

THE DIVISION DISPATCH

Year 9 | NUMBER 2 | September 26, 2024



ORGANIZED >

Organizational meeting

During the Sept. 10 Organizational Meeting, Lethbridge School Division's Board of Trustees selected its Chair and Vice-Chair. Christine Light was named Chair and Genny

Steed was named Vice-Chair. The Board also determined its committee appointments for the 2024/2025 school year. Click here for details: [COMMITTEES](#). ■

HEALTH/SAFETY >

Health and Safety Corner

From the May, 2023 OHS safety survey, we asked: What do you feel is your biggest safety concern? Today's topic provides information related to that concern! ■



*Safety
is Everyone's
Responsibility*

Considerations for a Clutter Free Classroom



Organize Supplies and Materials

- Storage solutions
- Daily maintenance - encourage students to return materials to designated places



Implement Clean up Routines

- Regular cleaning and decluttering schedule
- Assign roles for students to be responsible for certain areas



Limit Excess Items

- Minimalist approach - regularly assess what is essential for your classroom
- Digital resources - to reduce paper clutter



Create Clear Pathways and Exits

- Maintain walkways - clear of obstacles to prevent tripping hazards
- Doors and windows are free from obstructions and clutter



Use Care When Lifting Heavy Objects

When setting up a classroom, rearranging things, or moving heavy items like textbooks, use safe lifting techniques to avoid injury



Limit Use of Electrical Cords & Circuits

- Make sure cords are not running through high traffic areas
- Be careful how many devices you are plugging into one outlet



Keep Hazardous Materials Out of Reach

- Cleaning supplies and chemicals used for instruction should be properly labeled and securely stored



Conduct Regular Assessments

- Safety inspections - periodically check for clutter or hazards in the classroom and address them immediately

SUPT. MESSAGE >

Superintendent Mike Nightingale

I hope you are having a great beginning to the school year!

It's always wonderful to welcome students back and get into the routine of the new school year. I can't believe September is almost over. As always, the time seems to be flying by.



MIKE NIGHTINGALE

This September has brought a lot of change. We've had a number of principals and vice-principals move to new schools, we've welcomed new students and staff to the Division and we've had to implement a new personal device and social media procedure.

At the elementary level we've had to implement new government mandated assessments and we continue to implement new curriculum in multiple grades. This amount of change does provide new opportunities, but it also presents challenges.

I wanted to make sure you know how appreciative I am of the work you do. You've faced these new challenges with professionalism, skill and dedication.

As you know at the end of the month, we will recognize National Truth and Reconciliation Day. I want to express my gratitude to our Indigenous Education team for their continuous efforts in guiding us on our journey towards Truth and Reconciliation.

As well, I also want to recognize the intentional work schools engage in to help us work towards Truth and Reconciliation. I hope that you have a wonderful break on Sept. 30 and are able to take some time to reflect on the importance of this day and the progress we are making together towards Truth and Reconciliation. ■



51-25 >



Division recognizes employees at annual 51-25 club banquet

Earlier this month at the Sandman Signature Lethbridge Lodge, Lethbridge School Division recognized employees who have spent 25 years with the Division.

The 51-25 Club Annual Banquet had 16 new members join the club. Eight members were in attendance, which included Lois Van Roon, Rebecca Adamson, Christine Lee, Genie Hartwick, Christine Henke, Wayne Filipenko, Derek Resler and Lisa Prawdzik.

Tara Cunningham, Melanie Gregson, Debbie Richardson, Frank Nemeth, Lenore Lindeman, Doris Anderson, Elaine Jacklynn and Karla Wright were also welcomed into the ranks of the 51-25.

Trustees Andrea Andreachuk, Tyler Demers, Christine Light and Allison Purcell were on hand to honour the eight employees in attendance, and present them with gifts.

Click this link for photos: [51-25](#). ■

PRIZES!!! >

Read The Dispatch!



Every month, The Division Dispatch delivers valuable information to Division staff.

If this engaging content isn't enough to make you want to read the monthly newsletter, we have another incentive!

When you read The Dispatch, reach out to us to enter your name in a draw for a prize. Just click here to enter: [CONTEST](#).

The Division Dispatch contest winner for the month of August was Nicole Briscoe. ■

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TECH NUGGET >

Digital wellness connected with everything we do

Being in education, we all have had some recent reflections and conversations around managing our technology, supporting learning and attempting to support mental wellness in our schools.



MORAG ASQUITH

In the season of Digital Wellness, flavoured with the recent Ministerial Order and peppered with all things technology, Sydnie Erlendson, (our Digital Wellness FSLC) came trundling into my office Wednesday with a tasty little fact nugget, as she does. It interrupted all the tasks I was supposed to do... thanks Sydnie!

