

## EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

November 8, 2005

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Acting Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Successful Completion of High School Courses and High School Completion Rates

ORIGINATOR: T. Parker, Executive Director

RESOURCE  
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### INFORMATION

This report provides information on successful completion of grade 10, 11 and 12 core courses and high school completion rates.

Successful course completion data is calculated as the percentage of students who achieve credits in a high school course out of all the students who were initially enrolled in that course. The data is adjusted for students who may move from one stream to another part way through a course (i.e. a student who leaves social studies 10 and goes to social studies 13.)

High school completion rates are provided on an annual basis by Alberta Education. Jurisdictions receive the data nine to ten months after a school year is completed which is why the data included in this report is for the 2003-04 school year. Jurisdictions are provided with information on the percentage of students who have successfully completed high school within 3, 4, and 5 years after starting grade 10.

The major generalizations with respect to the information included in this report are as follows:

- The percentage of students successfully completing courses in each subject area increased at all three grade levels with the exception of mathematics courses at the grade 12 level. The most substantial increases in successful course completion were noted at the grade 10 level.
- Although the district is still below the province in terms of three and five year high school completion rates, the district has shown a greater rate of increase for both measures than is true for the province.

Appendix I provides district course completion data for grades 10, 11, and 12 and three and five year high school completion rates for the district and the province. Appendix II provides a graphical representation for the jurisdiction and the province on the percentage of students successfully completing high school five years after entering grade 10 from 1999-2000 to 2003-2004. Appendix III provides information for 3, 4, and 5 year completion rates for grade 10 cohorts starting in 1995-96. Actual completion rates are graphed up to 2003-04, and

projected rates are included through 2005-06. The 2003-04 three year completion data represents the group of students who entered grade 10 the first year that district professional development at the school level focused on successful course completion data.

### **Implications for Action**

Successful completion of courses from grade 10 to grade 12 is the key to enhancing high school completion rates. In order to assist schools in using their data effectively, a number of supports were put in place.

#### **1. District Professional Development**

For the past three years, senior high Instructional Leadership Teams have been focused on issues related to successful course completion. As part of this focus on building expertise, they have been provided with:

- processes for assessing the effectiveness of their best practices on course completion rates
- research on effective assessment practices that assist students in being successful learners
- school-specific data which allows them to track their progress in course completion over time
- lists of students entering grade 10 who may be “at-risk” of not completing courses, and who will require intervention strategies

#### **2. Aligning Resources**

Schools use this information about successful course completion to inform decisions about aligning resources, such as professional development, staffing decisions, and purchase of resources.

District high schools continue to work in collaborative teams to examine research, analyze their own data, and then identify and implement strategies that enhance teaching and learning. These practices are expected to enhance successful course completion which will in turn lead to further improvement in successful high school completion.

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APPENDIX I - Detailed Results

APPENDIX II - Jurisdiction and Provincial Five Year High School Completion Rates

APPENDIX III- Jurisdiction 3, 4, and 5 Year High School Completion Rates Through 2003-04 and Projected Four and Five Year Rates Through 2005-06

APPENDIX I

DETAILED RESULTS

Tables 1, 2, and 3 provide district data on successful course completion for grade 10, 11, and 12 core courses for the past three years.

**TABLE 1  
GRADE 10 COURSE COMPLETION DATA  
2002-03, 2003-04 AND 2004-2005**

Course	2002-2003		2003-2004		2004-2005		Difference 02/03- 04/05
	Initial N	% Successful Completion	Initial N	% Successful Completion	Initial N	% Successful Completion	
English 10-1	4388	86.8	4526	89.1	4416	91.1	+4.3
English 10-2	2538	59.3	2515	60.9	2358	65.9	+6.6
English 16	149	51.7	179	58.1	248	60.9	+9.2
<b>English 10 Total</b>	<b>7075</b>	<b>76.2</b>	<b>7220</b>	<b>78.5</b>	<b>7022</b>	<b>81.6</b>	<b>+5.4</b>
Applied Math 10	2148	60.2	2028	60.7	1853	63.8	+3.6
Math 10 Prep	670	46.4	446	60.1	352	56.5	+10.1
Math 14	1376	56.3	1289	62.0	1249	63.8	+7.5
Math 16	186	62.9	201	61.7	177	59.3	-3.6
Pure Math 10	3998	78.1	4300	82.9	4131	85.4	+7.3
<b>Math 10 Total</b>	<b>8378</b>	<b>67.1</b>	<b>8264</b>	<b>72.4</b>	<b>7762</b>	<b>74.9</b>	<b>+7.8</b>
Science 10	5843	74.8	5739	79.3	5451	80.9	+6.1
Science 14	1693	55.5	1684	66.9	1793	69.5	+14.0
Science 16	191	56.0	195	61.0	177	65.0	+9.0
<b>Science 10 Total</b>	<b>7727</b>	<b>70.1</b>	<b>7618</b>	<b>76.1</b>	<b>7421</b>	<b>77.8</b>	<b>+7.7</b>
Social Studies 10	4556	86.8	4642	90.8	4520	91.3	+4.5
Social Studies 13	2385	59.1	2212	65.1	2080	67.7	+8.6
Social Studies 16	194	59.3	195	59.5	234	63.2	+3.9
<b>Social 10 Total</b>	<b>7135</b>	<b>76.8</b>	<b>7049</b>	<b>81.9</b>	<b>6834</b>	<b>83.1</b>	<b>+6.3</b>

