



Month-end Report March 2009 – 10 School Days

M. Strukoff

Superintendent of Schools

EDUCATION

Bill 33

- All Classes are in Compliance

District Initiatives

- Implementation of BCeSIS IEP module is underway. Training sessions have not started with Special Education Staff. The Project leader is Shawn Lockhart, teacher trainer is Lisa Chapman.



Ministry Initiatives

- SD51 has been selected for a StrongStart Outreach program. The Director of Instructor will have more information in her report.
- Congratulations to GFSS on successfully applying for a \$2500 Trees for Tomorrow grant

Meetings in April out of District for the Superintendent

- April 23 & April 24 Vacation days to take in provincial Credit Union meeting
- April 29 11:30 Selkirk College – Meeting re Teacher Education Program and formalizing working relationship between the four Kootenay Districts and Selkirk College

Next scheduled AO Meetings

- 4:00 pm Monday April 27 at the SBO (trustees please RSVP)

Projects

- Representing the District, I am a member of the City of Grand Forks Transition Steering Committee. The city has received a grant for this work and a consultant has been hired to prepare a report regarding economic development in the city. Subsequently, additional grant money has been received and this report will include the whole Boundary. The Steering Committee developed the RFP for the consultant and will be reviewing the draft report
- In addition, I represented the District in the Regional Collaboration meeting in Greenwood on March 4. This meeting was focusing on economic development in the Boundary. Municipal representatives were present along with a variety of Government agency reps and other interested parties.
- Staffing and budget issues are central to day-to-day work load along with the start of preparing the District Achievement Contract for 2009-2010.



GFSS Involvement with Michael French's Movie – "Heart of a Dragon.

Jan de Haan took up the invitation from Michael French to preview his movie on disabilities and send in comments. Here is an exchange of letters that took place.

Heart of A Dragon

Dear Mr. French,

I enjoyed watching Heart of a Dragon. I think that as a person in a wheelchair I understood some of the things Hansen went through more than other people. I really appreciated the way people with disabilities were represented in the film, and that it wasn't just about Rick Hansen – it was applied to disabled people as a whole. Often in movies, a person with a disability, whatever form that takes, is shown as almost less than human, or their disability is ignored. I felt the way that Heart of a Dragon portrayed disabled people was more accurate than most films. It took into account the fact that he was disabled and the fact that he continued to do things on his own. Personally, I find that some people see only my chair, some don't see it at all (it doesn't have an effect on their opinion of me), and a few see the chair as part of me but it is not the only thing they notice. I think the film was successful in showing others' perspectives of disability. The reporter thought Hansen was only looking for attention, and all the other characters had slightly different thoughts and feelings towards Rick. Disabled people often need help, and that fact does not demean them as human beings at all, which the movie strongly stated. As to Hansen being a hero, he did what people thought was impossible for the benefit of others, which fits my definition of a hero. Thank you very much for this opportunity, I hope my feedback is helpful.

Sincerely, Alden Logan

Hello Alden,

The test screenings for 'Heart of a Dragon' that began in Grand Forks in September, continued across the United States, Canada, China and into Australia. What we learned from and about our audiences in these screenings was important in determining how we ought proceed in the release of our the movie.

I'm writing to thank you for being a part of our first test audience and to echo the advice of your teacher Jan Dehaan, - 'what you think matters and what write, can impact people in ways you might never imagine.'

The mail you sent following the screening, impacted me and my

colleagues in ways you might never have imagined. We too have experienced disability and while those experiences may be different than yours; common to each of us, is the sense that disability does not limit our potential. Perhaps it is just that, hope, that defines our story.

Soon we will begin a series of sneak previews for the movie across Canada and the United States. And based on what you wrote, we think its important to include Grand Forks and you, in that preview schedule.

To be specific, we will run a sneak preview at the Gem Theater on Sunday April 26th at 3pm and donate all the proceeds in ticket sales from the screening to the Phoenix Foundation in your name. And while this donation requires nothing from you, the Foundation will seek your input on where best these funds could be used in support of people and programs that are important to the future of young people in Grand Forks.

So the next time Jan DeHaan tells you and your classmates, 'what you think and what you write really does matter', remember that your words to me traveled around the world and mattered to a lot of people.

My fellow producers, including Blaise Noto, Colette Gouin, Mark Gordon and David Foster have spent many years bringing this story to the screen. Each of them has read your mail and shares my admiration for your talent.

I will ask Mr. DeHaan to arrange a quick meeting, perhaps this weekend and introduce you to the Phoenix Foundation.

Best Regards,
Michael