

## Good News Items

- Three students have been selected as this year's Christmas Card Artwork contest winners - Mikaylee Beck from Bonnyville Centralized High School, Karina Schneider from Cold Lake Outreach School and Jaz Narag from Aurora Middle School. Their art work will be featured on this year's Christmas cards.
- Congratulations to Leagan Poncappo on being selected as the Jr. Citizen of the Year in Lac La Biche!
- Trustee Debra Lozinski congratulated students and staff at J.A. Williams High School on an amazing series of 10 performances of the Lion King Jr.
- Trustee Lozinski also commended Kikino School on a rockin' Christmas concert. The December 12th concert was the first one of the season in Northern Lights Public Schools. A full schedule of concerts is available on our website.

## Class Size Report

The Board reviewed the Class Size Report the division is required to submit annually to Alberta Education. It shows the average class sizes at each school in grades K-3, 4-6, 7-9 and 10-12 in all subjects, as well as core subjects only.

Superintendent Rick Cusson noted that the Alberta Commission on Learning recommended in 2003 the following class sizes: 17 for K-3, 23 for grades 4-6, 25 for grades 7-9, and 27 for grades 10-12. The jurisdiction averages are below those recommendations, with the exception of K-3.

Superintendent Cusson noted some supports have already been put in place in schools that were above the recommended average, so class sizes have declined at some schools since the data was generated for the report, which is based on September 30th enrolment numbers. This includes supports provided through the Classroom Improvement Fund which was part of the collective agreement with the Alberta Teachers' Association.

One of the major factors affecting class sizes in the divi-

sion is a lack of physical space to create additional classrooms. The board will continue to lobby for infrastructure upgrades to its facilities and investigate other options to address space on a short-term and long-term basis.

The class size reports have been posted to the Accountability section of the division's website.

## Inclusive Education Report

Jimmi Lou Irvine, Associate Superintendent - Teaching and Learning, provided the Board with an overview of what happened with Inclusive Education in the division last year and some of the priorities for the 2017-2018 school year.

Northern Lights is fortunate to have an extensive division support team that includes specialists that many other rural school divisions do not have access to. This includes speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, and mental health, early learning and instructional technology consultants. All NLPS schools also have access to student advocacy counsellors and a student support team.

Northern Lights also works closely with other local service providers through the Regional Collaborative Service Delivery (RCSD) model. Through RCSD, NLPS can access supports for students and share information that enhances services throughout the region. For instance, the RCSD recently implemented a project that will see First Nations children aged 3-6 access programming that is similar to the PUF program.

## Board Meeting Times

The Board decided to continue alternating both the location and start time of its meetings. Meetings will be held in Bonnyville, Cold Lake and Lac La Biche. The public portion of the meetings will start at either 1 p.m. or 3:30 p.m. The full schedule is posted in the Board section of our website.

## 2018-2019 School Calendar

The Board reviewed two drafts of the 2018-2019 School Calendar and approved both in principle so they can be distributed for feedback. Both calendars will be posted on the division website and sent to stakeholders for feedback starting next week.

## IMR Funding Changes

The Board discussed the possible implications of changes to IMR (Infrastructure Maintenance Renewal) funding that were recently announced by Alberta Education. This is the money the division uses to maintain its schools, including facility upgrades like roofing, flooring and heating systems.

Previously the division receive 50% of its IMR funding at the beginning of the year. Now the division will need to submit a plan showing how they are using the funding by January 31 and will not receive any funds until that plan has been approved by Alberta Education. There is also a new requirement that 30% of the funds need to be spent on capital expenditures.

## Lac La Biche Sports Fields

Pending approval from the Minister of Education, Northern Lights Public Schools will be declaring two pieces of property in Lac La Biche as surplus to its needs and transferring them to Lac La Biche County in lieu of a financial contribution to the sports fields being developed at the Bold Center.

Northern Lights and the County have been discussing the development of sports fields since the Bold Center and the school were built. Development of sports fields is not included in the funding the division receives for new schools and the division also can't use instructional funds to help develop them.

Combined, the estimated value of the two properties is approximately \$750,000. The first property is a three-acre parcel that is currently part of the larger parcel that includes Lac La Biche Outreach School and the division's maintenance shop. Those buildings are not part of the agreement. The second piece of land is a two-acre parcel from the division's Hudson Bay property and used to be the old maintenance shop.

"This is an extension of the good faith we entered into with the County when we started the Bold Center project," said Board Chair Arlene Hrynyk. "It demonstrates our commitment to doing what's right for our kids and our community."

## Next Board Meeting

The next Board Meeting of the Northern Lights Board of Trustees will take place on Wednesday, January 17 in Cold Lake (exact location to be determined). The public portion of the meeting will start at 1 p.m.

For more information on Northern Lights  
and our schools, please go to:

[www.nlsd.ab.ca](http://www.nlsd.ab.ca)

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