



Learning Together.



2011-2012 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



Prairie
South
Schools

20

Learning together.

WELCOME TO PRAIRIE SOUTH SCHOOLS

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



2011/2012 was the start of a new direction for Prairie South School Division. We began the year with a new mission-vision statement, **Learning Together for Our Future**.

This powerful statement has been at the heart of all we've accomplished this year. With a new organization structure in place, and renewed core values to support us, Prairie South was able to focus on Learning Together through collaboration and engagement.

We are here now to celebrate all we've accomplished this past year. Looking back at 2011/2012, there are many outstanding examples of this collaboration and engagement, and they are worth celebrating.

Tell Them From Me Survey (TTFM)
One of the tools we utilized to increase collaboration and engagement amongst our communities was the Tell Them From Me Survey (TTFM). TTFM collects perceptual data from our key stakeholders

and allows us to act on that data to affect positive change in our schools. In the spring of 2011, students across the Division participated in the online survey. TTFM allows students to give their input into school improvement initiatives in a safe and anonymous manner. It measures

"2011/2012 was a year worth celebrating. At the heart of this celebration is, and always has been, student learning."

important topics such as social and emotional outcomes, physical health outcomes, and drivers of student success. In the fall of 2012, parents participated in their own TTFM survey, which was tailored to their unique perspective. Having this feedback and input helps us create the best learning environment for all students. On an individual level, schools have used the TTFM data to drive a school learning improvement plan goal. This includes revising bullying policies, or implementing parent information sessions.

Attendance Policy and Academic Integrity Policies
At school, students learn how to learn and achieve at their highest level. And they aren't alone in this – increasing support to our students was the driver behind the revision of our Attendance policy and our Academic Integrity policy.

The first, our Attendance policy, recognizes that regular and punctual attendance is necessary for students to maximize their learning and achievement. Schools work in partnership with families to improve student attendance, utilizing tools such as tracking and recording protocols, follow up, and intervention. Student Support Plans are one way that parents and teachers successfully collaborate. The second, our Academic Integrity policy, reflects the understanding that students need to learn how to learn. Concepts of academic integrity and responsibility are introduced in an age-appropriate way to students, providing them with clear and consistent expectations. Communication with students and parents, providing peer support, and accommodating our diverse learning needs are all ways this policy is implemented.

Both policies demonstrate that parents, teachers and students can work together, capturing the collaborative spirit of the policy changes, which is student achievement.

Partnerships
Our business-education partnerships put to practice the belief that an entire community has a role to play in the education of students. The partnerships provide a link between schools and communities, creating the opportunity for collaboration where the partners and schools share values, resources and responsibilities in order to achieve student learning outcomes. Prairie South has many authentic school and community partnerships, including our rural partnership with Sherrit Coal and the exciting field of power engineering, and our partnership with the Moose Jaw Warriors. Not only are we a fan of the Warriors as a hockey team, but also we sincerely appreciate the work they do in

our communities and our schools with collaborative initiatives such as the Salute to Youth program that started in the fall of 2011.

Calendar Review
Our decisions and policies reflect the needs of our communities, and are always based on solid research and accurate data. An alternative school year calendar has existed in six of our schools since prior to amalgamation. This arrangement features 14 non-teaching Fridays which come as a result of increasing the length of the instructional day. Although schools under this calendar arrangement have a reduced number of instructional days, the total number of instructional hours at these schools is equivalent to those operating under our regular calendar arrangement.

To ensure that we are continuing to meet the needs of these communities and supporting student learning, the Board contracted the Saskatchewan Educational Leadership Unit (SELU) to conduct a review. The purpose of the review was to determine the effects of the alternative school year calendar on student achievement, attendance, attitudes and other issues related to their instructional program. Overall, the review showed that the alternate calendar system is meeting the Ministry requirements and providing all the benefits for successful student learning. Not only are students performing as well as their counterparts in a traditional calendar school, student, parent and staff feedback showed overwhelming support and highlights the benefit it has to the rural community lifestyle. A copy of the SELU Alternative School Year Calendar Study is available on our division website. Whether traditional or alternate, reviews done on our calendar systems provide

the data needed to show they are in the best interest of student learning.

Writing Traits
When it comes to collaboration in the classroom, there is no better example than our 6+1 Write Traits. Since 2008, Prairie South teachers have been using a method of teaching writing called 6+1 Write Traits. The method uses specific lessons for the various writing stages, and not only helps students understand quality writing, but allows teachers to gather together to score student writing at grade levels creating Writing Benchmarks. It is through both the use of the Write Traits process and the collaborative scoring of the Writing Benchmarks that teachers have a better understanding of the writing process and students have a better understanding of quality writing criteria. By learning together, students and teachers continue to make this program the success it is today. This success can be seen on page 5 of this report in our Grade 5 and 8 Provincial Assessment results.

