

Prairie South Schools **20** Learning together.



Annual Report

To the electors
September 1, 2010 to August 31, 2011

Report from

Colleen Christopherson-Cote, Board Chair

with respect to learning together in the period September 1, 2010 to August 31, 2011



Learning about student support @prairiesouth everyday I am amazed at how great our team is....thanks. – Tweet by @CTAPinSK (Colleen Christopherson-Cote)

As board members we are privileged to look inside our schools and experience first-hand the great work that is happening. We are often amazed at what our communities, students, teachers, support staff and partners do on a daily basis. It's not that there aren't challenges, it's about the big and little achievements that happen each day and we want to celebrate that.

Together we are working to make all of our schools a welcoming and inclusive environment for learning, with a variety of programs and services. That includes keeping our facilities up-to-date, the total capital spending on Prairie South buildings in 2010-11 came to \$3,412,000. In addition to our monthly board meetings, trustees work in committees to address the following areas of priority in the division, and in the province:

- **Higher Literacy and Achievement** • **Equitable Opportunities for Students** • **Smooth Transitions**
- **Strong System-Wide Accountability and Governance** • **Advocacy and Networking**



Celebrating our School Community Councils

Thank you to all of our SCCs for your outstanding work. Our schools wouldn't be the same without you. School Community Councils (SCCs) are an important part of our schools, and provide meaningful input and support. They bring parents, community members and students into the planning and improvement process at the school level, and are important components of school division governance. SCCs allow the community to be engaged in educational decision-making, as well as facilitating a shared responsibility for learning among educators, students, parents and community members. To ensure SCC effectiveness we have created a board policy that requires an ongoing SCC engagement process of self-assessment in order and we encourage collaboration with other SCCs in the province. The provincial SCC Facebook page is just one example of how we support and encourage sharing and learning for everyone. Visit them at [SaskatchewanSCCs@groups.facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/SaskatchewanSCCs@groups.facebook.com).

Congratulations and Thank You

I can't stress enough how great our students, staff and schools are. There are so many achievements to celebrate. Thank you and well done to everyone for making a difference in your school, in your community and for yourself.



Respectfully submitted by Colleen Christopherson-Cote, Board Chair

Assiniboia 7th Avenue School • Assiniboia Composite High School • Assiniboia Elementary School • Avonlea School • Baildon Colony School



Belle Plaine Colony School • Bengough School • Caronport Elementary School • Caronport High School • Central Butte School



Central Collegiate • Chaplin School • Cornerstone Christian School • Coronach School • Craik School • Empire Community School • Eyebrow School



Glentworth School • Gravelbourg Elementary School • Gravelbourg High School • Huron Colony School • John Chisholm Alternate Program



Kincaid Central School • King George School • Lafleche Central School • Lindale School • Mankota School • Mortlach School



Mossbank School • Palliser Heights School • Peacock Collegiate • Prairie South Virtual School • Prince Arthur Community School



Riverview Collegiate • Rockglen School • Rose Valley Colony School • Rouleau School • Sunningdale School



Vanguard Colony School • Westmount School • William Grayson School



Report from

Jeff Finell, Director of Education

concerning the progress of learning in the period September 1, 2010 to August 31, 2011.

I never teach my pupils; I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn. – Albert Einstein

This quote is a good summary of what we're doing and why we've renewed our student focus and realigned our mission and vision statement – Learning together for our future – encouraging everyone to learn throughout their lives. That is why we are very excited about our new Comprehensive Learning framework – developed by 50 stakeholders – as well as a new organizational structure, and a refresh of our brand.

Taking a Collaborative Approach to Learning

For the last year we've been working together with board members, administrators, teachers and parents to design a Comprehensive Learning framework (CLF). The goal of the framework is to improve learning for students and staff by building on existing effective practices – as well as respond to a global shift in curriculum, teaching and learning practices. Like many school divisions, in Canada and the world, we want to improve our ability to support teachers, students and leadership in an accountable and purposeful way.

