

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

November, 7, 2006

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: L. Thomson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: International Baccalaureate Examination Results: May 2006

ORIGINATOR: T. Parker, Executive Director

RESOURCE

STAFF: Anne Mulgrew, Lorie Welk

INFORMATION

The International Baccalaureate (IB) program is a rigorous program designed for high school students. It is modelled after educational systems used in Europe, in countries such as France and the United Kingdom. Upon completion of the program, students receive a diploma certifying completion. This diploma is useful in obtaining university admission, and is widely recognized throughout the world. Some IB courses are recognized as equivalent to university level courses and universities may award entering students with credit for high IB examination scores.

Students registered as IB diploma students are required to complete the following in their grade 12 year:

- write six IB examinations;
- complete Theory of Knowledge, an interdisciplinary course intended to stimulate critical reflection on the knowledge and experience gained inside and outside the classroom;
- complete the "Creativity, Action, Service" (CAS) component of the program which encourages students to share their energy and special talents with others; and
- complete an extended essay which provides students the opportunity to do an in-depth investigation of a topic of special interest.

Students who are not interested in completing the entire diploma program may choose to only take a few IB classes.

In May 2006, 677 students from seven district high schools (Harry Ainlay, Jasper Place, M. E. LaZerte, McNally, Old Scona, Ross Sheppard, and Victoria) wrote a total of 2174 IB examinations. This represents an increase of 36 students and 259 examinations compared to the previous year.

Table 1 provides a comparison of district results to world results from the May 2006 test administration for courses in which a minimum of thirty students wrote the examination. Information on the total number of students in the world writing each examination is not available.

TABLE 1
COMPARISON OF DISTRICT IB RESULTS TO WORLD RESULTS: 2006

SUBJECT	Average Score (out of 7)		Number of District Students Writing
	E.P.S.	World	
English (HL)	4.82	4.80	295
History (HL)	5.03	4.95	291
Biology (HL)	4.57	4.18	329
Math Methods (SL)	5.59	4.82	350
Chemistry (SL)	5.47	4.16	297
Physics (SL)	5.29	4.15	142
French B (SL)	5.75	5.02	182
Mandarin B (HL)	5.74	6.13	34
Japanese AB (SL)	5.16	4.94	38
Visual Arts A (SL)	4.55	4.37	38

HL - Higher Level

SL - Standard Level

The 2006 district averages are higher than world averages for all of these courses except for Mandarin B (HL). District students also wrote examinations in the following courses: German AB (SL), German B (SL), French AB (SL), Spanish B (SL), Spanish AB (SL), Mandarin AB (SL), Mandarin B (SL), Japanese B (SL), Physics (HL), Computing Science (SL), Visual Arts (HL), Theatre Arts (SL), Theatre Arts (HL), Music Solo Performance (SL), Music Group Performance (SL), Music (HL), Dance (HL), and Dance (SL). The number of students participating in any of these examinations ranged from a high of 27 students to a low of one student. It would not be valid to compare district averages to world averages on such low enrolment courses.

