

GSSD STUDENTS PERFORM WELL IN MATHEMATICS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

In May, 2006, Grades 5, 8 & 11 students participated in a provincial mathematics *Assessment for Learning* project. This provincial assessment project relates specifically to the curriculum being taught in the classroom in provincial schools. Students were assessed in two areas: opportunity-to-learn (students' preparation and commitment to learning in the school environment) and student performance in curriculum objectives (measuring the students' understanding of math concepts as well as their skill and ability to perform mathematical processes).

Grades 5, 8 & 11 students were initially assessed in May, 2004 whereby results from both the 2004 and 2006 assessments were compared. The 2006 results indicate gains in geometry as well as significant improvement in student use of calculators. The GSSD Grade 5 and Grade 8 students scored higher than their provincial counterparts in measurable areas including problem-solving, computation, data management, measurement, geometry, fractions, whole numbers, algebra, ratio and proportion and numbers and operations. The GSSD Grade 11 students scored higher than their provincial counterparts in five of seven areas including applications and problem solving, concepts procedures and relationships, angles polygons and circles, polynomials and rational expressions, and consumer math and probability. Both students and teachers in Grades 5, 8 & 11 report that support for learning math is high enabling students to learn mathematics more effectively within division classrooms.

The area identified for improvement is problem-solving. The Division is currently in the planning stages of implementing various strategies and professional development opportunities to ensure improvements are realized. Teacher leaders have been

identified who will work with other teachers in their classroom throughout the year on teaching methods that focus on problem-solving. A second initiative undertaken involves developing a model of supervising learning in mathematics. In order to gauge our level of success in this area, further testing is planned. The results will be collated and presented later this fall.

For further information, contact Bert McNair, Superintendent of Program Development, at 786-4751. The powerpoint presentation, which provides further details on this project, can be found on our website at www.gssd.ca.

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**MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, September 13, 2007**



**Good Spirit School Division Announces
2007 General Proficiency Award Recipients and
2007 GSSD Scholarship Award Recipients**

The Board of Education of the Good Spirit School Division is pleased to announce that nineteen Grade 12 students within our division have qualified for the Saskatchewan Learning 2007 General Proficiency Awards. Saskatchewan Learning determines the number of recipients by division based on total province-wide enrolments.

We are very proud to announce the following students as recipients of the \$400.00 scholarship: Nora Bily from Churchbridge; Jade Anderson, Kyla Gillespie and Elizabeth Gomez from Esterhazy; Cassandra Eskra from Invermay; Katie Bergman, JessicaLynn Hemauer, Lisa Mitschke, Tina Paridaen, Caylyn Petracek and Geoffrey Zerr from Langenburg; Lori Schramm from Melville; Brittany Pasiechnyk from Preeceville; Katherine Gosselin, Brookelyn Kirkham, Sheri Malinowski, Amber Matechuk, Allison Mitchell and Jordan Soltys from Yorkton.

Also, the Board of Education of the Good Spirit School Division sponsors a \$400.00 scholarship at each of our twelve high schools which is awarded to the student with the top academic average. We are pleased to announce the following recipients: Clayton Ludba at Canora Composite School; Nora Bily from Churchbridge Public School; Kyla Gillespie from Esterhazy High School; Shannon Reminek from Fort Livingstone School; Cassandra Eskra from Invermay School; Alfred Airriess from Kamsack Comprehensive School; Lisa Mitschke from Langenburg High School; Lori Schramm from Melville Comprehensive School; Desiree Ginetz from Norquay School; Brittany Pasiechnyk from Preeceville School; Janet Babchishin from Sturgis Composite School and Allison Mitchell from the Yorkton Regional High School.

We would like to extend our congratulations to all graduates and best wishes on a bright and promising future.

For further information, contact Dwayne Reeve, Director of Education at 786-5500.

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***No Child Without Protection in New Program
within Good Spirit School Division***

Innovative New Program Protects Children, Eases Parents' Concerns

Beginning in November, there will be *No Child Without* access to prompt and accurate medical attention as a result of Good Spirit School Division's decision to partner with the Canadian MedicAlert Foundations' national charitable program, which protects elementary students from unforeseen medical emergencies.

