



November 30, 2017
For Immediate Release

BRSD Board of Trustees learning their new role

It's been a busy fall for the newly-elected members of the Battle River School Division Board of Trustees. Since their swearing in on October 23, the Board members have been immersed in a season of orientation and learning, in preparation for their first official meeting, which took place November 27.

In addition to specific orientation to the local school division, Trustees have spent three days in sessions sponsored by the Alberta School Boards Association. Some Trustees have also attended a planning session sponsored by Alberta Education.

The Board formalized an agreement to work together in positive ways by passing motions about a Code of Conduct and an etiquette to follow at Board meetings.

Here is a summary of items that the Board addressed at their first meeting:

- There are 6238 students enrolled in BRSD this year. Enrollments are up in some areas of the school division, while others are experiencing declines. This is a reflection of similar population changes happening overall in rural communities.
- Audited financial statements for the 2016/2017 year were reviewed and approved. According to the Auditors (MNP) it was a "very clean" audit.
- The 2017/2018 budget was also reviewed, in preparation for being submitted to the government by Nov. 30.
- Board members received an overview of the Annual Educational Results Report (AERR) / Three Year Education Plan for 2017 – 2020. The school division's plans for moving forward will continue to be based on ensuring all students feel safe, welcome and cared for at school; building literacy and numeracy skills for students of all ages; and learning and teaching in the 21st century, which means ensuring both schools are flexible to meet changing needs and help teachers stay current with their own skills and abilities. Professional Learning Series and Staff Collaboration Days are part of that. Some specific report highlights and trends that were presented include:
 - BRSD's Provincial Achievement Tests (PAT) results have gone up each of the last two years. The school division has also improved in a number of others areas.
 - The school division continues to be concerned about the challenges of recruiting teachers.
 - BRSD staff are working hard to implement new ways of evaluating student learning so we can better understand specifically what's required in order to help children succeed.

- BRSD is submitting a request to the government for new modular classrooms at CW Sears, Sparling and Bashaw schools.
- Across the Division, the cost of maintaining and repairing our aging schools continues to be a challenge.
- Battle River has nearly 40 students who have come from other countries to study in our schools. That number is growing as the International Student program continues to successfully recruit students from around the world. This is a way to learn about other cultures and increase the diversity of local schools. It also generates a higher student enrollment and additional funding for some of the division's smaller, rural locations.

For more information, please contact:

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