

## Chapter 25

### Regina School Division No. 4 – Promoting Positive Student Behaviour

#### 1.0 MAIN POINTS

Regina School Division No. 4 has improved some of its processes to promote positive student behaviour. It has implemented two recommendations and partially implemented three recommendations we made in 2016.

Since 2015, the Division implemented a student supports IT system to monitor student behaviour. It retains documentation of incidents, referrals, and discussions held with school staff and parents for behaviour issues.

For high school students, the Division directs staff to retain documentation of contact and communications with parents on attendance issues, but staff did not do so consistently. For elementary school students, the Division indicated that it is currently developing an attendance strategy. Keeping documentation of actions taken to address attendance issues helps provide a consistent course of action and monitor steps taken to promote regular attendance.

By March 2018, the Division had not reviewed all of its administrative procedures related to student behaviour. Periodically reviewing administrative procedures helps ensure their continuing relevance and applicability.

Each school year, the Division communicates to staff, in writing, training expectations for key initiatives to promote and support positive student behaviour. The Division implemented software that allows school administrators to easily review which of their staff are trained in key initiatives to promote positive student behaviour.

In 2017-18, the Division started collecting data on behaviour incidents and supports. It plans to use this to determine goals related to student behaviour. Once these goals are determined, it expects to report to its Board of Education on the overall success of its initiatives to promote positive student behaviour and whether its initiatives are making a difference.

#### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

Student behaviour influences the extent and quality of education that students receive. Positive student behaviour creates a safe, inclusive, and accepting school environment for learning and contributes to student success.<sup>1</sup> The success of students can have a significant impact on our society and economy. Poor behaviour can contribute to students leaving school before graduating from Grade 12 or without obtaining marks that could assist them in obtaining further education or finding employment.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/safeschools.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/safeschools.html) (28 March 2018).

<sup>2</sup> Auditor General of British Columbia, *Fostering a Safe Learning Environment: How the British Columbia Public School System is Doing*, (2001), p. 19.



Regina School Division No. 4 is one of the largest urban school divisions in Saskatchewan with about 23,000 students and 49 schools—41 elementary schools and 8 high schools. Six of the elementary schools and two of the high schools offer French Immersion programs.<sup>3</sup> The Division has seen an approximate 6% increase in its enrolment from 2015 to 2017.<sup>4</sup>

This chapter describes our first follow-up of management's actions on the recommendations we made in 2016.

Our *2016 Report – Volume 1*, Chapter 13 concluded that other than the areas of our recommendations, the Division had effective processes for promoting positive student behaviour. We made five recommendations around keeping consistent and accessible documentation, communicating training expectations for Division staff, and tracking and reporting on the success of initiatives to support positive student behaviour.

To conduct this follow-up audit, we followed the standards for assurance engagements published in the *CPA Canada Handbook – Assurance* (including CSAE 3001). To evaluate the Division's progress towards meeting our recommendations, we used the relevant criteria from the original audit. The Division's management agreed with the criteria in the original audit.

To perform our follow-up audit, we discussed actions taken with Division management and school principals. We reviewed the Division and selected schools' planning documents, communications from Division management, and public documents. For a sample of students, we examined documentation maintained by staff to monitor attendance and promote positive student behaviour.

## 3.0 STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This section sets out each recommendation including the date on which the Standing Committee on Public Accounts agreed to the recommendation, the status of the recommendation at March 23, 2018, and the Division's actions from November 30, 2015 up to that date. We found that the Division had implemented two of the recommendations and partially implemented three of the recommendations.

### 3.1 Administrative Procedures Not Reviewed Regularly

***We recommended that Regina School Division No. 4 review and update policies (administrative procedures) on a regular basis as its policy expects.*** (2016 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement September 14, 2016)

**Status** – Partially Implemented

The Division had not completely reviewed and updated its administrative procedures related to student behaviour.

<sup>3</sup> *Regina School Division No. 4 of Saskatchewan Annual Report 2016-17*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

The Division prioritizes administrative procedures to be updated based on feedback from Division management. We found that of the nine administrative procedures related to student behaviour, the Division updated five, with two of those procedures updated twice in the past five years. For the other four procedures, the Division has not yet prioritized the procedures for review. The Division last reviewed these procedures approximately 10 years ago (e.g., March 2008).

Periodically reviewing administrative procedures helps ensure their continuing relevance and applicability.

