

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

*A Monthly Report to the Eastern School Board*

*November 2007*

## **Phase II Multi-Year Planning**

The Board's draft Phase II Multi-Year Capital Works and School Organization Plan for St. John's area schools will be posted on the District's website on December 6, 2007 following the tabling of the report at the public meeting.

The next stage of the planning process will involve public consultations which are slated for late January/early February 2008. The consultation schedule will be advertised in local newspapers and promoted to local schools. The feedback generated from the public consultations will assist the Board in developing its final plan for adoption in spring 2008.

## **Facilities Update**

Cabot Academy, Swift Current Academy and St. Peter's Elementary have re-opened following mould abatement and restoration efforts at each of these schools since September 2007.

Cabot Academy and Swift Current Academy reopened on October 16 and 22 respectively, and St. Peter's Elementary reopened on December 4.

All students, staff and the school communities are to be commended for their support and understanding during these emergency situations.

## **Mount Pearl Intermediate**

Mount Pearl Intermediate reopened on schedule on October 29 following restoration after the electrical fire of September 15, 2007.

At the request of the Paradise Elementary School Council, Grades 5 and 6 students will remain at the School for the Deaf for the remainder of this school year.

We appreciate the efforts of Mount Pearl Senior High, Morris Academy, Newtown Elementary and the Mount Pearl school community in helping to accommodate students while the school was being renovated. We also acknowledge the disruption to student and staff schedules during this time and appreciate their cooperation and support.

## **Staffing and Recruitment**

During the month of November, the following job competitions were advertised:

Job Competition	# of Competitions
Primary / Elementary	15
Intermediate	5
Senior High	4
ESL	1
Academic Support	2
Administration	2
Total	29

Since the last report, there have been a number of positions posted externally, including computer support technicians, data analyst, IT manager, confidential secretary, school secretaries, and student assistants. A procurement clerk and senior accountant positions have also been advertised and filled.

The computer support technicians posting generated just under 100 applications with the remaining competitions bringing the total number to close to 200.

We also hired 11 new student assistant substitutes in Western region, nine in Vista region and five in Burin region with interviews planned for Eastern region.

## **Collective Bargaining**

A successful Labour Management meeting was held with NAPE, representing our student assistants, on October 17, 2007. It was an opportunity for the parties to discuss some of the challenges faced by both our administrators and student assistants in providing essential care to our challenging needs students.

Negotiations have also begun with CUPE Local 1560. Proposals have been exchanged between the parties and the first negotiation session has already taken place. CUPE has requested a media blackout on these negotiations.

### **Round Table on Youth Violence**

We recently held our first round table discussion to engage community partners in a dialogue on youth aggression and related District practices, programming and intervention strategies. This round table is part of the District's ongoing internal program evaluation process.

Community partners attending the initial round table discussion included: the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Child Youth Advocate Office, Women's Policy Office, Youth Violence Initiative, City of St. Johns, Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Center, the Community Youth Network, the Department of Education, and Child Youth and Family Services. Based on the successful discussions and feedback, future sessions are currently being developed.

### **Leadership Development**

We are pleased to report that we have accepted 105 candidates for Leadership Development training this year. We feel confident that we have a very dynamic group of individuals to represent our district at the regional and grade level basis.

The first sessions took place in November and participants are continuing their participation via a First Class forum. This program has produced very positive results for the district. Feedback from last year's participants was also very positive.

Our Leadership at Work for New Administrators training session attracted 30 new participants. This group of administrators is very eager to be involved in professional development and the level of discussion was encouraging.

### **Research on Leadership and Learning**

The Eastern School District, in partnership with Dr. David Dibbon and Dr. Bruce Sheppard of Memorial University of Newfoundland, will be conducting research entitled *Investigating the Links between Leadership and Learning*. Two surveys, one for teachers and one for administrators, will be conducted in February 2008. Results from this research will provide invaluable information to both individual schools and the District on our journey as professional learning communities.

### **Mathematics Action Plan**

In relation to our District Math Action Plan (K-6), programming staff continue to meet with schools on their achievement data and to review the factors/practices they feel impact on results. This information will then be used to work with school staffs in developing common formative assessments. Planning is also currently underway to formalize our Intermediate Mathematics Action Plan.

