

**Date:** February 26, 2025 **Agenda Item:** 8.5  
**To:** Board of Trustees  
**From:** Shawna Warren, Superintendent  
**Originator(s):** Shawna Warren, Superintendent  
**Subject:** **Superintendent Report**

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**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.

- ★ On February 3, Administration from Sturgeon Public met with the interim CAO from the Town of Gibbons to discuss the Board's #1 priority in the Capital Plan. This meeting fostered collaboration and strengthened the relationship between the school division and the local community.
- ★ The Northern Alberta Internet Child Exploitation (NAICE) Unit, in collaboration with Sturgeon Composite High School and Sturgeon County, hosted an evening information session for all parents and caregivers in Sturgeon County on February 19. The session focused on the realities of internet child exploitation in Alberta and strategies for open and collaborative discussions with children. Topics covered included the role of NAICE, internet and social media risks, child luring and sextortion, artificial intelligence, emerging online

platforms and partnerships to enhance online safety. The event aimed to educate and support families in keeping children safe in the digital world.

- ★ On February 26, Pink Shirt Day is celebrated across the Division to promote kindness, inclusivity and anti-bullying awareness. Students and staff wear pink to show their commitment to creating a respectful and supportive school environment.
- ★ On February 27th, 2025, SCHS will host a Grade 9 Tour Day, designed to provide an engaging and informative experience tailored to the needs of incoming students. Leading up to this event, the SCHS admin team visited schools in January to meet with Grade 9 students, explaining the high school process and what they could expect at SCHS. Additionally, parent evening sessions were held to welcome prospective families, offering a similar overview and fostering a sense of connection and support.
- ★ Throughout the next few months, schools across the Division will be hosting [Open Houses](#), providing families with the opportunity to connect with their school community, meet educators and explore learning environments. Open Houses play a vital role in building relationships, fostering a sense of belonging and ensuring families feel informed and engaged in their child's education. Attendees will have the chance to tour the school, ask questions and learn about the various programs and opportunities available for students.
- ★ 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.

- ★ Grade 6-12 school leaders were invited to attend a free online information session on the Digital Assessment Platform (DAP) hosted by ATLE in collaboration with Alberta Education Provincial Assessment. The session, held on February 12, 2025, provided updates on digital assessment implementation timelines, introduced new features and highlighted upcoming changes. Participants also had an opportunity to ask questions and have discussions.
- ★ The Parent Information Evening on Wednesday, February 19th provided an overview of the [Building Futures Program](#), which will launch for Grade 10 students in the 2025/2026 school year. Attendees (50 families registered to attend) learned about the program’s unique blend of academic coursework and hands-on experience in residential construction, allowing students to build a house while earning high school credits. The session featured presentations from the Director of Building Futures, teachers and current students, offering insights into the program’s benefits and structure. Parents had the opportunity to ask

questions and gain a deeper understanding of transportation logistics, course requirements and career pathways associated with the program.

- ★ Sturgeon Public Schools received a request for nominations of teachers to mark the June 2025 Diploma Examinations. Schools were asked to nominate qualified teachers by February 21, 2025, for superintendent approval before submission to Alberta Education by February 28, 2025. Participation in the marking process provides teachers with professional development opportunities, including experience with criterion-based assessment standards and collaboration with subject-area specialists. Special emphasis was placed on recruiting teachers qualified to assess French-language diploma exams to ensure a consistent and fair evaluation.
- ★ High schools have shared information about the upcoming Career Connector: Heavy Equipment Operations session for youth aged 16-24. This free event, held at [Interior Heavy Equipment Training School \(IHE School\)](#) in Sturgeon County on February 27 from 4 to 8 p.m., offers hands-on experience and career insights into the heavy equipment operating sector. Attendees will engage in in-class learning, hands-on equipment use and discussions with industry professionals. The event also includes a free food truck and networking opportunities, providing students with valuable exposure to potential career paths.

### **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.

- ★ Teacher's Convention took place on February 6-7, 2025, providing educators with opportunities for professional learning, collaboration, and growth. The event featured various sessions and workshops designed to enhance teaching practices and support student success.
- ★ February 2025, the Superintendent read "*The Pruning Principle: Mastering the Art of Strategic Subtraction Within Education*" by Dr. Simon Breakspear and Michael Rosenbrock. Published in November 2024, this book introduces a transformative approach to educational leadership by advocating for strategic subtraction to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in schools. Drawing inspiration from horticultural practices, the authors suggest that, much like pruning in gardening, deliberately cutting back non-essential tasks and initiatives can lead to better outcomes and reduce strain on resources and staff.

The book outlines a comprehensive framework for implementing this principle, emphasizing three key phases:

- Critically Examine: Assess the current landscape to identify areas where resources are being overextended.
- Consciously Remove: Thoughtfully eliminate non-essential tasks, ensuring that the process is handled with care to maintain organizational harmony.
- Carefully Nurture: Focus on cultivating and sustaining the areas that have the most significant impact on educational outcomes.

