

## EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

April 28, 2009

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Improving Student Achievement Through Programs: Student, Staff, School and Community Foci

ORIGINATOR: J. Bidulock, Assistant Superintendent

### RESOURCE

STAFF: Karen Bardy, Deborah Brandell, Gloria Chalmers, Margaretha Ebbers, Nancy Petersen, Heather Raymond, Pat Sachse-Brown, Corrie Ziegler

### INFORMATION

The Programs unit provides leadership in the areas of Alternative Programs, Aboriginal Education, City Centre Education Partnership (CCEP) and Community Collaboration, the Early Years, Health and Wellness, Diversity and Special Education. While the work is diverse, it is coordinated according to strategic areas (Appendix I) to assist schools in addressing the needs of the broad range of students served by the District. The work places emphasis on Board Priorities one and two but, in fact, addresses all Board Priorities and Strategic Directions.

The work of Programs is research-based, data and experience driven, collaborative and innovative as needed to respond to school and community needs. Innovation is essential in areas responding to challenges with multiple and emergent layers of complexity where next steps are not clear. To undertake this work, the unit uses a relatively consistent process. Challenges are identified through data reviews, staff or community input. Possible options are generated through a collaborative approach with other internal and external stakeholders; using research, a promising approach is identified, piloted, modified as needed and more broadly implemented.

A brief example of the process is illustrated by the work in developing an early learning program, primarily for preschoolers who could benefit from enriched language opportunities. District data from Student Information and Student Assessment indicated significant increases in English language learners; the District's Multicultural Health Brokers partner advised of the need and helped to locate where immigrant and refugees families with preschool children lived; research confirmed the importance of intervening early and honouring mother tongue; collaboration with Student Accommodation resulted in identification of a partner school central to the demand and, finally, Programs worked with the school, the Multicultural Health Brokers, Children's Services, an anonymous donor, ABC Head Start and the University of Alberta to develop a pilot program. Based on the pilot, Programs modified the approach, expanded to three additional sites and bridged with the CCEP early learning sites.

Samples of ongoing work in the unit that responds to community, assists schools and informs practice include:

- development of a Waldorf alternative program
- implementation of the Trustee Aboriginal Education Recommendations
- support of the City Centre Education Partnership
- support of the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AIS) collaboration work in five other clusters of schools
- expansion of early learning sites and professional development support for the early years, including full-day kindergarten
- exploration of feasibility of combining Kindergarten Inclusive Developmental Services (K.I.D.S.) North and South
- implementation of the Plan to Promote Healthy Food and Beverage Choices
- development and involvement with the English Language Learning Cluster initiative
- support to the Multicultural Task Force
- expansion of afterschool and summer programming
- investigation of a transition site for refugee and immigrant youth
- completion of Phase II of Early Education Review and identification of recommendations
- support implementation of the recommendations from the reviews of Deaf or Hard of Hearing, Learning Disabilities and Early Education
- representation on a broad range of external committees and collaboration on an ongoing basis with community partners
- development of the District's Three Year Plan and Annual Education Results Review

The Programs unit appreciates the opportunity it has to work collaboratively with schools, across decision units and with community to support success for all students, including those who are at risk of not completing their schooling.

ES:gj

APPENDIX I – Sample Matrix of Strategic Areas

**SAMPLE MATRIX OF STRATEGIC AREAS**

<b>Strategic Areas</b>	<b>Aboriginal Education</b>	<b>Alternative Programs</b>	<b>City Centre &amp; Cluster Work</b>	<b>Diversity</b>	<b>Early Years (KIDS)</b>	<b>Health And Wellness</b>	<b>Special Education</b>
<b>Early Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>early learning site</li> <li>Head Start sites</li> <li>KIDS</li> <li>Stepping into School</li> <li>First Nations Métis Inuit (FNMI) childcare spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>program specific kindergartens</li> <li>child care</li> <li>KIDS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>early learning sites</li> <li>Head Start site</li> <li>full-day kindergarten</li> <li>KIDS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>early learning sites</li> <li>Head Start</li> <li>KIDS</li> <li>Welcome to Kindergarten</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>early learning and kindergarten support</li> <li>full-day kindergarten professional development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>early identification project with Alberta Health Services (AHS) workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>early education sites</li> <li>KIDS</li> <li>Firm Foundations pilot</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>culturally sensitive assessment pilot</li> <li>research on impact of trauma on assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>assessment of alternative focus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>school climate growth measures</li> <li>resiliency measures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>culturally sensitive assessment pilot</li> <li>research on impact of trauma on assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provision of early learning assessment strategies booklet</li> <li>multi-disciplinary assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Development Instrument</li> <li>early identification project with AHS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>growth measures</li> <li>updating Individual Program Plan (IPP) guidebook</li> <li>supports for writing assessment</li> </ul>
<b>Community Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coyote Kids mentoring and Rites of Passage (Bent Arrow)</li> <li>in-school support (Métis Child, AYFWES<sup>1</sup>)</li> <li>5-day a week after school support (Ben Calf)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>parent societies</li> <li>support for alternatives (e.g., Elders, Métis Child, Royal Museum, University of Alberta [U of A])</li> <li>sports and arts organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partners for Kids</li> <li>joint grant proposals</li> <li>mentors</li> <li>summer university</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cultural brokers</li> <li>in-school settlement workers</li> <li>joint grant proposals</li> <li>mentors in-school and summer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>home visits (parents)</li> <li>ABC Head Start</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>APPLE<sup>2</sup> Schools</li> <li>Medic Alert</li> <li>Mental Health Kits</li> <li>AHS nutritionists</li> <li>medical students summer camp</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>literacy mentoring</li> <li>ESHIP<sup>3</sup></li> <li>complex needs</li> <li>partner groups<sup>4</sup> – AACL, GRIT, ERLC, LDAA, CASA</li> <li>U of A FASD<sup>5</sup> pilot project</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Aboriginal Youth and Family Well-Being Education Society (AYFWES)

<sup>2</sup> Alberta Project Promoting active Living & healthy Eating (APPLE)

<sup>3</sup> Edmonton Student Health Initiative Partnership (ESHIP)

<sup>4</sup> Alberta Association for Community Living (AACL)  
Getting Ready for Inclusion Today (GRIT)  
Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium (ERLC)  
Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta (LDAA)  
Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health (CASA)

<sup>5</sup> Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)