

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

March 23, 2004

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Resource Development Services—Supporting Teaching and Learning in
Edmonton Public Schools and Beyond

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

RESOURCE

STAFF: Dana Antayá-Moore, Edgar Schmidt

INFORMATION

Superb resources...Superb results, is what defines Resource Development Services. Our resources are designed to support and enhance quality teaching and student learning. We develop curriculum-based resources that integrate best practices and engage students in quality learning experiences.

Resource Development Services considers carefully the projects it undertakes. We listen to what teachers in our district are saying about the kinds of resources they need, and we work collaboratively with teachers and schools throughout the development process. We host focus groups to gather information and to obtain feedback about the projects we are considering. We involve teachers in the writing process and work together with consultants from Resource Development Services and Consulting Services to ensure high-quality content. When possible, we pilot resources in schools throughout our district to ensure that they will meet the needs of teachers and the students they teach.

In response to district priorities and needs expressed by Edmonton Public teachers, five print resources emerged as priorities for Resource Development Services this year.

Math 14 contains a teacher resource together with four consumable student study guides organized by strand. The resource was piloted in 10 Edmonton Public School high schools and one St. Albert high school from September to January. The feedback from both teachers and students was overwhelmingly positive. The resource was revised according to the feedback we received and made available to teachers in February.

Success in Science meets the needs of junior high students who are cognitively capable of understanding the content of the science curriculum, but who struggle with the reading level of the texts. These include ESL, Learning Strategies and Literacy students, both in the regular classroom and in district sites. Designed to be used in the context of classroom instruction this is not a stand-alone resource.

The teacher support material provides practical suggestions for using the resource in a variety of classroom contexts. The student study guides are engaging and include questions that extend students' thinking.

Senior High Literacy Tips, *Reading the Runes* and *Writing Beyond the Elementary Grades* will meet needs of Edmonton Public high schools whose instructional focus is reading or writing. *Senior High Literacy Tips* is a series of ten literacy tip sheets that high school English Language Arts teachers can use with students at any grade and in any stream. *Reading the Runes* focuses on reading in math and science. In addition to presenting the current research on best practices for reading instruction in these two content areas, this resource makes the case for the importance of direct reading instruction beyond elementary school and provides teachers with practical ways to support students' reading in math and science. *Writing Beyond the Elementary Grades* is a work in progress. Picking up where *Pushing the Pencil* leaves off, this resource will provide teachers with valuable information, samples and tools to address the area of writing in the secondary school setting.

Resource Development Services continues to explore new opportunities to support teaching and learning in our schools. One such opportunity, now in the initial stages of development, is a second languages resource which will meet the needs of schools implementing the Alberta Learning Language Initiative in 2006. This resource is the direct result of collaboration between International Languages consultants and Resource Development Services. It comes out of a need for print resources to support the implementation of the Language Initiative in Edmonton Public Schools and across the province.

Suggestions for future resources come from a variety of sources, including information gathered from both district teachers and teachers stopping by our display at the many conventions and conferences we attend. Potential projects for the upcoming year include a print resource of Best Practices linked directly to the work done by Research Support, a kindergarten resource focusing on both literacy and numeracy skills, Math 24, and maximizing junior high math.

Addressing ways of meaningfully using technology in support of teaching and learning is a priority for Resource Development Services. We recognize the increasing importance of technology as a learning tool and are exploring ways to provide teachers with accessible and relevant resources that will enhance their teaching and in turn support student achievement.

Through our partnerships with Alberta Learning, Resource Development Services has the ability to support teaching and learning across the province. Tied to our focus on the meaningful use of technology in the classroom, we recently completed the *Online Reference Centre Professional Development Resource* designed to support teachers in their use of Alberta Learning's *Online Reference Centre*. As well, we are working on a project with LearnAlberta.ca, the technology branch of Alberta Learning to develop online learning objects to match outcomes in the junior high math curriculum.

Resource Development Services recently entered into a partnership with the Learning and Teaching Resources branch of Alberta Learning to develop the print resource *Character and Citizenship in Education: A Toolkit for Administrators and Teachers*. This print resource provides an opportunity to build on the work already being done in Edmonton Public Schools in relation to Character-based Citizenship Education.

Resource Development Services continues to operate as a cost-recovery unit within the district, receiving no allocations for its operations. All development, production, printing, and marketing costs are carried by the unit and are funded through revenue recovered from sales of its current resources and services.

Resource Development Services Revenues from 2001 to Present

Year	Gross Revenue	Net Revenue (Carry forward)
2001-2002	1,274,123.77	\$148,935.27
2002-2003	1,044,732.67	\$496,881.10
2003-2004 (to date)	503,311.48	\$

The success of the unit has benefited from the work of former leadership and staff members and the current dedication of all staff in the unit. We continue to be responsive and responsible in our projects, generating sufficient funds to develop new and exciting projects in support of teaching and learning.

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