



# Inspiring Success!

## TRUSTEE NEWSLETTER

Spring 2022



School Trustees (L-R): Michelle Martin, Devonna Klaassen (Chair), Angie Charpentier, Gary Hansen, Barb Martinson, Esther Eckert (Vice Chair), and Robyn Steed.

**A**s I write this, there are undeniable signs of spring outside my window. A big fluffy white rabbit has hopped through my yard a few times, pausing long enough for me to see a tuft of brown hair starting to come through. Two squirrels are chasing each other back and forth. You can feel the warmth of the sun. There are puddles everywhere, and I've seen and heard the geese returning from their winter migration.

I know what you're thinking: "This is Alberta. Winter's not over yet!" I know I know ... but I will embrace these hints of of the changing season and let them feed my soul nonetheless. And with all that is happening in the world, it is essential that I be intentional about this.

For me that means moving my body and fueling it with proper nutrition, finding my breath, learning, growing, and connecting with others who feed my soul – surrounding myself with people who feel like sunshine. We hope each and every one of you were able to find at least some opportunity to integrate rest and wellness over the spring break.

I do hope you are refreshed and recharged as we head into the final leg of

the 2021-22 school year! On behalf of the Black Gold Board of Trustees, I want to thank you: parents and guardians, staff and students for all you do to inspire success in each other and for our students.

The warmth and vibrancy of spring is reflective of not only the season, but also this phase of transitioning out of this public health crisis. We have pushed through two full years of a pandemic that has truly challenged us all on so many levels. It has taken a toll on operations, academics, relationships, connections, mental health, and so much more.

As we move forward with this next, perhaps endemic stage, we fully recognize that there are a wide range of responses possible; however, we will continue to ask for respect, kindness, acceptance, civility and grace from each other. These quintessentially Canadian values have, and will continue to, serve us well.

Coming out of the pandemic does not necessarily mean going back to the way things were, but rather integrating new learning to our collection of experiences. Spring reminds us that resilience is only a season away.

As a school division, Black Gold will continue to prioritize providing a safe, welcoming, caring, supportive environment for all students and staff.

- Chair Devonna Klaassen

### Draft Curriculum Update

September 2022 is less than six months



away. Black Gold has been advocating to the Minister of Education to implement an updated curriculum that meets the educational needs of 21st century learners. Our efforts have included many detailed submissions from the Division, offering areas for improvement and pleas to allow more time for implementation.

The Learning Services department, under the direction Curriculum Consultant Terri Reid, has been working to provide...

(Continued overleaf)



## New high school name honours Cree language

In a historic first for the Black Gold School Division, the Board of Trustees recently voted to name the new Leduc high school after a traditional Cree language word for taking flight: Ohpaho (pronounced 'O-pah-hoh').

"After much discussion, the Board is proud and excited to announce the new high school has been named Ohpaho Secondary School," said Board Chair Devonna Klaassen. "It is a nod to the history of this land, the prominent Indigenous culture of the region, and it honours the Cree language."

"Giving Leduc's newest high school an Indigenous name is an act of reconciliation and a recognition that the school division is located on Treaty 6 territory," said Gary Hansen, Ward 3 Trustee and member of the School Naming Committee. "Using the Cree word for taking flight, I believe, captures the essence of public education, which is to prepare youth to use their educational experiences to soar and build brighter futures."

The name 'Ohpaho' was gifted to the Naming Committee for consideration by Brian Lightning, Language Coordinator at Samson Cree Nation Museum & Archives. He will receive a Black Gold prize pack, and will be invited to attend the planned groundbreaking ceremony for the new school in late May.



## New addition at ÉSBCHS

On Feb. 10, Education Minister Adriana LaGrange, MLA Brad Rutherford and Beaumont Mayor Bill Daneluik joined BGSD Board Chair Devonna Klaassen and special guests for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of the new south wing at École Secondaire Beaumont Composite High School.

The modernization project began in 2019, and was successfully completed on time and on spec in December 2021. The new south wing marks the first major upgrade to the school since 2002-2003,

and includes 10 new classrooms, a new small gym and a new Band room, which provide much-needed room for growth.

In addition to the new wing, the project encompassed significant renovations to the Foods, Cosmetology, Automotives and Fabrication labs, as well as upgrades to the existing fitness area and student change rooms to include a gender-neutral change room.

The school is proud to provide employees with a renovated and refreshed staff room to recharge, relax, and connect with their colleagues.

(cont. from front page)

## Draft Curriculum Update

...information and support to staff, as it appears inevitable that the Draft Curriculum will be implemented across the province this fall. On March 10, 2022, Minister LaGrange shared this update with School Boards across Alberta:

*"Starting this fall, Alberta's government is moving forward with implementing an updated curriculum in elementary school classrooms across the province. Based on advice from education system leaders, teachers, and curriculum experts, we will implement new curriculum in three subject areas in September 2022:*

- *K-3 Mathematics*
- *K-3 English Language Arts and Literature*
- *K-6 Physical Education and Wellness"*

Throughout the planning process, and more recently, our attention has been shifted to actions to support readiness for implementation. Teachers are being supported in understanding the new curriculum and preparing strategies to bridge the current curriculum with the new. Providing time for planning and collaborating by offering targeted Professional Development (PD), is an ongoing priority.

