



BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

January 20, 2021



BOARD UPDATE



Chair Klaassen welcomed everyone to the January 20, 2021 Board meeting. This meeting is again virtual in accordance with the current COVID restrictions.

"Happy New Year! I hope everyone was able to find some much needed rest and rejuvenation over the winter break, and are recharged and ready to jump back in and do all we can to fulfill our mission *To Inspire Success*.

I'd like to take the opportunity to welcome all students registered for in-person learning back to the classroom. Given the winter break and the set restrictions, we have indeed seen a reset in our case numbers. We have, and will likely continue to see some cases of COVID-19 in our schools, however at this time, these are minimal. Thank you to students, families, and staff for your commitment to supporting one another and keeping one another safe.

Kudos to our school staff who pivoted once again to provide remote learning for a few weeks to our Grades 7-12 students, and to all students, including ECS and Grades 1-6 for the first week in January. I heard many wonderful compliments about how this was rolled out and witnessed the learning first hand. I love that so many schools took full advantage of the fact that students were in their homes, and incorporated pets into the learning as well. Great engagement!

As well, I'd like to commend families for getting your learning declarations completed so timely, allowing sufficient time for all the staffing and scheduling adjustments needed to adapt all our schools and move forward with the new semester."

2021–2022 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDARS—BGSD & CCS

Superintendent/CEO Romanchuk presented the draft calendars, jurisdictional calendar comparisons, history of BGSD calendars and survey feedback. There are two drafts of the calendar with the differences outlining the November break, and the start-up date for September 2021. Trustees discussed the two calendars and showed more support for Draft #1 which outlines the full week break in November. Chair Klaassen stated that the calendar may not always be able to continue the full break for November in future years.

The Board approved Draft #1 as the [Black Gold School Division 2021-2022 School Year Calendar](#).

The Board approved Draft #1 as the [Covenant Christian School 2021-2022 School Year Calendar](#).



COVID-19 UPDATE



Associate Superintendent Monty provided a COVID-19 Update.

Currently, there are three schools with active cases, and this information can be found on the COVID-19 tracker on the BGSD website. So far, 1,800 students have had to self-isolate, along with 200 staff members. If an outbreak occurs at a school, Alberta Health Services is notified. Principals are continuing with cohorting and safety precautions.



POLICY 7—BOARD OPERATIONS

Associate Superintendent Volkman stated there has been the addition of the Wellness Spending Account to the trustees ASEBP benefits. The Board approved the update to Policy 7 – Board Operations to add the following wording (Wellness Spending Account) under Benefits

(11.4):

11.4.1.4 Health Spending Account/Wellness Spending Account

DRAFT PLAN FOR COUNCIL OF SCHOOL COMMUNITIES



Chair Klaassen stated that the Council of School Communities meeting will be on February 23, 2021. The event is by invitation-only to school council chairs, school administrators, community members, businesses and elected officials, and attendance must be confirmed with the Communications Advisor. There will be assigned virtual groups for the 'World Café', and a test run will be done with administrators. The topic for the meeting will be 'Defining our new Big Hairy Audacious Goal! What does BG need to do to help students be successful for the next 25 years?'

DISTANCE LEARNING UPDATE



Associate Superintendent Dargis presented an update on the Distance Learning Program for Semester 2. Enrolment increased by 180 students from Semester 1 with a total of just under 1,700 students. There was a decrease in enrolment in Divisions 1 & 2 (ECS and Grades 1-6), but an increase in Divisions 3 & 4 (Grades 7-12).

Denise Harrison, one of the Distance Learning Assistant Principals has now been hired as the Principal for the Distance Learning Program, and Annie Savard is the new Assistant Principal for the Program.

The Distance Learning Program was implemented in response to the pandemic and BGSD is not sure if it will continue for the next school year yet. Discussions are being held and decisions will be made at a later date.

Associate Superintendent Dargis expressed thanks to the Distance Learning team, Human Resources and Finance Departments, and Learning Services team along with the Data Coordinators for all of their contributions to the Program.

