

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

February 10, 2004

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Centre High Campus: 100% Success! One Student At A Time

ORIGINATOR: R. Cimolini, Principal Centre High Campus

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INFORMATION

“...suit the action to the word, the word to the action.” – Hamlet, Act 3, Scene 2

In 1997, the board issued Centre High the mandate to provide innovative and flexible programming for students in their fourth year of high school to improve student achievement and high school completion rates (Appendix I). Centre High Campus was a new concept in that it offered students a chance to be successful by putting them in a novel environment, where they could concentrate on their studies and proceed to the next phase in their career, be it education or work. Together, Centre High Campus staff work with our young adults to assist them with the next step in their education or career. Much attention at the school is given to assisting students with the transition from secondary school to either a post-secondary institution, or gainful employment. It is significant that 85% or more of the student body works part-time while attending classes.

Centre High Campus' instructional focus of reading comprehension combines with our focus on career development to assist students in achieving success. As part of our focus on reading, all students undergo reading comprehension testing each semester. Students previously identified as requiring learning assistance, or who are identified through this testing are encouraged to become part of our Read Team which provides support in reading comprehension, writing, and critical thinking skills. In addition, extensive career planning is conducted with all students each semester. The Centre High Career Centre also houses career advisors from NAIT, Lakeland College, and Grant MacEwan who are on campus each week.

These combined efforts assist students to:

- upgrade marks
- enroll in a course required to complete a credential or to enroll in a post-secondary program
- take a post-secondary course
- begin or continue with their career plan

Students taught us what they needed. Providing all subjects was unproductive. Students were interested in core programming (English, Social Studies, Mathematics, and the Sciences) for the purpose of upgrading a course mark or for the purpose of moving to a

different level of the subject discipline. It also became apparent the majority of students felt they were on a compressed timeline and needed to make up for lost time. To address this need, “prep” or “fast-track” courses were developed. For example, for a student who enters Centre High Campus with little or no background in chemistry, it is possible for the student to move through the elements of Science 10 related to chemistry and Chemistry 20 in the first half of a semester by doubling-up class time, and progress to Chemistry 30 in the second half of the semester, ready to write the diploma at the end of the semester. Delivering courses in this manner enables many students to overcome huge deficits in their credentials and move on to post-secondary institutions of their choice.

The community has also embraced the concept of Centre High Campus by supporting initiatives designed to give Centre High Campus students unique, high quality, contextual learning. Post-secondary partners include: NAIT, Lakeland College, NorQuest College, and Grant MacEwan College. Community and business partners include: XEROX, the Edmonton Police Service, Edmonton Emergency Response Service (Fire), Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, Canadian Academy of Travel & Tourism, Economic Development Edmonton, Greater Edmonton Teachers’ Association, Delta Hotels, and the Fairmont Hotel MacDonald. The educational experiences delivered by Centre High Campus result in strengthened student applications to post-secondary institutions or to higher paying jobs.

Centre High Campus students are connoisseurs. Some of our students may have attempted a course more than once at previous sites. Delivering the same information in the same manner as before will not get different results, and Centre High Campus staff understand the need to engage students by using a variety of different materials and different approaches. A challenge Centre High Campus continues to face is the need to be relevant in the lives and plans of youth. To date, we have been able to identify areas of interest and programming to enable youth to pursue their dreams. Our continued success is dependent upon our ability to adapt to changes that will shape tomorrow’s commerce, post-secondary learning, and society. Centre High Campus stands ready to meet the challenge of delivering the future to 100% of our students.

APPENDIX I: Student Accommodation and High School Completion

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STUDENT ACCOMMODATION AND HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION

Student Accommodation

14. There is an expectation that all students will complete high school within three years of enrolling in grade 10, with the following exceptions:
- a. Students who are not yet 20 years of age on September 1 and who wish to enroll for an additional year or years shall be accommodated:
 - i. in courses provided by Centre High,
 - ii. by the Learning Store outreach programs, or Argyll Home Education Centre, or
 - iii. in a district high school if the student has special needs that cannot be met in courses provided by Centre High.
 - b. On an exceptional basis and with the approval of the school's principal, a student with extenuating medical conditions or personal circumstances may be enrolled for a fourth or subsequent year in a district high school.¹

High School Completion

High school completion rates are used to track first-time grade 10 students for three and five years. Students have completed high school if, within three and five years of entering grade 10, they have:

obtained an Alberta High School Diploma, a high school equivalency diploma (GED)... or,

- enrolled in a credit program at an Alberta post-secondary institution or,
 - registered in an apprenticeship program or,
- earned credit in five grade 12 courses, including one language arts diploma exam course and three other diploma exam courses, which makes them eligible for post-secondary admission.²

¹ Administrative Regulation IC.AR

TOPIC: Student Accommodation

² Source: Alberta Learning, May 2003 http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/completion/