

PIPELINE

BGRS



JANUARY 2014

Chairman, Board of Education

It is hard to believe that we are half-way through the 2013/2014 school year. All of our departments and staff are working hard to provide Black Gold students with safe and caring schools and wonderful educational opportunities.



In the fall of 2013 the Municipal Elections saw changes to the Board of Education for Black Gold. For the first time Trustees were elected for a four year term.

The following people are your Trustees for the next four years:
County West – **Sam Kobeluck**; County Central – **Rebecca Eilander**; Devon – **Sandy Koroll**; Beaumont – **Lorna Misselbrook**; Leduc – **Barb Martinson** and **Dennis Nosyk** and County East – **Johnette Lemke**.

The Board is already busy visiting each of our school sites. These visits provide us with a wonderful opportunity to see “a day in the life” of our students and staff. We witness the tremendous work that goes into our facilities and the great pride our students and staff take in their schools.

Through our Provincial Associations, we have opportunities to provide the Government with our thoughts on the new regulations that will accompany the new Education Act and to give input into the Teaching Excellence Task Force.

We continue to work with our MLAs to promote education. We lobby the Government for adequate, predictable funding so we can maintain programming and keep our schools in great shape.

On behalf of the Board of Education, I would like to thank you for all you do to make Black Gold the wonderful school jurisdiction it is.

Johnette Lemke, Chairman, Board of Education – johnette.lemke@blackgold.ca

Superintendent

It is hard to believe that Christmas has come and gone and we are already into the latter part of the 2013-14 school year. The first half of this school year has been extremely busy. The following are a few highlights of what has transpired since September:

- On September 20th, the BGRD Welcome Back & Long Service Awards Ceremony for staff was held at Leduc Composite High School. The event recognized long service award recipients, support staff retirees and concluded with entertainment provided by the Black Gold House Band.
- On October 4th, BGRD staff and trustees, along with municipal and provincial representatives, hosted a sign unveiling ceremony for the new K-9 Public School in Leduc. The public event was held to provide awareness as to the location, the date of completion and of the



Superintendent – continued

- community partners associated with this project. A contest to name the new school was held and the winning name is West Haven Public School.
- Grade Configuration Working and Advisory Committees for the City of Leduc schools were formed in early October. A Public Information Open House will be held in the Maclab Centre for the Performing Arts foyer at 4308 - 50 Street, Leduc, on February 26th at 6:30 p.m. The Open House will provide information on boundary, grade configuration, and transportation options being considered.
- On October 5th, Leduc Composite High school celebrated their 50th year anniversary. A formal presentation followed by a dinner and social attracted more than 300 former staff and students.
- Municipal elections were held on October 21st. At the Board Organizational Meeting, Trustee Johnette Lemke was declared Chairman and Trustee Lorna Misselbrook was declared Vice-Chairman of the Board of Education.
- The Board ratified labour agreements with all Division staff.
- This year's Board-sponsored Innovation Fund once again garnered much interest. A total of 34 proposals were submitted with 16 proposals being selected for a total funding of \$103,244.15.
- Recently, we were very pleased to receive notification that funding for a modernization of Calmar Secondary school has been approved. We look forward to receiving details of what will be included in this announcement.
- "Engagement and transformation" are terms that are currently being readily used in the field of education. With this in mind, we look forward to our Parent Engagement evenings with internationally known keynote speakers, Simon Breakspear and Philip McRae. These events will be held at the Maclab Centre for the Performing Arts at 4308 - 50 Street, Leduc, on February 10th and February 18th at 7:00 p.m.



At Black Gold we are focused on the transformation of education as envisioned by, 'Inspiring Education'. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to our students, and I wish you all the best for an *inspiring* 2014!

Dr. Norman Yanitski, Superintendent of Schools – 780 955 6026 – norman.yanitski@blackgold.ca

Associate Superintendent, Learning Services

It feels like we just got started and now we are already half way through the school year. As always, change is the constant.