By implementing the Canadian MedicAlert Foundation's *No Child Without* program, Good Spirit School Division will ensure that all elementary school students up to age 14 at Invermay School, Preeceville School, Calder School, Churchbridge Public School, Canora Junior Elementary School, Hoffman School, Langenburg High School, Saltcoats School, Victoria School, Grayson School, Davison School, Yorkdale Central School, M.C. Knoll School, Dr. Brass School, Columbia School and Sturgis Elementary and Composite Schools with pre-existing medical conditions will be eligible to receive free MedicAlert bracelets and membership, which allows their condition to be quickly identified in the event of a medical emergency. MedicAlert will continue to work with the Good Spirit School Division to expand this program to other schools in the region over the next five years.

"The emergency numbers on the back of the MedicAlert bracelets mean we have access to every student's valuable health information when we need it most," said Juanita Brown, Superintendent of Schools. "The program better equips schools to deal with an emergency situation should it arise. *No Child Without* allows parents to feel more secure while their children are in the care of others throughout the school day."

In fact, parents are immediately notified by MedicAlert when the hotline receives a call about their child. Many parents of children who wear MedicAlert bracelets have found it reassuring to know that they're informed if their child has had a medical emergency and that proper care was quickly provided.

"As most parents know, children with medical conditions may be at risk whenever they leave their home. Parents worry a great deal about how their child will communicate their medical condition in a crisis," said Martin Kabat, President and CEO of MedicAlert. "The *No Child Without* program will provide students within the Good Spirit School Division the full protection of MedicAlert and give parents peace of mind."

MedicAlert's *No Child Without* program focuses on children who increasingly suffer from allergies like peanuts, childhood diabetes and asthma, and also helps children with other pre-existing medical conditions. Across Canada, at least 10 per cent of school-age children have a condition that warrants MedicAlert® protection¹.

¹ Statistics Canada 2001 Census; Canadian Lung Association - http://www.lung.ca/diseases-maladies/asthma-asthme/children-enfants/index_e.php; Canadian Diabetes Association, http://www.diabetes.ca/Section_About/thefacts.asp; The Prevalence and costs of Diabetes http://www.diabetes.ca/Section_About/prevalence.asp.

The goal of the *No Child Without* program is to provide elementary students across Canada a MedicAlert bracelet or necklet custom-engraved with the child's medical information, member ID and the MedicAlert 24-hour Emergency Hotline number. By calling the number, school staff or health care providers have immediate access to vital information from the child's electronic health record, including existing medical conditions, medications, allergies, special needs, physician and family contacts.

About *No Child Without*

The *No Child Without* program was launched nationally in November 2006 and over the next five years it will be offered to all of Canada's 10,000 elementary schools. The program was developed in the spirit of Canadian health care to assist every child regardless of their financial resources. The *No Child Without* program is funded in part by a \$2 million contribution from the Federal Government of Canada. MedicAlert relies on the generous donations from its members and corporations, government, foundations and individuals to support its mission.

About the Canadian MedicAlert Foundation

Operating nationally, MedicAlert is a member-based registered charity with more than one million Canadian members. The Canadian MedicAlert Foundation has been the provider of emergency medical information services in Canada for more than 45 years. The Foundation's services include electronic health records, a state-of-the-art secure database, a 24-hour emergency hotline and customized identification products that protect persons with chronic medical conditions or special medical needs. The foundation's web site can be accessed at www.medicalert.ca.

For more information on MedicAlert, please contact:

Janine Allen
Veritas Communications
416-482-2248 X 248
allen@veritascanada.com

Deborah Legrove, CFRE
Canadian MedicAlert Foundation
416-696-0142 ext. 1153
dlegrove@medicalert.ca

For further information, contact Juanita Brown, Superintendent of Schools, at 306-563-5562 or 1-877-390-0899.

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**MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOVEMBER 7, 2007**



**GOOD SPIRIT SCHOOL DIVISION ESTABLISHES
SCHOOL VIABILITY COMMITTEES**

The Board of Education of the Good Spirit School Division has established School Viability Committees in the communities of Calder and Grayson. The School Viability Committees will be collecting data and other relevant information over the next three months for presentation to the Board of Education in late January. The information gathered and presented by the School Viability Committees will be used by the Board of Education to determine if school closure or grade discontinuance needs to be considered.

