

## **Educational arrangements for J. W. Walker School students**

(February 29, 2008) – There were no injuries as a result of the explosion causing fire that occurred at J.W. Walker School on Thursday, February 28 at approximately 12:44 AM. The explosion happened after a break in the gas line seeped gas into the ground, which fed into the school through the water line. Gas ignited by the school's electrical equipment blew out the west wall of the gymnasium.

As a precautionary measure, the area was evacuated and Fort Frances High School, Confederation College, St. Francis School, and the Northwest Catholic District School Board's office were closed on February 28 and February 29, 2008. Fort Frances High School will be reopened on Monday, March 3, 2008.

In order to continue to provide a safe learning environment for the students of J.W. Walker School, effective Monday, March 3, 2008 the Rainy River District School Board will relocate classes with the students' regular teachers at the following alternate locations:

Junior Kindergarten, Senior Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 1/2, Grade 3, Grade 4, Grade 4/5, Grade 5/6, and Grade 6 students will attend Robert Moore School.

Grades 2, and Grade 2/3 students will attend Huffman School.

Grade 7, Grade 7/8, and Grade 8 students will attend Fort Frances High School.

Teachers will be contacting parents regarding the specific classroom location for each student.

Transportation for previously bussed students will remain the same with the possible exception of a short delay in drop off times. The Transportation Department will contact parents of any Grades 1 through 6 students that previously walked to school and have become eligible for bussing.

The Board is hopeful with respect to J. W. Walker School but the length of time before students return to Walker is unknown. The Board will ensure that the school is safe before returning the students to the facility.