

### Canine reading partners an important part of the team!



Jacquie Linton, a Grade 4 teacher at École John Wilson Elementary School in Innisfail, knew how much her students benefit from having her big dogs in the classroom. She has been bringing them to school twice a month for the last three years, so students can read to them.

“You can clearly see the confidence her students gain by reading aloud to these friendly, nonjudgmental, keen listeners,” said Principal Angela Warke.

“The dogs end up becoming part of their stories, too, when they’re writing. When the new ‘Animals in Schools’ admin procedure came into effect last fall, we paused their visits just long enough to get all the requirements in place so that they can continue coming to school. Our students care very deeply for these dogs and we all know the value they bring to learning.”

Administrative Procedure 2-23 outlines several health and safety considerations for students, staff and the animals. It includes such things as proper vaccinations, licensing, and completion of formal training.

*Literacy pals - Superintendent Kurt Sacher visited with two of Jacquie Linton’s three big dogs that come with her to class twice a month - the third dog had hurt his leg and had to stay home on this particular day. Jacquie also has llamas and donkeys on her acreage, but has no plans to have them approved for school visits!*

### Outstanding Safety Audit

The most recent external audit not only allowed Chinook’s Edge to renew the coveted Certificate of Recognition (COR) status, it resulted in an extremely high overall score of 92 percent. The audit included site observations, interviews and documentation review in 14 schools, Division Office, Transportation and Facilities departments.

“This tells us our schools are becoming safer every year,” said Linden Lonsberry, Safety Manager. “One of the components in particular, Management Leadership and Organizational Commitment, showed exceptional strength with a score of 97 percent. This division’s commitment to safety across the board impressed them greatly. In my experience, which is over 25 years in safety, this is the best audit I have ever seen - and I’m a former external auditor, too. I’m so proud of where we are - safety is now a core aspect of the culture in Chinook’s Edge. That involves the efforts of every staff member in the division.”



**Collaboration** - Grade 5-12 French Immersion teachers from across Chinook’s Edge, as well as representatives from Wetaskiwin Regional Public School Division and Red Deer Catholic School Division, spent a day working together in Division Office last week. They were looking at strategies to increase the use of technology in their teaching, and also focused on continual improvement in French Language Arts results. The group was pleased for the opportunity to share best practices that are helping students achieve success.