

Chapter 40

St. Paul's Roman Catholic School Division No. 20—Promoting Good Student Health and Physical Fitness

1.0 MAIN POINTS

Under *The Education Act, 1995*, boards of school divisions are responsible for the administration and management of schools, with oversight from the Ministry of Education. The Act specifies that schools are to provide for “instruction and activities to promote the good health and physical fitness” of students.¹ The Education sector strategic plan includes the following as a statement of strategic intent for students: “I am ready to learn—I am safe, healthy and hopeful.”² Good student health and physical fitness directly supports this strategic intent.

This chapter reports, for the 12-month period ending June 30, 2015, St. Paul’s Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 20 (GSCS) had effective processes to promote good student health and physical fitness, except it needs to:

- Set and communicate its expectations for promoting student physical activity
- Provide principals with criteria to help guide school-level decisions on student health and physical fitness initiatives
- Monitor partnerships and community relationships related to student health and physical fitness initiatives
- Report to its Board on the performance of its student health and physical fitness initiatives

In addition, GSCS needs to review and update its policies on a regular basis.

We encourage other school divisions to use the information in this chapter to assess their own processes to promote good student health and physical fitness.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Promoting good health and physical fitness in schools is important for improving health and education outcomes,³ and ultimately contributing to achieving the Government of Saskatchewan’s goal of securing a better quality of life for Saskatchewan people.⁴

Research indicates that students who are physically active and properly nourished are better learners.⁵ Healthy diets and physical activity are well-established factors that

¹ *The Education Act, 1995*, section 188.

² <http://education.gov.sk.ca/educations-strategic-sector-plan-matrix-2014-2020> (4 May 2015).

³ Government of Saskatchewan, *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth: Vision 2020 and Beyond*, p. 29.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁵ Veuglers and Schwartz, *Comprehensive School Health in Canada*, in Canadian Journal of Public Health, *Supportive Environments for Learning: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity within Comprehensive School Health*, July/August 2010, p. s 7.



reduce the risk of obesity, heart disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes.⁶ Additional benefits of a healthy lifestyle include:

- › Decreased behavioral problems
- › Increased ability to focus
- › Increased self-esteem and positive mental health
- › Increased social connection⁷

Promoting and supporting the healthy growth and development of children and youth is a shared responsibility among family, school, and other agencies. Schools serve as an important access point for nutrition, education, healthy eating practices, and the modeling of healthy lifestyles.⁸

Boards of school divisions are responsible for exercising general supervision and control over the schools in the school division, and approving administrative procedures for the internal organization, management, and supervision of schools. *The Education Act, 1995* (Act) states: “Every school shall make provision for instruction and activities to promote the good health and physical fitness of its pupils.”⁹

2.1 Ministry Guidelines for Promoting Nutrition and Physical Activity

The Ministry of Education is a member of the Pan Canadian Joint Consortium for School Health. This is a partnership of 25 Ministries of Health and Education across Canada working to promote a comprehensive school health approach to student wellness and achievement.¹⁰ Comprehensive school health is “an internationally recognized framework for supporting improvements in students’ educational outcomes while addressing school health in a planned, integrated and holistic way.”¹¹ The approach encompasses the entire school environment with actions addressing four inter-related pillars (see **Figure 1**).¹²

⁶ Candelas, Armstrong, and Xuereb, *Diet and Physical Activity in Schools: Perspectives from the Implementation of the WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health*, in Canadian Journal of Public Health, *Supportive Environments for Learning: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity within Comprehensive School Health*, July/August 2010 p. S 28.

⁷ Joint Consortium for School Health, *Physical activity within a Comprehensive School Health Model: School Policy Makers' Toolkit*, (2009), p. 4.

