

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

November 13, 2007

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: 2007 Provincial Achievement Test Results

ORIGINATOR: J. Bidulock, Assistant Superintendent

RESOURCE
STAFF: Joanne Aldridge, Anne Mulgrew, Elisa Rawe, Lorie Welk

INFORMATION

This is the third year that all Alberta school districts have been required by Alberta Education to report achievement test results by student cohort. Cohort reporting accounts for all students registered in grades 3, 6 and 9. Students who are absent or excused from an achievement test are included in the results as not having demonstrated the acceptable standard. Alberta Education has chosen this method of reporting so that all students are accounted for, thereby ensuring equitable analysis across jurisdictions.

The data included in this report is different from that which is included in the accountability pillar. Data in the accountability pillar is portrayed as “three-year rolling averages” which means that each year the most recent data becomes part of the average, and the oldest data is taken out. This report contains two years of annual data in order to reveal provincial achievement test trends from one year to the next more readily. Examination of these trends assists school and central staff to identify areas of success as well as areas that may require additional targeted support.

District to Province Comparison

- The percentage of district students achieving the acceptable standard exceeds provincial results for all tests at grades 6 and 9 with the exception of English language arts and grade 6 mathematics.
- The percentage of district students achieving the standard of excellence exceeds provincial results for all tests with the exception of grade 3 language arts.
- The percentage of district students achieving standards in grade 9 is substantially higher than the province with the exception of the acceptable standard for English language arts.

District 2007 to 2006 Comparison

- There was an increase in the percentage of students achieving the standard of excellence in grades 3, 6 and 9 Language Arts and in all grade 9 subjects with the exception of social studies.

- There was a decline in the percentage of grade 3, 6 and 9 students achieving the acceptable standard in most subjects relative to the previous year. Two exceptions are grade 9 science and English language arts.
- Prior level data indicates that district students performed better than predicted in grade 6 and 9 English language arts and mathematics. These are the only two subjects and grades for which this data is available.

Detailed Findings

In June 2007, all students enrolled in grades 3, 6, and 9 wrote achievement tests in language arts and mathematics. Students enrolled in grades 6 and 9 also wrote achievement tests in science and social studies. In addition to writing achievement tests in the core courses, students enrolled in grades 6 and 9 French Immersion wrote a French language arts test. Results from provincial achievement tests are reported in terms of the percentage of students achieving the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence.

Table 1 provides a comparison of district results to provincial results for percentages of students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in 2007.

**TABLE 1
DISTRICT AND PROVINCIAL RESULTS FOR THE
JUNE 2007 ACHIEVEMENT TESTS: COHORT DATA**

Achievement Test	Percentage of Students Meeting the Acceptable Standard			Percentage of Students Meeting the Standard of Excellence		
	Prov.	EPS	Diff.	Prov.	EPS	Diff.
GRADE 3						
Language Arts	80.3	78.4	-1.9	17.7	16.2	-1.5
Mathematics	79.9	78.9	-1.0	23.5	25.7	+2.2
GRADE 6						
Language Arts	80.3	77.6	-2.7	19.8	20.7	+0.9
Mathematics	74.0	73.1	-0.9	14.5	16.4	+1.9
Science	75.2	75.3	+0.1	26.6	29.9	+3.3
Social Studies	77.4	77.5	+0.1	22.3	24.9	+2.6
French Lang Arts	87.4	88.4	+1.0	11.0	13.8	+2.8
GRADE 9						
Language Arts	77.5	77.2	-0.3	14.8	18.3	+3.5
Mathematics	66.3	68.5	+2.2	18.3	22.7	+4.4
Science	69.6	71.9	+2.3	14.7	20.7	+6.0
Social Studies	71.4	73.5	+2.1	18.7	24.4	+5.7
French Lang Arts	81.3	86.4	+5.1	12.9	19.5	+6.6

District results exceeded provincial results in terms of percentages of students meeting the acceptable standard with the exception of the two tests at grade 3; grades 6 and 9 English language arts and grade 6 mathematics. For percentages of students meeting standard of excellence, district results exceeded provincial results for all achievement tests except grade 3 language arts.

