

# Black Gold Pipeline

Volume 12, Number 2 – June, 2009



**BLACK GOLD  
REGIONAL  
DIVISION NO. 18**

## Chairman, Board of Education

The school year is quickly coming to an end. After completing visits to all 27 schools, Trustees have determined that each school is “unique and the best school within the Division”. Thank you to all staff for your warm welcome and to the students who acted as our tour guides. All students were certainly proud of their school.



Board members continue to stay involved with the many Alberta Education initiatives. *Setting the Direction* and *Inspiring Education* meetings are planned in June, and Trustees have had the opportunity to provide input for changes to the School Act through our provincial public school association. In addition, we have written letters regarding Bill 44 (the Multicultural Amendment Act – Sec. 11.1) to our local MLAs and the Premier.



The recent Board Planning Session was very busy and productive. We addressed many topics including the Three Year Education Plan, Financial Plan, Strategic Planning options and Grade Configuration, just to name a few. As well, all Trustees continue to keep busy with various committee meetings.

As this is the last issue of the Pipeline for the 2008 – 2009 school year, I’ll take this opportunity to wish all of you a relaxing summer vacation.

**Barb Martinson, Chairman, Board of Education, 780-955-6025 – [barb.martinson@blackgold.ca](mailto:barb.martinson@blackgold.ca)**

## Superintendent

Wow! This is the final Pipeline for 2008-09 school year. I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to each and every staff member for the wonderful work you provide for our students. When the Trustees and I visit the schools, I hear nothing but positive comments about what is happening in your classrooms. The focused, caring, learning environments you have developed are a testament to your professionalism. It requires determined teamwork and leadership, and you should all take pride in what you have accomplished.



I wish those who are retiring, all the best in your future endeavours. You can be sure those who are returning in late August for the 2009-10 school year will accept the challenge to continue with the high standards you played such a major role in establishing.

I have been blessed to work for Black Gold Regional Schools for the past nine years. Each day I have felt honour and pride in the work that is being done for students in the Division. The Board has graciously provided me with a one year leave of absence as of September 1, 2009, to assume a secondment with Alberta Education.

I would like to thank my Administrative Assistant, Cindy Villeneuve. Her dedicated service to students and ability to keep me organized is greatly appreciated. I will also miss working with each and every member of the Black Gold Team. I am truly thankful for the mentorship I received from former superintendent John Bole, as his guidance provided me with a smooth transition into the position of superintendent. John and the previous superintendents before him all believed Black Gold was a family that worked for the best interests of students. This is the style of leadership that I have tried to emulate as your superintendent, one where we work collaboratively for the good of all students.

The Board is currently working on hiring my replacement. As soon as this process, which includes Ministerial approval, is complete, I will inform all staff of the decision. Our school division is in a strong position – staff care deeply about their work, and morale is high. We have much to celebrate in Black Gold, and I am honoured to have been a partner with you as your superintendent.

Enjoy your summer holidays!

**Norman Yanitski, Superintendent of Schools, 780-955-6026 — [norman.yanitski@blackgold.ca](mailto:norman.yanitski@blackgold.ca)**

## Deputy Superintendent



It continues to amaze me just how quickly a school year can go by. One day we're at Welcome Back introducing the new teachers to everyone and it seems like we turn around and we're posting new positions for the next year. The really great part about being able to post new positions is that we're not looking at a staffing reduction for next year. All of our predictions indicate that we will have about the same number of students as we have this year.

Our HR staff have had another very busy year. Liliane, working with our support staff created 89 new contracts plus all the changes to contracts for our current staff. Jeannine, working with our teachers, created 223 new contracts this year. Debbie and Claire in substitute services have already placed 6,400 substitute teachers in schools as of June 5. I would like to thank all of them for all the great work they've done on behalf of all the BGRS staff.

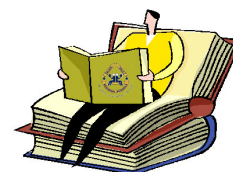


I'd also like to thank all of you who are working in the schools with our students, for your dedication and commitment. You've done amazing things over the course of the year and we really appreciate it. For those of you who are moving on to different challenges I wish you continued success and all the best. For those who will be returning to BGRS in the fall – have a great summer holiday and I look forward to another wonderful school year working with all of you.

Have a great holiday everyone! You've earned it!

