

## EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

February 8, 2000

TO: Board of Trustees

From: E. Dosedall, Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Hallmarks of Glenora School

Originator: M. Caley, Principal, Glenora School

### INFORMATION

Glenora School, located in the West End of Edmonton, educates 173 students from kindergarten to grade six, with one classroom at each grade level. Approximately ninety percent of our students live in the community. Our students consistently perform very well on the achievement exams.

At Glenora School excellence is closely linked with the Alberta curriculum. The remarkable success of the school is attributed to a focus on quality instruction in all curricular areas, frequent assessment, high expectations, innovation, parental involvement, and a safe and orderly environment. Different strategies are employed, but what are ultimately important are the practices that actually change what goes on in the daily lives of students and teachers.

The school-wide focus is on clear outcomes and on efforts to improve results. There are many factors that contribute to our achievement such as lively, interesting, and challenging classes, instruction that is linked to the curriculum, self evaluation, use of technology both in school and at home, and collaboration. Each year the school undertakes new initiatives that focus on the factors that contribute to high achievement. We sustain and perfect them over the year. As a team we ensure that together the instructional lives of children are improved. This has created a culture at Glenora that promotes high achievement. Our achievement results indicate an intense dedication to teaching and learning.

Although early childhood educators in Alberta often incorporate literacy activities into their programs, they tend to emphasize literacy experiences such as shared reading and writing rather than more formal or direct instruction aimed specifically at developing children's early literacy skills. The kindergarten initiative at Glenora, developed by Janet Guindon and Marie Caley, investigated the potential benefits of a literacy program for Kindergarten children that had clearly identified outcomes and structure. The results showed that all of the children in the program made substantial gains in their reading and writing abilities.

Glenora also has a strong arts program. Today's brain research suggests that arts can help lay the foundation for late academic and career success. A strong art foundation builds creativity, concentration, problem solving, self-efficacy, coordination, and values attention and self-discipline.

Mrs. Wieler has been instrumental in developing a strong music program. We believe that a substantial amount of time for music is important as it has positive, measurable and lasting academic and social benefits. Reading music engages both sides of the brain, and it is used as a tool for both motivation and the development new vocabulary. This year Glenora is one of 10 schools involved in "adopt a symphony member" and students are working with Victor Pipkin, a cellist, to create an original piece that will be performed at the Winspear Centre on March 5.

Glenora is unique in that we have an art specialist, Sharon Delblanc, who is an artist in her own right. Art is used to teach thinking and build emotive expressiveness and memory. Research has shown that by learning and practicing art the brain actually makes more and stronger connections. Art stimulates body awareness, creativity and a sense of self. Many of Glenora's students have been recognized in the district for their art.

In alignment with the district mission, vision, and the tagline "We Believe...Kids Achieve," we highlight the hallmarks of our success with a presentation about Glenora School's kindergarten initiative, music program and art program.

MC:jj