

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A Monthly Report to the Eastern School Board

April 2007

Budget 2007

The 2007 Provincial Budget was a good news budget for education, and for our district overall. We are pleased that teaching units have been retained and that we will receive additional units in key areas such as mathematics.

The increase of the repairs and maintenance budget from 55 cents per square foot to 92 cents is welcome news. This is an issue that our board, and predecessor boards, advocated for over the past number of years. This investment and commitment to school infrastructure will ensure that our students and teachers will be able to teach and learn in safe and healthy learning environments.

The announcement of the provision of free high school text books in core courses will be welcomed by many families and will alleviate many of the pressures high school administrators face in the first month of school. We are also pleased that the province's general liability insurance coverage will be extended to most community groups who use our facilities after hours.

We have advocated for changes to the Teacher Allocation Formula and ISSP/Pathways and we are optimistic that government will have more good news to share once the recommendations from the two provincial Commissions have been reviewed by government.

Staffing for Administrative Positions

We have posted 25 job competitions for school administrative positions as of April 30. Seven of these competitions are for principals and 18 for assistant principals. We are encouraged by the number of applicants received to date and the exceptional response from candidates in our leadership development program. There has been a good level of interest in all positions with some positions being a little more challenging than others.

Interviews started on April 18 and as of April 30 we have conducted in excess of 60 interviews. We have offered and confirmed candidates in seven positions.

Staffing Allocation to schools

The staffing allocation has been given to schools and the work of identifying redundancies and layoffs has been completed. This year we were able to complete the redistribution of teachers without layoffs. There were a number of redundancies created and all of these teachers were placed in suitable positions within the region of their present schools.

The new model of using senior administrative officers for families of schools has been very useful in moving this process forward.

Capital Update

We have been advised by the Department of Education that a contractor has been selected to conduct a roofing assessment of Leary's Brook Junior High, and that a roofing contractor has been hired to proceed with the roofing project at St. Bernard's Elementary in Witless Bay.

Job Postings for April

April was another busy month for the Human Resources division with a total of 55 jobs being advertised.

Job Category	# of postings
Primary/Elementary	3
Intermediate	0
High School	2
Administration	27
Guidance	8
REO Vista	1
SL Pathologist	2
Programs Specialists	2
Itinerant Mathematics K-6	8
Itinerant Mathematics 7-9	1
Environmental Education Centre	1

Update on Impaired Bus Driver

The bus driver on the Burin Peninsula who was charged with impaired driving in March has resigned. We understand from media reports that during his court hearing on May 9, he pleaded guilty and received a fine and had his license suspended for two years.

Training for New School Administrators

We completed two days of training for our new administrators on April 26 and 27. These sessions were well-attended by administrators from all regions in the district. The agenda for the first day included presentations on professional learning communities and inclusive education. The second day focused on all aspects of finance and administration of the school district. The feedback from attendees was very positive and we are certainly encouraged by the caliber of new administrators working in our schools.

Late French Immersion for Clarenville

Late French Immersion will be introduced in Clarenville Middle School in September 2007. This will bring French Immersion to the Vista Region and will mean that French Immersion will be offered in all four regions of the district. In September 2007, Early French Immersion will be offered in 37 schools, Late French Immersion in 26 schools and Intensive Core French in 28 schools.

Multi-Year Planning

District transition teams continue to meet with school administrators and school council representatives in CBS, Paradise and Coley's Point/Bay Roberts. The objective of these meetings is to discuss issues affecting students and teachers, especially those who will be moving into different facilities in September. Orientation sessions will be organized for students and parents, and programming, busing and facility issues will be followed up by district staff.

Medic Alert Program Launched

I am pleased to report that the Eastern School District has partnered with the Canadian MedicAlert Foundation to provide free MedicAlert bracelets and memberships to elementary students in 20 of our schools. The No Child Without program, which was launched in our district on May 1, will help students with a pre-existing medical condition be readily

identified in an emergency situation. Information packages were sent to the schools involved and it is hoped that the program will be expanded next year to include more elementary schools.

Meeting with Marine Institute

On May 7th, I had the opportunity to meet with Glenn Blackwood, Executive Director of the Marine Institute and tour the facility. I was quite impressed with this world class facility and the opportunities it has to offer our high school graduates. The Institute is trying to reach out to the schools in the metro region to better inform administrators, teachers and students about its programming offerings. Later this month, our intermediate and high school principals in the Avalon East/West regions will hold their regularly scheduled meeting at the Marine Institute and the agenda will include a tour of the facility.

Rural Active School Program Launched

On April 20th, a special assembly was held at Random Island Academy where Ross Wiseman, Minister of Health and Community Services, presented a cheque for \$50,000 to Dr. Anthony Card, associate professor with the School of Human Kinetics and Recreation, funding the Rural Active Schools Project.

We are partnering with Eastern Health and the School of Human Kinetics and Recreation to pilot the Rural Active Schools Project in five schools of our schools: Epiphany Elementary, Heart's Delight; Matthew Elementary, Bonavista; Random Island Academy, Random Island; Sacred Heart Elementary, Marystown; and St. Augustine's Elementary, Bell Island. The program aims to incorporate an additional 20 minutes of daily physical activity into the classroom.

Wreath Laying at National Day of Mourning

The Assistant Director (HR) represented the district at the National Day of Mourning for Injured Workers and placed a wreath at the ceremony at Confederation Building. The event was attended by representatives of all of unions and included a wide range of community and governmental agencies.