Yes, 2011/2012 was a year worth celebrating. At the heart of this celebration is, and always has been, student learning. Whether through community business partnerships or collaborating with parents on policy, we celebrate our collaboration and engagement as a way to help students learn. And while 2011/2012 was the start of a new direction for Prairie South, we are excited to share with you as we continue **Learning Together for Our Future**.

Jeff Finell
Director of Education

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WELCOME TO PRAIRIE SOUTH SCHOOLS CHAIR'S MESSAGE



fall of 2012, the community voted on who would be sitting at the Board table for the next four years. With eight incumbents and two new trustees, the result is welcoming a blend of experience and fresh ideas.

The Board is now focusing on a new strategic plan and a renewed governance model. Our priorities for the next four years will be on reading and facilities utilization. These two mandates represent not only the importance of the learning program, but of the learning environment. Together, they create the opportunity for students to succeed; to achieve at their highest level and to learn.

2011-2012 was a year with many achievements for Prairie South Schools. As Board Chair, I am proud of the way we embraced our new mission-vision and the achievements you'll read about on the pages in this Report and see in the classrooms and schools. Yet what I am most excited about are the great things that are ahead of us as we continue **Learning Together for our Future**.

As I enter my second term as the Chair of the Board of Trustees, I look back on the past year and how Prairie South has lived our new mission-vision of **Learning Together for our Future**.

As always, our schools are putting learning first, with a renewed focus on helping students achieve at their highest levels. This achievement can be attributed to the many hard working educators and staff, dedicated parents, and of course, our amazing students. They've learned that together, through collaboration, anything is possible. We've seen the results in the strong Grade 1 and 2 Reading Assessment Levels. We've seen our educators working together to improve student achievement through the Learning Improvement Teams (LITs) and we've opened the doors to feedback on how to keep improving through the Tell Them From Me (TTFM) survey.

Looking ahead, Learning Together is no more evident than with our Board of Trustees. In the

Colleen Christopherson-Cote
Chair, Board of Trustees

DID YOU KNOW?

In the Fall of 2012, Prairie South elected a new Board of Trustees? Check next year's Report to the Community to see how their first year went and the new strategic direction they are taking.

SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO!

Prairie South is governed by a 10-member Board of Education. Five trustees are elected from rural subdivisions (subdivision 1 to 5) and another five are elected within the City of Moose Jaw.

SUBDIVISION 1: RON GLEIM

SUBDIVISION 2: JACKIE JELINSKI

SUBDIVISION 3: AL KESSLER

SUBDIVISION 4: COLLEEN CHRISTOPHERSON-COTE (CHAIR)

SUBDIVISION 5: SHAWN DAVIDSON (VICE-CHAIR)

SUBDIVISION 6: DARRELL CRABBE, JOAN MCMASTER*, GORD STEWART*, BRIAN SWANSON, LEW YOUNG



Back row (l-r): Darrell Crabbe, Ron Gleim, Gord Stewart, Jackie Jelinski, Colleen Christopherson-Cote, Joan McMaster

Front row (l-r): Shawn Davidson, Brian Swanson, Lew Young, Al Kessler

**Trustees Joan McMaster and Gord Stewart retired from the Board this year. We would like to thank them for their years of dedication and service.*



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REPORT ON LEARNING

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK

WHERE ARE WE GOING AND HOW WILL WE KNOW WHEN WE GET THERE?

Higher Literacy & Achievement
GOAL: By May 2012, increase the number of students achieving at the 'adequate and higher level' in the quality of writing product.

GOAL: By 2015, narrow the gap between First Nations, Inuit & Metis (FNIM) students and other students in AFL writing.

Equitable Opportunities
GOAL: To formalize two or more authentic rural school and community/business partnerships.

Smooth Transitions
GOAL: Support at-risk Grade 8 students to transition successfully to High School.

GOAL: To re-engage female High School students at risk of not completing High School.

Strong System-wide Accountability & Governance
GOAL: To assist School Community Councils (SCC's) in a self-monitoring process using a common assessment tool.

GOAL: SCC's will actively participate in the development and monitoring of School Learning Improvement Plans (LIPs).