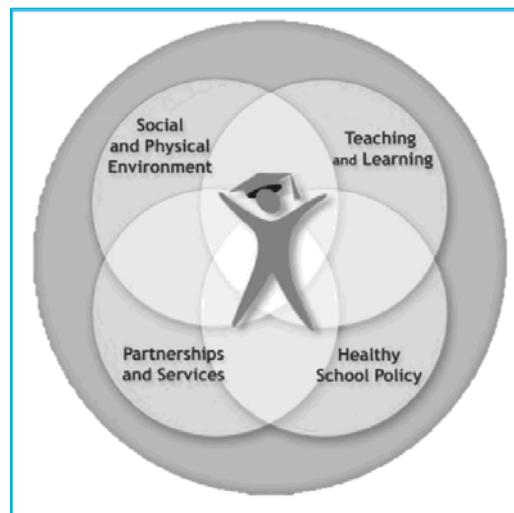
⁸ Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, *Nourishing Minds—Towards Comprehensive School Community Health: Nutrition Policy Development in Saskatchewan Schools* (2012), p. 3.

⁹ Section 188 of *The Education Act, 1995*.

¹⁰ www.jcsh-cces.ca/ (19 August 2015).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

Figure 1—Comprehensive School Community Health

Source: Joint Consortium for School Health.

The Ministry of Education has adopted the comprehensive school community health (CSCH) approach to guide it in promoting nutrition and physical activity. The Ministry uses guidelines and its website (which include tools and templates such as draft policies, checklists, etc.) to assist school divisions and schools with the implementation process and monitoring of initiatives based on the CSCH approach. The Ministry has issued two guidelines to school divisions:

- *Nourishing Minds – Towards Comprehensive School Community Health: Nutrition Policy Development in Saskatchewan Schools (2012)*¹³
- *Inspiring Movement – Towards Comprehensive School Community Health: Guidelines for Physical Activity in Saskatchewan (2010)*¹⁴

The Ministry's guidelines expect school boards to support optimal health for students in several ways. These include:

- Setting policies for healthy food and physical activity, including targets for planning and continuous improvement
- Seeking input and engagement from the school administrators, staff, students, parents, school community councils¹⁵ and the wider community
- Supporting professional development and ensuring that school board policies result in increased access to healthy food and physical activity across school divisions¹⁶

The Ministry sets the Core Curriculum, which includes content related to health and physical education. The aim of the Core Curriculum is to develop confident and competent students who can apply health strategies and have the disposition to live a

¹³ www.education.gov.sk.ca/nourishing-minds/ (30 June 2015).

¹⁴ www.education.gov.sk.ca/inspiring-movement (30 June 2015).

¹⁵ School community councils are intended to strengthen the capacity of schools to improve learning and well-being of students. They are comprised of parents/community members that are elected to the council and a number of appointed members such as the principal, teachers, community school coordinator and, in secondary schools, student representatives. www.gscs.sk.ca/community/SchoolCouncils/Documents/CSCCs_Questions_and_Answers.pdf (20 August 2015).

¹⁶ www.education.gov.sk.ca/nourishing-minds/ (30 June 2015).



healthy and active lifestyle.¹⁷ As set out in **Figure 2**, the Core Curriculum sets a minimum number of education minutes for grades one through nine. It also requires schools to teach one credit (100 hours) of health or physical education at grade 10, 11, or 12. The health education curriculum includes components on nutrition. *The Education Act, 1995* requires school divisions to follow the Core Curriculum.

Figure 2—Required Curriculum Minutes

Grade	Physical Education
1 through 6	150 minutes/week
7 through 9	100 minutes/week
Grade	Health Education
1 through 6	80 minutes/week
7 through 9	100 minutes/week
Grade	Health/Physical Education
10, 11 or 12	1 credit or 100 hours of health or physical education

Source: Ministry of Education, Core Curriculum: Principles, Time Allocations and Credit Policy.

