

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

December 12, 2000

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dosdall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Monitoring of Charter Schools

ORIGINATOR: A. McBeath, Department Head

RESOURCE
STAFF: Karen Bardy, Gloria Chalmers

INFORMATION

The attached reports have been developed in fulfillment of the district's obligation as monitoring authority for the Boyle Street Education Centre Charter School and the Suzuki Charter School. These reports have been compiled based on a monitoring process developed and agreed upon by the district and the charter schools for the original term of their charters. As the Suzuki Charter School has received a renewed three-year charter beginning this September and the Boyle Street Education Centre Charter School is in the process of seeking renewal of its charter, the district approached Alberta Learning and recommended that they take over the monitoring responsibility. Staff at Alberta Learning agreed that it would be appropriate for them to perform the monitoring beginning with the 2000-2001 school year.

The monitoring report for the Boyle Street Education Centre Charter School is provided in Appendix I and for the Suzuki Charter School in Appendix II. The information collected indicates that the schools are operating in accordance with their charters. After these reports have been received as information by Trustees, they will be forwarded to Alberta Learning.

GC/KB:dh

Appendix I: Boyle Street Education Centre Charter School 1999-2000 Monitoring Report
Appendix II: Suzuki Charter School 1999-2000 Monitoring Report

**BOYLE STREET EDUCATION CENTRE CHARTER SCHOOL
1999-2000 MONITORING REPORT**

This is the fourth monitoring report prepared for Alberta Learning regarding the Boyle Street Education Centre Charter School. This report focuses on the results and operations of the charter school during 1999-2000. The findings of the monitoring process follow.

1. General learning environment is reflected in the classroom set-up.

The Boyle Street Education Centre Charter School, which serves youth 12 to 19 years of age, with an average of 17, who have not succeeded in the regular school setting, continues to be located in the Boyle Street Community Services Co-op. About 80 percent of the students are of Aboriginal ancestry.

The school continues to have four classrooms, each dedicated to one of the four core subject areas. In addition, there is a commercial kitchen facility used for foods related career and technology studies (CTS) courses, an arts and crafts area used for cosmetology and fashion studies related CTS courses, and a tee-pee for Cree language and cultural instruction. Last year, the school purchased 17 additional computer workstations, a lap top computer, 7 graphing computers, a big screen television, a DVD player and VCR, a Karaoke machine, as well digital and analog video cameras. This new equipment provides many opportunities related to CTS communication technology courses.

The core classrooms (language arts, mathematics, science, social studies) are staffed by 2 learning facilitators who are teacher certified and subject matter specialists. The work experience and registered apprenticeship facilitator is also a certified teacher. As well, the school includes two aides, one of whom is a journeyman cook, a O.8 F.T.E. counsellor, a Native Studies instructor and an intern from the University of Alberta Internship Program.

Resources and field trips are provided at no cost to students. The school has a student council that meets on a weekly basis. The council provides input on student needs, school programs and facilities. Participation and volunteerism in the community is increasing. During this past year, students participated in a range of community events such as Innercity Awareness Week, Thanksgiving dinner, the Boyle Street round dance, Dreamspeakers, the volunteer appreciation dinner, the craft fair and National Aboriginal Day.

The school makes use of staff and support services provided by the Co-op such as youth workers, nursing staff, a housing registry and family counselling services. The staff also use a variety of strategies to assist students. They provide student-centred and individualized programming, bus ticket and bus pass incentives, a breakfast and lunch program, girls' teaching circles and a boys' drumming group.

2. Students are achieving satisfactory results on the achievement tests and diploma examinations.

School enrolment on September 30, 1999 was 103 students as compared to 105 on September 30, 1998. Of these students, 4 were junior high and 99 were high school enrolments. Sixty-three of the students, as compared to 46 in 1998, met the criteria for severe special needs. Over the course of the 1999-2000 school year, 207 students attended the school for a period of time in comparison to 275 in 1998-99. The school advised that there were 19 students on the waiting list for term 2, 17 for term 3 and 18 for term 4.