Guided by the framework, and backed by research that shows teacher collaboration improves student learning, teachers are working together to address student-learning needs. In addition to the shift in our curriculum, teaching and learning practices, and based on a Ministry directive, we have also researched new effective practices for grading students. We are doing this in order to address all aspects of learning, and make the required adjustments to all areas of the system.

Supporting our Schools

In response to our shift in learning and in recognition of the diverse needs of our schools, the Board approved a new organizational structure for Prairie South, on May 3, 2011. The new structure is based on information from a review that took various factors into consideration including our renewed student focus and commitment to maintain and build classroom-based student support – and to improve learning outcomes for all students.

The structure allows us to strategically group schools into clusters and customize services on a school-by-school basis, which increases support in our schools, enables networking, creates consistency and provides more opportunities for leadership roles. A Learning Support team consisting of a learning consultant, student support consultant, Psychologist, and a Speech Language Pathologist is also assigned to each school cluster. Our Superintendents also provide further support to their assigned cluster group in addition to their strategic areas of focus.

Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Public Reporting of Continuous Improvement



The Pre-K-12 Continuous Improvement Framework (CIF) was formulated by the Ministry of Education to assist school divisions in an annual cycle of strategic planning, monitoring and public reporting on the use of resources, strategic practices, and the progress in improving the achievement outcomes of all Saskatchewan's students. The ministry has mandated the following four provincial priorities, which all divisions track and report on through their Continuous Improvement Framework. Based on each of the mandated provincial priorities, our Board sets achievement goals that are indicated in blue text following each provincial priority. From there, the division creates strategies that are used to measure and achieve each goal while fulfilling the provincial priority.

1. Higher Literacy and Achievement

Promoting academic achievement for all students while closing achievement gaps is the goal set by our board.

Reading: We believe that the ability to read is crucial for success in school and in life. Therefore our reading assessment requires students to show that they understand the text, share and support their own ideas and make connections between what they've read and their own experiences. In 2011 students in grades 4, 7 and 10 were assessed. Our grade 4 and 7 students showed improvement based on 2007 and 2009 assessment results while results for grade 10 students indicated a decrease. This is an area we will continue to monitor; by 2015 we also want to improve the results of our First Nations students to be within 5% of other students.

Writing: Based on data from 2008, Prairie South students are achieving similar and in some cases meaningfully higher than other students in the province in writing. Therefore we are narrowing our focus to improve the quality or semantics of writing. Overall in 2010 our students showed a modest increase in performance – French Immersion students showed significant improvement. However results are not overly reliable in the areas French and First Nations due to a small amount of students.

Math: In math, we want to increase student achievement in the areas of applications and problem solving for grade 5 and 8 students. Following the recently renewed math curriculum student scores are lower. This may be partially due the new curriculum as well as the need for a new approach to teaching. In response, Prairie South is implementing in-services and support for teachers using the new curricula. Individual support is also available to teachers to help them; set up learning centres, get assistance in creating lesson and unit plans, find good resources, and connect teachers to other teachers for mentorship and collaboration.

The renewed curricula uses an active problem solving-based approach where students learn to understand the concept of the calculation – mathematical reasoning, as well as ideas and applications – and away from memorization and isolated concepts. The goal for this approach is for all students to become mathematically literate adults, using mathematics successfully in life and in work.

Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Public Reporting of Continuous Improvement

2. Equitable Opportunities for Students

Providing a safe and secure learning environment where all students have the opportunity to maximize their potential regardless of socioeconomic status, gender, cultural or linguistic background, geographic location, personal circumstances or ability.

