



FRONTIER
SCHOOL DIVISION
Excellence and Experience in Education

The Northerner

**Frontier School Division
Board Activity Report**

**2023
2024**

Board of Trustees



Top row: Charlene Throop (Area 5, Norway House), Howard Sanderson (Area 2, Waterhen), Hilbert Mosiondz (Area 1, Wabowden)

Middle row: Tanya Friesen (Area 3, Bissett), Marion Pearson, Vice-Chairperson (Area 4, Cranberry Portage), Mike Muswagon (Area 5, Norway House)

Bottom row: Donna Calvert (Area 4, Sherridon), Linda Ballantyne, Chairperson (Area 2, Grand Rapids), Marg Imrie (Area 3, Falcon Beach)



Missing from group photo, Trustee Graeme Montgomery (Area 1, South Indian Lake)

Introduction



The challenges of the pandemic left us with many lost connections, but the 2023-24 year has been a time of renewal and reconnection. We've had the opportunity to travel, visit schools, engage with communities, and participate in meaningful professional development activities for both our

employees and Trustees. These experiences have been invaluable in strengthening our bonds and reinforcing the commitment we share to the success of our students.

Our Board is deeply grateful to every individual who has dedicated time and energy to expanding and enhancing the programs we offer to our schools and employees. We are incredibly proud of our students and their resilience throughout these times, and we eagerly welcome their continued participation in activities both inside and outside the classroom.

We invite you to explore the key activities and accomplishments from our Board this year and, as always, we welcome your feedback as we continue to grow and improve together.

Linda Ballantyne, Chairperson
Frontier School Division Board of Trustees

Accountability to Provincial Government

A key responsibility of the Board is to ensure that we fulfill the mandate entrusted to us by the public, as outlined in *The Public Schools Act*. This means ensuring that our policies, practices, and curriculum not only comply with the legislative framework but also evolve in ways that reflect who we are as a community and as an educational institution. Our commitment to providing the highest standards of education for our students remains unwavering.

Moreover, our work is not done in isolation. It is intricately tied to our Strategic Plan, with its three focus areas and initiatives guiding our decisions and actions. We strive to ensure that our educational practices align with provincial expectations while also advancing the goals and values outlined in our plan.

Over the past year, the Board made significant strides in meeting these obligations, including:

- Election of Table Officers: Trustee Ballantyne was acclaimed as Chairperson and Trustee Pearson was acclaimed as Vice-Chairperson.
- Confirmed the following Board committees:
 - Finance Committee: Trustees Calvert, Imrie and Mosiondz, and Chairperson Ballantyne, with Trustee Imrie elected as Chairperson for this committee.
 - Policy Review Committee: Trustees Montgomery, Sanderson and Throop, and Chairperson Ballantyne.
 - Employee Pension Committee: Trustees Imrie, Sanderson, and Vice-Chairperson Pearson.
 - Support Staff Liaison Committee: Trustees Imrie and Montgomery.
 - Employee Benefits Committee: Trustee Friesen.
 - Frontier Collegiate Advisory Committee: Vice-Chairperson Pearson.
 - Nikanikh Ohci Foundation Inc. Board of Directors: Area 1 Trustee Mosiondz, Area 2 Trustee Sanderson, Area 3 Trustee Friesen, Area 4 Trustee Calvert, Area 5 Trustee Throop.
 - Awards Panel: Trustee Muswagon, Chairperson Ballantyne, and Vice Chairperson Pearson.
 - Special Leave Sub-Committee: Trustees Montgomery and Muswagon.
 - Divisional Hiring Committee for P.E.N.T.: Trustees Friesen and Throop.
- The Board received retirement notice from the Chief Superintendent, effective July 31, 2024.
- In December 2024, the Board met with the President and the Executive Director of the Manitoba School Boards Association and shared concerns regarding housing, recruitment, and insurance programming effecting curricular objectives identified in the Indigenous Way of Life teachings. An invitation to visit Divisional schools was shared with the President and the Executive.
- The Board met with the Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister and Deputy Minister and provided an overview of the Division; Strategic Plan three focus areas, and concerns on teacher recruitment and retention, housing and infrastructure/school needs, and supports for students, staff, and schools. An invitation was conveyed to the Minister and Deputy Minister to visit Division schools.
- Effective April 23, 2024, the Board named Paul Critchley as Secretary-Treasurer for the Division.
- Approval of the School Year Calendar for 2024-25. In June 2024, the Board approved a recommended refinement from senior administration to adjust the date initially chosen for the “All Teacher Professional Development” event in January 2025. The activity will now take place on February 7, 2025.
- Confirmed meeting calendar for 2024-25.
- Approval of the Division’s budget for 2024-25 (see Finance).
- The Board welcomed Chief Superintendent-Designate Tyson Mac Gillivray.
- Approval of the 2024 Special Mill Levy Rate (see Finance).