The percentage of students successfully completing grade 10 courses continues to increase in all core subject areas with the exception of Mathematics 16 when compared to 2002-03 completion data. Substantial increases were noted for many of the alternate stream courses. Research has shown that success at grade 10 is an important predictor for later success. As a result, improving grade 10 course completion has been a particular focus of collaborative reflection and professional development for high schools.

**TABLE 2**  
**GRADE 11 COURSE COMPLETION DATA**  
**2002-03, 2003-04 AND 2004-05**

Course	2002-2003		2003-2004		2004-2005		Difference 02/03 – 04/05
	Initial N	% Successful Completion	Initial N	% Successful Completion	Initial N	% Successful Completion	
English 20-1	3824	88.8	3824	91.8	3929	93.1	+4.3
English 20-2	2540	73.7	2611	73.4	2507	75.4	+1.7
English 26	64	71.9	99	64.6	127	71.7	-0.2
<b>English 11 Total</b>	<b>6428</b>	<b>82.7</b>	<b>6534</b>	<b>84.0</b>	<b>6563</b>	<b>85.9</b>	<b>+3.2</b>
Applied Math 20	2414	74.4	2242	77.6	2101	78.0	+3.6
Math 24	1012	66.9	1071	64.6	1046	66.9	0.0
Math 26	93	54.8	122	52.5	118	66.1	+11.3
Pure Math 20	3716	83.6	3571	86.1	3875	86.6	+3.0
<b>Math 11 Total</b>	<b>7235</b>	<b>77.8</b>	<b>7006</b>	<b>79.5</b>	<b>7140</b>	<b>80.8</b>	<b>+3.0</b>
Biology 20	4059	81.7	3898	85.6	3810	86.2	+4.5
Chemistry 20	4179	77.0	4009	79.9	3913	84.4	+7.4
Physics 20	2730	75.3	2643	79.6	2713	82.5	+7.2
Science 20	662	72.2	806	73.8	923	74.2	+2.0
Science 24	1241	67.3	1275	74.3	1274	77.0	+9.7
Science 26	55	81.8	97	61.9	113	68.1	-13.7
<b>Science 11 Total</b>	<b>12 926</b>	<b>77.0</b>	<b>12 728</b>	<b>80.5</b>	<b>12 746</b>	<b>82.9</b>	<b>+5.9</b>
Social Studies 20	3776	90.5	3564	91.9	3769	92.9	+2.4
Social Studies 23	2365	68.5	2379	70.3	2261	73.8	+5.3
Social Studies 26	86	77.9	129	72.1	148	68.2	-9.7
<b>Social 11 Total</b>	<b>6227</b>	<b>82.0</b>	<b>6072</b>	<b>83.0</b>	<b>6178</b>	<b>85.3</b>	<b>+3.3</b>

The percentage of students successfully completing grade 11 courses has increased in most core courses when compared to 2002-03. The core subject totals increased relative to last year in all four subject areas. The one area where course completion is not increasing is for Integrated Occupational Program courses (26 level). However, this data needs to be interpreted with caution due to the small number of students enrolled in these courses.

