

Northern Gateway Public Schools

opening the gateway to a lifetime of learning

Board Synopsis

From January 24 meeting

For Immediate Release

Public Meeting

· A Public Notice is hereby given that the Board of Trustees will convene a public meeting on February 16th, 2012 to be held at the Percy Baxter School gymnasium commencing at 7:00 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting is discuss the information provided to the parents on the implementation plans effective June 30th, 2012 to reconfigure Whitecourt Elementary schools, with Pat Hardy Elementary School housing all Kindergarten to Grade 2 students and Whitecourt Central Elementary to house grades 3, 4 and 5 students.

The Board of Trustees will consider this matter at a Board Meeting to be held April 3rd, 2012. Questions concerning this Public Notice may be directed to Kevin Andrea, Superintendent of Schools, at (780) 778-2800 or 1-800-262-8674.

Minister Announces Ten Point Plan for Education

· After consultations around the province with many stakeholders, Thomas Lukaszuk, Minister of Education, announced ten new initiatives to be rolled out in the months ahead. Some are trial projects which may provide important lessons about efficiencies and better results and some may become longer term practices. Others will require formal policy consideration by government.

The 10-point plan for education includes:

- Reducing travel time for students who spend more than one hour on a bus and enabling students to better use technology when they travel
- Creating more opportunities for students to earn credits in high school and post-secondary at the same time
- Updating school design specifications to better support communities
- Coordinating building playgrounds and new schools
- Supporting First Nations students by working more closely with the federal government
- Creating a stronger voice for parents in the education system
- Providing better information to increase the transparency, clarity and accountability of the education system
- Reviewing provincial achievement tests
- Examining the operational requirements of full-day Kindergarten

Follow this [link](#) to read the press release from Minister Lukaszuk

Field Trips

· The Board approved in full the Hilltop High School's international Marine Biology field trip to LA PAZ, Mexico, schedule from March 4 – 12, 2012. During this trip the students will explore, discover, research and identify marine organisms. Some of the onboard activities include: plankton hauls and identification with the use of a microscope and night-light observations. This program is through the PANTERRA – Young Naturalist Expeditions and more information can be located on the www.panterra.com website.

Presentations

Hilltop High School Volleyball Excursion

· Representatives from Hilltop High presented to the Board of Trustees, further information on the Senior Boys and Girls Volleyball excursion to Honolulu, Hawaii, scheduled from October 6 – 14, 2012. Participation by students in special events such as field trips, athletic competitions, music and drama festivals and students exchanges can significantly complement the educational program. Extracurricular activity, specifically sports, teaches life skills to students outside of the regular classroom setting.

Alberta Schools Wind Power Project

· Francois Gagnon, Chair of the Alberta Schools Commodity Purchasing Consortium, presented to the Board information on the Alberta Schools Wind Power Project. The Alberta Schools Commodity Purchasing Consortia (CPC) negotiates for school boards for reduced rates for gas and electrical. The wind power project would allow the CPC to negotiate and oversee the provincial wind power project, which could also see some return of power to the grid, leading to potential profits. Mr. Gagnon further explained there are several benefits of wind power, some of which include long-term predictable costs and low input costs. About 50 school divisions in the province have expressed interest in joining the \$150-\$200 million Alberta Schools Wind Power Project. If approved the wind farm would be fully operational by January 1st, 2014. School Boards if interested were asked to submit a non-binding letter of intent to the consortium. More information will be forthcoming to the Board to review before a final decision can be made by the June 2012 deadline.

The next regular Board meeting will take place Tuesday, February 14th, 2012 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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