

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

January 29, 2008

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Aboriginal Education Policy and Regulation: Implementation Plan

ORIGINATOR: D. Barrett, Assistant Superintendent

RESOURCE

STAFF: Karen Bardy, Sandra Bassett, Gloria Chalmers, Margaretha Ebbers, John Edey, Mike Falk, David Fraser, Dennis Huculak, Kerry-Ann Kope, Veda Lastiwka, Lorna L'Hirondelle, Colleen Mondor, Anne Mulgrew, Jamie Pallett, Ingrid Tenkate, Stuart Wachowicz, Stephen Wright, Bonnie Zack

INFORMATION

Background: In May 2007, the Board of Trustees approved an Aboriginal Education Policy and, subsequent to this approval, the superintendent approved an Aboriginal Education Regulation. This board policy clearly establishes the board's position and direction to the administration with regard to Aboriginal education in the district. The administrative regulation identifies key directives for action in the implementation of the policy.

The administration committed to bringing a report to board prior to the beginning of the budget process for 2008-09. As well, the administration is to provide a board report at the end of the 2007-08 school year outlining progress made during the first year of implementing the policy and the regulation.

Current Status: In the fall of 2007, in consultation with a range of district staff, key priorities for implementing the policy and the regulation were identified (Appendix I). These priorities were then incorporated in an implementation plan (Appendix II), aligned with the policy and the key directives for action identified in the regulation.

To date, funding provided has been expended on staffing, professional development and student recognition. Staffing includes one principal position and three contract positions – one related to Aboriginal cultural sensitivity curriculum development, one to developing curriculum for the Extended Cree alternative program and a third, not yet filled, to investigate expansion of early learning opportunities. Should the Extended Cree alternative program be approved, the intent is to contract a Cree language teacher the last two months of this school year. This will enable the teacher to make valuable connections with the local Aboriginal communities (e.g., Elders, parents, students, agencies and community organizations that support our students), to identify, collect and develop resources that can be used to set up the classroom, and to visit some of the successful Cree language programs in the band schools surrounding our city. Also, funds are being provided to enable principals and district staff to attend out-of-district Aboriginal education conferences and workshops. It is anticipated that funding will be required for the provision of professional development resources. As well, a recognition event for Aboriginal graduates is being planned for June 2008 and will require funding.

Work is proceeding in all areas of the plan. For example, information packages were distributed to all schools in October, with a follow-up package planned for late January; the external Aboriginal advisory committee was convened; meetings have been held with NAIT regarding an alliance; Aboriginal cultural awareness has been or is being incorporated in Principal Education and Development presentations and the full-day kindergarten professional development offerings; communication regarding the Aboriginal policy and regulation is ongoing; school and central staff are collaborating in the promotion of more effective transitions from grade 9 to 10, a curriculum for Aboriginal cultural awareness is in development; a workshop on culturally sensitive assessment was provided this fall; tracking of achievement, attendance and retention is ongoing; the Extended Cree curriculum development is well underway; work on encouraging enrolment in the Extended Cree alternative program is in progress; the social worker partnership with Métis Child and Family Services was extended to an additional school; an initial conversation took place with staff from the Paul Martin Foundation. As well, grant applications for funding were developed and submitted in partnership with the Mahkoos Society of Alberta to further Aboriginal supports in district schools, with Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society to develop an on-line Aboriginal mentor data base and with the Misericordia Community Pediatric Research Group to understand the school experience of our First Nations, Métis and Inuit students across the grades. The on-line Aboriginal mentor grant proposal was successful and work on this has just begun. We are still awaiting responses on the other two.

In the next few months, priority will be given to investigating early learning opportunities, advocacy, tracking expulsions, analyzing the attendance pilot and exploring the feasibility of disaggregating achievement data at the school level and planning for the Aboriginal graduates' recognition event.

Reflections to Date: The implementation of the Aboriginal policy and regulation is at an early stage. It is clear that the work must be ongoing and long term. Over time it must involve all district staff in schools and in central services. The Aboriginal Education consultants report that requests for service from schools has increased substantially in 2007-2008. The pace of implementation is affected not only by resources (personnel and other) available but also by the fact that it takes time for staff to develop cultural awareness and to fully understand their role in better serving Aboriginal students and families.