Federation of School Councils

At the recent annual meeting of the Federation of School Councils, Mr. Sandy Hounsell, President, Holy Family Elementary School Council, Paradise, was elected President of the provincial council. We extend our best wishes to Sandy and look forward to working with him in his new capacity. We also wish to thank outgoing president Mrs. Denise Pike for her excellent leadership and dedication to students in this province over the past ten years. We wish Denise well in her future pursuits.

DOE and District to Co-host National Conference

In partnership with the Department of Education, we are hosting the 2007 Interchange for Canadian Studies (ICS), a national conference on the environment for senior high school students. The conference is being held at Memorial University from May 21-27, 2007. Approximately 200 students from throughout the country will attend. Special thanks is extended to all conference organizers for their hard work in organizing this national conference.

New District Office Staff

I am pleased to welcome Ms. Mary Purchase, Senior Education Officer (K-6), Programs Division and Ms. Mary Barron, Senior Administrative Officer (Human Resources) to the senior administration team.

Teacher Recognition

A big pat on the back to some of our exceptional teachers:

- **Valerie Tubman (Queen Elizabeth Regional High)** and **Jeanette Laaning (Holy Trinity Elementary)** on receiving an ArtsWork Educator Award. This award is sponsored by the Department of Education in recognition of teachers who make significant contributions through the arts and exhibit teaching excellence in the arts.
- **Valerie Tubman**, Art teacher, **Queen Elizabeth High School**, also received the Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Deputy Minister's distinction award, the Prix D'Excellence, as part of a team award for the Species at Risk: Education Through Art Project that students completed last year.
- **David Constantine**, Physical Education teacher at **Laval High School**, on receiving a Physical Education Teaching Excellence

Award by CAHPERD (Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance).

- **Angela Allen Baker**, teacher, **Roncalli Elementary**, on being selected to attend the Honeywell-sponsored Space Academy for Educators Program in Alabama this summer for a week-long program focused on space exploration, math and technology and real-life astronaut training.

Student and School Applause

Congratulations to:

- **Prince of Wales Collegiate** on capturing the NLTA Provincial Senior High Mathematics League competition. Members of the winning team are Kelsey Li, Mark Yang, Roger He, and Greg Ball.
- the following students on successfully demonstrating their French skills in the annual Concours d'art oratoire (public speaking contest) hosted recently by the Canadian Parents for French: **Rebecca Simms, O'Donel High; Kristian Chaytor, Clarendville High School; Maggie Burton, Ascension Collegiate; Sarah Dinn, Bishops College; David Mannion and Andrea Moody, Holy Heart of Mary High School.**
- **Adam Kavanagh**, a Level 3 student at **Baltimore High School**, Ferryland on being named a Loran Scholar. The honour is awarded to students who demonstrate academic achievement, are involved in extra-curricular activities and show leadership potential.
- **Tyler Stapleton**, a grade eight student at **Villanova Junior High School** who received top honours in Newfoundland and Labrador in the 2007 Scholastic Challenge
- **Tricentia Academy**, Arnold's Cove, on receiving a HP Technology for Teaching grant valued at over \$30,000 (US). Tricentia is one of only 10 schools in Canada to win this award.
- **Sam Greene**, a Level 1 student from **Holy Heart of Mary High** in St. John's who has placed 6th overall at the World Individual Debating and Public Speaking Championships held recently in Cape Town,

South Africa! Sam placed third in the debating event, came into the top ten in Impromptu Speaking and placed in the top 15 in the Interpretive Speaking and Persuasive Speaking events.

- **Cassandra Sellars** of **Baccalieu Collegiate** who is one of three winners from across Canada in the "Law Day 2007" competition.
- **St. Francis School**, Harbour Grace, on winning a second place trophy at the First Lego League International Competition recently held in Atlanta, Georgia. Congratulations to Technology Education Teacher, **Norman Littlejohn**, coach **Randy Dobbin**, and his senior robotics team who also received an Honouable Mention in the Innovative Solution Award!
- **Pearce Junior High School choir** on winning second place at the Atlantic Band Festival held recently in Halifax.
- **Skills Canada Provincial Winners** who will be traveling to Saskatoon in June:
- **Pat Royle, Facilities Manager**, on successfully completing this year's Boston Marathon!

School Visits

Over the past few weeks, I had the pleasure of attending a number of district events such as the Avalon East Enterprise Showcase at O'Donel High and the Burin Regional Heritage Fair at Holy Name of Mary Academy. I also made school visits to Holy Heart of Mary, St. Theresa's, Mount Pearl Senior High and Heritage Collegiate, Lethbridge.

I also met with the Virginia Park School Council and am pleased to report that we had a very productive meeting as we discussed a number of their issues and concerns.

District Events and High School Graduations

As the school year winds down for another year, teachers and school volunteers are busy organizing the various events that showcase the talents of our students. In just about every region of our district, there were Science Fairs, Historica Fairs, Drama Festivals, Enterprise Showcases, Public Speaking events and Oratoricals at all grade levels, Rotary Music Festival and Choral Connections. High schools throughout the district are also busy hosting their high school proms.

A special thanks is extended to teachers, parents and our school communities for supporting our young people in these important school activities. A special thanks as well to the senior management team for representing the district at these important events.

Choral Connections

I am pleased to report that over 45 schools and 3,000 students participated in **Choral Connections**, a musical event we host annually. Sessions are facilitated by professional artists and focus on choral singing techniques, traditional music and dance, Irish dancing and instrumental performance.

This year we hosted one event in each region: Donald C. Jamieson, Burin; St. Anne's Academy, Dunville, Matthew Elementary, Bonavista and Holy Heart of Mary, St. John's.