

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

April 15, 2008

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Improving Student Achievement at Glendale Elementary School

ORIGINATOR: G. Falk, Principal, Glendale Elementary School

RESOURCE
STAFF: Sig Jensen, Corrie Ziegler

INFORMATION

Glendale Elementary is located in northwest Edmonton and serves 162 students. Glendale offers full day Kindergarten, regular programming for Grades one through six, two Opportunity Program classrooms and a division two Behavior and Learning Assistance Program. Recently, Glendale has experienced significant increases in the number of English language learners. The school receives support from many outside agencies, which have provided much needed nutrition and literacy support through mentorship and volunteers.

The Glendale School Community not only supports the school's instructional focus on literacy, they have also worked collaboratively with the staff in the development of higher order thinking skills in students. The development of higher order thinking skills is supported through the integration of technology into all curricular areas of the school.

The integration of technology began during the 2006-07 school year, when staff worked with District Technology to successfully apply for and secure a government grant for wireless technology. Glendale School was awarded a \$31,000 research project that involved the use of 31 one-to-one wireless laptops. Laptops were used daily, as part of classroom instruction, and then sent home each evening with the Grade six students. This project was very successful as evidenced by the results of a Wireless Mobile Technology survey administered at the end of the school year. Data indicated a dramatic increase in use of laptops in all core subject areas. Ninety per cent of all students believe they learned more by having access to their own laptops; ninety-seven per cent of Grade six students believed that using a laptop made school work more interesting.

Collaboration at all levels has occurred to allow the technology initiative to grow and succeed. Technology in-services through Consulting Services have provided the entire staff with common insights that were further refined through collaborative opportunities for teachers to learn from each other. As technology leaders emerged among the staff, they were partnered with other teachers for peer coaching. Enhanced collaboration has occurred with district schools regarding techno-literacy: Glendale has hosted principals and teachers from several district schools who are interested in wireless technology. Staff has also organized classroom presentations to grade level groupings from the schools in their cohort: Prince Charles, Inglewood and John A. McDougall. Finally, the Glendale Parent Council has

demonstrated collaboration by matching the grant for the first wireless lab and has supported a second mobile lab on the main floor of the school building.

As the technology initiative has developed, ample evidence supports the educational benefits of wireless computers as tools to enhance literacy. Increased student motivation and 'on-task' behavior has been noted. Students have deepened their understanding of difficult concepts through 3-D models, virtual illustrative material, and project-based learning. Ready access to the wireless laptops has allowed for differentiated instruction, giving students a sense of personal control in their learning environment. Teachers also report that the quality of student writing has been enhanced with significant improvements in the higher order thinking skills of editing and revision in the writing process.

The overall impact of the wireless technology initiative at Glendale School has led to many positive results: enhanced student literacy development and learning, increased staff collaboration and leadership development and it has become a gateway to further technology initiatives. Glendale students and teachers will continue their pursuit of excellence, within a warm, safe and caring environment, supported by technology innovations, to create bright futures for all.