ES:ee

Appendix I: Priorities and Measures

Appendix II: Aboriginal Policy and Regulation Implementation Plan

PRIORITIES AND MEASURES

The following priorities are incorporated within the plan (Appendix II):

Priorities Year One

Advocacy by board and administration

- Infusion of Aboriginal Outcomes in Core Curriculum
- Changes to the Attendance Board

Information to school and district staff

- Aboriginal Policy and Administrative Regulation
- Services and Resources Currently Available
- Research Involvement
- Cree Bilingual Demand
- Early Learning Opportunities

Professional Development

- Plan for Aboriginal Sensitivity Training for New Hires
- Plan for Aboriginal Sensitivity Training for Current Staff
- Pilot Training

Monitoring of Achievement, Attendance and Retention

- Continue monitoring of achievement, attendance and retention
- Plan to track participation in special needs and alternative programs
- Plan to investigate feasibility of disaggregating self-identified Aboriginal results at the school level

Current Alliances and Connections with Bands and Political Organizations

- Maintain Internal and External Advisory Committees
- Connect with Enoch, Alexis and Paul Bands
- Connect with Treaty 6, Treaty 8 and Métis Nation

Priorities Year Two

Continue Monitoring and Information Dissemination as Required

- Disseminate Research Information
- Cree Bilingual Program

Alliances and Joint Activities

- Generate joint activities or approaches with bands and political organizations
- Generate joint approaches with post secondary institutions

Staffing

- Review practices and status of Aboriginal staff in the district
- Plan for further increasing number of staff across staff groups

Priorities Year Three

Review Progress Relative to Policy, Regulation and Plan

Revise Plan Based on Analysis of Progress

Measures

- ❖ Success in Completing Identified Actions
- ❖ Improvement in Achievement
- ❖ Improvement in Attendance
- ❖ Improvement in Retention
- ❖ Decrease in Expulsions
- ❖ Increased Parental Involvement
- ❖ Increased availability of services and resources
- ❖ Increased staff participation in cultural awareness
- ❖ Increased staff diversity

ABORIGINAL POLICY AND REGULATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Policy and Regulation Area	Actions	Methods	Unit(s) Responsible	Key Partner Unit(s)	Year One	Year Two
Respect and Recognition	-Advise all schools and Central DUs about the Aboriginal Policy and Regulation	- Policy and Regulation distributed through Supt's Memo -Distribute Information packages to all schools and central DUs - Follow up with FNMI schools	Programs Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)	Schools	Distribution June 2007 Packages prior to October 31	Update and re-distribute packages (if 2007-08 distribution effective)
Respect and Recognition	-Recognize National Aboriginal Day at Board	-Plan a 15 to 30 minute program for June 2007 -Plan a 15 to 30 minute program for June 2008	Programs Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)		June 2007 meeting of the Board June 2008 meeting of the Board	June 2009 meeting of the Board
Respect and Recognition	-Sensitively place special needs programs that are predominantly Aboriginal	-Ensure that special education clusters that are predominantly Aboriginal are not located in schools with no or few Aboriginal students	Planning	Programs Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)	Target – March 2008 for review of current sites	Continue adjusting sites as needed
Community Involvement	-Connect regularly with Aboriginal community	-Maintain an external Aboriginal Committee -Develop a joint plan of action -Maintain connections with Hobbema (e.g., ATEP students, Cree programming) -Maintain relationship with Mother Earth Charter School	Programs Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)		Ongoing	Ongoing
Community Involvement	-Influence Aboriginal teacher education	- Follow up elementary & secondary Aboriginal teacher education programs	Programs Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)	Personnel	Ongoing	Ongoing
Community Involvement	-Identify and Develop new alliances	-Pursue a formal alliance with NAIT -Investigate opportunities with U of A (Melissa Gillis) and Norquest -Connect with Enoch, Alexis and Paul Bands -Connect with Métis Nation, Treaty 6 and Treaty 8	Programs Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)	Curriculum Argyll Centre	June 2008 for NAIT alliance June 2008 for contacts with Bands June 2008 for initial contacts with political organizations	June 2009 for Norquest and U of A June 2009 for joint project(s) with Bands and political organizations

