

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

December 12, 2006

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: L. Thomson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Status of Trustee Initiatives in the 2005-2006 Approved Budget

ORIGINATOR: C. McCabe, Executive Director

RESOURCE

STAFF: Lisa Austin, Jamie Pallett, Dean Power, Stuart Wachowicz, Corrie Ziegler

INFORMATION

In November 2004 trustees were asked to identify specific projects or areas of emphasis for consideration by the administration in preparing the 2005-2006 operational budget. The timeline and process for identifying, approving and reporting trustee initiatives in 2005-2006 was as follows:

Timeline	Process
Dec. 17/04	1. Trustees submit identified initiatives to the administration.
Dec. 17/04 to Jan. 31/05	2. The administration will review the initiatives, group those with similar content, and identify any implications and costs associated with the initiative(s).
Feb. 1/05	3. The administration will forward this information to conference committee for clarification and discussion.
Apr. 12/05	4. Based on information provided during the discussion in conference the administration will develop a plan to address the initiatives. A report outlining the initiatives would be presented at public board meeting. The name of the trustee(s) who originally identified the initiatives will continue to be attached to the initiative.
Nov. 2006	5. After results reviews have been completed, an information report on the status of the initiatives will be presented to board, e.g., initiatives for 2005-06 will be reported on in November 2006.

In reference to step 5 of the process above, this information report provides an overview of the actions completed in support of the four initiatives that the administration committed to undertake in 2005-2006. The overview includes the identification of the decision unit assigned the initiative, a summary of the actions and a description of possible future actions.

1. To create an operating surplus account. (Trustee Nicholson)

Assigned to: DU 380 Financial Operations

Action: Due to a district deficit occurring in 2004-2005, a surplus account to fund school surpluses was not created.

Future Actions: Consideration will be given by the administration and trustees to utilizing any surplus from the 2005-2006 year to fund school surplus accounts.

2. To actively engage the community in collaborative dialogue about educational issues. (Trustee Colburn)

Assigned to: DU 311 Communications

Action: A strategic community relations plan was developed for the Board of Trustees to engage stakeholders in supporting public education and the work of the Board. To support this objective, the plan identified a range of opportunities for Trustees to engage the community in discussion of educational issues. The plan included the following tactics to advance this work:

- individual and large group meetings with community, business and post-secondary institutions, which provided opportunities for Trustees to meet with stakeholders, inform them of the work of the Board and discuss a range of educational issues;
- Key Communicator program meetings with parents, which offered presentations on a variety of educational issues and involved ward breakout sessions where Trustees could engage in face-to-face dialogue with parents;
- development of a Board of Trustees' website, where Trustees shared key elements of their work and provided contact information to assist stakeholders in engaging in personal or online dialogue with Trustees;
- development of two PowerPoint presentations on the Board and district, which were designed to share vital aspects of the Board's work and serve as a springboard for discussion of educational issues;
- research and recommendations regarding potential organizations the Board may wish to approach, which would foster dialogue with these organizations; and
- development of various information pieces that provided overviews of the district's work and profiled issues important to the Board, which helped to inform stakeholders of educational issues important to the Board.

Future Actions: The strategic plan will be implemented and monitored as necessary.

3. To make Edmonton Public a leader in the area of the “enhanced physical activity” changes by being innovative and introducing changes to make the physical activity time more efficient. (Trustee Colburn)

Assigned to: DU 336 Curriculum

Action: Extensive support was provided to schools in 2005-2006 to enhance the provision of both Physical Education and Daily Physical Activity (DPA). Inservices were provided for physical education teachers in all elementary and junior high schools on the content and intent of the physical education curriculum, especially those outcomes directed toward developing lifelong physical health and wellness. This was to ensure every school has a staff member inserviced in the Physical Education curriculum. In addition sessions were held for all elementary and junior high schools on best practices for implementing DPA on days when students do not have scheduled physical education. School inter-visitations were also provided in support of DPA, and access to a Physical Education consultant. Starting in January 2007 a course will be available at the University of Alberta for teachers assigned physical education instruction. Curriculum also provided for schools support in scheduling DPA and physical education on a daily basis.

Future Actions: These actions were incorporated as part of broader efforts to promote healthier lifestyles as discussed in the November 29, 2005 board report and as updated in trustee request #235.

