



# Local Education Update

Presented by the  
**Board of Education of the  
Creighton School Division No. 111**

## School Events Mark Special Occasions

### Special Articles:

#### Board Seeks Community Input on Strategic Plan

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#### Choir and Drama Students Shine on Stage

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*The Education Update is published several times per year to highlight School Division initiatives and other Educational topics.*

There have been several events over the past weeks that have demonstrated our tradition of caring and excellence in Creighton Community School.

October 4<sup>th</sup> was the day for our annual **Senior's Luncheon**. Local seniors packed the gym for an extended lunch hour as students served them a lunch prepared by the community school staff and volunteers.

Their grandchildren or other CCS students joined

many of the guests at their table for lunch. As seniors enjoyed the lunch and the visiting, various students provided entertainment.

After lunch several seniors took the opportunity to tour the school and visit their grandchildren's classrooms. It was a wonderful cross-generational event made special by students, staff, seniors and other community members.

The next special occasion marked by a school event was the **Remembrance**

**Day Ceremony**. CCS has an excellent reputation for marking this important occasion with a thought-provoking and meaningful service. This year was no exception.

This year's service explored the symbols and monuments that help us remember the sacrifice of others.

**See Remembrance on Page 3.**

## Athletic Teams Continue the Pursuit of Excellence

Someone said that seeking perfection is neurotic, but the pursuit of excellence is healthy. If that is the case, the athletic program at CCS is very healthy indeed!

This fall has seen great participation in intramurals and on school teams. Athletes are participating for fun, fitness and for some glory as well.

Male and female athletes have represented CCS in golf, cross country running and volleyball. Students have been medalists in

conference and regional competitions and have represented our school at provincial competitions as well. As this article was written, both boys and girls volleyball teams were competing to qualify for provincial championships.

Research is very clear that participation in extra-curricular programs improves student learning. These findings apply to athletics and other programs as well. It may be surprising, but it is also true, that the benefit to the

students does not depend on the team or club's accomplishments, but rather on the participation and sense of belonging that the student develops.

Athletics and other programs can help children develop an internal sense of confidence, pride and belonging that is so important. Encourage your children to become involved in whatever kind of school program they are interested in.

## School Board Seeks Community Input

Two years ago the school board developed a strategic plan to lead the school division in the years ahead. In its discussions, the Board renewed the vision, mission, and core values for the school division and then established **five key goals**:

1. Build partnerships to strengthen school division capacity.
2. Develop targets and processes to monitor key results.
3. Establish an effective communication and public relations plan.
4. Enhance the current character education program in CCS.
5. Enhance the current Practical and Applied Arts program in CCS.

**Now it is time to review those goals** and consider where the division should next focus its energies.

There are certainly some things that will not change. The board will continue to remain true to the mission, vision and core values of the school division. The board will continue to provide an excellent education in a caring environment. The board will remain true to the vision, mission and core values of the school division. This sense of effective stability is crucial.

However, as the world changes it is important to ensure that the direction of the school division is appropriate. The board needs to establish goals for the next three years. This is why the school division is reviewing its strategic plan. This is also why the school board seeks community involvement.

The board has met with staff and administration and they have also met with the members of the School Community Council. They

will meet with student representatives on November 19<sup>th</sup>. You may feel represented by those the board has already met with and that is great.

However, **the board also wants to hear directly from you**. You may have suggestions for goals the board should reflect on. You may have perspectives that the board should consider. You may have a sense of where education should be going.

If you have ideas please share them. You can call, email or visit Robert Bratvold, the Director of Education. You can call or visit a board member. You can pick up a discussion guide or download it from "School Division, Strategic Planning" tab at the top of the page: [www.creightonschool.com](http://www.creightonschool.com).

**Whatever method you choose, please let your voice be heard.**

### AFL Results: Areas of Strength

Both Math and Reading results across the grades assessed showed that CCS students performed at or above provincial standards for adequate performance. This shows that CCS staff members do an excellent job of ensuring that students learn sufficient skills and abilities to function appropriately at their grade level. It is also good to know that a higher percentage of our students perform at the adequate level than the provincial average percentage.

Specific to reading, we clearly see that CCS students have strong basic Reading Comprehension skills at all grade levels tested and generally have strength in Critical Comprehension as well.

Math strengths were a little less consistent across grade levels, but generally most CCS students do well in Computation Skills and in Integrated Applications.

### AFL Results: Opportunities for Growth

Despite doing a good job of ensuring all students develop adequate skills, the data shows needs in both Math and Reading: we need to ensure more of our students reach the "proficient or higher" level of achievement. We certainly have students who achieve high levels of proficiency in Reading and Math, but the number of students who reach that level is lower than we would like.

In Reading, students demonstrated the most obvious needs for growth in Knowing and Using Reading Strategies and in Reader Response. In Math, there was less consistency, but one broad area that indicated an opportunity for growth was Estimation Skills.

Teachers are encouraged to continue reflecting on the data and using it to plan for improvements and the Director of Education welcomes any and all conversations about our results or AFL generally.

