



## **Saskatoon Board of Education Highlights Public Board meeting – September 20, 2011**

### **Newcomer Student Centre**

Trustees were given an update on our Newcomer Student Centre which opened its doors on August 15, 2011. Over the past two years, Saskatoon Public Schools has seen a significant increase in the number of students registering in our school division who require English as An Additional Language (EAL) programming. The Newcomer Student Centre meets the needs of this growing student population. Staff at the Centre introduce families to our schools; assess students' language and mathematics skills; register students in school; and recommend support and programming for students needing EAL services.

Since opening, the Newcomer Student Centre (located in the Division's Education Centre in downtown Saskatoon) has registered over 200 students and has welcomed 5 to 10 families a day. Trustees heard from Centre staff and from the Ha family who moved to Saskatoon from Vietnam in August of this year and received services from the Centre. The Centre celebrates its grand opening on Friday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> at 2:00 p.m.

### **Beyond a Little Stone School**

In 1982 the book, "from a little stone school" was published to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Saskatoon Public Schools. The book retraces the development of public education in Saskatoon from the first settlement on the east side of the South Saskatchewan River to the Centennial Year of 1982. A second book, "Beyond a Little Stone School" has been written and published. "Beyond a Little Stone School" covers Saskatoon Public Schools' history for the twenty-five year period, 1982 to 2007. The final chapter includes highlights that will lead the way for the next twenty five years of Saskatoon Public School. The book's author, Colleen Gny, and members of the new publication's editorial committee distributed the book to trustees and answered questions. Copies of the book are available at Saskatoon Public Schools in exchange for a donation to the Saskatoon Public Schools Foundation.

### **2011-2012 School Board Budget**

On June 21, 2011, the Saskatoon Board of Education passed its budget for the 2011-2012 school year with operating expenses of \$207.2 million and capital expenditures of \$14.3 million. Highlights from the budget include the elimination of basic student fees in elementary schools; the expansion of full day every day Kindergarten to Caswell,

Fairhaven, Westmount and W.P. Bate Schools; four new pre-kindergarten programs at Fairhaven, Howard Coad, Lester B. Pearson and W.P. Bate Schools; enhanced English as an Additional Language (EAL) programming for students in Kindergarten to Grade 12; including the opening of the Newcomer Student Centre; additional acquisition and use of technology to enhance the Division's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environment; and increased funding for facility improvement projects at a number of schools. Administration informed trustees that the Division is still waiting for approval of the budget from the Ministry of Education.

### **Board Annual Work Plan**

The Board approved its annual work plan for the 2011-2012 school year. The work plan includes public board meeting agenda items, and events for each month of the year.

### **Literacy for Life update**

Now in its eighth year, Literacy for Life is one of the Board's two strategic learning priorities. The goal of Literacy for Life is for all students, Kindergarten to Grade 8 to read and write, at or above grade level, in multiple subject areas so they can act upon their potentials in school and in life – thereby creating a healthier democratic society of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Trustees heard that in the 2010-2011 school year, students who struggle with reading improved their skills at a rate similar to the rate of improvement of non-struggling readers. Trustees also heard about the seven key dimensions to support student progress towards our Literacy for Life goal and about a number of external experts and consultants who will continue to provide a amazing range of professional development opportunities for teachers in 2011-2012. Both the Saskatoon Tribal Council schools and Horizon School Division continue to work with Saskatoon Public Schools towards significant reading and writing goals in their own schools during this school year.

*Saskatoon Public Schools is the largest school division in the province operating 43 elementary schools, 10 secondary schools, and two associate schools. We serve almost 21,000 students and employ over 2,400 professional and support staff.*

*Saskatoon Public Schools.... Inspiring Learning*

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