



Palliser Regional Schools

Palliser Centre

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Hello everyone,

At the time of my last message, I was looking forward to our second annual Student Leadership Conference called Discover U: Explore. Create. Achieve. It turns out Nov. 23 and the work of about 500 Grade 7-12 students may have been one of the best days Palliser has ever had. I would certainly put it in the same orbit, pardon the pun, as a 2009 event when Palliser students were able to speak live with astronauts aboard the International Space Station.



Discover U was a chance for our students to be inspired and to start building action plans for change. As our keynote speaker, author and musician David Usher said, creativity is a process that can be learned. It's not a flash from the blue. It takes work, learning, drawing from ideas and building new ones.

In the audience that day were students from tiny rural communities, side by side with students from Calgary. We had students from all walks of life and faiths including, for the first time, our Islamic students. The only student group not represented was our Hutterite colony students, and I'd love to see them participate next time.

To open the day, we asked students to indicate by show of hands how many had travelled outside Canada and the United States and how many spoke a second language. Pretty clearly our students have had opportunities and experiences I never had as a kid in rural Saskatchewan.

Early feedback we've received from students has been very positive, and comments about the inclusive nature of the event were quite powerful. I suspect the power of the day will be even more apparent once our students have had time to work on their action plans to champion change for the better.

Thank you to all who worked on organizing this event, especially the student leaders who led breakout sessions, set up the venue, and welcomed their peers from across the division. It was a great Palliser day.

With that, I wish you and yours Merry Christmas, happy holidays or a great winter break. However you use your time off, I hope you enjoy it with family and friends.

Kevin Gietz, Superintendent
Palliser Regional Schools

*Together we will ensure learning success for all students
to develop their unique potential as caring citizens in a changing world.*