

*Highlights from the November 26, 2008 meeting of the Board of Trustees for Red Deer Public Schools*

## **CELEBRATIONS**

- Glendale Middle School had an amazing week with Trickster Theatre with performances that underscored the schools theme of "Strength Through Character."
- Save-On Foods is responding to our Nutrition Policy having developed an exclusive cookie that meets the "Choose Sometimes" category in our Nutrition Standards Document.
- Dave Hancock, Minister of Education presented the Board with the "Minister's Education Leadership Recognition Award" for significant improvement in the areas of safe and caring; citizenship; school improvement, other non-diploma as well as very high achievement on program of studies, education quality and school improvement.
- The College of Alberta School Superintendents hosted an excellent Research Symposium that profiled many interesting education research projects underway across the province.
- The City Wide School Council Meeting included a great presentation "Nutritious Lunch Programs for Your School" by Nutritionist Jennifer Sundberg of the DTHR who has provided excellent support with the implementation of our Nutrition Policy.
- The ASBA Fall Meeting was most successful and included a presentation by former MP Deborah Grey who spoke on the importance of engaging and connecting with our community.
- District Recognition Night honored retirees, long-term service recipients and special award recipients. The event is run in conjunction with the ATA Induction ceremonies.
- Mike Fritz & Sharon Toppe from Joseph Welsh along with renowned author Steven Covey were interviewed on a Montreal radio talk show showcasing its success as a "Seven Habits School."
- The Minister of Education met with local school boards to discuss education issues and concerns. We shared our facility needs, the importance of local autonomy, and our support for local bargaining. The minister talked about consultations with stakeholders and plans to open up and review the *School Act*.
- The Lindsay Thurber band program has cut their first CD that is top quality!
- Lindsay Thurber Boys and Girls are off to the 4A Provincials Volleyball Tournament.
- School Administrators across the District will be participating in their annual retreat that focuses on student achievement.

## **The Life and Learning of Gateway Christian School**

Now in its tenth year with Red Deer Public, Gateway Christian School serves 566 students from kindergarten to grade 10. Since joining the District as an alternative school in 1999, the school has grown by 116%. The school is housed on two campuses—the Pines Campus serving kindergarten to grade 2, while the Central Campus is home to students in grades 3 to 10. The school has started a high school program this year for twenty-two students in grade 10 with grades 11 and 12 being added over the next two years.

Through a discussion on what exactly should be the profile of a Gateway graduate, the school has developed a profile of service and a worldview that includes the following through lines:

Justice Seeking	Beauty Creating
Order Discovering	Image Reflecting
Earth Keeping	Idolatry Discerning
God Worshipping	Servant Working
Creation Enjoying	Community Building
	Faith Nurturing

## **Financial Statements Approved**

Trustees approved the audited financial statements for the year ended August 31, 2008. Total assets of the Board are \$84.1 million. With revenue of over \$90.4 million, the District realized an operating surplus of \$4.18 million that represents 4.5% of revenues. The surplus is the result of \$1.6 million on purchases of capital assets and one-time grants that must be expensed over the life of the asset. \$1.7 million comes from grants that were not expended during the last fiscal year, but are committed to projects in the current year. Operations and maintenance had a surplus of \$741,000 in part due to lower than expected utility costs. The surplus has been transferred to operating reserves and will be incorporated into the long term financing plans of the District, schools and departments.

## **October Enrolment**

9879 students were attending Red Deer Public Schools during October 2008. 42% of students are in K to 5, 21 % are in middle schools, while 36% are in our high school grades. 10.5% of our students are registered in French Immersion.

## **2007/08 a Great Year for Red Deer Public**

The 2007/08 Annual Education Results Report tells the stories of accomplishments, highlights, success and results across Red Deer Public last year. The annual report reported highlights and results on:

- high quality learning opportunities for all
- safe and caring environments
- children at risk having their needs addressed
- students completing programs
- excellence in student learning outcomes
- students well prepared for lifelong learning, employment and citizenship
- highly responsive and responsible jurisdiction
- effective relationships with partners and stakeholders
- demonstrating leadership and continuous improvement

Trustees and administration were very pleased with the many successes achieved in our schools through the hard work of students, staff, parents and the community. The report demonstrates our commitment of striving for excellence.

## **2008/09 Budget Update**

The board reviewed an update on the District's budget to reflect the difference between the spring budget projections and the realities of fall enrolment and staffing. The updated budget of \$97.3 million is not significantly different from the budget approved in the spring.

## **Public School Boards' Association of Alberta & Alberta School Boards Association**

- Pandemic Planning—The District will develop a pandemic response plan using resources developed through Alberta Education and the David Thompson Health Region.
- Trustees were updated on a variety of PSBAA and ASBA projects and initiatives.

## **Correspondence**

- From Alberta Culture and Community Spirit – response to historical status of North Cottage High School
- From Municipal Government Board – regarding annexation plans for the City of Red Deer
- From Alberta Education – expressing appreciation on the review of the District's Three Year Education Plan
- From MLA-Red Deer South – responding to the concerns sour gas wells close to operating schools.