

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

June 12, 2007

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Michael A. Kostek School: Empowering Students Using Assessment for Learning - AISI Project

ORIGINATOR: B. Crossman, Principal, Michael A. Kostek School

RESOURCE
STAFF: Louise Osland, Corrie Ziegler

INFORMATION

Michael A. Kostek School is a large elementary school located in the west part of the city. The student population is 463 students in Kindergarten to Grade 6.

The Instructional Focus at Michael A. Kostek is "*Writing to Learn*". During the final year of the Supporting Teaching and Learning project, staff introduced students to assessment for learning strategies to support the writing focus. In the spring of 2006, when staff were asked to select one of four projects for cycle three Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AIS I) projects, staff unanimously selected to participate in the *Using Assessment to Enhance Student Learning and Success* Project. Staff believed that more in-depth professional development about assessment for learning would be a win-win for both staff and students. They believed that student achievement would be positively impacted, and teacher understanding of effective implementation of assessment for learning practices would be deepened and enriched.

During the current school year, Michael A. Kostek staff continued their assessment for learning work by assisting students in setting criteria. By inviting student involvement in setting criteria, staff noted increased student engagement. Furthermore, staff believe that when students know what success looks like, "what counts", what is expected and what they have already accomplished, they are empowered to learn and increase their chances for success.

The next step in the assessment for learning journey was to assist students in assessing their own work. Students are encouraged to do so by self-assessing; working with a peer; or conferencing with the teacher in large or small groups, or one on one. Students receive and give feedback in a variety of forms such as red light/green light, thumbs up/thumbs down, or two stars and a wish (whereby students give two positive statements about the work and one statement for growth). When students have time to carefully look at and think about their learning, based on criteria, they can more effectively make decisions about what needs to be changed or improved.

Next year Michael A. Kostek staff will focus on assisting students in collecting evidence/data of their learning to assist in setting well formulated goals that will lead to further action and deeper learning. In this way students are not simply passengers, but are actively setting the course for their educational journey.

Leadership staff from Michael A. Kostek has attended project professional development sessions, all staff have participated in monthly professional development meetings and grade level planning sessions. Each of these professional development opportunities have included time for dialogue and sharing related to assessment for learning strategies. Staff has found that the time taken to share successes as well as challenges has been extremely valuable. During instructional inter-visitations staff has had numerous opportunities to enhance their learning with staff from their cohort schools: Aldergrove and Patricia Heights.

Michael A. Kostek staff has made great strides in their assessment for learning practices this year. They see the value in taking the time to build best assessment practices into their daily practices. Staff are committed to moving the work forward next year and to ensure superb results from all learners – students and staff alike.

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