

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

January 31, 2006

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Acting Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Keheewin School – Focus on Literacy

ORIGINATOR: L. Boggs, Principal, Keheewin School

INFORMATION

Keheewin School, located in southwest Edmonton, serves 365 students in the Keheewin, Bears paw, South Ermineskin and the newer south subdivisions. Keheewin is a K-6 School and students with special needs are integrated into the regular classroom setting.

During the 2001-2002 school year, after having reviewed test results and teacher marks, staff made the decision to focus on reading comprehension as the prime means of improving student achievement. In 2005, writing was added for a well-rounded literacy focus. Currently, Keheewin's best practices include: paired reading, use of pre-reading strategies, leveled guided reading, use of graphic organizers, and teacher modeling of reading comprehension and writing strategies. These best practices are consistently implemented across all classrooms and in all subject areas.

Keheewin staff continues to refine their teaching strategies through professional development opportunities and collaborative activities. Collaboration occurs monthly during grade level and divisional meetings and with their trio school grouping. The focus of these meetings revolve around discussion and sharing of best practices, looking at student work, developing and monitoring intervention plans for at-risk students, and examining achievement data to determine next steps in the teaching and learning process. Presently, collaborative dialogue centers around the topic of assessment for learning. Teachers are holding each other mutually accountable through the sharing best practices and experiences with each other. As a result, teachers' individual and collective skills, as well as confidence in assessment for learning, has been built.

The strong literacy focus, the use of research based practices, and teacher collaboration, has assisted in the establishment of a Professional Learning Community at Keheewin. Staff working in a Professional Learning Community set goals and select high-yield strategies to help them meet their goals. At Keheewin School, the impact of their best practices is monitored through the periodic collection of critical evidence, gathered through their interim measures.

Typically, a high percentage of students at Keheewin School achieve acceptable standard on Provincial Achievement Tests. However, as a result of the instructional focus work,

the percentage of students achieving the standard of excellence, over a five year period, has increased dramatically.

During the 2004/2005 school year, 11 students were identified as “at risk” through Highest Level of Achievement Test reading scores. An intervention strategy was identified and implemented for each student. By year end, nine students were at or above grade level in reading while the other two students demonstrated one year’s growth in reading.

Keheewin School embodies a collaborative culture with shared values, united in creating a safe place for students to learn. Keheewin School scribes to the mission of "When love and skill work together, expect a masterpiece". Job embedded professional development, collaboration, and a focus on assessment for learning has improved the quality of teaching and is moving the school closer in its quest to achieve superb results from all students.

ES:gj