



ACHSC COMMUNIQUÉ – MAY 2009

1. School Communities Catch Health – ACHSC Symposium

ACHSC hosted a very successful Symposium on March 23 and 24 in Nisku, Alberta. The theme for this year's event was "The Time is Now: School Communities Catch Health". The program focused on many of aspects of school health, and included:

- An interactive presentation given by Rick Matishak on the Power of People.
- A presentation on Aboriginal School Health given by Gary Beaudin, who is a Consultant to the Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools.
- A panel of stakeholders discussing their roles in school health.
- A report on the learnings from the Regional School Health Team Meetings.
- A panel of students speaking about their perspective of school health.
- Various breakout sessions that highlighted promising practices in school health from around Alberta.
- Poster and table displays from organizations and local-level projects.

We were fortunate that the Honourable Dave Hancock, Minister of Education and Dr. Raj Sherman, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Health, were present to bring greetings and to share their thoughts related to school health.

The Symposium attracted 251 people from around the province and we were happy to see a variety of stakeholders from both the education and health sectors in attendance. We are currently in the process of reviewing the evaluation results from the Symposium, and these will be used to inform future events and work of ACHSC.

We would like to thank our sponsors: Public Health Agency of Canada, Alberta School Boards Association, Alberta Teachers Association, Alberta Education, Alberta Health & Wellness, College of Alberta School Superintendents, and Alberta School Council Association.

2. Information Gained from Regional Team Meetings

In the fall and winter, through funding from PHAC, we hosted a series of regional team meetings. These meetings were successful in identifying local champions, understanding unique issues in each region related to school health and determining a broad base of support for school health in Alberta. Some of the money that we received from the PHAC grant is supporting us to have a detailed report on these meetings completed. We hope to receive this report soon and will share the results with our membership in a timely manner.

3. PHAC Expression of Interest

In March, PHAC asked us to put forth an expression of interest for renewed funding for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. The proposal that we submitted includes work related to the regional school health teams, Aboriginal health and expanding our partnerships. Further detail of the activities we will undertake in these areas will be determined over the next month and submitted to PHAC when they request our full proposal.

4. Inspiring Education: A Dialogue with Albertans

If we are to be successful individually and collectively as a province, we need to consider how to help all Albertans realize their potential. *Inspiring Education: A Dialogue with Albertans* is an opportunity to shape the future of education in Alberta and the Government of Alberta wants to hear your perspective. A series of dialogue opportunities are being offered around the province this spring. More information can be found at: <http://www.inspiringeducation.alberta.ca/>. We encourage all ACHSC members to get involved with these consultations.

5. New ACHSC Executive

On March 24, the ACHSC Annual General Meeting was held. At this meeting, Rhonda Patton was acclaimed as the new Co-Chair from the health sector, and Meg Irwin was acclaimed as Secretary. Dave Colburn continues as Co-Chair from the education sector, and Bill Gordon remains Treasurer. The ACHSC Board of Directors will be reviewing our governance structure in June. More information on the results of our meeting will be provided in the next communiqué.

For more information on ACHSC or if you are interested in being involved in any ACHSC activities, please visit www.achsc.org, or contact Rhonda Patton (rhonda.patton@albertahealthservices.ca) or Dave Colburn (davecolb@yahoo.com).