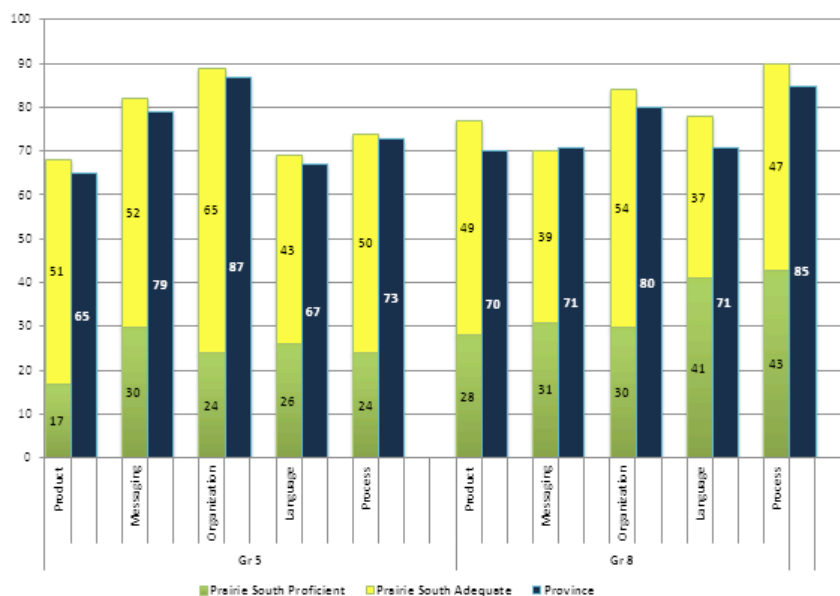
HIGHER LITERACY & ACHIEVEMENT

How Are Our Students Doing? Sharing the recent growth in student achievement data.

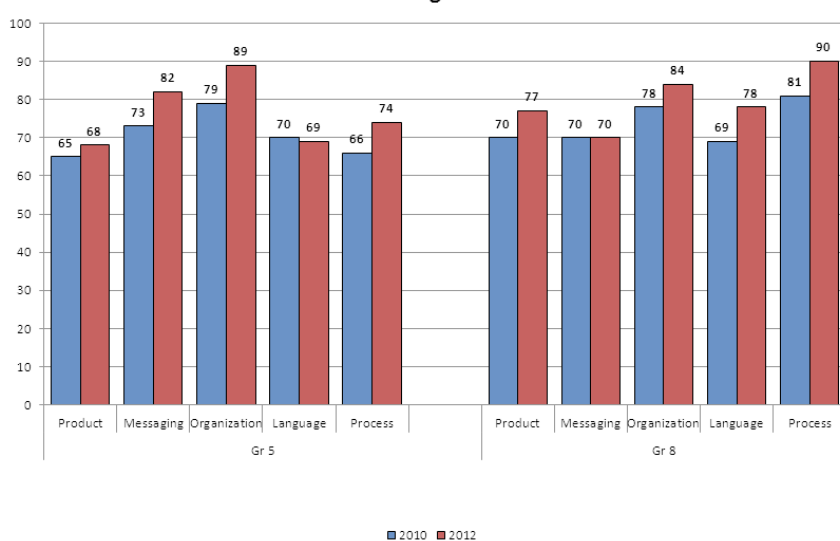
This is a snapshot on Reading and Writing, and includes tools such as the Fountas & Pinnell reading assessment and the Assessment for Learning (AFL) Writing Assessment. The AFL, which is a provincial assessment, serves as a vehicle for improving student learning outcomes in targeted key areas and is a key tool that demonstrates the progress of the Board's goals and strategic plan.

The AFL Writing Assessment was first administered in April 2008, and Prairie South has taken part in it in 2008, 2010 and most recently with Grades 5 and 8 students in April and May of 2012. The results of this report are not definitive, and are simply one glimpse into student achievement on one day, yet they provide a valuable look at student achievement within the Division and compared to the province.

PSSD Results from Provincial Assessment Writing 2012



PSSD Results from Provincial Assessment Writing 2012

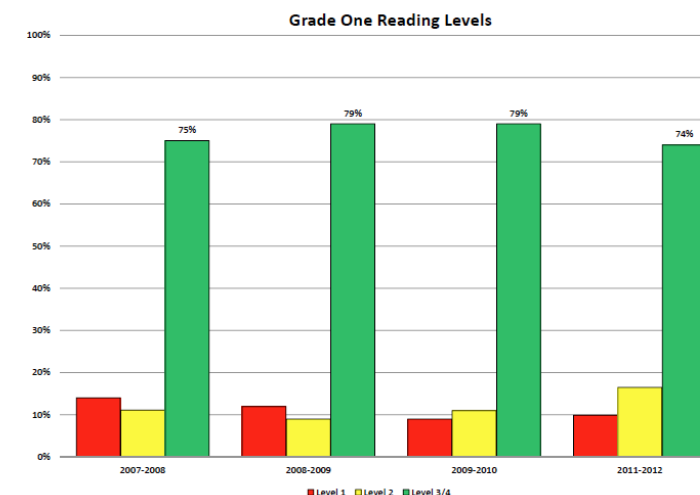
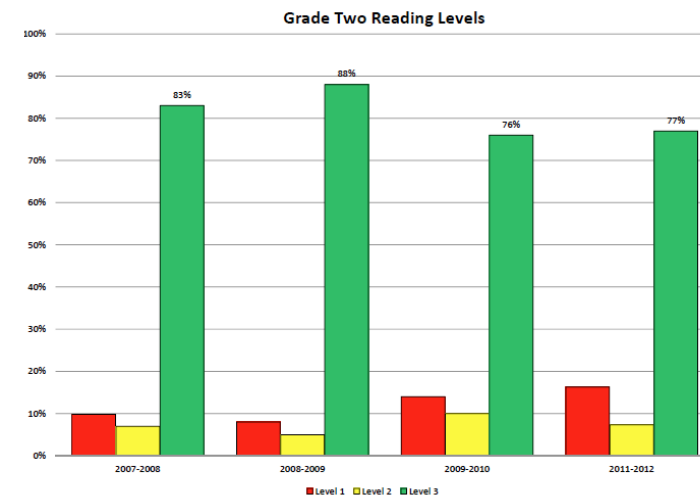


