

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

November 7, 2006

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: L. Thomson, Superintendent

SUBJECT: 2006 Provincial Achievement Test Results

ORIGINATOR: T. Parker, Executive Director

RESOURCE
STAFF: Anne Mulgrew, Lorie Welk

INFORMATION

This is the second year that all Alberta school districts have been required by Alberta Education to report achievement test results by student cohort. Cohort reporting accounts for all students registered in grades 3, 6 and 9. Students who are absent or excused from an achievement test are included in the results as not having demonstrated the acceptable standard. Alberta Education has chosen this method of reporting so that all students are accounted for, thereby ensuring equitable analysis across jurisdictions.

The data included in this report is different from that which is included in the accountability pillar. Data in the accountability pillar is portrayed as “three-year rolling averages” which means that each year the most recent data becomes part of the average, and the oldest data is taken out. This report contains two years of annual data in order to reveal provincial achievement test trends from one year to the next more readily. Examination of these trends assists school and central staff to identify areas of success as well as areas that may require additional targeted support.

District to Province Comparison

- The district comprises approximately 13.5 per cent of the provincial achievement test population; a change in district performance has a minor impact on provincial results.
- The percentage of district students achieving the acceptable standard exceeds provincial results for all tests at grades 6 and 9 with the exception of English language arts.
- The percentage of district students achieving the standard of excellence exceeds provincial results for all tests except grade 3 language arts.
- The percentage of district students achieving the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence was substantially higher than for the province on all tests written in French with the exception of grade 3 mathematics.

District 2006 to 2005 Comparison

- There was an increase in the percentage of students achieving the acceptable standard for eight of the nineteen achievement tests administered.

- There was an increase in the percentage of students achieving the standard of excellence for ten of the nineteen achievement tests administered.
- There was a decline in the percentage of grade 6 and 9 students achieving the acceptable standard in mathematics and science written in English relative to the previous year.

Detailed Findings

In June 2006, all students enrolled in grades 3, 6, and 9 wrote achievement tests in language arts and mathematics. Students enrolled in grades 6 and 9 also wrote achievement tests in science and social studies. In addition to writing achievement tests in the core courses, students enrolled in grades 6 and 9 French Immersion wrote a French language arts test. Results from provincial achievement tests are reported in terms of the percentage of students achieving the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence.

Table 1 provides a comparison of district results to provincial results for percentages of students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in 2006.

**TABLE 1
DISTRICT AND PROVINCIAL RESULTS FOR THE
JUNE 2006 ACHIEVEMENT TESTS: COHORT DATA**

Achievement Test	Percentage of Students Meeting the Acceptable Standard			Percentage of Students Meeting the Standard of Excellence		
	Prov.	EPS	Diff.	Prov.	EPS	Diff.
GRADE 3						
Language Arts	81.3	80.0	-1.3	14.1	13.9	-0.2
Mathematics (English)	81.4	81.2	-0.2	27.1	27.9	+0.8
Mathematics (French)	88.9	87.9	-1.0	24.4	28.5	+4.1
GRADE 6						
Language Arts	79.0	78.4	-0.6	15.9	17.0	+1.1
Mathematics (English)	74.5	76.6	+2.1	15.3	17.8	+2.5
Mathematics (French)	87.7	93.6	+5.9	20.3	28.7	+8.4
Science (English)	77.7	79.4	+1.7	28.1	32.2	+4.1
Science (French)	85.2	90.5	+5.3	20.0	24.1	+4.1
Social Studies (English)	78.2	79.9	+1.7	23.2	27.8	+4.6
Social Studies (French)	84.8	90.4	+5.6	17.3	23.6	+6.3
French Lang Arts	87.5	94.3	+6.8	11.2	14.6	+3.4
GRADE 9						
Language Arts	77.4	76.9	-0.5	13.6	15.9	+2.3
Mathematics (English)	66.4	68.1	+1.7	17.0	20.7	+3.7
Mathematics (French)	86.8	92.9	+6.1	26.0	34.8	+8.8
Science (English)	66.7	68.4	+1.7	13.5	18.1	+4.6
Science (French)	80.5	87.0	+6.5	10.4	12.4	+2.0
Social Studies (English)	71.9	74.6	+2.7	19.0	25.3	+6.3
Social Studies (French)	83.1	87.0	+3.9	15.5	17.4	+1.9
French Lang Arts	83.3	90.3	+7.0	10.9	16.8	+5.9

District results exceeded provincial results in terms of percentages of students meeting the acceptable standard with the exception of the three tests at grade 3, and grades 6 and 9 English language arts. For percentages of students meeting standard of excellence, district results exceeded provincial results for all achievement tests except grade 3 language arts. For grades 6 and 9 achievement tests written in French, district results are substantially higher than provincial results both for acceptable standard and standard of excellence.

