

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dossall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Student Information Management System

ORIGINATOR: G. Reynolds, Department Head

RESOURCE
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INFORMATION

The vast majority of educational funding to Edmonton Public Schools is dependent on the flow of student information between the district's central database and Alberta Learning. Therefore, it is important that an effective and sustainable flow of student information take place between the district's central database and each of the district's schools and learning centres.

The SIMS2000 project was initiated in 1997 to gather information from various stakeholders regarding what was expected of an effective student information system and to identify computer software that could deliver these expectations. The School SIS software, created within Edmonton Public Schools, is the backbone of the student information flow in the district. It is being continuously updated to meet the changing requirements of Alberta Learning and the needs of teachers and school administrations. For larger schools requiring more features than School SIS could provide, such as scheduling and some specific database accessibility requirements, SIMS2000 identified the commercially available program, School Administration and Student Information system (SASI), as a suitable supplement to School SIS.

The SIMS2000 implementation stage was concerned primarily with the introduction of SASI into the schools requiring its features. It also oversaw the addition of an electronic IPP (Individual Program Plan) capability to School SIS. The IPP addition to School SIS was developed and tested by elementary, junior high and senior high users before it became available across the district in September 2000. In the next few months a second version of the electronic IPP will be released reflecting input received from schools.

SASI implementation began with a one-school pilot, at W. P. Wagner High School in the 1999-2000 school year. During this pilot year, interface programs were written to allow for a smooth information flow from SASI to School SIS and back. As a result of the successful senior high school pilot, five additional senior high schools were converted to SASI for the 2000-2001 school year. Training has also commenced for the planned implementation of SASI into seven additional senior high schools for the 2001-2002 school year.

Initially SASI was promoted by SIMS2000 for use in all junior and senior high schools, but after a year of piloting the program, it was found that SASI does not work well to meet the needs of junior high school timetabling. In addition, the program is too costly for a relatively smaller school that needs to use only a small fraction of SASI's features. We are currently investigating the use of a scheduling program that could be added to School SIS to address junior high school scheduling needs.

To accompany this report, a presentation will illustrate how a senior high school teacher uses SASI to take attendance in the classroom and how other student information, helpful in performing the teacher's duties, could be accessed. In addition, illustrations will be made of how administrators and office staff use SASI to gain access to and report student information. Reference will be made to the requirements for building a successful senior high school schedule and how the SASI product addresses these complexities.

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