

# New Horizons Charter School Society

## Happy holidays from the Board family to yours!

Can you believe we have been in our new school for four months? The time has really flown by and we can see that students, staff and parents are very happy to be in this fantastic learning environment.

We had our first ever girls' volleyball team, and basketball season is now in progress. The Learning Commons is used every day for collaboration and exploration. The Junior High foods class has a real kitchen of their own, and the list goes on. The Board would especially like to thank our administration – Superintendent Don Falk, Secretary-Treasurer Fred de Kleine and Principal Ted

Zarowny – for the hours and hours of hard work dedicated to the planning and execution of the renovations and the move to Sherwood Park. We also thank all staff members for their efforts to uproot their space and settle in again over the summer.

The Board of Directors is looking forward to a new year of service in providing direction and, always keeping foremost the vision as stated in our charter: New Horizons School will enable gifted students to strive for excellence in a positive academic learning environment that fosters social and emotional support for each student.



### 2015 Board of Directors

*Jill Weiss – Chair*  
*Ryan Bosch – Vice Chair*  
*Densie Auriat – Co-Secretary*  
*William Watson – Co-Secretary*  
*Nicole Pasemko – Treasurer*  
*Vicky Qualie – Director*  
*Carole Karbonik – Director*

In September the Board bid farewell to Jason Clarke who resigned from his position as Chair. Jason has contributed significantly to New Horizons School and we thank him for his leadership. We also bid farewell to Kimberly Thomson, who resigned in October after serving three years on the Board as Treasurer. Finally, we thank Dave MacLean for his two years serving as a Board Director. We thank everyone for their commitment, unique perspectives, and enthusiasm.

### **JANUARY 13 – INFORMATION NIGHT**

If you know of any other families who might benefit from attending our school, please pass along this information

### **JANUARY 19 – STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT MEETING**

This meeting will gather input from parents to assist development the education plan for the 2016-2017 school year

### **FEBRUARY 24 – 20<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

Join us in celebrating this wonderful achievement for Alberta's first Charter School

## Staff Arrivals and Departures

Of course, with more space came more students, more teachers, and several staffing changes. This fall we welcomed Ms. Allison Joly, teaching grade 1 and Mrs. Holly Meek, teaching grade two. Since then, we have extended congratulations to Mrs. Meek on the birth of her new baby daughter and welcome to Mrs. Rochelle Skogen, who will be taking Mrs. Meek's place for the remainder of the year. And at the Christmas Break, we will extend thanks and farewell to Mrs. Jamie Lambert-Brown (grade 3), who has been part of our teaching staff for more than three years. A replacement for Mrs. Lambert-Brown will be announced in the near future. We look forward to continued growth in the year ahead and, as a Board, are making every effort to ensure that we continue to grow.

In addition to the regular School Board meeting minutes, which are available and posted on the school's website, the School Board periodically provides NHS parents with special updates. These Board Bulletin updates are intended to provide information, enhance communication, and encourage interest in Board-related matters.

**Please direct any questions or comments to**  
[jweiss@newhorizons.ab.ca](mailto:jweiss@newhorizons.ab.ca)



## Recent Board Initiatives

**Vice Principal:** The establishment of the new position of Vice Principal, with a start date of January 1, 2016. A part-time teacher will be hired to provide administrative relief time for the VP.

**Project Based Learning:** Allocation of \$8,325 to support successful Year 1 implementation (training and support) of a Project-based Learning initiative.

**Teachers of Gifted Learners:** Allocation of \$6,500 towards focused professional development for teachers of gifted learners. This includes funds to support new teacher mentorship, membership for each teacher with the National Association for Gifted Children (access to periodicals/videos, etc.), and an honorarium for completion of U of C courses specific to gifted education

**Marketing:** Funding of up to \$15,000 to be used in marketing materials and design to support our goal of continued enrolment growth.



## Budget Update

The NHCS anticipates total revenues for the 2015/16 school year at \$2.62 million and total expenses at \$2.70 million, with a resulting operating deficit for the current year of \$80,000. Although the recent board initiative items contributed to a deficit larger than that which we would typically approve, the Board unanimously voted in favour of taking action to enhance the learning environment for our gifted children and to invite others to join us. Further, the deficit is supported by an accumulated operating reserve in excess of \$500,000

## Sherwood Park Regional Planning Exercise

The Sherwood Park Regional Planning Exercise is designed generally to address the school facility needs of the four public school jurisdictions that serve Sherwood Park: New Horizons Charter School Society, Elk Island Public Schools, Elk Island Catholic Schools, Conseil scolaire Centre-Nord. In addition, its specific purpose is to identify a permanent school location for the recently-formed École francophone de Sherwood Park. The Board is grateful for the opportunity to engage in this process, is committed to participating in it, and remains optimistic that it will result in an outcome that addresses the learning needs in the students of our school, as well as those of the students in the other school jurisdictions.

A resident of the neighbourhood adjacent to the school recently provided us with a copy of a letter that was distributed to all homes in the community. In it the writers, identified as "Concerned Parents and Community Members of Sherwood Park," advise neighbourhood residents of the pending construction of the francophone starter school and list a series of perceived concerns with respect to its arrival. The Board wishes to advise parents that the preparation and circulation of this letter was not undertaken by the Board, the Board was not advised in advance of its distribution, and the Board is not supportive of it. Further, the Board is concerned about the extent to which letters of this nature may place our school in a negative light and diminish its reputation.

Thank you to all that attended the Education Ministry facilitated meeting on November 30th to discuss the proposed Francophone School. While not all our questions were answered at that time, the Board is committed to full participation in the Sherwood Park Regional Planning Exercise as a means of addressing student accommodation issues in our community.