The establishment of School Viability Committees is part of an annual process that is outlined in the Good Spirit School Division's draft Administrative Procedure 103 – *School Viability*. A copy of the draft is attached to the press release. The draft procedure will be presented and discussed at the Good Spirit School Division's Annual General Meeting which will be held at Yorkton Regional High School on Thursday, November 22nd.

For further information, contact Mr. Dwayne Reeve, Director of Education, at 786-5500 or 1-866-390-0773.

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Administrative Procedure 103

SCHOOL VIABILITY

Background

In order to provide high quality educational experiences that reflect what is best for students and to assist students in developing their full potential, the Good Spirit School Division recognizes the need to maintain viable schools and classrooms. The Good Spirit School Division will annually review school operations to determine the need to consider closure or grade discontinuance in schools throughout the division.

In situations where it is not feasible to transport students to another school for their learning experiences, the Good Spirit School Division may endeavor to use technology and/or increased per pupil expenditures to ensure viable learning experiences are provided to locationally disadvantaged children.

Procedures

1. The Director may appoint a School Viability Committee when any or all of the following conditions exist at a school:
 - 1.1 There are three consecutive grades with enrolment less than seven students;
 - 1.2 There are or are projected to be more than three grades in a classroom;
 - 1.3 There are or are projected to be 30 or fewer students in Kindergarten to Grade 5;
 - 1.4 There are or are projected to be 30 or fewer students in Grades 6 to 9;
 - 1.5 There are or are projected to be 30 or fewer students in Grades 10 to 12;
 - 1.6 The school's Pupil Teacher ratio falls below 13:1 excluding schools with community school status and schools that receive small remote school funding from the Department of Learning;
 - 1.7 Schools within 20 kilometres of the nearest school may be reviewed for the purpose of consolidation; and,
 - 1.8 No more than three school viability committees shall be established in any given school year. The schools identified will be dependent upon the degree to which they meet the conditions stated.

The Director may appoint a School Viability Committee with a proposed structure of:

Director of Education
Superintendent of Business Administration
Superintendent of School Involved
Principal of School Involved
Two elected School Community Council Members

Upon the establishment of the committee, the Director of Education and Board Member for the area, will convene a meeting with the School Community Council.

2. The School Viability Committee is charged with the responsibility of collecting data, suggesting School Community Council discussions and presenting alternative actions available to the Board of Education, within 90 days of the time the committee is formed. In carrying out this responsibility, the primary objective of the School Viability Committee is to provide the Board of Education with the information necessary for determining what is best for children. This information should allow the Board to respond to the educational needs of the children within their jurisdiction.
3. The School Viability Committee should consider the following critical factors when collecting data, obtaining input and developing alternative actions:
 - 3.1 Student Enrolment: Present and Future;
 - 3.2 Instructional Groupings;
 - 3.3 Extent of Multi-Grade Classes;
 - 3.4 Educational Programming including curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular programs;
 - 3.5 Busing: Student Time on Bus and Costs;
 - 3.6 Professional and Support Staffing;
 - 3.7 Facility Costs: Maintenance and Operations;
 - 3.8 Locationally Disadvantaged Students;
 - 3.9 Overall Financial Impact on School Division Operations; and,
 - 3.10 Ability to Accommodate Students in Receiving School(s).

Reference: Section 85 Education Act
Board Policy – Policy 2

SCHOOL VIABILITY COMMITTEE TIMELINES ADJUSTED

The Board of Education of the Good Spirit School Division has decided to extend the timeframe for the School Viability Committees in Calder and Grayson at their Board meeting on January 10, 2008. The Board of Education will receive the final reports from both viability committees in October of 2008 rather than later this month.

The current economic environment within the province has had a positive impact on student enrollments in most areas of the Good Spirit School Division. The delay will allow the Board of Education more time to assess the impact the positive growth will have on the viability of both Calder and Grayson Schools.

The newly elected provincial government has indicated that they are contemplating changes to the funding of small, remote schools and the processes that must be followed when Boards of Education are considering school closures. The Board of Education for the Good Spirit School Division felt it was necessary to delay the receipt of the viability reports until the position of the government has been clearly defined.

The adjustment of the timeframes will mean that both Calder and Grayson Schools will be operational for the 2008-2009 school year.

For further information, contact Mr. Dwayne Reeve, Director of Education at 786-5500.

