

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

April 24, 2001

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dosdall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Status of Previous Two Years Trustee Budget Initiatives

ORIGINATOR: G. Reynolds, Department Head

RESOURCE

STAFF: Gloria Chalmers, Mary-Ellen Deising, Marion de Man, Barbara Morgan
McDermid, Anne Mulgrew, Dean Power, Stuart Wachowicz

INFORMATION

REQUEST #318, FEBRUARY 27, 2001 (TRUSTEE HANSEN) PROVIDE A REPORT ON THE STATUS OF THE PREVIOUS TWO YEARS TRUSTEE BUDGET INITIATIVES.

STATUS OF TRUSTEE INITIATIVES IN THE 1999-2000 APPROVED BUDGET

- 1. The district will develop a plan which will significantly improve the ability of high schools (and where appropriate, junior highs) to meet the needs of their students, who are presently experiencing difficulty completing their public school education.**

The plan will examine the feasibility of making I.O.P. courses available at all general intake district high schools, enabling them to meet the needs of students in their catchment area. As well the district will develop a plan to better articulate high school course offerings with the post-secondary trades and technology schools.

Administration will in addition examine and report on the feasibility of an allocation to develop programs for struggling students at specifically identified sites for a start date of September 2000. (Trustee Bonko, Trustee Hansen)

Disposition:

DU 304 Curriculum, Programs and Planning

Category: Instructional Support Services for Schools

Plan: By June 2000, assistance will be made available to secondary schools in enhancing curriculum programming, and organizational strategies for students at risk of not completing their schooling.

By June 2000, the funding framework for at risk programming will be reviewed.

Status:

By January 2000 an agreement was reached among high school principals to accommodate students within their catchment area by providing suitable programming, including IOP for those who needed it.

Subsequent to this a committee was struck to develop an Administrative Regulation to guide the district high schools in the administration of IOP, and meet the requirements of Alberta Learning for district regulations governing IOP. The draft was presented to Superintendent's Council in May 2000, and received general support given some small amendments.

At the same time Alberta Learning released a draft proposal for a major revision to IOP. Response to the draft was made by the district. It is understood that the revised draft of the new IOP will be presented in May 2001.

Meetings are being held with district high school principals in April and May 2001 to establish an understanding as to how IOP will be made available to students in their catchment areas, pending the release of the provincial program, and to gain final input into the proposed Administrative Regulation.

By June 2001 (assuming the provincial document on IOP has been released) a plan will be presented to the Board of Trustees that will provide IOP programming for all students who meet the criteria for the IOP, which will include access to the occupational courses.

2. That all students completing grade 3 meet the requisite numeracy skills of the grade 3 mathematics program. (Trustee Nicholson)

Disposition:

DU 304 Curriculum, Programs and Planning

Category: Instructional Support Services for Schools

Plan: By February 2000, a district plan related to early numeracy initiatives will be developed.

Status:

Through the spring of 2000 information was collected on the perceptions held about numeracy skills of students. It revealed concerns that extended well beyond division I. The principals' curriculum committee has reviewed the issue and has provided valuable insight into the extent of the need. Work has been done through the fall and winter of 2000-2001 to create a comprehensive strategy that will address early numeracy concerns and provide support for further development of numeracy skills through grade 9.

Curriculum is presently in the process of hiring a Curriculum Consultant who will act as a project manager, and along with district teachers will establish district numeracy standards from grades 1 through 9. This will be supported by assessment tools as well as teacher resources and inservicing.

A full report to the Board on the planned development will be provided in May 2001, with development and piloting commencing in the 2001-2002 school year.

STATUS OF TRUSTEE INITIATIVES IN THE 2000-2001 APPROVED BUDGET

- 1. By September 2000, establish district sites where Integrated Occupational Program (I.O.P.) courses are available for struggling students who are currently at risk of not completing their schooling. (Trustees Bonko, Dean and Hansen)**

Disposition:

DU 304 Curriculum, Programs and Planning

Category – Instructional Support Services for Schools

Plan: By January 2001, investigate the establishment of district sites where Integrated Occupational Program (I.O.P.) courses would be available.

Status:

By January 2000 an agreement was reached among high school principals to accommodate students within their catchment area by providing suitable programming, including IOP for those who needed it.

Subsequent to this a committee was struck to develop an Administrative Regulation to guide the district high schools in the administration of IOP, and meet the requirements of Alberta Learning for district regulations governing IOP. The draft was presented to Superintendent's Council in May 2000, and received general support given some small amendments.

