

### Board of Education: year in review

This has been an eventful and purposeful year for the Chinook's Edge Board of Education. After last fall's Trustee Election, the Board welcomed new Trustees: Allan Tarnoczi (first term, Sundre), Melissa Copley (first term, Carstairs/Cremona) and Joe-Anne Knispel-Matejka (second term, Sylvan Lake).

The Board has taken an innovative, solution-oriented approach to advocacy with this government on items of critical importance to Chinook's Edge School Division. They have advocated strongly that the community of Carstairs needs their lack of learning spaces addressed in a timely and appropriate fashion. They have also advocated for sufficient funding for an increasing number of students with complex needs. They have also made special mention of their concerns for a long term solution for the students of Horizon School, as well as those students currently supported by an underfunded Regional Collaborative Service Delivery (RCS D) model. Additionally, the Board has provided significant input into how the administration of PUF funding can be more efficient and effective for students in our schools.

The Board scrutinized the division's \$129 million budget, as always. They worked hard to ensure educational dollars are benefiting students, and are employing the use of reserves to invest in key areas in the division. A large part of the reduced reserves in Chinook's Edge is caused by the ongoing challenges of providing transportation services in our large rural school division. The Board has explored possible solutions to this situation, and entered a joint busing agreement with Red Deer Catholic Regional Schools. The Board considers student transportation to be a fundamental component of student wellness, and will continue to study possible solutions.



*The Board of Education hosted Minister David Eggen on May 4th, for a pleasant and fruitful meeting.*

#### **Achieving success!**

The Board rallied behind every school and community in the division, and worked to ensure progress and success on a number of initiatives:

- advocating successfully for additional learning spaces at Jessie Duncan School in Penhold, where a second set of four portables is currently being constructed.
- carefully researching and approving new bus purchases, to ensure the Chinook's Edge fleet remains current.
- extensive policy review process in an effort to clearly define expectations, while at the same time streamlining unnecessary staff time.
- Trustees continue to lend their expertise to key initiatives in addition to Board work: Trustee Connie Huelsman continues the role of ASBA Zone 4 Chair; Trustee Holly Bilton remains Chair of the Rural Caucus which included a pre-budget meeting with the Minister this year; and Sherry Cooper continues the role of Director with the Rural Caucus.



*The bargaining committees from the Board and the ATA local ratified their Collective Agreement on February 12th, through high quality work in a series of respectful meetings which is a priority for Chinook's Edge.*

**We are grateful for the strong and caring relationship we have with our staff, and look forward to advocating on behalf of our schools and our entire division next year. Thank you to everyone in our school communities, for your effort and dedication this year. Our work together is making a meaningful difference to the students we serve!**

*- The Chinook's Edge Board of Education*