2.2 Division Priorities Related to Health and Physical Activity

St. Paul's Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 20 is also known as Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools (GSCS, or Division). It is one of Saskatchewan's 28 school divisions. It is Saskatchewan's largest Catholic school division with 45 schools serving approximately 17,000 students in the city of Saskatoon and surrounding area.¹⁸ GSCS has seen an increase in enrolment of about 6% since 2012.¹⁹ In 2013-14, it had revenues of \$177.4 million (2012-13: \$187.5 million) and expenses of \$178.0 million (2012-13: \$167.3 million).

One of GSCS' strategic priorities is "Improving Student Learning and Achievement." One of its goals is "to commit to increasing the health and fitness of all students: to ensure a culture of student engagement and participation as foundational in our curricular and extra-curricular opportunities for students."²⁰

Ineffective processes to promote good student health and physical fitness increase the risk that students will not be ready to learn or will be less capable of achieving their full potential. This increases the risk of not achieving desired educational and health outcomes, with their related social and economic benefits.

¹⁷ Ministry of Education, (2010), *Renewed Curricula: Understanding Outcomes*, p. 28.

¹⁸ St. Paul's Roman Catholic School Division No. 20, Annual Report 2013-14, p. 4.

www.gscs.sk.ca/board/Pages/AnnualReportsPublications.aspx (2 September 2015).

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 14.

²⁰ St. Paul's Roman Catholic School Division No. 20, *Board of Education Priorities and Goals 2012-2016*.

www.scs.sk.ca/board_information/documents/2012_2016_Board_Priorities_and_Goals.pdf, pp. 2-3 (1 May 2015).

3.0 AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, CRITERIA, AND CONCLUSION

The objective of this audit was to assess the effectiveness of the processes St. Paul's Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 20 used to promote good student health and physical fitness for the 12-month period ended June 30, 2015. We focused on processes related to nutrition and physical activity.

To conduct this audit, we followed the standards for assurance engagements published in the *CPA Canada Handbook – Assurance*. To evaluate the Division's processes, we used criteria based on our related work, reviews of literature including reports of other auditors, and consultations with management. Division management agreed with the criteria (see **Figure 3**).

Figure 3—Audit Criteria

1. **Establish requirements to promote good student health and physical fitness**
 - 1.1 Document requirements for promotion of health and physical fitness (e.g., policies for nutrition and physical activity, oversight of schools)
 - 1.2 Align requirements with Ministry of Education policies and guidelines
 - 1.3 Align requirements with Division strategic direction
 - 1.4 Communicate requirements to school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders
2. **Use initiatives to promote good student health and physical fitness**
 - 2.1 Select initiatives that align with requirements
 - 2.2 Assign responsibility for initiatives
 - 2.3 Allocate resources for initiatives
 - 2.4 Engage partners to support initiatives
 - 2.5 Carry out initiatives
3. **Monitor effectiveness of initiatives**
 - 3.1 Decide how best to measure the success of initiatives (e.g., indicators)
 - 3.2 Measure results of initiatives
 - 3.3 Adjust initiatives as required
 - 3.4 Report on initiative results

We concluded that for the 12-month period ending June 30, 2015, St. Paul's Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 20 (GSCS) had, other than in the following areas, effective processes to promote good student health and physical fitness.

GSCS needs to:

- Set and communicate its expectations for promoting student physical activity
- Provide school principals with criteria to guide school-level decisions on initiatives
- Monitor partnerships and community relationships related to student health and physical fitness initiatives
- Develop a process to track and report to its Board on the performance of its student health and physical fitness initiatives

In addition, GSCS needs to review and update its policies on a regular basis.



4.0 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

For clarity, when we refer to GSCS, we mean the Division as a whole, including its oversight body (i.e., Board), the Division Office (i.e., senior management and administrative offices), and schools. When we refer to the Division Office and schools, we mean these components of the Division.

4.1 Need to Document and Communicate Physical Activity Expectations

4.1.1 Need to Set Physical Fitness Expectations

We expected that GSCS would have processes for documenting its requirements for promoting student health and physical fitness (e.g., policies for nutrition and physical activity). We expected that GSCS would align its requirements with its strategic direction and the Ministry of Education's policies and guidelines.