Recently, at the district-wide PD Day, teachers in each elementary school received information regarding the implementation. Our schools have reported that this was a valuable opportunity to collaborate and staff appreciated the information presented. They also identified the need to collaborate further in grade level groups across the Division. "Many hands make light work" was a quote from a principal to highlight what is needed to make the curriculum implementation a success.

In the coming months, Black Gold is determined to do what we have always done - to do what is best for our students! We pledge that we will do our very best to ensure that our students will not be negatively impacted by the new curriculum. **Good pedagogy is the key to great learning.** We know the excellent and committed staff of Black Gold will continue to inspire success in our students, regardless of the quality of the curriculum.

- Vice Chair Esther Eckert



## Three Year Capital Plan

Black Gold School Division is the seventh largest division in Alberta and one of the fastest growing, which means constant review of our capital needs.

The Board is committed to providing its students and staff with a welcoming, caring, respectful, safe, and healthy learning and working environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging. Each student and staff member within the Division has the right to learn and work in schools that promote equity of opportunity, dignity, and respect.

We are happy to share our five priorities for the 2023 – 2026 timeframe. We cannot carry out these goals without the help from our municipal partners. We work with municipal administrators to plan these projects. We work hard to develop these relationships so that we can build new schools and modernize those that we need to.

Below you will find the table that outlines the new build, the modernization projects, timelines, and costs.

- Trustee Michelle Martin

### CAPITAL PLAN SUBMISSION

#### BLACK GOLD SCHOOL DIVISION 3-YR CAPITAL PLAN PROJECTS 2022-2025

##### NEW SCHOOL & PRESERVATION REQUESTS -

Board Priority	Yr.	Location	Title	Key Driver	Project Sub-Category	Total Project Cost
1	2022/2023	Leduc	Ecole Corinthia Park School Modernization	Infrastructure Condition	Modernization	\$6,000,000
2	2022/2023	Beaumont	New High School in Beaumont (1,000 opening with room for 600 addition)	Economic Growth	New Facility	\$53,151,485
3	2023/2024	Devon	Robina Baker School Modernization	Infrastructure Condition	Modernization	\$3,000,000
4	2023/2024	Leduc	Solution for Willow Park School (New 950 capacity K-9)	Economic Growth & Infrastructure Condition	Replacement	\$34,061,525
5	2024/2025	Leduc	East Elementary School Modernization	Infrastructure Condition	Modernization	\$3,000,000

Prepared by Black Gold School Division March 15, 2021

\$99,213,020

## Upcoming Board Meetings

- **April 20, 2022** - Regular Board Meeting (live-streamed; open session begins at 10:30 a.m.)
- **May 25, 2022** - Regular Board Meeting (TBD)
- **June 22, 2022** - Organizational Board Meeting (live-streamed; open session begins at 10:30 a.m.)

## Resources

Board Agendas and Minutes:

<https://blackgold.civicweb.net/Portal/>

Board Member Profiles & Contacts:

<https://www.blackgold.ca/about-bgsd/board/board-member-profiles/>

## Reach Out!

Your voice is important - we want to hear from you! You can reach out to your Board of Trustees directly with your questions, concerns, or suggestions.

Please know that all trustees represent the voice of the entire division, please always feel free to reach out to any trustee to address any concerns or feedback:

Ward 1 - Michelle Martin  
[michelle.martin@blackgold.ca](mailto:michelle.martin@blackgold.ca)

Ward 2 - Devonna Klaassen, Chair  
[devonna.klaassen@blackgold.ca](mailto:devonna.klaassen@blackgold.ca)

Ward 3 - Angie Charpentier  
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Ward 3 - Barb Martinson  
[barb.martinson@blackgold.ca](mailto:barb.martinson@blackgold.ca)

Ward 4 - Esther Eckert, Vice-Chair  
[esther.eckert@blackgold.ca](mailto:esther.eckert@blackgold.ca)

Ward 4 - Robyn Steed  
[robyn.steed@blackgold.ca](mailto:robyn.steed@blackgold.ca)



Education Week was established by teachers in 1928 to call attention to the importance of public education and its role in the development of Alberta. Our mission at Black Gold is To Inspire Success! Success, like learning, is a journey in itself. Our Black Gold Family strives to come together to connect, collaborate, learn, and support one another, as we continue as guides on this journey for our students.

## Our 2022 Edwin Parr Teacher Award Nominee!



As a first-year teacher, first at Leduc Composite High School (LCHS) and then at the Black Gold Distance Learning (DL) program, Alexis Stuehmer deeply impressed her colleagues with her maturity, flexibility and commitment akin to a professional with many years of experience.

