

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

November 12, 2008

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Responses to Trustee Requests for Information

ORIGINATOR: D. Barrett, Assistant Superintendent  
J. Bidulock, Assistant Superintendent  
B. Coggles, Assistant Superintendent

RESOURCE  
STAFF: Gloria Chalmers, John Edey

INFORMATION

**RESPONSE TO TRUSTEE REQUEST #113, MAY 27, 2008 (TRUSTEE RIPLEY): PROVIDE INFORMATION ON THE STATUS OF THE DISTRICT'S LIBRARIES IN TERMS OF THE FIVE KEY ELEMENTS IDENTIFIED BY THE CANADIAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION AS BEING INTEGRAL TO THE SUCCESS OF SCHOOL LIBRARY PROGRAMS.** The administration reviewed the standards outlined in the publication *Achieving Information Literacy: Standards for School Library Programs in Canada*, 2003. This document was prepared by the National Standards Writing Committee—a joint committee of the Canadian School Library Association and the Association for Teacher-Librarianship in Canada. The standards are very comprehensive and evaluative in nature. The standards have not been adopted by our district, or by Alberta Education. There has been discussion at both the District and provincial levels about the appropriateness of the standards as they apply to the library programs of the future, especially in consideration of the rapidly changing use of technology in classrooms to access information. Therefore, the standards have not been communicated to schools nor has data related to the standards been collected over time.

Considering that discussion continues to occur around which standards are appropriate, and that the standards have not been communicated to schools, it would be premature and misleading to collect data from schools about the degree to which schools are meeting these particular standards.

In alignment with Alberta Education's *Policy, Guidelines, Procedures and Standards - School Libraries*; two board policies and one administrative regulation provide direction to schools regarding school libraries. These policies and regulation are: Board Policy HIBD.BP – School Learning Resource Centres, Board Policy HI.BP – Teaching and Learning Resources, and Administrative Regulation HI.AR – Instructional and Learning Resources.

Alberta Education has indicated that its policy, guidelines, procedures and standards are currently under review. The standards developed by the Canadian School Library Association

in 2003 will be considered, along with more updated resources, as future directions are planned. It is anticipated that electronic media and electronic links between school libraries and community libraries, will play an increasingly important role in school libraries of the future.

**RESPONSE TO TRUSTEE REQUEST #147 (TRUSTEE HUFF), OCTOBER 14, 2008 INVESTIGATE THE OPPORTUNITIES AND COSTS FOR TRUSTEE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REGARDING GOVERNANCE BY THE INSTITUTE OF CORPORATE DIRECTORS. WOULD THE INSTITUTE OFFER A SPECIAL SERIES OF WORKSHOPS REGARDING GOVERNANCE FOR LOCALLY ELECTED BODIES?** The Institute of Corporate Directors (ICD) was contacted with regards to workshop offerings that would be beneficial to the Board of Trustees. The Governance Essentials Program (GEP) for Directors of Not-for-Profit Organizations was recommended as a course that may be of interest to Trustees.

Upcoming dates the Governance Essentials Program is being offered:

- Toronto: January 25 to 27, 2009
- Ottawa March 1 to March 3, 2009

The cost of the program is \$2,250\*+ GST. Program fee includes tuition, all program materials and meals. (\*price is subject to change)

Not-For-Profit Governance Essentials Program information as well as other ICD programs can be found on their website at <http://www.icd.ca/> under the Education tab. The ICD currently does not provide customized programs, but they have offered to look into options, should there be an interest.

**TRUSTEE REQUEST #148, OCTOBER 14, 2008 (TRUSTEE HUFF) PROVIDE INFORMATION REGARDING WORK UPDATING POLICIES AND REGULATIONS REGARDING LIFE THREATENING ALLERGIES AND RESPONSE TO SERVICE REQUEST #224 (TRUSTEE HUFF): REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: POLICY RE: ANAPHYLAXIS.** Current practice regarding life threatening allergies is addressed in the Administration of Medication regulation IHCD.AR. The District is currently updating the medication management regulation to address various aspects, most specifically those related to allergies, diabetes and administration of medication during district provided transportation. Input to this revision was received from staff, parents, health authority representatives, central services staff and legal counsel.

