



Black Gold Regional Division No. 18

PIPELINE

Chairman, Board of Education

It is my pleasure to begin 2011 by thanking and congratulating all of you for your hard work and dedication throughout 2010. The Christmas and Band Concerts were fantastic!

The Board has been very busy since the fall elections.

- We are continuing with our school visits and will visit all 28 schools during this school year. These visits allow us to see and experience, first hand, the wonderful things happening within Black Gold Regional Schools.
- A draft of the 2011-12 School Year Calendar has been distributed for feedback. We will be reviewing the feedback prior to finalizing the calendar.
- We continue to work on our Division Policies and our Strategic Plan.
- Meetings with the Minister of Education and our MLAs have been very positive. We continue to lobby for appropriate and sustainable funding for Black Gold Regional Schools. The support from all of our staff is greatly appreciated as we continue this endeavour.

Please take the time to read the *Trustee Community Update* for additional information from the Board. The *Update* is posted on the BGRS website under Publications.

Thank you again. We appreciate all that you do for our students and Black Gold Regional Schools.

Sandy Koroll, Chairman, Board of Education, 780-955-6025 – sandy.koroll@blackgold.ca

Superintendent

Here we are half way through another school year already, and what a year it has been!

Our new school in Thorsby is coming along. It has been a long process, with some construction delays, but there is light at the end of the tunnel! We anticipate having the building ready for students on March 7th and the official grand opening is scheduled for May 19th.

We continue to lobby for our joint school in Beaumont, but we have not yet received approval. The growing student population in Beaumont continues to create challenges for us. I have met with the Principals in Beaumont and we are starting to examine options to deal with the enrolment growth. On December 14, 2010, the Board Chair and I met with the Minister of Education to discuss the enrolment growth in Beaumont and the pressures that are impacting our present student programming and future planning options.

During the month of December, a Communication Audit was conducted and we hope to have a report from the consultant by the end of January.

At the monthly Superintendent's Meetings, we are using a Professional Learning Community (PLC) to build our capacity and improve our professional growth. To date we have had presentations on: Strategic Planning, Orientation and Use of Webinars, and Role of the School Council. On October 14 & 15, 2010, in Nisku, at the Administrators' Workshop, "Leadership for Tomorrow", we focused on Skill Sets for the 21st Century, Principal Quality Standards, Professional Growth Plans, AISI and PD, Future Staffing and Enrolment Trends, and Leaders Supporting Teachers Integrating Technology (ETAL). We are using research from Dr. Douglas Reeves' book, "Leading Change In Your School" as one of our key resources.

The annual Council of School Councils meeting is scheduled for February 22, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. The Chair of each School Council and the Principal of the school are invited to attend.

I would like to thank all of you for your continuous hard work, commitment and dedication to the students of Black Gold Regional Division and I wish you all the best for a successful second half of the school year!

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

Associate Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction

Usually, the Pipeline report is a sampling of the activities occurring within the Curriculum & Instruction Department. For this Pipeline; however, we will comment on an extensive review of C & I completed just before Christmas. While not normally exciting stuff, the information gathered provides a glimpse into the future and what that means for the classroom.

Shall we begin our comments with providing a context? Most respondents shared their perceptions of Home Based/ Home Education, On-line Programming, Student Services, AISI-PD, and Curriculum and Instruction, before providing advice. Interestingly, although the comments about what C & I does well were extensive, the observations all related to two common themes. Specifically, the service provided to schools and the high quality of the leaders in C & I. Without detailing all the services provided by each area, it may be sufficient to indicate that there were many complimentary statements. Examples of the language used are “extremely useful,” “helpful,” “benefit to BG,” and “appreciate.” Basically, people value all that is done to support schools and believe the current mandates of each area are critical to our success as a school jurisdiction.

With respect to the quality of the leaders in C & I, individuals were equally complimentary. People characterized staff members as “articulate,” “prompt,” and “democratic.” Although individuals did not use the word in their comments, their picture of the C & I staff could be painted with the single brush of “professional.”

The key question, however, is where to from here? Clearly, there is a solid and extensive range of services provided to schools through the C & I Department. Is it enough for future challenges? The general consensus is that it is not enough on two fronts. The first is with respect to service levels. There is a desire for more services from each of the areas. How we reconcile that with a finite budget and a tradition of limiting central services is problematic. We cannot expect more services from people already fully employed and yet we are resistant to adding staff. C & I, and schools in general, live in a compromise region between expectations and reality.

On a related topic, most respondents indicated that the coaching model is superior to the lead teacher model. This is true in Instruction and we eliminated most of the lead teachers a few years ago, but it is equally true within the AISI program. For the next round of AISI, Alberta Education may solve the problem for us with a mandate but if they do not, we should make the switch to using only coaches.

