



## Hay River School Principal Changes Announced for 2011-12

Educational leadership at Hay River's schools will be revamped in the 2011-12 school year, following the resignation submitted by Diamond Jenness Secondary School's current principal, Paul Thériault (effective the end of this 2010-11 school year).

Since his arrival in 2009, Thériault has provided quality service to the Hay River high school and community. Among the successes DJSS has seen during his tenure are the addition of the Trades Centre, the completion of Phase 1 of building renovations, and the introduction of innovative programs such as the Leadership and Resiliency Program and the Storefront School. Thériault has also been active in the community, notably as commanding officer of the resurgent Hay River Cadet Corps. Thériault will take his considerable administrative experience with him to his new position as principal of École francsaskoise de Lloydminster (a K-7 francophone school).

Beginning in September 2011, Geoff Buerger will be reassigned to Diamond Jenness Secondary School from his current principalship at Princess Alexandra School. The current principal of Harry Camsell School, Chris Philpotts, will take on the additional responsibility for Princess Alexandra School.

Both Buerger and Philpotts will bring extensive experience to their new and expanded roles. For example, Buerger has more than 20 years experience as principal, teacher and coach at the high school level. His recent hosting of the National Student Debate Seminar in Hay River is a testament to his commitment to strong high school student programming and achievement.

Having one principal oversee two schools is also not uncommon. Philpotts has had that experience as principal of two schools in B.C. for several years prior to his return to the NWT in 2010. Philpotts is committed to maintaining separate identities for the two schools and building on the strengths of both. His position will provide the opportunity for programming efficiencies that will ultimately enhance student learning in all the elementary grades.

Melvin Larocque, vice-chair of the Hay River District Education Authority, notes, "The DEA has faced a number of challenges during the past several years, including reduced funding due to declining enrolment and the recent announcement of significantly decreased funding from the GNWT/ECE for the Storefront School. The planned changes will allow the DEA to continue to have strong, forward-thinking leadership to serve the educational needs of our students."

The quality of education for Hay River students continues to be the primary focus. It is anticipated that the strong administrative support teams currently in place in the Hay River schools, including assistant principals and secretaries, combined with very low turnover of effective program staff (Instructional Coaches, PSTs, teachers and assistants) will help to maintain and strengthen Hay River schools through this transition and beyond.

Adds Larocque, "The DEA is looking forward to the fresh and creative ideas that these two principals will bring to their new positions. Our schools have seen successful programs and improved student achievement during the past several years, and we look forward to continuing that trend."

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