

BOARD OF EDUCATION

INFORMATION REPORT

DATE: November 8, 2016
TO: Board of Education
FROM: Maureen Carradice, Director of Human Resources
RE: **STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATES**

The following is a Strategic Plan Update as it relates to the following priorities:

Priority	Enhancing the culture, climate and learning environment to promote a sense of belonging, diversity, well-being and safety. (Social Emotional Wellness)
Goal	To foster a positive, respectful workplace culture and sense of community.
1. Pro D / In-service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide staff with learning opportunities to enhance an understanding of practices that foster social and emotional competence and well-being 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Establish a District Wellness Committee with representatives of all employee groups to create a Strategic Plan for staff social emotional wellness b) Create report of current strategies that support staff social emotional wellness c) Provide 3 Pro D sessions for all leaders regarding social emotional wellness d) Utilize BCPSEA resources to support Pro-D In-service
2. Staff Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support all leaders in understanding staff engagement and its impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Through District Wellness Committee, create and circulate an electronic anonymous employee satisfaction survey b) Identify factors that will positively impact staff engagement c) All leaders to receive 3 Pro D sessions regarding culture building and staff engagement

Priority	Aligning and allocating resources, equitably, responsibly and effectively, to support goals and key initiatives. (Resources)
Goal	To align resources to efficiently and effectively execute the strategic plan.
3. Attendance Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To facilitate attendance improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Implement a comprehensive attendance support program consistent with provincial initiatives b) Advice and guidance provided to policy development encouraging a culture of positive work attendance

The Social Emotional Wellness Priority and the Attendance Support strategy within the Resources Priority will be jointly addressed under the umbrella of the Chilliwack School District Wellness, Engagement and

Disability Support (WEDS) program. The overarching goal of the WEDS program is the enhancement of a positive workplace culture in which all staff feel valued and, consequently, missed when absent. WEDS is also aimed at assisting employees in overcoming barriers to attending work regularly and productively.

Broad-based employment research tells us that there are three significant aspects to a positive workplace culture. They are: recognition, opportunities for growth, and fun. In order to identify which of these aspects are functioning successfully within the Chilliwack School District employment culture and which are not successful, an Employee Satisfaction Survey will be crafted, circulated and analyzed to determine specific aspects of the culture that can be enhanced. While specific Chilliwack School District employment data is gathered and analyzed, all leadership staff are being trained in employment engagement strategies and opportunities are being provided for leaders to develop skills in recognizing and engaging all employees.

WELLNESS COMMITTEE

A Committee consisting of support staff employees who are members of CUPE, teachers, managers and principals and vice principals has been formed. It is co-chaired by the district's two (2) Human Resources Managers for Wellness. The purpose of the Committee is to promote health and wellness within the District. The Committee has three (3) primary initial objectives: formation and distribution of an Employee Satisfaction Survey; establishing and collecting a catalogue of the wellness initiatives occurring in the district; and creating a Community Resource Guide. It is anticipated that the Employee Satisfaction Survey will be circulated in January and February 2017 for collection and analysis in March and April 2017. The Committee has begun work on cataloguing wellness activities occurring at schools and sites in the district. A foundation for the Community Resource Guide is being developed at the provincial level and will be enhanced by the Committee with local community resources. The Committee members have enthusiastically embraced the role they have been asked to perform.

ATTENDANCE SUPPORT AND DISABILITY MANAGEMENT

For a number of years, district staff in human resources have been working with unions and individual employees to facilitate returns to work from extended medical absences and to assist employees with disabilities in maintaining attendance at work. The Human Resource Managers for Wellness are assisting employees and medical practitioners in creating return to work programs that include part-time returns, graduated returns and accommodated returns to work. Some examples of the accommodations that have been provided include provision of voice amplifications systems for individuals with voice disabilities and sit/stand work stations for individuals with back injuries. The work that has been done in this area has had a significant impact on minimizing absences and ensuring early returns to work. It is expected that a heightened focus in this area will continue to positively impact attendance.

Chilliwack School District was accepted into the second phase of the provincial attendance support program. The provincial program has provided an overall template for Chilliwack's program as well as providing print resources and staff development presenters.

Since May 2015 all absences for all staff have been registered in the district's absence management system. Baseline data from the past year is currently being analyzed with assistance from the district's software provider, SRB, as well as the district's benefit manager, Morneau Shepell. It is anticipated that absence statistics for all employees, peer groups, schools and sites and for the district as a whole will be finalized by early in 2017. Provincial and district absence averages will also be available by the end of 2016 through B.C. Public School Employers' Association (BCPSEA).

Wellness, Engagement and Disability Support has been presented to all principals and vice principals as well as all managers through two (2) staff development sessions, one (1) of which was presented by a representative of BCPSEA. The role of the supervisor in the WEDS program has been defined as follows. Supervisors will be provided with absence data for those individuals whom they supervise as well as absence averages for each employee group. The Human Resources Department will identify the employees who have the highest rates of absenteeism in the district and will work with supervisors to develop a plan of consultation with those individuals. In consideration of the fact that the supervisor has the closest relationship with staff, supervisors will be asked to meet with those employees with the highest rates of absenteeism in a supportive, helpful manner. The objective of the initial supervisor conversation is to assist employees in identifying when they have excessive rates of absenteeism and assisting them to identify the barriers that are preventing their attendance at work. Supervisors have also been advised that Human Resources will provide information about resources to assist employees in overcoming attendance issues. Should initial supervisory conversations not achieve change in attendance, staff in Human Resources will become involved in counselling and supporting employees to assist them in regular attendance at work.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Two (2) professional development sessions were provided for leadership staff in the fall of 2015 to begin a conversation about the school district's employment culture and to brainstorm effective engagement strategies that are in place in the district. In spring 2016 a session providing information on the impact of employee engagement as well as practical strategies to engage employees was presented to all leaders in the district. Sessions on the supervisor's role in attendance support have also been presented and practical skill development sessions aimed at conducting conversations in relation to attendance concerns as well as other difficult supervisory issues are planned throughout the winter and spring of 2016/2017.

NEXT STEPS

Supervisors will begin conversations with those employees with the highest rates of absenteeism. Human Resources staff will continue to assist in providing resource information to help employees overcome barriers for regular attendance at work. They will also continue to work with disabled employees to create workplace accommodations to maintain individuals' presence at work.

Employee Satisfaction Survey data will be analyzed in order to identify other strategies for implementation to enhance employee engagement in the district.

Attendance averages from the 2015/2016 school year will be used as a basis of comparison with future years to determine the impact of the attendance support program.