

## EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

April 10, 2007

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: B. Holt, Acting Superintendent

SUBJECT: Changes to the Basis of Allocation for 2007-2008

ORIGINATOR: C. McCabe, Executive Director

### RESOURCE

STAFF: Sandra Bassett, Rick Bell, Gloria Chalmers, John Eshenko, Elaine Ford, Rodney French, Joan Gibson, Bill Godfrey, Kathy Goudreau, Gord Hanson, Greg Kushnir, Sandee Lowe; Donna Matheson, Gabe Mancini, Jane Moore, Jamie Pallett, Morrie Smith

### INFORMATION

The basis of allocation is a method of distributing financial resources to schools that is perceived to be fair, equitable and allows for the provision of quality education that reflects the specific needs of students at the local level. The basis does not identify costs for the delivery of programming in schools.

When determining potential changes to the basis of allocation, consideration is given to changing needs within the district, the feedback received from district stakeholders, attitude survey results, budget debrief data, and reactions and advice provided by principals and central staff relative to specific proposals for change. The elements that underpin the potential changes for 2007-2008 are:

- Aligning the basis of allocation more closely with Alberta Education's Funding Framework
- Maximizing the per pupil weighted allocations
- Realigning allocations to high needs schools
- Realigning allocations that support English Language Learners and Aboriginal students

Based on the advice and council from the Basis of Allocation committee, principal support groups, parent groups, senior administration and trustees, the following changes to the basis of allocation have been approved by the Superintendent for 2007-2008:

1. Eliminate the Settlement Grant allocation by rolling one quarter of the amount into the weighted student allocation over the next four years

In 2002 the Provincial Government provided the district with a one-time supplementary allocation (\$16 M) to partially offset the arbitrated salary settlement for teachers. These resources were allocated to schools that same year based on the number of teacher F.T.E. at each school location. Since 2002, all schools have been receiving a "Settlement Grant" allocation based on their 2002-2003 teacher F.T.E. numbers.

In light of the fact that 2002-2003 teacher F.T.E. numbers no longer reflect current staffing levels and the fact that the district no longer receives funding of this sort from the provincial government, it is recommended that the "Settlement Grant" allocation be phased out by rolling one quarter of the amount into the weighted student allocations (levels 1-8) over the next four years. By doing this, the impact on schools will be minimized.

2. Withdraw the Program Enhancement Grant and the Enhanced Opportunity Grant from school allocations and incorporate them into the High Needs Allocation

In 1994 Alberta Education introduced the Program Enhancement Grant (\$255 K) and the Enhanced Opportunity Grant (\$806 K) to the district. Both grants were intended to support programming for students with needs related to low income, ESL and high mobility.

Based on the fact that these two grants are distributed to schools as line items using the same criteria as the district's high needs allocation and the fact that the provincial government no longer provides these grants to the district, it is recommended that the Program Enhancement Grant and the Enhanced Opportunity Grant be phased out over a two year period and the resources previously allocated under these two line items be added to the district's High Needs allocation (\$530,300/year). By doing this, the basis of allocation will be simplified and more appropriately aligned with the Alberta Education Funding pillar. The total amount of resources designated for High Needs would then be approximately \$2.6 million.

3. Establish a "Two Plant" allocation

Currently there are four sites in the district that operate two plant facilities and are required to cover the costs of head custodians for both locations. The four schools are: Amiskwaciy, Ellerslie, Mill Creek/Ritchie and R.J. Scott/Lawton. Currently the basis of allocation does not accommodate these additional expenditures for operating two sites as one decision unit. Therefore, it is recommended that a "two plant" allocation be established and the allocation equal the difference between the rate for a Head Custodian (up to 50,000 sq. ft.) salary and an 8 hour Custodial Assistant (12 month) salary or \$12,511 per school.

4. Fund High Risk English Language Learners at level five

Over the past three years the district has experienced a dramatic increase in English Language Learners (ELL). Some of these students have limited competence in their first language, have little or no experience with formal schooling and are suffering from the effects of trauma because of their experiences of war and refugee camps. These students have unique and challenging programming needs that require additional support beyond the traditional infrastructure offered by schools.

To assist schools with meeting the needs of these students, a new eligibility category has been created. Currently the criteria for this category is being reviewed, however, it is anticipated the minimum requirements would be:

- Confirmation that the students have "refugee" status from the Federal Government,
- Limited experience in formal schooling,
- Significant delays in age appropriate reading and writing competency in both their first language and English, and
- The student was assessed by the English Language Support Services Centre.