As we continue to fulfill our role in partnership with the provincial government, we remain dedicated to ensuring that our students receive an education that is both compliant and progressive—one that prepares them for success in a rapidly changing world.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we work together to meet these vital responsibilities.

Accountability to the Community

As elected representatives of our grassroots community, we hold a deep responsibility to the people within our community circle. This responsibility includes not only listening to their voices but being accountable for the decisions we make on their behalf. Our commitment to accountability is why we actively encourage community involvement – from parents and guardians to community leaders and everyone who values learning in all its forms.

Over the past year, we've made strides in strengthening this connection, with key accomplishments including:

- The Board ratified a number of higher care school trips:
 - Berens River (3 trips)
 - Black River Anishinabe (4 trips)
 - Brochet (3 trips)
 - Chan Kagma Otina Dakota Wayawa Tipi
 - Cold Lake (8 trips)
 - Cormorant Lake (2 trips)
 - Cranberry Portage Elementary (3 trips)
 - Dauphin River (2 trips)
 - D.R. Hamilton (2 trips)
 - Duck Bay
 - Duke of Marlborough (5 trips)
 - Falcon Beach (5 trips)
 - Frontier Collegiate (8 trips)
 - Frontier Mosakahiken (5 trips)
 - Grand Rapids (8 trips)
 - Gypsumville
 - Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw Education Resource Centre (37 trips)
 - Jack River (11 trips)
 - Joseph H. Kerr (2 trips)
 - Julie Lindal (2 trips)
 - Lakefront (2 trips)
 - Leaf Rapids Education Centre (3 trips)
 - Matheson Island
 - Mel Johnson (2 trips)
 - Minegoziibe Anishinabe (2 trips)
 - Peonan Point
 - Philomene Chartrand
 - San Antonio (3 trips)
 - Skownan (5 trips)
 - Stevenson Island (5 trips)
 - Thicket Portage
 - Wanipigow (9 trips)
 - Waterhen
- West Lynn Heights (2 trips)
- The Board approved a number of higher care school trips:
 - Barrows Junction (4 trips)
 - Berens River (3 trips)
 - Black River Anishinabe (2 trips)
 - Chan Kagma Otina Dakota Wayawa Tipi
 - Cold Lake (2 trips)
 - Cormorant Lake
 - Cranberry Portage Elementary
 - D.R. Hamilton
 - Duck Bay
 - Duke of Marlborough (2 trips)
 - Falcon Beach (4 trips)
 - Frontier Collegiate (9 trips)
 - Frontier Mosakahiken (6 trips)
 - Gillam (2 trips)
 - Grand Rapids
 - Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw Education Resource Centre (21 trips)
 - Jack River (10 trips)
 - Julie Lindal
 - Matheson Island
 - Mel Johnson (2 trips)
 - Minegoziibe Anishinabe
 - Ministic
 - Peonan Point (2 trips)
 - San Antonio (2 trips)
 - Stevenson Island
 - Thunderbird (2 trips)
 - Wanipigow (2 trips)
 - Waterhen (2 trips)
- Approval of the following:
 - Request from Senior Elections Official to not hold Fall By-Elections for School Committees.



- Refinements to the Norway House School Authority Constitution and Terms of Reference.
- Refinements to the Black River Anishinabe School Committee Constitution and Terms of Reference.
- Finalized plans for the 2024 Annual School Committee Conference including the Conference theme: *School and Community Working Together*.
- Request from the Waterhen School Committee for religious exercises (The Lord's Prayer) in Waterhen School.
- Division-wide needs assessment/review of playground structures.
- Review of the Division Office Needs Assessment, including receiving a presentation from Stantec.
- Received updates from administration on the forest fire situation affecting the Divisional communities/schools of Cranberry Portage and Sherridon including displacement of students and staff, safety and security of facilities, and associated plans. The Board shared their appreciation of everyone involved in support of students, staff, and communities.
- The Board encouraged Pride and 2SLGBTQIA+ celebration activities planned throughout the Division.
- Correspondence received from the Black River First Nation Chief and Council to conclude the Education Partnership Agreement with the Division effective June 30, 2025. Administration was directed to meet with the First Nation's Education department to begin the process for this transition.

As we continue to move forward, we remain dedicated to fostering open dialogue, transparency, and collaboration with all members of our community. Together, we can build an educational environment that reflects the needs, values, and aspirations of those we serve.

Accountability to Policy

We believe that effective policy should be shaped by the people and communities we serve. That's why we consistently turn to the needs and feedback of our community circle to guide and refine the policies we put in place. By staying connected to the voices that matter most, we ensure that our policies reflect the values and priorities of those we represent.