Our Technology Department continues to evolve. Barry Scheelar is in charge of Information Technology (IT) and Ray McCubbing is at the helm of the Educational Technology Department (ET) and is continuing on with his duties as Technology Integration Facilitator (TIF). Darren Maltais is already making a name for himself as a stellar coach in his new role as a TIF. The department is moving forward with the Evergreening of the netbooks in schools, addition of Chromebooks, providing more Access Points in classrooms and upgrading the infrastructure in each building with the goal being to provide better access to learning resources and opportunities. The Tech department is also leading the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) initiative by providing support and installing cabinets and charging stations in each school. We, as a Division, are embracing the Google environment for collaboration and communication.



Associate Superintendent, Learning Services – continued

The first “*made in Black Gold*” conference for librarians was a resounding success last fall. All librarians throughout BGRS honed their skills and were in-serviced on the latest trends in both *Destiny* and the future of their craft. They continue to work to introduce teachers within their schools to new and innovative resources. We also continue to expand and support our inventory of e-learning materials.



Professional Development is focused on two areas this year. Principals are working with their staffs to address school-based needs as identified through the Tell Them From Me (TTFM) accountability pillar surveys as well as student / parent engagement. Teachers also have the opportunity to address professional growth through self-directed professional development.

The number of new Canadians is increasing in our Division. We are working with all of our schools to provide diagnostic tools and comprehensive resources to help ESL / ELL students and their families with resources to help them be successful in school and beyond.

Our Outreach schools in Beaumont and Leduc continue to support an increasing number of students. Our Video-conference classes are taking advantage of new technology to provide opportunities for remote teachers to engage more with students in other schools. These, along with our Home Education and blended programs, provide flexibility to help schools meet the needs of students in their communities and surrounding areas.



Once again, BGRS have achieved good results in the accountability pillar, affirming the efforts of our teaching and support staff to make our schools safe and caring centres for learning. The exceedingly high participation rates acknowledge the ability of our schools to implement an inclusive environment where all students are provided an appropriate program that allows them the opportunity to fulfill their potential.

I expect that the progress we have made in the past few years will continue as we move forward to implement the tenets of Inspiring Education and Curriculum Redesign.

Bill Romanchuk, Associate Superintendent – Learning Services – 780 955 6028 – bill.romanchuk@blackgold.ca

Associate Superintendent, Human Resources & Administration

It's January, 2014, and that means New Year's Resolutions. Webster's Dictionary provides the following definition of “resolution”: *to decide or determine, to make up one's mind, to make clear, and, finally, the action of expressing formally our intention or purpose.*

My Dad turned 80 on January 4th, and his intention was to throw a fabulous party: heaps of good people, good food, and good drink. While chatting one evening on the phone he said, “Cal, I'm not sure if I'll see 81, so I want to share this birthday with the people I love.” And in true Albert fashion, he took charge and began organizing his party: deciding on the menu, telling us kids what we needed to do and inviting people: friends, immediate family, nieces, and nephews – the house was packed.

Dad worked the room and chatted with everyone, and when it was time for his birthday cake and the opening of his presents, he asked each of his granddaughters to come sit next to him. From across the room, standing next to my sister, I observed the delight in my Dad's deep blue eyes. I watched as my 20-year-old daughter gave Dad her present and she said, “Grandpa, this present is from me; Happy Birthday.” Then she gave him a huge hug and kissed him on the cheek.



Associate Superintendent, Human Resources & Administration – continued

Well, for those of you who know me, you know what happened next – yes, my eyes filled with tears as I grasped the importance of this moment; I looked at my sister, my brother, and Mom, and their eyes, too, showed tears of love.



In our business, relationships are key, and it's no different in the business of life. I'd like to thank our school support staff, Central Office support staff, our custodians, maintenance men, and our teachers for keeping the importance of positive relationships at the forefront at the bargaining tables – BGRS is truly an amazing organization with wonderful people. I look forward to our upcoming advisory committee meetings, and I'm looking forward to working with the Beaumont principals in hopes of completing the staffing reconfiguration by spring break.

I want to both welcome new staff to BGRS and thank everyone for his/her leadership and dedication to each other, our students, and their families. The relationships you are building do make a difference, and when the walls come down, love takes over. I also want to convey my thoughts and prayers to each of you currently experiencing or who have in the past year experienced difficult times – may hope fill your heart and carry your sadness away.

