

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

March 13, 2007

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: B. Holt, Acting Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Response to Trustee Request for Information

ORIGINATOR: T. Parker, Executive Director  
E. Schmidt, Executive Director

RESOURCE  
STAFF: Anne Mulgrew, Eila Stenberg

INFORMATION

**TRUSTEE REQUEST #265, FEBRUARY 13, 2007 (TRUSTEE COLBURN):  
PREPARE A BOARD REPORT COMPARING THE PROVINCIAL LEVEL OF  
FUNDING AS WELL AS A COMPARISON OF PROVINCIAL HIGH SCHOOL  
COMPLETION RATES ACROSS THE COUNTRY:** The most current data available on high school graduation rates across the country comes from the 2002-2003 school year. The table below provides the graduation rates by province and where the province ranks relative to other provinces.

**HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES RELATIVE TO  
TYPICAL AGE OF GRADUATION FOR 2002-2003**

<b>Province/Territory</b>	<b>% 2002-2003 Graduation Rate</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Alberta	67	10
British Columbia	77	6
Manitoba	71	9
New Brunswick	82	2
Newfoundland	77	6
Nova Scotia	81	3
Northwest Territories	43	12
Nunavut	26	13
Ontario	76	8
Prince Edward Island	83	1
Quebec	79	4
Saskatchewan	77	6
Yukon	57	11

Source: *Education Indicators in Canada: Report of the Pan Canadian Education Indicators Program 2005.*

With the exception of Quebec, these rates are calculated based on students completing high school in three years. Students who require four or five years to complete high school are not included in these figures. The numbers for Quebec are based on students completing Grade 11. The range in completion rates, excluding the territories, is from 67 per cent (Alberta) to 83 per cent (Prince Edward Island).

One problem with comparing high school graduation rates across provinces is that each province has its own criteria for high school graduation.

The chart below includes some of the critical features for high school graduation for each of the ten provinces. It is interesting to note that only Alberta and British Columbia require students to write grade 12 provincial examinations as part of the requirements to receiving a high school diploma.

**PROVINCIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR  
HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION**

<b>Province</b>	<b>Graduation Requirements</b>
Alberta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School is defined as grades 10 to 12.</li> <li>• A student requires a minimum of 100 credits, 20 of which must come from courses at the grade 12 level.</li> <li>• Students are required to complete diploma examination in at least two subjects – English and Social Studies.</li> <li>• High school courses can have a value of 3, 4 or 5 credits.</li> </ul>
British Columbia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School is defined as grades 10 to 12.</li> <li>• A student requires a minimum of 80 credits to graduate which must include 48 credits for required courses, a minimum of 28 credits from elective courses and 4 credits for Graduation Portfolio Assessment</li> <li>• Language Arts is the only mandatory Grade 12 course required.</li> <li>• High school courses have a value of 4 credits per course.</li> </ul>
Manitoba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High school is defined as grades 9 to 12.</li> <li>• Students require a minimum of 28 credits to graduate.</li> <li>• The only compulsory courses at the grade 12 level are language arts and mathematics, however a student must complete 4 credits at the grade 12 level.</li> <li>• High school courses have a value of 1 credit per course.</li> </ul>
New Brunswick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School is defined as grades 10 to 12.</li> <li>• Students require a total of 20 credits, with a minimum of 5 at the grade 12 level.</li> <li>• The only compulsory course at the grade 12 level is English.</li> <li>• Although there are no provincial examinations at the grade 12 level, students must also earn at least 50% on the Grade 11 English Provincial Examination.</li> <li>• High school courses have a value of one credit each.</li> </ul>

Newfoundland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High school is defined as grades 10 to 12.</li> <li>• Students require a total of 36 credits, with a minimum of 9 at the grade 12 level.</li> <li>• There are no provincial examinations at the grade 12 level</li> <li>• High school courses have a value of one or two credits each.</li> </ul>
Nova Scotia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Government of Nova Scotia does not provide any information about graduation requirements on their website.</li> </ul>
Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High school is defined as grades 9 to 12.</li> <li>• Students require a total of 30 credits.</li> <li>• English is the only mandatory course at the grade 12 level.</li> <li>• Although there are no provincial examinations at the grade 12 level, students must pass the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test which is taken in Grade 10.</li> <li>• High school courses have a value of one credit each.</li> </ul>
Prince Edward Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High school is defined as grades 10 to 12.</li> <li>• Students require a total of 20 credits of which 5 must be at the grade 12 level.</li> <li>• English is the only mandatory course at the grade 12 level.</li> <li>• There are no provincial examinations.</li> <li>• High school courses have a value of one credit each.</li> </ul>
Quebec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary school is defined as grades 7 to 11.</li> <li>• Students require a total of 54 credits of which 20 must be at the grade 11 level.</li> <li>• English and French are the only mandatory grade 11 courses.</li> <li>• High school courses have a value of either 4 or 6 credits each.</li> <li>• Students who have achieved graduation status are not eligible for university until two years of college education are acquired.</li> </ul>
Saskatchewan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High School is defined as grades 10 to 12.</li> <li>• Students require a total of 24 credits (5 of which must be at the grade 12 level).</li> <li>• English and Social Studies are the only mandatory courses at the grade 12 level.</li> <li>• There are no provincial examinations.</li> <li>• High school courses have a value of 1 credit each.</li> </ul>

Because each province has defined its own credit structure, and which courses are mandatory to be considered to have completed high school, then any comparisons of completion rates across provinces is suspect.

Table 2 below provides information on per pupil expenditures for the provinces and the territories. The most current information available is for the 2003-2004 school year. These figures include operating, capital, interest on debt, and other expenditures such as contributions to teachers' pension funds.

**TABLE 2**  
**TOTAL EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT IN**  
**PUBLIC AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS: 2003-2004**

<b>Province/Territory</b>	<b>\$ Amount</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Alberta	8,598	5
British Columbia	8,463	7
Manitoba	9,003	3
New Brunswick	8,376	8
Newfoundland	7,914	10
Nova Scotia	7,189	12
Northwest Territories	13,190	2
Nunavut	NA	
Ontario	8,629	4
Prince Edward Island	7,532	11
Quebec	8,465	6
Saskatchewan	8,214	9
Yukon	15,021	1

Source: *Summary Public School Indicators for the provinces and Territories, 1997-1998 to 2003-2004.*

The data in this table provides the per student cost in public elementary and secondary schools in Canada. With the exception of the Northwest Territories and the Yukon, the average cost per student ranges from a low of \$7,189 in Nova Scotia to a high of \$9,003 in Manitoba. The difference in the amount per student for the province ranked 4<sup>th</sup> to the province ranked 8<sup>th</sup> is \$253 per student a very small difference. This accounts for all the provinces with the exception if the Maritimes, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

TP:ES:cg