The Ministry describes in *Inspiring Movement* and *Nourishing Minds* that leadership by boards of education is critical for establishing effective policies and for ensuring their effective and full implementation.²¹ As noted earlier, one of the GSCS Board goals is to commit to increasing the health and fitness of all students.

GSCS's Board has approved a *Nutrition Policy* that supports implementation of the Ministry's guideline "*Nourishing Minds*." We found that the *Nutrition Policy* addresses most, but not all, points in the Ministry's guideline, *Nourishing Minds*, (e.g., targets, defining healthy foods). The *Nutrition Policy* refers to other documents (e.g., *Nourishing Minds*, Saskatchewan School Boards Association – *Nutrition Guidelines for Schools*, *School Food Guidelines*, *Nutrition Positive*).

GSCS has not set out its expectations on student physical activity to support the implementation of the Ministry's guideline, *Inspiring Movement*. The Board approved a *Physical Education Safety Guidelines Policy*. This policy only sets out safety guidelines for physical education and playground activities. The Ministry recommends setting policy for physical activity that takes into account the needs of all students and includes physical activity strategies and targets for improvement within planning.²² We noted that the Ministry's guideline *Inspiring Movement* includes a sample school division policy. Not setting out physical activity expectations (e.g., an expectation for students of 30 minutes of physical activity per day) makes it less likely that the Division and its schools will achieve the Board's stated goal of increasing the health and fitness of students. This may impact overall learning for students.

1. **We recommend the St. Paul's Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 20 set its expectations for promoting student physical activity.**

²¹ *Inspiring Movement*, p.11; *Nourishing Minds*, p. 8.

²² *Inspiring Movement*, p.11.

We found that the Board did not have a process to keep its policies current. We noted cases where the references in the *Nutrition Policy* were outdated. For example, the Policy references the *Nourishing Minds* issued in 2009 instead of the revised version released in 2012. We also noted that the approval date for the *Physical Education Safety Guidelines Policy* was 1999; Division management told us it was last assessed in 2002.

Not having a process to review policies periodically increases the risk of policies becoming outdated or irrelevant.

- 2. We recommend the St. Paul's Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 20 establish a process to review and update policies on a regular basis.**

4.1.2 Existing Expectations Communicated

We expected that GSCS would communicate expectations for student health and physical fitness to school administrators, teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders.

The Division Office used the GSCS's website to communicate existing policies. However, as the previous section noted, GSCS needs to document its expectations for promoting student physical activity. The Division must set and document its expectations for it to be able to communicate them to school administrators and parents.

Certain Division Office staff support schools in the areas of physical activity and nutrition. For example, Division Office staff members participate in Saskatoon-wide "In Motion" and "Nutrition Positive Committees." We observed that Division Office staff shared information with school principals as well as supports in the areas of health (including nutrition) and physical fitness through emails, meetings, and interactions with specialized staff.

To promote student nutrition and physical fitness, schools communicate with parents, teachers, and students. Each school maintains its own website. We observed that the websites of the schools we visited provide links to Division policies.

GSCS expected each school to use its website, newsletters for parents, along with posters in schools to provide information on student nutrition and physical fitness to parents, teachers, and students. We found four of the seven schools we visited did not consistently use their websites or newsletters to provide information on student health and physical fitness during the 2014-15 school year. Rather, we found they used posters promoting student nutrition and physical fitness in schools.



4.2 Improvements Required in Selection and Implementation of Initiatives

4.2.1 Responsibility Assigned, Not Monitored

We expected the Division Office and schools would assign responsibility for initiatives and engage partners as necessary.

The Division Office has given certain of its staff responsibility for overseeing schools (i.e., superintendents). It has also assigned staff in several specific areas related to student health and physical fitness (e.g., coordinators, dieticians), to guide and assist schools including delivery of the curricula, and nutrition programs for these areas.

