



Black Gold Regional Schools

PIPELINE

Chairman, Board of Education



Superintendent

As the last week of school draws near, I would like to thank you for your dedication to all the students in Black Gold.

It has been quite a year, from... Tripartite Discussions, proposed new Education Act, Communications Audit, Strategic Planning, Professional Development, Action on Inclusion, continued Technology updates to... the opening of a new Elementary School in Thorsby, and a new joint school announced in Beaumont. One must admit that this has been quite a productive year for all of us in Black Gold!

The new Beaumont School will be built to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver Standard. The joint school will be energy efficient and provide a healthy learning environment through improved air quality and the use of natural light. The facility will have a capacity of 1,200 students from kindergarten to grade 9, including 700 students from the yet to be named public school and 500 students from Académie Saint-André Academy, respectively.

Beaumont's new joint school is part of the Alberta Schools Alternative Procurement (ASAP III) project. The successful contractor will be responsible for financing, building and maintaining the school for a 30 year term. Doors are projected to be open to students in September 2014.

I would like to thank those who are retiring for your hard work, commitment and dedication to Black Gold Regional Schools. Congratulations!

For those who are returning, have a wonderful and well-deserved summer holiday and I will see you all in September at the Welcome Back on September 16th at Leduc Composite High School

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

Associate Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction

As schools are winding down towards summer, a group of people from Central Office and schools seem to be winding up! It is an unofficial group who call themselves the “Engaging Students” group. There have been a number of meetings during the year and the group slowly added members. On June 16, all members gathered for something they called “speed dating.” The essential trait of every participant is a singular preoccupation with student learning. All members have a direct involvement, in some manner, with teaching.

What a pleasure to isolate ourselves for a few moments from the June panic to really explore what we mean when we utter catch phrases like collaboration, cognitive engagement, meaningful questions, or reflection. The goal is an entire school system where learning is the highest priority. That would create, in the words of Thomas Kuhn, a paradigm shift.



Since this is being driven by what we do in schools, it has a quality sometimes absent in “top down” initiatives. Members of this group may be in your school. They may even teach in the classroom next door. Next year, there will be common references to individuals being a member of the “Engaging Students Group” or “Learning Team” but the reality is everyone is a member of the Learning Team. The group formed because of what Black Gold teachers daily demonstrate in the best jurisdiction in Alberta.

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

Deputy Superintendent, Human Resources

Another year is drawing to a close. I’m sure that by now many, if not all, are looking forward to next Thursday and the start of a well-deserved rest from the hectic pace. It has been another great year in Black Gold due to the skills and commitment of all our staff. Our offices have once again been kept busy supporting the schools.

Our substitute service has recorded over 8800 transactions this year, that’s an average of over 45 per school day. Although there are still a few issues with the electronic booking system, it is getting better and the number of issues has been dropping. Debbie Lambert has once again done a great job working with the system and dealing with the anomalies.

Liliane Duhaime, our Human Resources Assistant for support staff, has also been kept busy. Along with all the forms and letters and changes to assignments for returning staff, she has also posted over 120 ads for support staff. Again, a huge thank you for a job well done working with almost 400 employees.

Jeannine Gervais, my Administrative Assistant, has also had another busy year. Along with managing all of the changes to assignments that occur throughout the year, she also posted and processed over 140 teacher contracts. She is already busy processing contracts for next year; hopefully things will slow down a little for us in July. Jeannine has again done a fantastic job working with over 500 staff members.

I know that the year is ending with some questions unanswered. We have had to make some important decisions that impact next year in order to create a workable budget. Having been able to maintain the current pupil teacher ratio has been fantastic when you consider the challenges we have faced. The principals worked very hard on the Division budget, doing everything in their power to maintain the quality of education we are known for. They and everyone else deserve a huge thank you for a job well done.

For those leaving us, all the best in the future! For those just joining us, congratulations and welcome to Black Gold! We are very well-positioned for next year and I look forward to another year of educational excellence with great staff.

Thank you to each and every one of you! Enjoy your summer holidays.

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

Secretary-Treasurer

The Budget Report for 2011-2012 was presented to the Board of Education at their meeting on May 25, 2011. The budget projects a deficit of \$1,543,947 which will be supported through the use of operating reserves. Projected revenues and expenditures by program are as follows:

Budget assumptions include a projected enrolment increase of 54 FTE Grades 1-12 students. While Base Instruction and Class Size Funding rates for ECS to Grade 3 and Tiered CEUs increased by 4.54%, funding for other instructional grants have been reduced by 50% or eliminated entirely. Funding rates for Operations & Maintenance and Transportation remain the same as in the prior year. The result is an overall increase in funding for Black Gold Regional Division of .9%.

