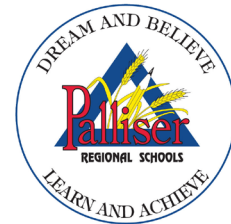


# Highlights of the Board of Trustees Meeting

Tuesday, April 17, 2012



## Board of Trustees pay visit to Coalhurst Elementary School

The Board of Trustees of Palliser Regional Schools held its regular meeting of April 17, 2012 at Coalhurst Elementary School. The trustees were treated to performances by the choir and the handbell group.

Coalhurst Elementary is a preschool to Grade 6 school serving about 275 students. In 2011, CES was named a School of Distinction by the Awards for Excellence in Education for improvement in academics. In 2009, the school was recognized by the Garfield Weston Awards in two categories: Determination in Academic Achievement and Improvement in Academics.



Coalhurst Elementary School's handbell group performs for the Board.

## Glenmore Christian Academy school review results presented

Director of Learning Dan Ryder was welcomed to the meeting to share data collected in the school review of Glenmore Christian Academy, a faith-based school in southwest Calgary. A team of Central Office administrators and visiting principals from other Palliser schools visited the campus on Feb. 29, 2012 to conduct the review, which included surveys of staff, students and parents, classroom observations, and focus group meetings.

The review data indicated the school's strengths include committed and caring teachers, high academic results, and a faith focus that embeds faith in the school environment and practice.

Areas for improvement were communication between staff and parents; meeting different student learning needs and different learning styles with varied methods of instruction; more consistent expectations of homework with some parents and students saying there is too much or too little; and comments from some students indicate bullying is a concern.

The review results are presented to the school



staff who are then encouraged to act on the report by celebrating successes and identifying strategies for improvement.

## Showcase of Palliser PD groups' efforts proves to be 'just tremendous'

Superintendent Kevin Gietz expressed his appreciation to Director of Learning Donna Dalby, executive assistant Anna Ell, staff at County Central High School, in particular Janice Povey, and the staff at Vulcan Prairieview for their

efforts to organize and accommodate the final division-wide professional development day on April 16, 2012. Hundreds of teachers from across Palliser converged in Vulcan for a day that included a showcase of their work this year.

Each of Palliser's teachers is part of a small professional learning team, united by a common interest in subject matter or grade level. At each

of the four division-wide PD days, they meet to work on common goals intended to improve student learning.



Michael Shain, one of Palliser's art teachers, shares information at his collaborative learning group's display.

“The showcase was just tremendous,” Gietz told the Board. Teachers created displays to share what they learned, and many of the displays offered takeaways, resources other teachers could take home with them.

## **Public invited to stakeholders’ meeting May 14 at Cultural Rec Centre, Vulcan**

The Board heard an update on plans for a stakeholders’ meeting scheduled for 1 to 4 p.m., May 14 at the Cultural Recreation Centre in Vulcan. This will be the first time the Board has invited students, parents, staff and public from across Palliser to a single meeting, rather than to regional gatherings.

Superintendent Kevin Gietz said bringing everyone from Palliser together for A Community Conversation will create a unique opportunity for sharing and collaborative learning.

Invitations to the meeting have been sent to all schools and municipalities and will be advertised publicly. Anyone interested in attending is encouraged to preregister by contacting Central Office at 403-328-4111, toll-free t 1-877-667-1234 or by email at [community.conversation@pallisersd.ab.ca](mailto:community.conversation@pallisersd.ab.ca). Walk-ins are also welcome to attend.

## **Talks continue with Master’s society**

Superintendent Kevin Gietz reported on a recent and “very positive” meeting with Tom Rudmik, representing the society at Master’s Academy and College. The society had served notice in December of its intent to end its partnership with Palliser by the end of the 2012-13 school year. However, Palliser and Master’s continue to meet in hopes of resolving matters. The discussions are to continue between the two parties on April 19.

## **Palliser co-sponsors election forums**

Chairman Don Zech reported on the first of two election forums Palliser is co-sponsoring during the provincial election campaign. Zech attended a packed event in Coaldale where the four candidates in the Little Bow Riding were present: Everett Tanis, Liberal Party; Bev Muendel-Atherstone, New Democrats; John Kolk, Progressive Conservative; and Ian Donovan, Wildrose. Palliser partnered with the Coaldale Chamber of Commerce for the event which attracted about 200 people on April 16.