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CAPE FAREWELL YOUTH EXPEDITION FOR INVERMAY SCHOOL

The Board of Education of the Good Spirit School Division would like to congratulate Invermay School on being chosen as one of thirteen Canadian high schools to participate in the Cape Farewell Youth Expedition 2008 sponsored by the British Council/McGill University Group. The two-week voyage of discovery in September 2008 is an innovative arts and science project focused on climate change whereby one student from next year's Grade 10 or 11 class will have the opportunity to spend two weeks in Iceland, Greenland and Baffin Island with an international group of students.

The project focuses on the Arctic because climate change affects the world unevenly and polar regions have been more dramatically and profoundly affected.

The Board would like to congratulate Mr. Ron Adair for his efforts in putting forth a fantastic application. As part of the project, climate change will be worked into the 2008-2009 curriculum at Invermay School in Mrs. Penny Castle's art class as well as Mrs. Gail Krawetz's English Language Arts class.

"I was first introduced to the Cape Farewell Project by my colleagues in Saskatchewan Learning where we have all been involved with the Science 10 renewal for the past 4 years," states Ron. "This new Science course contains an extensive unit on weather and climate change. I was pleasantly surprised, excited, when I learned that Invermay School was selected to represent Saskatchewan. This will be an incredible experience for a lucky student and I am so happy to be a part of this project. This proves that there is opportunity for everyone in projects of this nature."

For further information, contact Mrs. Gail Krawetz, Principal of Invermay School, at 306-593-2233.

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GSSD STUDENTS PERFORM WELL IN ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING RESULTS

In May, 2007, Grades 5, 8 & 11 students participated in a provincial mathematics *Assessment for Learning* project; as well, Grades 4, 7 & 10 students participated in a provincial reading *Assessment for Learning* project. This provincial assessment project relates specifically to the curriculum being taught in the classroom in provincial schools. Students were assessed in two areas: opportunity-to-learn (students' preparation and commitment to learning in the school environment) and student performance in curriculum objectives (measuring the students' understanding of math and reading concepts).

In mathematics, Grades 5, 8 & 11 students were initially assessed in 2004 and 2006 respectively. The results show small but steady increases in achievement throughout the three years. Family support for learning math is high enabling students to learn mathematics more effectively. Families should be congratulated for their support at the Grade 5 level, however, trends show that more family support for learning mathematics is needed at the Grade 8 and Math 20 levels.

Overall, mathematics problem-solving is an area that demands increased focus at all levels. We are continuing the program started in Fall, 2007 of implementing various strategies and professional development opportunities to ensure improvements are realized. Mathematics Teacher leaders continue to work with other classroom teachers on teaching methods that focus on problem-solving. Administrators are being supported by providing a model of supervising learning in mathematics.

At the Grades 4, 7 & 10 levels, students were assessed on their reading comprehension. All grade levels tested scored the same as or slightly higher than their provincial

counterparts. The Assessment results indicate that the school division needs to investigate and review available resources to enhance the reading program as well as assisting teachers to develop additional reading strategies.

The Division has developed two major learning goals around math and literacy. The Math Goal states that Good Spirit School Division students will improve performance in math problem solving skills. The Literacy Goal states that the Good Spirit School Division will collect data on literacy levels to provide information that will be used to set student achievement goals beginning with the 2008-2009 school year. Based on available data, the Division is directing resources to meet the established goals. The system goals contribute to the overall learning goal of working towards “Strong Foundations – Bright Futures” for all students.

For further information, contact Bert McNair, Superintendent of Program Development, at 786-4751. The powerpoint presentation, which provides further details on this project, can be found on our website at www.gssd.ca.

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SALE OF CANORA ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

The Board of Education of the Good Spirit School Division would like to announce, as of April 8, 2008, we have entered into an agreement to sell the Canora Administration Office. The sale will result in the closure of the office effective May 9, 2008. The Transportation and Facilities Departments and staff will be relocated to the Fairview Administration Centre in Yorkton. The Student Services personnel working out of the Canora Office will be relocating to schools in the areas they are currently serving. There is no anticipated disruption in service within any of the departments due to the relocation.

“This move will create some economic efficiencies and will assist in enhancing communication and workings among departments. This is a logical progression in the consolidation of services division-wide to ensure a strong, focused administrative team has the ability to best serve our public, staff and students,” states Dwayne Reeve, Director of Education.