Table 2 provides information on district results over the past two years.

TABLE 2
DISTRICT RESULTS ON PROVINCIAL
ACHIEVEMENT TESTS FOR 2005 AND 2006: COHORT DATA

Achievement Test	Percentage of Students Meeting the Acceptable Standard			Percentage of Students Meeting the Standard of Excellence		
	2005	2006	Diff.	2005	2006	Diff.
GRADE 3						
Language Arts	79.5	80.0	+0.5	16.2	13.9	-2.3
Mathematics (English)	79.5	81.2	+1.7	26.4	27.9	+1.5
Mathematics (French)	88.0	87.9	-0.1	27.3	28.5	+1.2
GRADE 6						
Language Arts	76.6	78.4	+1.8	17.4	17.0	-0.4
Mathematics (English)	79.1	76.6	-2.5	21.4	17.8	-3.6
Mathematics (French)	93.2	93.6	+0.4	25.5	28.7	+3.2
Science (English)	80.9	79.4	-1.5	31.8	32.2	+0.4
Science (French)	94.4	90.5	-3.9	31.7	24.1	-7.6
Social Studies (English)	79.9	79.9	0.0	25.9	27.8	+1.9
Social Studies (French)	92.5	90.4	-2.1	24.2	23.6	-0.6
French Lang Arts	87.7	94.3	+6.6	8.0	14.6	+6.6
GRADE 9						
Language Arts	77.8	76.9	-0.9	16.4	15.9	-0.5
Mathematics (English)	72.0	68.1	-3.9	26.0	20.7	-5.3
Mathematics (French)	89.2	92.9	+3.7	33.1	34.8	+1.7
Science (English)	71.4	68.4	-3.0	19.3	18.1	-1.2
Science (French)	87.8	87.0	-0.8	16.2	12.4	-3.8
Social Studies (English)	74.2	74.6	+0.4	24.8	25.3	+0.5
Social Studies (French)	85.8	87.0	+1.2	10.8	17.4	+6.6
French Lang Arts	91.9	90.3	-1.6	12.2	16.8	+4.6

One positive trend in the data is an increase in the percentage of students achieving the acceptable standard in grades 3 and 6 English language arts and grade 3 mathematics written in English, even though these are areas where the district is below the province. These gains in grades 3 and 6 language arts may be attributable to schools' increased focus on early literacy.

A second area of substantial improvement was in the grade 6 French language arts results where both the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence increased by 6.6 per cent.

However, while the district continued to exceed provincial results in most areas in the 2005-06 test administration, Table 2 provides other information that may be of concern. At the grade 6 level, mathematics and science written in English, and science and social studies written in French experienced a decrease in the percentage of students meeting the acceptable standard relative to the previous year. At the grade 9 level, both mathematics and science written in English experienced substantial decreases in the percentage of students meeting the acceptable standard relative to the previous year. While the overall district results in grade 6 and 9 mathematics and science have decreased, the decrease was not consistent across all schools. In fact, several schools achieved substantial increases.

With respect to the standard of excellence, the district experienced substantial decreases at the grade 6 level for mathematics written in English, and science written in French. At grade 9, there was a substantial decrease in the percentage of students achieving the standard of excellence for mathematics written in English and science written in French. However, substantial increases were noted for standard of excellence for social studies written in French and French language arts.

Implications

- The district needs to continue to examine why students exceed the province in all subject areas except English language arts.
- The district needs to investigate what strategies were implemented by schools that achieved substantial gains in grade 6 and 9 mathematics and science so that these strategies can be shared with schools whose results declined.
- The substantial increases in both acceptable standard and standard of excellence for the grade 6 French language arts achievement test may be attributed to the targeted support provided to those schools during the 2005-06 school year.

Four of the five cycle-3 AISI projects use achievement test information as one of the quantitative measures of success. It is expected that the implementation of a variety of strategies within these projects will positively impact the district achievement test results.

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