Table 2 provides information on district results over the past two years. Appendix I provides a graphic display of district achievement test results for the past three years.

**TABLE 2
DISTRICT RESULTS ON PROVINCIAL
ACHIEVEMENT TESTS FOR 2006 AND 2007: COHORT DATA**

Achievement Test	Percentage of Students Meeting the Acceptable Standard			Percentage of Students Meeting the Standard of Excellence		
	2006	2007	Diff.	2006	2007	Diff.
GRADE 3						
Language Arts	80.0	78.4	-1.6	13.9	16.2	+2.3
Mathematics	81.5	78.9	-2.6	27.9	25.7	-2.2
GRADE 6						
Language Arts	78.4	77.6	-0.8	17.0	20.7	+3.7
Mathematics	77.0	73.1	-3.9	18.1	16.4	-1.7
Science	79.7	75.3	-4.4	32.0	29.9	-2.1
Social Studies	80.2	77.5	-2.7	27.7	24.9	-2.8
French Lang Arts	94.3	88.4	-5.9	14.6	13.8	-0.8
GRADE 9						
Language Arts	76.9	77.2	+0.3	15.9	18.3	+2.4
Mathematics	68.8	68.5	-0.3	21.1	22.7	+1.6
Science	68.9	71.9	+3.0	17.9	20.7	+2.8
Social Studies	75.0	73.5	-1.5	25.1	24.4	-0.7
French Lang Arts	90.3	86.4	-3.9	16.8	19.5	+2.7

There are some positive indicators for the district revealed by this trend data at the standard of excellence, specifically in English language arts at all grades and in most other grade 9 subjects. There is also some positive improvement at the acceptable standard in grade 9 science and English language arts. However, while the district continued to exceed provincial results in most areas in the 2006-07 test administration, Table 2 provides other information that may be of concern. The district results relative to 2006 for the acceptable standard are disappointing. At grade 3, there was a substantial decline in the percentage of students who met the acceptable standard in English language arts and mathematics. At grade 6, there was a substantial decrease in the percentage of students meeting the acceptable standard in all subjects. At grade 9, there was a substantial decrease in the percentage of students meeting the acceptable standard in social studies and French language arts. One trend that contributed to the decline in students demonstrating the acceptable standard is an increase in the percentage of students excused from writing these tests at grades 3 and 6 relative to 2006. Students excused from writing are included in the data as not demonstrating the acceptable standard. A student is excused from writing an achievement test by the superintendent when the student's teacher advises the school principal that

- the student is not capable of responding to the assessment in its original or approved accommodated form, or
- participation would be harmful to the student.

An increase in the percentage of excused students contributed to the decrease in the percentage of students demonstrating the acceptable standard in all grade 3 and grade 6 tests with the exception of French language arts. The percentage of students excused is also substantially higher for the district compared to the province at grades 3, 6 and 9.

In contrast to some of the trends in Table 2, a very positive trend is revealed in the district prior level of achievement data. This is a trend that is not evident from this table. Prior level of achievement data compares students' prior achievement at grades 3 and 6 respectively to their performance in grades 6 and 9 on the 2007 tests. This data indicates that students are performing better than predicted in grade 6 and grade 9 English language arts and mathematics. These are the only tests for which this data is available. Positive prior level results support the observation that students show greater than expected academic growth when they are a part of the Edmonton Public School district for two or more years. Students new to our district in the current economic boom include new immigrants who may be learning English for the first time and residents of other provinces who may need to adjust to slightly different educational programs of study. The district English Language Learner (ELL) Centre provides support for students as they transition into our district from other countries. Consultants and teachers provide additional literacy and numeracy supports to students through specific programs. AISI projects focus on supporting students through assessment for learning, enhanced processes for collaborating with family and community agencies, differentiated instruction, enhanced literacy practices, and technology innovations. Community partnerships engage other agencies to help new Canadians and those students who may struggle due to issues of poverty. Prior level data for English language arts and mathematics provides evidence that students are supported in their academic growth over time through a variety of district initiatives.