**Stuart Evans, Deputy Superintendent, 780-955-6032 – [stuart.evans@blackgold.ca](mailto:stuart.evans@blackgold.ca)**

## Associate Superintendent Curriculum and Instruction



As we head into summer and look forward, there are indications of what we may expect for next year. The focus was on CTS announcements this year, and as those announcements are implemented, CTS will be the curriculum area of 2009-10. The new school year will begin with many students traveling to the World Skills Competition in Calgary during the first week of September.



Beaumont and Leduc Composite High Schools will be very busy implementing their pilot Health Pathways courses in Sports Medicine, Medical Sciences, Health Care Aide (Leduc Composite), and Early Childhood Assistant (Beaumont Composite) funded with \$908,000 from Alberta Education. As well, our high schools and Leduc Junior High School will be in the second year of a pilot program to increase the number of females participating in CTS courses, funded with \$287,000 from Alberta Education. Over and above this support is the second year of a three-year "Evergreening" project that provides high schools with \$604,000 for replacement and new equipment. The rush of support is greatly appreciated as CTS has been under-funded for well over a decade.

On the leadership front, there will also be a few changes. Our Resource Allocation Committee is moving forward with instructional leadership, and there will be fewer lead teachers and more principal instructional leaders. Lead teachers for 2009/2010 will be Barb Roy/Chris Peacocke in Second Languages, Carrie Erdmann in Elementary Mathematics, Sean Flanagan in Secondary Social Studies, and Carolyn Reny in ESL. We now also have our principals, Ray Cable in Elementary Science and Howard Rasmusson in Secondary Mathematics. As our administrators identify high priority areas, other principals will pick up curriculum leadership roles.

On the topic of leadership, there are many people to thank. Crystal Elton for so capably filling in for Jen Southcombe who so capably was filling in for Terri Reid as our On-Line Coordinator. Terri will be returning from Alberta Education for September. To Elsi Evans for her work in Home Based, Home Education, and for keeping me grounded. Dianne Butler for seamlessly picking up Ken Boschman's Student Services assignment and her unfailing support of students while Alberta Education contemplates, and to Faye Gertz in AISI and PD, who has no fear about telling me when my logic is flawed.

Have a great summer. We have earned it!

**Neil Fenske, Associate Superintendent, 780-955-6028 – [neil.fenske@blackgold.ca](mailto:neil.fenske@blackgold.ca)**

**Secretary-Treasurer**



The August 31, 2010 Budget Report will be presented to the Board of Education at their meeting on June 24, 2009. The budget reflects \$81.8 M in planned expenditures for the funding which we will receive for 2009-2010. Budget assumptions include a projected enrolment increase of 4 students, stable Instructional Resource Fees, added support for FNMI counselling and the continuation of resources directed to Video Conferencing, to address the challenges of our small high schools. We will continue to face significant challenges in the upcoming year in the Operations and Maintenance program. Support for IMR (Infrastructure Maintenance & Renewal) has not increased to address the rising costs of maintaining our school facilities.



On June 9, 2009 we received permission from Alberta Education to call tender on the Thorsby Elementary Replacement School. It has been a long time coming, and we look forward to moving ahead quickly on this project. We still hope to open the new school in September of 2010. Construction is underway on the mini-modernization of Willow Park School and will be substantially closer to completion by September, 2009.

This has been a challenging year, with our migration to the Bellamy financial software program. Thank you for your patience. Have a safe and relaxing summer.

**Ruth Andres, Secretary Treasurer, 780-955-6049– [ruth.andres@blackgold.ca](mailto:ruth.andres@blackgold.ca)**

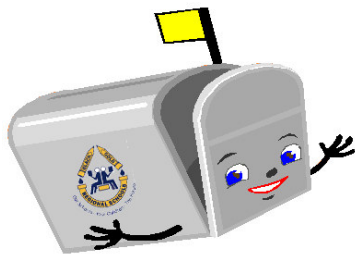
**Business Services  
Benefit and Payroll Information**



**Adding a Dependant for Benefits**

Avoid late applicant benefit status during the summer by notifying payroll immediately if you:

- get married
- have a baby
- lose spousal coverage.



**Change of Address**

If your address changes please advise payroll via fax or email so that we can change your payroll address and update your address at the appropriate benefit carriers. Once employee self-service is available, you will be able to change your address online.

**Employment Confirmation**

Employees requiring employment confirmation for mortgage purposes or verification of service information during the summer should submit these requests prior to July 1<sup>st</sup>. This will ensure that appropriate Central Office personnel are available to process requests; otherwise, response time may be delayed as holidays are scheduled during the summer.

