

Northern Gateway Public Schools

opening the gateway to a lifetime of learning

Board Highlights

From April 26 meeting

For Immediate Release

Onoway High School Field Trip

· At their regular April 26th, 2011 meeting, the Board approved the Onoway High School out of province field trip to Richmond, B.C. The 39th annual MusicFest Canada is scheduled from May 17th – 21st, 2011. During the week-long event full of music, learning and fun, MusicFest will inspire thousands of young musicians across Canada.

MusicFest Canada is an annual national event that brings together more than 10,000 of Canada's finest young musicians who perform for recognition as the country's foremost musical ensembles. Participants range in age from 12-25 years and are drawn from the elementary, high school, college and university levels. The festival is held each year in May, usually near the holiday weekend.

Education Week – May 1st – 7th, 2011

· Each year, the Alberta Teachers' Association, in collaboration with Alberta Education, chooses a theme to help schools and locals plan activities supporting public education in their communities. This year's theme is "*Public Education: The Heart of Our Communities: Engaged, Ethical and Entrepreneurial.*"

Education Week is an opportunity to celebrate the important role that education plays in building our society. This year's theme supports the value of strong relationships between schools and the communities they serve. Together we can provide the supports students need to achieve success and fulfillment as engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit.

Schools are hosting various events throughout the week. Please see the division website for a complete list of activities happening in schools in your area, and watch for special interviews with local teachers in the newspapers that week.

Board Advocacy

· The Board's advocacy work on behalf of the Division continues with meetings held with Department of Education officials, local MLAs' and the Minister of Education. Key focus remains on current funding for student transportation services and the impact of Budget 2011. The Board continues to underscore the point that rural communities deserve a standard of educational service comparable to that in other areas of the province.

1.5 Million Transferred into School Operational Budgets

· On March 31st, 2011, at a Committee of the Whole meeting, trustees put forth a recommendation that administration transfer \$1.5 million from the Division Accumulated Reserves into the school operational budgets to offset the significant loss of grant revenues to the Division as a result of Budget 2011. This is a one-time transfer that will effectively deplete Division Accumulated Reserves and require further cuts for the 2012-13 school year. The Board approved this recommendation at their April 26th, 2011 regular Board meeting.

Three Year Capital Plan

· The Board recently ratified the 2012 – 2015 Capital Plan submission to Alberta Education with its top priority remaining the major modernization of Onoway High School.

Each year, all 64 school jurisdictions and 13 charter schools submit their three-year Capital Plans to the department, which are updated annually. The proposed projects in these plans – new and replacement schools, modernizations and additions – are examined. From that Alberta Education will determine the most pressing needs as identified by the school boards. Alberta Education prioritizes these project requests by first considering school board priorities and then other criteria. The criteria include health and safety of students and staff, enrolment projects, current utilization, facility conditions and capacity for program delivery.

The next regular Board meeting will take place Tuesday, May 10th, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. at the Division Office in Whitecourt. Members of the public are welcome to attend. For more information, please call (780) 778-2800 or toll free at 1-800-262-8674.

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