Finally, I wish you and your families a wonderful, healthy, and prosperous new year. Please do stop me and say hello whenever you get the chance, and, remember, the headlines you make in this life will be based on the difference you make in the lives of others.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Calvin Monty, Associate Superintendent – Human Resources & Administration – 780 955 6032 – calvin.monty@blackgold.ca

Associate Superintendent, Business & Finance



The Audited Financial Statements for 2012-13 were approved by the Board of Education on November 27, 2013. There was an overall surplus of \$1,380,401 allocated between the following programs:

Instruction	\$ 829,619
Plant Operations & Maintenance	\$ (188,861)
Transportation	\$ 126,549
Board & System Administration	\$ 613,094
External Services	\$ 0

The budgeted deficit in Instruction was not realized primarily due to additional CEU funding received and an under-expenditure in certificated salaries & benefits. The deficit in Plant Operations & Maintenance highlights our continued financial pressure in this program area. Board & System Administration accounted for 3.41% of expenditures, well below the cap of 4% allowed by Alberta Education.



The 2013-14 Revised Budget of \$105,462,230 was also approved by the Board of Education on November 27, 2013. We are projecting a deficit of \$1,673,768 allocated between the following programs:

Instruction	\$ (1,298,268)
Plant Operations & Maintenance	\$ (270,033)
Transportation	\$ (98,540)
Board & System Administration	\$ (6,927)
External Services	\$ 0

The deficit budget will be fully supported through the use of operating reserves.

Have a great rest of the school year.

Ruth Andres, Associate Superintendent – Business & Finance – 780 955 6049 – ruth.andres@blackgold.ca

Division Principal



It is interesting to note that much of what I was involved in last year parallels many of my focuses this year: the Aspiring Leadership Team, Innovative Grant opportunity, reconfiguration of schools within a community, Regional Principal Group meetings, and school support continue to fill up the calendar. One major difference is the increase in time, energy and resources spent on communication.

This year's Aspiring Leadership Team (ALT) has five participants compared to nine last year. Once again, the ALT continues to focus on educational leadership rather than that of school administration. The ALT monthly meetings involve dialoguing with invited guest speakers (leaders within the BGRS organization) and group discussions on professional readings. ALT members also have the opportunity to visit Division schools and be involved in a leadership project of their choice. The five members are committed to the program and are eager to expand their current leadership skills.

The term reconfiguration has been well used over these past two years. Recommendations for the Beaumont School Reconfiguration were accepted by the Board of Education in the spring of last year. In September, 2013, the same reconfiguration process was applied to the City of Leduc. The need to look at school boundaries and grade configurations at each of the BGRS sites within the City of Leduc was necessitated by the announcement of a new K-9 school being built in the neighbourhood of West Haven. It is anticipated that West Haven Public School will open in the fall of 2016. The working committee assigned to this project continues to make progress and is looking forward to soliciting feedback from all stakeholders. An Open House has been planned for the evening of February 26, 2014. We look forward to receiving constructive comments. It is anticipated that a final proposal will be ready to present to the Board of Education by late spring.



The 2013/14 Innovative Grant Initiative has again garnered much interest. A total of 37 proposals totaling \$311,621.63 were submitted. A selection committee consisting of three administrators, two school trustees and one support staff member reviewed the submissions and selected 16 proposals totaling \$103,244.15. We look forward to seeing these creative projects in action.

Regional Principal Group meetings continue to be encouraged. The intent of these meetings is to provide opportunities for principals to review, discuss and strategically address regional concerns. I look forward to working with the principals to maximize this collaborative strategy.

As mentioned earlier, communication continues to demand much attention. With this in mind, an Online Presence Committee was formed to review our current website and look at document management systems. The committee has met several times and is working on developing a strategy to bring continuity and to maximize online communication. A recommendation is forthcoming and we look forward to bringing further clarity to our online audiences.



I look forward to continuing to work with everyone and to being part of the constant amelioration process. I wish you all the best in 2014.

Norman Dargis, Division Principal – 780 955 6110 – norm.dargis@blackgold.ca



We could learn a lot from crayons: some are sharp, some are pretty, some are dull, some have weird names, and all are different colours...but they all exist very nicely in the same box.