- FNIM:** We are working strategically to improve participation and outcomes for First Nations and Métis students. Based on data, we know there are two areas that need to be addressed – the gaps between grade 12 marks of FNIM students and the rest of the student population, as well as rates for graduation rates of FNIM students. The understanding of First Nations ways of knowing also needs more awareness amongst staff and students. In order to increase awareness, treaty kits have been implemented in all schools. We are also working to identify barriers for FNIM students through a five-step process.
- Programs:** A key strategy for our Student Support Consultants is to increase evidence and use of data in the Current Level of Performance (CLP) of Personal Program Plans (PPP). Collecting and using data is the basis of creating effective goals and proving quality programming in our schools. It also tells us if our plans are on target or need adjustment. In addition it helps to make information more objective for teachers. We celebrated great improvement in this area – by June 2011, 74% of the CLP in our PPPs now have data based descriptions – which is a total increase of 40%.
- Psychologists:** School psychologists need to provide understandable and useable assessment data, to help teachers and classroom staff adjust and accommodate students requiring support. We want to ensure that assessment data and psychologist recommendations for a student influence positive changes to academic or behavioral performance at school. To achieve this our psychologist arranges follow-up meetings with school personnel to review student progress. Although there was little difference in the results from last year, more consultation occurred around student needs, and behaviour plans were developed and monitored.
- Counsellors:** We've purchased materials and provided training for our counsellors to help prevent or reduce student suicidal behaviour. It is common for suicide education to take place following a completed suicide. That is why we want to increase awareness of suicide, prevention and the resources available in a proactive manner with students to reduce the risk of suicide in our division. By the end of June 2011 77% of grade 8 to 12 classrooms received a suicide prevention presentation within the past two years. In addition to these presentations, CMHA presented to classes at Prairie South.
- Partnerships:** Enhancing partnerships in rural communities can bring mutual benefits to the school and outside partner through learning and working together. Our objective in this area for 2010-11 was to formalize two or more authentic rural school and community/business partnerships. We formalized one partnership between Coronach School and Poplar River Mine and we have met and done projects with the Avonlea Heritage Museum and Avonlea School. Future formal partnerships will be sought in situations where a partnership would be mutually beneficial to both the school/division and the business or community group.

Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Public Reporting of Continuous Improvement

3. Smooth Transitions Into and Through the System

Promoting conditions where students are ready to enter kindergarten and progress successfully through school and be prepared to pursue further education or enter the workforce when they graduate.

Early Learning: We want to reduce the vulnerability rates of our 0 to 5 population by helping them get ready for kindergarten. We are doing this in response to data that indicates many of our children are coming to kindergarten unprepared to take advantage of the learning opportunities available to them. Recent studies show that when we focus on children in their early years, through a quality play-based program, students can experience more positive outcomes in school and in life. Prairie South Prekindergarten and Early Learning programs are for children between 3 and 5 years old. At the time of this report, we have 18 Prekindergarten programs in the division and two Early Learning programs. In the spring of 2010 our region showed an overall vulnerability rate of 21%. By June 2015 we want to reduce the vulnerability rate to be 18% or less.

Transition: Supporting at-risk grade 8 students so they can successfully transition to high school is a goal that will continue into the 2011-12 school year. Leaving grade 8 and moving onto 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. 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.

Completion: We are finding that persistence and support to complete high school is needed for some of our female students. 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) The target for this strategy was to have 80% of the students in the program successfully transition into a regular high school setting. Although goals weren't totally met, progress and success in the program was very evident. 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.



Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Public Reporting of Continuous Improvement

4. Strong System-Wide Accountability and Governance

Engaging communities and partner organizations in establishing policies and procedures that strengthen public accountability, stewardship, student learning and advance public education.

Engagement: We want to enhance capacity and increase engagement of School Community Councils support in student well-being and Learning Improvement Plans (LIPs). 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. At Prairie South our SCCs are doing well when compared to other SCCs around the province, we 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.

