

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

February 14, 2006

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Acting Superintendent

SUBJECT: Alberta Education Accountability Pillar

RESOURCE

STAFF: Bob Holt, Tanni Parker

INFORMATION

At Edmonton Public Schools, we believe that every young person is capable of succeeding in school, and we are focused on achieving superb results from all students. The following priorities; to improve achievement of all students in core subjects with an emphasis on literacy and numeracy, to ensure high quality teaching and learning, and to achieve high standards of citizenship, conduct, safety and well-being of students and staff, identify where we want to go as a district and provide direction to help us reach our destination.

The results provided in the Alberta Education Accountability Pillar provide additional information to assist in the measuring of both achievement and rate of improvement on a broad range of categories that relate to the priorities that have been set.

Background

The Accountability Pillar is one of the three pillars in Alberta Education's Renewed Funding Framework. The Accountability Pillar:

1. Ensures consistency of what school jurisdictions are measuring. This consistency of measures allows for jurisdictions to gauge their own progress over time and compare their progress with that of the province.
2. Assists Alberta Education with determining if challenges being faced in jurisdictions are local or provincial.

The Accountability Pillar uses **student achievement data** (Provincial Achievement Tests, Diploma Exams), **survey data** and additional "**outcome data**" (Drop out rates, high school completion rates and the number of students eligible to receive Rutherford Scholarships) to measure the work of jurisdictions.

Within the Accountability Pillar, all jurisdictions are evaluated in the following three ways:

1. Achievement: A comparison of a jurisdiction's results against a fixed provincial standard.
2. Improvement: A comparison of a jurisdiction's current results with previous three-year average.
3. Overall: A combination of achievement and improvement based on a provincial formula.

Key Findings from the Accountability Pillar

On January 26, 2006, Alberta Education provided an opportunity for the Board and the Administration to review the Accountability Pillar Summary for our district. The meeting provided clarity regarding how the data was gathered and presented, as well as what the next steps would be for using data at the jurisdictional and provincial level.

Overall, the district received a rating of “Good” on a five point scale developed for the Accountability Pillar. This places our district one rating below “Excellent” which is the highest of the five levels on the scale.

Related to the Accountability Pillar information are a number of provincial expectations for next steps. First, all jurisdictions must include the Accountability Pillar Evaluation in their Annual Education Results Report. Currently how the information will be included in the report has not been determined by Alberta Education. Second, any results that were identified as “Issues” or “Concern” need to be explicitly addressed as actions in the school authority’s next Three-Year Education Plan. Finally, all school authorities must share their Three-Year Education Plans and Annual Education Results Reports with their communities.

Conclusion

Analysis of the information provided in the Accountability Pillar has confirmed the need for continued and enhanced support throughout the district for students who are “at-risk” of not meeting grade and subject level expectations and not completing high school. Overall our schools are experiencing success in moving students from acceptable standards to higher standards of achievement but are experiencing challenges in moving students from below acceptable into the acceptable or “at grade level” range.

The administration, with the support of the Board, must continue to ensure that teachers have access to the professional development required to enhance their expertise to ensure more students are successfully meeting acceptable standards and are successfully meeting grade level expectations. Opportunities to build on the successful areas that were highlighted in the three-year Supporting Teaching and Learning Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AISI) Project must be capitalized and additional innovations must be introduced in the next Three-Year AISI Project to ensure that *all* students achieve superb results.

ES:ljb