Business Services Payroll and Benefit Information

SRB Update – It is hard to believe that it is over a year since we converted payroll to SRB! Completing T4s on SRB will mark the end of the first cycle on SRB. This spring, we will be starting to transition support staff to online timesheets. Watch for more information as we roll out this exciting project.

Questions on Pay or Benefits

We are pleased to welcome Sarah Bjornstad to our payroll staff, replacing Carrie Bendfeld who has retired. If you have any questions regarding your pay or benefits, please contact the appropriate person as detailed below:

<u>Jaime Woinaroski</u>	Teachers and Substitute Teachers, Trustees
<u>Donna Kumpula</u>	Education Assistants, School Secretaries, Library Clerks, Technicians, Administration and Maintenance
<u>Sarah Bjornstad</u>	Benefits for all employees, Payroll for Custodians, Relief Custodians, Miscellaneous Hourly, Substitute School Secretaries, and Substitute Educational Assistants

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/NAME

If you have recently moved or changed your name and have not yet notified Black Gold, you can update your address by clicking on the “Contact Us” toggle under My Info in SRB. We will update your information in SRB (accounting software) and ASEBP (benefit provider). Employees must contact ATRF directly for both address and name changes.

BANKING INFORMATION CHANGE

If you change your banking information, please advise payroll a minimum of 5 days prior to pay day to ensure sufficient time for processing in the month.

BENEFIT CHANGES

If you have married or have a change in dependants, please go online to www.asebp.ab.ca under Forms section, Administrative forms and then change application form. Download the form, complete it and send it to payroll. New family members must be added within 31 days to avoid penalty.

MY ASEBP

If you have questions about your benefits, you will find many answers on the ASEBP website. There are also many member self-serve features to My ASEBP. From managing every aspect of your Health Spending Account, to requesting or printing your own ASEBP ID cards, My ASEBP is making your benefit plan more user friendly. If you have not recently logged into My ASEBP, register today for the new My ASEBP to discover all of its new features. You can download the free mobile app from the Apple App Store or from Google Play.

T4 SLIPS

T4 slips will be ready by **February 28, 2014.** If you have worked in more than one job category within Black Gold Regional Schools during 2013, you may expect more than one T4 slip (i.e. Teacher and Substitute Teacher). T4 slips will be mailed to your home address as indicated in SRB, My Info, so please ensure that this address is up-to-date.

LOCAL AUTHORITY PENSION PLAN (LAPP)

Lapp contribution rates have increased effective January, 2014.

Member rate up to the Year's Maximum Pensionable Earnings (YMPE) – 10.39% (2013 – 9.43%) Member rate over the YMPE – 14.84% (2013 – 13.47%) Employer rate up to YMPE – 11.39% (2013 – 10.43%) Employer rate over YMPE – 15.84% (2013 14.47%)

The YMPE level is determined by the Canada Pension Plan annually. In 2014, the YMPE is \$52,500.

Business Services Payroll and Benefit Information – continued

JANUARY DEDUCTIONS

If you had reached your maximum deduction amount for CPP and or EI anytime in 2013, remember that your January pay amount will be lower than December because you will again be contributing to CPP and EI in January.

Sarah Bjornstad (Custodians, Sub SS/EA, Misc. Hourly & Benefits) – 780 955 6055 – sarah.bjornstad@blackgold.ca

Donna Kumpula (Support Staff) – 780 955 6053 – donna.kumpula@blackgold.ca

Jaime Woinaroski (Teachers, Trustees, Sub Teachers) – 780 955 6052 – jaime.woinaroski@blackgold.ca

Laurel Kvarnberg, Director of Finance – 780 955 6059 – laurel.kvarnberg@blackgold.ca

Student Services

We all contribute every day to ensuring all children and youth are supported in their physical, social-emotional, behavioural, and cognitive development. Our primary role in Student Services is to help ensure that our Division staff is well-supported, and that supports and services are fully integrated with efforts to improve instruction and increase student achievement. We try to support in a number of ways; through offering professional learning opportunities for staff, elbow to elbow coaching, and through the provision of specialized services (e.g. psychology, speech-language, occupational therapy, etc).



This year we have put our energy and resources behind several key areas in order to help support student learning and development. These include mental wellness, programming for students with significant and complex learning needs, literacy, and early learning.

