

Highlights from the November 28, 2007 meeting of the Board of Trustees for Red Deer Public Schools

QUICK NEWS AND CELEBRATIONS

- Trustees met with Ron Liepert, Minister of Education, to review our plans and priorities including capital and facility needs. The meeting was very encouraging and positive.
- Principals, vice principals and senior administration participated in a great administrators retreat focused on leadership.
- Teachers from a variety of grades and subject areas are working together to develop common forms of assessment as part of our AISI project.
- Lindsay Thurber's school council and staff provided input into the qualities they desire in their new principal as Gary Unterschultz will be retiring at the end of January
- A conference to improve high school completion of Aboriginal students identified both issues and strategies to support graduation of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students.
- It was a great night of jazz at the "Taste of Jazz" concert that featured the music programs from Hunting Hills and Eastview
- The Foundation will focus on global education and awareness next year. This year the Foundation provided funding for 24 projects totaling over \$43,000
- Joseph Welsh is truly embracing their initiative on the "7 Habits for Highly Effective People"
- Brenda Sautner, Assistant Superintendent-Intervention Services successfully defended her doctoral dissertation. Way to go Dr. Sautner!
- ASBA delegates supported Red Deer Public's resolution to increase the reporting of transition rates for students from four years to six years.
- The Board received a "Snack Pack" featuring nutritious snacks from DTHR Nutrition for approval of the new Nutrition policy.
- The Board of Trustees received a "bouquet" in the Red Deer Advocate for its leadership with the new Nutrition Policy
- Edmonton Public Schools is following Red Deer Public's lead in developing a plan to remove junk food from schools. A letter to the editor in the Edmonton Journal was headlined as "Red Deer Got it Right"

Life and Learning at Glendale Middle School

"Why Glendale Rocks..." highlighted the programs, activities, events and people that make their school a great place to live and learn. Student ambassadors recognized the school's great staff, special events, focus on academics, super options, commitment to developing values, awesome athletics and support for students as just some of the school's many strengths.

Staff Recognition

- Kim Jewan, a teacher in the Pathways program at Oriole Park was recently awarded the Mac Kryzanowski Award from the Special Education Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association for outstanding service and professional contributions in the area of special education. Kim is recognized as kind, caring and positive. She makes everyone feel welcomed, capable and valued and sees the potential in all her students.
- Sharon Lampard and Bryan Burley received Certificates of Outstanding Service from the Social Studies Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association for their contributions to social studies education at the local and provincial levels. Both are providing leadership in the field. Sharon is seconded to lead Social Studies implementation with the Central Alberta Regional Consortium while Bryan has been seconded to Alberta Education for development of resources for the Distributed Learning Branch.

Thurber Students Host and Visit French Students

As part of a reciprocal exchange with their twin school, Jeanne d'Arc in Mulhouse, France, students from Lindsay Thurber will host students this spring and travel to France in the spring of 2009. The exchange program develops strong bonds and friendships while providing a rich cultural experience.

2006/07 Audited Financial Statements

Trustees approved the audited financial statements for the year ended August 31, 2007. With revenue of over \$85 million, the District realized an operating surplus of \$1.6 million—this represents just 1.9% of revenues. The surplus is the results of:

- revenue of \$800,000 from interest earned on the Lindsay Thurber capital funds that will repay District operation and maintenance funds that were used to support the Thurber modernization. These funds are restricted to use for deferred maintenance projects
- surplus in transportation of \$400,000 as a result of additional eligible students and efficient operations
- miscellaneous revenue of \$400,000 including interest income above projections

Other key financial figures include:

- 90% of revenue comes from provincial government
- 76.2% of expenses supports classroom instruction
- plant operations and maintenance represent 14.3% of expenses
- 2.6% of expenses cover administration costs
- average expenditures per pupil were \$9,464

Increased Funding Allocation for Schools

With the District reporting an operating surplus, the Board agreed to a one-time allocation of \$400,000 to schools from the accumulated surplus to be distributed to on a per pupil basis. This will result in an increase in funding of approximately \$44 per full time student for 2007/08.

2007/08 Revised Budget

While the bulk of our budgeting takes place in the spring based on projections, the District updates its budget in the fall to reflect the actual student enrollment. This provides a more accurate financial plan for schools and the District. The revised budget is not fundamentally different from the budget approved in the spring with the exception of new funding recently announced for the GH Dawe modernization and renovations totaling \$6.5 million. Total revenues for the District this year are more than \$91.6 million.

2006/07 a Great Year for Red Deer Public Schools

The 2006/07 Annual Education Results Report tells the stories of accomplishments, highlights, success and results from 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 working 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 tradition of striving for excellence.

Public School Boards Association of Alberta and Alberta School Boards Association

- The Board will forward a letter of support to provincial leaders for the PSBAA's leadership in advocating for the enactment of a "Local Government Charter" in the form of an amendment to the Constitution of Alberta. The Charter endeavours to rebuild the "respectful partnership" between local government and the provincial government.
- Red Deer Public hosted the Zone 4 ASBA meeting that included a presentation on managing infrastructure needs for school jurisdictions across the province. In considering facility requests, the Department of Education will be looking closely at the case for support or rationale for capital projects. Trustees also toured Lindsay Thurber and were very impressed with the modernization and renovations of the school

Correspondence:

- Parkland Community Planning Service – advising them of the Board's preference for the Red Deer College traffic impact study.