Division Office staff indicated the Division expected schools to adopt both the “Nutrition Positive” and “In Motion” initiatives (see **Figure 4**). Most of the schools we visited did not consider themselves to be fully participating in these programs (five of seven schools visited for Nutrition Positive; six of seven schools visited for In Motion). Although schools receive information regarding initiatives from GSCS, school administrators indicated that it was not clear whether the Nutrition Positive and In Motion initiatives were priorities for the Division.

Schools select and use different initiatives to promote student health and physical activity given their differing school populations, composition, and needs. However, the differing views between the Division and schools on the selection and use of key initiatives, such as Nutrition Positive and In Motion, increases the risk that schools will not have effective activities in the areas that the Division has identified to support students. Providing principals with criteria to guide their assessment and selection should assist with the alignment (see **Recommendation 3**).

4.2.2 Initiatives in Place at Division and School Level

We expected that GSCS would use initiatives (i.e., programs and activities) to promote student health and physical fitness. The Division Office and schools would select initiatives that align with GSCS’s requirements.

We found that GSCS and schools used various initiatives, in addition to delivering the health and physical education curricula, to promote student health and physical fitness. GSCS uses two key initiatives: Nutrition Positive and In Motion (see **Figure 4**).

Figure 4—Nutrition Positive and In Motion Initiatives

Nutrition Positive is a partnership program to bring good nutrition into the whole school community encouraging good health through nutritious food choices. Classroom and school activities, staff events, fundraising projects and meal programs all focus on good nutrition and creating healthy food environments. Partners in the Nutrition Positive Committee include school divisions, public health, CHEP (Child Hunger Education Program), the College of Nutrition (University of Saskatchewan),^a and corporate sponsors (e.g., Cameco Corporation).

In Motion is a health promotion strategy that encourages students and teachers to make regular physical activity a part of their daily lives.^b In Motion’s overarching ambition is to ingrain both understanding and behavioural changes into the culture of the school community. Founding partners of the In Motion Committee include Saskatoon Health Region, City of Saskatoon, University of Saskatchewan, and ParticipACTION.

Source: Child Hunger Education Program and Saskatoon Health Region websites.

^a www.chep.org/en/programs/nutritionpositive (2 September 2015).

^b www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations_services/Services/health-promotion/Pages/in-motion.aspx (8 September 2015).

We observed schools implementing initiatives to support nutrition and physical activity (see **Figure 5**).

Figure 5—Examples of Initiatives and Partners²³

Initiative	Description	Partnership
FitStats	Assessment and reporting software used to assess, promote, analyze, monitor and manage student fitness levels (see Figure 6 for further detail)	N/A
Intramural Sports	Lunch and after school team sports focusing on general participation	N/A
Interschool Sports	Competitive sports teams	N/A
Play First	Recess before lunch	N/A
Marafun	Marathon distance covered in small segments	Saskatoon Marathon
Jump Start	Learn to play organized sport hockey	Canadian Tire
Body Breaks	In class physical activity breaks for students	N/A
Football/Hockey/Track	Access to programs	Kinsmen
60 Minutes Kids Club	Initiative sponsored by the Heart and Stoke Foundation to get kids excited about making healthy choices	Heart and Stroke Foundation
Skating	Access to facilities	City of Saskatoon
Child Nutrition Programs	Feeding children in need	Potash Corporation
Food Donations	Feeding children in need	Local restaurants and bakeries
Food Program, Kids Kitchen, Fresh Food Market	Feeding children in need, teaching how to cook, hosting fresh food market sales to community members	Child Hunger Education Program (CHEP)

Source: St. Paul's Roman Catholic Separate School Division and school information.

Both the Division Office and schools identify initiatives. At the Division level, staff generate ideas for initiatives, and also collect from and share ideas with schools. For example, Division Office staff attended Saskatoon In Motion and Nutrition Positive Committee meetings.