The proposed revisions and perceived implications for the District currently are being examined by the Executive Team. It is anticipated that a revised Administration of Medication regulation will be approved by the end of November 2008. The revised regulation will acknowledge the responsibility and the authority of the principal with regard to the administration of medication at school and to and from school if transportation is district provided. It will be more specific about the need for a Student Focused Medication Management Plan (also under revision by Alberta Health Services) for students requiring blood glucose testing and any medical condition that requires the administration of medication at school. The proposed regulation will clearly specify requirements regarding the storage of medication, transporting students who may require medication for safe transit and identifying and preparing staff to administer prescription medication.

In the revised regulation, if a student could potentially experience a medical emergency (e.g., hypoglycaemia, asthma or anaphylactic shock) all staff and others working with students or work related to students are to be alerted to the potential emergency and required procedures to be followed. Principals will be directed to contact the parent or guardian immediately in response to incidents of low blood sugar causing hypoglycaemia, anaphylactic shock or grand mal seizures.

To support the regulation, principals will be provided with an enclosure for parent handbooks to notify parents or guardians of the need for a *Student Focused Medical Management* plan if medication is to be dispensed at school.

It is our intention to provide links within the regulation that access a diabetes handbook for schools, as well as a handbook for anaphylaxis. All schools now have the anaphylaxis kit developed in partnership with Alberta Health.

As a resource to schools, the Alberta Nutrition guidelines contain a section on product labelling. All schools recently received a copy of this resource. In partnership with Alberta Health nutritionists, we have developed a template for ingredient listing and nutritional facts that will be used by Purchasing in directing our suppliers of food products to comply with the guidelines. In collaboration with legal counsel, Purchasing and Programs staff are in the process of developing a contract that commits our suppliers to list ingredients as part of the tendering process. Proper ingredient labelling will inform the consumer as to possible adverse reactions.

In relation to allergies of staff, these are governed by section two of the Occupational Health and Safety Act which obliges Edmonton Public Schools to provide a safe and healthy work environment. There is no specific reference to allergic reactions on staff. Principals are reliant on staff to identify issues that are related to their health and well being. In schools where staff and students have self-identified allergies, specific allergen sensitive policies and protocols have been developed that apply to anyone entering the building.

In the summer of 2008 all paint specification for contractors were changed to *latex based paints* only. This is now the standard for outside contractors. The rationale for this switch is due to the higher quality of latex paints now available that provide better endurance and adhesion than previous latex paints. The latex paint fumes take only a short time to dissipate and provide no health risks during that time. Synthetic latex is used in latex paints and differs from the natural rubber latex which is found in latex gloves. It is natural rubber latex that commonly causes adverse allergic reactions.

*Oil based paints* require a longer period for fumes to dissipate and, because of the curing agent, present a greater chance for allergic reactions. However, oil based paints are still used in specific applications around the District where latex paints will not provide sufficient adhesion or durability. These paints are usually applied by district staff. When district painters are using oil based paints they ensure that adequate ventilation is provided, and use fans when necessary to dissipate the fumes. Staff also wears personal protective equipment when working with the oil based products.

A low volatile organic compounds (VOC) rating is considered when purchasing either type of paint for district use.

For the past five years, carpet glues with low VOC ratings have been used as the standard for flooring projects in the District. However, there are still detectable fumes with this glue. District practice, when carpets are replaced or installed, is to ask the administration if there are any allergies amongst staff or students. If so, steam cleaning is carried out immediately after the carpet is installed to reduce any fumes to minimal levels. This practice has been successful when utilized. When cleaning is not possible, air handling systems and/or natural ventilation is used to dissipate fumes.

District maintenance has only one staff member who only provides carpet repairs and therefore does not deal with the same type of fumes as in a new application. Major carpet replacement is done through external contractors who must follow WHMIS and OHS standards. Additional environmental considerations that may impact on health will be discussed in the environmental report which is an agenda item for the board meeting of November 25, 2008.

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