

## Charter Board Highlights June, 2010

We are rapidly winding down year two of Valhalla Community School and it has been a remarkable year. We have experienced challenges and accomplishments, which have served to further our school's progress toward maturity.

You have probably heard many school boards are experiencing tight finances as a result of the general state of the economy and the particular changes to provincial funding. Cuts are being made and many jobs are being lost in the education system. Fortunately, since our enrolment for the fall remains stable, we will not be in such a tight position as that. Nonetheless, in order to keep some flexibility in our budget, the board has established a textbook rental and resource fee. We have tried to keep this cost in line with other schools in the area, and are hoping that the cost will not prove too onerous for our families. If you are unable to pay this charge, please contact the office to discuss alternatives.

Next year, Alberta Education will begin our mid-term evaluation. This is a very thorough assessment of how we are doing at carrying out our charter. It will involve examining our documents; sitting in on classes; interviewing staff, parents, board members; etc. In order to prepare for this process, we are doing our best to address all the areas of our commitment and one need which has emerged is the organization of our grievance committee. This committee would hear complaints on the part of individuals or groups who allege a violation of the provisions of the school's Charter. The four committee members would consist of parents and teachers, serving a one year term. We have an opening for one more parent, so if you are interested in helping in this way, please contact me (Jolene – 356-2114).

Our charter recognizes that parent involvement is of prime importance to student success, and therefore sees volunteering as providing a considerable benefit to all parties involved. With the hope of acknowledging all the volunteers that have already provided such great support, and to encourage all families to become actively involved in volunteering for the school, one of our new directors, Tara Fehr, has offered to act as a volunteer coordinator. She will be contacting families to find out areas of interest, whether it is: hot lunch, in class, field trips, yard maintenance, prepping class materials, working a casino shift, ski hill, school council, charter board, committee work, you name it... with the goal of each family donating 20 hours of their time during the year. Thank you to Tara, and to all our outstanding volunteers.

Looking ahead, we are continuing to work on making room for our expansion into grade nine in the 2011/2012 school year. For now, we have enough room for our 2010/2011 K-8 students, however as the year progresses, we will be working on adding space.

A big change for the fall will come as a result of the retirement of our principal, Susan Thomson. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to Susan for joining us on this adventure. Not every principal would have been willing to take the risk of joining an unproven group such as ours; her commitment to our school's beginnings played a substantial role in allowing us to get where we are today. We want to wish her the very best for her retirement. Happy travels! Meanwhile, we are currently carrying out our search for a new principal and look forward to all the opportunities that will bring.

Finally, thank you parents, students, staff, administration, community members, and directors for helping us to create this wonderful school. It is the teamwork of each one contributing his or her part, which makes this such an amazing journey. Have a marvelous summer!