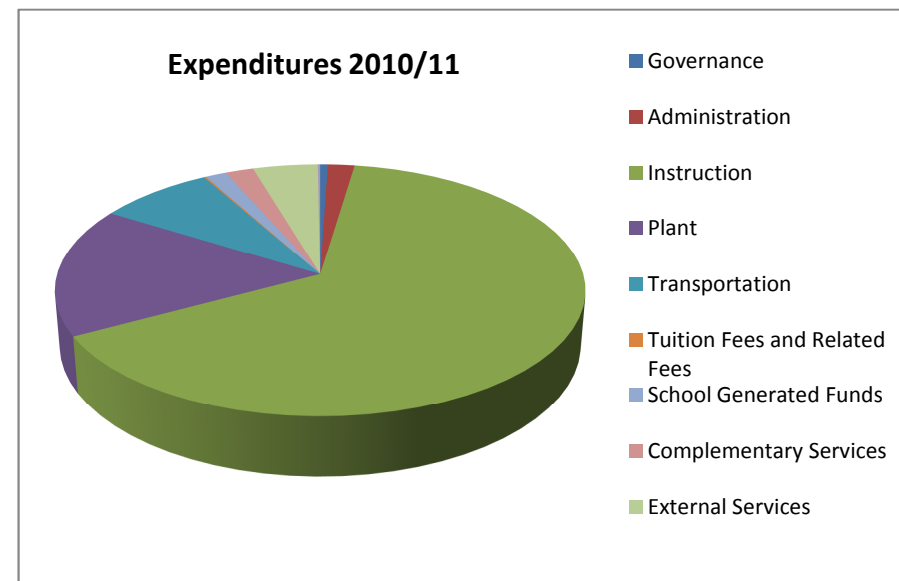
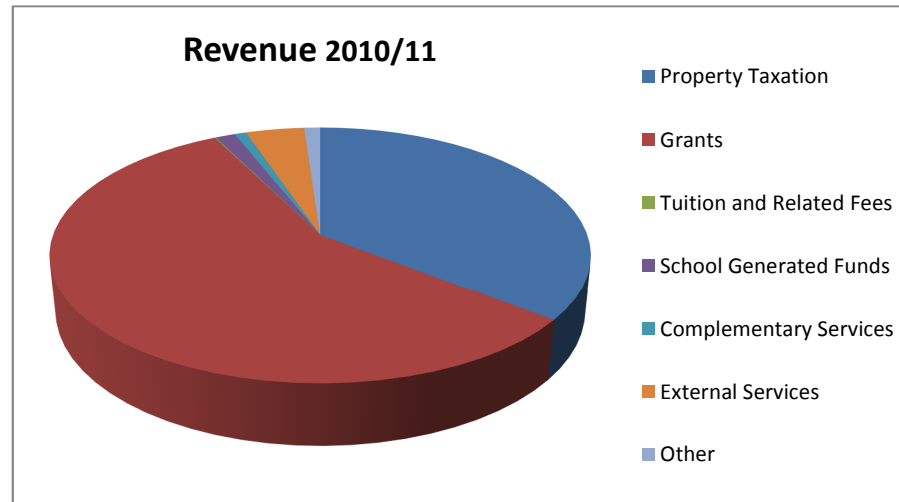


Learning together for our future

With 40 schools in 19 communities there is always a lot happening and this is a very exciting time. As Director of Education, I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in making Prairie South Schools a welcoming community of learning. We are very fortunate to have such a remarkable team of committed people working and volunteering in all areas of the division. As we continue to move ahead it is with purpose and high expectations to deliver a quality learning experience for all students.

Respectfully submitted by Jeff Finell, Director of Education

Financial Highlights



Operating Highlights

Total Revenue: \$86.8 million

Total Expenditures: \$81.1 million

Surplus: \$5,600,222

Total municipalities (*cities, towns, villages and rural municipalities*): 82

Total schools: 40 (including two associate schools and five Hutterian colony schools)

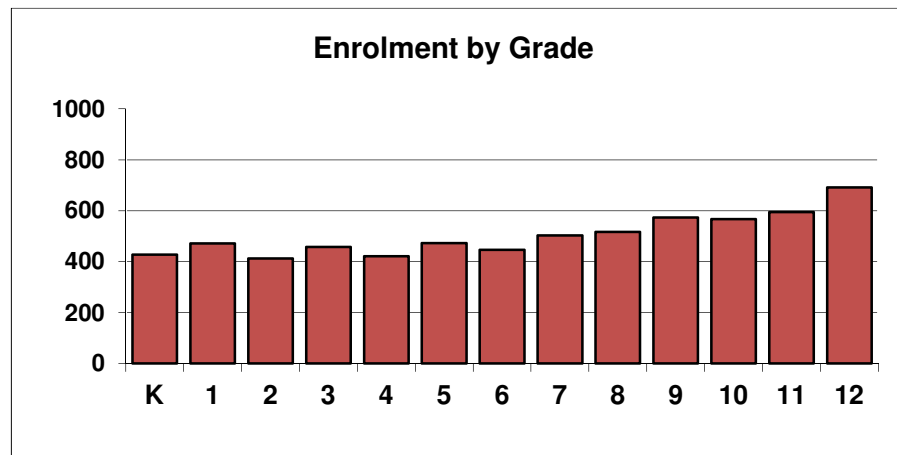
Total students: 6436.5 full-time equivalents, Prek to Grade 12 (prekindergarten and kindergarten students are counted at 50% to reflect the level of program offered at this age)

