



**2021-22 Return to School Plan:** Trustees approved the 2021/22 Return to School Plan as presented by the Superintendent. [It is posted on the Back to School button on the Division website.](#) Families are encouraged to check the news section frequently as updates will be provided on a regular basis. Grade 1-9 students return to school on September 2 and Kindergarten students start on September 7 or 8 depending on their group. Kindergarten teachers will be contacting parents to let them know their child's start date and group. The Division's plan is subject to change, but aims to balance the physical, mental and emotional needs of students. Many restrictions have been eased or lifted and the Division will slowly ease into activities such as school assemblies. All students, staff and visitors to a school are required to complete the daily self checklist and must not be at school if presenting with any of the symptoms. Masks are not required in Division schools, but staff and students are encouraged to wear them, and those who choose to wear them will be supported. All students are required to wear masks on buses, and additional disposable masks will be available on all buses. In addition, hand hygiene will be encouraged, high touch areas will be cleaned regularly, and HVAC and air circulation systems will be regularly monitored. If there is a 10% rate of absenteeism in any school, the Division is required to report to Alberta Health Services (AHS). St. Paul Education will support AHS as it runs temporary vaccination clinics in schools. Immunization is voluntary and will be available in September and October for eligible students in Grades 7-12 and staff. More Information will be provided to parents and guardians, **parental consent will be required for in-school immunizations**. The decision to vaccinate is the personal health choice of parents. In the coming months, a portion of a school, such as individual grade(s) or class(es), may temporarily move to at-home learning as required for operational reasons (i.e. staffing issues). Any parents who have concerns about their child's learning upon school re-entry are encouraged to contact their child's teacher(s). Division teachers will focus on meeting students where they are at and moving them forward in their learning. Rebuilding connections will also be an important part of school re-entry. The deadline to register for at-home learning was Tuesday, August 24. Any additional requests may be considered on a case by case basis. The Division will be planning to provide at-home learning for approximately 18 students from Grades 1-9.

**National Day for Truth and Reconciliation:** Over the summer, the federal government announced that September 30 is now a national day to mark Truth and Reconciliation. As the Division calendar was passed in the spring, trustees passed a motion to amend the Division calendar to have a professional development day on September 30 instead of September 27. Appropriate Orange Shirt Day and related activities will be held in schools on September 29 or October 1. Individual schools will be participating in professional development activities related to Truth and Reconciliation on September 30.

**Friends of Playschool Request:** St. Paul Friends of Playschool submitted a request to the Board to assume management of their program for 2022/23. The playschool has been operating at St. Paul Elementary for a number of years. In recent years, the Division successfully started a new preschool program at Mallaig School and also assumed responsibility for the program in Two Hills School, in partnership with the local preschool group. This request has been tabled to the October meeting.

**Election 2021:** Municipal elections are scheduled for the fall of 2021. Nominations for the school board will remain open until noon on September 20, 2021. Election Day is October 18. Contact Central Office or visit the [Division website for more information or to download a nomination form](#).



### Superintendent's Report

- Superintendent Brodziak welcomed incoming assistant superintendents Karol Cabaj-Martin and Keith Gamblin to the St. Paul School Division Central Office team.
- Over the summer, Alberta Education announced funding to address literacy and numeracy learning loss for students from Kindergarten to Grade 3. The Division will be submitting a proposal to access this funding. Literacy and numeracy have also been identified as target areas within the [Division Education Plan](#).
- Alberta Education is funding Financial Literacy programs for students in Grades 7-12. Programming will be provided by the Enriched Academy and the Canadian Foundation for Economic Education. Topics covered will include money management, budgeting, TFSAs, credit, student loans, and saving across the lifespan. Financial literacy resources and programming will also be available for students in Grades 3-6. More information about this important topic will be going out to schools.

### Financial Report

- In accordance with requirements, the Division has applied for and received permission from the Minister of Education to carry a deficit budget for 2021/22, to be offset by the use of reserve funds.
- To support the continuation of enhanced cleaning measures related to Covid-19, there will be some additional unforeseen costs not forecasted in this year's budget. The Division will continue many pandemic initiated practices, such as virtual meetings when appropriate, which will also result in some cost savings.
- Trustees have received an audit plan from the Division auditors and scheduled the year end review for the end of November.
- Alberta Education has announced funding for active school councils. The funding is intended to increase communication and engagement. More information will be shared when it is available.
- Trustees reviewed cheque and financial information for July and August.

### Reports

[Alberta School Boards Association Fall Annual General Meeting](#): Participants will have the option to attend in-person or virtually on November 14-16.

[Alberta Catholic School Trustees Association \(ACSTA\)](#): The Annual General Meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 12-14.

#### [Infrastructure, Maintenance and Capital:](#)

- A report was presented outlining the status of summer construction projects. The majority have been completed as planned with a few being delayed due to material shortages.
- Extensive technology upgrades totalling approximately \$89,000 were also completed over the summer, resulting in improved wi-fi coverage and network capacity for all Division schools.
- A voice over internet phone system has been installed as a pilot in the Elk Point schools. If successful, the Division will look at this cost-saving alternative for other sites.
- Exterior site work including parking lot paving is being completed in Ashmont and a new playground and fencing have been installed at the Two Hills Mennonite School.



### Information/Correspondence

**Education Services Agreement (ESA) Draft Standards Review:** Over the summer, Alberta Education released an updated document outlining draft standards for ESAs between provincial school authorities and their neighbouring First Nations. The document was updated to reflect the current Education Act. The Division administrative team will be attending a virtual information session in September. More information will follow.

**Parent Advisory Council/Teacher Advisory Council:** Minister LaGrange has announced the formation of two new councils, a parent advisory council and a teacher advisory council. They are looking for diverse representation from across the province. Interested persons can see the Division [website](#) to apply. This is an unpaid volunteer position with a 10-month term.

**Contract Bus Operators Insurance:** The Division participates in an insurance consortium with other rural school authorities. A hard market across the industry, coupled with a few serious claims, have caused insurance premiums to rise substantially over the past year, including insurance premiums for contract bus operators who purchase their insurance through the Division.

The Division is continuing to work closely with our local operators to explore more affordable options before the next renewal date on October 31.