an incredible start, with over 30 professional development sessions already completed! Most recently, new GSSD Trustees and the Board Executive Committee participated in a Board Orientation on Monday, November 18, 2024.

The day was packed with valuable information, introductions to key processes, and opportunities to build connections. It also gave new Trustees a chance to familiarize themselves with the Good Spirit Education Complex and meet some of the colleagues they'll be working alongside over the next four years. The orientation set the stage for a well-prepared and productive November 21, 2024, Board meeting.

## Administrative Procedures

The Board was informed of the Administrative Procedures that have undergone revision and review since the Regular Board Meeting on October 10, 2024. These procedures are now available on the [GSSD website](#):

- [552 Transportation of Students in Private Vehicles \(Updated October 2024\)](#)
- [320 Student Records \(Updated October 2024\)](#)
- [261-1 Category A and B In-Province and Out-Of-Province Field Trip Request \(Updated October 2024\)](#)
- [552-2 Transportation of Students in Private Vehicles - Parent Consent Form \(Updated October 2024\)](#)

## Closing Items

### School Community Councils & Celebration

Trustee Morrison expressed her enthusiasm for Yorkton Regional High School's production of *The Wedding Singer*. She was proud to volunteer and warmly welcome excited audience members during the performances on November 22 and 23, 2024.

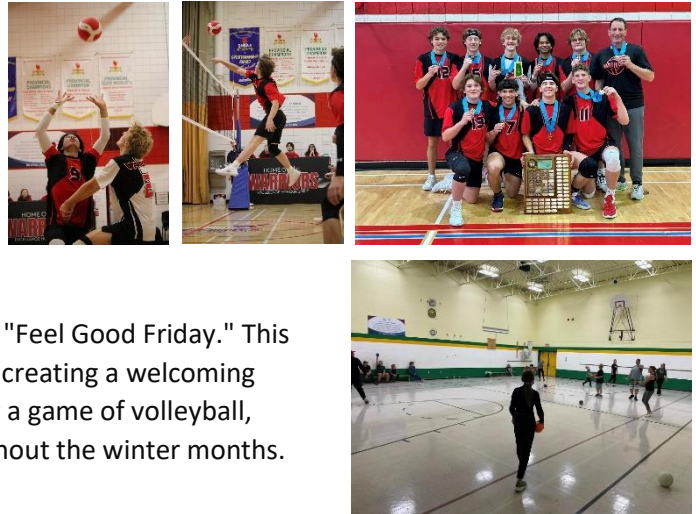
Trustee Pohl shared her enthusiasm for Springside School's highly engaged School Community Council. During their second meeting of the year, the school hosted a chili and



hot dog supper at 5:30 p.m., followed by the meeting at 6 p.m. The event attracted great participation, with many attendees staying for both the meal and the discussion. It was exciting to see such strong parent involvement and engagement.

Trustee Smart-Sondergaard shared his excitement for Esterhazy High School’s hosting of Provincial Volleyball on Friday, November 22, and throughout the weekend.

Trustee Stav highlighted Grayson School’s exciting new initiative, "Feel Good Friday." This program opens the gym to the community for planned activities, creating a welcoming space for connection and fun. Kendra and her family joined in for a game of volleyball, enjoying this great community event, which will continue throughout the winter months.



## Upcoming Important Dates

November 24-30, 2024	Education Week – <i>“Learning is a Journey” Apprendre est une aventure!</i>
December 1, 2024	Board Chairs Council Meeting – In-person before Fall Assembly, Regina,
December 1, 2024	Public Section Annual General Meeting, Delta Hotel, Regina
December 1-3, 2024	Fall General Assembly and AGM – Delta Hotel, Regina
December 12, 2024	Regular Board Meeting
December 25, 2024	Christmas Day
January 1, 2025	Happy New Year!
January 23, 2025	Regular Board Meeting
January 30 & 31, 2025	SSBA School for New Trustees - Saskatoon
February 13, 2025	Public Section Executive Meeting – via Zoom, 9:00-10:30 am
February 27, 2025	Regular Board Meeting
March 27, 2025	Regular Board Meeting
April 3, 2025	Public Section Executive Meeting, Time TBD, Sheraton Cavalier Hotel, Saskatoon
April 24, 2025	Regular Board Meeting
May 22, 2025	Special Board Meeting
June 5 & 6, 2025	Public Section General Meeting & Professional Development Event Location & Times TBD
June 12, 2025	Regular Board Meeting
August 13, 2025	Evaluation & Special Board Meeting
August 14, 2025	Regular Board Meeting

**Upcoming Board Meetings:** December 12/24, January 23/25, February 27/25, March 27/25, April 24/25, May 22/25 - Special Board Meeting, June 12/25, August 13/25 - Evaluation & Special Board Meeting, August 14/25

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

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

 [www.gssd.ca](http://www.gssd.ca)

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 @gssd\_204

 [Good Spirit School Division 204](#)

**Students Come First.**