

Good News Items

- Trustee Mandi Skogen commended Cold Lake Elementary School on hosting an entertaining volunteer lunch that featured performances from the school's choir and each different grade.
- Trustee Karen Packard congratulated Nelson Heights Middle School students on raising \$500 for next year's We Day trip through a coffeehouse that featured piano players, dancers and a rock band.
- Trustee Lorne Kaban brought back accolades from the Duclos School Council. The parents had been advocating for increased janitorial services and were pleased with the support they received from the division's maintenance department.
- Trustees also congratulated the many athletes that achieved personal bests and top-10 finishes at recent track and field zone competitions. Students from several schools in the division were advancing to Provincials.

Accelerated Reading at HEB

Students and staff from H.E. Bourgoin Middle School showcased their success with the Accelerated Reader program which was initiated at the school in 2014-2015 to increase the number of students reading and get them reading more often. The program tracks which books students are reading, gives them recommendations that are at their reading level and quizzes them on the books they have read. In the first year of the program, the number of students reading at or above benchmark went from 31% to 48% and the number of students deemed as needing urgent intervention went from 22% to 8%.

The students said the program encouraged them to read more often and increased their confidence with reading. One student had her reading level improve by two grade levels this year alone. Students who achieve the reading goals they set are rewarded with fun field trips and other incentives.

Accelerated reading also provides valuable information for teachers that they can use to determine areas they need to work on with students and what strategies might be helpful. It also works well with other literacy strategies being used in NLPS classrooms including guided reading and Daily 5.

Edwin Parr Nominee

H.E. Bourgoin Middle School Principal Maureen Ference introduced the division's 2018 Edwin Parr nominee - Colby Bowers. She said Bowers comes to school every day with a positive attitude and has an open arms policy mantra that is so embedded in his physical education instruction that students have been sharing it with their families at home.

Due in large part to Mr. Bowers's passion and enthusiasm a record 170 students signed up to play basketball at the school this year and many joyfully showed up to practice in the early morning hours. Mr. Bowers even recently donated \$500 to the school so that no students would have to pay the \$5 registration fee to participate in track and field. "He gives every part of his soul to making sure all kids feel successful," she said.

Mr. Bowers was recognized recently as the division's nominee at the Alberta School Boards' Association Zone 2/3 Edwin Parr banquet.

2018-2019 Budget

Secretary-Treasurer Paula Elock presented the Board with an overview of the 2018-2019 budget. All Boards are required to submit a budget to Alberta Education by the end of May. The division is planning for a \$1.2 million deficit at the end of 2018-2019, which will be offset by reserves. Both Transportation and Plant Operations and Maintenance continue to operate in a deficit position.

Technology Report

Bill Driedger, Associate Superintendent - System Improvement, highlighted the work being done in technology in the division. Overall, there is one device (computer, Chromebook, laptop, etc.) for every 1.3 students. Work has been done throughout the division to ensure schools have

the bandwidth needed to accommodate all of the devices. Driedger noted that access to technology will become even more important as Alberta Education's curriculum review continues and new resources are developed as most of those new resources will likely be web-based.

Trustees also engaged in a discussion about the impact a lack of cellular service has on connectivity and communication in some communities. The Board will be advocating at the provincial level for improved connectivity, particularly in rural areas.

Next Board Meeting

The next Regular Board Meeting will take place on Wednesday, June 13 at the Lac La Biche Division Office.

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

www.nlsd.ab.ca