

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

January 30, 2001

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Dosedall, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Changes to the Basis of Allocation for 2001-2002

ORIGINATOR: G. Reynolds, Department Head

RESOURCE

STAFF: Basis of Allocation Committee: Doug Beaton, Ron Bradley, Jan deLeeuw, Mary-Ellen Deising, Lucille Dupuis, Lorraine Farris, Mark Liguori, Terry MacPherson, Ingrid Neitsch, Judy Soper, Colin Willows

INFORMATION

The basis of allocation is designed to provide an equitable distribution of resources to schools. The basis is not intended to identify specific costs for the delivery of programming in schools. It is the means by which available resources are distributed among all schools in the district. Principals, in consultation with staff, students, parents, and community members plan the deployment of these resources to achieve the school's planned results.

The annual review of the basis of allocation is a key element in the district's budget planning process. The purpose for the review is to improve the extent to which the basis provides for an equitable distribution of resources and to identify and examine possible changes to the basis. The major criteria considered in the review and in determining proposed changes are:

- all resources available for allocation to schools are distributed equitably in accordance with responsibility for results; and
- allocations are student driven; and
- the number of allocation categories is minimized; and
- the basis of allocation is accepted, understood, and supported by all concerned; and
- the information on which allocations are based is clear, consistent, and easily obtainable; and
- the administrative cost of allocating resources is minimized.

This report identifies the only change for 2001-2002 that has been approved by the superintendent of schools and reflects the extensive work of the Basis of Allocation Committee, as well as feedback obtained from Superintendent's Council and Vertical Groups.

That the adaptation category in elementary and junior high school be phased out over the next two years, and be replaced with a block funding formula based on the number of non-coded students scoring two or more years below grade on either measure of HLAT.

Effective September 2000, Edmonton Public Schools no longer have district sites for adaptation students. It was felt that for the majority of these students their needs were best met in their community school.

For the past several years less than one third of the students who are coded and funded adaptation score two or more years below grade as measured by HLAT (e.g., in 1999-00, 1,900 students in grades 4 to 9 were coded and funded adaptation, but only 590 of these students scored two years below grade on either measure of HLAT). This type of data leads us to believe that we are possibly funding the wrong students. However there is no doubt that every school in the district has at risk students who are in need of program modifications. By using the number of non coded students who score two or more years below on either measure of HLAT, we would be identifying most of these at risk students. As the total amount allocated remains the same, but the number of students used for calculation purposes is lower, schools would receive more resources for students in this category than they did previously under adaptation coding. At the extreme ends, 9 schools would see their allocation reduced by \$10,000 or more, while 12 schools would see their allocation increased by \$10,000 or more. Due to these extremes it is felt that a phase in over two years will provide schools with enough time to adjust their program delivery for at risk students according to the new funding level.

Allocating these funds as a block amount will eliminate the time and money schools spend on identifying adaptation students thus directing more funds towards programming needs. It will also provide schools with the flexibility to direct resources to those students that they have identified as in the most need. The need for IPP's would not be eliminated as this continues to be a requirement of Alberta Learning.

Although the HLAT results only represent one "snapshot" of student achievement, it is the most equitable measure we have in the district to allow us to collect data over time. As the recording of teacher awarded marks on SIS becomes more reliable, this data could also be used in the calculation of this allocation.

Because grade 3, 6 and 9 students are not required to take the HLAT writing test, we had to identify students who scored two years below on **either** the reading or writing tests, which may inflate the number of students used in this calculation. For this reason, as well as in an effort to provide meaningful longitudinal data for the district the committee feels that it would be beneficial to the district to reinstate the writing component of HLAT for all grades.

Students in grades 10, 11, and 12 do not write HLAT and therefore an alternative mechanism will need to be developed to allow for block funding for at risk students at the high school level. Having another piece of data from the grade 9 population (writing component of HLAT) may help determine a more equitable formula for allocating to high schools. Due to the complexity of funding high schools on credit completion, it is believed that a formula for high schools will not be ready until the 2002-03 school year.

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