GSCS has also undertaken, with the support of partners, more extensive research and analysis of needs. The 2012 *Nutrition Programming in Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools Program Priorities Document*, together with more recent updates, described needs and initiatives related to feeding hungry students.

Division Office staff assess the cost and priority of initiatives through the Division budget process. For example, the Division considered and approved the “FitStats” initiative (see **Figure 6**) as part of its budget process.

Figure 6—Implementing the FitStats Initiative

At June 2015, the Division Office was in the process of piloting a new initiative called “FitStats.” FitStats is assessment and reporting software that will be used to assess, promote, analyze, monitor and manage student fitness levels. It provides reporting and coaching tools to assist teachers in supporting students to improve their fitness levels. The physical fitness data collected included aerobic, flexibility, muscular

²³ By “partner” we do not mean legal partnerships; rather, we mean relationships with persons or organizations within the community that provide support of various kinds.



endurance and muscular strength measures. It highlighted what areas need improvement and suggested actions for students to take. The Division piloted the initiative for physical education students in all high schools and one elementary school in the 2014-2015 school year. The Division Office coordinated training in the initiative for physical education teachers. The Division plans to roll this software out to all its schools in the future.

Source: Provincial Auditor Saskatchewan (August 2015).

The Division Office pilots (tests) major initiatives before implementing throughout the entire School Division. For example, during the 2014-15 school year, GSCS piloted FitStats (see **Figure 6**). For initiatives which it funds, the Division Office provides direction to promote consistent implementation across schools (i.e., yoga, physical education equipment).

We did not see evidence of schools using, nor the Division Office recommending the use of guidance and tools from the Ministry for assessing and addressing needs related to student health and physical fitness (e.g., planners, checklists, and evaluation tools). Also, the Saskatoon Nutrition Positive Committee provides guidance to Division schools in the *Nutrition Positive Manual*. However, we saw little evidence of schools using the guidance from the Ministry or the Nutrition Positive Committee.

At the school level, principals most often informally assess feasibility of school-level initiatives; they may also discuss these initiatives with Division Office staff and school community councils. We saw a variety of initiatives in schools (see **Figure 5** for examples). Principals indicated that they were often approached, for example by businesses and not-for-profit organizations in the community, with proposals for initiatives. We found that principals did not use consistent or systematic approaches for assessing initiatives and did not receive guidance from GSCS to help them assess and select initiatives. Without consistent guidance on assessing and selecting initiatives, principals may not be selecting initiatives that align with Division priorities and meet the needs of the students.

3. **We recommend St. Paul's Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 20 provide principals with criteria to guide their assessment and selection of health and physical fitness initiatives at the school level.**

4.2.3 Resources Allocated Based on Perceived Priorities

We expected the Division Office and schools would allocate resources for the initiatives and carry them out.

Student health and fitness initiatives require financial, staff, volunteer, and physical resources such as equipment. As noted earlier, GSCS considers major health and fitness initiatives in its budget process. For major Division initiatives (for example, training for FitStats, nutritional assistants for school meal programs), the Division Office evaluates staff resource requirements when planning the initiatives. For these initiatives, the Division Office also considers training requirements. We found that the Division Office provided training to staff and volunteers on these initiatives.

For school-level initiatives, principals consider required resources. Schools rely extensively on volunteers and staff to run health and physical activity initiatives.

Initiatives are often led by staff with a particular interest in the initiative. In some cases, partners provide funding and/or volunteers. While Nutrition Positive and In Motion initiatives are a priority at the Division (and Ministry) level, principals stated that they do not have sufficient staff/volunteer resources to make it a priority at their level, or their priorities are focused more on simply feeding kids. As previously noted, GSCS has not set clear expectations for promoting student physical activity (see **Recommendation 1**).

