

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

February 25, 2003

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Ukrainian Bilingual Alternative Program: Name and Focus Change

ORIGINATOR: B. Holt, Executive Director, Instructional and Curricular Support Services

RESOURCE STAFF: Janice Aubry, Gloria Chalmers, Melody Kostiuk, Deanne Patsula, Stuart Wachowicz

RECOMMENDATION

That a change of name from the Ukrainian Bilingual Alternative Program to the Ukrainian International Bilingual Program to reflect a change in focus be approved.

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Background: Over the past several years, the district has initiated the revisions of both local and provincial curricula for the various bilingual programs to bring them in line with the *Common Curriculum Framework for Bilingual Programming in International Languages: Western Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Basic Education*. This work has provided a means for revitalizing and refocusing language programs. In the case of the Ukrainian Bilingual Alternative Program, it was felt that incorporating an international focus and recognizing the current status of the language would strengthen the program and its appeal to students and their families.

Input was sought and received from principals, teachers and parents of students currently involved in the program. All parties supported a change in name and emphasis. Parents indicated that this represented an important direction for future development of the program.

Rationale: The proposed name reflects the fact that Ukrainian is the official language of Ukraine and is the second most widely spoken Slavic language in the world. It is spoken by more than 45,000,000 people in over 24 countries. While there are clear local heritage links to the Ukrainian language, the language also represents a rich international culture, including architecture, music, literature, history and customs.

While the current emphasis on high academic standards, inclusion of French as a second language and involvement of the local community will be maintained, the intent is to broaden the perspective and prepare students to be global citizens. Plans include having students interact with a variety of speakers of Ukrainian and guest artists with international experience, enabling students to communicate with students in Ukraine and in other countries

though the use of technology and exploring possibilities for exchanges with students in other countries where Ukrainian is spoken.

To implement international components of the program, the district will partner with such organizations and agencies as the Canada Ukraine Foundation; Ukrainian Resource and Development Centre, Grant MacEwan College; Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Alberta; Faculty of Education and Ukrainian Language Education Centre, University of Alberta and the Government of Alberta's Advisory Council on Alberta-Ukraine Relations.

This change in name and emphasis supports the new provincial program of studies for Ukrainian language arts which identifies the importance of global citizenship skills:

“Effective participation in the global marketplace, workplace and society requires strong communication, interpersonal and team skills and strong knowledge and understanding of cultures. Ukrainian bilingual programming provides a rich environment for the development of the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes that promote effective global citizenship and enhance the economic and career potential of the student.” (*Ukrainian Language Arts – k-9 Program of Studies, Interim 2002, page 2*)

Approval of the recommendation would confirm the shift in emphasis that involves establishing a balance between cultural heritage and traditions and contemporary international Ukrainian language and culture. As well, it has the potential to raise the appeal of the program to students of Ukrainian heritage and to students from other cultural backgrounds who are interested in acquiring proficiency in a second or third language.

GC:ee