

## EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

December 12, 2006

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: L. Thomson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Engaging Students through Differentiated Instruction - AISI Project Update

ORIGINATOR: T. Parker, Executive Director

RESOURCE  
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### INFORMATION

This report will provide overview information about one of the district's Cycle 3 Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AIS I) projects; Engaging Learners through Differentiated Instruction. This project represents a significant component of district-wide AIS I involvement, which aims to improve student achievement with an emphasis on students at risk.

#### Overview of Project

The Engaging Learners through Differentiated Instruction AIS I project includes 78 schools across all divisions. This project is designed to motivate and engage all students in their learning. In a typical district classroom there is a wide diversity of students: students working above, at and below their grade level; students who have different prior knowledge and skills; students with varied interests and cultural backgrounds; and, students with distinctive learning preferences and special needs. The differentiated classroom works to address these various learning needs within a community of learners.

The Differentiation AIS I project aims to develop logical and practical approaches that enable teachers to meet the diversity of learning needs within a productive, supportive and positive learning community.

Differentiated instruction:

- Includes a variety of different strategies (e.g. learning styles, brain-based learning, instructional designs etc.)
- Actively engages all learners
- Is directly linked to curricular expectations/essential learner outcomes
- Supports teachers in adjusting content, process and product in response to student learning needs
- Allows for student choice of tasks and assessments based on interests, strengths, needs and potential

- Provides students with opportunities to demonstrate their competency in a variety of ways
- Supports students in building the resiliency necessary to overcome challenges and become healthy contributing members of our global society.

### Professional Development

Professional development will be provided through project sessions, but more importantly, through experiences that involve the direct mentoring of teachers in the context of their own classrooms. The schools in this project will work collaboratively on an ongoing basis throughout the term of the project to build expertise, sustain change in teacher practice, monitor student learning and communicate effectively within the area of differentiated instruction. Collaborative inquiry and monitoring will ensure that students remain at the heart of the project in a way that supports the achievement and success of all learners.

In the first year of the project, professional development will focus on building common language and understanding. In order to effectively model differentiation, project professional development will be differentiated for elementary, junior high and high schools. The project will also offer support in differentiated instruction to administrators and teacher leaders.

### Communication and Knowledge Dissemination

Members of the project leadership team will be responsible for sharing information with participant schools and will be conduits for two-way communication between the schools and the project leadership team. Significant information will also be shared through the district AISI website. School stories, highlighting progress and challenges will be presented at project professional development days and at public Board meetings to deepen understanding of the work as it progresses.

### Summary

Differentiated instruction addresses the needs of all students so they become capable learners who connect their learning to their lives in order to become contributing members of society. Through the Engaging Learners through Differentiated Instruction AISI project, staff will implement differentiation practices on a broad scale to support all students, but especially those at risk, in the attainment of higher levels of learning.

LT:gj

APPENDIX I –List of the Schools involved in the Engaging Learners through Differentiated Instruction AISI project

Engaging Learners through Differentiated Instruction AISI Project SchoolsWard A

Caernarvon  
 Calder  
 Glengarry  
 Institutional Services  
 ( Kennedale, Yellowhead, Youth Attendance  
 Centre)  
 Killarney  
 Lauderdale  
 Major General Griesbach  
 Mee-Yah-Noh  
 Queen Elizabeth

Ward B

Bannerman  
 Edmonton Christian - Northeast Campus  
 John D. Bracco  
 Kildare  
 Londonderry  
 Outreach Programs - Learning Store at  
 Londonderry

Ward C

Dovercourt  
 Edmonton Christian - West Campus, Senior High  
 Jasper Place  
 Meadowlark  
 Meadowlark Christian  
 Outreach Programs - Learning Store at Circle  
 Square, New Directions at Circle Square  
 Ross Sheppard  
 Westlawn  
 Westmount  
 Winterburn

Ward D

Amiskwaciy Academy  
 Beacon Heights  
 Highlands  
 Mount Royal  
 Newton  
 Outreach Programs - New Directions at Park Plaza,  
 Transitions at Park Plaza  
 Riverdale  
 Victoria  
 Woodside

Ward E

Callingwood  
 Centennial  
 Ormsby  
 Outreach Programs - Learning Store at West  
 Edmonton Mall  
 S. Bruce Smith  
 Talmud Torah  
 Thorncliffe

Ward F

Centre High  
 Lendrum  
 Malmo  
 Oliver  
 Outreach Programs-Transition at the Y  
 Strathcona

Ward G

Argyll Centre -Terrace Heights  
 Hardisty  
 Julia Kiniski  
 L'Académie Vimy Ridge Academy  
 McNally  
 Ottewell  
 Outreach Programs - Learning Store on Whyte Ave  
 and Transitions at Bonnie Doon  
 W. P. Wagner

Ward H

Brander Gardens  
 Brookside  
 Greenfield  
 Harry Ainlay  
 Outreach Programs - Learning Store at Blue Quill,  
 New Directions at Blue Quill  
 Vernon Barford  
 Westbrook

Ward I

Daly Grove  
 Ekota  
 Ellerslie  
 Grace Martin  
 Greenview  
 Kate Chegwin  
 Meyokumin  
 Meyonohk  
 Millwoods Christian  
 Pollard Meadows  
 Satoo  
 T. D. Baker  
 Tipaskan  
 Weinlos