The second forum is scheduled for 7 p.m., April 18, at Vulcan Prairieview Elementary, co-sponsored by the Vulcan Chamber of Commerce.

## **John Davidson, Sunnyside to receive community foundation grants**

Two Palliser schools are to receive grants from the Community Foundation of Lethbridge and Southwestern Alberta at its annual grant celebration event April 20 at Lethbridge Soccer Centre.

A \$5,400 grant will go toward a library space at John Davidson School. Portable shelving will be set up on the stage in the gym to serve as the library. When necessary, the shelves can be secured and moved to allow other uses of the stage.

Sunnyside School will receive a \$1,000 grant to purchase a variety of new instruments and sheet music for its music program.

## **More celebrations in Palliser**

Trustees were reminded that an open house is planned at the new school on Rock Lake Colony at 12:30 p.m. April 20. Earlier this spring, a celebration was held at Springridge School on Carmangay Colony to acknowledge the new classroom space there.

The Board approved the Audit Tender documents



**There was a standing room only crowd at the Coaldale Chamber of Commerce and Palliser Regional Schools election forum.**

and process, as presented. The tender for audit services is expected to be posted online on April 18, and close in two weeks. The Board also heard the results of the recent tender for the installation of a modular at Coalhurst Elementary School. Three tenders were submitted by the close date of March 22. The Board will recommend to Alberta Infrastructure that the lowest bidder, Wahl Construction Management Ltd., be accepted.

## **Congratulations to Palliser's Edwin Parr nominee, Marie Muschiol**

Marie Muschiol, a teacher at County Central High School in Vulcan, is Palliser's finalist for the Edwin Parr Award, recognizing outstanding first-year teachers. She will be vying to be the Edwin Parr winner from Zone 6 of the Alberta School Boards' Association, with the winner announced May 9th.

The Board congratulated Muschiol and other new teachers in Palliser who were nominated this year: Stephanie Hrisook, Brant Colony School; Joni Goodkey, Arrowwood School; Gwen Hutchins, Glenmore Christian Academy; and Christine Carrick, Glenmore Christian Academy.

The trustees who served on Palliser's nomination described the selection process as incredibly difficult given the calibre of all the nominees.

## **Lobbying continues for renewed support for Career Transitions for Youth**

The Board expressed their support for the work of Chinook Regional Career Transitions for Youth. Career Transitions is formed out of a partnership of eight southwestern Alberta school jurisdictions, including Palliser. It provides a number of services to students to facilitate their transition from school to work. Unfortunately, both the federal and provincial budgets have dramatically reduced the funding available to support the service. The school boards involved are lobbying the provincial government for support.

Trustees expressed their appreciation of the value of the services provided by Career Transitions, which include the regional skills competition. Career Transitions leases space in Palliser Centre.

## **Palliser exploring technology pilot project at County Central High**

Associate Superintendent (Human Resources) Kevin Garinger, who also oversees technology in Palliser, said a not-for-profit organization called Cybera is interested in piloting cloud computing and virtualization at County Central High School in Vulcan. The pilot could enhance student learning in rural Alberta through faster video hosting to download educational videos, clear, uninterrupted video conferencing, distance collaborative projects and virtual classroom field trips. Garinger said cloud computing could also reduce costs in evergreening servers. Axia, which provides the SuperNet to public institutions across Alberta, has been involved in the pilot project discussions.

## **Regional threat risk assessment protocol to be signed May 28**

Superintendent Kevin Gietz expects to attend a formal signing ceremony of the Chinook Regional County VTRA Protocol on May 28 in Lethbridge. Seven school jurisdictions will be implementing this protocol for Violence Threat Risk Assessment. The protocol has been developed in partnership with a number of community agencies, including Alberta Health Services (Addiction and Mental Health), local law enforcement, Chinook Country Student Health Partnership and Southwest Alberta Child and Family Services. The Superintendent acknowledged the work of Director of Learning Pat Rivard on this collaborative effort.

## **More school calendars approved**

The Board continued to consider draft school calendars for 2012-13. Calendars will be posted on Palliser's site, under the Schools tab, as they are approved.

## **Capital Plan amended**

The Board was notified it cannot include modularity on its Three-Year Capital Plan, which the Board approved at its March meeting. The plan has been adjusted accordingly and will be updated on the website.

## **Next meeting at a colony school**

The next meeting will be at 10 a.m., Tuesday, May 15 at Chin Lakes Colony School, located at Lakeside Colony.