

## EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

April 10, 2001

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dossall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Donnan School: Sports Alternative Program

ORIGINATOR: D. Blackwell, Principal, Donnan School

RESOURCE

STAFF: Henry Madsen, Phil Mark, Dan Peacocke

### INFORMATION

Donnan School is a Kindergarten to Grade 9 school with a population of 310 students and serves the local neighbourhood of King Edward Park as well as the Meadows neighbourhoods in Mill Woods. Because Donnan is the district site for the Sports Alternative Program, 135 of our students arrive from other neighbourhoods in Edmonton, as well as the nearby communities of St. Albert, Bruderheim, Ardrossan, Beaumont, Calmar, Stony Plain, Sherwood Park, and Leduc.

At a Sports School Symposium held in November of 2000, a call was made by the organizing committee for all school districts to recognize and support the commitment that athletes make to their sport. The committee urged schools and school districts to provide flexible scheduling and academic programming so that athletes could be successful both academically and athletically. Edmonton Public Schools can be very proud of the leadership they have demonstrated in this regard. As of September 1996, Donnan was one of three schools chosen by our district to provide programming for athletes in Grades 4 - 12. Ross Sheppard and W.P. Wagner High Schools were the other two schools that were chosen.

Students with a passion for a sport can find it difficult to do well in a traditional school environment. Typically, students either drop out of their sport or they are forced to accept less than satisfactory academic performance. The Sports Alternative Program at Donnan provides students with the opportunity to integrate their desire for sport with an expectation for excellence in academics. In keeping with the motto of Donnan school, "Academics and Athletics; Excellence Together", we strive to provide opportunities for our students to be successful in both their academic endeavours and their athletic pursuits.

Students are expected to make optimum use of their class time, concentrate their efforts and focus on their subjects while at school. They learn to organize their responsibilities, prioritize their tasks and adjust to the high standards that are set to ensure success in the

program. Students typically learn to work efficiently, doing more in less time. Our teaching staff understand and support the work of our athletes. They know that self-discipline and dedication fostered by a commitment to sports transfers easily into success within the classroom.

The support provided by Donnan School continues to evolve and includes:

- increased instructional time devoted to learning in core subjects
- staff that continually adjust teaching approaches to maximize learning opportunities
- a homework tracking program to support assignment completion
- ongoing communication of achievement through progress reports and interim “progress updates”
- a modified school calendar that provides families with a unique scheduling alternative
- classes that provide tutorial help
- flexible scheduling and assignment deadlines to accommodate the peaks and valleys of athletic competition
- flexible complementary programming to include sports related topics such as Food Basics (Nutrition), Sports First Aid, and Communications and Presentation Skills

At Donnan School, we have found that these implemented strategies promotes the academic achievement of **all** our students, not only those involved in the Sports Alternative Program.

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