## Caring for Students with Intensive Needs



*Schools must work with parents to meet the needs of students with exceptional learning and behavioral needs to ensure they have equal access to, and benefit equally from, the school's educational program.*

The Creighton School Division has always had an excellent program of supports to care for students with exceptional learning needs. In the past year the province has changed the focus of its delivery of supports to school divisions for special needs programming. This change will have an impact on how the school provides support, but it will continue to support students with intensive needs.

Previously the province based programming and funding on a "Medical Model". This is a model where the clinical diagnosis of a disability indicated the type of program and funding the school would receive to assist in supporting child's education.

This system provided some benefits, but sometimes clinical diagnoses were difficult to obtain, and some

clinical diagnoses were accepted and others were not, leaving schools in a difficult place. In addition, the focus was on the identification of a disability, which sometimes had negative consequences.

The new "Impact Model" focuses on the how a child's needs impact his or her ability to access the curriculum or how those needs impact the school system. The intent is bring a focus on what the child and the school need to be successful, rather than on a disability.

Sometimes a student has needs for intensive support because of a clearly diagnosed condition, and that can be helpful in providing

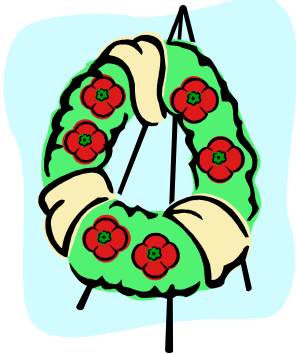
direction to the parents and the school. Other times a student's needs for intensive supports can be a result of any number of factors. The key is that we focus on what the child needs to be successful.

One advantage of the impact model is that it tends to lead to more clearly identified student needs and to the identification of more students who have intensive needs. **The challenge is that the province did not substantially increase funding so the school needs to find new ways to allocate staff and deliver the educational program.**

The division will continue to work hard to ensure all learners succeed.

## Heartfelt Remembrance Day Service

**Lest We Forget**



The gym was filled with students, staff, parents and community members as CCS remembered the sacrifice of members of the armed forces.

Students re-created many of the symbols associated with Remembrance Day. As they presented their creations on stage, they shared readings and poems that explained the origin and meaning of the symbols. It was impressive to see that

student learning about the symbols made the meaning of remembrance more important to them. It was a wonderful example of student learning in school with an important real-world application.

Another meaningful aspect of the service was the presentation of the most recent Canadian sacrifices in war. The CCS chorus performed an excellent choir selection as a media presentation was projected. CCS students

held portraits of soldiers and brief biographical information about the soldier was projected as well. The presentation made it clear to all that these soldiers, and those that were injured or died in previous wars, all were more than a number. There suffering caused the suffering of families and friends as well.

Remembering the sacrifices of those in the past and working for peace now is important. That is what those at the CCS Remembrance Day Ceremony experienced.

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## New Curriculum ... Again?

Some wonder why there are new ways of teaching certain subjects when the basic content does not change much. There are certain constants in teaching, but context of the world around us does change.

School systems need to prepare students for the world that will exist in the future, not the world that existed when most parents and teachers were in school.

Recently the province

announced a renewal of Math curriculum in grades K,1,2,4,5,7,8 (3,6&9 is next year) as well as new Grade 6 to 9 curricula in Science, English, Career Guidance, and Phys Ed.

There are other curricula coming in the next year or so as well. There will be some changes to expect.

While some of the basic content will remain the same, the province will reduce the breadth of the curriculum and focus on a deeper understanding in a

few core areas.

As part of this shift, students can also expect more connections between what they do in the various subjects and a focus on Inquiry Learning. This may be challenging change for many students and teachers.

The benefits and challenges of the new curriculum are best experienced through a partnership between home and school.

## Let Your Voice Be Heard

The school board is beginning to decide what goals it will set for itself and Creighton School Division in the next three years. The goals it chooses will establish the focus of its time, efforts and additional spending for the next three years. The board wants to hear your opinions, so please let your voice be heard.

The Board's mission is to create a student centered environment that fosters healthy living, lifelong learning and responsible citizenship for all students. And as they continue to provide an excellent education in a caring environment, they want to lead change, not just react to changes in the community. Looking to the future and setting goals is part of that leadership. Consider these questions:

- **What do we want students to learn and how will we know they have learned it?**
- **What are the 5 most important greatest challenges currently impacting student learning at our school?**
- **If the school division was limited to doing only three things for students, what should it do for them?**

Please give the Director of Education a call and tell him what you think!

## Why Read This Newsletter?

Most people in the area know that **Creighton Community School has a strong reputation for caring and excellence.** The students, parents, staff and administration make it an outstanding school.

The School Board is the group of

individuals elected to make decisions about education in the Creighton School Division No. 111. We are a small, friendly, public School Division whose boundaries enclose 1600 km<sup>2</sup>.

We operate one school and we wanted to reach all members of

the community to ensure they know about some of the great things happening in Creighton Community School and about some of the things that the Board is working on to ensure we have the best education system possible in our community.