We found that the Division Office and schools consider physical resources required (e.g., equipment) when implementing initiatives. The Division Office makes equipment and training on equipment available to schools to encourage physical activity.

4.2.4 Incomplete Information on Partnerships

We found the Division Office and schools partner extensively with the private sector and not-for-profit sector to promote student health and physical fitness. In some cases, they approach partners; in other cases, partners approach them. Partners such as the City of Saskatoon and Potash Corporation play a crucial role in the schools addressing needs (see **Figure 5**).

The child nutrition programs are mostly centralized at the Division Office with Division Office staff initiating corporate partnerships (see **Figure 7**). At August 2015, each school orders its own food to feed children in need. The Division Office is looking at centralizing that process to increase efficiency. We also found schools entered into partnerships or community relationships²⁴ with local businesses for additional food (i.e., donated bread) for school-level initiatives.

Figure 7—Partnerships—Corporate—Nutrition Programs

One large corporation in Saskatoon donates \$175,000 to the Division Office for child nutrition programs. In the 2014-15 school year, the Division reported that this assisted schools in serving approximately 81,894 breakfast meals, 138,531 lunch meals, and 243,939 snacks at nine schools. We observed food programs in schools we visited. In one high school, an “on-the-go” breakfast is served. In one elementary school, all students receive breakfast, lunch, and snacks each day (400 students). In other schools, students must tell teachers if they require meals or snacks. We did find there were contingency plans to feed children as the need arises in all schools we visited.

Source: Provincial Auditor Saskatchewan (August 2015).

The process to obtain partners is informal. Where a need for partnerships is identified, the Division Office or schools contact organizations that have the potential to meet need (e.g., University of Saskatchewan pediatrics program to meet health needs at St Mary’s). See **Figure 8**.

Figure 8—Partnerships—St. Mary’s Wellness and Education Centre

We visited St. Mary’s Wellness and Education Centre. This school is seeking to respond to the challenges of its community through many initiatives: a high performance agility centre, pediatrics clinic, eye clinic, community garden and fresh vegetable market. The Division and the Saskatoon Health Region support the initiatives at this school. Many initiatives responded to a report issued in November 2006 that described the disparities in health that existed in Saskatoon between people living in low-income neighbourhoods and those living in affluent neighbourhoods.^a Other partners include the Saskatoon Tribal Council, and the University of Saskatchewan, College of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics.

Source: Provincial Auditor Saskatchewan (August 2015).

^awww.sktc.sk.ca/programs-services/health/stc-health-centre-services/community-based-paediatric-clinic/ (24 August 2015).

²⁴ Community relationship means interaction with a person or organization in the community, whether formalized or not, that relates to the activities of schools or the Division.



Both the Division Office and schools enter into partnerships and community relationships. The Division Office does not consistently evaluate or approve school-level partnerships. Nor does the Division Office require reporting from schools on their partnerships. As a result, the Division Office does not have complete information on which schools have entered into partnerships, and the extent of resources and value they provide to the school or overall Division.

The lack of complete partnership information could lead to schools working with inappropriate partners. It could also create competition among schools for partners or missed opportunities to coordinate efforts, increasing the risk of inefficiencies and duplication of effort for school administrators and Division Office staff.

4. We recommend that the St. Paul's Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 20 monitor partnerships and community relationships related to nutrition and physical activity initiatives.

4.3 Initiative Monitoring and Reporting Required

4.3.1 Setting Targets, Monitoring Performance, and Reporting of Initiatives Needed

We expected that GSCS would monitor the effectiveness of its initiatives (i.e., programs and activities) to promote student health and physical fitness. It would decide how best to measure the success of its initiatives, and carry out that measuring. It would adjust initiatives as required. GSCS would report on the results of its initiatives.