Our Mental Health Capacity Building Project, now in year four, has helped to raise awareness of mental health issues and to strengthen our partnerships with community-based service providers for the provision of mental wellness programs throughout our schools and communities. Natural partners, such as our School Health Champions and school-based Counsellors, received joint inservicing on the Mental Health Toolkits and Building a Comprehensive Guidance and Counselling Program. Our Counsellors also received 2-day training in Mental Health First Aid.

Through school visits and conversations with staff and parents, we have been taking an ‘environmental scan’ of our Division in terms of students who require extraordinary supports and services. In particular, we have been looking at how we can remove barriers to learning by ensuring that students get what they need in a more timely and responsive manner. Through our work with the Regional Collaborative Service Delivery model, and other community-based service providers, we are moving towards better streamlining of services for students.

Dawn Reithhaug, literacy consultant, has been working with our teachers and administrators over the past couple of years to help further our understanding of the reading process and how we can intervene in a responsive manner to help our students become more proficient in literacy. The most recent set of seminars was presented during the week of January 27th-30th, for teachers, administrators, and Education Assistants.



Our Early Childhood Mapping results along with the results of the Early Years Evaluation administered to all Kindergarten children, identified a need for targeted intervention for children across the Division, particularly in the area of social-emotional development. Following a response-to-intervention model we have been able to

Student Services - continued

help children 'at risk' to access additional program hours and supports, through pilot projects in some of our schools.

We don't often see immediate results for our efforts in education, and often, the most important successes cannot be captured in the data we collect. However, the impact is evident in the day-to-day work we do with children and families, the relationships we build, the stories of progress and achievement, and the promise of hope. This is demanding, but rewarding work, and 'hats off' to all our BGRS staff for your commitment to our students.

Dianne Butler, Director of Student Services –780 955 6037–dianne.butler@blackgold.ca



Happy New Year!

The Information Technology (IT) department has been busy this year with new Chromebook roll outs, memory upgrades and several other projects intended to improve our Division infrastructure.



We have, in partnership with facilities, begun the second phase of our Access Point per classroom rollout. The hope is to have all Division 4 schools done by the spring. This will greatly improve the depth of our wireless coverage. As part of this deployment we are moving to a new network switch manufacturer that will provide more and cleaner power for the access points in schools.

It has been an interesting winter for internet service so far. A routing problem cut Black Gold off from any internet sites hosted by Amazon Web Services and was a difficult problem to resolve. No sooner did we have that resolved when we became the victim of four Denial of Service Attacks (DDOS). We worked with all our partners to mitigate the disruption caused by these attacks and are investigating future steps required to protect the infrastructure necessary to provide internet access.

The next month or two will see the techs rolling out 5 CTS lab replacements across the Division. Educational Technology and IT decided on Lenovo computers following the Request for Proposals (RFP) process. We are going to get outstanding performance for a very reasonable price. There will also be several more sets of Chromebooks to deploy in the coming months that will keep things moving at a lively clip.

We continue to maintain a completion rate on service requests of over 90% and strive to maintain this level of service as part of our committed service request levels which define how long tickets should be open.



ET has seen a large increase in Google use. There have been just under 1 million gshare emails sent and 120,000 documents created, using just under 1 Terabyte of total storage. These are large numbers for those who are technologically inclined. In November a Google + community was started for all BGRS staff. In addition to this, approximately 100 webcams have been distributed around BGRS for video conferencing using Google hangouts. This has increased the connections being made between classes and schools and already there have been some great activities for students.

The Chromebook rollouts into grades 1 and 2 classrooms have been completed and currently we are working on getting a Chromebook set into every grade 3 to 12 school. The oldest set of Netbooks in each school is being placed into new cabinets and will be used for BYOD support. BYOD is continuing to expand and become accepted in many classrooms. Further information is available on the Black Gold website under the "**Parents**" page.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns please submit a help desk request and we will work to address them. Have a safe and productive second half to the 2013/14 school year.

Barry Scheelar, IT Manager – 780 955 6041 – barry.scheelar@blackgold.ca

Ray McCubbing, Ed Tech Manager – 780 955 6044 – ray.mccubbing@blackgold.ca