

Highlights from the December 9, 2009 meeting of the Board of Trustees for Red Deer Public Schools

CELEBRATIONS

- Christmas Concerts and Winter Celebrations are taking place in schools across the District as we share in the spirit of the season. *We are so proud of all our student performers!*
- As just one example of the spirit of giving within our schools, students from Lindsay Thurber delivered 65 Christmas Hampers to needy families in our community.
- Findings from the "Understanding the Early Years Project" were released. They highlighted the importance of early childhood development in preparing students for the future. A study of children and families within our community contributed to the research findings that will provide valuable information that will assist in planning for the early needs of children.
- The Board of Trustees received six awards as part of the Minister's Education Leadership Recognition Awards that acknowledges the important role school boards play in the achievements and improvement of school jurisdictions.
- The annual Administrators' Retreat for principals and vice principals was outstanding and focused on hands-on and practical use of technology to support teaching and learning in our schools.
- Trustees hosted the second annual "Student Town Hall Meeting" where grade 11 students from Lindsay Thurber and Hunting Hills provided the Board with input on meeting the needs of the 21st century learner, priorities in times of budget challenges, effective discipline in schools and innovative approaches to enhance student access to learning. Some of the ideas that were generated will be incorporated within the District Education Plan.
- The Board held its Mini-Retreat to discuss a range of current issues as well as topics that will be considered in the District Education Plan.
- "Take Note," the Jazz Choir from Lindsay Thurber, was a most appropriate opening act for "The Nylons" who recently performed in Red Deer.

Science and Technology Focus at Glendale

As part of the K to 8 reconfiguration of selected schools, Glendale has examined the potential of offering a sciences and technology focus program starting in the 2010/11 school year. A detailed plan on the focus program was provided to the Board for its consideration.

While the Program of Studies and hours of instruction in all subject areas would be consistent with District and Alberta Education standards, students will be taught using an inquiry-based approach where sciences and technology will provide a context for students to explore the world in all subject areas. It involves asking questions, making discoveries and testing those discoveries in the search of new understanding.

The school has already made connections with other science schools to support the program's implementation as well as ongoing professional development.

Technology will support teaching and learning through the gradual implementation of one-to-one laptop computers, use of electronic whiteboards as well as the use of video conferencing to connect students with locations around the world that provide practical science connections.

Through the development of strong partnerships within our community, students will also be involved in extensive field studies and guest presentations that will provide a hands-on approach to the sciences.

Enrollment at the school will be managed to best meet the learning needs of all students.

The Board of Trustees reviewed the implementation plan and gave its approval for the program to proceed next year.

Reconfiguration Sees Changes to School Catchment Areas

The reconfiguration of Glendale, GH Dawe and Normandeau schools to serve students from pre-kindergarten to grade 8 requires a change in the

student attendance areas for these schools.

A review of current attendance areas, natural boundaries, and a variety of factors that will ensure balanced enrolment of students among the three schools were considered in the establishment of new boundaries.

The changes will see more students within the walk limits of their designated school. The plan also anticipates the need to establish strategies to address potential traffic concerns.

An information package that will outline all of the changes related to the K to 8 reconfiguration, including new boundaries, will be provided to parents in January and posted on the District website.

November Enrolment

9884 students were enrolled in the District compared to 9879 the year before. Compared to last year we have 77 more students in high school and a decrease of 61 students in kindergarten.

Public School Boards Association of Alberta and Alberta School Boards Association

- Trustee Lawrence Lee participated in an orientation retreat along with other members of the new executive for the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta
- Patty Dittrick, President and David King, Executive Director with the Public School Boards' Association of Alberta, met with the Board of Trustees to discuss priorities for the PSBAA. The meeting also provided an opportunity to recognize David King, who will be retiring in June 2010, for his valuable work for the Association.
- The ASBA is seeking feedback from jurisdictions on the 2010/11 budget by identifying strategic priorities and initiatives that may affect the budget.

**THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES EXTENDS SEASON'S GREETINGS.
WISHING YOU ALL A MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND THE VERY BEST FOR 2010.**