At the same time Alberta Learning released a draft proposal for a major revision to IOP. Response to the draft was made by the district. It is understood that the revised draft of the new IOP will be presented in May 2001.

Meetings are being held with district high school principals in April and May 2001 to establish an understanding as to how IOP will be made available to students in their catchment areas, pending the release of the provincial program, and to gain final input into the proposed Administrative Regulation.

By June 2001 (assuming the provincial document on IOP has been released) a plan will be presented to the Board of Trustees that will provide IOP programming for all students who meet the criteria for the IOP, which will include access to the occupational courses.

- 2. Put in place a process for providing diagnostic assessment for students entering Grade 1 to identify hearing and vision problems which could affect learning. (Trustee Fleming)**

Disposition:

DU 304 Curriculum, Programs and Planning

Category – Special Needs

Plan: In cooperation with the Capital Health Authority, Edmonton Public Schools will approach the Optometrist and Audiologist Associations to determine their interest and willingness to assist in the provision of vision and hearing services for our Grade 1 students.

Status:

Vision Screening Pilot Project:

- a partnership was developed between Capital Health Authority (CHA), Edmonton Catholic Schools, Edmonton Public Schools and the Eyewear Place
- the pilot project involved a vision screening of all kindergarten and grade one students in four Edmonton Public Schools and two Edmonton Catholic Schools
- the screening occurred in the fall of 2000
- the CHA nurse was responsible for follow-up with parents
- statistics regarding incidence of vision concerns is being analyzed and will be forthcoming from CHA
- continued involvement by all partners will be evaluated when the data is available

Hearing Screening:

- the district is investigating the possibility of a similar partnership as the vision screening with the Capital Health Authority
- discussions are ongoing to establish protocol and guidelines for potential service provision

3. Develop alternatives for providing speech and language and occupational therapy services where that service is not being provided by Capital Health. (Trustee Fleming)**Disposition:**

DU 304 Curriculum, Programs and Planning

Category – Special Needs

Plan: The administrations of Capital Health and Edmonton Public Schools in consultation with parents and staff will develop other options with regard to the provision of speech and language services for students.

Status:

Speech Language and Occupational Therapy Services:

New Services which are provided through the Edmonton Student Health Initiative (ESHIP), include the following:

- short term intervention is provided to sensory multi-handicapped students and the Individual Support Programs by Consulting Services Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist and Communication Disorders Specialist
- in school speech and language direct interventions has expanded to include students in grades 4 – 6
- in school occupational therapy and physiotherapy direct intervention are provided to children with mild, moderate and severe needs
- an interdisciplinary team approach implementing occupational therapy and speech language therapy is used in some treatment groups

Other projects include:

- discussions with Capital Health Authority and Grant McEwan College to address more effectively the needs of school aged children in the training program for Communication Disorder Assistants
- ongoing discussions with Capital Health Authority to investigate alternate strategies for service provision
- information and assistance is provided to parents regarding services available to their child and transitioning between programs

4. Develop a common progress report for grades 1 to 6. (Trustee Nicholson)

Disposition:

DU 342 Student Assessment

Category – Board Governance and District Administration

Plan: By June 2001, a decision will be made regarding the implementation of a common district progress report for grades 1 to 6.

Status:

In March 2000, the recommended revisions to Board Policy HK.BP: Student Achievement and Growth were approved by board. Included in this report was a recommendation that by September 2002, all schools shall use the progress report function of School SIS, and that there be common progress report formats for kindergarten, elementary, junior high and senior high respectively. The Student Assessment Branch has been working with a principal support group during the 2000-2001 school year, and will continue to meet with them during the 2001-2002 school year, to further define the elements of the common progress reports at each level. Input will also be gathered from teachers, students and parents.

5. Study the feasibility of re-unification of high school athletics program. (Trustee Nicholson)

Disposition:

DU 338 Consulting Services

Category – Instructional Support Services for Schools

Plan: Study the feasibility of re-unification of high school athletics program.

Status:

Consulting Services will continue to explore the possibility of high school athletics reunification with principals and department heads.

6. Ensure that there is an effective monitoring system to provide early warning for individual school deficit/surplus positions. (Trustee Nicholson)

Disposition:

DU 380 Financial Operations

Category – Board Governance and District Administration

Plan: A formal process will be established through Budget Services and Financial Services to monitor, report and help manage the district surplus and deficit position. Assistance will be provided through workshops, individual consultation and other support.

