

Chinook's Edge welcomes 32 new teachers

For Immediate Release, August 24, 2017: The annual New Teacher Orientation has been underway this week, signifying the start to another year of learning and growing in Chinook's Edge.

Thirty-two teachers who are either new to the profession or new to the division are taking part in what is considered to be one of the most extensive mentorship programs in the province. The three-day program increases new teachers' understanding of the culture and expectations in Chinook's Edge, and provides time and support as they begin mapping out specific plans and goals for the school year.

For Taylor Grenier and Jason Jackson, who are both returning to their hometown of Olds to teach, the New Teacher Orientation has been a valuable start to the year.

"It has been so rewarding to meet all the other new teachers and collaborate together," said Taylor, who graduated from the University of Alberta last spring and will be teaching Humanities at Olds High. "Everyone at Division Office has been so welcoming as they share strategies and insight, and it's very apparent that they want us to succeed in our first year."

Taylor, who is one of six siblings, will be teaching his first year in the same school where his youngest sister will be finishing Grade 12. They are the children of Gaye Grenier, who is a long-serving Family School Wellness Worker in Chinook's Edge.

"Through my mom and through the great experiences I had as a student at Olds High, I've just always had strong support from people who really care. I've come to know this is truly the small-town advantage – you don't get that opportunity to know each student on a personal basis in larger centres. I get to work alongside teachers who inspired me to become a teacher myself. I will continue learning beside teachers who believe in connecting with kids, in a division where great relationships are at the centre of everything else. For a first year teacher just coming out of university, it's a dream come true," said Taylor.

Jason Jackson isn't just returning home to start his teaching career at Olds High, he's also taking over the family farm as his parents retire. Jason's career path took a few turns before he was hired as the school's new French Immersion teacher.

"I actually dropped out of French class in high school, but then one of my teachers encouraged me to go on an exchange. When I met other young people who spoke French and discovered how exciting it is to relate to other people through French, I was hooked," said Jason, who went on to work at a school in France before graduating from the French campus of the University of Alberta. "Language is a window onto the world, and I'm looking forward to giving students another perspective on the world through another language. It's been very humanizing to be around so many people this week who truly want us to do well."

Dr. Lissa Steele, Associate Superintendent of Learning Services, describes this group of teachers as very thoughtful and reflective about their practice and what they hope to accomplish. "They are very strong in their values and beliefs about education and about kids. We are so lucky to have them!"

The first day of school for students in Chinook's Edge is August 31st.

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For more information, please contact: **Sandy Bexon, Communications** (403) 227-7085 / cell (403) 391-3220

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