These nuggets she plops down in my office often inspire creative ideas, strategic planning and collaboration with counselling staff, tech staff and leadership. What became apparent after her most recent sharing, was that Digital Wellness is so connected to everything we do. It has really become apparent this year that technology has crept into our lives quite silently and has left very little time for us as humans to deeply reflect upon how, where and what it has impacted and it has left a long-term effect that requires management.

I consider myself somewhat fortunate to have started my career in education in the early '90s. Some folks may find it unbelievable I am still alive, let alone still working in education given the breadth of experiences I have had the fortune to endure. There were no cellphones, work didn't regularly involve computers and as a teacher, data was written down in a little grade book. Parenting in the early oughts was also still relatively simple.

Other than yelling out the window in the neighbourhood or looking up a tree to find my children around dinner time, communication with my children and others didn't rely on technology.

Now, even though my children are young adults and relatively self-sufficient ("relatively" used loosely) I find myself texting them, calling their friend's parents (to their chagrin) or stalking them on Instagram. My kids now can't escape me - no virtual trees to climb and we now live in Lethbridge.

I recently read that, "Parental stress is a serious health issue, warns U.S. Surgeon General" (CBC, 2024). When Sydnie shared what she was learning, it brought about some thinking our system should ponder.

It was brought to my attention that some daycares send hourly updates (push notifications/texts/images) on the children in their care to the parents. As I walked through BestBuy the other day, I noticed a little cute sock with a monitor.

When I inquired about what this medical device was, the salesperson indicated it was a "vitals baby monitor so when parents are sleeping they can stay abreast of their child's vitals." I thought about my parenting experience and how little I knew about my children's hourly childhood experience, I also then thought about

how our education system in Kindergarten and Grade 1 supports our parents in transitioning from daycare (communication inundation) to Kindergarten given the very different communication information sharing that takes place.

Taking a moment to reflect and bounce ideas off of Sydnie we both wondered... what does the absence of an hourly notification feel like once it isn't there? What pressures does this place on the parent if they are working full-time? Are those hourly updates reassuring or nurturing "parental stress"? And what do you say after each of the six updates? What does this somewhat innocuous practice silently reinforce? Are parents and our system aware of our communications (how, what and when) and the impacts on them and their children?

With a heavy heart I reflect upon my state of health as a parent had I received hourly updates year long, while I was starting a career, or as a teacher being required to send hourly updates to parents about their children in school.

The U.S. Surgeon General is probably correct, parenting is becoming a stressful role. I hope we can continue to move toward simplifying our lives, being conscious of our pressures and aware of what is important information.

In Lethbridge School Division, as we embark on developing a new report card in our elementary division and continuing our journey of learning about thoughtful assessment practices, I am excited to learn about, "what is important to communicate to our parents" as we continue into 2024/2025. I certainly hope we can continue to support communication between schools and parents that considers developmental appropriateness and that fosters independence in our students (and parents) and maintains learning as our core business.

Lastly, this is a little plug for our Digital Wellness Team (Cason Machacek - Digital Wellness Teacher or Sydnie Erlendson- Digital Wellness FSLC), especially returning in September to some significant changes in our schools and the use of personal mobile devices in classrooms.

They are a resourceful, positive, thoughtful team that keeps wellness promotion at the core of what they do.

If teachers are needing support in the Digital Wellness domain i.e. has a student who self regulates by using their PMD or are looking for activities to replace "free time on PMDs" they would be more than willing and excited to support that space. I am very grateful for the learning they have inspired in this "granny in education" as I continue to learn and be amazed everyday at how our lives are continually changing and our classrooms reflect this change. ■

TERRY FOX >



Legacy of Terry Fox honoured by schools in Division

General Stewart Elementary School's Terry Fox Walk doubled its fundraising target.

On Friday, Sept. 13, Lethbridge School Division Trustee Andrea Andreachuk, a cancer survivor and a former Kindergarten teacher at General Stewart, spoke to students at a special assembly.

Andreachuk spoke about her cancer journey and about Terry Fox's inspirational

Marathon of Hope.

Afterwards, students went outside to participate in a Terry Fox Walk.

The school had set a fundraising goal of \$500, and raised over \$1,000.

Click here for more photos: [FOX](#).

On Monday, Sept. 16, Dr. Probe Elementary School hosted its Terry Fox assembly, which was highlighted by an appearance by Terry Fox's uncle, who is also named Terry Fox. ■



INTELLIGENCE >



Division set to launch Artificial Intelligence committee

Lethbridge School Division is forming an Artificial Intelligence committee to assist in shaping the future of AI integration in our schools.

The Division is seeking a diverse group of individuals, from students, teachers and school administrators to parents and community members.

Committee members will work to ensure responsible and ethical integration of AI technologies and develop policies and procedures, among other duties.

To learn more, click here: [ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE](#). ■