



ACHSC COMMUNIQUÉ - OCTOBER 2009

The school year is upon us and I am reminded as a trustee, it is not only on us, but almost two months old. As the school year is rapidly unfolding so is the work of the Alberta Coalition for Healthy School Communities.

1. ACHSC Work Plan 2009-2010

Funded by an \$80,000 grant from the Public Health Agency of Canada ACHSC has identified three areas of focus for its work in the upcoming year:

- a) **Host a series of 5 regional school health team meetings** with a view to create 5 self-sustaining regional school health teams across the province. Through these meetings we seek to engage all stakeholder groups with an interest in school health (e.g. trustees, health professionals, parents, administrators, teachers etc.). The concept of regional teams has been endorsed by the Executive Directors of the Alberta School Board Association, the Alberta School Council Association, the College of Alberta School Superintendents and senior executive of the Alberta Teachers Association. These teams will have the potential to strengthen collaboration, enhance local response and create a provincial network that can identify provincial perspectives on school health. Meetings are expected to begin by late November and be completed by early March.

- b) **Host a symposium.** Ever Active Schools, an important partner organization, has planned a mid January conference on school health. ACHSC and Ever Active Schools see this as a great partnership opportunity. Instead of having a separate ACHSC symposium, ACHSC has decided to jointly plan and sponsor a pre-conference day, as well as the program of the conference, with Ever Active Schools. This is an exciting opportunity to expand our partnership and we look forward to planning the details of this event.

- c) **Host a series of Aboriginal school health meetings.** In 2008, we decided to create a task force to examine the state of school health in Aboriginal schools. While we did not have financial resources to support this task force at the time, we are pleased to allocate a sum of money this year to support traveling the province and hosting 7 aboriginal school health meetings. The location of these meetings will be Lethbridge, Calgary, Edmonton, St. Paul, High Prairie, Fort McMurray and High Level. A unique feature of the meetings will be our efforts to engage both reserve and off reserve school communities. Our task force, which consists of members of the Aboriginal community, including one Elder, are well along in planning these historical meetings. These meetings are expected to be completed by mid March. This will be the first time in Alberta that we are aware of that meetings will be formally planned to discuss aboriginal school health and engage both reserve and off reserve communities.

2. Governance

In this rapidly changing world it is often not productive to simply stand still and carry on with the status quo. In this vein, ACHSC is currently in the process of reviewing our model of governance and decision making. A governance committee has been working over the past few months to develop a new model of governance for ACHSC that will be presented to the board in the next month. We look forward to sharing the results of this meeting with our membership and welcome your feedback and ideas.

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