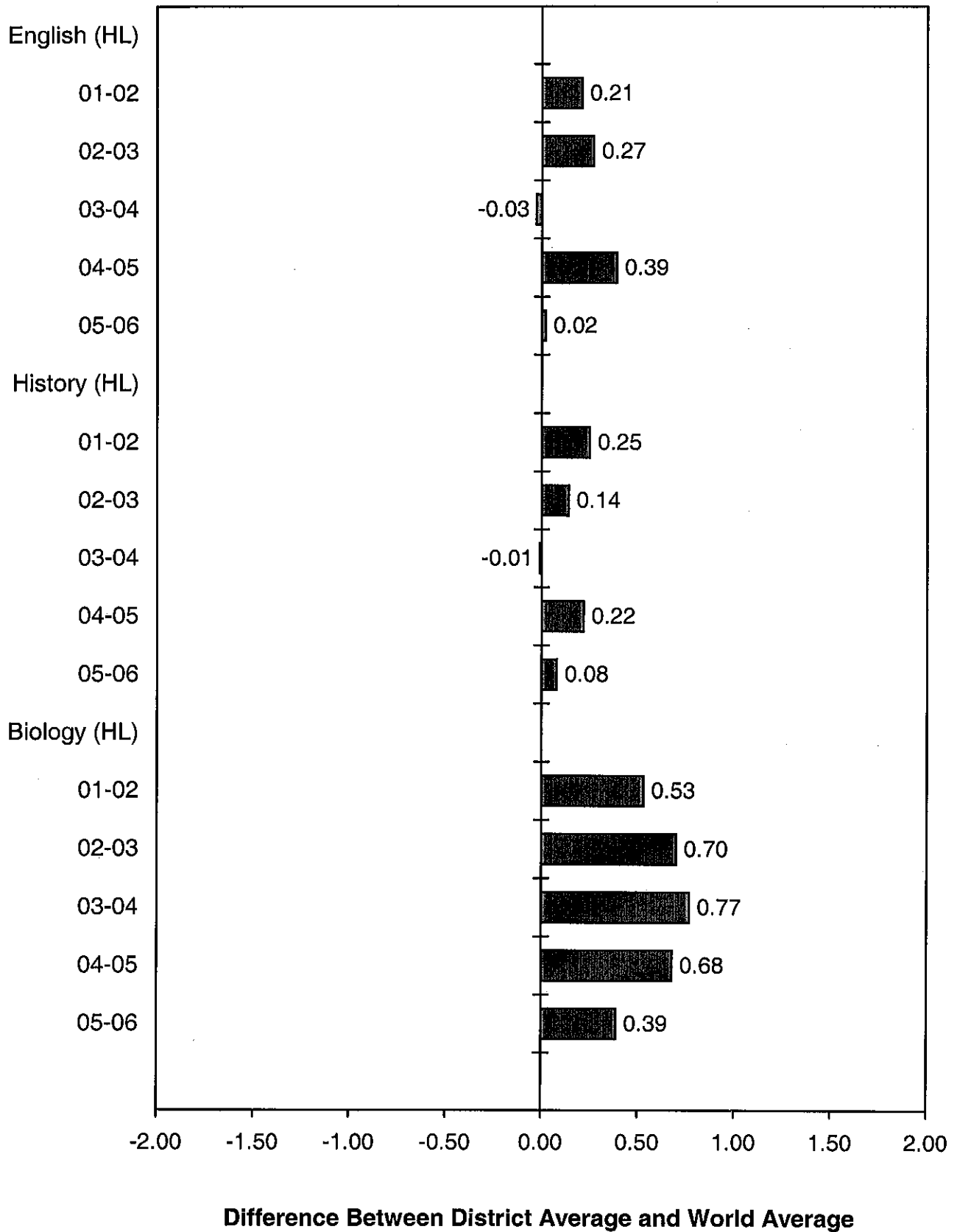
In 2006, 174 out of 677 (25.7 per cent) of the students participating in IB examinations were registered as diploma candidates. Of this number, 155 students (89.1 per cent) were successful in obtaining their diploma.

Appendix I provides longitudinal data from 2002-2006 of district averages relative to world averages on IB examinations. This data is calculated for each examination by taking the difference between the district average and the world average and plotting it to determine if there are any trends over the five-year time period. Only IB examinations with a substantial number of students (greater than 50) are included in this representation. As the graph illustrates, district averages have been higher than world averages over this time frame for all courses which have a substantial enrolment except for the 2004 results, when district averages for English (HL) and History (HL) slipped below world averages. It is not legitimate to compare district averages from this year to district averages from previous years, since the difficulty levels of the examinations fluctuate from year to year.

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APPENDIX I - Comparison of District and World Averages on IB Examinations: 2002-2006

**Comparison of District Averages and World Averages
On IB Examinations 2002 to 2006**



Comparison of District Averages and World Averages On IB Examinations 2002 to 2006

