

Making a Difference: Chinook's Edge says thanks during Substitute Teacher Appreciation Week

March 11 to 15, 2024 marks Substitute Teacher Appreciation Week in Alberta, and Chinook's Edge is grateful for all of its subs!

“Substitute teachers play an essential role in our school division,” said Ray Hoppins, Associate Superintendent of People Services. “They respond to calls for help with - at times - a moment’s notice, and in a short time work to ensure great education continues for students. Subs do what they do because they care about kids. They like to be with the students and are diligent about developing positive relationships with them.”

There are more than 400 substitute teachers in Chinook's Edge. Many are retired teachers who want to stay involved in education, while other substitutes are earlier in their teaching careers and choose substitute teaching because of flexibility and other reasons that fit their personal circumstances.

Esther Cameron is one of the division's substitute teachers. Cameron has several years of full time teaching experience, and has spent time away from education focused on her family as well.



Esther Cameron substitute teaching at Hugh Sutherland School in Carstairs

Last spring Cameron decided to make herself available for substitute teaching and she is in demand in the Carstairs area.

“I find subbing gives me the balance I need with my family,” said Esther Cameron. “Also, I like the variety it brings - like one day I taught kindergarten in the morning and high school in the afternoon and that was great. The variety of assignments allow me to get to know lots of different students and to appreciate different parts of the school.”

“What’s great about Esther is you know she is here because she cares about students,” said Dean Nielsen, Principal, Hugh Sutherland School in Carstairs. “She is willing to take on whatever role we give her, and is happy to be here. You can literally feel her joy and we really appreciate that.”



Darcy Marshall, with a Phys. Ed class at Delburne School

Darcy Marshall is another of the substitute teachers that make a positive impact in Chinook's Edge. Marshall retired from a 34 year teaching career in June 2023. As a Physical Education specialist, there is a demand for his sub days, although Marshall chooses to spend his time at schools he has taught at before: most recently École H.J. Cody High School, as well as École Fox Run School, Spruce View School and Delburne School.

"I retired, but nothing has changed about how I feel about teaching. I still love it," said Darcy Marshall. "I enjoy subbing because it keeps me in contact with the students and with colleagues that I care about. In some ways, I find substitute teaching harder than teaching - because you have to work at gaining the respect of students quickly. I find that when I focus on knowing the students' names and developing relationships with them, students respond well."

Alex Lambert, Principal, École H.J. Cody High School, said, ***"Darcy is a committed professional that has the deep trust of our staff. Staff know that they can rely on Darcy to lead their classes. He is willing to step in wherever needed and is truly a team player. When he gets here he comes with a smile and makes positive connections with students. Thanks Darcy and to all of our substitute teachers."***

"To every substitute teacher in Chinook's Edge, thank you!" said Hoppins. ***"We appreciate you this week - and always. You make a difference."***

