

Date: January 29, 2025 **Agenda Item:** 8.7
To: Board of Trustees
From: Shawna Warren, Superintendent
Originator(s): Shawna Warren, Superintendent
Subject: **Superintendent Report**

Background:

The Superintendent is committed to keeping the Board informed regarding progress in the Board's approved outcomes, measures and strategies articulated in the Division's Education Plan to meet our priority of Student Achievement. Using key insights from the Annual Education Results Report, the Division's Education Plan directs the work in schools and at a system level.

This report offers a concise overview of recent events and attended meetings that have influenced the Division's trajectory in the past month. By highlighting significant interactions and their implications, this report aims to provide the Board of Trustees with valuable insights into the Division's proactive leadership, collaborative partnerships, and ongoing operations enhancement.

As per Ministerial Order 003/2020 (AMENDED 2023), the Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard applies to superintendents. All superintendents are expected to meet the Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard throughout their careers. The superintendent of schools as referred to in the Education Act is accountable for the demonstration of all of the competencies identified in the Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard.

Building Effective Relationships

A superintendent establishes a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment by building positive and productive relationships with members of the school community and the local community.

- ★ In January, the SCHS admin team visited local schools to answer questions, promote programs and welcome future high school students. Recognizing the need for additional coaching and discussion to support the transition to high school, the team scheduled afternoon visits to multiple schools, grouped by location, to maximize their outreach. These visits provided an opportunity to connect with students, address their concerns and ensure a smooth transition to SCHS. A virtual meeting was also offered for the Learning Centre, with flexibility for Oak Hill to choose their preferred format.

- ★ On January 23rd, the Sturgeon Heights School Council hosted a presentation featuring "[Unplugged](#)" St. Albert, an initiative dedicated to raising awareness about the negative effects of early smartphone and social media exposure. Parents from neighbouring schools, including those in the St. Albert Public and GSACRD divisions are also joining for the

presentation. The event highlighted the importance of promoting healthier childhoods and encouraged community engagement on this critical topic.

- ★ The Superintendent holds bi-weekly meetings with the Communications Team to ensure strategic and effective communication across the Division. These meetings focus on aligning messaging and marketing with divisional goals, addressing emerging issues and fostering transparent and consistent engagement with stakeholders, including staff, students, families and the broader community.
- ★ The [Sturgeon Public Scoop](#) is the Division's newsletter, providing important updates and information to the school community. It serves as a key communication tool, sharing news, events and essential resources with staff, students and families throughout the school year.
- ★ The Superintendent continues the "Woot Woot Wagon" initiative throughout the school year. Each month, a Senior Executive team member brings the wagon through Central Office, offering treats to staff as part of an ongoing effort to promote a positive and supportive work environment.
- ★ The Superintendent continues to connect monthly with neighbouring school division Superintendents. These regular meetings promote collaboration, the sharing of best practices and the discussion of common challenges, strengthening relationships and fostering regional cooperation.
- ★ The Superintendent has continued an initiative introduced in January 2023, aimed at recognizing Central Office staff members' birthdays each month.
- ★ The Superintendent writes a "Welcome to the Sturgeon Public Team" card to all new staff who join Central Office. This gesture reflects the Superintendent's commitment to fostering a welcoming workplace culture.
- ★ The Superintendent continues to write personalized thank you cards to various Division staff members for their contributions and celebrations occurring throughout the Division.
- ★ The Superintendent transitioned her "Superintendent Week-at-a-Glance" to a weekly newsletter titled, "From the Desk of the Superintendent" that is shared every Friday with the Board of Trustees, school leadership and Central Office leadership. This new format includes a blog post and key information items from the government.

- ★ The Superintendent continues the leadership and central office staff engagement meetings from 2022-2023 to support collaboration and professional development in 2024-2025.
 - Monthly Principal meetings, grouped by school type, with the Superintendent and the Education Services leadership team.
 - Weekly Senior Executive Committee meetings.
 - Regular 1:1 meetings with direct reports to focus on mentorship and growth.
 - A new monthly Central Office leadership meeting will focus on strategic planning and clear roles and responsibilities across departments.

Leading Learning

A superintendent establishes and sustains a learning culture in the school community that promotes ongoing critical reflection on practice, shared responsibility for student success and continuous improvement.

