**R.F. Staples Trustee Report to School Council**

**May 28, 2019**

At our April 5 board meeting we set the priorities for the upcoming school year which were:

* Planning for Diversity
* Mental Health
* Literacy and Numeracy
* Support for Professional Practice.

We received data from the satisfaction surveys after this date and have since reviewed the priorities. These will likely change after our next board meeting – schools that will be affected know of this possible change.

**Early Learning program at Swan Hills School**

The school board approved the request from the Swan Hills Preschool Society to establish a school based Early Learning program for children ages 3-5 at Swan Hills School starting next year. This brings the number of PHPS Early Learning programs to seven. The names of our early learning programs have been changed to avoid confusion – they are all now PREP programs (Preschool Readiness Education Programs)

**Transportation Assurance Report**

Each school day our buses travel 10,331 km, transporting 2,639 students.

Students live an average of 17 km from the school they attend.

About 14% of our students have a one-way bus ride over one hour.

The average one-way ride time is 34 minutes which is the same as the provincial average.

**Ecole WES Board Meeting**

At our April 17 School Board meeting we watched Principal Ouimet kiss a goat. This was his commitment to the students of Ecole WES if they met a reading challenge of 6,000 minutes during the month of March.

### I was able to present a citizenship award to [Dayce Madson](https://www.phpschools.ca/our-division/news/citizenship-award-winner-dayce-madson/), a grade 4 student on the same day.

### ****ASBA Spring General Assembly****

### The Board of Trustees will be attending this meeting starting this Sunday. I am the Rural Caucus of Alberta School Boards rep and we will be meeting Sunday afternoon.

Also as a part of the spring assembly, the ASBA and Headstrong, an initiative by the Mental Health Commission of Canada, are co-leading the Provincial Youth Mental Health Summit. The first event of its kind in Canada will see up to 180 student leaders in grades 9 to 11 from across the province attend. We could send a maximum of 3 students. We did have 3 attending, all from Vista Virtual – I believe we may be down to 2 students attending. Expenses aside from traveling to Red Deer were covered for the students. ASBA paid for one and the board agreed to pay for the other two students.

### At our fall general meeting, we are presenting a proposal to lobby government to increase the speed that buses can travel from the current maximum on highways to the actual posted speed limit. This is supported by our own zone and by the student transportation association.

### ASBA Honouring Spirit: Indigenous Student Award

The school board recognized R. F. Staples Grade 10 student Drayden McCallum for his nomination for the ASBA Honouring Spirit: Indigenous Student Award. First Nations, Métis and Inuit Liaison Audrey Degner nominated Drayden for the award, and attended the meeting to tell the board how honoured she was to be part of Drayden’s learning journey. Drayden reported that he discovered the value and importance of his education during his junior high years.

Audrey Degner, FNMI worker presented an honorable mention certificate to Drayden today at a school assembly.

**May 8 Board Meeting – Vista Virtual School**

For the first time in its history, the school board held its regular meeting in Calgary, at the [**Vista Virtual School**](https://www.vvschool.ca/) campus. We also toured the Edmonton campus on the day before the Calgary visit. With an overall combined budget of $84 million, Pembina Hills Public Schools is unique in that:

* We serve 3,800 students in 11 community schools, 2 Hutterite colony schools and 2 outreach centres in Barrhead and Westlock.
* We have an online school, Vista Virtual School (VVS) with campuses in Edmonton and Calgary that serves over 10,000 part-time and full-time Alberta students located anywhere in the world.
* We operate the Alberta Distance Learning Centre (ADLC) in Barrhead on behalf of the province.

**PHPS student serves on Minister’s Youth Council**

Grade 9 Vista Virtual School student Tahir Natha spoke to the board about his experience serving on the Minister of Education’s Youth Council. Tahir was one of 32 students who were selected from 350 applications across the province to serve on the council.

Youth Council members provided advice to the Minister and Alberta Education in a variety of areas, including the GSA policy and curriculum reform. They will also meet with Minister LaGrange on the Education Act over the summer.

**2019 PHPS Satisfaction Survey results**

Each year, the school division surveys all parents, staff, and Grade 4-12 students on their satisfaction level in a variety of areas. The results are used by schools and the division to develop their annual education plans and work on ways to improve the educational experience of our students. Overall, our parents, staff and students gave us an approval rating of 93%.

**Budget for 2019/2020**

The school board discussed some of the assumptions they will need to make in order to develop their 2019-20 budget, including the following monies that may not be provided in the coming year:

* The Classroom Improvement Fund (CIF) expires August 31, 2019. Pembina Hills currently receives $844,000 in CIF funding which is used to provide supports for our students with the highest needs. Assuming this will not be reinstated, the school board has agreed to pull $307,000 from reserves to make up for some of the shortfall. Schools will need to come up with the remaining $537,000. If the provincial budget does not reinstate this funding, or increase inclusive education funding to reflect the need, there will be a $1.5 million shortfall between funding and the supports required for our students with the highest needs.
* The School Fee Reduction Grant provides $400,000 per year to Pembina Hills and was introduced in 2017 when the province passed legislation to eliminate student instructional fees. This grant was designed to offset the loss of revenue to school boards. Prior to 2017,the division charged student instructional fees of $60 for Kindergarten, $70 for Elementary, $110-$140 for Junior/Senior High, or a family rate of $300. If the School Fee Reduction Grant is eliminated, the school board will consider the possibility of reinstating instructional fees.

[**Rock the Diploma**](https://www.phpschools.ca/our-division/news/are-you-ready-for-june-diploma-exams/)

weekend sessions are being offered at Barrhead Composite and R.F. Staples in June. Students can take part in interactive and strategic classes focused on preparing them to write diploma exams. Sessions are $90 each and students can register at their school office.

**RFS Student Citizenship Awards**

It was my honor today to present 2 citizenship award to RF students Camryn Wiegand in grade 10 and Ty White in grade 8. This is one of the many things I love about being a trustee.

As you will recall from out thoughtexchange and my report earlier this year, we changed the citizenship awards. The only award I have yet to present is the grade 12 citizenship awards as they will likely come in the fall. I would encourage parents and community members to nominate deserving students for citizenship awards. By the smiles I see I know they feel honored.