Student Instructional Resource Fees remain the same as in 2010– 2011 and Transportation Fees for School/ Program of Choice and Passengers Ineligible for Funding have been increased. The site-based supplies and services allocations to the schools have been reduced from the 2010– 2011 allocation rates. It is the expectation of the Board of Trustees that the schools will use their reserves to offset the effect of this reduction.

It is important to note that the Pupil Teacher Ratio for Black Gold Regional remains the same as in the prior year. Any reductions in staffing are the result of changing enrolments at the school, AISI funding being cut by 50% or the end of one-time funding grants, such as the Education Technology Leadership grant.

| Revenues | 2011-2012 | % |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Instruction | \$ 75,455,441 | 79.64% |
| Operations & Maintenance | \$ 12,077,426 | 12.75% |
| Transportation | \$ 3,842,824 | 4.06% |
| Board & System Administration | \$ 3,073,482 | 3.24% |
| External Services | \$ 295,653 | 0.31% |
| | \$ 94,744,826 | 100% |
| Expenditures | | |
| Instruction | \$ 76,428,269 | 80.67% |
| Operations & Maintenance | \$ 12,426,133 | 13.11% |
| Transportation | \$ 4,014,703 | 4.24% |
| Board & System Administration | \$ 3,124,015 | 3.30% |
| External Services | \$ 295,653 | 0.31% |
| Surplus (Deficit) | \$ (1,543,947) | -1.63% |
| | \$ 94,744,826 | 100.00% |

We are facing fiscal challenges in all areas due to increased staffing costs and the overall .9% grant increase. The planned deficit budget of \$1.5 M for next year will be supported through the reduction in Unrestricted Net Assets and the use of operating reserves.

Thank you to the members of the Resource Allocation Committee for your input into preparing the budget. I wish everyone a safe and relaxing summer. Have a great break!

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

Technology

Netbook Projects

We distributed almost 1000 netbooks this school year.



Netbook Project Requirements include:

- Three core subject area teachers willing to work together.
- A well articulated plan, developed by school administrators meeting with the teachers involved.
- The plan's focus is on student learning through the lens of HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills) and personalization.
- Outline of administrator involvement to support teachers and to lead by example.

Making A Difference: Administrators as Ed Tech Leaders

- The ETAL project comes to an end this year. I would like to thank Dan Blackburn, Dianne Butler, Brad Clark, Matthew Kierstead and Gayle Monsma for their efforts in supporting school administrators.

WebPages

- The BGRS website will be redone over the summer on the recommendations of Communications Audit undertaken by the Board. As well, a new website called Engaging Students will amalgamate student and teacher learning resources and information from Curriculum and Instruction, AISI/PD, Student Services and Educational Technology.

PowerSchool

- PowerSchool will be upgraded to Version 7 over the summer. This will bring some added features, but will not change the way you use the program.

Infrastructure Changes

- Over the summer a number of schools will be moved to a new server system. This will result in some schools being offline for a few days over the summer. Principals of affected schools have the timeline. As always, if you are having difficulties over the summer please contact the Tech Department for help as below.

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 Black Gold main switchboard at 780-955-6025.
- As always we hope you have a relaxing and enjoyable summer, without too many computer problems.



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

AISI/Professional Development



It is hard to believe that the 2010-11 school year is just about over! We have been through so much this year! As the province announced that all AISI budgets were to be reduced by 50% going into the next school year, the difficult decision was made for the entire Division to move to the instructional coaching model. Due to this decision, all schools in Black Gold will be supported by the following coaches; Steve Trueman, Terra Kaliszuk, Greg Luchak, Michael Skoreyko and Denise Harrison. This year we were fortunate to have Kim Epp working as an instructional coach 0.3 FTE. Kim will be returning to the classroom full-time next year. We have truly appreciated everything she has brought to the team as well as to the teachers she has worked with, thank you Kim. We also would like to extend an enormous thank you to our lead teachers who have dedicated a great deal of time and effort supporting teachers in their schools in on-going professional development, all focused on improving student learning. It has been a great experience working with all of you, thank you!

As our team has worked with teachers over the year, we have compiled all of that fabulous work in one location – the AISI Resource website - <http://www.blackgold.ab.ca/ict/AISI/>. As new lessons, units and projects are created, they will be posted on this site. As our Black Gold website is updated, this site will also be easier to access. Thank you to all the teachers who have helped create this site, what a valuable resource!

As an AISI Team, we have been working very closely with the Engaging Students group (a joint collaboration between Student Services, Technology, AISI, On-line Coordinator, and the Division Principal, all working toward engaging all students in learning). We will continue this work into the coming school year.

This year has also brought about two new initiatives that were very successful; the monthly Beginning Teacher seminars and the 9-week Student Teacher Orientations. Both programs will continue next year, and the Beginning Teacher seminars will be expanded to teachers in their 1st, 2nd and 3rd year of teaching.