Neil Fenske, Associate Superintendent, 780-955-6028 — neil.fenske@blackgold.ca



Deputy Superintendent, Human Resources

Welcome back and welcome to 2011! It continues to be a busy year in Human Resources. One of the challenges this year, as many of you know, has been ensuring that the Substitute Management System is working as well as it can. Although there are a few quirks in the program, we are pleased with the general effectiveness and efficiency it provides. As of January 18, 2011, there had been over 3,000 substitute bookings. We are still in the development stage of including school support staff in the program, but hope to start a pilot in the near future. I'd like to thank Jeannine, Liliane, and Debbie for all their hard work as we track and work with over 1,200 staff members and substitute personnel.



I know we all appreciate the increased daylight hours we're having... now if can only stop snowing just for a little while....

Stuart Evans, Deputy Superintendent, 780-955-6032 – stuart.evans@blackgold.ca

Secretary-Treasurer

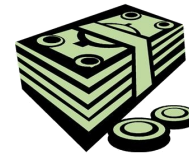
The Audited Financial Statements for 2009-2010 were approved by the Board of Education on November 24, 2010. There was an overall surplus of \$488,400 distributed between the following programs:

Instruction	\$321,931
Operations & Maintenance	-\$ 11,741
Transportation	-\$ 22,720
Administration	\$200,930
External Services	\$ 0

The budgeted deficit in Instruction was not realized due to additional funding received, primarily in CEU funding. The additional CEU revenue was placed in a reserve account and is being used for staffing in the current year.

The Revised Budget for 2010-2011 was also approved by the Board of Education on November 24, 2010. We are projecting an overall deficit of \$127,688 distributed between the following programs:

Instruction	-\$81,451
Operations & Maintenance	-\$38,480
Transportation	-\$ 4,637
Administration	-\$ 3,120
External Services	\$ 0



The budget reflects an increase of 2.92% in base instruction and class size grant rates, while all other grants received a 0% grant increase. As a result we are facing fiscal challenges in Severe Disabilities programming and the Operations & Maintenance program. The planned budget deficit of \$127,688 will be fully supported through the use of operating reserves.

Overall, Black Gold Regional Division is in a healthy financial position, with sufficient resources to continue to provide our students with an excellent education. It will be interesting to see what funding will be provided to school jurisdictions for 2011-2012 when the provincial budget is announced in the next couple of months.

Ruth Andres, Secretary-Treasurer, 780-955-6049 - ruth.andres@blackgold.ca

Technology

Netbook Project

Fifteen sets of netbooks have been deployed so far this school year for a total of 54 sets. Baseline data on netbook use towards netbook project goals is being gathered by school administrators' observations and then will be analyzed by U of A researchers. In conjunction with this, our Technology Integration Facilitators, Susan and Ray, will be working with teachers on netbook planning and HOTS – analyzing, evaluating and creating; with teachers posting these to <http://teachersconnect.blackgold.ca/>

Student Engagement

A group of central office and school administrators are working with a consultant, Cheryl Lemke, with a focus on technology and Student Engagement. We hope to share some of this work before the end of the school year.

Parent Connect

A PowerSchool Parent Connect pilot with John Maland is underway. Leduc Composite High School will be next. Other schools and timelines to be determined by the school.

Raising a Digital Generation Parent Tutorial

Media Awareness Network has released [e-Parenting Tutorial: Keeping up with your kids' online activities](#). This interactive tool helps parents increase their awareness of how children and teens are using the Internet for learning, entertainment and socializing, and the issues they may be encountering along the way. Through the exploration of five key themes – homework, cyberbullying, marketing, online relationships and excessive use – parents can develop the knowledge and skills they need to help their children navigate the Internet safely and wisely.



High Performing Districts in the Application of 21st Century Learning Technologies

This [literature review](#) provides an in-depth examination of current research on topics such as 21st Century learning, emerging trends, technology infrastructure, pedagogical practices, policy creation, changing roles and results from Alberta districts' research and experiences.

IT Metrics

We will begin tracking our Service Level Completion Times in January – goal 95% on time.

In order to facilitate an efficient use of system personnel, setup, trouble-shooting and repairs are prioritized as follows:

- Priority 1 – WAN, LAN, Internet, Firewall, E-Mail, filtering, servers and data backup
- Priority 2 – administrative and classroom PCs and laptops, classroom multimedia technologies, new staff accounts, special needs student assigned PCs
- Priority 3 – lab, carts and library PCs and laptops, printers, student owned-wireless access, software conflicts, account maintenance
- Priority 4 – new software and hardware, new initiatives and emerging technologies

Expected Help Desk Resolution Times are as follows:

- Severity 1 – critical system down < 4 hours
- Severity 2 – staff/student cannot work, next school day
- Severity 3 – basic functionality available, within 3 school days
- Severity 4 – workaround available, within 7 school days
- Severity 5 – new software and hardware, within 10 school days

All the best in the New Year from the Technology Department.