Achievement information from the school indicates that the students obtained 1320 credits as compared to 1085 in 1998-99, wrote 17 diploma exams, compared to 10 in 1998-99 and obtained 80 diploma exam credits compared to 50 in 1998-99. No provincial achievement tests were written in 1998-99 or in 1999-2000. There were 948 core subject credits gained compared to 695 in 1998-99. As well, 344 option credits, 240 CTS credits, 232 work experience and 10 RAP credits were gained. Five students graduated as compared to 2 in 1998-99.

Staff monitor student progress through the development of case plans and also track what students do once they leave the school. They also monitor student conduct and report that there is evidence of improved student behaviour. On the Social Behavior Scale, average student scores show an increase in social competence, interpersonal skills, self management and academic skills and a decrease in anti-social behavior and disruptive or demanding behavior. Daily attendance is tracked and has improved considerably over the course of the past three years as shown in the information below:

Percentage Student Attendance

	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July
1998	47.3	33.7	23.7	24.1	18.7	17.2	16.6	15.1	12.7	10.6	5.5
1999	54.3	42.6	47.8	48.6	47.7	69.6	63.9	62.4	81.9	58.7	58.4
2000	75.7	64.4	84.8	56.7	63.9	82.5	64.8	55.7	81.1	55.8	38.5

3. Alberta Learning’s basic curriculum is being delivered.

Sample IPP’s and information about credits completed were provided to demonstrate that the Alberta Learning curriculum was delivered.

4. Access to hours of instruction meets or exceeds minimum requirements.

The timetable provided indicates that students had access to 1001.6 hours of instruction over 192 instructional days. This meets the provincial requirement of access to a minimum of 1000 hours of instruction per school year.

5. Alberta Learning evaluation policy is being followed.

Alberta Learning states that “reports of student achievement shall identify student progress relative to the grade levels of the curriculum” and that “this information shall be provided to parents and to students, and shall be part of any continuing record of a student’s progress.”

For students who meet the criteria for special needs, the school established entry levels of achievement in language arts and mathematics based on the Canadian Achievement Test (CAT). Programming was based on achievement levels and progress measured. In fact, all students new to the school and returning students who had not completed any credits completed CAT. Starting in September 2000, the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) test is being used. All report cards reviewed were for senior high school students and they indicated a mark for the course completed.

6. Planning and scheduling are in order and followed.

Students work on one core subject for ten weeks while also taking non-core courses such as a variety of CTS courses, CALM, Cree or cultural alternatives. Since each student's program is individualized to reflect needs, achievement levels, and interests, there is no fixed group instruction schedule. The staff in each core room provides group and individual instruction in accordance with the needs of the students present.

7. Student records are properly maintained.

Student records are kept in a locked filing cabinet in a locked room. A number of files were reviewed and were found to be complete.

8. The charter business plan is being followed.

The Boyle Street Education Centre Charter School prepared and submitted to Alberta Learning a three-year business plan for the period 1999-2002. This plan was reviewed by Alberta Learning and no changes were requested. As required by the Charter School Legislation, a sole purpose corporation with its own board of directors was established to operate the school. The meetings of the charter board are open to the public.

The school continues to work on increasing the involvement of parents or caregivers. In this regard, the annual parent supper has been an effective strategy and provided an opportunity to gather input through a satisfaction survey completed at the meeting. Survey results indicate that 73% of the parents or caregivers are satisfied with the school, with how the school meets their youth's learning needs, are happy with the way classes are organized and taught and with the school being located in a community centre. As well, 77% indicated that they are able to get the information they need about how their youth is doing at school and that the school is a caring place that respects them and their youth. Eighty-three percent of the students surveyed indicated being satisfied or very satisfied with the school overall and with the variety and challenge in the classroom and in the school. Similarly, 87% were satisfied or very satisfied with how much they were learning, 77.7% with core and option class instruction, 79.6% with personal safety in school and 81.5% with school rules and regulations. With respect to staff, 93.8% strongly agreed or agreed that students are learning what they need to know, 100% that students are being challenged to do their best, 87.6% that students are learning to take responsibility for their own actions and 93.8% that overall student achievement is satisfactory.