Grade 5 Snapshot

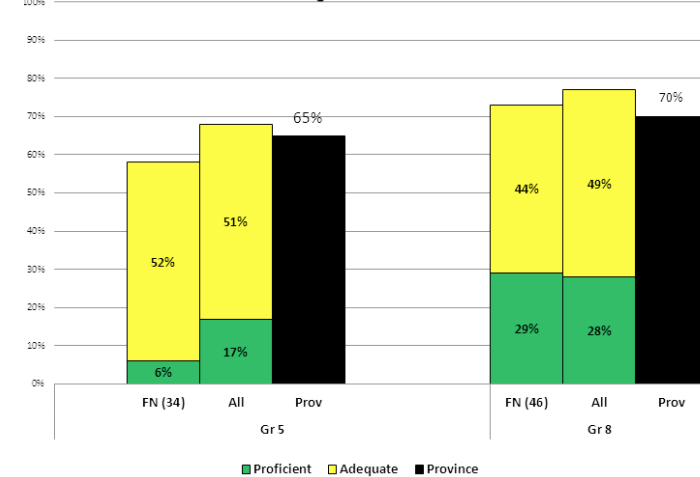
For our Grade 5's there is no meaningful difference in achievement in any of the components of the assessment when compared with the province. Yet when compared with our own results from two years ago, there is a meaningful increase in student scores in areas such as Organization and Writing Process.

Grade 8 Snapshot

For our Grade 8's, over the past two years there has been a meaningfully higher performance in the areas of Quality of Writing Product and Language Choices. This group has done very well and there are no areas in which our Grade 8's show low results.



2012 Writing AFL: FNIM Achievement



student achievements, is just as important. The Prairie South Learning Department has analyzed the reports, and shared the individual school level results with school administrators and teachers. The schools work with our dedicated learning support teams, learning together to use the data to inform them as they select goals for their annual Learning Improvement Plans. They will create work plans and implement resources and strategies that assist teachers in adjusting their instruction to continue to meet these goals.

And when our teachers are learning together, great things can happen.

Grade 1 and 2 Snapshot

Reading levels, as measured using the Fountas & Pinnell assessment, have not changed significantly over the past few years. We are pleased with the number of competent readers we have in Prairie South and are providing targeted supports for those students that may be taking a bit longer to develop the skill of reading. Parents as partners are critical to the development of literacy skills. Reading with, and to, your child every night from the time they are babies until they are pre-teens is the single most effective strategy we know in developing strong readers.

First Nations, Inuit and Metis Snapshot

One of the Division goals has been to narrow the achievement gap between FNIM students and the rest of the Division. There is still a meaningful difference at the Grade 5 level, but we are happy to see a very narrow gap at the Grade 8 level.

Next Steps

The Board was pleased to see that the data collected in these assessment tools shows that we are reaching our goals to increase student achievement. Yet that doesn't mean the work stops. The next steps, what we do with the results and how we work to improve or maintain

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SMOOTH TRANSITIONS

Staff working with the John Chisholm Alternate Program are a key part of Smooth Transitions Into and Through the System, which is a provincial priority and part of our Continuous Improvement Framework. Based on the Smooth Transitions priority, our board goal is to provide the support needed for our students to progress successfully through school. The board goal includes three division strategies and two of the three strategies were included in the report. The reports were very informative and although goals weren't totally met, progress and success in the program was very evident.

Support at-risk grade 8 students transition successfully to high school

Leaving grade 8 and moving to high school can be a challenging time for many students. Students who are at-risk for various reasons find this transition even more challenging and are more apt to drop out or disengage if not provided with transition support.

For a transition to be considered successful, students in the program need to have an 85% attendance rate, and they need to complete grade 9 and register for grade 10. The target for this strategy was an 80% success rate. In June 2011, 67% of the students in the program had successfully transitioned into high school. This goal is ongoing and some of the students who were not successful are still in the program, and continue to work on their transition. The program is in its third year.

Persistence and support to complete high school

Females who do not complete high school tend to work in jobs with lower pay, are more dependent on various social services throughout their life span, become parents at an earlier age and have increased risk for ongoing health, addictions and justice issues. (Social Determinants of Health: The Canadian Facts, 2010) There are approximately 20 female students identified as non-attenders or potential dropouts in the Moose Jaw area of the division. The target for this strategy was to have 80% of the students in the program successfully transition into a regular high school setting. By June 2011, 52% of the females made a successful transition, and others are still working on making the transition. For the 2011-12 school year the program has also been made available to male students.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Board recently approved funding towards the enhancement of the Practical & Applied Arts (PAA) Program.

SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO!

EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES:

GOAL: To formalize two or more authentic rural school and community/business partnerships.

Avonlea
Avonlea Heritage Museum

Assiniboia Composite High School
Southland Co-op
Conexus

Assiniboia Elementary & 7th Avenue
Conexus

Coronach
Sherritt Coal
Hart Butte Community Farms Ltd.

EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Our business-education partnerships put to practice the belief that an entire community has a role to play in the education of students. The partnerships provide a link between schools and communities, creating the opportunity for collaboration where the partners and schools share values, resources and responsibilities in order to achieve student learning outcomes.

Prairie South has many authentic school and community partnerships, including our rural partnership with Sherritt Coal and the exciting field of power engineering, and our long standing partnership with the Moose Jaw Warriors. Not only are we a fan of the Warriors as a hockey team, but also we sincerely appreciate the work they do in our communities and our schools with collaborative initiatives such as the Salute to Youth program.

DID YOU KNOW?

Rouleau School SCC presented at the 2012 National Congress on Rural Education - and Mortlach School SCC will be presenting in 2013.

SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO!

STRONG SYSTEM-WIDE ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE

At Prairie South our SCCs are doing well when compared to other SCCs around the province. The board goal for Strong System-Wide Accountability and Governance states that our School Community Councils (SCCs) play a pivotal role in connecting the division to its communities and engaging communities to support student learning. There are two division strategies involving SCCs to support this goal.

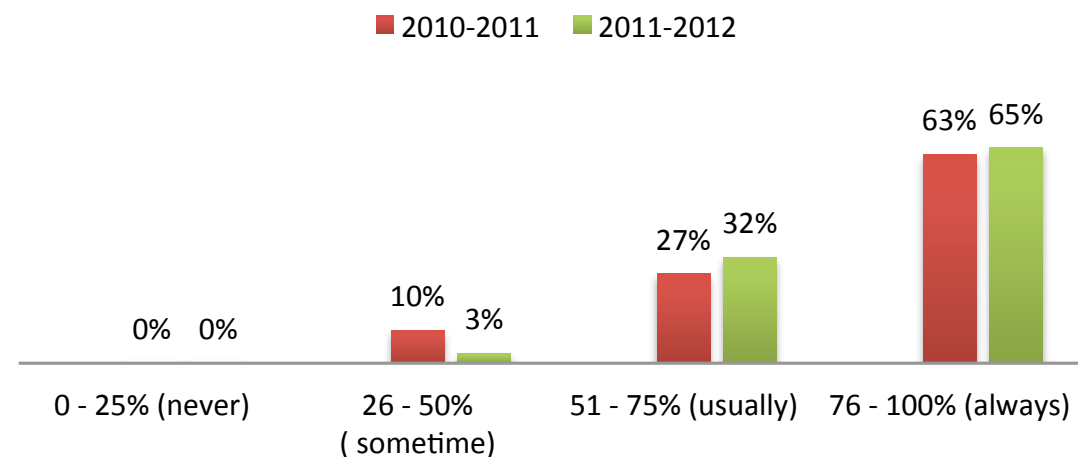
To enhance capacity and increase engagement of School Community Council's support in students well being and Learning Improvement Plans.

School Community Councils allow parents, community members and students to be engaged in the planning and improvement process at the school level, and are important components to school division governance. SCCs allow the community to be engaged in educational decision-making, and facilitate a shared responsibility for learning among educators, students, parents and community members. Prairie South School Division Board policy requires SCCs to engage in an ongoing process of self-assessment in order to ensure their effectiveness. The target for this strategy was to have 70% of SCCs participating at a pre-determined engagement level, and supporting School LIPs. Prairie South had 100% of SCCs complete their Self-Monitoring and Improvement Plan rubric. In response to the rubric, support will be extended to help SCCs understand current strengths and weaknesses and identify realistic directions for improvement. All LIPs have been posted to the website.

To enhance communication opportunities for School Community Councils School Governance: A responsibility of SCCs is to provide advice and represent the parents and community to: a) Board of Education on policies, procedures, programs and educational service delivery; b) school staff respecting school programs; and c) other community organization, agencies and governments on the learning and wellbeing needs of children and youth.

The targets set for this strategy include communication of SCC procedures and processes. At this point, the board has initiated input from SCCs' procedures that pertain to schools and communities. Two other targets have not yet had data collected. This was delayed to allow time for our pilot schools to work on the Comprehensive Learning framework.

Learning Improvement Plan (LIP): creating a shared plan



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LEARNING IMPROVEMENT TEAMS (LITs)

In the fall of 2012, all Prairie South School teachers began participating in Learning Improvement Teams (LITs).