ABORIGINAL POLICY AND REGULATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Policy and Regulation Area	Actions	Methods	Unit(s) Responsible	Key Partner Unit(s)	Year One	Year Two
Community Involvement	-Engage parents	-Organize family nights -Organize Stepping Into Schools -Participate in The Learning Partnership -Identify what is happening in all FNMI schools -Encourage Aboriginal parent volunteers	Programs Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)	Schools	Ongoing	Ongoing
Staffing and Professional Development	-Recruit Aboriginal Staff -Maintain Aboriginal Staff	- Liaise with post-secondary teacher preparation programs -Encourage Aboriginal students in education programs to do practicum in our district & facilitate appropriate placements - Initiate development of an exit interview protocol & instrument - Advertise in Aboriginal publications	Personnel	Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services) Programs	Liaising, encouraging and advertising ongoing Initiate & advertize by June 2008	Pilot exit interview instrument Continue ongoing work
Staffing and Professional Development	-Provide targeted professional development	-Include information about Aboriginal policy and regulation in PED, LED & Full-day K inservices -Include Aboriginal cultural sensitivity in orientation program for new staff - Develop and pilot sessions on Aboriginal cultural sensitivity for new hires to district -Make presentations to post-secondary students	Leadership Services Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services) Personnel	Schools Student Achievement Programs	June 2008 for PED, LED & Full Day K Aboriginal understanding ongoing	Ongoing professional development
Staffing and Professional Development	-Provide district-wide professional development	-Develop and implement plan to provide Aboriginal cultural sensitivity for all staff not previously inserviced	Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services) Consulting Services Personnel	Leadership Services Schools	June 2008 for plan development and pilot implementation	Ongoing professional development

ABORIGINAL POLICY AND REGULATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Policy and Regulation Area	Actions	Methods	Unit(s) Responsible	Key Partner Unit(s)	Year One	Year Two
Achievement	-Monitor achievement, attendance and retention of self-identified Aboriginal students -Monitor expulsions of self-identified Aboriginal students	-Continue tracking of HLATs and PATs -Continue tracking of attendance and retention by school and for district -Monitor expulsions & identify trends - Investigate feasibility of providing school-level disaggregated Aboriginal achievement information - Develop process for tracking graduation rates	Student Assessment Student Information Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services) Programs Leadership Services	Schools	October 2007 for HLATs & PATs June 2008 for attendance and retention Expulsions by May 2008 Determine feasibility of disaggregating achievement information at the school level by March 2008	October 2008 for HLATs & PATs June 2009 for attendance & retention Expulsions by May 2009 School level (if feasible) by October 2008
Achievement	-Monitor participation of self-identified Aboriginal students in alternative and special needs programs	-Continue tracking number of students in special needs programs -Request number of students in alternative programs	Student Information	Programs Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services) Schools	March 2008	March 2009
Achievement	-Recognize achievement of Aboriginal students	-Encourage schools to nominate Aboriginal students for Nellie Carlson & other awards - Follow up to ensure nominations made - Organize and host an event for Aboriginal graduates	Student Assessment Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)	Schools Programs Student Achievement	June 2008	June 2009
Achievement	-Advise all schools of successful practices	-Identify success stories and practices and inform all district schools	Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services) Curriculum Consulting Services Programs	Schools	Ongoing	Ongoing

