

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

November 9, 2004

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: District Initiative on Supporting Teaching and Learning

ORIGINATOR: D. Barrett, Assistant to the Superintendent

RESOURCE
STAFF: Kathy Cammarata, Louise Osland, Tanni Parker, Ken Tranter, Corrie Ziegler

INFORMATION

Student Achievement Services was created in 2001. This decision unit provides support and assistance to schools and central staff as they work to continually improve student achievement. Currently, Student Achievement Services consists of one director, three principals, one assistant principal and two support staff. The work of Student Achievement Services is framed around the District Priorities, District Belief Statements, Expectations within the Supporting Teaching and Learning Framework (Appendix I, II) and is guided by the District Targets and Process Goals (Appendix III).

Student Achievement Services provides support and assistance through two broad areas:

- the development and delivery of professional development sessions for key leaders from all decision units in the district
- direct work with principals and lead teachers in their schools.

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the work of this decision unit for the upcoming year.

Professional Development for Principal and Lead Teachers

Student Achievement Services will offer four professional development sessions for all principals and lead teachers this year. These sessions will provide research based content and processes in four areas: using effective teaching strategies and practices; teachers working together to enhance student achievement; using assessment tools to monitor progress towards goals; and working effectively with parents to increase student achievement. Professional development sessions are developed, planned and written through a collaborative process with teachers, principals, Consulting Services, Resource Development, Student Assessment, Student Information and Communications. Professional development sessions are presented by a Presentation Team, which includes principals, assistant principals, teachers, consultants and Student Achievement Services staff.

Professional Development Sessions Held at Schools

Student Achievement Services will organize three facilitated school visits for all principals and lead teachers this year. The purpose of these visits is to enhance principals and lead teachers' observational skills as well as their ability to provide effective, reflective feedback about what was observed.

Principals in the Classroom

Research demonstrates that principals who are in classrooms on a regular basis can more effectively support the work of teaching and learning. Student Achievement Services will continue to provide support to principals in this critical component of the Supporting Teaching and Learning framework through three professional development sessions.

Coaching Professional Development

All principals in the district have a coach, who is generally another principal from the district. Principals will attend three professional development sessions throughout the year that center on the development and enhancement of effective coaching skills. Principals, as coaches, learn to ask effective, reflective questions that encourage their colleague to critically examine their practice as well as decide on logical next steps that would result in continued school improvement.

Central Decision Unit Staff Professional Development

Student Achievement Services also plans and coordinates monthly professional development sessions for leadership staff from central decision units. The purpose of these sessions is to heighten awareness of the work of teaching and learning in schools and determine efficient and effective ways each decision unit can enhance service to schools. Central staff have the opportunity to attend sessions at the center as well as participate in school visits.

Work in Schools

The Student Achievement Services team also works directly with selected school principals and lead teachers to provide direct support for the consistent, day to day application of effective, research based teaching and learning practices that result in enhanced student achievement. Some examples of services and supports include:

- support for principals as they work to spend more time in classrooms
- identification and implementation of best teaching practices
- assistance with the analysis of data
- using data to assist schools in planning effectively for further instruction
- efficient and effective alignment of resources
- assistance in the creation of professional development plans
- enhancing collaboration within schools and across the district.

Improving student achievement is complex work. It requires a collaborative effort and involves all district staff. Student Achievement Services is pleased to be able to have a lead role in supporting all district staff to achieve the goal of superb results from all students.

APPENDIX I – Expectations 2004-2005

APPENDIX II – Central Services Expectations

APPENDIX III – SMARTe Targets 2004-2005

CZ:gj

Expectations 2004 - 2005

1. **Implement a School-wide Instructional Focus:**

There is obvious evidence that the school is “living” a solid school-wide focus through its words, actions and deeds. There is also evidence of how central services is supporting the instructional focus at the school sites.

2. **Develop Professional Collaboration Teams to Improve Teaching and Learning:**

Using protocols and strategies, teacher teams meet regularly to talk about student work, teacher assignments and effective instructional practices within the instructional focus. The principal participates in these meetings. These meetings drive improvements in teaching and learning. The Instructional Leadership Team meets regularly and is providing strong leadership around the instructional focus.

3. **Identify, Learn and Use Effective Research-Based Teaching Practices:**

A narrow list of (3-5) best practices has been identified. Progress is being made at school-wide implementation of the best practices in each and every classroom for each and every student.