For further information, contact Dwayne Reeve, Director of Education, at 306-786-4750.

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~ MEDIA RELEASE ~

April 29, 2008

GOOD SPIRIT SCHOOL DIVISION HOLDS MILL RATE

The Board of Education of the Good Spirit School Division has established a 2008 uniform mill rate of 21.95 mills at a special meeting on April 28, 2008. The uniform mill rate will be levied across the division with the exception of the former York School Division who will be levied an additional .20 mills to cover the capital costs associated with the 2005 renovation of the Yorkton Regional High School. This maintains the same rate as levied in 2007.

The establishment of the mill rate impacts the revenue received for the remainder of the 2007-2008 budget year for the Good Spirit School Division and establishes budgetary limitations for the 2008-2009 budget year. Total expenditures forecast for 2008-2009 are planned to reach the \$62,600,000 which is an increase of 8.9% over the 2007-2008 budget. Factors impacting the expenditures include wage adjustments to reflect the collective agreements, capital projects in Norquay and at the Yorkton Regional High School which are anticipated to cost \$2.7 million dollars and an allocation of dollars targeted to the school division's goal of improving student learning outcomes in literacy and math.

“The benefits of a strong provincial economy and increased government revenues will allow us to better serve the students and families of the Good Spirit School Division. The Board of Education was able to allocate more dollars to address our key instructional initiatives in literacy and math as well as address some pressing facilities needs across the division.” stated Dwayne Reeve, Director of Education.

For further information, contact Dwayne Reeve, Director of Education at 786-5500.

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~ MEDIA RELEASE ~

May 14, 2008

GSSD STUDENTS ABOVE CANADIAN NORMS IN STANDARDIZED TESTING

In February, 2008, over 1,200 students in Grades 3, 6 & 9 participated in Canadian Achievement Tests, Third Edition (CAT-3) standardized tests. The CAT-3 is a test series designed to measure achievement in the basic skills commonly taught in school divisions across Canada. The CAT-3 tests measure student achievement in reading, language, mathematics, word analysis, vocabulary, spelling/dictation, language/writing conventions and computation & numerical estimation.

The test results indicated that the GSSD Grade 3 students were able to outperform the Canadian norm in 7 of 8 subtest categories; the GSSD Grade 6 students outperformed the Canadian norm in 5 of 7 subtest categories and the GSSD Grade 9 students outperformed the Canadian norm in 6 of 7 subtest categories. The overall results of the February, 2008 tests indicated that Good Spirit School Division students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 were able to outperform the Canadian norm in 18 of 22 subtest categories. For a further detailed breakdown of test results and norm comparisons, visit the website at www.gssd.ca.

The CAT-3 testing program has been implemented in the Good Spirit School Division to establish benchmarks in basic skill achievement and assess growth and progress over time; provide diagnostic information to help identify individual student strengths and

instructional needs; obtain information for instructional planning at both the classroom and school system levels; and to assist with program selection and student placement.

On May 5, 2008, the testing results were presented to the Board of Education for review by Thom Koroluk, Superintendent of Student Services and Bert McNair, Superintendent of Program Development. "We are very proud of the achievement of our students and the significant work of our teachers. The CAT-3 test results are proof that our attention to student achievement is paying dividends and that excellent teaching and learning is occurring in our schools." stated Bert McNair.

For further information, contact Mr. Bert McNair, Superintendent of Program Development, at 786-4751.

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~ MEDIA RELEASE ~

June 30, 2008

ATTENDANCE BOUNDARY REVIEW

The Board of Education of the Good Spirit School Division has completed the scheduled Attendance Boundary Review.

In February, 2008, a series of informational meetings were held throughout the division to discuss possible attendance boundary changes. Based on information collected during these meetings, a draft version of attendance boundaries which would be put in place for the 2008/2009 school year was developed. The completed attendance boundary document was presented and approved by the Board of Education at their meeting on Thursday, June 12, 2008. The boundary changes are being finalized and families affected by the changes are being individually contacted.

“The information gathered through the public meetings and the written submissions have allowed us to create boundaries that better reflect the wishes of our families so we can serve their children and our students more effectively.” stated Dwayne Reeve, Director of Education.

For further information, contact Florence Halldorson, Transportation Manager, at 786-5505 or toll free at 1-877-390-0899.

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