It is recommended that students meeting the criteria for this new eligibility code be funded at level five.

5. Increase Aboriginal Education Funds by \$300,000

Edmonton has the second largest urban Aboriginal population in the county. By 2015 it is expected to be the largest. Over the past five years the number of schools with self-identified native populations greater than 15 per cent of their total school population has increased from 33 to 47 schools.

To provide more support for these schools it is recommended that the resources for the Aboriginal education allocation be increased by \$300,000. With these additional resources the fixed amount for the Aboriginal Funds allocation will rise from \$475,000 to \$775,000.

6. Establish a School Closure Allocation

In the past, when schools were closed, designated receiving schools covered the costs associated with moving materials, supplies and with helping students and parents make the transition to their new learning environments. In some instances, these expenses were very large and created undue stress on the receiving school.

To avoid such situations, it is recommended that designated receiving schools be given a one time allocation equivalent to \$100 for every closed school student registered at their site on September 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year. This allocation will only be applicable for designated receiving schools.

7. Full-Day Kindergarten Funding at 1.000 FTE at level one

In 2007-2008 full-day kindergarten programming will be offered in the top 25 high needs schools in the district. It is recommended that funding to support this programming be provided on a per pupil basis and that funding be 1.000 FTE at level 1.

Attachment 1 provides the background, current situation and considerations associated with offering full-day kindergarten programming.

In addition to the recommendations listed above, it is important to note that commencing September 2007, the "site" restriction criteria for Literacy and Strategies allocations will end. Schools providing programming to students who meet the Literacy and Strategies criteria in 2007-2008 will receive a per pupil weighted allocation at level five regardless if they are a district site or not. This change in the basis of allocation was approved by the Superintendent in March 2006.

JRP:bly

Attachment 1– Conference Committee Report, April 3, 2007, Full-Day Kindergarten:  
Background and Considerations

## EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

April 3, 2007

TO: Conference Committee

FROM: B. Holt, Acting Superintendent

SUBJECT: Full-Day Kindergarten: Background and Considerations

ORIGINATOR D. Barrett, Executive Director

RESOURCE

STAFF: Karen Bardy, Gloria Chalmers, Jamie Pallett

This matter relates to confidential information regarding:
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response to trustee request arising from a previous conference committee meeting.</li> </ul> |
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## INFORMATION

**TRUSTEE REQUEST #274, MARCH 6, 2007 (TRUSTEES): PREPARE A REPORT TO PROVIDE A BASIS OF DISCUSSION FOR FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN FUNDING WITH OTHER URBAN BOARDS.** This report provides background information about the benefits and challenges of full-day kindergarten to provide a basis for discussion for full-day kindergarten funding with other urban boards.

**Background:** Existing research on full-day kindergarten (Appendix I) reports mixed findings but, in general, supports the views that children attending full-day programs tend to outperform those who attend for a half-day and that children from educationally disadvantaged families have the most to benefit from full-day kindergarten programming.

The Alberta Commission on Learning's final report released in October 2003 recommended the establishment of full-day kindergarten. The report, based on references to studies conducted in the United States, to a report done for the Calgary Board of Education, to results found in the Northern Lights School Division and to the Dr. Jose da Costa study carried out in collaboration with Edmonton Public Schools, concluded that there are numerous positive benefits from full-day kindergarten programs. As a result, the Commission report provided several recommendations with regard to full-day kindergarten, one of which was that kindergarten "be available on a full-day basis, ideally for all children, but as a first priority, for at-risk children." The province is still studying this recommendation along with a few other outstanding recommendations, including establishing junior kindergarten, from the Commission's report.

The longitudinal study undertaken by Dr. Jose da Costa between 2001 and 2004 involving 18 high needs schools in Edmonton Public produced findings consistent with other research in this area. As reported in the board report of November 29, 2005, "the primary finding of the longitudinal study indicates that full-day kindergarten for lower socio-economic status (SES) students positively influences their achievement levels, at least until the end of grade three. These are the neediest students and they appear to benefit from this programming enhancement for at least four years." Two specific findings are:

- The full-day programs have positively affected children's abilities to read and write in kindergarten, grade one, grade two and grade three.
- Proportions of children, from predominantly low socio-economic backgrounds, achieving at grade level in grade three who completed the full-day kindergarten experience continue to be at the same level with the achievement rates throughout the district.

