

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

September 10, 2002

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Highest Level of Achievement Test Results: June 2002

ORIGINATOR: Bob Holt, Executive Director

RESOURCE

STAFF: Anne Mulgrew, Lorie Welk

INFORMATION

Overview

The major generalizations from the 2001-2002 administration of the Highest Level of Achievement Tests (HLAT's) are as follows.

- The percentage of students reading at or above grade level decreased by 0.5 per cent relative to previous year.
- The percentage of students judged to be writing at or above grade level increased by 1.4 per cent relative to the previous year.
- The percentages of students judged to be writing at the proficient and excellent levels of performance increased relative to the previous year.
- The percentage of students who demonstrated one or more years growth in reading decreased by 0.9 per cent relative to the previous year.
- The percentage of students who demonstrated one or more years growth in writing increased by 1.1 per cent relative to the previous year.

Introduction

During the two week time period of April 22 to May 3, 2002, students enrolled in grades 1 to 9 wrote the Highest Level of Achievement Tests (HLAT) in reading, and students enrolled in grades 1 through 8 were administered the writing task. The reading test consisted of the reading comprehension subtest of the Canadian Test of Basic Skills. The writing test was a locally developed prompt (Appendix I) that was the same for all students. The prompt was field tested by students enrolled in grades 1 to 9 in another school district in the spring of 2001. The results from the field testing were used to

- verify that students across this age span could successfully respond to the prompt
- provide additional samples of student work to further refine grade level writing criteria
- provide task-specific samples of student work to assist teachers in scoring

Student writing was marked by classroom teachers who submitted a grade level of achievement and a performance score for each piece of writing. A 4-point holistic scale ranging from limited to excellent was used to determine the performance score. The grade level of achievement criteria and performance rubric are included in Appendix II.

Results

Table 1 provides information on the number of students writing HLAT's by enrolment grade. Students registered in a division rather than a grade were included in this analysis by equating their year-in-school to an enrolment grade.

**TABLE 1
DISTRICT STUDENTS PARTICIPATING IN THE
HIGHEST LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT TESTS: JUNE 2002**

Enrolment Grade	Reading						Writing					
	Wrote		Exempt		Absent		Wrote		Exempt		Absent	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	5152	90.5	284	5.0	255	4.5	5217	91.7	210	3.7	264	4.6
2	5447	94.2	100	1.7	236	4.1	5470	94.6	82	1.4	231	4.0
3	5524	96.1	56	1.0	170	2.9	5512	95.9	47	0.8	191	3.3
4	5613	95.9	60	1.0	183	3.1	5599	95.6	57	1.0	200	3.4
5	5952	96.2	65	1.0	172	2.8	5927	95.8	59	0.9	203	3.3
6	5842	96.5	57	0.9	156	2.6	5809	95.9	56	0.9	190	3.2
7	5942	95.3	33	0.5	264	4.2	5910	94.7	34	0.6	295	4.7
8	5945	95.3	27	0.4	268	4.3	5868	94.1	27	0.4	345	5.5
9	5738	93.6	40	0.6	354	5.8	DID NOT WRITE					
2002 Total	51155	94.9	722	1.3	2058	3.8	45312	94.8	572	1.2	1919	4.0
2001 Total	51173	96.1	621	1.2	1437	2.7	33965	95.9	420	1.2	1041	2.9
2000 Total	51072	96.0	538	1.0	1592	3.0	33586	95.2	382	1.1	1294	3.7

For the reading component, the participation rate ranged from a low of 90.5 per cent at grade 1 to a high of 96.5 per cent at grade 6. The grade 1 data is influenced by 136 out of 241 French immersion students being exempted from the reading test. Overall, 1.3 per cent of students were declared exempt and 3.8 per cent of students were absent from the reading test. These numbers reflect a slight increase (0.1 per cent) in the percentage of students declared exempt and a 1.1 per cent increase in the percentage of students absent relative to 2001 data.

