

## **From the desk of Superintendent Michelle Jensen**

The Challenge...The Need...The Plan. Those headings are the focus points for communicating the needs of the Deerfield School District to our community. Throughout the past several months you have seen articles published in the newspaper, reports sent home through student mailings and information shared on our district website about the challenges facing our district.

In the upcoming months, as we prepare for the September school referendum, we will continue to share information about the challenges, the needs and the plan. Last week, all district residents received the first of a series of informational postcards in the mail. The postcard gave an overview of the purpose and plan for the referendum. Subsequent postcards will highlight areas of need that will begin to be addressed through the proposed referendum. Those areas are instruction, technology, facilities and daily operations.

The challenges faced by the district are many, but the school board, administration and Citizens Advisory Committee have kept the focus of the referendum on two goals;

1. Keep the needs of the students as our priority.
2. Create a referendum plan that allows us to address our most critical needs while keeping the tax impact manageable.

While the proposed referendum plan would not be able to address all the needs, it will allow the district an opportunity to begin taking care of the most critical needs over a five-year period. This is similar to our personal budgets where we usually can not afford to make changes all at once. We often plan for new purchases, remodeling work or home repairs over a period of time. Most of us also find that while our needs may be many, we must take care of the most urgent needs first. We plan to use the referendum revenue in the same way-most urgent needs first.

The school board and administration have worked diligently to determine the needs in each of the four areas. We continuously work to make good financial decisions for the district while keeping student education at the forefront. We will continue to do this as we move forward with the referendum plan because we know that strong schools build strong communities.