**Current Situation and Considerations:** The district now offers full-day kindergarten in 18 schools that fall within the top 25 highest needs schools in the district. At inception of full-day kindergarten, the costs were covered through Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AISI) funding. The district received permission to continue to cover the costs for full-day kindergarten in these schools for the second AISI cycle. However, since the second three-year AISI cycle ended last year, the AISI source of funding was no longer available for full-day kindergarten.

The province funds kindergarten students at 0.5 FTE. Costs for the additional 0.5 FTE, at this time, must be provided from the instructional grant received for instruction in grades 1 to 12. The cost of providing full-day kindergarten support to 18 schools in 2006-2007 was \$909,804. Offering full day kindergarten programming at the 25 high needs schools in the district for the 2007-2008 school year would cost \$1.22 million based on 2006-2007 enrolment (Appendix II). This amount does not recognize kindergarten students registered in the alternative programs such as the Ukrainian bilingual program at Balwin school or in the Logos program at Youngstown school but does recognize level four funding provided to students at Prince Charles school.

Funding full-day kindergarten is a major challenge for the district and other boards. By providing full-day kindergarten without additional funding, the district could be viewed as allowing Alberta Education to download the provision to the local level. But, the cost issue itself is complex as one can realistically argue that expending funds in kindergarten is in fact a good investment that may save dollars at a later date in divisions one and two as well as enabling many students to experience success rather than failure in those early years. However, the decision to provide, while it can be demonstrated to be educationally sound, does extend the mandate of school districts. Given the fiscal challenges faced by the district, there is some political vulnerability to broadening the education mandate.

Finally, one could suggest that a district is acting appropriately by continuing to fund full-day kindergarten until such time as the districts are apprised of Alberta Education plans related to priorities identified by Premier Stelmach. Because of the mandate letters the premier provided to each Cabinet Minister detailing priorities and tasks he expects, Alberta Education has established four priority teams who will identify project plan requirements. One such priority team will explore options to provide children with access to early learning opportunities, offering hope that some funding might become available. It should be noted that the team for this priority is within the responsibilities of the director of the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative (ACYI).

BH:ee

APPENDIX I Excerpt from *Full-day Kindergarten: Longitudinal Effects Through to Grade Three*, Jose L. da Costa, Ed.D., Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, February 27, 2005.

APPENDIX II Proposed 2007-08 Full-Day Kindergarten Funded at 1.000 FTE (Level 1)

Excerpts from *Full-day Kindergarten: Longitudinal Effects Through to Grade 3*, Jose L. da Costa, Ed. D., Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, February 27, 2005.

### *Existing Research and Literature*

West, Denton, and Germino-Hausken (2000) asserted that of the approximately 4 million children attending kindergarten in the United States in the 1998/99 school year, 55 percent were enrolled in all-day programs. While 40 states mandated public school jurisdictions to offer kindergarten programs in 2003, only 10 states (these are Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and West Virginia) required that jurisdictions offer full-day kindergarten programs. In Canada, all provinces require public (and separate school jurisdictions where they exist) school jurisdictions to offer kindergarten programming. Only Quebec and New Brunswick (require school jurisdictions to offer full-day kindergarten programming, and only the later mandates that all children must attend full-day kindergarten programs. In both Canada and the United States, regardless of legislation, individual jurisdictions and even schools within jurisdictions offer full-day kindergarten programs to their students, these are often funded by community donors, limited duration operating grants, or by shifting resources from other programs and grade levels to support full-day kindergarten. These full-day programs are often put into place to address the needs of children from socially impoverished backgrounds.

..... Although still mixed, research conducted in the 1990s does show more consistently that children attending full-day kindergarten programs outperform their half-day counterparts, particularly in academic achievement of at-risk students (Clark, 2002; Cryan, Sheehan, Wichel, & Bandy-Hedden, 1992; Elicker & Mathur, 1997; Hough & Bryde, 1996, Koopmans, 1991).