- ★ In September, a request was sent to High School Principals regarding the nomination of teachers to mark the January 2025 Diploma Exams. They were asked to complete the nomination process using an attached spreadsheet and submit their school's nominations by September 20, 2024, to receive approval from the Superintendent. Alberta Education emphasized the need for a sufficient number of qualified teachers, especially those able to mark French language exams, and provided detailed guidelines and timelines for the process.
- ★ The Superintendent established a subcommittee of Principals, Vice Principals and central office staff to develop a *Parent Conversation Progression Framework* focused on addressing challenging student behaviour. This collaborative effort aims to create a structured approach for engaging with parents. Using Legislative responsibilities as defined in the Education Act and Human Rights Legislation, this framework aims to ensure consistent and effective communication strategies that support positive student outcomes and safe and caring learning and working environments across the Division.

Modeling Commitment to Professional Learning

A superintendent engages in career-long professional learning and ongoing critical reflection, identifying and acting on research-informed opportunities for enhancing leadership, teaching, and learning.

- ★ January 1-3, 2025, the Superintendent read the Book *Adapt or Perish! How to Survive the Firestorm of Change in Business, Leadership, and Careers* (Hall et al., 2011).
 - The book is written by eight expert authorities on business, leadership and career transitions, who guide the reader through the constant fundamental changes taking place in today's economy that affect everybody's businesses and careers. They share their experiences and advice on how to use the new technologies that appear almost daily, and how to navigate through an economy in which jobs have become more

temporary and job search more entrepreneurial. *Adapt or Perish* takes the reader behind the scenes in business, leadership and careers to show you which strategies will succeed and which will not. It will make you aware of new ideas, new possibilities, new ways of thinking, and new ways to become the new leaders of tomorrow.

- ★ January 5-8, 2025, the Superintendent read the book *The School Board Member's Guidebook, Becoming a Difference Maker for Your District* by Ryan Donlan and Todd Whitaker.
 - The book provides practical strategies to help school board members navigate the complexities of governance and make meaningful contributions to their school divisions. The book emphasizes the importance of effective collaboration with superintendents, building consensus among board members, and accurately representing community interests. It offers guidance on strategic planning, conducting productive meetings and leveraging individual strengths for the benefit of the board and the division. Each chapter provides actionable insights and real-world scenarios to empower board members to drive positive change and foster cohesive, student-focused leadership.

- ★ The Superintendent confirmed her interest in continuing as the Primary Contact for her Community of Practice (CoP) group at the upcoming March CASS Annual Learning Conference. The CoP group focuses on supporting Chief Superintendents in building knowledge, sharing experiences and engaging in continual learning to strengthen their leadership and governance-related practices. She also verified the accuracy of the group's purpose statement.

Visionary Leadership

A superintendent engages with the school community in implementing a vision of a preferred future for student success, based on common values and beliefs.

- ★ On January 8, Sturgeon Public Schools shared an exciting update on the Rural Caucus of Alberta School Boards website about [Sturgeon Composite High School's new Aviation - Flight 15 program](#). This innovative course allows students to explore the fundamentals of aviation, gain real-world experience through hands-on activities like a Discovery Flight event and earn credits toward their education. Aligned with Transport Canada standards, the program equips students with the knowledge and skills to pursue future careers in aviation, showcasing the Division's commitment to providing unique learning opportunities for students.

Ensuring First Nations Métis and Inuit Education for all Students

A superintendent establishes the structures and provides the resources necessary for the school community to acquire and apply foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit for the benefit of all students.

