

AMALGAMATION UPDATE

A NEWSLETTER ABOUT MANITOBA SCHOOL DIVISION AMALGAMATIONS

Volume No. 3

June 3, 2002

Significant headway continues to be made as we prepare for the new arrangement of school divisions in Manitoba. Key areas of progress being highlighted in this report include the choice of divisional names, structures for the governing board, and the appointment of senior administrators.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to school trustees, senior administrators and staff for their outstanding work in ensuring that Manitoba students benefit from a successful transition to these new school divisions.

The provincial government has also taken a number of important steps in the last several weeks to support the amalgamation process. Regulations are now in place establishing the names, boundaries, and ward structures that have been chosen for the new divisions.

Bill 14, *The Public Schools Modernization Act*, has now received first reading in the Manitoba Legislature. Second reading is now in progress. The purpose of Bill 14 is to ensure that the amalgamation process proceeds smoothly, and with the best educational interests of students in mind. I am optimistic that this bill will soon be reviewed by a Legislative Committee and will then receive final passage.

Bill 14 amends *The Public Schools Act* to make all of the changes that were indicated when the amalgamation process was announced last November. It provides for the establishment of interim boards; prohibits school closures for a three year period following amalgamation; requires that a school board have between five and nine trustees; requires school boards to hold annual consultations regarding their budgets; enables limits to be placed on the administrative costs of school divisions; and revises the mandate of the Board of Reference. The Bill also establishes a process for resolving issues about the transfer of assets, liabilities and employees from former divisions to new ones.

For most boards, the next step in the transitional process involves the establishment of an interim board. The amalgamating boards are expected to recommend the composition of the interim board. Boards may nominate any number of their current trustees to serve on the interim board. The interim board will be a legally constituted school board under the Public Schools Act, and must exercise the powers assigned to it in accordance with that Act.

I am confident that the current boards, and the interim boards, once established, will continue to work to ensure that the transitional process is well managed so that the affairs of the new school divisions are transferred in good order to the school boards which will be elected in October.

Honourable Drew Caldwell, Minister
Education, Training and Youth



School Division and District Progress Report

The Border Land School Division

(Rhineland, Boundary, Sprague and south Red River)

Agreement has been reached on a nine trustee board. The interim board will also have nine members. Senior administrative appointments include Superintendent Don Wiebe and Secretary-Treasurer Bryan Nichols. The board office will be in Altona.

The Frontier School Division

(with Lynn Lake, Snow Lake, Leaf Rapids and Churchill School Districts, and Rorketon and Camperville)

Frontier will retain its current board structure and senior administrative team. School committees will be put in place in each community that joins Frontier.

The Louis Riel School Division

(St. Boniface and St. Vital)

Agreement has been reached on a nine trustee board. Senior administrative appointments include Superintendent/CEO Terry Borys and Secretary-Treasurer René Appelmans.

The Mountain View School Division

(Duck Mountain, Dauphin, Intermountain and Pine River)

Agreement has been reached on a nine trustee board. Senior administrative appointments include Superintendent Barry Nadolny and Secretary-Treasurer Bart Michaleski.

The Park West School Division

(Pelly Trail and Birdtail River)

Agreement has been reached on a nine trustee board. Senior administrative appointments include Tony Martin as CEO and Gerald Puhach as Secretary-Treasurer. The existing boards have agreed to make these appointments effective July 1, 2002.

The Pembina Trails School Division

(Assiniboine South and Fort Garry)

Agreement has been reached on a nine trustee board. Selection of the division's senior administrative team is under way.

The Prairie Rose School Division

(White Horse Plain and Midland)

Agreement has been reached on a nine trustee board. Senior administrative appointments include Superintendent/CEO Fred Colvin and Secretary-Treasurer Agnes Gaultier.

The Prairie Spirit School Division

(Mountain and Prairie Spirit)

Agreement has been reached on a nine trustee board. Senior administrative appointments include Superintendent Lorne Miller and Secretary-Treasurer Jody Parsonage. The board office will be in Pilot Mound.

The Red River Valley School Division

(Morris-Macdonald and the north area of Red River)

Agreement has been reached on a seven trustee board. The joint administrative team of Superintendent Walt Friesen and Director of Finance Peter Gordon will remain in place during the transition period.



School Division and District Progress Report (continued)

The River East Transcona School Division

(Transcona and River East)

Agreement has been reached on a nine trustee board. John Carlyle has been appointed Superintendent of the new division. The process for selection of a Secretary-Treasurer has begun.

The Southwest Horizon School Division

(Antler River and Souris Valley)

Agreement has been reached on a nine trustee board. Selection of a senior administrative team is under way.

The Sunrise School Division

(Springfield and Agassiz)

Agreement has been reached on a nine trustee board. Ken Bell has been appointed Superintendent of the new division; the process for selection of a Secretary-Treasurer is proceeding. This amalgamation is proceeding without the School Districts of Pine Falls and Whiteshell at this time.

Limits on Administrative Costs

The Minister has approved a number of FRAME Committee recommendations concerning administration definitions and other related matters. The most significant change is a change to the reporting of Curriculum Consulting and Development expenditures whereby the administration limit will apply only to the administration component of the program. To accommodate the reporting of these administration costs, a new FRAME program will be established. Other Curriculum

Consulting and Development costs will not fall within the limits set for school division expenditures on administration.

All changes to FRAME were recently communicated to school divisions in a letter from the Deputy Minister of Education, Training and Youth dated May 16, 2002. Please refer to this letter for a comprehensive summary of the changes to FRAME.

Differential Mill Rates

By now amalgamating divisions should have concluded decision making on any need to maintain differential mill rates for the three-year period from 2003 to 2005 allowed under The Public Schools Act. In order to ensure that the Provincial Municipal Assessor is aware of those needs, and the corresponding requirement to maintain the property assessment base consistent with the

original boundaries, school divisions planning to maintain differential mill rates are requested to advise the Provincial Municipal Assessor in writing at:

Mr. Mark Boreskie
Provincial Municipal Assessor
Manitoba Intergovernmental Affairs
500 - 800 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg MB R3G 0N4



Manitoba Education, Training and Youth contacts

Questions about the amalgamation initiative should be directed to:

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