In 2002, students enrolled in grades 3 and 6 were also administered the writing task. Grade 9 students will be included in the 2003 HLAT administration. For the writing component, the participation rate ranged from a low of 91.7 per cent at grade 1 to a high of 95.9 per cent at grades 3 and 6. As with reading, 136 French immersion students enrolled in grade 1 were exempted from the writing task.

Analysis of Results by Enrolment Grade

The following guidelines were followed in analyzing the data:

- students exempted from either the reading or writing component were included in the data as “not yet 1” grade level of achievement
- students whose raw scores on the multiple-choice reading test were lower than random chance were classified as “grade level of achievement undetermined” and, for purposes of analysis, were included as being more than two years below enrolment grade in reading
- students who were absent are not included in the data

Comparison of 2002 Results to 2001 Results

Table 2 provides a two-year comparison of the percentage of students achieving a grade level of achievement equal to or greater than their enrolment grade for both the reading and writing components of HLAT.

**TABLE 2
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS ACHIEVING A GRADE LEVEL
OF ACHIEVEMENT EQUAL TO OR GREATER THAN THEIR
ENROLMENT GRADE: JUNE 2001 AND 2002**

Enrolment Grade	Percentage of Students			
	Reading		Writing	
	2001	2002	2001	2002
1	87.4	84.6	86.2	84.0
2	85.0	85.3	88.9	89.7
3	85.2	84.6	n/a	89.1
4	83.2	83.5	84.3	88.2
5	85.1	84.1	84.9	86.0
6	84.9	85.5	n/a	87.1
7	87.5	87.3	85.7	87.0
8	84.7	84.3	84.4	86.0
9	86.1	85.9	n/a	n/a
Total	85.5	85.0	85.7	87.1

From Table 2, the following generalizations can be made:

- in June 2002, the percentage of students attaining a grade level of achievement in reading equal to or greater than their enrolment grade ranged from a low of 83.5 per cent at grade 4 to a high of 87.3 per cent at grade 7
- in June 2002, the percentage of students who achieved a grade level of achievement in writing equal to or greater than their enrolment grade ranged from a low of 84.0 per cent at grade 1 to a high of 89.7 per cent at grade 2
- at a district level, the percentage of students attaining a grade level of achievement equal to or greater than their enrolment grade decreased 0.5 per cent for reading, and increased 1.4 per cent for writing compared to 2001
- the percentage of students reading at or above grade level increased for enrolment grades 2, 4 and 6 but decreased for grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 9 between 2001 and 2002
- the percentage of students judged to be writing at or above grade level increased for all enrolment grades where data was available for both 2001 and 2002, with the exception of grade 1

Reading Results

Table 3 provides detailed information for 2000, 2001 and 2002 on the reading component of the HLAT. This analysis compares students' grade level of achievement in reading to the grade level in which students are enrolled.

**TABLE 3
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF 2000, 2001 and 2002 HLAT
GRADE LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT (GL of A)
READING SCORES BY ENROLMENT GRADE**

