

Dear Valhalla School families and community,

June/2012

On behalf of the Charter Board, I would like to extend a final greeting to all of you, as we come to the end of another school year. We have had a landmark year, in part due to reaching the notable milestone of having all our grades in place. It was a true pleasure to celebrate with the Grade 9's at their farewell. They are a remarkable class, which will represent our school with distinction; we wish them all the best as they launch out into high school.

In addition, we have regretfully received the resignation of Superintendent, Ray Battochio, due to the complexity of maintaining both his role with his primary employer in Pembina Hills and his position at Valhalla. We would like to express our gratitude to Ray for his work here, particularly leading us through the AB Ed Charter Evaluation last year, and then helping to continue the development of our board and our programming. We wish him well in his future endeavours.

After a thorough search, it is our pleasure to announce that John Picard will be joining us, as Superintendent of Schools, commencing July 1, 2012. John comes to Valhalla with a broad range of experience, including 19 years in school administration. Currently, John works as a Principal for Foundations for the Future Charter Academy, the largest of Alberta's Charter Schools, having experience with three different campuses (Elementary, Middle School and High School). He brings a strong background in both Direct Instruction and Charter Schools, having published articles and presented numerous seminars and conferences on both topics across the country. John's teaching career was focused in the areas of Social Studies, Math and English Second Language at the grade 7-11 level.

John has a BA from University of Manitoba; a Diploma in Education from Bishop's University, Lennoxville, Quebec; and a Masters in Educational Administration from the University of Ottawa.

John has been described as a servant leader. He brings to us a strong belief in the primary responsibility of the parents in the education of their children and the most important motivation for all our decisions being the interests of the children. We are certain his training and experience will fit our needs and we look forward to working with him.

One of the first items of business for our new Superintendent will be to work to meet the December charter renewal application deadline. You may remember the extensive Charter Evaluation last year, all directed towards giving us the requirements that would need to be met for this submission. We have every reason to believe we will be in a favourable position for renewal, as our team has worked very hard to meet all the expectations. Once again, thank you all for your dedicated effort for our school. We see the tireless work of the management, the entire staff and the volunteers, as they live out the vision of our charter through each of their different jobs.

We are sorry to announce that two of our team, Judy Hauger and Jennifer White, have given notice that they will not be returning this fall. These are both exceptional, hard-working women and will be missed, however, they will maintain some connections to the school, so happily we will still see them around.

Finally, to you, our families and community: thank you for choosing our school, for offering support and giving of yourselves in so many different ways, helping to make this the best school possible.

We'll see you in the fall; just imagine what next year might bring!

Jolene Kochendorfer, Chair Valhalla School Foundation