WHAT ARE LITs?

LITs, as a form of professional learning, encourage teachers to collaborate to improve student outcomes. They are small, grade or department level teams that work together, inspiring and empowering teachers to improve the teaching and learning happening in our schools.

WHEN DO THEY MEET?

Our LITs meet for one hour approximately every other Monday. The time commitment for this valuable professional learning isn't more than previous years; simply by utilizing the time differently, there isn't any more non-student contact time than usual.

HOW DOES THIS IMPACT THE STUDENTS?

One of Prairie South's core values is high expectations for educational success, helping students learn and achieve at their highest level. We believe that this new structure for teacher collaboration will help us ensure this happens. During the 2010-2011 year, nine Prairie South Schools piloted this type of professional learning. While it's not without its challenges, the response so far has been incredibly positive. Teachers and Administrators are seeing the results of this collaboration and the positive effect it has on student learning!

PRAIRIE SOUTH ENROLMENT

6,635

PREKINDERGARTEN

241

KINDERGARTEN

404

GRADE 1

436

GRADE 2

478

GRADE 3

399

GRADE 4

443

GRADE 5

415

GRADE 6

488

GRADE 7

445

GRADE 8

502

GRADE 9

520

GRADE 10

603

GRADE 11

573

GRADE 12

688

15 K-12 SCHOOLS + 12 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS + 6 SECONDARY SCHOOLS + 5 COLONY SCHOOLS + 2 ASSOCIATE SCHOOLS

= 40 SCHOOLS * 8 PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS *

TELL THEM FROM ME (TTFM)

One of the tools we utilized to increase collaboration and engagement amongst our communities was the Tell Them From Me Survey (TTFM).

TTFM collects perceptual data from our key stakeholders and allows us to act on that data to affect positive change in our schools. In the spring of 2011, students across the Division participated in the online survey.

TTFM allows students to give their input into school improvement initiatives in a safe and anonymous manner. It measures important topics such as social and emotional outcomes, physical health outcomes, and drivers of student success. In the fall of 2012, parents participated in their own TTFM survey, which was tailored to their unique perspective.

Having this feedback and input helps us create the best learning environment for all students. On an individual level, schools have used the TTFM data to drive a school learning improvement plan goal. This includes revising bullying policies, or implementing parent information sessions.

COMPREHENSIVE LEARNING FRAMEWORK (CLf)

In 2010, a variety of issues surfaced that indicated a need to re-evaluate our operations in light of education changes. School administrators and staffs expressed concern regarding the growing number of education initiatives, provincial mandates to report student learning and consequent responsibility to improve student achievement. As a result, the Central Administrative Council (CAC) and Administrators' Quad Chairs began to research options that would support our learning in how to handle this work. Discussions were held with Dr. Douglas Reeves and Dr. Connie Kamm from the Leadership and Learning Center who were then invited to submit a proposal. Dr. Connie Kamm met with the CAC one day in August and two days in December of 2010 to refine the proposal and to develop direction for the initiative.

A Design Team, formed in January 2011, was comprised of an array of fifty stakeholders including teachers, administrators, trustees, and members of School Community Councils and the Central Administrative Council. The Design Team met for eight days, between February and May 2011, to synthesize their understanding of system-wide change as represented within this Comprehensive Learning framework (CLf) document.

The purpose of the CLf is to build the capacity of Prairie South School Division as a learning organization for continuous improvement. It will serve as a constructive tool to ensure that outstanding teaching, learning, and leading are demonstrated, supported, and celebrated through:

- inclusion of both the Division-Wide Performance Indicators and the School Indicators that guide the division and school Learning Improvement Plans (LIPs)
- analysis of relevant assessment evidence and other pertinent information, with the ultimate goal of improving instruction as a direct connection to improved academic achievement for all students
- development and implementation of research-based, effective educational practices, and
- establishment of a communication plan among students, parents, staff, Board of Trustees and the community.



LEARNING TOGETHER FOR OUR FUTURE.

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REPORT ON BUSINESS

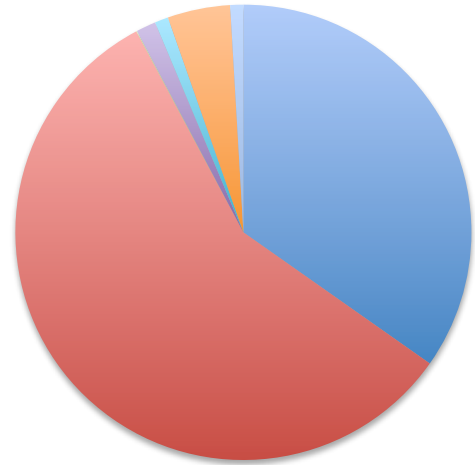
In keeping with a very busy and productive year, the 2011-2012 budget supported many important Division projects; strengthening our School Community Councils (SCC's), the implementation of the Comprehensive Learning Framework, and the expansion of Early Learning programs to name but a few.

