



Renfrew County District School Board

Director's Report - November 23, 2009

Summer Booster Program gets Provincial Recognition

Principal Brent McIntyre and his team of summer booster educators have been asked to present the results of their work at the Ontario Education Research Symposium in February 2010. One of the goals of the 2010 symposium is to provide evidence and examples of how research, evaluation and/or data analysis are being used to inform improved practices and outcomes in schools and classrooms. The Summer Booster program is designed to support grades 1 and 2 students who have gaps in their literacy and numeracy skills. Student data is collected and then analysed to determine ways in which we can reduce the impact of the 'summer slide' in learning. As a result of our inquiry, we have been able to develop precise strategies that are proving effective in helping struggling students retain new knowledge and skills over the summer. With the support of the Student Achievement Division, we were able to hire two Booster Leads to support classroom and teaching practice. These leads performed all diagnostic assessments associated with the program, and created consistent resources and curriculum for each site to implement. Our results indicate that each site in the county experienced positive growth in student achievement. In the future, the Booster team is pursuing a partnership with McMaster University to further inquire, analyse, and adapt the program to sustain our positive momentum.

Successful Leadership Assessment Program

On Thursday, November 19, 2009, the Renfrew County District School Board held a very successful Leadership Assessment Program for aspiring administrators. Chair of the Board, Roy Reiche welcomed the group to the program and emphasized the importance to our system of having qualified and competent candidates for the administrator selection process. Five local candidates were successful in demonstrating their leadership skills in a range of simulated leadership tasks. The successful candidates of the program were: Cathy Kyle (Primary Curriculum Consultant - Mary Street Education Centre), Veletia Richards (Early Literacy Coach - Petawawa Family of Schools), Tammy Cayer (Student Success Teacher - Fellowes High School), Tom Havey (Secondary Teacher - Arnprior District High School), and Peter Burnette (Secondary Teacher and Acting Vice-Principal - Arnprior District High School). A special 'thank you' also goes to the assessors for the program that day: Superintendent Steve Sliwa, Superintendent Dennis Jenkins, Jodie Barrett (Principal - McNab Public School), Terry Hughes (Principal - Mackenzie/Keys Complex) and Lauren Wilson (Secondary Curriculum Leader).

Early Learning Program

On October 27, 2009, Premier Dalton McGuinty announced Ontario's plan to move ahead with the extended full-day, early learning program for four and five-year olds. Teachers and early childhood educators will work together to help children learn during the regular school day. Parents may also enrol their child for extended hours for a reasonable fee, before and after regular school hours (for example, 7:00-9:00 a.m. and 3:30-6:00 p.m.). This will make it easier for parents to get to and from work and will ensure their children have an integrated learning program for the whole day at one location. The extended day program will be led by registered Early Childhood Educators, and will be based on a cost recovery basis (subsidies will be available to some families based on need).

The Early Learning Program will be offered in selected schools in Year One, the 2010-2011 school year (35,000 spaces for four and five-year olds will be available across the province). The Renfrew County District School Board will receive funding for 156 student spaces or six classrooms for the first year of implementation. A blended staffing model comprised of one teacher and one Early Childhood Educator (ECE), will deliver the program during the day with an average class size of 26 students (ratio of 1:13 per adult). Senior staff is consulting with our coterminous board, local Best Start networks, consolidated municipal service managers, and other community officials in an effort to determine which schools best meet the following criteria: availability of space; community need; minimal impact on existing child care and early years programs; student achievement; and readiness to implement. The RCDSB is required to submit a list of selected schools to the Ministry of Education for their consideration by the November 30th deadline and an announcement will be made by mid-January 2010 so boards can inform parents and community of the first year implementation plans. The program is expected to be fully implemented in all schools by 2014.