The school has provided a copy of its Annual Education Results Report for 1999-2000.

9. Financial matters as reported by the BRF and AFS are in order.

Audited financial statements for the year 1999-2000 have been provided.

10. The Boyle Street Education Centre Charter School will provide a copy of its annual education report as required in the business plan (education plan) in accordance with Alberta Learning regulations.

A copy of the 1999-2000 annual education report has been provided.

11. The school facility complies with building standards and zoning regulations.

The treasurer advised that the fire alarm system and sprinkler system annual tests and inspection reports were obtained.

12. The insurance regulation is followed.

The treasurer advised that the insurance policy is the same as last year. Last year we noted that it was unclear whether or not the insurance extended to volunteers or any other person acting within the scope of his duties for the named insured. The treasurer advised that, as recommended, they checked with their insurer and were advised that indeed the insurance extended to volunteers and others.

13. All teachers are certified.

It has been confirmed that the 11.5 F.T.E. teaching staff employed by the charter school in 1999-2000 held permanent professional certificates. The 11.5 F.T.E. certified staff includes a 1 F.T.E. principal and a 0.3 acting vice principal position. In addition, the school employed 1.5 aides, a 0.5 custodian, 1 administrative assistant, a 0.8 F.T.E. counsellor, 1 Native studies facilitator and a University of Alberta psychology intern student. The foods coordinator aide is a certified journeyman chef.

**SUZUKI CHARTER SCHOOL
1999-2000 MONITORING REPORT**

This is the fifth monitoring report prepared for Alberta Learning for the Suzuki Charter School. The findings of the monitoring process follow.

1. General learning environment is reflected in the classroom set up.

The Suzuki Charter School is located in a closed Edmonton Catholic School, providing students with a physical plant designed and equipped as an instructional facility. For the 1999-2000 school year, two portables were added to the school to accommodate a grade 2 and a grade 5. Additionally, this resulted in a classroom being available to serve as a choral room.

Last year, the school purchased its own piano. This piano supplements the four pianos that are available through the partnership with the Suzuki Piano Society. The grades 5-6 combined class was split and a teacher hired for the grade 5 class. As well, a French teacher was hired to provide instruction to grades 5 and 6.

As of September 30, 1999, the enrolment of the school was 108, an increase of 9 from the previous year. Fifteen students were enrolled in kindergarten, 18 in grade one, 17 in grade two, 18 in grade 3, 18 in grade 4, 14 in grade 5 and 8 in grade 6. None of the students met the criteria for special needs.

As the school defines its charter in terms of music instruction, each student participated in three half-hour group lessons a week in a particular instrument. Eight students studied flute, 12 guitar, 34 piano, 35 violin, 5 viola, 12 cello and 2 bass. In addition to the instrumental program, the school offered a choral program for all students. The music environment was enhanced by activities such as the following:

- Performances by the music teachers
- Concert featuring the students enrolled in strings and guitars
- A Bach extravaganza involving Bach's minuets played in different keys and a variety of moods
- Concert featuring the guitar students
- Remembrance Day Dedication concert featuring the music students
- Christmas choral concert held at Robertson-Wesley United Church
- Millennium concert featuring all instruments as well as choral selections held at Concordia University College
- Italian night involving cello students playing mostly Italian composers held at Santa Maria Goretti Community Centre
- Concert of Edmonton's Intermediate Youth Orchestra held in the school gymnasium
- Winspear Centre educational concerts
- Shoctor Theatre concert involving a group of Suzuki students

For some of the concerts, the school gymnasium provided insufficient space. The school found other venues at a cost to the school.

