

DATE: February 28, 2017

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Student Senate 2016–2017 Work Plan

ORIGINATOR: Nancy Petersen, Acting for Executive Director

RESOURCE STAFF: Marnie Beaudoin, Regan Holt, Bill Howe, Sean Jones, Karen Mills

REFERENCE: [Public Board meeting October 4, 2016 item 2](#)

ISSUE

The Student Senate is presenting to the Board of Trustees an update of their work towards the completion of their annual work plan.

BACKGROUND

At the public board meeting on October 4, 2016, Student Trustees, on behalf of the Student Senate, brought forward their work plan addressing four priority topic areas identified for the 2016–2017 school year. The topic areas were established collectively by the Student Senators and were based on input from students from across District schools.

The priority topics areas are:

1. **Student Health and Wellness:** reflecting alignment to Priority 2, Goal One: *A Focus on Well-being and Student Citizenship*. This priority topic area received the greatest weighting from the Student Senate with stress, mental health and preventative supports being some of the key concepts that emerged.
2. **Curriculum:** reflecting alignment to Priority 1, Goal Two: *Success for Every Student*. This priority topic area generated discussion regarding the importance of student voice in Alberta Education’s development of future Kindergarten to Grade 12 provincial curriculum, as well as emphasizing the importance of learning experiences that are meaningful and engaging to students.
3. **Preparation for Life Beyond School:** reflecting alignment to Priority 1, Goal Three: *Success Beyond Schooling*. This priority topic area reflected the strong awareness and connection from students between what they do in school now and what they will need to be successful once they complete Grade 12.
4. **Successful Learning in School:** reflecting alignment to Priority 1, Goal Two: *Success for Every Student*. This priority topic area generated discussion regarding what students learn in school today, with flexibility and strong teacher-student relationships emerging as key themes.

CURRENT SITUATION

In the fall, The Student Senate struck committees and appointed students as Committee Leads in support of three of the four topic areas. Each committee identified its core activities to accomplish by the end of June, 2017. The work of each committee is supported by District staff with content expertise in the priority topic area. The following activities are currently underway for each committee:

1. **Student Health and Wellness:** The Student Health and Wellness Committee is planning and hosting a mental health conference for up to 100 District students in April. The goals of the event include providing student leaders with opportunities to promote healthy school cultures, increasing mental health literacy, and enhancing students' understanding that "healthy brains make healthy learners".

In addition to defining the direction and vision for this youth event, the Student Health and Wellness committee has arranged a number of logistical details related to this event, including securing space at a District high school, confirming a keynote speaker and organizing volunteer roles.

2. **Curriculum:** The Curriculum Committee is advocating to Alberta Education to include student input into curriculum development. To this end, the committee is seeking the input of District students about current curriculum and the curriculum development process.

In the fall, the Student Senate was supported by the Curriculum and Resource Support unit to encourage students' participation in the Alberta Education survey about provincial curriculum change. To build on this, the committee is developing a survey to collect District students' perspectives about current curriculum and the curriculum development process.

3. **Preparation for Life Beyond School:** The Preparation for Life Beyond School Committee is seeking to identify questions District students have about life beyond school and provide responses from experts to these questions. The questions will be organized into two primary categories: post-secondary education and general life skills. The committee is developing a survey to elicit these questions from high school students across the District.

The fourth priority topic area identified earlier in the year by Student Senate was **Successful Learning in School**. As the work plan was being developed and implemented, it was recognized that the work of the three committees were all contributing towards successful learning in school. It was therefore determined by the Student Senate that Successful Learning in School would be addressed through the work of the other three priority topic area committees.

NEXT STEPS

To work towards completing their projects in their priority topic areas, the Student Senators will undertake the following actions:

- The Student Health and Wellness Committee will continue to organize the mental health conference for students, including establishing a registration system, advertising the event and finalizing session details for presenters and participants.
- The Curriculum Committee will finalize the curriculum survey, distribute it to students through the Student Senate and compile the data to share with Alberta Education.
- The Preparation for Life Beyond School Committee will gather information from District students through an online survey about their questions about life beyond school. The committee will review the results to identify the key questions students have about life beyond school, and begin to develop resources, such as short videos, to provide responses to these questions.

KEY POINTS

- The Student Senate established priority topics areas that are being addressed through the following:
 - The Student Health and Wellness committee is organizing a student conference on the topic of Mental Health and Well-being.
 - The Curriculum Committee is advocating to the Minister of Education to integrate student input and feedback into curriculum development

- The Preparation for Life Beyond School committee is developing a range of student supports to help them transition successfully to post-secondary education, and support students in the development of life skills.
- A fourth priority topic, Successful Learning in School, is being addressed through the work of the committees in the other three priority topic areas.
- The Student Trustees, on behalf of the Student Senate, will report to the Board of Trustees a final summary of their progress around the outcomes related to each priority topic area at a June public board meeting.

ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I	N/A
APPENDIX I	N/A

MB:mb