

## EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

September 12, 2006

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: L. Thomson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Update on Cycle 3 AISI Projects

ORIGINATOR: T. Parker, Executive Director

RESOURCE

STAFF: Sig Jensen, Louise Osland, Sandra Stoddard, Corrie Ziegler

### INFORMATION

In June, 2006, upon completion of an extensive consultation process with staff, students and parents, the district submitted five separate proposals to Alberta Education as part of the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AISI). Each AISI proposal is directly connected to District Priorities, Legacy and Belief Statements. While all five projects have the goal of ensuring students reach their potential, with a focus on students at risk and enhancement of high school completion rates, each project outlines a unique approach to realizing this goal. Schools have chosen to participate in the project that will best meet the learning needs of their students and staff.

On August 23, the district received very positive feedback from Alberta Education's School Improvement Branch, as well as some suggestions for minor revisions to each of the five proposals. This feedback was incorporated into each of the proposals and the proposals were re-submitted to Alberta Education on September 1<sup>st</sup>. On September 7, notification was received that all five proposals were recommended for formal approval.

This report provides further information about each proposal. "Vision statements", crafted by the Project Leadership Teams provide a succinct summary of the goal of each project. As well, sample comments received from Alberta Education's review of the proposals are included.

#### General Information about all AISI Projects

Each project will be coordinated and managed by Project Leadership Teams (PLTs), consisting of school and central staff. These teams will conduct monthly meetings and discuss project progress, analyze data, share successes, respond to challenges, monitor resource allocation, plan project professional development, facilitate ongoing consultation within and across projects, as well as share project information with the Board, the Superintendent and Executive Directors. Through the work of PLTs, district leadership capacity will be enhanced.

The impact of these projects on student achievement will be measured by assessment tools such as: Highest Level Achievement Tests (HLATs), Provincial Achievement Tests, Diploma Exams, course completion rates, teacher awarded marks, and Prior Level of Achievement scores. Student Achievement Services worked closely with Student Assessment to identify baseline data and determine targets for each project. As in the past, individual schools will continue to monitor the impact of the AISI project through school based assessments such as teacher developed assessments, looking at student work, school based interim measures, etc.

In addition, selected questions from district student, staff and parent satisfaction surveys, as well as project specific surveys will assist in informing schools, PLTs, the district and Alberta Education of project progress as well as next steps.

Further information is provided in Appendix I, which provides a visual display of the number of schools in each project, as well as the number of students per project.

#### Using Assessment to Enhance Student Learning – 71 Schools

Vision Statement: Encourage and enhance the use of assessment tools to guide instruction and improve learning so that there is a clear understanding of where students are at, where they need to go and how they can be supported in getting there.

Feedback from Alberta Education: “This project is one of many assessment projects being proposed by school authorities for AISI Cycle 3. It is obviously an area of great need. If it contributes to students’ being more involved in their own learning it will be very useful.”

#### Learning with Technologies – 12 schools

Vision Statement: Capitalize on the potential of technologies to engage students and staff and empower them to succeed.

Feedback from Alberta Education: “Technology is an area that merits investigation because there seems to be a widening gap between how youth and adults (specifically teachers) use it. This project could provide some insights into the issues and benefits of using technologies. Approaching it from the students’ perspective will enhance its value.”

#### Interagency Collaboration – 18 Schools

Vision Statement: Bridging the efforts of families, schools and community agencies in developing a shared responsibility for the optimum development of children.

Feedback from Alberta Education: “This project will provide useful longitudinal data for students in a Full Day Kindergarten program. It introduces exploration of the impact of multifaceted collaborative efforts to help youngsters who can benefit from Full Day Kindergarten to help them become successful learners. It should generate a lot of interest as it will advance our understanding of components necessary to help these children. I’m really looking forward to working with you on this project!”

#### Deepening Literacy Instruction – 40 Schools

Vision Statement: Yet to be determined by the PLT. A draft statement reads: Enhance students’ reading and writing skills and build literacy expertise in schools.

Feedback from Alberta Education: “This project will explore how literacy can be enhanced through a variety of approaches. It could benefit from a greater emphasis on how it will impact the students (e.g., How will students deepen their knowledge and skills in literacy?).”

#### Engaging all Learners Through Differentiated Instruction – 78 Schools

Vision Statement: Yet to be determined by the PLT. A draft statement reads: All teachers will meet a spectrum of student learning needs by using a range of instructional and management strategies.

Feedback from Alberta Education: “This project will contribute to our understanding of how differentiated instruction will help students improve their learning. Differentiated instruction actually consists of a variety of different strategies (e.g., learning styles, brain-based instructional designs, etc.) which you could make more explicit.”

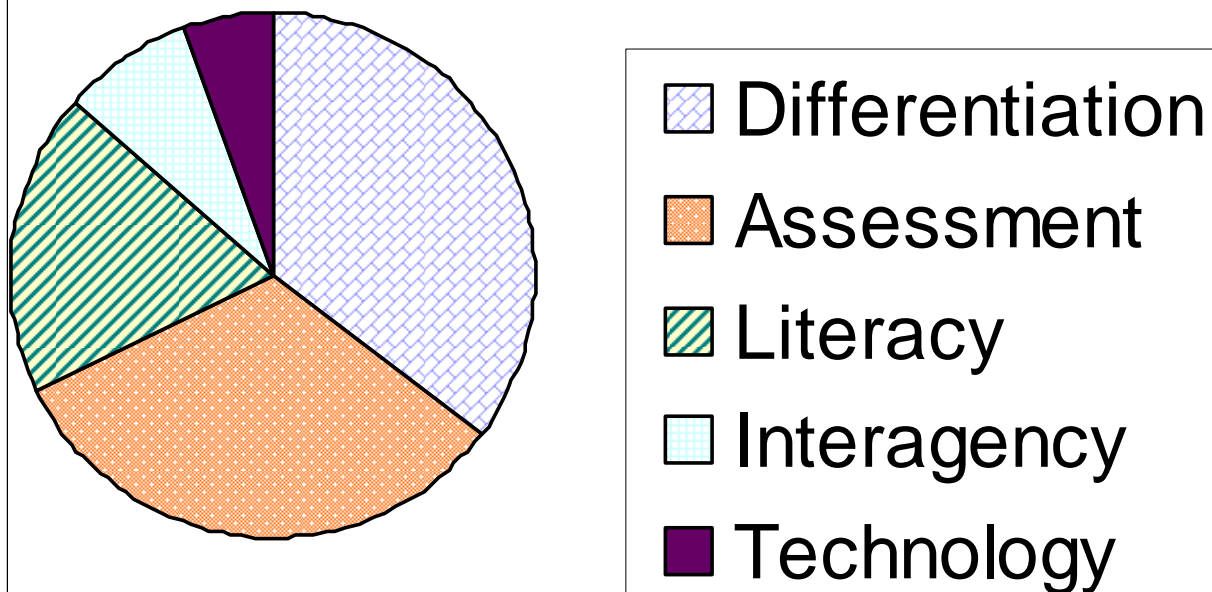
#### Summary

The district is embarking on a new and exciting three year journey to enhance student achievement and high school completion rates. This journey will be co-constructed by district staff. The energy, enthusiasm, commitment and dedication already demonstrated by members of the PLTs is a very strong beginning to this journey of achieving project and district goals. Through the continued support from the Board, senior administration and Alberta Education our district students will continue to demonstrate enhanced achievement and high school completion.

LT:gj

APPENDIX I – Number of Schools/Students in each AISI Project

### Number of Schools in each AISI Project



### Number of Students in Each AISI Project

