

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

May 12, 2009

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Improving Student Achievement at Westbrook Elementary

ORIGINATOR: D. Watson, Principal, Westbrook Elementary School

RESOURCE
STAFF: Laurie Beggs, Corrie Ziegler

INFORMATION

Westbrook School is located in the south-west part of the city, serving approximately 482 children in Kindergarten to Grade 6.

Westbrook School is committed to creating a learning environment that nurtures personal growth and mutual respect in students, staff and parents. Stakeholders believe that learning occurs best in a safe, accepting, cooperative and stimulating environment. Strong parental involvement, student leadership and character education all enrich Westbrook and build a network that further supports teaching and learning. School Council members support and extend academic programming. Programs and events such as Artist-in-Residence, learning fairs, and a community barbeque help to meet the Westbrook School Council's goal of promoting wellness and pride.

Westbrook School celebrates a consistent record of academic excellence. The school community values a differentiated approach to teaching and learning which allows for and encourages students to challenge themselves in their learning. Extending learning opportunities that match student needs, interests and readiness is part of the differentiated approach. Providing students with opportunities to develop life-long learning skills and individual responsibilities is critical in equipping students in living and learning in an ever-changing social, physical and technological world.

Teachers have deepened their understanding of the principles of differentiating instruction and assessment practices through professional learning opportunities and collaboration. Staff have been involved in a variety of professional learning opportunities, using district consultants, collaborative meetings and ongoing professional development time. Thoughtful practices such as building and using common vocabulary and building confidence in using the language of a particular discipline are specific ways Westbrook staff and students go deeper in their work.

Staff are integrating and extending their work related to differentiated instruction from the area of language arts to include mathematics and SMART technologies to enhance student engagement and learning. Each classroom has recently been equipped with a SMART board and a document camera. Through the creation of the 2009 – 2010 school plan, the school has

committed effort and resources toward coordinated support for targeted professional development in support of the change in the math curriculum, supplemental math learning resources supports, the learning of basic facts and opportunities for students to participate in math contests. Supports for math learning include participation in the Math 4 All Initiative, math clubs that enrich and provide support, daily math activities that focus on math fact acquisition, math contests, a math fair, and the use of “The Problem Solver” teaching tool at each grade level.

At Westbrook School the importance of relationships, community connections and professional learning enhance student learning and support all students as individuals reaching for a bright future.

ES:gj