

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

December 11, 2007

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Improving Student Achievement at Brightview Elementary School

ORIGINATOR: T. Kernaghan, Principal, Brightview Elementary School

RESOURCE
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INFORMATION

Brightview Elementary School, located in the Canora community, serves 172 students with full day Kindergarten, regular programming for Grades one to six, four Opportunity Program classes and a Division One Behaviour and Learning Assistance Program.

To meet the needs of students at Brightview, the staff collaboratively share, develop and refine their teaching practice. This collaboration takes many forms. Teachers collaborate within the school, across schools in the district, with staff in central services and with community agencies.

Within the school, sharing through collaboration helps the small staff build collective expertise. An example of this type of sharing is the online Question-Answer-Response (QAR) resource bank. QAR is a literacy questioning strategy. By having an online resource bank, teachers can access each other's ideas rather than "re-inventing the wheel" for each classroom. Staff at Brightview also collaborate to make school-wide decisions. This is exemplified by a recent staff decision to make a mid-year adjustment to the professional development plan, shifting from a general Balanced Literacy plan to one more focused on guided reading and student writing.

Another significant avenue for collaboration occurs within the "Focus Four" school cohort, which includes Brightview, Calder, Lauderdale and McArthur schools. Cohort work provides grade level teachers at Brightview with the chance to engage in professional conversation and planning with teachers of the same grade at a cohort school. Since there may only be one teacher per grade at a small school like Brightview, this type of collaboration between schools is crucial.

Collaboration with central decision units takes a number of forms at Brightview. The most obvious collaborative effort with central is the targeted, literacy professional development plan that was developed for Brightview with Consulting Services. In addition, Consulting Services provides professional development for the staff in collaborative meetings of the Focus Four, supporting literacy in all four schools.

Two new supports were made available to Brightview students this year through the work of Programs. The first is that Brightview now offers a full day kindergarten program. By spreading the kindergarten experience across the entire day, there are more avenues available for teachers to build literacy into play and to distribute the learning across a range of activities that are meaningful to kindergarten-age students. Programs is also coordinating supports to high-needs, west-end schools so that resources can be realigned and maximized for the benefit of students in all eight schools.

Finally, through the work of the Community Collaboration AISI project, Brightview is collaborating with other schools in their project cluster as well as with community agencies in support of all students. One such agency is the Family Centre. The project cluster of eight schools, to which Brightview belongs, has collaborated with the Family Centre to make success coaches and a family support worker available to the schools. Brightview school has also formed a collaborative partnership with the Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society and is involved in the Society's Wichitowin program. This program, which means "All Together", helps Brightview staff meet the needs of the Aboriginal students at the school. Further supports to all students are being developed in partnership with the Optometrist Association of Alberta. Once formalized, it is hoped that this initiative will bring eye health services to students at Brightview and then to the other eight schools in this project cluster.

Brightview school's collaborative efforts are enhancing teaching practice and providing strong supports for all students. Bright futures for teachers and students truly do begin at Brightview.