

## EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

January 30, 2007

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: B. Holt, Acting Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Riverbend School: A School in the “Using Assessment to Enhance Student Learning and Success”- AISI Project

ORIGINATOR: K. Goudreau, Principal, Riverbend School

RESOURCE  
STAFF: Louise Osland, Corrie Ziegler

### INFORMATION

Riverbend Junior High School is located in the southwest part of the city and has a student population of 606. In the spring of 2006, after extensive discussion and consultation, the staff of Riverbend School made a decision to participate in the *Using Assessment to Enhance Student Learning and Success* Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AIS I) Project. Staff viewed this work as a natural continuation of the school’s journey to improve student achievement.

During the 2005 – 2006 school year, Riverbend teachers devoted a great deal of time translating the curriculum into student friendly language. Teachers shared the rewritten outcomes with students to help them be clear of the purpose of the lessons. Teachers also began to involve students in self assessment and provided effective feedback to students throughout a lesson or unit of study. Teachers believe this work has contributed to the school’s excellent Provincial Achievement Tests and Highest Level of Achievement Test results. Another form of data, student satisfaction survey results have also demonstrated positive results, although there is a need to enhance results for the following two questions: *Are you clear on what you are expected to learn?* and *Do you find school work challenging/interesting?* Further data analysis have led staff to believe that continued work in the area of Assessment for Learning would result in enhanced student achievement, especially for students at risk, as well as enhanced satisfaction survey results.

Riverbend staff are currently involved in several components of the AIS I Assessment for Learning project. The principal and selected teachers have attended the first two project wide sessions. These sessions provided the catalyst for further, targeted professional development at the school level. Depending on the knowledge, skill and experience of the teachers at Riverbend, they chose one of the sessions listed below to help meet their learning needs:

- Continued work in translating curriculum into student friendly language.
- To learn about and practice assessment for learning strategies, as an integral part of teaching and learning for every lesson.
- Work with a district consultant to make connections between curriculum, assessment practices and instructional strategies.

Staff meetings include time for discussions and professional conversations related to the above sessions, and allow staff to share successes, challenges and provide support to each other. In addition, Riverbend staff have met several times with staff from Kenilworth, Edith Rogers, Crestwood, George P. Nicholson, Garneau and Minchau Schools to continue to provide opportunities to extend and deepen their understanding of assessment for learning as a way of teaching. Staff have participated in monthly instructional walk-throughs at the selected partner schools and will host an instructional walk-through on February 22.

As staff experimented with new assessment strategies, and reflected on the impact these strategies have on student learning, they clearly saw the need to revisit and revise school assessment policies. As a result, staff, parents and students were involved in discussions about assessment issues and how they impact student learning. This collaborative process led to the ongoing revision of the school's assessment policy.

Although Riverbend teachers are in different places on the assessment journey, they all continue to strive to enhance their assessment practices, in their effort to achieve superb results from all students and staff.

BH:gj