

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

January 28, 2003

TO: Board of Trustees
FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools
SUBJECT: Trustee Initiatives
ORIGINATOR: A. Habinski, Executive Director, School and District Services
RESOURCE
STAFF: Mary-Ellen Deising

INFORMATION

The following initiatives have been submitted for consideration in the revision of central department three-year plans. The intended actions of the administration with regard to the initiatives will be reported to the Board together with the introduction of revised 2002-2005 plans and the 2003-04 proposed budget on April 8, 2003.

Initiative	Trustee
<p>1. Partnership regarding RAP. Who are they? When will programs be completed? What progress to date? Content of programs? Numbers enrolled?</p> <p>Background: With the badly eroded technical and vocational programs how does Edmonton Public Schools intend to provide meaningful course selections for students not going to university? Programs are sparse at the moment; must improve.</p>	Dean
<p>2. Junior high students (not university bound) being prepared for a career – what is available for them upon entering high school?</p> <p>Background: Someone should look at a course of study for the above-mentioned students. Some of the junior high schools have parts of career education but certainly not enough. We are talking about a very large percentage of students.</p>	Dean
<p>3. Character Education in all schools. There should be a strong commitment to this program, not the “we have the Character Education in our school”. Actively pursue it.</p> <p>Background: Some have good programs, some have a little bit of it, others are working on it. Enough time has transpired to have a sound working system in place, in <u>every</u> school.</p>	Dean

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<p>4. Method of tracking Grade 12 students who do not receive a grad diploma.</p> <p>Background: Percentage of students receiving diplomas is very low. Adjustments to rectify the problem have to be put in place, especially for students entering the work place. Possibly a strong RAP program?</p>	Dean
<p>5. Keep trustees apprised of all information pertaining to education, particularly what’s happening in the trustee’s ward.</p>	Dean
<p>6. Edmonton Public Schools work in a more systematic way to deal with our students’ physical fitness. This has implications for physical education and nutrition programs.</p> <p>Background: Recent studies have shown an increasing alarming trend to obesity in our children in Canada. Educating the whole child means we have to begin to deal seriously with this problem. [see attached article, <i>70-per-cent of teen girls don’t exercise enough, study finds</i>, Appendix I]</p>	Martin
<p>7. Edmonton Public Schools attempt to get a Police Resource Officer in all our high schools.</p> <p>Background: The safety of our students and staff has to be a high priority.</p>	Martin
<p>8. To develop some concrete proposals for innovative ideas for under-utilized space in our schools.</p>	Martin
<p>9. Explore the feasibility of Edmonton Public Schools partnering with the ATA and Alberta Learning to implement a Demonstration Project for a Centre for School-Family-Community Partnerships.</p> <p>Background: One of the primary purposes of a Centre for School-Family-Community Partnerships would be to further the development and implementation of parent and community involvement strategies which are specifically intended to improve student’s academic success. [see attached article, <i>How Parents Can Support Learning</i>, Appendix II]. One of the key pillars of the district’s “Focus on Instruction” is to involve parents and other members of the school community in ways that support and enhance teaching and learning with the view to fostering parent and community involvement that will ultimately lead to improved results for students. As a result of this work, the district is well positioned to serve as a demonstration project for a Centre for School-Family-Community Partnerships. Such a demonstration project could assist Alberta Learning to assess the effectiveness of a Centre for School-Family-Community Partnerships in promoting involvement strategies that lead to improved learning outcomes and increased academic success for Alberta students.</p>	Odynski

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10. Explore the feasibility of Edmonton Public Schools partnering with the YWCA in their *One Woman One Vote Initiative* to provide education and training to Edmonton Public Schools students and staff on the importance of young women being involved in the political process.
- Background: The goal of the YWCA's One Woman One Vote initiative is to assist women to become more actively involved in shaping the public agenda by increasing their participation in election activities and by seeking public office [elected or appointed]. To achieve this goal the YWCA of Edmonton recommends that further steps are necessary to bring education and training to Edmonton women on the subject of involvement in the political process.
- To this end the YWCA shares the common goal of "achieving high standards of citizenship" with the district. A partnership between Edmonton Public Schools and the YWCA could enhance the ability of both organizations to achieve their common goals and, in doing so, better serve the citizens of Edmonton.
11. Develop a policy and administrative regulations to govern how the district will regularly involve affected stakeholders in the development of district policies, priorities, positions and initiatives.
- Background: The consultation process the district used to obtain input from our stakeholders in the development of our submission to the Commission of Learning was very well received. A policy that demonstrates the district's continued commitment to involve affected stakeholders in the development of Edmonton Public Schools policies, priorities, positions or initiatives could generate further public commitment and support for the district and for public education.
12. Invite staff, students, parents and members of the Edmonton community to review and comment on the districts' model and position of a comprehensive strategy for school to work transition, described as Career Focused Education and as approved by the Board on November 12, 2002, before any further development of this initiative takes place.
- Background: This document signals a dramatic shift in the district's approach to high school programming and graduation requirements. Successful implementation will require the support of our staff, students, parents and community. This document has already been approved by the Board and submitted to the Commission of Learning. Our stakeholders should have the opportunity to provide feedback on this model before any further resources are invested in this initiative.

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13. Conduct a public consultation process to determine our stakeholders' views and inform our decision making process about the use of Public Private Partnerships as a means to fund the district's capital projects.

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Background: The Alberta government is about to approve Public Private Partnerships as a means to fund public capital projects including the building of new schools. As this is a substantial shift in public policy and practice, the views of our electorate should inform the districts decision making process regarding this controversial approach to funding public schools.

14. Conduct a review of the district's practice of selling pop, candy and other "junk food" in vending machines, stores, and cafeterias in district schools with a view to determining:

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- the possible effects of this practice on our students' health;
- the views of parents and the community on continuing this practice;
- the cost of providing more healthy food choices [e.g. bottled water, milk, unsweetened fruit juice, fresh fruit, etc] for sale in school vending machines, stores and cafeterias;
- the financial implications for the district of substituting more healthy food choices in vending machines, school stores and cafeterias.

Background: An editorial in the Edmonton Journal, November 1, 2002 called for the district to eliminate the sale of pop and candy in vending machines in district schools. This sentiment was echoed by some of our community members during the district's consultation on our submission to the Learning Commission. New and alarming data about the effects that poor nutritional habits are having on children's health – specifically increasing rates of childhood obesity and juvenile diabetes - provide compelling evidence for the district to re-examine this practice.

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Appendix I – *70-per-cent of teen girls don't exercise enough, study finds*, Edmonton Journal, January 16, 2003

Appendix II – *How Parents Can Support Learning*, American School Board Journal, September 2001