

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

January 30, 2001

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dossdall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Community Access Program

ORIGINATOR: Gary Reynolds, Department Head

RESOURCE
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INFORMATION

The Community Access Program (CAP) is one of the key components in the federal government's Connecting Canadians initiative. The CAP program is administered by Industry Canada. The goal of CAP is to give residents of all rural, remote and urban communities across Canada affordable access to the Internet, and to provide new ways to communicate, learn and do business in today's knowledge-based economy.

Related goals include:

- promoting public awareness of the benefits and opportunities of using information technology and services;
- helping citizens become better informed through the exchange of ideas and information;
- coaching individuals in the use of information technologies;
- supporting on-line delivery of government programs and services; and
- facilitating business activities such as electronic commerce.

In urban communities, CAP is being delivered through:

- federal departments and agencies;
- participating public libraries and schools; and
- community organizations.

At a typical public access site, people can perform the following tasks, among others:

- explore the World Wide Web for news and other information;
- search for job openings or business opportunities;
- send and receive e-mail
- print out electronic documents;
- buy and sell products or services;
- connect with government and community services; and
- develop technology skills.

Cap is a cost-shared program. Funding is available at a maximum rate of \$17,000 per site. Eligible costs for CAP funding include:

- purchase of equipment;
- equipment maintenance;
- purchase of Internet connections;
- telephone and Internet charges;
- staff salaries;
- promotion;
- supplies such as paper and ink cartridges;
- orientation sessions;
- administration fees such as insurance, incorporation and audit fees;
- modest management fees (based on demonstrated need); and
- technical support.

In June of 2000, our district was approached by Industry Canada to determine whether Edmonton Public Schools would be interested in participating in CAP. Information about the program was provided to district principals at the June SELT meeting. Twenty-five principals expressed interest in receiving more information about the program. One of the benefits of this program cited by principals was the potential for increasing community involvement in schools.

In the fall of 2000, the schools interested in the program were notified and visited to determine their level of support for the program and to develop an individual school plan. Edmonton Public Schools submitted an Operation Plan, to Industry Canada, that was based on the plans received from 21 district schools that chose to participate in the program (see Appendices I and II).

In December of 2000 Industry Canada communicated to the district that the plan was approved and a contract for implementing CAP was signed by the two parties. The majority of our schools will be implementing the program commencing February 5, 2001, with the remainder commencing March 1, 2001.

The length of the program is 18 school months from the commencement date. The schools are obligated to provide the program for a minimum of 20 hours per week. At a district level we are obligated to provide the program for a reasonable amount of evening and weekend coverage. According to the contract, schools are required to provide a minimum of two workstations connected to the Internet and one printer for public access. Attached are the requirements for community-based urban CAP sites (Appendix III).

For further information on Edmonton Public School's Community Access Program, see the website at the following URL: <http://dev1.epsb.ca>.

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APPENDIX I: Operational Plan

APPENDIX II: CAP Sites

APPENDIX III: Requirements for Community-based Urban CAP Sites