We note that GSCS itself specifies, in a policy, that it will monitor its performance against the Board's strategic priority of "Improving Student Learning and Achievement" and its goal to commit to increasing the health and fitness of all students.²⁵

In 2014-15, GSCS used the following processes to monitor its nutrition policy and the effectiveness of student health and fitness initiatives. These included:

- The Division monitored the delivery of the health and physical education curriculum to students.
- Students participated in the *Tell Them From Me Survey*, where students anonymously share their perceptions on many issues, including health and physical activity.²⁶
- The Division monitored results from a piloted initiative. During the 2014-15 school year, the Division began piloting FitStats fitness monitoring software. The Division collected physical fitness test results from Grade 9 and 10 physical education students in all high schools and from one elementary school (see **Figure 6**).

²⁵ St. Paul's Roman Catholic School Division No. 20, *Board of Education Priorities and Goals 2012-2016*.

www.scs.sk.ca/board_information/documents/2012_2016_Board_Priorities_and_Goals.pdf, pp. 2-3 (1 May 2015).

²⁶ Related questions included whether students played sports with an instructor at school other than in a physical education class, and hours per day doing moderate and intense physical activity.

- The Board received a presentation that outlined curriculum offerings and described the number of students participating in activities including sports teams.
- A few schools formally assessed new initiatives. We observed one of the seven schools we visited collecting data (including a questionnaire to parents) about an initiative (i.e., moving noon recess to before lunch). The school used the results of the questionnaire to assess whether the initiative was providing the expected benefits (e.g., more food eaten, fewer behaviour issues).

Other than GSCS using the Ministry's Core Curriculum, which sets out required curriculum minutes, we found that GSCS had not set out measurable targets related to its goal of increasing health and fitness of all students. Setting measurable targets is important as it involves setting a direction (i.e., goal) and then identifying where it wants to be in achieving that goal, by when. Knowing the progress the Division is making in reaching targets helps it determine the resources necessary to achieve the target. Without targets, it is difficult for the Division to understand if it is doing enough or doing the right things, and whether it is making a difference in improving the health and fitness of students.

As set out in **Figure 9**, we found schools did not always comply with existing policies (e.g., the Division's *Nutrition Policy*). As such, the Division's monitoring provided it with only limited information of the results of the Division's and schools' many initiatives and compliance with its nutrition policy.

Figure 9—Nutrition and Food Sales in Schools

The Division Nutrition Policy categorized food and beverages sold to students as Serve Most Often, Serve Sometimes or Serve Least Often (Nutrition Positive Guidelines). The policy also states that schools should be nutrition positive. It sets out that foods should emphasize vegetables and fruit, lower fat milk products, whole grain products, lean meats and foods prepared with little or no fat, low salt, sugar, caffeine and high in vitamins and minerals. Foods from the Serve Least Often list should be served in moderation. 50% of food in vending machines should be "heart smart" selections and vending machines are not allowed to sell regular or diet soft drinks, milk and waters with flavors or sweeteners, fruit drinks with less than 100% fruit juice, or sports drinks. The *Nutrition Positive Manual* also sets out a list of foods that are not recommended.

We visited seven schools. We observed instances where schools served foods on the "not recommended" list such as donuts, muffins, cookies, potato chips, nachos and cakes. We also observed some of these foods along with soft drinks, energy drinks and sports drinks in vending machines at high schools. We did observe that there were no deep fryers in any of the schools we visited, which is consistent with a Division Office initiative to remove all deep fryers.

Source: Provincial Auditor Saskatchewan (August 2015).

Without information and corresponding analysis about the effectiveness of its initiatives and policy, GSCS will be less able to effectively identify issues. The Division will also be less able to determine which schools require revised initiatives or assistance to comply with policy and support student health and physical fitness. As a result, there may be uneven results across the Division, the Division may fail to take effective, timely action to address issues, and students may be less ready to learn.

5. **We recommend that the St. Paul's Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 20 establish a process to track and report to its Board of Education on the performance of its initiatives to promote good student health and physical fitness.**



5.0 SELECTED REFERENCES

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