

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

February 8, 2000

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dosdall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Changes to the Basis of Allocation for 2000-2001

ORIGINATOR: G. Reynolds, Department Head

RESOURCE

STAFF: Basis of Allocation 1999 Summer Committee: Doug Beaton, Lucille Dupuis, Phillip Grehan, Pam Hall, Pat Hogaboam, Shirley Keith, Mark Liguori, Terry MacPherson, Judy Soper, Colin Willows
Basis of Allocation 1999-00 Committee: Jan deLeeuw, Mary-Ellen Deising, Lucille Dupuis, Pam Hall, Pat Hogaboam, Terry MacPherson, Judy Soper, Carol Symons, Colin Willows

INFORMATION

The basis of allocation is designed to provide an equitable distribution of resources to schools. The basis is not intended to identify specific costs for the delivery of programming in schools. It is the means by which available resources are distributed among all schools in the district. Principals, in consultation with staff, students, parents, and community members plan the deployment of these resources to achieve the school's planned results.

The annual review of the basis of allocation is a key element in the district's budget planning process. The purpose for the review is to improve the extent to which the basis provides for an equitable distribution of resources and to identify and examine possible changes to the basis. The major criteria considered in the review and in determining proposed changes are:

- all resources available for allocation to schools are distributed equitably in accordance with responsibility for results; and
- allocations are student driven; and
- the number of allocation categories is minimized; and
- the basis of allocation is accepted, understood, and supported by all concerned; and
- the information on which allocations are based is clear, consistent, and easily obtainable; and
- the administrative cost of allocating resources is minimized.

This report identifies the changes for 2000-01 (identified by bold type) that have been approved by the superintendent of schools.

Numbers 1 and 2 reflect the recommendations of the principals' Basis of Allocation 1999-00 Committee and of Budget Services. Number 3 reflects the recommendation of the principals' Basis of Allocation 1999 Summer Committee, which was provided to the current Basis of Allocation Committee for information only.

- 1. That the following new categories be established effective 2000-2001, and these categories receive level 5 allocations (\$6,844):**
 - **Visual Disability (moderate), and**
 - **Hearing Disability (moderate).**

For a number of years, the district provided centrally funded itinerant teachers to provide tutorial and other supports to students with moderate to severe hearing and visual disabilities. The itinerant teachers also provided consultation to school staff and inservices. With the SMH agreement, the funding for these services were split – part was included in the basis for allocation for deaf and blind students, and part was consolidated into Consulting Services. What was lost was direct service to students who had significant disabilities but were not deaf or blind. Some of these students are functionally no different in the classroom than students who meet the diagnostic criteria for severe disabilities. For a number of years, these students received district allocations on an exceptional basis, but this practice was discontinued with the provincial auditing of the severe disabilities grants.

Some students with moderate to severe sensory disabilities require specialized equipment and instructional materials, instructional accommodations, academic assistance, social skills training and need for orientation and mobility training. Not all sensory impaired students require specialized services, and needs do change over time. The proposed criteria require specification of the supports and services that are required and which will be provided. Eligibility will be approved on a one year basis, and can be renewed with evidence of ongoing need.

- 2. That a demonstration program for students with schizophrenia and other neuropsychiatric disorders be established at Spruce Avenue School effective March 2000, and that level 8 allocations (\$13,307) be provided for the educational component of the program.**

In conjunction with the student health initiative, two classes are being established for students with schizophrenia and other neuropsychiatric disorders, one at the elementary and one at the junior high level. The Edmonton Student Health Initiative Partnership (ESHIP) will be providing funding for a psychiatric nurse for each class and occupational therapy. All students will be under the care of a psychiatrist and may move in and out of hospital programs depending upon the course of their disorder. They require very staff intensive settings, with attention to both academic and psychiatric needs. Paranoia,

disordered thought and speech, hallucinations and delusions are common symptoms that make successful accommodation in other school settings inappropriate.

The educational program requires a level of educational support equivalent to other students with severe disabilities (level 8), and the district will be able to access severe disabilities grants for these students. It is planned to implement the elementary class in March, with the junior high classroom starting in September.

3. That, beginning with the 2000-2001 school year, the number of schools receiving a High Needs allocation be reduced from 75 to 50.

The formula will continue to use poverty (incidence of low income) and mobility (transfer of students in and out), based on the 1996 Statistics Canada information which uses neighbourhood specificity that we have not had in the past. The allocation will continue to be based on Level 1 and 2 students only.

The Basis of Allocation committee determined that there was insufficient funding to support adequate programming in 75 schools. Although the amount allocated for High Needs (\$1.3M) has not changed in the last six years, the intent is to concentrate maximum district resources to schools with the highest need students.

The recommendation is in keeping with the Poverty Committee Recommendation that the allocation be limited to the highest priority schools, and although their recommendation suggested that the allocation should go to 30 schools, the Basis Committee felt that the cuts would be too deep at this time.

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