

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

May 9, 2000

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dosdall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Patricia Heights School In Partnership with Edmonton Space and Science Centre

ORIGINATOR: B. Taylor, Principal, Patricia Heights School

RESOURCE

STAFF: Vireo Karvonen-Lee, Michael Lastiwka, Pat Richardson,
Max Scharfenberger

INFORMATION

Patricia Heights School, located in west Edmonton, is a kindergarten to grade 6 school serving 235 students. The motto of the school “ The Choice for Excellence” is reflected in the high levels of achievement attained by students and the quality of programming they receive. The school serves the immediate community of Patricia Heights, as well as the communities of Westridge, Wolf Willow, and the Country Club. Approximately half of the students of the school are bussed from these three areas.

During the course of the 1998-99 school year, parents and staff began discussions with the staff of the Edmonton Space and Science Centre about the possibility of forming a partnership. Developing a particular focus on science in this way was felt to be a desirable move by the staff and parents who saw the many ways in which this partnership could enhance the programming that students were receiving. As well, it was felt that the opportunities it would provide would build on a natural curiosity that young children have about the world around them and the world of space and space exploration. Whereas in the more usual science fair approach only a few students end up taking their interest to the level of participation, it was our hope that the interest and excitement of most students would be stimulated. This would then have a positive effect on their performance in science as an area of study.

All classes have taken advantage of school programs offered at the Edmonton Space and Science Centre which are directly related to curriculum topics in science. Our grade 5/6 class experienced a full week residency at the Edmonton Space and Science Centre in October and there have been visits where the whole school participated, such as our trip in March to meet the Prime Minister.

There are two science clubs associated with the partnership, one being offered at the school, and the other being offered after school on Fridays at the Edmonton Space and Science Centre. Expert staff from the Edmonton Space and Science Centre assist in the planning and running of these clubs.

We feel honoured that priority is given to our school in planning events such as a school wide year end celebration at the Edmonton Space and Science Centre in which all of the facilities of this location will be available to our students.

The support we have received from the staff of the Edmonton Space and Science Centre has been outstanding. They have been generous in the time they have given to our students and staff in the planning of our events and in helping us ensure that exciting learning opportunities exist for students. The success of this venture has already exceeded our expectations in this first year of operation. As the Edmonton Space and Science Centre undergoes a major renovation and expansion of facilities, we know that the opportunities for our students can only increase. We look forward to helping them assess and evaluate new programs for children as they undertake to expand the role that the Edmonton Space and Science Centre has in supporting science programming for all students in Alberta. We anticipate that the excitement we are seeing for science will help all our students increase their knowledge and explore science as a future area of study.

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