2. Students are achieving satisfactory results on the achievement tests and diploma examinations.

The school's 1999-2000 grade three class consisted of 18 students. All students wrote the grade three language arts and mathematics achievement tests. Results were as follows:

Course	Met Acceptable Standard	Met Standard of Excellence	Did not Meet Standard
Language Arts (18)	18	7	0
Mathematics (18)	17	7	1

The school's 1999-2000 grade six class consisted of 8 students, all of whom wrote the provincial examinations. Results are as follows:

Course	Met Acceptable Standard	Met Standard of Excellence	Did Not Meet Standard
Language Arts (8)	7	4	1
Mathematics (8)	8	5	0
Science (8)	8	2	0
Social Studies (8)	7	5	1

3. Alberta Learning's basic curriculum is being delivered.

Classroom timetables, sample report cards and information about performance on the grades 3 and 6 provincial achievement tests were provided to demonstrate that the Alberta Learning curriculum was delivered.

4. Access to hours of instruction meets or exceeds minimum requirements.

The school reported 189.5 instructional days of 5 hours and 20 minutes per day for a total of 1008.4 hours. Thus, the school met the minimum required number of instructional hours which is 950 hours per year.

5. Alberta Learning evaluation policy is being followed.

A review was conducted of sample June 2000 report cards. All report cards indicated grade level of achievement in all four, core subjects. With regard to music, the choral and theory class instructor reported on curriculum objectives. As well, information was provided related to the instrument studied.

6. Planning and scheduling are in order and followed.

Classroom schedules were provided and indicate that provision was made for the delivery of all elementary provincial curricula, with music being indicated on the schedules as music, choral or group lesson. At the grade four level, social studies and science are covered in "thematic study".

7. Student records are properly maintained.

A number of student records were reviewed in the spring and were found to be complete. The student records are kept in the school office in a locked cabinet. As well, the school office is locked unless staff are working in the office.

8. The charter business plan is being followed.

The charter school's education plan for the period of 1999-2000 was provided. The plan focuses on the Suzuki philosophy related to promoting academic, musical and artistic talents of each student. The plan incorporates the provincial goals that were applicable to the school and identifies student achievement and student and parent satisfaction as the significant measures. Achievement data is provided in section 2 and music activities in section 1. With regard to satisfaction, students in grades 2 to 6 were surveyed and 29 parents or 35 percent of families responded to focus questions. Students were asked to respond "yes" or "no" to questions about liking being in school, feeling safe at school, being respected by others, having teachers who listen and encourage students to do their best work, having interesting music classes and having opportunities to perform. The percentage of students responding "yes" tended to be in the high nineties. Parents' comments were summarized under the focus questions. Parents were asked in what ways they were involved in their child's schooling, what communications they receive regarding child's progress, what innovative practices they are aware of being used in the school, what ways the school is different from regular elementary school and why they chose to send their child to Suzuki Charter School.

School board meetings are open to the public. However, individuals wishing to speak at board must advise in advance and are then advised when they are scheduled to speak.

9. Financial matters as reported by the BRF and AFS are in order.

Audited financial statements for the year 1999-2000 have been provided.

10. Suzuki Charter School will provide a copy of its annual education report as required in the business plan (education plan) in accordance with Alberta Learning regulations.

A copy of the 1999-2000 annual education report has been provided.

11. The school facility complies with building standards and zoning regulation.

A certificate of inspection for the fire alarm system dated August 15, 2000 was provided.

12. The insurance regulation is followed.

The Suzuki Charter School's insurance policy was reviewed and found to be in compliance with the provincial insurance regulation.

13. All teachers are certified.

It has been confirmed that 9 of the 10 teachers employed by the Suzuki Charter School in 1999-2000 held permanent professional certificates and one held an interim certificate.