Peter Balding, Division Technology Administrator, 780-955-6040 – peter.balding@blackgold.ca

Student Services

There continues to be much discussion throughout the province about the Setting the Direction Framework. The framework, approved by the Minister of Education in June, 2010, articulates a vision for ‘an inclusive education system that meets the needs of all students, including those with diverse learning needs.’ Since that time there have been changes at Alberta Education to support inclusion. For example, Alberta Education recently established the Inclusive Learning Supports Branch, and the implementation of the Setting the Direction framework has been renamed Action on Inclusion. As well, there have been various pilot projects (e.g. learning coaches, digital planning tool for teachers) around the province stemming from some of the ‘best practices’ identified in the Setting the Direction guiding principles. The new funding framework and the legislative and policy supports around ‘one inclusive education system’ have yet to be determined/announced. At this point, we expect that current funding framework for Special Education and the Standards for Special Education, including the coding criteria, will continue to apply for 2011-12.

Our Student Services Department has been aligning our work with the guiding principles of the Setting the Direction framework in the following ways: supporting students at their local schools where possible and appropriate for them, working collaboratively with our AISI and Ed Tech leaders to support effective instructional practices that will increase student engagement and success, expanding our partnerships and collaborations with our community-based partners to provide ‘wraparound’ services for students and their families, and increasing capacity for staff to address diverse learning, social/emotional, and behavioural needs through an emphasis on prevention and response to intervention models.

As has been stated by the Minister, ‘we have a collective responsibility to ensure that each student has a meaningful educational experience and is supported to be successful.’ Because creating an inclusive education system requires a collaborative effort, relationships are key. It is also a process that takes resources and support, as well as time and patience. As Setting the Direction transitions to implementation, we will continue to work collaboratively with staff and parents in the best interests of the students we serve.

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

AISI/Professional Development



Alberta Initiative for School Improvement

The AISI Instructional Coaches have held support days in Lead Teacher schools and they continue to collaborate with teachers in their coaching schools. All of these co-created engaging lessons and units are on the AISI Resource page <http://www.blackgold.ab.ca/ict/AISI>. We will continue to build this valuable resource. This fall, our AISI team has created many interactive workshops for a wide variety of groups; Administrators, ECS teachers, Beginning teachers, as well as all teachers who attended the fall cohorts.

The AISI Team will showcase the exciting work happening in our Black Gold schools at the upcoming AISI Conference on February 7 & 8, 2011.

Division Professional Development Days

PD has moved to the cohort model where teachers work with teachers across the Division on common units and lessons. We held an optional cohort day in the fall, running 23 cohorts, covering the majority of curriculum areas within all divisions. Half of Black Gold teachers attended an optional cohort session. Division PD days this year are Monday, January 31st and Friday, March 4th with Cohort Sessions in the morning at Leduc Composite High School, and choice sessions in the afternoon.



We will continue to offer NVCi certification and recertification through joint collaboration with Student Services.

Denise Harrison – AISI-PD Coordinator, 780-955-4528, denise.harrison@blackgold.ca

Business Services—Payroll and Benefit Information

If you have a question or concern regarding your pay or benefits, please contact the appropriate person, as detailed:

Cindy Sobey - Teachers and Substitute Teachers

Donna Kumpula - Education Assistants, School Secretaries, Library Clerks, Technicians, Administration, Maintenance

Carrie Bendfeld - Benefits for all employees, Custodians, Relief Custodians, Miscellaneous Hourly, Substitute School Secretaries/Educational Assistants

January Pay:

Please note that if you paid the maximum contribution for CPP and EI last year, your Net Pay for January 2011 will be considerably less as you will begin to contribute to CPP and EI again.

Address Changes:

If you have a change of address, please use Employee Self Service (ESS) and click on [Change Name and Address](#). This will change our payroll records and we will also notify ASEBP.

Benefit Changes:

If you have married or have a change in dependants 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 a penalty.

T4 Slips:

Regular employees will receive their T4 slips via courier to schools by February 28, 2011. T4 slips for all terminated employees and substitutes will be postmarked by February 28, 2011.

If you have worked in more than one job category within Black Gold Regional Schools during 2010, you should expect more than one T4 slip (i.e. Teacher and Substitute Teacher or School Secretary and Educational Assistant). This also applies if you have had a baby during the year.

Health Spending Account – (HSA)

To maximize your reimbursements for the HSA, please read through the HSA employee guide to ensure you are taking full advantage of the HSA and know how to effectively recoup your health expenses.

Eligible expenses are detailed on the Canada Revenue Agency website at www.cra.gc.ca under [Medical Expenses](#).

If you are healthy and most of your medical expenses are covered by the ASEBP benefits, you can still claim the portion of ASEBP premiums that you pay as an expense on your Health Spending Account.

Local Authorities Pension Plan:

LAPP contribution rates have increased effective January 1, 2011.

Member rate up to YMPE	8.49%
Member rate over YMPE	12.13%
Employer rate up to YMPE	9.49%
Employer rate over YMPE	13.13%

YMPE refers to the Year's Maximum Pensionable Earnings level determined by the Canadian Pension Plan annually. In 2011, the YMPE is \$48,300.00.

Contact Information:

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Laurel Kvarnberg, Finance Manager, 780-955-6059 — laurel.kvarnberg@blackgold.ca