

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

January 29, 2002

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Response to Trustee Request for Information

ORIGINATOR: M. de Man, Department Head

RESOURCE
STAFF: Gloria Chalmers

INFORMATION

REQUEST #39, JANUARY 15, 2002 (TRUSTEE MARTIN): HAS THE ADMINISTRATION STUDIED THE POVERTY INTERVENTION PILOT PROFILES ALLUDED TO IN THE RECENT CSBA BULLETIN AND, IF SO, IS THERE ANY RELEVANCE TO EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITH RESPECT TO SOME OF THESE PROJECTS? The administration has studied the poverty intervention pilot profiles alluded to in the CSBA Bulletin and contained in *Action Against Poverty: School Boards Making a Difference* published in November 2001. Ten schools, representing both urban and rural areas, were profiled in the report. All but two were elementary schools, one served a mainly French Acadian community and three served First Nations students. Many made use of partnerships with groups such as health, social services, service clubs, business and municipal governments. Some focused on early intervention, others on literacy, attendance, culturally appropriate support, recreation, strengthening links with families and nutrition. Finally, a few worked on raising levels of awareness of trustees and others or on making poverty interventions more systemic.

The approaches described are consistent with the strategies identified in the June 23, 1998 district board report, *Effective School Strategies Which Address the Learning Needs of Students Living in Poverty*. As well, the district identified a systemic approach in the April 13, 1999 board report, *Program Framework for Students Disadvantaged Due to Poverty*. The district, under the direction of the supervisor of Aboriginal Education, is currently in the process of reviewing and updating the priorities for meeting the needs of Aboriginal students in the district. The district values and continues to build partnerships that focus on early intervention (e.g. ABC, Norwood and Oliver Centre providers; Success By 6 Classrooms on Wheels), nutrition (e.g., the Edmonton City Centre Church Corporation snack and hot lunch programs), literacy (e.g., the Centre for Family Literacy family literacy program, rhymes that bind program, books program and others), mentoring (Big Sisters and Big Brothers literacy mentoring program), outreach (e.g., Mayfair Rotary Club, West Edmonton Mall and others who support the learning store; YMCA LearnNet and time out programs), culturally appropriate support (e.g., Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society at Rites of Passage), recreation (e.g., Open Doors for Kids organized by the city), health (e.g., Health Canada and Capital Health on diabetes prevention in the city centre project) and research (e.g., Community-University Partnership for the Study of Children, Youth and Families).

Work on better meeting the needs of students disadvantaged due to poverty is ongoing and the district appreciates the efforts of others in raising the profile and providing examples of effective approaches. (G. Chalmers, 429-8398)

GC:mjl