The Superintendent will be using this framework as a tool to lead out professional development with the Sr. leadership team and with school-based leadership. School-based leaders are familiar with Dr. Breakspear's *Learning Sprints* and many have been using them for years as an effective professional development framework for professional learning communities with teachers.

★ February 2025, the Superintendent read "*The Essential School Board Book: Better Governance in the Age of Accountability*" by Nancy Walser. The book highlights best practices from effective school boards and offers practical strategies for governance that contribute to successful schools. Nancy Walser provides a data-driven analysis of how school boards can move beyond traditional oversight to actively support student success. She draws on case studies of high-performing school boards and identifies key characteristics that set them apart.

- Key Themes:
  - School Boards Matter – Contrary to the belief that school boards have little impact, research suggests that effective boards significantly influence student outcomes.
  - Focus on Student Achievement – Successful boards prioritize policies and decisions that directly improve student learning.
  - Data-Driven Decision Making – Effective boards rely on data and research to guide their policies and evaluate school performance.
  - Collaboration with Superintendents – A strong, professional partnership between the board and the superintendent is essential for smooth governance.
  - Community Engagement – Engaging parents, educators, and the broader community fosters trust and alignment with educational goals.
  - Policy and Leadership Development – Board members need continuous professional development to understand their role and refine governance practices.
- Takeaways:
  - Board members must shift from micromanaging to setting clear goals and holding the system accountable.
  - High-performing school boards cultivate a shared vision, use evidence-based strategies, and ensure that resources align with student achievement.

- Trust, transparency, and communication are foundational to effective governance.
- ★ Sturgeon County offered two spots for SPS staff members to participate in their Supervisory Development Program for the May 2025 – May 2026 term. This year-long program was designed for supervisors and leaders looking to enhance their skills in team building, conflict resolution, performance management and other key leadership areas. The application deadline was February 14, 2025.
- ★ On February 25, the Superintendent attended the *2024 Education Law Year in Review*, presented by McLennan Ross in Edmonton. This professional development session will cover significant legal cases from 2024 affecting the K-12 education sector, including labour and employment law, human rights, privacy, special education, school board governance and student-related issues. The session will provide practical insights into how these legal developments will impact school authorities in 2025.

### **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.

- ★ February Admin Council, Principals and central office leaders spent dedicated time just focusing on business operations. The meeting, just like the January Admin Council meeting, was shortened to one hour and held virtually to keep our leaders in our school buildings during Labour Action.
- ★ To “promote in the school community a common understanding of and support for the school authority’s goals, priorities, and strategic initiatives”, the Superintendent ensures all communication about Labour Action is clear and factual. All relevant information is uploaded to the website and stakeholders are directed to the website for most up-to-date information.
- ★ To promote innovation and continuous improvement, the Superintendent continues to hold Leadership Strategic Planning meetings every few months with central office leadership. The most recent meeting was on February 24, 2025. Based on the book “The Pruning Principle”, the focus was "our takeaways from Labour Action" - Pruning Principle questions: 1. What aspects of our current approach might be unnecessary or overcomplicating? 2. What could be taken away to achieve the desired outcome? 3. How can we streamline our approach to focus only on what truly matters and still get most of the upside? 4. Are there any resources or tools that we are using that might be redundant or unneeded? Or are there tools or resources that we should be using that would help us do less better?

- ★ To reinforce common understanding, the Superintendent's weekly "From the Desk of the Superintendent" always includes a tailored message informed by research on effective learning, teaching and leadership that reinforces the Division's vision, mission and values.

### **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.

- ★ The school division dedicated the month of February to focusing on Indigenous Literature and Authors, providing resources tailored to each grade level. By curating a selection of literature and resources from Indigenous authors, the Division is actively enriching the curriculum, offering students and educators valuable perspectives and insights. This focus not only broadens students' understanding and appreciation of Indigenous cultures but also supports the development of a more inclusive and comprehensive educational environment.

### **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.

- ★ Sturgeon Public Schools offered training sessions on SchoolEngage, the new application launched for registration collection. The training, conducted via Google Meet, lasted approximately one hour. All Principals were strongly encouraged to attend one of the sessions to gain essential information for the successful implementation of SchoolEngage. Two identical sessions were held: one on Tuesday, February 11 and another on Thursday, February 13.
- ★ [Registration for the 2025-2026 school year](#) opened on February 18, 2025. Current families were notified through PowerSchool, and the school registration process is actively being promoted on the Division website and through various social media platforms.
- ★ The Division will expand Legal Public School to accommodate Grade 6 students within the school beginning the 2025-2026 school year. This expansion reflects a commitment to ensure that students receive quality education without the need to leave their community.
- ★ The [Transportation Services](#) flyer for the 2025-2026 school year registration was updated and provided to all schools to share transportation information with new and existing parents. Two versions were created: a print version with QR codes for in-person distribution and a digital version with links for electronic sharing. Schools have traditionally used these flyers to inform Pre-K and Kindergarten families.



