



BUFFALO TRAIL PUBLIC SCHOOLS – Supporting Female Leaders in Buffalo Trail Public Schools – February 21, 2023

Submitted by: Rhae-Ann Holoien, Superintendent

March 9, 2023 will mark the third annual Women in Leadership event in Buffalo Trail Public Schools. In 2020, when I started my position at BTPS, our Board Chair, Vice Chair, and Deputy Superintendent were all female leaders. That specific makeup of gender leadership is unique within the province with only 20% of superintendents being female. BTPS continues to lead as supporters of gender equity within the province with division support, mentorship, and events available.

BTPS supports professional learning and building capacity of all staff. Within that work, we want to have learning opportunities to support our current and future female leaders. Recent ATA numbers indicate that up to 74 percent of the teaching profession is female. Our previous activities and events included an evening with Senator Paula Simons; discussions with Karla Ingoldsby, Vice President of Thermal Oil at Athabasca Oil; a division wide book study on *Nerve, Lessons on Leadership from Two Women who went First* written by Martha Piper and Indira Samarasekera; an evening with Dr. Alice Wainwright-Stewart, President of Lakeland College; a podcast series featuring women in various leadership roles; celebrating and showcasing achievements; and now on March 9, 2023, an evening with Darci Lang, a motivational speaker and author. According to Dr. Susan Coates, who discussed in her thesis “Pathways to the Superintendency: The experiences of Alberta Female Superintendents” the jurisdictions that identify and support leadership capacities of potential female leaders are most effective in fostering female leaders. Our goal is to support our staff in their leadership journeys.

We all play a part in embracing equity by celebrating International Women’s Day (IWD). This year’s International Women’s Day theme is #EmbraceEquity. On March 9, 2023, we are hosting an in person event and Darci Lang will be engaging us in conversation. This event will also allow attendees to network with others, share experiences, and work collectively to impact positive change. Darci has written four books and her book *Embrace the 90%* supports this year’s IWD theme.

Everyone can play a role in forging gender parity and bringing awareness to gender equity. This event on Thursday, March 9 is for everyone. We will have an opportunity to hear Darci Lang speak and have conversations with others on how we all are able to advocate, champion accelerating women’s equality and support the development of an inclusive mindset. Contact Bri Blackie at BTPS (bri.blackie@btps.ca) if you would like to attend the March 9th event.