4. **Implement a Targeted Professional Development Plan That Builds Expertise in Selected Best Practices:**

The School’s Professional Development Plan supports the instructional focus by building teacher expertise and promoting high expectations for all students. As expertise is developed, teachers are held increasingly accountable for implementation of strategies.

5. **Realign Resources (People, Time, Talent, Energy and Money) to Support the Instructional Focus:**

The school can demonstrate clear evidence that it is making decisions that its resources are aligned with the school-wide instructional focus.

6. **Engage Families and the Community in Supporting the Instructional Focus:**

The school can demonstrate clear evidence that it is involving families and the community with the school-wide instructional focus and with district and school-wide expectations.

7. **SMARTe Targets:**

The school has set at least two school-wide SMARTe targets. One is around an external measure, such as the Provincial Achievement Tests or the HLATs and one is around a local measure of student achievement. Results are easily available and publicly posted. The data is part of an internal accountability system that is used as a lens for decision-making.

8. **Principal as Instructional Leader for the Classroom:**

The principal is working towards meeting the expectation of spending 50% of the instructional day involved in instructional leadership that is directly related to the classroom.

October 2004

CENTRAL SERVICES EXPECTATIONS

1. **Words, actions, deeds support teaching and learning**

There is evidence that the environment and culture of each Central Services Decision Unit demonstrates, through its words, deeds and actions, that it supports teaching and learning.

2. **Collaboration with schools and other Decision Units to support teaching and learning**

There is evidence of collaboration within each Decision Unit and between each Decision Unit and schools, trustees, departments and other Decision Units to support teaching and learning.

3. **Align resources to support teaching and learning**

There is evidence that each Decision Unit has aligned its resources – time, people, and dollars – to support teaching and learning.

4. **There is an internal accountability system that supports teaching and learning**

The Decision Unit is engaged in a process of gathering information, using that information to inform changes in practice, and monitoring the effectiveness of the changes on supporting teaching and learning.

5. **Central services leaders support teaching and learning**

Central services create professional service communities and provide direction and support in meeting the goals and requirements of the schools and district in support of teaching and learning.

SMARTe Targets 2004-2005

Student Learning Goals

1. By June 2005, all students will demonstrate a minimum of one year's growth in language arts and mathematics as measured by the teacher assigned grade levels of achievement, or by the communication and numeracy goals in their IPP's.
2. a. By June 2005, the number of students in the district reading below grade level as measured by the 2005 HLAT's will decrease by 5%.
 - Attainment of this goal represents approximately 360 additional students across the district who will be reading at grade level.
 - Schools will set individual SMARTe targets that will contribute to the attainment of this goal at a district level.
- b. By June 2005, the number of students in the district reading above grade level as measured by the 2005 HLAT's will increase by 5%.
 - Attainment of this goal represents approximately 600 additional students across the district who will be reading above grade level.
 - Schools will set individual SMARTe targets that will contribute to the attainment of this goal at a district level.
3. By June 2005, the number of students in the district writing below grade level as measured by the 2005 HLAT's will decrease by 5%.
 - Attainment of this goal represents approximately 300 additional students across the district who will be writing at grade level.
 - Schools will set individual SMARTe targets that will contribute to the attainment of this goal at a district level.
4. By June 2005, the district high school completion rate after 5 years as reported by Alberta Learning will be 75%.
 - Attainment of this goal represents approximately 420 additional students across the district who have met the criteria for high school completion within 5 years.
5. a. By June 2005, the number of students in the district who are not meeting the acceptable standard in English language arts, mathematics, social studies and science on Alberta Learning Achievement tests and diploma examinations will decrease by 5%.
 - Schools will set individual SMARTe targets that will contribute to the attainment of this goal at a district level.
- b. By June 2005, the number of students in the district who are meeting the standard of excellence in English language arts, mathematics, social studies and science on Alberta Learning Achievement tests and diploma examinations will increase by 5%.
 - Schools will set individual SMARTe targets that will contribute to the attainment of this goal at a district level.

6. By June 2005, each school and the district will meet the SMARTe target they have set for participation rates on grade 3, 6, and 9 Alberta Learning Achievement tests and grade 12 diploma examinations.
7. By June 2005, the percentage of students in the district successfully completing each high school course will increase by 5%.
 - Schools will set individual SMARTe targets that will contribute to the attainment of this goal at a district level.

Process Goals

Every school will ensure high quality teaching and learning and high quality leadership through the implementation of the Expectations.

Every school will provide evidence of achieving high standards of citizenship, conduct, safety and well being of students and staff as identified in the Expectations.