

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

December 14, 1999

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dossall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Sifton School: Learning in the New Millennium

ORIGINATOR: D. Percy, Principal, Sifton School

RESOURCE

STAFF: Fran Galbraith, Catherine Suen

INFORMATION

Sifton School, located in the Clareview neighbourhood, is an elementary school of 195 students in which all students are expected to achieve their potential and become life long learners. We serve a multi-cultural community in which eleven languages other than English are spoken at home. Tremendous community support exists for enhancing student learning. This takes a variety of forms: partnerships, volunteerism, financial grants, and program initiatives.

Several programs have been devised to help students' accept responsibility for their learning: use of agenda books to organize homework, an after school extended learning opportunity, and a home reading program, "Reading To The Stars", which has made daily reading a school wide event.

Our Leadership Team, consisting of three students from each Division II classroom develop and organize special learning events and activities for the school. Spelling contests, student buddy activities, and organizing special event days are ways in which the team shows leadership at Sifton School.

In addition to strengthening the responsibility for learning, these programs, as well as the introduction of Balanced Literacy in all Division I classrooms have enhanced communication between home and school. These aspects of our program provide regular opportunities for parents to work with their children and be directly involved in their learning.

Student achievement results have shown a marked improvement. On the Provincial Achievement Tests, the proportion of grade 3 students achieving the acceptable standard increased by 7% in Language Arts and 26% in Mathematics. In grade 6, the proportion of students achieving the acceptable standard increased by 9% in Language Arts, 24% in Mathematics, 18% in Science and 8% in Social Studies.

The Leadership Team undertook a survey of students, teachers, parents and community members to determine what learning would be like in the new millennium. They asked respondents to “Describe learning in elementary school as you would like it to be in the next millennium. Think about learning as it exists now and what you would like to see in the future. In respect to learning, consider what will be learned, how it will be learned, who will learn it, when it will be learned and where learning will take place.” The responses have provided the foundation of Sifton School’s presentation and emphasizes strategies that are currently being used to improve student achievement.

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