

**LRRBE UPDATE**

**Recent Education Developments & Nation Partnerships for Educational Buildings**

*This is a long summary, but, there is an extensive list of wonderful things to share. Thank you for your patience, attention and support.*

Recently, LRRBE has spent a great deal of time writing proposals and negotiating with Canada for more buildings, more supports and/or to be allowed to repurpose some of our existing funds.

We would like to announce some **new building projects** that are almost finished; in the process of being finished; or, recently completed. This also includes some Nation department building partnerships. These are significant infrastructure additions that will support our children, youth and the entire community extremely well for many years.

**6 New Classrooms (Double Portables)** - Education has been able to provide to the schools of JDP, FLE and JBS six newly constructed classrooms with built in washrooms (2 classes and washrooms per school). These will be fully equipped with new technology in the same manner as all of our classrooms. These will reduce class-size and allow special learning enhancements for our students and keep up with community growth. This will be in place and ready to use for the upcoming school year and perhaps earlier. These add to the past summer full renovation of the JBS, JDP and SGS portables, and the Garden River Early Childhood building (discussed later).

**Multi-Nation Dept Partnerships - Fox Lake Arena**

**Three Season Hockey Arena** (Sept. May) - Education has renovated the hockey surface of the Fox Lake hockey arena, painted, and insulated the building roof and sides of the rink area. Education has also placed a new extension onto the arena that is meant to serve as a separate school hockey program area (dressing rooms, classroom, washrooms, offices, etc.). Education removed the old cement surface and boards and are replacing them with a refrigeration coolant system unit and lines, new cement surface and new boards that will allow for three season hockey play. It can be a four-season operation, however, due to the large expense of summer operation this is usually avoided. The cement surface is then available for other sports and events during the summer, as are the dressing rooms and showers in each dressing room.

**New Fox Lake Arena Building -**LRRCN, Public Works, Education and MAS have joined in this project by funding the removal of the remaining portions of the arena and replacing it with a full new structure. Funds are limited; however, the replacement will be basically the same with dressing rooms (washrooms & showers included) moved to the side and a significant expansion of the previous viewing area with spectator bleachers at the front end of the hockey arena area, plus a few bleachers where they can be fitted around the rink. Offices will be added and if funds can be stretched some more features.

The dream for this building is a school hockey program (in development) and family skating during the day, and evening and weekends filled with community minor hockey teams and adult recreational league teams, plus opportunities for pleasure skating and more. The building will have a full cement foundation which should allow a long life-span and be a good base set-up for health and hygiene reasons. The cement is already in Fox Lake and our goal is a September or October opening.

**LRRCN Capital/Education Partnership**

**Outdoor Hockey Rinks - John D’Or Prairie & Garden River**

The Nation Capital Department partnered with LRRBE to redo the Garden River Outdoor Skating rink. In JDP we partnered to create a totally new outdoor rink and heated skate changing room.

**LRRCN Community Services/Health/Education ECE Partnership.**

**Fox Lake Early Childhood Education** (**ECE) Buildings -** Community Services and Education have partnered to create a new Daycare located approximately across from the FLE school. Includes: 2 classes, offices, a meeting room and a kitchen. It has been started. There is a new ECE size playground already purchased and in Fox Lake waiting to be set-up beside this building.

**Application** - Education and LRRCN Health are applying to Health Canada for a new Fox Lake Head Start building which will be located on the street that FLE is located and adjacent to the new Daycare. Includes: 3 classes, kitchen, meeting room, offices and therapy rooms. At this time, there has been no approval on this, however, the required application/studies/report work has been completed and submitted.

**LRRCN Community Services & Health & Education ECE Partnership**

**Garden River ECE and Education Regional Offices** - SGS created a multi-purpose Early Childhood Education building with 1 Daycare - 2 Head Start classes, nap rooms, and across the back Education Regional Offices to serve this community and the LRR region. Head Start has moved in already.

**LRRCN Capital/Education Partnership**

**FLE Total New Roof** - FLE will be undergoing a full and complete roof replacement this spring and summer ($6 million project). After years of issues this is well deserved. Thank you FLE for your patience and incredible ability to stay focused on learning and happiness even while you had drips from the ceiling.