Grade	Year	>Minus 2	Minus 2	Minus 1	AT *	Plus 1	Plus 2	>Plus 2	N
1	2002			15.4	66.8	15.9	1.9		5436
1	2001			12.6	68.2	16.7	2.5		5552
1	2000			15.3	66.1	16.5	2.1		5513
2	2002		3.3	11.4	65.6	16.6	3.1		5547
2	2001		3.5	11.5	63.5	17.7	3.8		5545
2	2000		3.1	13.1	63.6	17.2	3.0		5530
3	2002	2.2	3.5	9.7	63.7	18.5	2.4		5580
3	2001	2.3	3.7	8.9	63.7	19.0	2.5		5601
3	2000	2.1	3.9	9.2	66.1	16.9	1.8		5875
4	2002	3.0	3.3	10.2	66.5	14.7	2.3		5673
4	2001	3.4	3.8	9.6	67.1	13.9	2.2		5960
4	2000	3.2	2.6	9.8	67.3	15.0	2.1		5836
5	2002	4.0	3.1	8.8	60.1	21.2	2.8		6017
5	2001	3.5	2.9	8.5	60.0	21.3	3.8		5859
5	2000	2.9	2.7	10.2	61.0	19.8	3.4		5861
6	2002	3.9	2.3	8.3	61.6	19.3	4.6		5899
6	2001	3.6	2.2	9.3	60.9	19.1	4.9		5904
6	2000	3.5	2.0	9.7	60.3	19.7	4.8		5786
7	2002	4.3	1.5	6.9	62.8	20.1	4.4		5975
7	2001	3.4	1.6	7.5	62.5	20.1	4.9		5892
7	2000	3.0	1.7	8.8	61.8	19.6	5.1		5724
8	2002	3.9	1.6	10.2	58.6	20.7	5.0		5972
8	2001	3.5	1.4	10.4	58.8	21.3	4.7		5751
8	2000	3.4	1.4	10.8	58.9	21.0	4.5		5730
9	2002	4.1	1.9	8.0	63.5	18.5	4.0		5778
9	2001	3.5	1.9	8.6	63.5	18.8	3.8		5730
9	2000	3.0	1.7	8.3	63.6	19.7	3.7		5755
Total	2002	2.9	2.3	9.8	63.2	18.4	3.4		51877
Total	2001	2.6	2.3	9.6	63.1	18.7	3.7		51794
Total	2000	2.4	2.1	10.5	63.2	18.4	3.4		51610

* "At" Means GL of A Equals Enrolment Grade

For the population of students that wrote the reading test or were exempted, the following generalizations can be made:

- 63.2 per cent of the students achieved a grade level of achievement in reading commensurate with their enrolment grade (an increase of 0.1 per cent from 2001)
- 21.8 per cent achieved a grade level of achievement in reading that was higher than their enrolment grade (a decrease of 0.6 per cent from 2001)
- 15.0 per cent achieved a grade level of achievement that was lower than their enrolment grade (an increase of 0.5 per cent from 2001)

Writing Results

Table 4 provides results from 2000, 2001 and 2002 on the writing component of the HLAT.

TABLE 4
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF 2000, 2001 AND 2002 HLAT
GRADE LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT (GL OF A)
WRITING SCORES BY ENROLMENT GRADE

Grade	Year	>Minus 2	Minus 2	Minus 1	AT *	Plus 1	Plus 2	>Plus 2	N
1	2002			16.0	83.7	0.3			5427
1	2001			13.8	85.7	0.4			5558
1	2000			17.7	81.4	0.9			5503
2	2002		4.2	6.1	89.3	0.4			5552
2	2001		4.3	6.8	88.4	0.5			5541
2	2000		3.6	6.9	88.8	0.6	0.1		5500
3	2002	2.1	2.5	6.4	88.7	0.3			5559
4	2002	2.9	3.3	5.6	87.9	0.3			5656
4	2001	3.1	3.9	8.7	83.8	0.5	0.1		5925
4	2000	3.1	3.4	7.6	85.2	0.6	0.1		5809
5	2002	3.6	4.0	6.4	85.5	0.5			5986
5	2001	4.1	4.1	6.9	84.4	0.4	0.1		5830
5	2000	3.2	4.8	8.5	82.5	1.0			5817
6	2002	4.3	3.3	5.3	86.9	0.2			5865
7	2002	6.3	3.0	3.8	85.4	1.4	0.1		5944
7	2001	6.3	3.0	5.0	84.8	0.8	0.1		5831
7	2000	6.2	3.2	5.7	84.2	0.7			5680
8	2002	6.3	2.5	5.2	85.0	0.9	0.1		5895
8	2001	6.1	3.5	5.9	83.5	0.8	0.1		5700
8	2000	6.7	2.9	6.3	83.0	1.0	0.1		5659
Total	2002	3.2	2.9	6.8	86.5	0.6	0.0		45884
Total	2001	3.3	3.2	7.8	85.1	0.6	0.0		34385
Total	2000	3.2	3.0	8.7	84.2	0.8	0.1		33968