**TABLE 3**  
**GRADE 12 COURSE COMPLETION DATA**  
**2002-03, 2003-04 AND 2004-05**

Course	2002-2003		2003-2004		2004-2005		Difference 02/03 - 04/05
	Initial N	% Successful Completion	Initial N	% Successful Completion	Initial N	% Successful Completion	
English 30-1	4937	79.2	4628	83.6	4777	82.1	+2.9
English 30-2	2316	67.9	2413	70.2	2303	71.3	+3.4
English 36	44	79.5	44	75.0	37	59.5	-20.0
<b>English 12 Total</b>	<b>7297</b>	<b>75.6</b>	<b>7085</b>	<b>79.0</b>	<b>7117</b>	<b>78.5</b>	<b>+2.9</b>
Applied Math 30	1735	76.1	1871	73.1	1779	74.2	-1.9
Math 31	1437	79.7	1487	81.8	1503	82.3	+2.6
Pure Math 30	4143	76.2	4159	71.1	4307	73.3	-2.9
<b>Math 12 Total</b>	<b>7315</b>	<b>76.9</b>	<b>7517</b>	<b>73.7</b>	<b>7589</b>	<b>75.3</b>	<b>-1.6</b>
Biology 30	4136	75.6	3886	73.8	3889	76.4	+0.8
Chemistry 30	3880	70.4	3614	72.4	3547	77.8	+7.4
Physics 30	2085	74.1	2086	79.0	2092	78.3	+4.2
Science 30	557	72.7	806	72.1	918	72.7	0.0
<b>Science 12 Total</b>	<b>10 658</b>	<b>73.3</b>	<b>10 392</b>	<b>74.2</b>	<b>10 446</b>	<b>76.9</b>	<b>+3.6</b>
Social Studies 30	4061	80.8	3942	80.1	4015	81.3	+0.5
Social Studies 33	2432	70.4	2362	74.9	2286	75.3	+4.9
<b>Social 12 Total</b>	<b>6493</b>	<b>76.9</b>	<b>6304</b>	<b>78.2</b>	<b>6301</b>	<b>79.1</b>	<b>+2.2</b>

The percentage of students successfully completing grade 12 courses has increased in English 30-1 and 30-2, Mathematics 31, Biology 30, Chemistry 30, and Physics 30, and Social Studies 30 and 33 when compared to 2002-03. The core subject totals increased relative to 2002-03 in all areas except mathematics.

Through the district professional development work, schools have been provided with information on a timely basis to allow them to monitor the successful completion of core courses. High schools have been proactive in introducing strategies such as “no zero policies”, second chances for assignments, and more use of class time to work on assignments that will be used for summative assessment to ensure that more students are successfully completing courses at all levels, as a means of enabling more students to successfully complete high school.

### Three and Five Year Successful High School Completion Rates

Alberta Education has been providing data to jurisdictions with respect to the percentage of students who successfully complete high school within three, four, and five years of starting grade 10. The high school completion rate tracks first-time grade 10 students over a five year time frame. Alberta Education defines students as having completed high school if, within three to five years after entering grade 10, they have

- obtained an Alberta High School Diploma, a high school equivalency diploma (GED) or a certificate of achievement; or
- enrolled in a credit program at an Alberta post-secondary institution, or registered in an apprenticeship program; or
- earned credit in five grade 12 courses, including one language arts diploma examination course and three other diploma examination courses.

Students who have moved from one jurisdiction to another within Alberta during high school are counted in the jurisdiction where they received the most high school credits. Alberta Education uses data from Statistics Canada on inter-provincial migration to make corrections to the data for students who may move out of province during high school.

Table 4 shows the three and five year high school completion rates available for the district and the province since 1997-98.

