

Highlights from the September 23, 2009 meeting of the Board of Trustees for Red Deer Public Schools

CELEBRATIONS

- Gateway Pines hosted their annual Teddy Bear Picnic that collected 174 teddy bears that will be distributed to the Women's Shelter and Pediatric Ward for children in need.
- The 29th Annual Dawe Run was a great event for the 4000 students from Red Deer and Central Alberta who ran through our trail systems on a beautiful fall day.
- Our Foundation has begun its valued work for another year to enhance and enrich learning opportunities for students across the District.
- The Public School Boards Association of Alberta will host "Straight Talk" sessions across the province to gain feedback on what students will require to be prepared for the year 2020.
- Lindsay Thurber hosted an informative scholarship session for 300 students and parents. Students recognized the importance of good marks, involvement in school as well as community service and volunteering as being important factors in obtaining scholarships to fund their post-secondary education.
- Hunting Hills hosted a potluck supper for its international and ESL students. The students are enthusiastic to be attending school in Canada.
- Planning continues on the K to 8 reconfiguration of GH Dawe, Glendale and Normandeau with a report to the Board on the implementation plan expected at the end of October.
- Trustees and Administration appreciated the many outstanding back to school events in September.
- The College of Alberta School Superintendent has initiated a mentorship program for new superintendents. Don Falk will serve as mentor for Grant Henderson from Medicine Hat Public Schools.
- The Board Chair and Superintendent had separate meetings with the Minister of Education and other jurisdictions to discuss the upcoming financial challenges and the salary issues with the ATA.

Red Deer Public Schools Are Active

Having long been recognized as leaders in promoting healthy and active lifestyles for students, a number of our schools have been recognized with Quality Daily Physical Education Awards. Criteria include daily curricular instruction for all students, intramural activities and school sports, which provide opportunity for all students to participate.

Schools receiving recognition were:

- Annie L Gaetz
- Central Middle
- GW Smith
- Grandview
- Lindsay Thurber
- Oriole Park
- Venture
- Aspen Heights
- GH Dawe
- Glendale
- Hunting Hills
- Mattie McCullough
- Westpark Middle

The Ever Active Schools designation recognizes schools that promote healthy living and physical activity through initiatives that impact the entire school community. Ever Active Schools include:

- Aspen Heights
- Eastview
- Glendale
- Hunting Hills
- Mountview
- Westpark Middle
- Central Middle
- GH Dawe
- Grandview
- Lindsay Thurber
- Oriole Park

In support of these programs, many schools are focusing on the Winter Olympics as a theme to get students active this year.

Summer Facility Improvements

Summer provided opportunities for our Maintenance Department and contractors to complete a number of facility improvements in our schools. Major projects included modernizations and renovations at Aspen Heights Elementary and GH Dawe Community School. Other projects ranged from lighting upgrades and roofing replacements to security upgrades and replacements to technology infrastructure. We were pleased with all our contractors' and their efforts to have these projects completed in the tight timeframe of summer break. Our schools look great--annual inspections of our facilities ensure they are well maintained.

Role of Trustee School Liaisons

Each year Trustees are assigned liaison schools that provide opportunities for them to visit schools and attend special events that allow them to become familiar with the life of the school. Trustees reviewed their appropriate involvement in schools and at school council meetings. The Board discussed the value that serving as liaisons provides in maintaining connections with school communities while recognizing protocols and processes for dealing with issues and concerns.

Student Town Hall Meeting

Red Deer Public is proud of its processes to engage its stakeholders when establishing District priorities. As part of the process, Trustees will host grade 11

and 12 students for our second annual Student Town Hall meeting on Wednesday, December 2 to gather their input and perspectives on important issues facing the District. Building on the success of last year's event, the Board is interested in student perspectives on how the education system can prepare students and develop the skills needed for the future. With impending financial challenges facing education, we will also seek student input on items that are essential, could be changed and might be eliminated within the system. Students will also determine two additional topics for discussion at the meeting. We believe our students will be up for the challenge and provide valuable insights that will support the Board in establishing future direction for the District.

Study Tour of China

Along with sixteen superintendents from across Alberta, Don Falk, Superintendent of Schools participated in a study tour of China in May 2009 to promote links and develop partnerships between our systems while gaining a better understanding of the education systems of both China and Canada. Falk provided an overview of the study tour and potential opportunities for the District to build relationships and explore opportunities for collaboration. Red Deer Public has a Chinese Mandarin language program at Hunting Hills. We are interested in opportunities to develop and enhance programming in Chinese culture and language programming in our schools.

Public School Boards Association of Alberta

- Our Board is pleased to endorse and support the candidacy of Trustee Lawrence Lee for the Vice Presidency of the Public School Boards Association of Alberta.

Correspondence Received:

- Alberta School Athletics Association: an update on school athletics programs which play an important and valued role within our high schools.
- Canadian Education Statistics Council: Education Indicators in Canada: An International Perspective. Of note, Canada has the largest proportion of its adult population with post-secondary education in the world.
- Statistics Canada: Summary of Public School Indicators 2000/01 to 2006/07. It notes that Alberta spending on K-12 education is in the middle of the pack compared to other Canadian provinces.