**All LRRBE Communities Very Large Education Bus Garages**- Education will soon be completing a very large multi-bay bus garage (each bay can hold two busses) with separate areas for school vehicles and our transportation department busses and their needs, in each community. There are also administration offices and a small board room for the transportation and security department. The buildings have cement floors, bus washing bay and other features. (Fox Lake is a 20 percent larger building.)

**All Schools Solid Playground Surfaces** - All LRRBE schools will be receiving cemented basketball courts, volleyball courts, and other play surfaces (hop scotch etc.). The elementary schools will also receive small sliding hills for the students to enjoy in the winter. FLE has limited space so it has received an expanded playground area by utilizing some of the bush area behind the school (the cultural field is not affected). JDP is partially completed and the cement mix for Fox Lake is already in Fox Lake and waiting for good spring pour weather.

**JBS New Lunch Cafeteria** - Education has completed a new 76 by 96-foot lunch cafeteria for the JBS school. It is located at the back of the school and still awaits the full-size professional kitchen and some other work. It has a very large sitting area and washrooms.

**Regional Culture and Language Centre Located in Fox lake**- Education is in the process of completing the set up of three beautiful large buildings located off the Fox Lake bush winter road to Fort Vermilion (kitchen, eating, learning areas, sleeping areas and showers) with the purpose of being a LRRBE culture and language learning centre for our students. This was designed with carefully chosen material and colour selection to blend in to the Woodland Cree landscape. This is a very exciting project that meets the dreams and aspirations of the Little Red River Cree Nation people and particularly our Elders, who have passionately requested strong cultural, language and LRRCN identity teaching on the land of the Little Red River Cree Nation. (All communities will be scheduled to access centre.)

**Education School Board Offices -**in JDP there is a 10 office, board room and reception area education building being set up by April 30. This will be separate to the existing Nation offices.

**All LRRBE Communities More Teacher Accommodation = More Programs** - Education has set-up 6 new mobile homes in Fox Lake (arrived last March) and 2 more in Garden River and 2 more in JDP (January), with the purpose of housing additional teachers for the schools so more varied programs and more support programs can be offered to the students. These are mobile homes built with either three or two small apartments within each mobile home. This houses two or three teachers rather than one, which allows for more staff.

**All Schools Classroom Learning Resources and Technology** - All LRRCN have received a very significant enhancement in technology google chrome laptops for students and more is planned. There has also been a large increase in classroom and school learning resources this year and last year. We hired more teachers (to expand course offerings and give more student support), hired more teaching assistants and took on the school security staff and immediately hired more security personnel. There was also a great deal more learning resource purchases for class and home use.

**All Communities New School Feasibility Study**- LRRCN is currently working with a consultant to do a New School Feasibility Study on the student/program capacity of all our schools and an Enrolment Projection Study to predict when an additional school will be required in each community.

**New Opportunities** - The above new programs and buildings will require new community member workers to manage and operate this and therefore, new employment opportunities will occur.

**Working Together for Children/Youth**- Part of the reason we can fund these projects is due to our dedicated staff, school board members, Chief and Council and our other Nation department partners. All of these groups join to work together in meaningful ways. LRRBE also takes a very strong and very frequent proposal writing approach towards Canada, Alberta, and other organizations. We increase our core revenue significantly in this manner.

There has also been an increase in revenue because the community school enrolment has substantially increased. Our funds are heavily dependent on school attendance and achievement. The improvements in attendance and achievement allow us to be funded for more dollars, and position us to lobby for more. Thank you to the families and students for this success.

There still is more to be done in the area of attendance and achievement, particularly after the COVID-19 setbacks. It is our goal to provide our students with excellent support systems and programs while the students and families pursue their educational aspirations. The above is part of our most recent educational developments, advancements and commitments to the LRRCN children, youth, parents, Grandparents, Elders and all of the community. We also realize, more is needed. Suggestions are always welcome and very helpful.

Dr. Gordon Breen, Director LRRBE