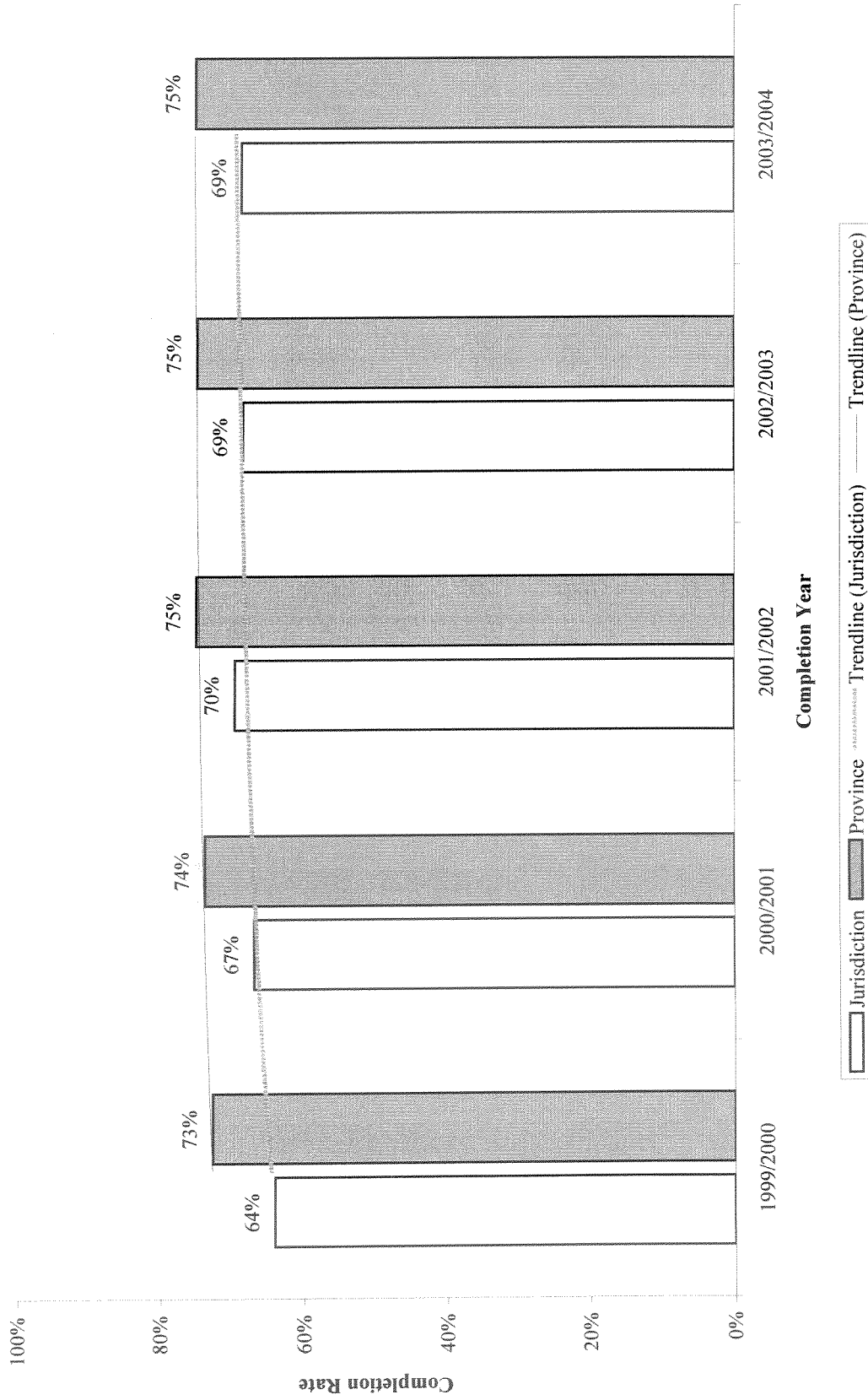
**TABLE 4  
PROVINCIAL AND DISTRICT THREE AND FIVE YEAR  
HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION DATA: 1997-98 THROUGH 2003-04**

Year	Three year Completion Rates (%)		Five year Completion Rates (%)	
	Province	EPS	Province	EPS
1997-98	61.7	<b>51.1</b>		
1998-99	62.8	<b>53.0</b>		
1999-00	65.0	<b>57.4</b>	72.8	<b>64.1</b>
2000-01	65.0	<b>56.7</b>	73.8	<b>67.0</b>
2001-02	65.5	<b>57.2</b>	75.1	<b>69.7</b>
2002-03	67.3	<b>57.5</b>	75.1	<b>68.7</b>
2003-04	68.9	<b>60.3</b>	75.4	<b>68.9</b>

For the three year completion data, the district increased from 51.1 per cent in 1997-98 to 60.3 per cent in 2003-04, an increase of 9.2 per cent. During the same time frame, the provincial completion rate increased 7.2 per cent. Although the district three year completion rate of 60.3 per cent is below the provincial rate of 68.9 per cent, the district showed a more substantial gain over the given time frame. For the five year completion data, the district has increased from 64.1 per cent in 1999-2000 to 68.9 per cent in 2003-04, an increase of 4.8 percent. During that same time frame, the provincial increase was 2.6 per cent. As with the three year data, although the district rate is below the provincial rate of 75.4 per cent, the district showed a more substantial gain over the given time frame.

Edmonton School District No. 7

**Jurisdiction and Provincial Five Year High School Completion Rates**



**Jurisdiction 3, 4, and 5 Year High School Completion Rates through 2003/04  
and Projected Four and Five Year Rates through 2005/06**

