



The Grade 4/5 class from Vanscoy School made this Anti-Bullying quilt for Pink Shirt Day!

- photo credit: Vanscoy School, on Twitter

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**PRAIRIE SPIRIT
SCHOOL DIVISION**

Learners for Life

Located within Treaty 6 Territory

Blaine Lake project moves ahead

At its regular meeting on March 15, the Board approved the awarding of the new Blaine Lake school project to 1080 Architecture. The new school for Blaine Lake was announced in June as part of the provincial government’s economic stimulus funding.

It is expected that the design process will take approximately 12 months with an additional 16 - 18 months for construction. The project should go to tender for construction by March 2022.

The Town of Blaine Lake has committed to partnering with the school division on this project.

The new school in Blaine Lake is expected to be open for students by fall, 2023.

Local teacher agreement

The Board ratified the Local Implementation and Negotiation Committee (LINC) agreement with Prairie Spirit teachers at the March 15 Board meeting.

The LINC agreement covers locally determined benefits, such as personal leave, preparation time and professional development, etc.

This new agreement will be in place until 2023.

Division pandemic funding update

The Board of Education received a financial update from Prairie Spirit administration at the February 22 and March 15 Board meetings.

The provincial government has completed three phases of pandemic funding for school divisions.

Prairie Spirit submitted funding applications for all three phases of funding and received funding for Prairie Spirit schools in each phase.

The Division’s pandemic funding has been used for expenses including the purchase of personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitization supplies (chemicals and cleaning supplies), the creation of Spirit eLearning (online school) for teachers and technology, additional caretaking hours at school, etc.

Prairie Spirit’s online school

The Board received an update on Spirit eLearning, Prairie Spirit’s online school, at the February 22 Board meeting.

Peggy Mattila-Bains, Coordinator and Kristen Mathison, Acting Principal of Spirit eLearning, presented about this new school, which offers online learning for students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. There are 280 students enrolled in the school this year.

This school offers a unique and innovative approach to online learning. Students have established contact times with their teacher and classmates throughout the day. “We can still sit “side-by-side” and work to support individual learning needs,” Mattila-Bains said.

High school students may take classes from Spirit eLearning, while remaining connected with their home school.

Mattila-Bains explained that students and parents are encouraged to contact their local school if they want more information about online courses through Spirit eLearning.

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Mental health supports in Prairie Spirit schools

The Board received a presentation on mental health supports in Prairie Spirit from Fay Cassidy, Learning Superintendent and Diane Kendall, Coordinator, at the Board meeting on February 22.

Mental health is defined as:

- Successful mental activity
- Productive daily activities
- Fulfilling personal relationships
- Adaptive to change
- Ability to cope with stress

Prairie Spirit has a team of dedicated and highly trained school counsellors who work with students, Cassidy explained.

“It is astounding the level of professionalism and expertise we have in our counselling team and Learning Support Services,” she added. Counsellors champion mental health literacy in schools.

The Division has developed a Mental Health Framework with strategies to support students and schools. The

Saskatchewan Health Authority has used Prairie Spirit’s framework when planning for Mental Health supports and programming with other school divisions in the province.

Grade 9 teachers in the Division are trained in Mental Health Literacy curriculum, which is designed to give Health and Life skills teachers lessons to effectively address mental health.

The Division is using pandemic funding to support a virtual mental health counsellor. More information about how to access this counsellor will be shared with schools and families in April.

Kendall reported that connections with parents have increased as relationships continue to be the focus during the pandemic.

“Thank you for being leaders in the province in many ways as we support the big and small learners in our school division,” said Lori Jeschke, Director of Education.

Students skating on a rink near Blaine Lake Composite School in February.

- photo credit: Tirzah Reilkoff on Twitter



Prairie Spirit Board of Education

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Trustee Highlight

Bonnie Hope has served as Board of Education Trustee for the City of Martensville since 2009. Prior to becoming a Trustee, she was involved in her local SCC.



Bonnie was elected Board Vice-Chair at the Board’s organizational meeting in November, the first woman to serve in Board leadership.

When Bonnie was first elected as a Trustee, Martensville had just become incorporated as a city and was experiencing unprecedented population growth. As a result, she brought an urban context to a “rural” school board.

She was the inaugural Chair of the Prairie Spirit Schools Foundation (PSSF) Board, serving in that role for five years. She continues to serve as a PSSF Board member.

She was Prairie Spirit’s representative for the Public Section for six years, and served as Chair of this organization for 2017/18. During that time, the Court of Queen’s Bench ruled in favour of Good Spirit School Division in the Theodore Case.

“Highlights from my Trustee work would be every graduation celebration I have been invited to attend,” she said. “This is the goal line for those involved in the business of K-12 education, and it is an honour to be a part of it.”

Being involved in the planning and construction of six new schools in Prairie Spirit, including two in Martensville, is another highlight, she added.

“In our Board governance work, as we learn to work together as a team and make decisions, I also learn and grow as a person; this work models *Learning for Life*,” she said.

Bonnie worked with the Saskatchewan Health Authority for 30 years and retired in 2020. She now supports a physician’s clinical practice at Royal University Hospital.