**Health Spending Accounts (HSA)**

The Alberta School Employee Benefit Plan, Health Spending Account is online. If you are terminating at the end of June, you have 60 days from June 30th to apply for any remaining HSA credits. If you are not terminating, you have 60 days from August 31<sup>st</sup> to apply for HSA credits. If you have not incurred any other expenses that qualify for HSA, remember that you can claim the employee portion of premiums paid for health benefits. If you have any questions, please call ASEBP at 780-431-4786 or toll free at 1-877-431-4786.

## Teachers

For those teachers whose contracts terminate (temporary contracts, early retirements or resignations) benefits, including your health spending account, terminate on the last day worked (ie. June 30<sup>th</sup>).

Direct deposits for July and August pay dates will be July 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>.

Record of Employments are submitted electronically to Service Canada. You no longer require a paper copy, as you can access your ROE online.

For all teachers whose contracts are continuing, regular pay dates will be the last banking day of the month as usual. Pay vouchers will continue to be sent via email to your Black Gold address for June, July and August pay vouchers.

## Employee Self-Service

Several employees have asked if they will be able to access their pay vouchers on the new system on the web, similar to the previous access. The answer is yes, this option will be available once we have had a chance to test and roll it out. The component is called Employee Self-Service, and it will provide similar information to Masterworks, including an option to change address information. In addition, employees will be able to check benefit coverage on ESS (employee self-service). We will provide more information as it becomes available. The schools that have volunteered to test the new substitute teacher management program will be offered access first.

## Reimbursements from Accounts Payable to Staff:

Effective September 1, 2009, any payments from accounts payable to staff members will be deposited directly to the bank account on file. This includes mileage and expense reimbursements.



Have a great summer!

Carrie Bendfeld (Custodians, Sub SS/EA, Misc. Hourly & Benefits) (780)955-6055 [carrie.bendfeld@blackgold.ca](mailto:carrie.bendfeld@blackgold.ca)

Donna Kumpula (Support Staff) (780)955-6053 [donna.kumpula@blackgold.ca](mailto:donna.kumpula@blackgold.ca)

Cindy Sobey (Teachers, Trustees, Sub Teachers) (780)955-6052 [cindy.sobey@blackgold.ca](mailto:cindy.sobey@blackgold.ca)

**Laurel Kvarnberg, Finance Manager, 780-955-6059 – [laurel.kvarnberg@blackgold.ca](mailto:laurel.kvarnberg@blackgold.ca)**

## Student Services

As we approach the conclusion of the 2008-09 school year, I would like to thank Black Gold staff for working collaboratively with Student Services to find the best ways to serve our students with special learning needs. There are countless examples of your dedication and commitment, and your willingness to go above and beyond for the benefit of the students we serve.

As you may be aware, there are significant changes proposed to special education as a result of the *Setting the Direction* initiative. These changes are innovative, and involve a paradigm shift in thinking with respect to the manner in which we support our students with special needs. What has emerged is a vision to develop one inclusive education system which supports all students, including those with special needs. The vision is centered around programming changes in three priority areas – Curriculum, Capacity, and Collaboration. To this end, there will be less emphasis on coding/labelling and greater emphasis on personalizing learning based upon strengths and needs. There will be increased emphasis on professional development for staff, parental involvement, and collaboration of community based services. All good stuff!



Student Services has already implemented some changes in anticipation of the new direction for special education including a change in the referral process which emphasizes support to staff/students rather than an emphasis on assessment for coding purposes. As well, we are working collaboratively with our colleagues in Curriculum/AISI/PD, and Technology to develop a shared vision of how we can help all our students become better engaged as learners, achieve success, and increase their personal independence.

These are exciting times in Education! I look forward to working collaboratively with you on the *Setting the Direction* and other initiatives next school year. Enjoy your much deserved vacation time.

**Dianne Butler, Director, Student Services, 780-955-6037 – [dianne.butler@blackgold.ca](mailto:dianne.butler@blackgold.ca)**

## Technology



- **New Classroom Computers (funded by Alberta Education):**

- Installation is planned for late fall.
- Larger LCD screen, wireless keyboard, built-in DVD drive, small footprint.
- Designed to be connected to projector, will be able to play video, YouTube, etc.
- Thin-client will still be available, mainly for remote access from home.

