



Creating Futures

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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South Slave Teachers gather to Celebrate and Learn

The SSDEC's annual in-service on August 27th and 28th in Hay River will focus on inquiry-based learning and celebrating recent staff success and awards

Fort Smith, NT – On August 27th and 28th teachers from across the South Slave will gather in Hay River to reflect on the many successes of the past year and engage in professional learning activities as they prepare for the coming year. All the teachers and education assistants from the South Slave Divisional Education Council's five communities (Fort Resolution, Fort Smith, Hay River, K'atlodeeche First Nation, Lutsel K'e) will be at Princess Alexandra School for the two-day session. The 2014 in-service themed, "*Inquiring Minds: 21st Century Learning in the South Slave*" will feature workshops with Judy Martin of the *Galileo Educational Network*, a specialist in inquiry-based learning.

The shift to inquiry-based learning and an interdisciplinary approach is part of the Government of the Northwest Territories' *Education Renewal and Innovation* initiative. The Galileo Educational Network mentors teachers in the research behind this approach, and in the proven strategies and related uses of technology. Since 2010 the SSDEC has been piloting a similar approach with select teachers and with tremendous success. This in-service intends to bring all SSDEC teachers up to speed with these strategies that are proven to effectively engage students more deeply in powerful learning experiences.

Inquiry-based learning is the approach that challenges students to ask questions and discover the answers through their own work, and then communicate their learning to others. Engaging students in solving real-life problems is what develops skills, knowledge and attitudes required in the 21st century such as critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration and communication. Several teachers across the South Slave have piloted inquiry-based units in the 2013-2014 school year and will be showcasing their work to their peers at the in-service.

The annual in-service is a time to celebrate the accomplishments of the last year. Dr. Curtis Brown, Superintendent of the SSDEC said **"This is the one time of year all the program staff of the South Slave are together in one place. It's a great opportunity to celebrate our collective success, to confirm and reinforce what is working, and to further our own learning to ensure we are providing the best possible education for all our students."** On the morning of Wednesday August 27th, Dr. Brown and Assistant Superintendent Brent Kaulback will be presiding over the opening session and celebrations. **"One of the big highlights for us is**

the *Public Sector Leadership Award* the SSDEC received this past February from the *Institute of Public Administrators of Canada and Deloitte*,” said Brown, “The award is a testament to the shared leadership provided by all our staff through the implementation of the Council’s *Leadership for Literacy* initiative, and the resulting success and accomplishments of our staff and students.”

The SSDEC will also use this occasion to announce the winners of the *Excellence in Education Awards*. Two awards are given, one to recognize the work of an educator and another to recognize an important partner in the SSDEC’s mission to provide quality K-12 education. In addition, numerous staff members will be recognized for their personal accomplishments in winning awards, publishing work, and completing post-graduate degrees.

Media are welcome to attend and take photos at the opening session and celebrations/award ceremony from 8:30 – 10:30 A.M. on Wednesday August 27th at Princess Alexandra School. Interviews can be scheduled for the refreshment break mid-morning thereafter.

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