- ★ In May 2025, Sturgeon Composite High School will host a grand opening ceremony to unveil two impactful exhibits borrowed from the Legacy of Hope Foundation. These exhibits aim to raise awareness about the lasting impacts of the Indian Residential School System. The event will feature special guests and serve as a meaningful collaboration between SPS and the Legacy of Hope Foundation, fostering education and understanding within the community.
- ★ A request was made for release time for Tara Draper, Vice Principal SCHS, to attend the Alberta Teachers' Association's wícihtotân mentorship program for Indigenous teachers and school leaders. Named in Cree by Elder Mary Cardinal Collins, wícihtotân means "let's help each other" and reflects a spirit of mutual support and community. This program creates a space for Indigenous educators to connect, share experiences and engage in professional development within a culturally affirming environment. The gatherings, held three times per year (two online and one in person), provide opportunities for mentorship, dialogue, knowledge exchange and collective growth.
- ★ A meeting was held on January 7th with the Parent Co-chair, to plan the upcoming Indigenous Parent Advisory Committee meetings. Proposed meeting dates included February 11, March 11, April 8 (optional quilting gathering) and April 22. Based on group feedback, meetings will include child-friendly activities during the business portions. The February 11th agenda features cultural teachings, smudging, a circle and discussions on family engagement initiatives and a Legacy of Hope quilt project. Parents and students will collaboratively create quilt squares to represent their families. Indigenous games will also be organized for students and led by community volunteers.
- ★ January's focus is on Inuit Culture and History, offering a deep dive into the lifestyle and beliefs of the Inuit people before European contact. This period saw the Inuit as completely self-sufficient, living in small, independent, nomadic groups and relying heavily on hunting, fishing, and gathering for survival. Their society was governed by customary law, notable for its informal nature, adaptability, and the use of social pressures to guide appropriate behaviour. The Inuit had a rich material culture primarily rooted in their hunting and fishing technologies. Spirituality played a significant role, with beliefs centered around animal and human-like spirits, including those of deceased relatives. Their lives were also influenced by various taboos that impacted many aspects of daily life, and a complex mythology that provided explanations for both the natural and supernatural worlds.

School Authority Operations and Resources

A superintendent directs school authority operations and strategically allocates resources in the interests of all students and in alignment with the school authority's goals and priorities.

- ★ In January, Sturgeon Public Schools introduced a new process document, *Managing Student Data Access: Roles and Responsibilities*, to align with Administrative Procedure 520: *Student Records Management*. The document outlined clear roles, timelines and responsibilities for principals, central office staff and HR personnel in managing and reviewing student data access. Highlights included annual and biannual reviews, role-specific access levels and collaboration with IT and HR for timely updates and security compliance. This initiative ensures adherence to FOIP standards and supports the Division's commitment to safeguarding student information effectively.
- ★ On January 8, 2024, Sturgeon Public Schools informed families about a [cybersecurity incident involving PowerSchool](#), the Division's provider of student and staff information systems. This breach impacted school divisions globally, including Sturgeon Public Schools. In a communication sent to families, it was confirmed that no financial or banking information, Social Insurance Numbers, or evidence of ongoing unauthorized activity had been compromised. PowerSchool engaged cybersecurity experts and law enforcement, including the FBI, to investigate and contain the breach, while Sturgeon Public Schools collaborated with PowerSchool and its insurance teams to ensure system security. Despite the incident, there was no disruption to school operations or classroom instruction. Families were assured of the Division's commitment to protecting personal information and were promised updates as further details became available.
- ★ Sturgeon Public Schools is proud to announce the launch of the [Building Futures Program](#) in Fall 2025, aligning with Alberta's focus on expanding career education opportunities. This innovative program integrates academic instruction with hands-on experiential learning, enabling students to actively participate in the construction of a residential home while earning high school credits. Aligned with Alberta Education's priorities and the Division's mission to foster engaging and collaborative learning environments, the program addresses workforce needs in skilled trades, promotes career exploration, and supports post-secondary transitions. Key benefits include the opportunity to work alongside trades professionals, acquire practical skills, earn up to 75 credits in a year and experience the pride of contributing to a tangible project. To ensure success, partnerships with industry leaders like San Rufo Homes have been established and preparations for logistics and recruitment are underway. The Division Principal visited Grade 9 classrooms during the week of January 20, 2025, to promote the program, engage with families and generate interest. This initiative underscored the Division's commitment to delivering impactful educational experiences that contribute to student success and Alberta's economic growth.

Supporting Effective Governance

A superintendent of schools as referred to in the Education Act, as chief executive officer of the board and chief education officer of the school authority, provides the board with information, advice and support required for the fulfillment of its governance role, and reports to the Minister on all matters required of the superintendent as identified in the Education Act and other provincial legislation.