This past year, the Board has made significant progress in aligning our policies with community needs, including:

- Trustee Montgomery was named as Policy Review Committee representative for the Divisional Support Staff Liaison Committee.
- The Board approved twenty (20) applications for Special Leave for 2024-2025.
- The Board approved new and revised policies for implementation:
 - C.2.L - Security Cameras in Schools
 - E.1.O - Personnel Files
 - E.3.M.-R - Sick Leave (Regulation)
- The Board approved a number of new or revised policies for distribution/feedback:
 - E.1.N.1 - Smoking on School Division Property-Employees and User Groups
 - G.1.L - Administration of Prescribed Medication to Students
 - New draft: Staff Interaction with Students
 - New draft: Confidentiality
- The Board approved rescinding Policy F.3.D - Homework
- Review of Policy E.2.A - Language Fluency by the Policy sub-committee.

As we continue to build on this work, our commitment to listening, adapting, and ensuring that our policies serve the best interests of all stakeholders remains unwavering. Together, we can continue to create an educational environment that fosters success, inclusion, and opportunity for every student.

Thank you for your engagement and collaboration as we move forward in shaping policies that will have a lasting impact on our schools and communities.

Accountability in Finances

When it comes to managing the Division's budget, the responsibility ultimately lies with the Board. One of our most crucial roles is ensuring that public funds are spent wisely and efficiently, maximizing the impact of every dollar. This requires us to closely examine how resources are allocated within our classrooms and across our key focus areas: Academics, Indigenous Way of Life, and Student Services and Wellness.

We owe it to every taxpayer to ensure their contributions are directly supporting education, with tangible returns reflected in the success and well-being of every student. As we continue our work, we remain committed to transparency, stewardship, and ensuring that our financial decisions align with our overarching goal: providing the best possible education for all students.

This past year, the Board has made significant progress in aligning accountability to finances including:

- Approval of the audited financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2023
- Approval to use Division surplus by transferring funds to the capital reserve account for Divisional housing. Support for the Engaged Learners Program, replacement of the Cranberry Portage Elementary gymnasium floor, and replacement of ageing Technology infrastructure (computer servers) from surplus was also approved.
- The Board approved a recommendation from the Finance Committee and appointed the auditing firm of Deloitte as Division Auditor for 2023-24.
- The Board approved the Collective Agreement reached in-committee with the United Steelworkers (USW) Local 7106-18 for employees in Area 5 and Cross Lake for the period July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2026. This agreement is pending ratification by those respective employee groups.
- Mill Rate of 12.8363 mills to be used for the 2024 Special Levy.
- The Board approved recommendations from their Employee Pension Committee:
 - Amendments to the Retirement Plan for employees.
 - Transfer of administration of payroll services to Ellement.
- Forwarding the estimated Extrapolation of the Financial Position as of December 31, 2023, to Deloitte.
- Statement of Investment Policies and Procedures including the change to Private Debt Benchmark.
- The Board approved the Division's budget for 2024-25. The budget is based upon the Division's Strategic Plan and provides emphasis on the three focus areas: Academics, Wellness, and Indigenous Way of Life.
- Effective April 23, 2024, the Board named Paul Critchley as Secretary-Treasurer for the Division.
- Approval of the Division's Five Year Capital Plan.
- The Board received reports from the following committees:
 - Finance,
 - Nikanihk Ohci Foundation Inc. (N.O.F.I.) Board of Directors,
 - Employee Pension,
 - Support Staff Liaison,
 - F.S.D./F.T.A. Liaison,
 - Policy Review, and
 - Divisional P.E.N.T. Hiring.
- The Board approved the New Graduate Recruitment Incentive payment to new graduate applicants hired, commencing in the 2024-2025 school year.

Thank you for your continued dedication to making every dollar count in service of our students and communities.



Accountability through Strategic Planning

Our Strategic Plan serves as our north star, continually guiding the Board in everything we do for our schools, employees, and students. While this guiding light may shift in response to provincial directives, mandates, or financial challenges, it ensures that we remain aligned and focused on our shared mission. No matter what new direction we may face, the Strategic Plan keeps us on track, always working toward the same goal: providing the best education possible for our students.

This past year, the Board has accomplished:

- The Board met with senior leadership on October 19-20, 2023, with discussions arising on the Division's Strategic Plan focus areas (Academics, Wellness, Indigenous Way of Life), policies, and recruitment and retention of staff.
- Professional Development activity for all staff, and Indigenous Way of Life programming on November 1, 2023.
- Participated in a virtual Celebration Activity with schools involved in the Educational Prosperity Program and The Learning Bar in December 2023.
- The Board met with the Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister and the Deputy Minister. An overview of the Division was provided that included the three focus areas. Discussions arose on teacher recruitment and retention, housing and infrastructure/school needs, and supports for students, staff and schools.
- Presentations were received from senior administration on Literacy, Numeracy, Science, and Technology.
- Approval of the Board Report, including overview of the three focus areas, to school committee delegates for the 45th Annual School Committee Conference in April 2024.
- Approved refinements to the Strategic Plan three focus areas at the June 2024 Board meeting.

