

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

April 16, 2002

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Jasper Place High School AISI Project – Career Directions

ORIGINATOR: B. Coggles, Principal, Jasper Place High School

RESOURCE
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INFORMATION

Jasper Place High School, located in west Edmonton, is a dual-campus school serving 2,100 students in Grades 9 to 12. A wide range of programming is offered, including both International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement studies. The school serves as a district site for Learning Disabilities, Home Education and English as a Second Language programs and offers a full selection of Career and Technology Services courses to complement the academic programming.

One of the concerns facing Edmonton high schools is the number of students who fail to complete diploma requirements within the prescribed three years at their neighborhood school. At Jasper Place we believe a major contributor to this problem is many students lack direction or goals beyond high school, which results in a low level of motivation to do well in their studies.

To address this issue, staff at Jasper Place have developed a program we have named Career Directions. In this program students receive guidance and mentorship in determining their aptitudes and interests and information and assistance in identifying career paths and criteria for success in the various fields.

A proposal for funding was submitted to the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (A.I.S.I.) program and was approved under the category of maximizing student potential, Grade 10-12. This funding provided for hiring an additional counselor, creation of a school career centre, hiring a career centre manager and the development of program materials.

As part of this initiative, students create a portfolio containing a record of all their activities in the program. Two major components of the portfolio are a student career plan and a related educational plan. This activity assists students in selecting appropriate courses in high school and making a smooth transition to post-secondary studies. Because students have a plan and a goal to work towards, it is anticipated they will have higher levels of motivation to do well and student achievement over all will benefit.

This program was initiated for all Grade 10 students during the 2000-2001 school year with very strong support from parents and full support of the school council. In total, 680 Grade 10 students and their parents were involved. During the 2001-2002 school year the program has been extended to include Grade 11 students. Initial indicators show the Career Directions program is having positive results.

The instructional focus at Jasper Place school is aligned with this program: All students at Jasper Place School will develop improved skills in setting educational and career goals and developing plans to achieve them through participation in the school's three year Career Directions Program. Growth will be measured by student achievement scores, district satisfaction surveys, school retention rates, high school completion rates, and tracing of student post-secondary choices.

BC:lt