The past fiscal year, the last of the transition funding model, also saw a higher level of capital spending to update and maintain Prairie South Facilities. This means Prairie South Schools saw improvements right at their doorsteps, as approximately three million surplus dollars were used to address the accumulation of much needed facility maintenance across the Division.

I am pleased to report that the Division received a clean memo from the auditors, showing no weakness in our internal controls. This demonstrates the hard work and dedication of our finance team, and the ongoing support provided by the Board of Trustees. The year ended with a deficit of \$1,808,746 compared to a budgeted deficit of \$1,867,763, and revenues were \$85,680,680 with expenses coming in at \$87,489,426.

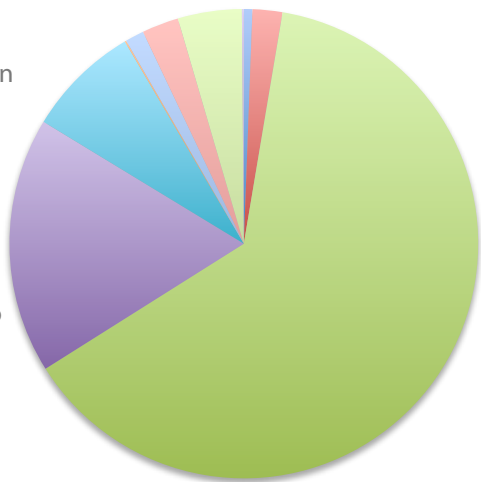
The Division moves forward into the 2012-2013 year in a stable, healthy situation with processes in place to sustain us. Our focus on risk management has ensured this sustainable success. The new funding model, although not without its challenges, aims to make it more equitable for all school divisions across the province. Our 2012-2013 budget will be a reflection of the new model - sustainable, aligned with our strategic priorities and with a continued focus on student learning. Our net assets, the money available to work with, is just over \$21,600,000, and will be used to fund continuing facilities projects and the Practical & Applied Arts Enhancement Project. It promises to be an exciting year.


Bernie Girardin
Superintendent of Business & Operations



REVENUE

- Property Taxation
- Grants
- Tuition and Related Fees
- School Generated Funds
- Complementary Services
- External Services
- Other



EXPENSES

- Governance
- Administration
- Instruction
- Plant
- Transportation
- Tuition and Related Fees
- School Generated Funds
- Complementary Services
- External Services
- Other

TOTAL REVENUE \$85.7 MILLION

TOTAL EXPENSES \$87.5 MILLION

DEFICIT \$1.8 MILLION

HUMAN RESOURCES

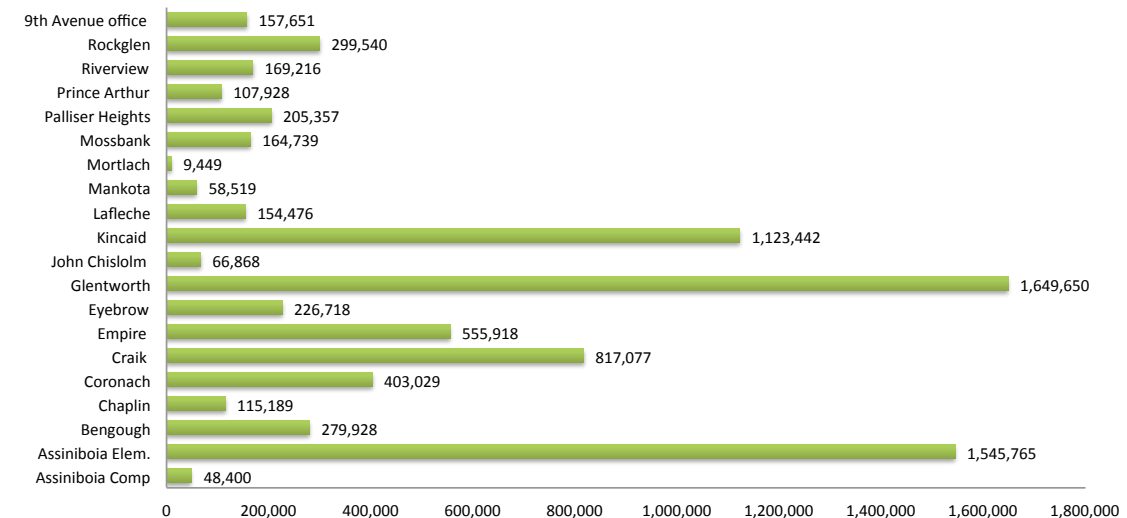
Who works at Prairie South Schools? 16 Administrators.....503 Teachers.....269 Instructional Support Staff.....315 Part-time Staff.....206 Operations, Maintenance and Transportation Staff = 1309 wonderful and dedicated staff!

