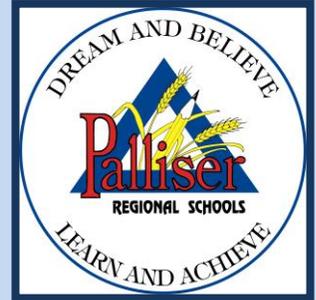


# From the Chair ...

## *Highlights of the Board of Trustees Meeting held Tuesday, October 21, 2008*



- Schools were commended for their **excellent fund-raising efforts** through the recent Terry Fox Run activities.
- The Design Team and Steering Committee for the **Picture Butte High School modernization project** have been very active over the past month, and new concept drawings are expected later this week.
- The **CTS Mobile Unit Grand Opening celebrations** were excellent, and both Coalhurst High and County Central High were commended for the enthusiastic participation of students in the programs.
- The Board is planning changes to the Coalhurst High School site to address **water drainage issues**.
- Discussions continue with Siksika First Nation regarding **tuition for First Nation students attending school at Arrowwood and Milo**.
- The Board will proceed with the **Noble Central School CTS pad and parking lot upgrade**, and the bus loop and parking lot construction will be put to tender.
- The Board will be advertising in the near future for a **Health & Safety Coordinator**. A **Health & Safety Committee** with representation from all employee groups will be struck to support the implementation of OH&S legislation in Palliser.
- A new administrative procedure related to **Reporting Student Achievement and Attributes** is being developed to complement current procedures related to Communicating Student Achievement and Grading for Learning. Various methods of communicating changes to grading practices are being explored to ensure parents are informed prior to these new practices being implemented.
- The Alberta School Boards' Association has been contracted to review the current **Board Policy Handbook**.
- The **Administrative Procedures Review Committee** has begun the review of the procedures governing system operations. This review is expected to take several months.
- The **Minister of Education** will visit southern Alberta November 12 to present the Minister's Educational Leadership Recognition Awards (MELRA) which recognize outstanding achievement by school boards in a variety of areas. In addition, the Minister will meet with Board Chairs and Superintendents at that time to discuss key issues.
- The first issue of **The Pulse**, Palliser's division newsletter has been distributed, and feedback has been very positive. Anyone interested is encouraged to visit the Palliser website to subscribe to the online newsletter.
- The Board will provide a letter of support to the **Prairie Tractor & Engine Society** to assist in a grant application to enable them to move a 1917 Eaton's Catalogue House onto their property.

- As part of the **special education review process**, consultation sessions are planned across the province, with the Lethbridge session planned for December 8. The Board has issued its support for a special issues forum for school boards to be offered by the ASBA.
- The **ATA Local Years of Service Banquet** will take place November 4.
- Alberta Children and Youth Services has notified school jurisdictions of upcoming **changes to staff regulations in licensed preschool programs**. A grandfathering opportunity is offered for staff currently working in licensed preschools so they can become licensed. All Palliser staff who qualify for licensing under the grandfathering provision are being encouraged to apply for this one-time opportunity.
- The Board will be **touring several Palliser schools** November 25 and December 8. Touring of the remaining facilities will take place during the 2009-10 school year.
- The Board approved the final document resulting from the **evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools** September 26, 2008.
- The Board established a **special meeting November 27** to review the Audited Financial Statements and Annual Education Results Report prior to submission to Alberta Education.
- The Board **approved lease agreements** with the Calgary Society for Christian Education (Calgary Christian School), the GCA Educational Society (Glenmore Christian Academy) and the Master's Academy Educational Society (Master's Academy & College), which will allow the Board to access provincial Plant Operations & Maintenance funding to operate these facilities.
- **Palliser is pleased to celebrate an excellent Accountability Pillar Report received from Alberta Education**, noting an overall rating of **Excellent** in seven categories, **Good** in six areas and **Acceptable** in the three remaining categories. Significant improvement was noted in eight areas, and Improvement was noted in two additional areas.
- September 30 enrolment shows a total school enrolment of 6221. As ECS children count as half students for funding purposes, the system full-time equivalent is 5975.5, up 1655.5 from the same time last year. Without the addition of the three new Calgary schools, overall Palliser would be up 6.5 FTE students.
- Several **staff changes are underway in Central Office**, including hiring for vacant positions of Health & Safety Coordinator, Maintenance Worker/Courier and Finance Clerk. The current half-time secretary positions in the Transportation and Facilities Departments are being increased to full-time as well. In the **Technology area**, with the recent resignation of the Technology Infrastructure Coordinator, the Director's role has been expanded to include overall supervision of the department, enabling the hiring of an additional computer technician and a second Technology Integration Specialist to work directly with teachers.
- The **New Teacher Induction Program** has been very well received, with excellent feedback from participants.

Don Zech, Board Chair  
Palliser Regional Schools