

*We have*  
**BIG** plans



*for a*  
**GREAT**  
*future!*

**DIRECTOR'S MEMO # 27**

**2010 05 31**

#### **"Discussion on Early Learning" Supports Teachers**

The Ministry of Education has launched a new online tool for staff to ask questions about the full day learning program. The Discussion on Early Learning tool is an interactive forum to share ideas and dialogue between Early Learning teachers and staff at the Ministry's Early Learning Division and will also feature frequently asked questions. If you have questions, observations or suggestions about the new program, the Ministry wants to hear from you. You can access Discussion on Early Learning at [www.edu.gov.on.ca/earlylearning/feedback.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/earlylearning/feedback.html).

#### **European Tour a Rewarding Musical Experience**

A group of teachers and music students from Walkerville recently returned from a musical tour of Austria and the Czech Republic where they performed at a number of historic sites and experienced European music and culture. Among the highlights of the trip were performances at Vienna's Schoenbrunn Palace, which featured performing groups from all over the world, and Mirabel Gardens in Salzburg, the setting made famous by the movie "The Sound of Music". To cap off the memorable experience, the students were treated to a farewell dinner and performance by traditional Czech musicians, singers and dancers. I'm told that our students impressed audiences with their musical performances and represented their school, their city and their country with class.

#### **Literacy Night Features Green Theme**

Amherstburg Public School had an overwhelming response to their third annual "Bring Your Parent to School Night". Over 230 people enjoyed literacy activities with an environmentally-friendly theme. Amherstburg's five year school re-greening plan was shared with families and a presentation was shown on "Garbage Island" in the Pacific Ocean. Each student received a free non-fiction book while families were able to purchase gently-used books for only twenty-five cents. The literacy event was sponsored by Amherstburg's parent council who provided door prizes with funding from the Ministry of Education's Parents Reaching Out Grants.

#### **Peer Mentorship Program Celebrated**

Riverside has cultivated a special relationship with its students in the STEPS program (Strategies to Enhance Personal Success) through the Peer Mentorship program, a unique initiative that pairs them with Grade 11 Leadership students. The Leadership class recently coordinated a Disability Awareness assembly which featured a slide show depicting "a day in the life" of a STEPS student. The Peer Mentors discussed the special relationship they have with the STEPS students and encouraged others to become involved in the program. Congratulations to the Leadership students for spreading the word about the Peer Mentorship Program.

#### **Building Financial Literacy into the Curriculum**

Basic financial skills are important to our students' futures. That's why now until June 16, the Ministry is inviting educators, parents and students to visit <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/surveyLiteracy.html> to provide their input about how to integrate financial literacy into Ontario's curriculum. Ontario's Working Group on Financial Literacy is also seeking input from a variety of education and financial experts to identify the core financial concepts that constitute "financial literacy". Preparing students to be financially literate is part of the province's plan to build a well-educated workforce and prepare Ontario for a more prosperous future.

#### **Fashion Show Raises Funds and Awareness**

Kingsville District High School Peer Helpers recently held their "Fashion Show For Hope" in support of a children's charity in South Africa. Nurturing Orphans of Aids for Humanity (NOAH) is a non-profit organization that provides for children who have been orphaned by parents who have died of Aids. NOAH sets up "Arks" within South African communities to provide food, shelter, clothing, education and care for orphans. By the end of 2011, it is estimated that there will be 2.5 million orphans in South Africa and over half of them will be children whose parents have died from Aids. Congratulations to Kingsville's Peer Helpers on a successful fashion show and fundraiser.