- ★ The school division recently launched the online Recruitment Request Process, streamlining staff hiring. Staff can now submit recruitment requests through the designated website, track their status and receive applicant updates.
- ★ The Town of Redwater proposed new marketing and advertising initiatives through Facebook and Instagram, aiming to target specific audiences in larger urban municipalities for teacher recruitment. Sturgeon Public Schools expressed interest in exploring this opportunity for teacher attraction.
- ★ The 2024 Year-End Report for the Wastewater Lagoon was received from KANA Environmental Consulting. The report outlined the ongoing contract with KANA Environmental, which has managed lagoon operations for Sturgeon Public School Division since May 2021. Monthly inspections were conducted, with no emergency situations or complaints reported. The annual report included inspection records and confirmed compliance with operational standards.
- ★ As we prepare for the 2025-2026 Registration process, Principals have been engaging with their school communities about potential future programming. One example of this is Morinville Public School sent out a survey to gauge interest in a full-time kindergarten program with a STEM focus. Seventeen families expressed interest in registering their child for the program. Based on this response, the school confirmed that the program would move forward for the 2025/2026 school year.
- ★ Sturgeon Public Schools has partnered with both Perkopolis and Chalkboard Plus to provide staff with exclusive discounts and special offers. These national perks programs offer free memberships to all employees with a valid school board email, ensuring access to various savings and services.
- ★ Sturgeon Public Schools' Transportation Services revamped the [Bus Stop Map](#) tool for in-town bus stop locations. This updated tool allows parents to easily identify the nearest community bus stop to their home when considering transportation services.

### **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 few months ago, *Business View Magazine* invited submissions for their Education Section and inquired about our interest in participating. The school division proceeded with a



proposal, participated in an interview and was ultimately selected as a featured division. The published article is now [available](#) in the magazine.

- ★ On February 10, 2025, the Board participated in a Professional Development Day led by Brian Callaghan. This session focused on Trustee Code of Conduct and Trustee Remuneration, providing valuable insights and strategies to support the Board in its governance and leadership responsibilities.
- ★ At the February 12, 2025, Committee of the Whole meeting, a consultant assisted the Board in evaluating the Superintendent for the 2024-2025 school year. This evaluation process focused on the Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLQS), ensuring alignment with legislation, Board Vision, Mission and Values and leadership expectations. The session provided the Board with insights to support the Superintendent's ongoing growth and development.
- ★ The survey on the Real Property Governance Act (Bill 13) was completed to gather feedback on the legislation's impact on school boards. ASBA sought input to ensure that legislative changes would not affect the sale of properties where proceeds had been designated for educational purposes. Responses remained confidential and were used in aggregate to guide ASBA's advocacy efforts. The deadline for submissions was Wednesday, February 12, 2025.
- ★ The Alberta School Business Officials Association (ASBOA) hosted an onboarding session titled "There's Been an Election... Now What?", which staff from the Division virtually attended. The session covered legislative requirements, wise practices and board governance procedures following a school board election. Topics included trustee eligibility, financial disclosure, organizational board meetings, conflict of interest policies and communication protocols. Attendees also participated in discussions on meeting operations, fiduciary responsibilities and a mock board meeting to enhance understanding of governance processes.
- ★ The Superintendent watched the recording of the virtual session "Speakers' Corner with Jane Halford on Board Dynamics." Hosted by ASBA, this session focused on enhancing governance practices and improving board cohesion and collaboration to drive better outcomes for schools and communities. A dedicated question-and-answer period was included and the session was recorded for members' access via LearnASBA.
- ★ The Superintendent attended the virtual session "Speakers' Corner with Michael Solowan and Terry Gunderson on Trustee Codes of Conduct" on February 24. Hosted by ASBA, this session provided an opportunity to learn about the requirements for Trustee Codes of Conduct and the application of sanctions under Policy 4 and Policy 4 Appendix A in the G-TEC Policy Model.

- ★ Alberta Education has responded to the [Board's December advocacy letter](#) regarding improvements to the provincial data collection and reporting process. In response to school division requests, the 2024/25 Alberta Education Assurance survey will now include electronic distribution of parent random access codes, a step that aligns with our recommendation to modernize survey distribution and improve participation rates. While this is a positive development, the Board continues to advocate for further enhancements to survey design, data timeliness and interpretation to ensure the information collected effectively supports student learning and division planning.
- ★ 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 Municipal Elections Forms from Alberta.ca were received this month and the SPS website was updated to include the required nomination forms.
- ★ 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 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:

<b>COMPETENCY:</b>	(7) Supporting Effective Governance
<b>INDICATORS:</b>	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 February 26, 2025, Public Board meeting.

**Attachment(s):**

Not applicable.