### **Pilot Chemistry 2202 Assessment**

In our continued efforts to provide support to teachers and students, the District is moving forward with a common assessment pilot project in Chemistry 2202. A district committee will be looking for pilot schools in the next month. All schools will receive feedback on the process upon its completion.

### **Active Schools Program**

Our district is partnering with the Department of Education and St. John's Parks and Recreation on a \$60,000 grant from the provincial government for the Active Schools Program. We are very pleased that, through partnerships with community agencies and contributions from the participating schools, we have successfully reached our goal of expanding the active Schools Program to all K-6 schools in St. John's.

### **New High School Nutrition Course**

A provincial in-service for teachers of the new Nutrition 2102/3102 course was recently held. The introduction of this course is significant in that it brings the curriculum in line with the currently modern standards of nutrition. Participating teachers are very pleased to be involved with this new course. A First Class Conference has been set up for this group for teachers to share questions and ideas.

### **Achievement for All**

The *Achievement for All* professional development program was introduced to Guidance Counsellors, Educational Psychologists, Program Specialists and administrators. Five information sessions were held during November in the four regions and another two are planned for December. There is a high level of interest in this PD Program. We appreciate the Department of Education's provision of substitute days to allow us to train lead teachers for this program.

### **PD Close-outs**

Since September, all four regions have held full school close-outs at the K-6, intermediate and high school levels. These closeouts, which are held in the first term, have been well received by teachers who report that these are great networking opportunities for meeting with other teachers and learning more about the craft of teaching. The feedback confirmed that these sessions are a success and acknowledge the hard work of our district team in organizing these meaningful professional development opportunities for our teachers.

## School Visits

During the past two months, I had the pleasure of visiting St. Theresa's Elementary, Stella Maris Academy, Mount Pearl Intermediate, Holy Spirit High School, Dunne Academy, Pearce Junior High, Donald C. Jamieson, Swift Current Academy, Tricentia Academy, Laval High School, Paradise Elementary, Cabot Academy, Baccalieu Collegiate, Tricon Elementary, Perlwin Elementary, St. Peter's Elementary (Avalon West), Immaculate Conception, and St. Peter's Junior High.

In addition to school visits and specials events such as awards ceremonies, I attended the following:

- On October 25, I spoke at opening ceremonies for the provincial Student Leadership conference held in Carbonear. Approximately 450 students and teachers from all over Newfoundland and Labrador gathered at Carbonear Collegiate for the 18th Annual Provincial Student Leadership Conference.
- On November 21, I was pleased to join with Education Minister, Joan Burke, our chair, Milton Peach, and members of government and the Paradise school community to announce a second new K-6 school for Paradise and an extension to Holy Family School.
- On November 21, I was pleased to join with Eastern Health's CEO, Louise Jones, to officially open the Rowan Centre, an addiction day treatment centre in Pleasantville which offers addictions treatment and educational programming to students.
- On November 22, I joined with Education Minister Joan Burke at Holy Heart of Mary to launch a new provincial awareness campaign aimed at attracting young women to the skilled trades.

## Applause

Congratulations are extended to the following schools and staff on their achievements:

- Congratulations to Holy Heart of Mary Vice Principal, Sharon Brennan, on being awarded a *BIOTE Canada-Biogen Idec Teaching Excellence Award* for her efforts in promoting biotechnology in the classroom. Ms. Brennan, who was Science Department Head last year, was one of three national winners who earned cash awards for creativity and innovation of their teaching methods.

- For the second consecutive year, Ms. Collette Frye-Pitt has received the 'Quality Daily Physical Education Award'. This award is sponsored by CAHPERD ( Canadian Association for Health , Physical Education, Recreation and Dance ) and celebrates excellence in physical education programming.
- Congratulations to Lake Academy staff and students on receiving a 'CARAS' Band Aid Musical Instrument Grant of \$10,000 and for being the only school in our province to receive this grant for the current school year.
- Congratulations to Jonathan Constantine, a level three student at Queen Elizabeth High School in CBS, on being chosen to be part of the Canadian Youth Delegation at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Bali, Indonesia, December 3 to 14 2007.
- Congratulations to Cailee Carroll, a grade 9 student of St. Paul's Junior High School on the recent launch of her teen novel, Original Girl.

### News conference announcing new K-6 school for Paradise and extension to Holy Family.

