

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

April 11, 2000

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dosdall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Edmonton Student Health Initiative Partnership Status Report

ORIGINATOR: Angus McBeath, Department Head

RESOURCE
STAFF: Gloria Chalmers, Anne-Louise Charette

INFORMATION

The purpose of this report is to provide trustees with updated information on the status of the Edmonton Student Health Initiative Partnership (ESHIP).

Since the last report in September, ten new partners have joined ESHIP. There are currently thirty-seven partners in ESHIP, including fifteen charter and private schools, sixteen private early childhood services operators, three school districts, and the regional authorities for health, mental health, and children and family services. The partnership has a steering committee of eleven representatives from the partners, chaired by Brenda Higham, the coordinator hired by the partnership.

There are seven projects identified by ESHIP in response to the needs identified by school staff, parents, and service providers. Services identified as being most critical were emotional/behavioral supports, speech-language services, nursing, and occupational and physical therapy. The current status of each project is summarized in Appendix I. Much of the activity this year has been focused on developing operational models for each of the services, recruitment and orienting/training of staff, and arranging for accommodation of the staff. A major component of the process for each project has been to ensure that those partners who would be receiving the services were involved with those who would be providing service in identifying service needs, referral process, staff expertise required, and so on.

The large number of new staff that was added through the student health initiative could not be accommodated in existing offices. It was decided to establish four new centres in schools to house interdisciplinary service teams. These centres will house staff from both Capital Health and Ma'Mōwe, to facilitate interdisciplinary collaborative services. New district consulting services staff are being housed at Belvedere.

Edmonton Public Schools donated space to the partnership in the Alberta School for the Deaf and Killarney School, and Edmonton Catholic Schools donated space in St. Kevin's School and St. Thomas More School. Alberta Infrastructure is providing funding to make these

spaces functional for office use. Capital Health is donating approximately \$140,000 in furniture and Ma'Mōwe is providing a supervisory position for emotional/behavioral services at no cost to the partnership. Some staff has already moved into their new space.

The first steps have been undertaken to provide a single referral procedure and destination. Common referral forms have been developed to enable schools to access ESHIP services from Capital Health and Ma'Mōwe. These will go to a central intake, be recorded, and then be sent to the appropriate staff member. This process allows the partnership to collect information on the number of students seen and the disciplines providing service. Collection of the information is a provincial requirement. Consulting Services will continue to use its referral forms for the 2000-2001 school year. Consulting Services referrals will be sent to Belvedere and referrals for the Mental Health Classrooms will be sent to Spruce Avenue School.

The partnership received \$5.2 million for the 1999-2000 school year, and will receive an equivalent amount for the 2000-2001 school year. The province allows surplus funds to be carried forward to the next budget year. The partnership expects to carry forward approximately \$1.8 million. These funds will be used to increase already planned services or fund additional projects.

Some services are currently in place and all services will be fully implemented in September. It should be noted that Capital Health had to deploy most of their staff to participate in the meningitis vaccination campaign. This delayed implementation of their new services in schools by several weeks.

There is a commitment from the ESHIP partners that the partnership will use the principles, planning process, and increased understanding of the other organizations that evolved through this initiative to foster other collaborative endeavors in the city.

Schools have received information packages about ESHIP services and referral forms and an information session is scheduled for April 26, 2000.

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Appendix I New and Enhanced Student Health Services Provided Through ESHIP

**NEW AND ENHANCED STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES
PROVIDED THROUGH ESHIP**

Speech Language Pathology Services

Prior to the student health initiative, Capital Health had 23.5 FTE speech-language pathologists and no speech-language pathology aides (SLPAs) serving Edmonton students. ESHIP funding has allowed Capital Health to add 8.9 FTE speech-language pathologist (SLP) positions and 26.5 FTE (SLPA) positions. There are 16.5 FTE SLPAs working with pathologists in schools, and the other ten positions will be added for September. There are currently 3 SLP unfilled positions. Services have been extended to grade 4 and will be extended to grades 5 and 6 in 2000-2001.

Consulting Services has added 2 FTE SLPs in April to provide treatment services to Edmonton students who are autistic, dependent handicapped, or sensory-multi-handicapped. SLPAs will be hired to assist in treatment. Prior to this ESHIP funding, services were restricted to assessment and consultation. Although treatment services will be available to schools at no cost, there will continue to be a charge for assessment and consultation. It is planned to hire 2 FTE SLPAs for September.

Occupational and Physical Therapy Services

Until ESHIP funding was available Capital Health did not provide occupational or physical therapy services to children in schools. Nine new therapist positions were created, 7 FTE in occupational therapy and 1.6 FTE in physical therapy. All of these are filled with the exception of 0.8 FTE physical therapist and services are now available. By September the remaining position will be filled and two or three rehabilitation aides will be added to assist in the provision of these services.

Consulting Services added 0.6 FTE occupational therapist and 0.6 FTE physical therapist in February to provide treatment services to Edmonton students who are autistic, dependent handicapped, or sensory-multi-handicapped. There is expected to be a small increase in these services for September. As is the case with speech-language services, treatment services will be available to schools at no cost but there will continue to be a charge for assessment and consultation.

School Nursing Services

Prior to the student health initiative, there were 23.3 FTE nurses serving Edmonton schools. School-based nursing services have been enhanced by 16.5 FTE. These positions have been filled and nurses are starting to contact schools regarding the new services. The additional support is targeted to schools with high student health needs rather than being distributed evenly among schools.

Home Care Services

Home Care provides home-based services to children with complex medical conditions. Since September, Home Care services have been expanded to include assistance to schools

in providing for these children during the school day, as well as consulting on best practices for other school children who have complex or critical medical needs that must be addressed in the school setting. Home Care has added 1 FTE registered nurse, 0.8 FTE occupational therapist and 0.2 FTE physical therapist to provide school-based services in Edmonton.

Bright Program

The Bright Program will offer assistance to students, their families and school staff to understand and accommodate the cognitive, physical and emotional changes experienced by students with acquired brain injury. Two staff members will have offices in Glenrose but do most of their work in schools. The positions have been advertised and staffing is expected by the end of April.

Community Mental Health Classrooms

Two mental health classrooms are being established at Spruce Avenue School to provide education and treatment for elementary and junior high school students with schizophrenia and other neuropsychiatric disorders. ESHIP will provide the mental health services including 2 psychiatric nurses, an occupational therapist, and psychiatric consultation. The district will provide the educational services, and all students will be eligible for severe disabilities funding from Alberta Learning. Admissions will be coordinated through the principal, but involve mental health professionals on the admissions committee. Students accepted for the program will be admitted to the program for May and June.

Emotional/Behavioral Specialists

Twenty emotional/behavioral specialists will be hired by Ma'Mowe Children and Family Services to provide therapeutic support to students in schools. The positions have been advertised and most positions will be filled by May. After orientation, staff will be responding to referrals from schools. In Edmonton Public Schools, these staff will provide primarily group interventions, including training in areas such as anger management, bully proofing, social skills, and resiliency.