"Her passion and dedication to teaching, along with her strong interpersonal skills and natural talent for building positive and productive relationships makes Ms. Stuehmer an excellent nominee for the 2022 Edwin Parr Teacher Award," said Board Chair Devonna Klaassen. "We are fortunate to have her, along with so many other great teachers, in our Black Gold family."

An alumni of LCHS, Alexis felt right at home at the school. Her first year in the teaching profession took place in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, and it forced her to be highly flexible and adaptable. She was often given challenging assignments that involved teaching a number of Grade 10 and 11 split-level courses, including a wide variety of English courses, as well as Physical Education, and CALM.

"She was forced to move between delivery modes with very little notice," said LCHS Principal Brad Clarke, who co-nominated Alexis. "Working in close collaboration with other teachers, she developed her classroom materials in such a way that she was able to flow seamlessly between online and in-class instruction."

As a brand new teacher, Alexis has been commended for her collaborative spirit and her desire to bring depth to her practice. She continuously sought to diversify her teaching strategies, and created a variety of learning opportunities for her students. This approach allowed Alexis to support her students by meeting their individual needs and creating a strong sense of community in her classrooms.

"Fostering supportive relationships with students is a highlight of Alexis' practice, which allows her to rise to the different teaching roles she has been given," said DL teacher Trish Hrytsak, who mentored Alexis.

Alexis' enthusiasm reached beyond her formal teaching position and into a coaching role with the junior girls basketball team at LCHS. "With the lifting of restrictions on extracurricular activities, Ms. Stuehmer volunteered to co-coach our JV Girls basketball team," said Principal Clarke. "The team's success can be seen not just in the fact that they played for the Division championship, but in the excitement and happiness clearly evident on their faces."

Distance Learning principal Denise Harrison, who co-nominated Alexis, sees her as a dedicated teacher who strives to improve her students' learning daily, as well as her own personal practice. "She is a highly respected teacher and champion for all our students," said Harrison. "Alexis is always well-planned, well-prepared, organized, and has shown great flexibility and adaptability in her teaching assignments. She has shown herself to be very resourceful and gifted in her ability to successfully manage different learning environments."

"I was so surprised to find out that I had been nominated," said Alexis. "My first year of teaching was such a whirlwind. I was unable to do my first practicum due to the pandemic, and going into my larger practicum it felt like I was lagging behind. However, with the support and guidance of my amazing colleagues, I was able to quickly adapt to adversity and become successful with the kids in the classroom."

"This experience has given me the confidence that I am capable of handling and overcoming difficult situations."

- Trish Hrytsak/Deven Kumar

## ASCA Conference

The 2022 Alberta School Councils' Association Annual Conference - always a great conference and resource - was held April 22-24 as a virtual event.

The Board of Trustees sponsored attendance for a few school council members. We look forward to hearing highlights from their experience!

ASCA puts on a great conference and is a great resource. The meeting portion is an opportunity to find out what other school councils across the province are up to, and what the main advocacy focus areas being brought forward by parents are.

## Solar project for WHPS

The Board of Trustees recently approved a contract with Alta Pro Electric Ltd. to install a solar panel system on the roof of West Haven Public School in Leduc this summer.

The Division has been approved for an estimated \$235,000 in grant funding from the Municipal Climate Change Action Centre (MCCAC) Solar for Schools Program. The Municipal Climate Action Centre is a partnership of Alberta Municipalities, Rural Municipalities of Alberta, and the Government of Alberta.

The grant funding is based on a rebate per watt of total installed capacity, up to 50 per cent of eligible expenses. The Board has approved using up to \$280,000 in capital reserves to cover the remaining costs.

Once completed, the 251 kilowatt solar-powered system will provide the school with a dependable source of unlimited energy and help reduce the school's carbon footprint by offsetting approximately 75 percent of the school's energy consumption annually.



## Meeting with MLAs helps strengthen relationships

The Board of Trustees was delighted to meet and have lunch with the Honourable Rick Wilson, Minister of Indigenous Relations, MLA Mark Smith and MLA Brad Rutherford on April 6, 2022, to strengthen relationships and discuss matters related to public education.

“We were able to share recent Black Gold highlights, hear more about what is happening in each of their portfolios, and we were able to engage in meaningful discussion and advocate directly on areas of concern,” said Board Chair Klaassen.

Advocacy areas included student safety, transportation funding, dual-credit process and funding, restoration of PUF funding, and cross-ministerial support for mental health.



**REDS FLASHING...  
NO PASSING!**

**IT IS ILLEGAL TO PASS A  
SCHOOL BUS WHEN THE  
RED LIGHTS ARE FLASHING.**

**\$567 Fine +  
6 Demerit Points!**

**School bus safety...  
It's everyone's responsibility!**