TRANSPORTATION

The wheels on the bus go round and round...126 School Bus Routes driven by 240 Bus Drivers across 32,747 square kilometers of beautiful Southern Saskatchewan. Prairie South school buses travel more than 24,852 kilometers a day...that is over 1/2 way around the world every day!

FACILITIES

Roofs and boilers and stairs, oh my! Prairie South facilities invested \$8,158,859 in Capital Projects in 2011/2012. This includes window and door replacements, fire alarm upgrades, and new gym bleachers.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

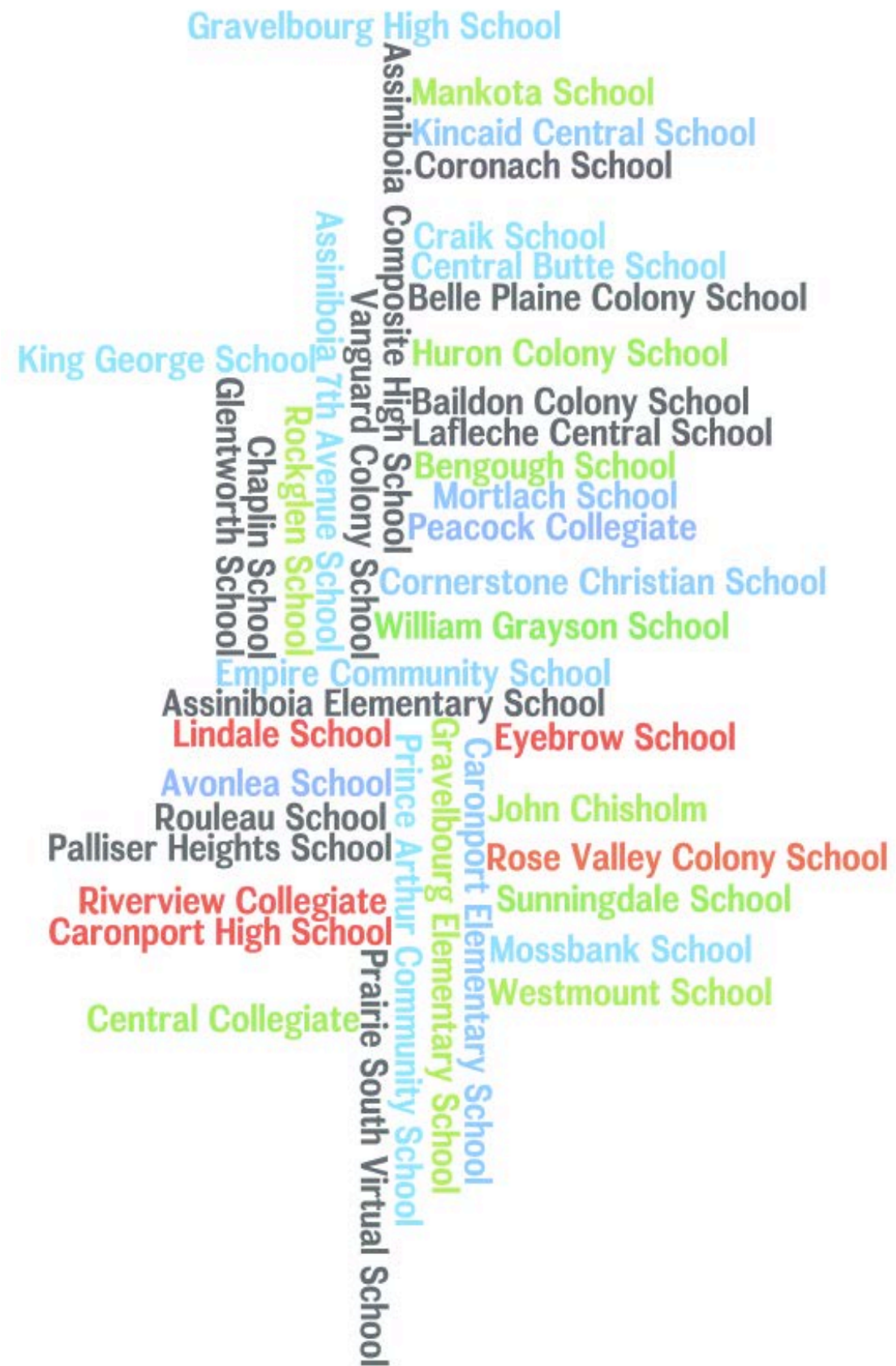
Our 21st Century Learning is supported by a strong Information Technology program. How strong you might ask? 2,200 PC's.....1,150 Notebooks.....333 Macs and MacBooks.....618 Mobile Devices. Now that's strong! And they are busy machines. Prairie South internet traffic is 180GB per day, which means 122,040,000 pages of text per day passes to and from the Internet!

Did we mention the virtualization? Prairie South runs 341 Virtual Machines and backs up 54TB of data each night. By virtualizing our machines, we've reduced our energy costs by 80% and substantially reduced our carbon footprint.



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