..... In a review of the literature, Corter and Park (1993) found agreement among teachers, principals, consultants, and parents regarding what constituted exemplary kindergarten practice; they noted six principles exhibited in exemplary programs:

1. underpinning the kindergarten program of studies should be a play-based child-centred philosophy;
2. the focus of the program should be on the *whole* child;
3. the child should be placed in the social context;
4. parents and administrators should recognize and support the teacher;
5. all interest groups should work towards structured and balanced programs; and
6. schools and society in general should provide support for kindergarten.

These principles were supported by da Costa and Bell (2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004) who focused on exemplary kindergarten programs in a Canadian context.

..... A review of the literature does, generally, support the notion that full-day kindergarten provides an academic advantage for students. Alber-Kelsay's (1998) study of 77 children in East Brunswick Public School District in New Jersey, found that those grade one children who had attended full-day kindergarten scored higher than their half-day counterparts as measured on all areas of the standardized portfolio assessment measuring instrument. Furthermore, these students performed particularly well on the Developmental Spelling Assessment sub-test of the standardized portfolio. In another longitudinal study spanning three years, Koopmans (1991) found that the long-term effect of attending an all-day kindergarten program provided grade one students with a significant academic advantage over their counterparts who attended half-day kindergarten. These results are supported by Fusaro's (1997) meta-analysis of kindergarten research which found that "overall, students who attended full-day kindergarten manifested significantly greater achievement than half-day

attendees. The U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) is currently following a nationally representative sample of children from kindergarten (in 1998/99) to grade five (in 2004/05). Preliminary analyses of the fall-spring assessment results in reading and mathematics reveal the full-day kindergarten students to have achieved 0.12 standard deviations higher in both subject areas than the sample's half-day kindergarten students after adjusting for child, family, and classroom characteristics (Walston, West, & Rathbun, 2002). A variety of other small-scale or program evaluations generally support the notion of the academic benefits realized by full-day kindergarten students (e.g., Coladarci & Ervin, 2000; Cryan et al., 1992; da Costa & Bell, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004; Elicker & Mathur, 1997; Hough & Bryde, 1996).

Some debate does appear in the literature regarding who might best benefit from full-day kindergarten. Housden and Kam (1992) and Fromboluti (1988) both argue that a developmentally appropriate full-day kindergarten program benefits all children both academically and socially, but it is especially beneficial to children from low socioeconomic (SES) or educationally disadvantaged backgrounds. da Costa and Bell's (2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004) research demonstrated that, by the end of the kindergarten year, children attending full-day kindergarten programs consistently outperform children attending half-day kindergarten programs on Clay's Observation Survey sub-scales which measure emergent readers' abilities to read and write English. da Costa and Bell's work does seem to suggest that children from educationally disadvantaged families have the most to benefit from full-day kindergarten programming. This view is also supported by Clark (2002), and Clark and Kirk (2000).

**PROPOSED 2007-08 FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN FUNDED AT 1.000 FTE  
(LEVEL 1)**

<u>LOCN</u>	<u>SCHOOL</u>	<u>ENROL</u>	<u>ALLOC</u>
100	ABBOTT	34	130,796
104	ATHLONE	23	88,480
502	* BALWIN	28	107,715
236	BELMEAD	33	126,949
109	BELVEDERE	26	100,021
504	BRIGHTVIEW	20	76,939
118	DELTON	36	138,490
507	EASTWOOD	20	76,939
215	EVANSDALE	31	119,255
205	GLENDALE	27	103,868
240	HOMESTEADER	20	76,939
567	HORSE HILL	11	42,316
136	INGLEWOOD	23	88,480
521	JOHN A. MCDOUGALL	34	130,796
519	LAWTON/R.J.SCOTT	10	38,470
520	MCCAULEY	15	57,704
151	MONTROSE	16	61,551
156	NORWOOD	23	88,480
530	PARKDALE	16	61,551
161	** PRINCE CHARLES	48	234,580
196	RUNDLE	25	96,174
212	SHERWOOD	23	88,480
238	SIFTON	43	165,419
537	SPRUCE AVENUE	11	42,316
213	*** YOUNGSTOWN	20	76,939
		616	2,419,648
	COSTS OF ADDITIONAL 0.500 FTE KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMMING		1,209,824

\* BALWIN - EXCLUDES UKRAINIAN KINDERGARTEN ENROLMENT

\*\* PRINCE CHARLES - ALLOCATED AT LEVEL 4

\*\*\* YOUNGSTOWN - EXCLUDES LOGOS KINDERGARTEN ENROLMENT