* "At" Means GL Of A Equals Enrolment Grade

For the population of students that were administered the writing test or were exempted, the following generalizations can be made:

- 86.5 per cent of the students achieved a grade level of achievement in writing commensurate with their enrolment grade (an increase of 1.4 per cent from 2001)
- 0.6 per cent of the students attained a grade level of achievement in writing that was higher than their enrolment grade (the same as 2001)
- 12.9 per cent of the students attained a grade level of achievement in writing that was lower than their enrolment grade (a decrease of 1.4 per cent from 2001)

Differences Between Reading and Writing

Although the percentages of students achieving at or above their enrolment grade were very similar for reading and writing, the distribution of scores was very different. This information is provided in Table 5.

**TABLE 5
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SCORES
FOR READING AND WRITING: JUNE 2002**

Enrolment Grade	Reading			Writing		
	Below	At	Above	Below	At	Above
1	15.4	66.8	17.8	16.0	83.7	0.3
2	14.7	65.6	19.7	10.3	89.3	0.4
3	15.4	63.7	20.9	11.0	88.7	0.3
4	16.5	66.5	17.0	11.8	87.9	0.3
5	15.9	60.1	24.0	14.0	85.5	0.5
6	14.5	61.6	23.9	12.9	86.9	0.2
7	12.7	62.8	24.5	13.1	85.4	1.5
8	15.7	58.6	25.7	14.0	85.0	1.0
9	14.0	63.5	22.5	DID NOT WRITE		
2002 Total	15.0	63.2	21.8	12.9	86.5	0.6
2001 Total	14.5	63.1	22.4	14.3	85.1	0.6
2000 Total	15.0	63.2	21.8	14.9	84.2	0.9

From the information in Table 5, the following generalizations can be made:

- although approximately the same per cent of students are below grade level for reading and writing, few students are judged to be above grade level for writing
- the percentage of students below grade level in reading ranges from 12.7 per cent (grade 7) to 16.5 per cent (grade 4)
- the percentage of students below grade level in writing ranges from 10.3 per cent (grade 2) to 16.0 per cent (grade 1)
- the percentage of students below grade level in reading increased between 2001 and 2002
- the percentage of students below grade level in writing has decreased over the past three years

Very few students were judged to be above grade level in writing. This pattern of results is very similar to those obtained in the past three years, and may reflect the reluctance of staff to judge students' writing at a grade level that exceeds their enrolment grade.

Writing Scores: Grade Level of Achievement and Performance

Writing scores were analyzed to determine the distribution of performance scores (limited to excellent) based on the grade level of achievement of the writing. This information is provided in Table 6.

**TABLE 6
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF PERFORMANCE SCORES IN
WRITING BY GRADE LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT: JUNE 2002**

Grade Level of Achievement	Limited	Adequate	Proficient	Excellent	N
<1	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1517
1	23.3	41.9	23.4	11.4	5191
2	21.4	47.2	22.4	9.0	5792
3	16.5	43.9	29.2	10.3	5766
4	17.2	44.9	26.4	11.4	5809
5	17.1	47.2	27.9	7.8	5753
6	12.4	45.3	31.1	11.2	5497
7	12.7	44.5	32.5	10.3	5398
8	10.2	45.3	33.2	11.3	5097
9		21.3	34.4	44.3	61
10		66.7	33.3		3
2002 Total	19.2	43.5	27.3	10.0	45884
2001 Total	22.4	44.5	24.2	9.0	34385
2000 Total	24.1	42.3	23.6	10.0	33968

Certain generalizations can be made from Table 6. These generalizations do not apply to papers judged to be at a grade 9 or 10 level of achievement since these papers have been judged to be at a grade level of achievement that is above enrolment grade. The following generalizations are apparent for papers judged to be at a grade 1 through grade 8 level of achievement:

- the percentage of students judged as “limited” tends to decrease as the grade level of achievement increases.
- the percentage of papers judged to be “adequate” remains fairly consistent.
- the percentage of papers judged “proficient” tends to increase as the grade level of achievement increases.
- the percentage of papers judged “excellent” remains relatively consistent across grade level of achievement.