Professional Development for the 2010-11 school year saw a great change with the formation of Division-wide cohorts focusing on subject areas and Division levels. As we move into the 2011-2012 year we will continue with this model and have three opportunities to meet; October 11th, November 25th, and March 2nd. Watch for registration in early September. Continue to check the PD page on the Black Gold website for upcoming conferences and workshops <http://www.blackgold.ab.ca/Resources/PD/>.

Enjoy your much deserved summer break! If you are looking for any professional reading, do not hesitate to borrow books from our AISI library.

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

Student Services

The implementation of Action on Inclusion is well underway across the province. In our Division we have been mindfully and systematically aligning our work and services to schools in keeping with the provincial framework. For all of us, that has meant working collaboratively and differently to access a continuum of supports and services that are necessary for student success, as funding for special needs has not increased for the past three years. There have been changes to services and programs and there will be more to come as implementation of Action on Inclusion continues to roll out. This is the nature of Education. While there is some anxiety and uncertainty during this transition period, we have already seen many benefits for students as the deficit (coding/labeling) model is slowly replaced with a focus on identifying student strengths and better understanding their needs. Creative and flexible programming is evident as schools are maximizing all available resources. This is not easy work, and some days it seems like we have to deal with much more than is humanly possible.

Looking towards 2011-12, we will continue to focus on collaborative practices and capacity building for school staff. A number of pilots will be happening in the Division including the Inclusive Education (digital) Planning Tool, the Meville to Weville Literacy Project, and Positive Behaviour Support team training for staff and parents. A year from now, we will be looking at a new funding framework for schools along with some provincial standards around a continuum of supports for students which will help guide our work for the following year.

We are incredibly fortunate in our Division and in our region to have so many dedicated staff and community-based partners who work tirelessly, collaboratively, and compassionately to meet the needs of the students we serve. Thank you for all your valuable input and support this year through advisory groups, surveys, and informal feedback that helps guide our work. Thank you as well for taking on pilot projects, volunteering for committees, and even allowing camera crews into your schools to help make teaching videos! As we wind up another school year, I hope you get a chance for some 'stillness' over the summer break, and a chance to rest and reflect on the great work you do with children and youth.

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



Business Services—Payroll and Benefit 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

All address changes should now be completed on employee self service (ESS). Please note, this change will be verified by HR and accepted, so it may take a few days to show the updated address in the ESS system.

Employment Confirmation

Employees requiring employment confirmation for mortgage purposes or verification of service information during the summer should submit these requests prior to July 1st. 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 30 to apply for any remaining HSA credits. If you are not terminating, you have 60 days from August 31 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. Please read the “Important Messages” on the bottom of your Health Spending Statement to find out if you will be losing credits. If you have any questions, please call ASEBP at 431-4786 or toll free at 1-877-431-4786.

Teachers

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

For all teachers whose contracts are terminating, pay dates will be July 14th for July and July 15th for August. For those teachers whose contracts are terminating (temporary contracts, early retirements or resignations) benefits, including your health spending account, terminate on the last day worked. (i.e. June 30)

Direct deposits for July and August pay dates will be July 14 & 15.

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

Mileage and Expense Claim Reimbursements from Accounts Payable to Staff

Please ensure that all mileage and expense claims are submitted prior to summer vacation.

Have a great summer!

Contact Information:

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

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

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

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

Operations and Maintenance

The upcoming school year is, again, showing growth in several areas causing “lack of class space” issues once again. Black Gold was fortunate enough to locate 4 used portables from a nearby Charter school and were able to re-allocate left over funds from another project to fund the move and set up of these portables. We were also able to purchase one new Modus modular as well. All of these units are located in Beaumont and will be ready for occupancy by the start of the next school year.

The old Thorsby Elementary school has now been cleared of all hazardous materials and is slated for demolition as soon as the current school year comes to an end. I am sure that there were lots of good times and many good memories from that once fine facility. As soon as the demolition of the school is complete, the building site will take on its new shape; bus lane, staff parking and of course, parent drop off, which is long overdue. Weather permitting, the intent is to have this construction completed by September or October.



Thank you again to all staff who have cooperated, assisted, and held their patience throughout this past school year when Facilities staff have been in your building. You have all shown that a team effort goes a long way.

Enjoy your summer vacation and play safe.

Dan Borys, Operations & Maintenance Manager, 780-955-6068—dan.borys@blackgold.ca



“Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things.”

Robert Brault

WELCOME BACK



AND LONG SERVICE AWARDS CEREMONY

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2011
LEDUC COMPOSITE HIGH SCHOOL**

**8:00 A.M. — 8:45 A.M.
CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST IN MACLAB FOYER**

**8:45 A.M. — 9:45 A.M.
CEREMONY IN LEDUC COMPOSITE HIGH SCHOOL GYM**

SCHOOL-BASED PD TO FOLLOW