### 3.2 Training Expectations Communicated and Tracked for Key Initiatives to Support Positive Student Behaviour

***We recommended that Regina School Division No. 4 communicate to school administrators and staff, in writing, training expectations for initiatives to promote and support positive student behaviour.*** (2016 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement September 14, 2016)

**Status** – Implemented

***We recommended that Regina School Division No. 4 require principals to make readily available, at schools, information on administrators and staff trained in key initiatives to promote and support positive student behaviour.*** (2016 Report – Volume 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement September 14, 2016)

**Status** – Implemented

Starting in the 2016-17 school year, the Division communicates to staff, in writing, training expectations on key initiatives to promote and support positive student behaviour each school year. The Division implemented software to track school staff trained in key initiatives to promote and support positive student behaviour.

The Division has determined that key initiatives to promote and support positive student behaviour are Mandt training and Violence Threat Risk Assessment.<sup>5</sup> It has made this training mandatory for certain school staff. Before the beginning of the school year, the Division sends opening packages to all school staff. The packages include information on professional development days and staff who should attend mandatory training.

Weekly, the Division sends out an email to all staff that includes information and reminders for available training, including key initiatives and other initiatives to promote and support positive student behaviour.

<sup>5</sup> Mandt training (non-violence crisis intervention) for school staff is a comprehensive, integrated approach to preventing, de-escalating, and if necessary, intervening when the behaviour of an individual poses a threat of harm to themselves and/or others. Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) helps school staff identify behaviour and responses where there is a threat or risk of injury to the student or those around them. This assessment also collects data on details of incidents and records information on future risk and courses of action.



For other training initiatives to promote and support positive student behaviour, principals can select which initiatives to implement at their school, and which staff to train in those initiatives.

Since our 2016 audit, the Division implemented software which allows school administrators to review which of their staff are trained in key initiatives. We found school administrators use the software to identify staff trained in key initiatives to assist other staff in supporting positive student behaviour.

Having a sufficient number of trained school administrators and staff available at each school helps ensure that skills required to support students and respond to high risk situations are available.

### 3.3 Documentation of Actions Taken to Support Student Attendance Needed

---

***We recommended that Regina School Division No. 4 require consistent and accessible documentation of key discussions, decisions, and steps taken to support positive student behaviour.*** (2016 Report – Volume 1; Public

Accounts Committee agreement September 14, 2016)

**Status** – Partially Implemented

During the 2016-17 school year, the Division implemented a student supports IT system (CLEVR) to monitor student behaviour.

The Division directed its staff to use the system to retain documentation of incidents, referrals, and discussions to support positive student behaviour. Also, the Division directed its staff to use its attendance tracking system (Powerschool) to document communication with parents and guardians regarding behaviour and attendance issues.

For the 30 students' files we tested for behaviour issues, the Division retained documentation of incidents, referrals, and discussions held with school staff and with parents about attendance.

In addition, the Division has implemented a High School Attendance Strategy to improve student attendance. The strategy sets out protocols for responding to attendance issues.

For 2 of 37 high school students we tested, schools did not consistently document contact and communications with parents.

For elementary schools, the Division has an administrative procedure requiring schools to contact parents when a student is absent. As of March 2018, the Division had not developed guidance for schools regarding documentation of discussions and steps taken to address chronic attendance issues.

For the five elementary schools we visited, while each principal monitored student attendance, there was not a consistent process for responding to or documenting follow up on poor student attendance. The Division indicated that it is currently developing an elementary school attendance strategy.

Not keeping key documentation to support actions taken to address attendance issues makes it difficult for the Division to follow a consistent course of action and monitor steps taken to promote regular attendance.

### 3.4 Reporting on Overall Success of Student Behaviour Initiatives Needed

***We recommended that Regina School Division No. 4 establish a process to track and report to its Board of Education the overall success of its initiatives to promote positive student behaviour.*** (2016 Report – Volume 1;

Public Accounts Committee agreement September 14, 2016)

**Status** – Partially Implemented

As of March 2018, the Division had not reported to its Board of Education on the overall success of its initiatives to promote positive student behaviour.

The Division collects, analyzes, and reports detailed information on attendance. The Division has set out strategies for improving student attendance as part the Education Sector Strategic Plan.<sup>6</sup> The Division told us that it was developing a new strategic plan that will include goals related to attendance.

In the 2017-18 school year, the Division started collecting data (in its student supports information system) on behaviour incidents and supports. The Division told us that it planned to present the data and related analysis to the Board in 2018, and create goals related to student behaviour.

Without collecting additional data regarding student behaviour, the Division cannot identify trends to determine whether its student behaviour initiatives are successful. Such information would help it to identify areas for improvement, and make informed decisions about these initiatives. In addition, such information will enable the Division to determine if the initiatives are making a difference.

<sup>6</sup> Education Sector Strategic Plan describes the strategic direction of the education sector and its priorities and outcomes align the work of school divisions and the Ministry of Education.