The overall results for 2002 compared to 2001 indicate that the percentages of papers judged proficient and excellent increased. The percentages of papers judged limited and adequate decreased.

Growth Information

A by-student comparison was undertaken to compare reading and writing scores for individual students over two years. This data includes only those students who had a reading score or a writing score for both 2001 and 2002. Table 7 provides information with respect to the change in reading scores over the two test administrations.

TABLE 7
HLAT READING
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHOSE READING SCORES CHANGED
ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES BETWEEN 2001 AND 2002

Enrolment Grade	Number of Students	Regressed More Than 1 Grade Level	Regressed 1 Grade Level	Grade Level Stayed the Same	Grade Level Increased by 1	Grade Level Increased More Than 1
1	79	0.0	2.5	45.6	50.6	1.3
2	4989	0.0	0.9	17.2	67.8	14.1
3	5049	0.2	1.8	17.8	66.0	14.2
4	5117	0.3	1.1	18.6	67.2	12.8
5	5487	0.4	0.8	10.6	68.4	19.8
6	5404	0.2	0.7	14.2	70.0	14.9
7	5290	0.4	1.4	14.2	67.3	16.7
8	5400	0.3	0.9	16.0	68.5	14.3
9	5186	0.5	1.2	17.3	66.6	14.4
2002 Total	42001	0.3	1.1	15.7	67.7	15.2
2001 Total	41672	0.3	1.0	14.9	67.6	16.2
2000 Total	41589	0.3	1.0	15.0	67.6	16.1

The data in Table 7 indicates that 82.9 per cent of students increased their reading grade level of achievement by one or more grades between 2001 and 2002. This represents a decrease of 0.9 per cent when compared to the growth data for 2001. For 15.7 per cent of students, the 2002 grade level of achievement in reading remained the same as in 2001. For 1.4 per cent of the students, the grade level of achievement in 2002 was one or more grade levels below their score in 2001.

A total of 79 students enrolled in grade 1 for a second time in 2002 also had a reading score in 2001. Just over half of these students increased their grade level of achievement in reading by one or more grades between 2001 and 2002.

Table 8 provides information with respect to the change in writing scores over the last two test administrations.

TABLE 8
HLAT WRITING
PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS WHOSE WRITING SCORES CHANGED
ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES BETWEEN 2001 AND 2002

Enrolment Grade	Number of Students	Regressed More Than 1 Grade Level	Regressed 1 Grade Level	Grade Level Stayed the Same	Grade Level Increased by 1	Grade Level Increased More Than 1
2	4988	0.0	0.5	6.2	86.9	6.4
3	4998	0.1	0.5	6.1	89.0	4.3
5	5420	0.1	0.8	6.6	85.2	7.3
6	5333	0.2	1.0	5.0	86.4	7.4
8	5292	0.9	1.4	6.0	84.2	7.5
2002 Total	26031	0.3	0.8	6.0	86.3	6.6
2001 Total	15327	0.4	1.2	6.6	84.4	7.4
2000 Total	15164	0.4	1.3	7.3	83.5	7.5

Growth information in writing is available only for students enrolled in grades 2, 3, 5, 6 and 8. This is because students enrolled in grade 9 were not administered the HLAT writing task in 2002 and students enrolled in grades 3, 6 and 9 were not administered the writing task in 2001.

The data in Table 8 indicates that 92.9 per cent of students increased their writing score by one or more grade levels between 2001 and 2002, an increase of 1.1 percent from 2001 data. For 6.0 per cent of the students, the grade level of achievement in writing in 2002 remained the same as it had been in 2001. For 1.1 per cent of the students, the grade level in writing decreased by one or more grades.

A comparison of Table 7 and Table 8 indicates that a higher percentage of students achieved one or more year's growth in writing (92.9 per cent) than in reading (82.9 per cent) between 2001 and 2002.

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