

Chinook's Edge honours employees at annual staff recognition celebration

For Immediate Release, October 27, 2017: Chinook's Edge School Division acknowledged dozens of long-serving staff and welcomed 22 new teachers at its annual Celebrations event on October 26.

Co-hosted by the Board of Education and the Alberta Teachers' Association Local #17, the evening honoured every employee group at every level across the division. It began with the induction of 22 new teachers into the Alberta Teachers' Association and ended with a tribute to 40 retirees, many of whom had spent their entire careers in Chinook's Edge.

"Our Board is very grateful to our staff and we are always pleased to honour them in this way," said Colleen Butler, Board of Education Chair. "The people we pay tribute to at Celebrations have reached a career milestone with Chinook's Edge, and the annual event allows us to thank each of them for their commitment. No matter their role, each of our staff serve students and families extremely well."

Among the many people receiving long-service awards at Celebrations, there is perhaps no one who has served Chinook's Edge longer than Ron Fisher. Ron is stepping down from 49 years with the division, having worked in a variety of roles – most recently that of Trustee for Sundre. He began his long career as a guidance counsellor at Sundre High in 1967. He went on to teach sciences for years, predominantly Biology, and moved into the role of Vice Principal and then Principal. He retired from Sundre High in 1998, only to continue serving the community and the division as Trustee for the next 19 years.

Ron Fisher was presented with the Roy E. Cope Award at the Celebrations event, which is an honour extended by the Board to individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the educational well-being of students in the division.

"Education has been my whole life," said Ron, who chose not to run in the recent Trustee Election. "I have always been interested in academics and I have traditional views on how these important courses should be structured, so I've followed achievement results very closely during my years on the Board. I've seen a lot of trends come and go, and I've been keen to see how they affected student achievement and knowledge levels. The basic need for strong education and factual knowledge will never change, and there has been positive movement in that regard in Chinook's Edge. It has been gratifying to be part of this – it's been my life's work."

"I think the education of our kids and youth is the most important thing we can do in society, and it has been a very rewarding career. Looking back over the years, my most satisfying time was my time in the classroom."

A record number of staff – 64 in total - were recognized for 10 years of service at the Celebrations event, and two staff from Transportation Services were honoured with the rare milestone of over 40 years of service. Bus drivers Barbara Wiker and Rick Purcell have worked for 40 years and 45 years respectively.

"People say the world has changed so much, but to me the kids are the same and the view down the road is the same," said Rick. "The biggest change is the high level of safety training that is involved in driving a school bus now. I feel like I was the kid of the company when I started out, but even way back then the priority was to simply get all these youngsters to school safely. That will never change."

A full list of ATA inductees, retirees and long-service award recipients is included with this release. For more information or to obtain photos from the Celebrations event, please contact:

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