Total teaching staff: 498.7 full-time equivalents

Pupil-to-teacher ratio: 14.12

Total non-teaching staff: 472.77 FTE, including bus drivers

Total rural and city school bus routes: 126



Mission and Vision
Learning together for our future.

Core Values

High Expectations for Educational Success

At school students:

- o learn how to learn;
- o achieve at their highest levels;
- o contribute to our school community; and
- o participate in the communities at large.

Community Involvement & Engagement

Community involvement is important because:

- o our schools connect people with learning and community;
- o public participation helps us make better decisions; and
- o diverse perspectives create a better understanding of need.

Division Transparency

We build trust and credibility with our community members by:

- o sharing information that improves the public's understanding of our decisions and policies;
- o showing how we spend our monies to deliver services; and
- o maintaining the code of ethics established by the Saskatchewan School Boards Association and the Education Act.

A Collective Common Sense Approach

Our decisions and policies reflect the needs of our communities and are based on:

- o solid research;
- o accurate data; and
- o informed judgment.

2010-11 Capital Projects

In addition to the day-to-day maintenance that is required in all of our schools, a number of capital projects were either in progress or completed during the 2010-11 school year.

The total capital spending on Prairie South buildings came to \$3,412,000 with work completed on the following projects:

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Assiniboia Elementary: | Gym floor Gym lighting |
| Bengough: | Lighting upgrade |
| Central Collegiate: | Final window phase Roof top unit |
| Coronach: | Roof top units (4) Lighting upgrade |
| Craik: | Heating/Ventilation system upgrade Gym floor |
| Empire: | Gym floor replacement Gym lighting |
| Eyebrow: | Window replacement |
| Glentworth: | HVAC system installation Gym lighting upgrade |
| John Chisholm: | Roof replacement Furnace replacement (5) |
| Kincaid: | Boiler replacement Gym floor |
| King George: | Gym lighting upgrade |
| Lafleche: | Gym floor |
| Lindale: | Partial roof replacement |
| Mankota: | Gym floor |
| Mossbank: | Roof replacement on gym and PAA lab |
| Palliser Heights: | Cladding replacement |

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Peacock Collegiate: | Upgrade dust collection system Vacuum pump on boiler Auto body paint booth upgrade |
| Rockglen: | Partial roof replacement |
| Sunningdale: | Gym lighting upgrade |
| Westmount: | Gym floor replacement Gym lighting upgrade Window replacement – Phase 2 Replace six rooftop units |
| William Grayson: | Roof top unit |

Capital spending on vehicles in the Facilities Department was \$43,000. Upgrades were made to a maintenance vehicle, and a ride-on mower with a cab and snow blower were purchased.

Equipment purchased for the following schools totalled \$523,000:

| | |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mankota: | Voice Over Internet Protocol system (telephone/intercom/paging) |
| Glentworth: | VOIP intercom and phone system |
| Empire: | VOIP intercom and phone system |
| Westmount: | VOIP intercom and phone system |
| Various: | Purchase of playground equipment – at a shared cost with schools |

Your Board of Education

Prairie South School Division is governed by a 10-member Board of Education. Five trustees are elected from rural subdivisions (subdivision 1-5) and another five are elected within the City of Moose Jaw (subdivision 6).

Subdivision 1: Ron Gleim

Subdivision 2: Jackie Jelinski

Subdivision 3: Al Kessler

Subdivision 4: Colleen Christopherson-Cote

Subdivision 5: Shawn Davidson

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