- ★ A dedicated website has been designed to provide comprehensive information and resources for the [Trustee Election - 2025](#). This user-friendly platform offers guidance for prospective candidates, key election details and insights into the role of a Trustee. Additionally, a [Trustee Election Handbook](#) has been created to support individuals interested in running for election. The handbook serves as an essential resource, outlining the responsibilities, expectations and contributions of Trustees in shaping the future of education within the Division. Together, the website and handbook aim to inform and inspire candidates while promoting transparency and engagement in the election process.
- ★ The Superintendent meets with the Board Chair and Vice Chair to review agenda packages before the Committee of the Whole and Public Board meetings, as per Board policy.
- ★ The Superintendent provides Trustees with the monthly speaking points for School Council meetings and Stakeholders in general to support effective governance.
- ★ The Superintendent created a "Big Rocks" list for 2024-2025, highlighting key strategic planning items. These are standing agenda item topics at each Committee of the Whole meeting to support the Board's governance role.
- ★ The Superintendent remains committed to creating and distributing the "Trustee Talk" newsletter on a monthly basis, ensuring transparent communication across the Division. The newsletter is shared throughout the Division and published on the website and school web pages, providing updates and insights from the Trustees to keep the school community informed.

Status & Relationship to Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLQS):

This report aligns with the [SLQS](#) in the following way:

COMPETENCY:	(7) Supporting Effective Governance
INDICATORS:	a. establishing and sustaining a productive working relationship with the board, based on mutual trust, respect and integrity; c. ensuring that all students in the school authority have the opportunity to meet the standards of education set by the Minister of Education;

- d. ensuring that the board's plans, resource allocations, strategies and procedures lead to the achievement of its goals and priorities;
- e. ensuring that the board's fiscal and resource management is in accordance with all statutory, regulatory and board requirements; and
- h. ensuring the support, ongoing supervision and evaluation of all staff members in relation to their respective professional responsibilities.

Governance Implications:**Education Act**

Superintendent of schools

222 (1.1) Unless otherwise authorized under this Act, a board must appoint as a superintendent of schools only a teacher who holds a superintendent leadership certificate prescribed by the regulations and issued under this Act.

(3) The superintendent is the chief executive officer of the board and the chief education officer of the school division.

(4) The superintendent shall carry out the duties assigned to the superintendent by the board.

(5) The superintendent shall supervise the operation of schools and the provision of education programs in the school division, including, but not limited to, the following:

- (a) implementing education policies established by the Minister;
- (b) ensuring that students have the opportunity in the school division to meet the standards of education set by the Minister;
- (c) ensuring that the fiscal management of the school division by the treasurer or secretary-treasurer is in accordance with the terms or conditions of any grants received by the board under this Act or any other Act;
- (d) providing leadership in all matters relating to education in the school division.

Superintendent of Schools Regulation (Alberta Regulation 98/2019)

Qualifications

2(1) No individual may be appointed as a superintendent unless the individual has a superintendent leadership certificate issued under the *Certification of Teachers and Teacher Leaders Regulation* (AR 84/2019).

Policy 700: Superintendent of Schools

The Superintendent of Schools, as referred to in the Education Act, is the Chief Executive Officer of the Board of Trustees and Chief Education Officer of the Division. The Superintendent directly reports to the Board of Trustees and is accountable to the Board of Trustees on behalf of students and the public, for the total operation of the school system in a manner that is consistent with the requirements of the Education Act, Alberta Education regulations, the Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard, Board policies, Division vision, mission and values, and the Education Plan goals.

The Superintendent of Schools provides the Board with information, advice, and support required for the fulfillment of its governance role. The Superintendent plays a critical and collaborative role in supporting the leadership of the Board by advising, informing, and supporting the Board to address current and emerging issues. Specific Areas of Responsibility:

[Policy 701: Board Delegation of Authority](#)

The Superintendent is the Chief Executive Officer of the Board and the Chief Education Officer of the Division and is accountable to the Board of Trustees for the conduct and operations of the Division. All authority delegated to the staff of the Division is delegated through the Superintendent.

The Superintendent plays a critical collaborative role in supporting the leadership of the Board by advising, informing, and supporting the Board by recommending actions to address current and emerging issues in alignment with the mission, vision, and value statements of the Division

Administration is prepared to respond to questions at the January 29, 2025, Public Board meeting.

Attachment(s):

Not applicable.