

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

February 22, 2000

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dosdall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Student Volunteer Service

ORIGINATOR: K. Dropko, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools

RESOURCE

STAFF: Anne Sherwood

INFORMATION

In response to trustees' request for information on student volunteer service in the district, the following background information is provided.

Board Policies and Regulations

The board has had long standing policies and practices of encouraging student volunteer service within the school and the community. Appendix I includes excerpts from existing board policy and regulation that speak to the issue of student volunteer service related to:

- Participation in community sponsored charitable organizations
- Activities to assist individuals and groups in need
- Educational partnerships between schools, business, and community organizations
- Parent and community involvement in the schools
- Guidelines for the involvement of volunteers in the school
- Activities of school organizations, teams and clubs, e.g. student safety patrols
- Student volunteer drivers covered under liability insurance
- District awards for student achievement in areas such as citizenship, service, or exemplary behaviour

Extracurricular Activities

Schools are engaging students in all manner of 'volunteer' activities in the school, in the community, and between schools. Activities such as peer support; peer mentorship and volunteer reading tutor programs between older students and younger students and between schools; outreach programs between senior and junior high school leadership students and elementary schools; choir visits to seniors' centres and hospitals; environment day park clean-ups; student safety patrols; and participation in community

charitable activities such as the Food Bank, UNICEF at Halloween, the United Way, and community sponsored fun runs and marathons for charity. One excellent example is the Peter Jang Memorial Dui-gi Run, (Hope for Tomorrow) for Leukemia Cancer research that was actually initiated by students at Vernon Barford School. In addition, theme weeks such as Environment Week and Random Acts of Kindness Week provide additional opportunities for students to initiate and participate in volunteer service.

Many schools have educational partnerships that have a component of student volunteer service such as Dan Knott School and The Grey Nuns Hospital; and the YMCA/EPS Alliance where students are trained to be literacy tutors and work with younger students in their school on reading activities (Oliver School pilot). Another example, is the Edmonton Community Foundation grant program to help students become aware of the role the community plays in assisting others whereby junior high students select a charity that benefits children.

Credit Programs

While most of the school activities are extracurricular, informal and not for credit, there are programs which include required volunteer/community service. Some examples are: the work experience program; the International Baccalaureate CAS requirements (Creativity, Action, Service 150 hours); and Physical Education 20/30 service hours (approximately 20 hours for volunteer referee, Junior High coaching etc.). The Christian School Grade 11 students participate in a significant two to three day off-campus service project every year. Many of our junior and senior high schools offer a course in Leadership; volunteerism is part of this course. For example the Leadership Skills courses available to Harry Ainlay students in each of grades 10, 11, and 12 requires 100 hours of volunteer service work each year.

Student Awards

Many of the district student awards have a component of volunteer service built into the criteria for the awards:

- District Recognition Awards for Service, Team and Merit (secondary students category)
- Physical Education Awards (grade 12)
- Michael A. Strembitsky Award of Excellence (community service requirement)

Other local awards that require volunteer/community services are:

- John Bright Memorial Award
- Kinsmen Club of Edmonton Achievement Award for Community Service
- Leaders of Tomorrow Awards

Most high schools and junior high schools and many elementary schools recognize students with citizenship awards that are in large measure based on volunteerism.

District Standard for Student Achievement and Growth

In addition, one of the district standards for student achievement and growth is that *All students demonstrate the qualities of caring, productive, and effective community members*. Student involvement was identified as one of the indicators for the standard. To assist schools in measuring achievement of the standard, the district recently incorporated a system for tracking student volunteer work in the School Student Information System (SIS). The system was made available to schools in October 1999 on an optional use basis.

AS:mmf

APPENDIX I – Excerpts from Policy and Regulation Regarding Student Volunteers

POLICY EXCERPTS RELATED TO STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

JJ.BP – Advertising in Schools (Excerpt)

The Board encourages the participation of schools in community-sponsored programs designed to enhance student understanding and appreciation of the role, purposes and activities of charitable organizations. Further, the Board encourages schools to participate in activities intended to assist individuals and groups in need.

JAA.BP – Educational Partnerships and Sponsorships (Excerpt)

The board supports educational partnerships and sponsorships between schools and business, and community organizations that:

- Enhance the quality and relevance of education for learners;
- Ensure that all those involved in the partnership are treated fairly and equitably;
- Allocate resources and volunteer services to complement – not replace – public funding for education;
- ...
- Provide opportunities for all partners to share in the development of responsible citizens; ...

JA.BP – Parent and Community Involvement (Excerpt)

The board believes that:

- ...
- parents, business, and community members can assist in the development of responsible citizens through co-operative working relationships with schools and the district.

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION EXCERPTS RELATED TO STUDENT VOLUNTEERS

JA.AR – Parent and Community Involvement (Excerpt)

Principals shall:...

- establish guidelines for the involvement of volunteers in schools

JJ.AR – School Participation in Charities: Canvassing in Schools (Excerpt)

1. Participation in charities includes school participation in charitable, community organizations, as well as locally initiated activities to assist individuals and groups in need....
2. Schools are encouraged, on an optional basis, to provide experiences intended to enhance student understanding and appreciation of the role, purposes and activities of charitable organizations.

HGDA.AR – Guidelines for Student Activities and Organizations (Excerpt)

1. All activities of a school organization, team or club should be conducted in such manner that the dignity and self-esteem of the individual student are maintained or enhanced....
2. It is expected that the activities of school organizations, teams and clubs be characterized by good sportsmanship....
4. Student participation in initiation, induction, graduation or similar activities should be voluntary and not be a condition of status or membership in a school organization, team or club...
5. The principal has responsibility for approving the criteria for membership of a student organization, team or club in the school...

IHFB.AR – Student Safety Patrols (Excerpt)

1.student membership in the safety patrol shall be on a voluntary basis and with the parent's prior consent.

EIBA.AR – Liability Insurance for Volunteer Drivers (Excerpt)

- B.4. Prior to volunteer drivers transporting students in privately owned vehicles...the principal shall also obtain written parental consent for drivers under 18 years of age.

II.AR – Recognition of Students (Excerpt)

- A.1. The district shall recognize, on an ongoing basis, outstanding student performance in areas such as academics, athletics, fine arts, citizenship, service or exemplary behaviour.