DIPLOMA EXAM UPDATE



Associate Superintendent Dargis advised that for the 2020-2021 school year, diploma exams are optional. Numbers were provided of students that are choosing to write diploma exams. The Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs) are continuing as per usual.

WARBURG JOINT-USE AGREEMENT

The Board approved the updated Joint Use Agreement with the Village of Warburg as presented by Associate Superintendent Volkman.

The agreement included updated insurance information for both parties and new pandemic language.



WEST END REVIEW UPDATE



Superintendent/CEO Romanchuk provided an update on the West End Review. BGSD has continued with the review as directed by the Board to maintain the equitable and sustainable quality of education for all students.

Superintendent/CEO Romanchuk shared some quantitative data of class sizes, enrolment summaries and cost analysis which included maintenance costs as well. The primary focus of the review last year was the elementary grades, and this year will focus on secondary grades. Once the review is complete, it will move to other areas within the Division. The working committee has been established, and timelines set. The committee hopes to have the final report of quantitative findings to the Board by the Board planning session in May 2021.

NEW HUMBLE CENTRE SCHOOL DISPOSITION

Superintendent/CEO Romanchuk presented information on various options regarding the New Humble Centre School property disposition. Information was shared on the evaluation of the property and the infrastructure of the building. Lease and sale options were presented to the Board. The recommendation from Administration is to lease the building to the New Humble Community School Association.

The Board directed Administration to proceed with a lease agreement with the New Humble Community School Association for the disposition of New Humble Centre School.

TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

IT Manager Barry Scheelar and Education Technology Consultant Ray McCubbing attended the meeting virtually to provide a Technology Update.

The following information was shared by IT Manager Scheelar:

- ◆ Security network audit occurred last week – passed with flying colors
- ◆ Purchased Cyber awareness training for finance staff
- ◆ Replaced server and switches – relevant for 5-7 years before next replacement
- ◆ Booster installed to upgrade Warburg Hutterite Colony School internet signal
- ◆ Enhanced login method for BYOED (Bring Your Own Educational Device), self-recovery for student passwords, authentication has steadily been improving.
- ◆ BYOED bandwidth is capped at 50%



The following information was shared by Education Technology Consultant McCubbing:

- ◆ BGSD implemented Technology Fee
- ◆ New software programs being used: New Google Enterprise feature, Read Write for Chrome, Lucid publishing and chartering, Student Aware, Screencastify, EquatIO, Enhanced login method for BYOED
- ◆ Reducing Chromebook numbers, hopefully have all students BYOED
- ◆ Information on the sale of Chromebooks to parents
- ◆ Support for BYOED & Technology – inviting students to bring their own devices, it's how teachers choose to implement the devices that can determine if a BYOED program succeeds or fails

Some of the Technology Upcoming Challenges are:

- ◆ New curriculum and associated resources
- ◆ Reduction in supplied devices requires increase in BYOED
- ◆ Elbow to elbow support digging deeper into technology use
- ◆ Equity of access among students
- ◆ Digital citizenship, responsible use



GIRLS IN STEM UPDATE

Associate Superintendent Dargis announced that Black Gold School Division's third annual 'Girls In STEM' Day is coming up on January 29, 2021. This innovative event engages students in Grades 7-9 in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math-related (STEM) topics and highlights careers in these traditionally male-dominated fields.



This year's theme is "Pushing the Limits, Like a Girl!" Through hands-on learning experiences and interaction with STEM female role models, the girls will gain confidence in their interests in STEM subjects at a particularly important time in their educational careers. This year, we are pleased to invite members of the public to listen in on our keynote speaker, Dr. Shawna Pandya, a Canadian physician, aquanaut, and scientist-astronaut candidate with Project - Polar Suborbital Science in the Upper Mesosphere (PoSSUM).

CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Superintendent/CEO Romanchuk showed a PowerPoint presentation on '[School News](#)' which included various activities during December and January at the following schools and is posted to our BGSD website under Board Highlights—January:

- ◆ Riverview Middle
- ◆ Covenant Christian

- ◆ École Beau Meadow
- ◆ Willow Park
- ◆ West Haven Public
- ◆ East Elementary

A [video clip](#) was also shown of two Riverview Middle School students honoured as local heroes.

