



ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY MEETING - Hanna Schools General Comments Wednesday, October 14, 2009

Taking grades 7-12 from the smaller schools, and transferring them to other schools and keeping the school open for K-6 is an option. We are a spread out school division, traveling a long distance is inevitable, so, in this time of tremendous budget cuts, maybe a school closure has to occur.

Teachers are already maxed out with their teaching loads, having the expectations of offering VC courses to smaller schools means even more preparation time for the teachers. Burn out is a distinct possibility.

It seems that more money and expense is taken away from Hanna schools to aid in the delivery of programs in the smaller schools. What about the kids in Hanna?

Shared staff is not an option. Travelling to other schools only puts more stress on those teachers involved. And it also takes away the personal contact and time from the teachers, own students at their school.

Many parents and students have expressed concerns with respect to the new school calendar and daily timetable. Students are finding the lunch break to be far too short (there is not enough time for students to go home for lunch). Adding time to each class does not translate into genuine learning opportunities. The reassuring being the change in calendar and timetable is suspect and is not based in educational research and best practices. Change it back!!

It is easy to say, "Close a school", however, in doing so, you are taking away the heart of that community. Further to that, children are riding the bus longer. Kids should not be penalized for living in rural Alberta. Last, in closing a school, you are taking away the livelihood of teachers and support staff. I don't think school closures or layoffs will solve any problems. Classrooms only get bigger, and thus there is less attention for each student. Make this government accountable. It's okay to run a deficit.

Retro fit schools to reduce energy costs (for long term investment)

Is Central Office overstaffed? Is the Secretary-Treasurer doing all she should/can? Lots of financial people under her... How about curr support staff? Do we need them? Really? How about the BBQ? Fancy calendar? Show restraint far and wide.

Downloading on schools/teachers must be supported with resources. Increasing expectations must be supported – time must be given during the school day and no expectations for excessive work outside school.

I think PLRD should encourage parents and communities to contact the MLA's and Minister to keep funding to rural education.

It would appear that consolidating Hanna Primary + JCC would have less impact on PLRD providing the parents and community have input into the transition and any designs to renos which would be required to accommodate a consolidation.

This is an excellent opportunity for dialogue, especially involving board members.
Thanks to Duane Roy for thoughtfully answering questions.

Did we push the panic button too soon?
Spend the money now: surplus
How can we regain powers of Taxation?
Who is contacting Ministers of Education Advocacy?