

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

January 30, 2001

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dossdall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: High School Examinations

ORIGINATORS: Rick Anderson, Wilma Bayko, John Beaton, Phyllis Cardinal, Ray Cimolini, Bruce Coggles, Mack Fysh, Gord Hanson, Shirley Keith, Noel Kunst, Jennifer Lawley, Ken Marshall, Bob Maskell, Brian McWilliam, Louise Osland, El Probert, Tony Rankel, George Rice, Ros Smith, Hans Van Ginhoven

RECOMMENDATION

That Board Policy HE.BP Organization For Instruction, Section B, be revised to read "fourteen days."

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Rationale

The current policy (Appendix I) was implemented in 1975 when the then Department of Education ceased administering grade twelve departmental examinations. The policy merely reflected the number of days that had been dictated by the Department of Education's examination schedule. Since the reintroduction of the department's examination program in 1985 the district has not revised its regulation to fit the existing diploma examination schedule (Appendix II) that now requires six and one-half (6½) examination days per semester. The lengthening of the examination schedule was brought about by two factors; one, separating the English examinations into two parts, and two, to avoid forcing a student to have more than one diploma examination on any given day – a position that was at the time supported vigorously by our district.

There are also a number of other factors that require understanding:

- the diploma examination schedule dictates a school's examination schedule that involves all students not only grade twelves. All high school students are writing mid-terms, school final examinations and/or diploma examinations, during this period.
- numbers will vary from school to school but some high schools will administer as many as 67 different examinations
- there are approximately 18,000 high school students; in some instances there could be 1,500 students in one school writing an examination on a given day
- school examination schedules are arranged such as to minimize examination conflicts and avoid forcing students to write more than one examination on any given day

- setting up examination halls frequently involves moving 800 or more desks from classrooms. Some schools do rent desks and chairs but clearly everyone cannot.
- an increasing number of students require special examination accommodations (extra time, tapes, scribes, readers, isolation) adhering to Alberta Learning's process that requires intensive staffing
- an increasing number of students are utilizing word processors to write Part A of the English 30/33 examination, social studies 30 and biology 30; for example at W.P. Wagner 65% of their English students and 70% of their social studies students will use word processors making these facilities unavailable and requiring large numbers of staff to supervise and trouble shoot
- examination set up, particularly of the diploma examination papers, requires a team of staff members to lay out, monitor, check, collect, recheck, pack and return the examinations
- the district's requirement of high schools to upload teacher assigned final marks for diploma examination courses on January 22 and all other courses on January 31
- the existing policy HE.BP Organization for Instruction recognizes the need for time to achieve a semester changeover or turnaround day:
  - high schools are largely organized on a semester basis and hence essentially start and end a school year twice within one operational year
  - most high schools will receive a range of 50 to 200 new registrations for the second semester which requires processing, program evaluation, and timetabling
  - all schools will make numerous adjustments to student semester two timetables as a consequence of semester one results, which can only be done at the last moment
  - changes in registration and timetabling may lead to changes impacting teacher assignments across the school
  - time to move furniture from examination halls back into classrooms
  - time to prepare accurate class lists, attendance rosters for teachers to commence the new semester
- it is understood that the time between the English 30/33 Part A and Part B examinations are instructional days and not to be used for scheduled examination purposes
- Administrative Regulation HEA.AR (Appendix III) remains unchanged.
- it is understood that during scheduled examination periods regular, scheduled instruction is not proceeding but the services of staff and the facility are available to students for activities such as reviews, tutorials, seminars, completion of missed or late assignments, supervised library study
- regular classroom instruction throughout the examination period will be maintained by the following non-integrated special needs programs: autistic, dependent handicapped, opportunity and trainable handicapped

BMc:pa

APPENDIX I	Board Policy HE.BP – Organization for Instruction
APPENDIX II	Grade 12 Diploma Examinations 2000-2001 School Year Schedule
APPENDIX III	Administrative Regulation HEA.AR – Semester Changeover – Senior High Schools