4. To engage community partners in support of improving high school completion. (Trustee Gibson)

Assigned to: DU 311 Communications

Action: A strategic community relations plan was developed for the Board of Trustees to support connections with key members of the community. A number of tactics assisted the Board in its work to engage stakeholders in supporting improved high school completion, including:

- individual and large group meetings with community, business and post-secondary institutions, which provided a forum to share the Board’s commitment to improve its high school completion rates and invite community partners to support this work;
- Key Communicator program meetings with parents, which featured several presentations and breakout sessions on how parents and school councils could support the work of teaching and learning, as well as a session on helping students with career planning; the ward breakout sessions also enabled Trustees to engage in dialogue with parents about supporting improved student achievement results and high school completion rates;
- development of a Board of Trustees’ website, which helped to profile the Board’s Legacy Statement and its commitment to raise high school

- completion rates; the site also provided Trustees’ contact information to support dialogue with stakeholders;
- development of two PowerPoint presentations on the Board and district, which profiled the Board’s commitment to help more students successfully complete high school and extended invitations for stakeholders to support the work of the Board;
- various information pieces highlighting the Board’s commitment to improve its high school completion rates and the progress it is making in this regard, including two educational supplements, two issues of the Board newsletter in Class Calendar, and various speeches and letters, all of which were designed to improve awareness of the Board’s work to help more students complete high school.

Future Actions: The strategic plan will be implemented and monitored as necessary.

Assigned to: DU 327 Student Achievement Services

- Action:**
1. Staff from Student Achievement Services presented the following topics at the Key Communicator Programs listed below:
 - October 12 – Overview on District Focus on Teaching and Learning
 - April 12, Mandatory Records Checks for Volunteers
 2. An Attendance Committee composed of various decision units within central (Leadership Services, Consulting Services, Student Achievement, Student Information) was formed to enhance student attendance at all grade levels, as well as explore effective community partnerships
 - 19 schools participated in a district wide pilot project to identify attendance issues and possible solutions. One outcome of the work of this committee was the development of a “flagging system” as part of the district’s Student Information System (SIS), with successful results. This system is now an integral part of SIS and available for all schools to use.
 - The Committee worked closely with the Attendance Board to inform them of the work on attendance issues in our district. In addition, a representative from Alberta Education spoke at one of the committee’s inservices about the process for referral, hearings and outcomes.
 3. Staff from Student Achievement Services sat on a joint committee with staff from the local and provincial Alberta Teachers Association. This committee work will continue throughout cycle three AISI projects, with a shift in purpose and will now explore how to collaboratively support and enhance the successful implementation of all five current AISI projects.
 4. As part of district’s Framework for Supporting Teaching and Learning, and integrated into the district’s professional development sessions,

schools were provided with support to engage families and community in enhancing student achievement and high school completion. Examples of family and community involvement ranged from assemblies to newsletters, tutoring and mentoring programs, presentations by various community leaders, etc.

5. Student Achievement Services coordinated various vehicles for communicating the work of the district to improve high school completion rates, including:
 - Monthly elevator displays
 - Display of the district's AISI project work in the Atrium of the Centre for Education
 - Displays of district Achievement Results on the main and second floors of the Centre for Education
 - Camera ready inserts for school newsletters
 - Regular feature articles in the district's Compass publication
 - Focus on Student Achievement Presentations at all public board meetings
6. As part of the consultation process in creating cycle three AISI projects, school principals were asked to "choose appropriate strategies and processes to gain feedback regarding the next AISI cycle from teaching and non-teaching staff as well as their parent and, where possible, non-parent community." This feedback was incorporated into the development of cycle 3 AISI projects.

Future Actions: The revised Framework for Supporting Teaching and Learning outlines ongoing engagement of community partners and reads as follows:

Engage Families and Community – The school staff uses processes to engage the school community in developing an understanding of the area(s) for instructional improvement and improved student learning within the framework. These processes allow for dialogue with both the school community including students, and the larger parent and non-parent community. This creates a broad understanding of the targeted areas for school improvement. Through these processes, opportunities for input and clarification from the community are provided. As well, this engagement of the community as partners in education assists the school in holding itself accountable for the implementation of its plan.

Student Achievement Services will continue to engage community partners in supporting improved high school completion as an integral part of all five current AISI projects. Where appropriate, the actions listed above will continue. In addition, as part of the collaborative, grassroots approach and direction of the new AISI project, other innovative and creative strategies will evolve and be implemented.

JRP:bly