Status:

Financial Monitoring System

The following monitoring process has been implemented:

- Review and analyze the monthly financial reports for schools, which have submitted deficit reduction plans.
- Discuss findings with schools as required to ensure that the school will be in a position to achieve the planned surplus/deficit reduction goals.
- Compare actual performance with projected surplus/deficit, to ensure reasonableness of bi-monthly surplus/deficit projections prepared by the schools and with surplus/deficit reduction plans.
- Prepare projected surplus/deficit summary reports from projections sent by schools on a bi-monthly basis and central services on a monthly basis and report major fluctuations.
- Discuss deficiencies found in preparation of projections with the schools and provide assistance to the schools to eliminate the deficiencies.
- Prepare year-end surplus/deficit reports for the Audit Committee

Once the accountant position is filled next month, the process will be enhanced as follows:

- Develop training materials for in-services and workshops for:
 - Interpretation and analysis of financial data and reports
 - Preparation of financial projections
 - Monitoring of results and correcting deviations from plans
- Plan and conduct workshops and in-services.
- Provide advice and assistance to schools, related to financial monitoring and preparation of projections.
- Provide onsite training relating to financial monitoring and preparation of projections when requested by the schools.

7. Study the feasibility of an all-boys junior high school program. (Trustee Nicholson)

Disposition:

DU 304 Curriculum, Programs and Planning

Category – Board Governance and District Administration

Plan: By June 2001, the feasibility of an all-boys junior high will be determined.

Status:

A literature review has been conducted. As well, gender information on district achievement and special needs students has been gathered. Input has been received from parents through key communicators and will be sought from students at the next student advisory committee. A committee consisting of staff from various departments has been struck to review the data and preliminary report. A report will go to board in June 2001.

8. Investigate the feasibility of providing character education programming in all elementary schools. (Trustee Nicholson)

Disposition:

DU 304 Curriculum, Programs and Planning

Category – Instructional Support Services for Schools

Plan: By June 2001, determine the feasibility of providing character education programming in all elementary schools.

Status:

An inventory of character education programs currently used in the district is presently being undertaken. This will yield a profile of each of the character education programs in use with an identification of resources and specialized training needed for each. This will be made available to the Board and to district schools by June 2001.

In addition, a district consultant and a team of teachers and principals have been working to study the feasibility of a comprehensive staff development program, that could enable all district staff to inculcate aspects of character education into their day to day teaching in all subject areas and in all activities in the school. This would be called “Competencies for Success” and a full report on the study will be presented to Board in June 2001.

9. Ensure that central services decision units have sufficient expertise in curriculum areas. (Trustee Nicholson)

Disposition:

DU 338 Consulting Services

Category – Instructional Support Services for Schools

Plan: Ensure that Consulting Services has sufficient expertise in curriculum areas at elementary, junior high, and senior high levels by investigating ways to increase consultant staffing in core curriculum areas.

Status:

Consulting Services has increased staffing in the core curriculum areas by 10.300 FTE since this initiative was proposed. This was accomplished through funding from the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AISI) and increased requests from schools.

10. Increase availability of professional development activities for all staff. (Trustee Nicholson)

Disposition:

DU 338 Consulting Services

Category – Instructional Support Services for Schools

Plan: Increase availability of professional development activities for all staff by offering day time and after school inservices, coaching and mentoring opportunities as well as follow-up and support activities.

Status:

More daytime and after school inservices are being offered both at the Centre and at school sites this year. Inservices are repeated from one semester to the next to allow for more flexibility in registration. Many inservices now offer a coaching and mentoring component as well on-going involvement to support reflective practice. The goal is to move away from viewing professional development as a discrete activity providing strategies that can be taken back to the classroom to one that is delivered at the school targeting the school's specific goals and needs.

11. Review the feasibility of extending the technology incentive program for teachers. (Trustee Nicholson)

Disposition:

DU 338 Consulting Services

Category – Instructional Support Services for Schools

Plan: The feasibility of funding an extension of the Technology Incentive Program through the Technology Integration Grant will be reviewed.

Status:

The Technology Incentive Program (TIP), in which about 640 teachers were trained over the past four years on basic computer use, has been replaced with the Technology Skills Program (TSP), in partnership with District Technology, DU 316. The new program allows for a greater number of teachers (currently 2000 teachers and school administrators) to receive training more specific to their needs. The goal of the TSP training is to have all teachers skilled on school SIS/ SASI by September 2002. Training is provided by Consulting Services education technology consultants as well as by district technology staff, depending on which strands the teachers select over the course of the project.

As the district receives an allocation from Alberta Learning through the “Technology Integration Grant”, this training is offered at no cost to the schools.

Another technology skills project, the Telus Learning Connection, continues this year. Its goal is to train teachers in internet skills.