

Division News

January 26, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - January 25th was a big celebration day at Niton Central School as they held their official grand opening for a new Junior ATB branch in their building. Twenty one students in Grades 4 to 6 have worked hard to learn the in's and out's of banking and how to become their own successful Junior branch of one of Alberta's largest financial institutions. Edson local Branch Manager Axel Axmann and Customer Service Representative Nicole Mullin have been leading the dedicated students through the various steps since the end of November.

"It has been fantastic working with these youth in learning about our entire process: using monopoly money to practice, we have shown them how to set up an account, balance deposits, and ensure compliance regulations are adhered to," noted Axel. "I have really enjoyed the opportunity to be working side-by-side with the kids and seeing their excitement as they learn."

Axel and his staff have committed to coming out every Wednesday to the school when the branch is open from noon to 1pm. The Branch will be open until the end of May and Axel hopes that it will re-open in the fall. The student-run initiative is viewed as an official branch of the ATB so community members are encouraged to come in to the branch on Wednesdays to make deposits to their accounts. *Don't have an ATB account?* Don't worry - these students are also trained in opening accounts with application forms ready to be filled out. Grade 5 student Silas is Niton's ATB's CEO and he interviewed for his job as 'he believes that it was a great opportunity to be part of a team to help people and learn more about math.'

From greeters to tellers to CEO, all positions are held by Niton students and they are trained well as one visitor found out. Nizar Abouchami, North Market Vice-President for ATB, was present for the Grand Opening and asked a student greeter to 'talk to someone about a loan'.

"I was told that although they couldn't help me out in their branch, they would be happy to refer me to the Edson branch," he laughed while Axel and Nicole smiled proudly in the background. "Then I went to make a deposit to my account and was even more impressed at the attention to detail that she made in filling out the paperwork. Great job!"

Grande Yellowhead's Board Chair and Area Trustee, Brenda Rosadiuk, was also impressed with the program as she made her own deposit that morning. "This initiative is such a wonderful opportunity for our students to learn real life-skills to assist them in their future." Principal MaryAnn Varty agrees. "Axel and his staff have been great to work with and have brought a great deal of enthusiasm and excitement into the building. We sincerely appreciate that our local branch from Edson was willing to commit so much time and effort in our community." The Junior Branch was also given \$1,000 from ATB at today's Grand Opening in recognition for the students' hard work.



For more photos and a video clip from the opening, please visit the division's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/gypsd.

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