



NOTICE TO STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Re: Modernization of Willow Creek Composite High School

On May 25, 2011, the Provincial Minister of Infrastructure, Ray Danyluk, attended a news conference in Claresholm to announce funding for the modernization of Willow Creek Composite High School. This long-awaited announcement is part of a Provincial initiative that calls for modernization of 13 existing schools and construction of 22 new or replacement schools across the Province at a budgeted cost of \$550 million. Details regarding the role of AB Infrastructure and AB Education in these Provincial projects are still to be finalized, but it appears that it is the Government's intent that they are more involved in the management of these construction projects than they have been in past projects.

Modernization of Willow Creek Composite High School and the subsequent disposition of the former Claresholm Elementary School will complete the Board's number one capital priority, which includes the recent modernization of West Meadow Elementary School. Since August 30, 2007, when funding for the modernization at West Meadow was announced, the Board has been planning for the modernization of WCCHS, inasmuch as the Province included some funding in the West Meadow announcement to implement the planning process for the grade 7 – 12 facility.

Over the past four years various groups have been involved in sessions related to visioning, planning and designing of the modernized WCCHS. The funding announcement of May 25, 2011 enables the project to proceed beyond the planning stages to the construction stage. In order to facilitate the modernization, students attending school in grades 7 through 12 in Claresholm will need to be accommodated in facilities other than the current WCCHS facility. Over the past couple of years, various options for housing the students, while still providing the necessary instructional programming have been investigated. The May 25th announcement and subsequent authorization by AB Education and AB Infrastructure to proceed to construction phase has sped up the process and Livingstone Range School Division is prepared to proceed to "decant" the current WCCHS building over the summer and provide instruction for students in alternative sites starting in September of 2011 and for the duration of the construction. Although we do not yet know definitive timelines that will be required for construction, it is anticipated that students would not be back in the modernized WCCHS until February of 2013 at the earliest and possibly September 2013.

Although final details are still to be worked out, it is the intent that the 2011 – 2012 grade seven students be housed at West Meadow Elementary School. This means that most of those students, who are currently in grade six at WMES, will remain at that site for their grade seven year. Grade six students currently attending school in Stavely will join their grade seven classmates at West Meadow Elementary School in September. The grade seven staff and students will be part of Willow Creek Composite High School, but housed in West Meadow Elementary School for that year.

The Board intends to add four portable instructional classrooms to the north end of the former Claresholm Elementary School to provide sufficient regular classroom space to accommodate the grades 8 through 12 students. Further, the Board intends to supplement this instructional space by leasing the former Beauchamp GM dealership building to house the automotives, welding and

fabrication, cosmetology, and band programs. We are in discussions with the Claresholm Community Centre Board to utilize the commercial kitchen facilities at the Claresholm Community Centre to provide the commercial cooking instruction. We are also in discussions with AB Health Services to use the gym adjacent to the Claresholm Aquatic Centre for gymnasium space. This gym space will be in addition to space available in the former Claresholm Elementary School as well as utilization of the gym in West Meadow School for after-school sports and activities.

Although we recognize that renovation projects can be unsettling for students, staff, and parents, it is felt that these accommodations provide the best alternative available to students as we undergo this extensive modernization to create a facility and learning environment that will meet student needs in the long-term.

As we work through the details surrounding this project, we will try to keep students and parents informed. Please refer to the Willow Creek Composite High School website and/or the Livingstone Range School Division website (www.lrsd.ab.ca) for updates and information.