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ABORIGINAL POLICY AND REGULATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Policy and Regulation Area	Actions	Methods	Unit(s) Responsible	Key Partner Unit(s)	Year One	Year Two
Curriculum	-Increase infusion of Aboriginal perspectives throughout the curriculum.	-Develop and submit letter to Alberta Education advocating for infusion -Promote the district's Aboriginal Collection on line -Advertise the Lois Hole Digital on-line collection -Develop sample lesson plans that link with the on-line collections -Investigate ways of ensuring that school libraries have culturally accurate resources	Curriculum Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services) Programs Consulting Services	Schools	Letter March 2008 Advertise – October 2007	Advertise October 2008 Implement resource review June 2009 Develop sample lesson plans June 2009
Programs and Programming	-Increase Aboriginal Language options	-Determine/encourage demand for Cree Bilingual -Develop Extended Cree alternative program -Explore possibility of a Michif program	Programs Curriculum Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)	Planning Schools	Demand/Encourage April 2008 Board Approval April 2008	Implement September 2008 (assuming demand) Explore June 2009
Programs and Programming	-Increase access to research	-Participate in a Visual Narrative Research Project -Host research seminars on assessment, best practices, etc.	Programs Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)	Research Support Services	June 2008	June 2009
Programs and Programming	-Improve transitions between divisions	-Explore early learning opportunities & links to K -Continue work on transitions to grades 7 and 10	Programs Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services) Student Assessment	Schools	June 2008	Implement strategies September 2009
Programs and Programming	-Provide alternative programs responsive to needs of Aboriginal community	-Maintain and enrich Awasis and Amiskwacyi alternatives -Maintain and enrich alliance with Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society in Rites of Passage	Programs Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)	Schools	Ongoing	Ongoing
Programs and Programming	-Increase early learning opportunities	-Maintain relationships with Aboriginal Head Start programs supported by Ben Calf and Bent Arrow -Investigate opportunities provided by funding for to ELL Canadian born	Programs Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)	Schools	Ongoing June 2008 early learning	Ongoing September 2008 implement an additional early learning option

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ABORIGINAL POLICY AND REGULATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Policy and Regulation Area	Actions	Methods	Unit(s) Responsible	Key Partner Unit(s)	Year One	Year Two
Assessment	-Increase knowledge about culturally sensitive assessment practices	-Provide workshops and written material regarding culturally appropriate assessment instruments and practices -Develop plan to reduce over identification of Aboriginal students as special needs	Programs Student Assessment Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)	Budget Office Leadership Services Schools	Ongoing Workshop October 2007 Materials June 2008	Ongoing
Enhanced Supports for Learning	-Maintain alliances in support of Aboriginal students and families	-Support & grow alliance with Métis Child & Family Services re: Social Work support, fiddling and dancing and meal provision -Maintain alliances with Bent Arrow, Ben Calf & Red Road as noted previously & re literacy and family support	Programs Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)	Schools	Ongoing	Ongoing
Enhanced Supports for Learning	-Advise schools about supports available	-Distribute an Aboriginal Education brochure to all schools describing services	Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)	Programs Schools	October 2007	October 2008
Enhanced Supports for Learning	-Expand number and type of mentorship opportunities	-Engage in collaborative work with Big Brothers, Big Sisters to explore additional Aboriginal options - Explore other options through community connections	Programs Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)	Schools	June 2008	Ongoing
Enhanced Supports for Learning	-Explore career and technology options	-Reconnect with Oteenow -Partner with Careers the Next Generation - Investigate Paul Martin Foundation Entrepreneurial option	Programs Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)	Schools	June 2008 Entrepreneurial option March 2008	Ongoing
Enhanced Supports for Learning	-Expand options for dealing with attendance issues	-Advocate to province for changes to the Attendance Board -Analyze impact and learnings from attendance pilot -Develop additional strategies to improve attendance -Review research regarding improving attendance	Leadership Services Programs Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services)	Schools	Advocacy letter March 2008 Ongoing	Ongoing

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ABORIGINAL POLICY AND REGULATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Policy and Regulation Area	Actions	Methods	Unit(s) Responsible	Key Partner Unit(s)	Year One	Year Two
Accountability	-Report regularly to board and senior staff	-Develop report for board in December 2007 -Develop annual report to board in May or June -Review implementation plan on a yearly basis	Programs	Student Assessment Aboriginal Education (Consulting Services) Leadership Services Curriculum Consulting Services Budget	December 2007 May/June 2008	May/June 2008