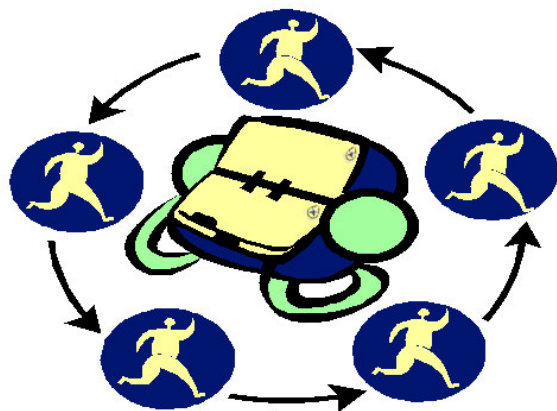
- **Making A Difference: Administrators as Ed Tech Leaders:**

- Five administrators, Dan Blackburn, Dianne Butler, Brad Clark, Matthew Kierstead, Gayle Monsma, (funded as 0.2 FTE each by Alberta Education) will be working with school administrators to support them as they take advantage of new technologies and Web 2.0 software to focus on instructional leadership.
- Each school will receive a set of netbooks over the course of the school year, to be shared by at least one administrator who teaches and up to three teachers, as part of the leading by example component of the project.
- Schools with Division programs will receive netbooks for those students as part of the UDL component of this project, led by Dianne Butler and Student Services.
- Projector installs (funded by Alberta Education) for next year will be in classrooms associated with this project. Remaining classroom projectors to be installed in the 2010-2011 school year.
- Existing netbook pilot projects will continue into 2009-2010, acting as a test-bed for our planning as above.

- **PowerSchool:**

- SASI is being discontinued as of Sept. 2010, so we will be moving to a new Student information program.
- An Implementation Planning Committee will be working on the timeline for the changeover, with as many schools as possible transitioned before September 2010.
- This is a web-based program with all files located in Nisku.
- PowerSchool has an interface to facilitate parent and student communication.

- **Learn Alberta Content Delivery Servers (which house Learn Alberta videos):**



- Will be collected and replaced at the end of June by Alberta Education.
- These new servers should make video from Learn Alberta more reliable.

- **Summer Support:**

- There will be at least one technician working at any time during July and August, so if you do have a problem you can contact them through the BGRD main switchboard, 780-955-6025.
- As always we hope you have a relaxing and enjoyable summer, without too many computer problems.



**Alberta Initiative for School Improvement**



AISI has had a very busy year with winding up our Cycle 3 projects, GREAT and I PASD and planning our Cycle 4 projects, Growing, Reflecting and Assessing Together:

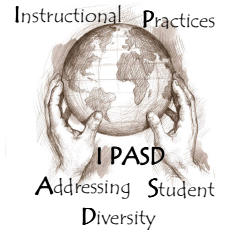
Empowering Students and Teachers (GREATEST) and Collaboration liant l'apprentissage et les stratégies scolaires efficaces (CLASSE). Thank you for the 'double duty' that you engaged in for AISI, completing data collection and surveys for both the Cycle 3 and Cycle 4 projects at a very busy time of year. Thank you also to our current Division Lead Teachers, Kim Epp and Keith Pask for all the expertise, energy and effort they put into supporting you in making our GREAT project a success.

I am excited about both of our new projects. The GREATEST project will build on the skills and attitudes that we have been developing in the GREAT project and the I PASD project; helping students move to deeper levels of thinking and accountability for their own learning. We will be applying the newest research into educational practices along with the best use of our current technology to help our students become the best they can be. We are also trying a new model of implementation with some schools continuing with the School Lead Teacher model and others working with an



Instructional Coaching model. Welcome to our new Division Lead

Teachers/Instructional Coaches for the GREATEST project – Kim Epp, Terra Kaliszuk, and Steve Trueman.



Our CLASSE project is examining new ways that we can support students in our French Immersion programs, particularly through increasing the amount and type of oral French discussion among students. We will be examining the impact of increasing opportunities for conversational French and of using English to support thinking and learning in the French classroom. This is an exciting opportunity to embark in some ground-breaking research in an area where research is sparse. We will be using an Instructional Coach model for implementation. Welcome to our new Instructional Coach for the CLASSE project – Simone Lapointe.



**Division Professional Development Days**

We are currently working on our Division PD program for the 2009/2010 school year. If you are interested in facilitating a session, please contact me as soon as possible.

Thank you to the Division PD Committee for their assistance in planning the program. If you are interested in becoming a part of the Division PD Committee during the 2009/2010 school year, please contact me.

Next year, teachers will be expected to attend both of the Division PD days, January 29, 2010 and March 5, 2010.

The Division PD program should be online in early September.

Have a safe and relaxing summer.

**Faye Gertz, AISI/PD Coordinator, 780-955-4528 – [faye.gertz@blackgold.ca](mailto:faye.gertz@blackgold.ca)**



The one thing children wear out faster than shoes, is parents.