As we move forward, let us remain committed to this path of continuous growth and improvement, ensuring that every decision we make serves the needs of our students and strengthens the educational experience for all.

Thank you for your dedication and collaboration as we continue working together to achieve our shared vision.



Board and Superintendent Group Meeting

At every meeting of the Board and senior leadership (the Superintendent Group) discussion always focuses on our Strategic Plan, and ways we work together to support our schools.

- The Board received presentations from senior administration on Literacy, Numeracy, Science, Fine Arts, Student Services and Wellness, and Technology.
- The Board met with senior administration on October 19-20, 2023. Discussions arose on the Strategic Plan, policies, and recruitment and retention of staff.
- The Board met with senior administration on March 19-20, 2024, to review the Strategic Plan focus areas.
- Area Advisory Committee Meeting reports were provided by Trustees.
- Direction was provided to administration to begin planning the Board/Superintendent October 2024 meeting.

Collective Bargaining

The Board approved the Collective Agreement reached in-committee with the United Steelworkers (USW) Local 7106-18 for employees in Area 5 and Cross Lake for the period July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2026. This agreement is pending ratification by those respective employee groups.

The Board received regular updates on Collective Bargaining.

Education Partnership Renewed

The Board approved senior administration to connect and work with the Berens River First Nation Chief and Council on an amendment to the Education Partnership Agreement between the Division and the First Nation.

Awards and Recognition

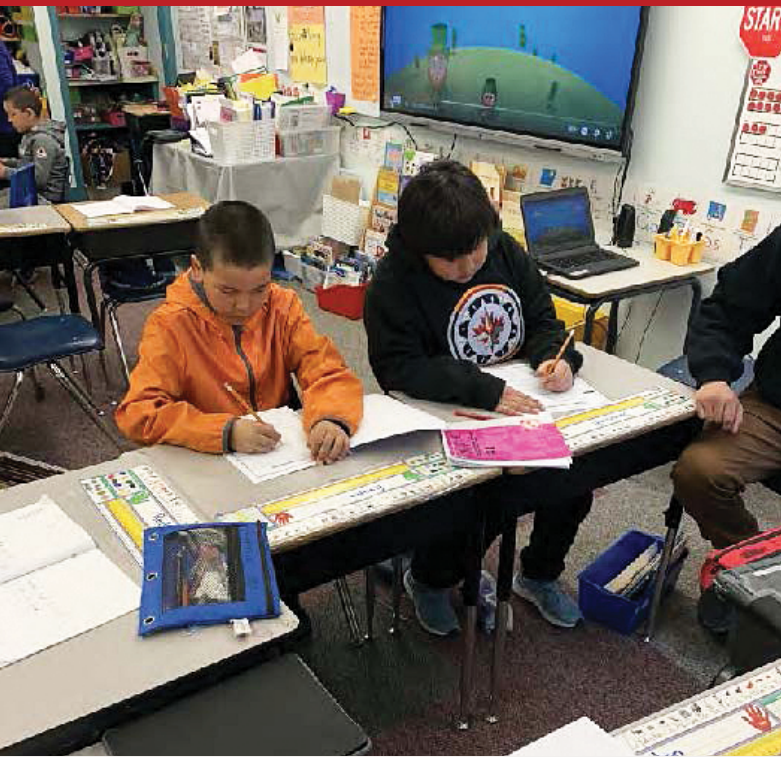
- The Board approved an amendment to the Division Recognition Awards program to include 45-year long service recognition.
- The Board was presented with a Kokum (grandmother) Mask from former Chief Superintendent Keven Van Camp and Gloria Van Camp. The Mask originated from the later Doreen Dupree, a community champion for education in the early beginnings of Frontier School Division school committees.
- The Board approved recommendations from their Awards Panel for the 2024 Frontier Achievement Award and the 2024 Award for Outstanding Contribution – School Committee Members. Recipients were formally announced at the 44th Annual School Committee Conference in April 2024.
- The Board was presented with a framed painting from an Indigenous artist from Norway House to commemorate the Frontier Games 50th Anniversary. An additional framed photograph was presented to Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister in support of our Frontier Games.
- The Board is pleased to announce the three recipients of the 2024 Award for Outstanding Contribution – Employees: Marietta Anterola, Ernestine Huhtala, and Hector Riquelme.



Summary

As we reflect on the journey we've shared throughout 2023-24, it's clear that our circle of connection has grown stronger. But the work doesn't end here. It's essential that we each continue to nurture and strengthen these relationships, building upon the foundation we've laid.

Thank you for being an integral part of this circle. Together, we can continue to grow, support, and inspire one another.







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