

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

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Inclement Weather

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we worked through a couple of “red days” earlier in January.

I want you to know that over time we have considered several perspectives when it comes to creating our administrative procedures regarding inclement weather. The challenge we face as a school division is to balance our responsibility to have our schools open with our moral obligation to minimize the risk for all of our travelers (students, staff and parents).

We have learned from parents, at our Parents Matter committee, that parents want notice when a possible closure might be a few days ahead. As a result, prior to each red day this January we were able to get a message home in advance that asked parents to be prepared for what might happen. We have received very positive feedback for the heads up. Where it is possible, we will continue that practice. Please know that there still might be times where severe weather comes quickly and we are unable to give as much advance notice.



Some of you may wonder why we are reluctant to make the final decision for a red day the night before. The reason is that based on our experience the weather can change overnight and by waiting until the morning we fully respect our commitment to keeping schools open when possible. We do not want to be in the position where a school closure decision is made the night before only to see the weather improve and we are wishing we could still be open for learning.

Another key point I wanted to make about inclement weather is that cold weather is typically far more predictable than heavy snowfall. With heavy snowfall warnings, for example, we have seen times when the snow actually didn't arrive at all or was of little impact.



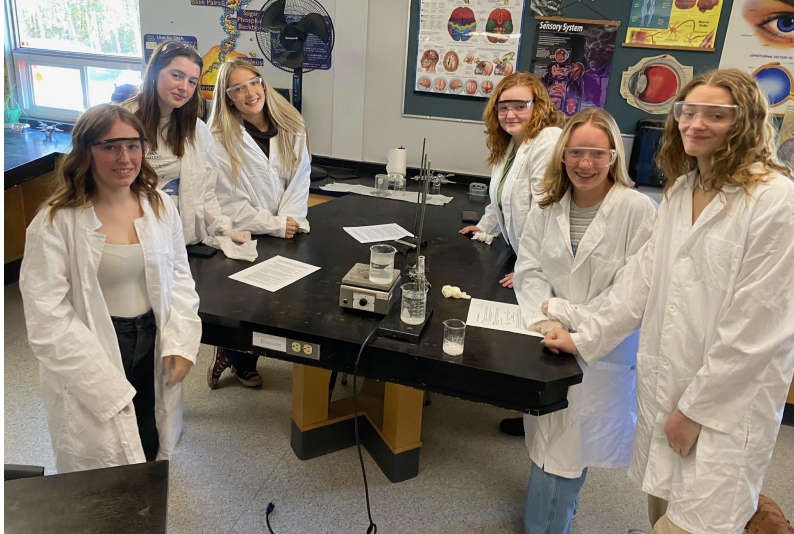
Building our Education Plan for 2024-2027

For your awareness, we are working as a division to build the key components of our education plan for the next three years. We have a very active committee of school based administrators and central office personnel working hard to move us forward responding to our students with complex needs across our division. We are committed to learning from other jurisdictions and each other as we find the best path forward in this area. We already have many leaders and teachers learning that many of our complex needs students simply lack the skill, rather than the will, to be successful. This new learning will have a significant impact on how we move forward as educators.

Additionally, we have another team of leaders looking at Career Pathways to ensure that our students have ample opportunity to clarify where they are going and why. These leaders are actively wanting to see that our students gain the support, guidance and expertise they need to make great decisions for themselves. They want students to not only graduate, but leave our division with a clear plan for their future.

We are beginning to explore an online learning platform for learners needing us to be even more creative and flexible to fully meet their needs. To do this, we have another group of leaders and teachers considering a future focus on what we are calling Adaptive Learning. In the short term, we believe this new online learning platform will help programs already in place such as our Career Highs that currently exist in a number of our high schools. In the next few years we will go further to explore what is possible for a broader range of our students.

In any event, please know that as we finalize our Education Plan for 2024-2027 we will provide you with more information along the way. Also, at each of our school councils you will find a Parents Matter representative who will know much more detail about this plan following our April meeting together. Stay tuned!



Diploma Exam Preparations

For parents of students writing Chemistry 30, Mathematics 30-1 and 30-2, and Biology 30 in the second semester, please make sure your child is aware of the tremendous opportunity for diploma exam support prior to writing their final diploma in June. We may also have additional diploma subject areas to include as we get closer to the end of May.

As you know, our classroom teachers do an amazing job creating powerful review processes in their classrooms. That said, we found with a pilot program at the end of the first semester that there were some students who benefited from accessing an online teacher for support just prior to writing their exam. As a result, we are planning to continue to make this online review option available late in June, 2024.

A support like this is typically delivered at a cost of between \$150 and \$200. Because we remain in the piloting phase, this support will continue to be free. Your child's school, and their teacher, will share more information as it becomes available.

Survey Says

Alberta Education provincially administered surveys should be landing in your mailbox shortly if you have a child in grade 4, 7, or 10, if they haven't already. Later in March, we also want to invite all of our families to fill out an important local Chinook's Edge School Division survey. For both sets of surveys, please take the time to fill them out to the best of your ability. It really makes a difference for us when we get a considerable number of parents providing us with their feedback. Your voice influences our priorities for the future and helps us to learn what is going well and not so well along the way.