

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

September 10, 2002

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Central Services Support for Teaching and Learning: Part I

ORIGINATOR: Avi Habinski, Executive Director, School and District Services
Bob Holt, Executive Director, Instructional and Curricular Support Services

RESOURCE

STAFF: Central Services Staff

INFORMATION

Central Services in Edmonton Public Schools is comprised of approximately 847 FTE staff. Staff descriptions include principals, teachers, consultants, psychologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, social workers, audiologists, planners, legal counsel, maintenance workers, custodians, support staff, computer specialists, accountants, caterers and printers.

Central Services core work is to support the students and staff in our 206 schools. Our work is focused on supporting schools to improve the achievement of all the students they serve. Central Services works collaboratively with schools to ensure a high quality of teaching and learning is achieved. We support schools in their goal of achieving high standards of citizenship, conduct, safety and well-being for all students and staff.

Central Services support for teaching and learning ranges from direct instructional support to processes intended to maximize the instructional time available at schools. Each department and decision unit is committed to working with schools in support of their work in meeting instructional goals and district priorities. The following is a sampling of Central Services initiatives, programs and service models designed to support teaching and learning. Work was initiated during year one of the program and continues as feedback is garnered about how Central Services can work to meet emerging school needs.

Supporting Teaching and Learning

Implement a Schoolwide Instructional Focus

- Provide support and training to district staff in regards to identifying a school-wide focus.
- Assist schools with implementing instructional focus areas across the curriculum.
- Provide assistance to schools with the implementation of their instructional focus areas for a range of learner needs including special needs, Aboriginal, and other at-risk students.
- Ensure consultant teams are involved in ongoing work to research, identify and share best practices.

- Provide support to schools with a literacy focus (Balanced Literacy, Literacy M.A.P.S., Reading Recovery, language arts curriculum inservices).
- Develop a range of literacy resources.
- Develop a web-based application to assist principals and their ILT in the planning and monitoring of their progress in the implementation of the Seven Areas of Focus.
- Develop a consulting and assessment team to help schools implement the Focus on Supporting Teaching and Learning framework.

Develop Professional Collaboration Teams to Improve Teaching and Learning

- Continue to develop teacher support resources defining assessment standards with grade level work samples to support teacher judgments of student achievement.
- Continue to train a cadre of consultants that are knowledgeable about assisting schools to create quality interim measures (Instructional Focus Consultant Team).
- Facilitate a senior high committee whose goal is to develop strategies to integrate special needs students into their schools' instructional focus.
- Implement a District Team to provide support to schools in the Seven Areas of Focus and Year Two Expectations.

Identify, Learn and Use Effective Research-Based Teaching Practices

- Provide research-based support for schools and Central Services staff.
- Pilot methods where teachers are able to share strategies and best practices among schools with the same instructional focus.
- Continue to share local expertise and knowledge by highlighting locally conducted research in the form of summaries.
- Conduct district-based research related to high school and course completion rates.
- Provide a kindergarten to grade 12 district framework for literacy development.
- Develop a range of high quality curricular resources to meet emerging teaching and learning needs.
- Pilot and monitor effective strategies for improving the achievement for Aboriginal students.

Implement a Targeted Professional Development Plan That Builds Expertise in Selected Best Practices

- Provide leadership and assistance in developing training and coaching support for principals, teacher-leaders, assistant principals, and central staff in regard to supporting teaching and learning.
- Research best practises and assist school coordinators in the development of professional development plans for high school students with special needs.
- Align professional development days and inservices with instructional focus areas.
- Use a variety of models of professional development including coaching, classroom intervisitation, etc.
- Organize the Professional Development Calendar to reflect instructional focus areas and district priorities.
- Organize, in conjunction with the Academic Challenge Review, professional development for staff in regards to supporting intellectually gifted children.
- Host *New Teacher* and *Best Practices* institutes featuring classroom visitations and inservices around instructional focus areas.
- Develop, test and implement an integrated system designed to help staff:
 - Assess their skills
 - Identify training opportunities

- Facilitate search for appropriate training
- Simplify registration and payment processes
- Offer a computerized historical record of staff training.
- Continue to assist staff with the interpretation of data and how to find measurement tools to determine student progress.
- Continue to build coaching capacity within our district.
- Provide schools with the option to create customized, school-based professional development plans with the assistance of a lead consultant to support teaching and learning.

Realign Resources (People, Time, Talent, Energy and Money) to Support the Instructional Focus

- Provide assistance to principals and administrative assistants in preparation of financial projections to enable them to realign funds to optimize expenditures.
- Maintain a budget planning system that assists schools with aligning resources with the schoolwide instructional focus.
- Implement a comprehensive *Facilities Management Plan* that provides scheduled services to maintain critical elements of the school building.
- Implement the *Technology as a Utility* initiative in an effort to reduce overall costs related to technology infrastructure, acquisition and supports.

Engage Families and the Community in Supporting the Instructional Focus

- Ensure that the district is effectively linked with other major organizations to better support district students and families (e.g., Capital Health, Ma'mowe, University, ESHIP, YMCA, Centre for Family Literacy, etc.).
- Facilitate the work of a committee of parent advocates that make recommendations for a broader inclusion of students with special needs in their neighbourhood schools.
- In consultation with parents and community agencies, develop a transition process for students with disabilities into pre-school programs.
- Explore the feasibility of developing a comprehensive program for parental involvement and professional development in enhancing teaching and learning.
- Garner feedback from *Student Advisory Team* regarding how teaching and learning may be enhanced.

SMARTe Targets

- Continue to develop exemplar interim measures which schools can use as models when creating or selecting assessment tools to monitor the impact of their instructional focus.
- Provide support in the collection and interpretation of data from teacher awarded marks, provincial achievement tests, project-specific assignments and the highest level of achievement tests.
- Monitor the implementation of HK.AR and provide support to schools with respect to use of the common progress report templates.
- Generate a variety of reports related to HLAT achievement, senior high course achievement and retention, etc.

Principal as Instructional Leader

- Develop service models designed to reduce the principals' time in the areas of staffing, technology and property management.
- Seek input from principals regarding how Central Services can further assist and support the work of our schools.

Process Goal

Every school will provide evidence of achieving high standards of citizenship, conduct, safety and well-being of students and staff

- Establish a character education framework, for kindergarten to grade 12, to assist in creating a safe and cooperative culture in schools.
- Provide professional development opportunities related to student behavior and conduct.
- Coordinate services to provide orientation, information and support to new teachers hired to the district.
- Liaise with the Alberta Teachers' Association and University of Alberta Mentorship Programs to provide ongoing support for teachers.
- Develop a *Graduate Profile* to assist schools in meeting their students' educational and career goals.

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