



# Renfrew County District School Board

## Director's Report - March 31, 2008

### Elementary School Effectiveness Framework

All elementary schools in the Renfrew County District School Board are using the School Effectiveness Framework (SEF) to examine the work being done to improve student learning and achievement, instructional leadership, assessment and evaluation, and curriculum and instructional strategies. Each school has a SEF team, which evolved from our CODE special education project team and typically includes the principal, a teacher from each division, special education teacher, and literacy teacher as well as a "data champion" teacher and, in larger schools, the VP and/or a French teacher. The school team is co-chaired by a teacher and the principal.

With financial support from the Ontario Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat and the Renfrew County District School Board, school teams have time to meet at the school to review current practice in light of the criteria in the framework and to implement plans for addressing gaps. School staffs also devote time during professional development days to develop skills and resources for improved student learning. During school visits, the academic superintendents meet with the SEF co-chairs and/or the team.

The Renfrew County District School Board is providing training for the SEF teams. In March, the teams participated in a day long workshop on the intelligent use of EQAO data and resources, connecting assessment data to curriculum expectations to focussed instruction. In April, the teams will spend time with the LNS Student Achievement Officer to learn about which high yield instructional strategies are shown to close learning gaps. The team co-chairs will also be provided with training on classroom walk-through, which includes focussed observation for collecting data, analysis to determine level of learning of key curriculum expectations, and reflective professional dialogue leading to decisions about instructional practices.

As well as school SEF teams, there is a District SEF Team consisting of the director, superintendents, principals, and teacher consultants. With additional financial support from the LNS and the Board, the district team is able to provide additional direct support and resources to eight OFIP schools. These schools were selected based on an analysis of EQAO results over time and the presence of an open, focussed, inspired, professional team as evidenced by progress made on the CODE project. The district team assists these schools with the work of self-review and will conduct its own reviews.

### Secondary School Student Success/Learning to 18

The monitoring team from the Ministry of Education visited in March to review our progress on the indicators of secondary student success. Once again, the committed work of secondary teachers, the leadership of school student success teams, and the outstanding achievements of our students were apparent to the Ministry. In 2006-2007, 88% of our grade nine students achieved eight credits; 72% of grade ten students achieved sixteen credits; 98% of grade nine students passed the compulsory courses; and 96% of grade ten students passed compulsory courses - all these percentages exceed the province as a whole and place our Board in the middle or upper third of all school boards. The Ministry tracks pass rates for 47 English, Mathematics, and Science courses from grade 9 to grade 12 - students in the Renfrew County District School Board exceeded the provincial pass rate on all but four of these courses.

Gayle Bishop, Student Success Leader, tracks Board data and can report that in semester one, 88.6% of grade nines and 85.5% of grade tens earned four credits. This is encouraging as schools are focussed on improving results for grade ten students.

### Safe Schools

The Ministry of Education made changes to the legislation regarding safe schools, effective February 1, 2008. In response to memoranda giving direction on codes of conduct, programs for expelled students, programs for students on long-term suspensions, anti-bullying programs, and progressive discipline, the Board revised and adopted its policy and procedures on these matters at the end of January. There has been training for principals and vice-principals on the current requirements with a focus on character education, anti-bullying, and progressive discipline.

Additionally, staff initiated a review of all other administrative procedures dealing with student and staff safety to ensure that our procedures are in alignment with new and pre-existing regulations and requirements. Representatives from all employee groups and administration met in September to review approximately a dozen of our current procedures and to give input on what clarification or changes were needed. The group met again in February to consider the revised drafts. It is anticipated that the work of revising this set of procedures will be completed this month.

## **Special Project Funding**

### Parents Reaching Out Grants

The Renfrew County District School Board Parent Involvement Committee and school councils at a number of schools recently learned that their applications for Ministry of Education grants in support of efforts to communicate with and engage parents were successful. The central committee receives \$14,900 so it can host school-based or regional parent information sessions and provide advice on effective school councils; continue to support parents through provision of resources on key topics for each school; host the second annual Achieving as One symposium and continue to build the network among school councils. Eleven elementary schools and two secondary schools each receive amounts up to \$1000 to support local projects (Pine View, Eganville, General Lake, Champlain Discovery, Sherwood, Morison, Keys, Highview, Beachburg, Cobden, AJ Charbonneau, Mackenzie, General Panet).

### Environmental Education Grant

Staff submitted a successful application for \$23,500 in funding from CODE to support four curriculum-related projects that engage students in activities related to the environment:

- student study of water quality of the Ottawa River, involving several secondary schools;
- reducing the ecological footprint through recycling and energy conservation at each secondary school;
- training for geography teachers and students at each secondary school on global information and global positioning software, and using these tools to map the local environment - e.g. hiking trails;
- building nesting boxes for birds as part of the Opeongo HS OSPREY and LEAF programs, which involve students in studying the local forest ecology.

### Managing Information for Student Achievement (MISA)

The Renfrew County District School Board was pleased to learn that it qualified for additional MISA funding in the amount of \$48,392. These funds will be used to support the work of elementary OFIP/SEF teams and secondary student success teams through the provision of information technology hardware that will allow easier access by teachers to student achievement data and the creation of electronic data walls.

## **Reporting to the Ministry**

In February/March, there have been the following points of accountability:

- Principal/Vice-Principal Pilot Performance Appraisal - Review Team Visit;
- School Effectiveness/OFIP - Literacy Numeracy Secretariat Monitoring Visit;
- Student Success - Ministry Monitoring Visit;
- Report on Regional Aboriginal Symposium;
- Report on Ontario Psychological Association Funding.

## **Upcoming Events**

Grand Opening of Addition to AJ Charbonneau PS in Arnprior, including classroom and Leaps and Bounds Children's Centre - Thursday, April 3, 2008 at 10:00 a.m.

Renfrew County Science Fair at the Petawawa Civic Complex - Saturday, April 5, 2008 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. with presentations and judging in the morning and awards in the afternoon.

Options 2008, Skilled Trades Fair and Competition at Ma-te-way Park in Renfrew - Friday, April 18, 2008 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.