



January 2012

Listening to parents and students

Listening to parents and students is important to us in the Calgary Board of Education.

As we work to personalize learning for students we also work hard to listen to what students and parents tell us about how each student learns best. It is part of how we keep our promise to know our students and to create learning as unique as every student.

Teachers and principals listen to students describe their thinking and aspirations. This understanding of each student's abilities, gifts and interests is used to create their learning plans. As Chief Superintendent I meet regularly with student representatives from our high schools to understand their experiences and to hear from them what works best in our schools. The ideas and feedback from students helps me ensure the Calgary Board of Education responds to the needs and interests of today's learners.

Listening to parents and students also helps us stay connected with our diverse community. We listen to parents as they work with our school staff. We respond to information gathered from Calgarians through our online surveys and engage with those who contact our offices directly. We listen to our school councils and neighbours, elders from our Aboriginal communities and representatives from cultural groups within our city.

At least one in five Calgarians is directly connected with the CBE and all Calgarians are impacted by the work of public education. Listening to students, parents and community members talk about what they want for the children of Calgary is work we've highlighted in our Three-Year Education Plan.

Although we've done a good job of listening in the past, we want to get better. As part of our focus on hearing from our parent community, we hosted Area

meetings across the city last month to have open discussions with parents and key communicators. The conversations covered some of the issues we face as a system. We asked about transportation fees, school and system policies and how to communicate better. The input will inform our decisions. The questions parents asked will improve our communication.

With each student in mind we build the capacity of our system, training and developing our people to deliver the best education. The CBE has over 12,000 employees. All employees—whether or not they work directly with students—contribute to student learning.

Public education requires significant funding and we do our best to make every penny a worthwhile investment. By listening to parents in meetings, in schools, and online, we engage the community we serve. These connections support success in learning for more than 104,000 students.

We think of our promise to provide excellence in education as one we continuously strive to fulfill. We think of our promise to listen and respond as key to our students' success. And we know we have much more to hear from our community. We invite you to tell us more about what you want in Calgary's education system by visiting cbe.ab.ca in January.

2012-2013 School Instructional Calendars

The traditional and modified school calendars for 2012-2013 are approved. There are changes to dates from the previous *tentative* calendars such as the first day of school for students. You may access the 2012-2013 instructional calendars at the following link: <http://www.cbe.ab.ca/calendars/default.asp>