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Directions Newsletter

Regular Meeting of the Board – February 2015

Distance Education Status Report

Presented by Shelby Budd, Principal of the Chinook Cyber School

The goal of the Chinook Cyber School is to deliver courses to students, while developing personal responsibility for students as lifelong, independent learners. The Motto is “*No Limits!*”

Chinook sends out interest surveys every year for students to complete, and the Cyber School works with the schools to decide what classes to deliver, including new classes. The Cyber school works in partnership with Chinook schools to provide students with programming to meet high school requirements, elective courses to enhance learning opportunities, a collaborative online learning environment by providing the opportunity and the means for communication between the student and the online instructor, and dynamic courses that take advantage of the online environment through differentiated instruction and assessment.

In 2013-2014, the Chinook Cyber School offered a total of 56 courses, offered through a variety of methods:

- **Asynchronous** – online delivery of courses using the learning management system (LMS) Moodle. These courses are semesterized.
- **Synchronous** – video delivery of courses using video conferencing units. These classes are scheduled into the student’s timetable at a specific time each day. All synchronous classes are supported with a Moodle course as well. These courses are semesterized.
- **CSI (Continuous Student Intake)** – asynchronous delivery of courses using Moodle. Students may begin the course at any time during the school year and have up to one full calendar year to complete the course. Courses close over the summer. Students may apply for extension, though it is not recommended.

Highlights:

- Increase of 116 seats from previous year.
- 7.6 FTE – 4 full time; 14 part time staff; staffing increase of .2 from previous year.
- 63 students will carry over to fall, as they did not complete this year.
- Course drops were down by 20 from previous year.
- Foods 30 offered as new course in semester 2.
- Development of Health and Physical Science underway.
- Overall the average final mark for all courses was 83%.

Celebrations:

- 97% completion rate.
- Successful pilot of Adobe Connect for synchronous courses and new hardware roll out for synchronous teachers and students (Lenovo laptops, eyeballs).
- Representation provincially on the Ad Hoc committee for Technology in Education.
- Completion of Digital Citizenship courses for grade 3, 5 and 8 - joint project between CCS and CIA.
- Pilot process in place for implementation of TAT teams.
- Co-hosts of DE Bootcamp in Humboldt.
- Continued interest from without our division, provincially, nationally and internationally to have access to our courses for resources and development purposes.
- Strong partnership with Horizon, Northern Light and Good Spirit School divisions.
- Positive feedback and media attention.
- Changes to handbook to accommodate students requiring upgrading (fall 2014).
- Continued development and roll out of new Science courses (fall 2015).
- Support for Home Schooling.

Prairie Learning Centre Monitoring Report

Presented by Tim Wooldridge, Program Manager, Prairie Learning Centre

The Prairie Learning Centre promotes excellence in education for youth and teachers across Canada by engaging individuals and communities within the mixed grass prairie landscape. The Prairie Learning Centre provides innovative learning opportunities for youth through the combined efforts of educational partners (Grasslands National Park and Chinook School Division) and community partners (Village of Val Marie, SK).

2013-2014 Report

The Prairie Learning Centre offered a total of 39 school-based workshops to 30 Chinook Schools, with 1404 Chinook students participating in workshops/programs.

Celebrations:

- The Prairie Learning Centre has moved into a new larger learning space in Val Marie School.
- The PLC has an improved web site with an online calendar to ease booking organization for teachers.
- The PLC is becoming a resource for teachers piloting the Environmental Science curriculum with five schools visiting to pilot hands-on science in Grasslands National Park.
- Twenty-five students received High School credit for Chinook Cyber School Wildlife Management courses this year.

- The PLC has received extremely positive feedback from participants and has had greater student numbers for 2014 than at any time in the history of the PLC.
- Outreach programming that is directly marketed and created for Hutterian schools was offered in the months of January, February, March, April, May and June and was a great success with interest expresses from programming for next year.
- The PLC has received financial support from an increased number of sponsors that include the CIF, Sask Power, Sask Energy, and Canada Trust.
- Grasslands National Park and Chinook School Division signed a new Contribution Agreement for the next three years.
- Eight students received credit for completing Biology 20 with the Prairie Learning Centre.

2014-2015 Report

As of February 9, 2015, the Prairie Learning Centre offered a total of 38 school-based workshops to 33 Chinook Schools, with 573 Chinook students participating in workshops and programs.

Celebrations:

- Offering a teachers information session at the Chinook Teachers Association Welcome Back Day.
- The PLC has revamped its web site to communicate new program offerings and to remove programs that are no longer a focus.
- The Maverick / Val Marie Bio 20 Module One was the most successful Biology 20 trip that Tammy Wallace, Maverick teacher, has been a part of! Great students, great presenters and a 100% retention rate for Module 2.
- The PLC has continued to work with long-term program funders – Sask Power, Sask Energy and Canada Trust and received support for each of the new Elementary Outreach Programs for 2014-2015.
- The PLC has organized Hutterian Outreach programming to reach all colonies for the 2014-2015 school year. Hutterian schools will be offered programs from October to May.
- The PLC has created brand new learning resources and learning materials for the Outreach Programs – Rocks Rock! The Science of Rocks and Erosion (Grade 4) and Snap, Crackle Pop! The Science of Electricity (Grade 6)
- Programming numbers are on track to increase, yet again, from the previous year with the potential for 2000 students to receive Prairie Learning Centre programming.
- The PLC, Maverick School and Val Marie School participated in Sage Grouse Fence Marking, which garnered very positive media coverage.
- Edmonton Public Schools has agreed to open its doors to the Prairie Learning Centre at the Bennett Centre – one of North America's busiest and most acclaimed Science and Environmental Education Centres.

Kindergarten Registration for 2015-2016

Kindergarten Registration Week for all Chinook Schools is March 9-13, 2015. Please check chinooksd.ca or contact your local school for specific dates and to register your child.

- Kindergarten eligibility is age 5 by December 31, 2015.
- Parents must bring proof of child's birth date (Birth Certificate) AND Sask Health Card.

On Tuesday, March 10 beginning at 7:00pm, registration will be held for Stewart Valley, Waldeck, Success (TBC), and Wymark (TBC) schools and it is also a common registration night at Irwin School for all Swift Current city schools (Irwin, École Centennial, Central and Fairview).

Staff Appreciation Week: February 8-14, 2015 "Learning Together for the 21st Century"

Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week is recognized nationally by the Canadian Home and School Federation as a way to celebrate the personal and professional contributions that teachers and school staff make to children and their education. Celebrated annually since 1988, the week provides a great opportunity for communities, families and partners to express appreciation for the dedication and hard work of the teachers and support staff in Saskatchewan.

It is important to acknowledge the impact that teachers and support staff have on the children in southwest Saskatchewan, and Chinook School Division is very proud of our employees. We are privileged to have so many talented and passionate people in our communities who truly care about the education and development of our children. During this week, we encourage School Community Councils, families and communities to take a moment to celebrate and recognize the teachers and staff at their local school.

Chinook School Division Annual Meeting: March 23, 2015

The Chinook School Division Annual Meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 23, 2015 at 7:00pm at the Chinook Education Centre in Swift Current, with a possible satellite location to be announced.