

RESD to open new adult learning centre

By **Wanda McConnell**
Herald Editor

River East School Division is expanding its continuing education department to include an adult learning centre.

The centre will be a place for adults to return to school to receive high school credits towards their mature student status. Tuition will be free.

"We are responding to a community need. There's certainly a realization amongst the adult community that there's nothing but good that comes from upgrading their academic abilities in terms of jobs, standard of living and all those things," says Jack Jonasson, assistant superintendent in charge of student services.

The new centre, which will be ready to start offering courses this fall, will be based in the McLeod Education Centre at 530 McLeod Ave. That building is the former McLeod Elementary School and is now the headquarters for the division's continuing education department.

Classes in a cross-section of high school courses will be available, says Jonasson. Courses will be offered not just at the Senior 4 (Grade 12) level.

"There are a lot of people out there, we think, who are not going to have the confidence to tackle the S4 level and we're not setting them up for success if we restrict it to S4 courses."

For the same reasons, the centre will restrict students to taking three courses at any one time. "That helps

us to counsel them in terms of being successful."

The centre will be similar to the Community Learning Centre in Transcona, which has become so successful that after just one year in operation, it is expanding. As well, Transcona-Springfield School Division is opening a second centre in Oakbank.

The River East centre will cater not just to adults who've been out of school for a while, but to students who may wish to retake a course to earn a higher grade, or get a course they need to enter university.

Courses will be offered in class at the centre, on a tutorial basis, by correspondence, and in cases where science or computer labs are needed, could even be done with students in regular classrooms in local schools or evenings.

Although final details are still being worked out, Jonasson predicts two full-time teachers will be needed

at the centre, along with several part-time special area (ie: physics, technology) teachers. The centre is likely to have two timetables, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and from 2:30 to 7:30 p.m., and probably Saturdays.

It will be flexible, he says, adding "there will be a number of ways in which we want to accommodate the adult learner."

It's expected many of the students, whose courses will be paid for by government grants, will want to upgrade their reading, writing and math skills, and also their technology skills, says Jonasson.



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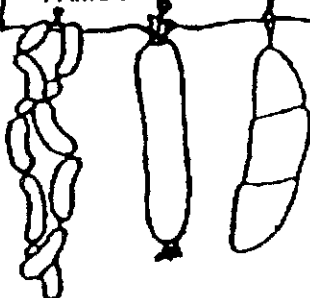
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