Implications

- The district needs to continue to provide effective support to struggling students in their early school years, particularly in literacy and in numeracy.
- The district will continue to monitor the impact of initiatives designed to provide additional support to students (the new ELL centres, the five current AISI projects, and the new Aboriginal policy and regulation) and use the data collected to inform next steps.
- District schools should include prior level of achievement data results when they communicate student achievement on provincial tests to parents and the community.
- Cohort data results should be reported to the school's community as required by the province, but framed for various audiences in the context of the percentage of students who are excused from writing the achievement tests. All students who are capable of writing the tests without undue harm should be encouraged to participate with the appropriate allowed accommodations.

Four of the five cycle-3 AISI projects use achievement test information as one of the quantitative measures of success. Several use prior level of achievement data. It is expected that the implementation of a variety of strategies within these projects will positively impact the district achievement test results.

ES:fm

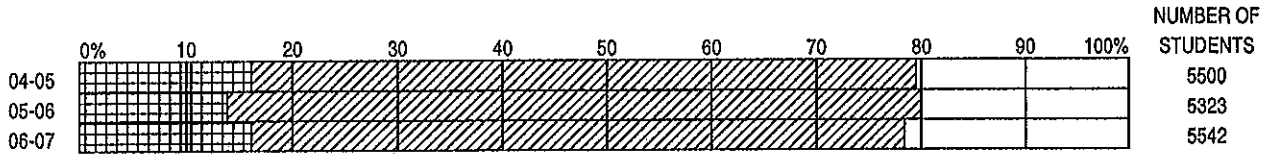
APPENDIX I - Student Achievement Report 2005-2007 Based on Cohort Data

**STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT REPORT 2005-2007
Based on Cohort Data**

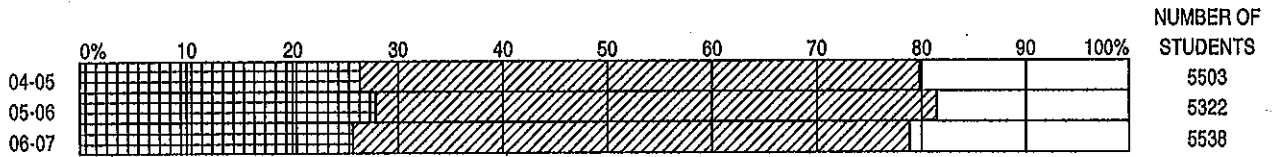
% Meeting Standard of Excellence
 % Meeting Acceptable Standard
 % Not Meeting Acceptable Standard

GRADE 3 ALBERTA LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT TEST (Cohort Data)

Language Arts

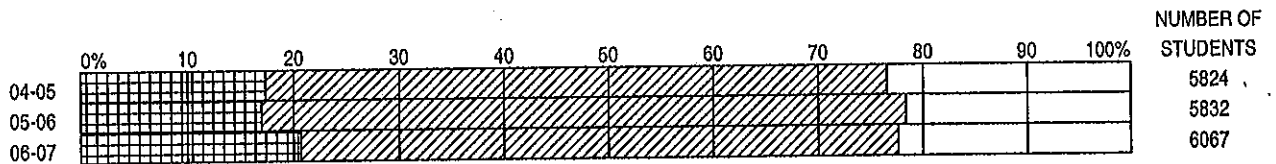


Mathematics

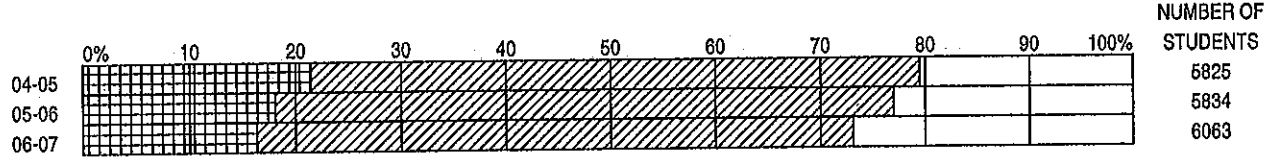


GRADE 6 ALBERTA LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT TEST (Cohort Data)

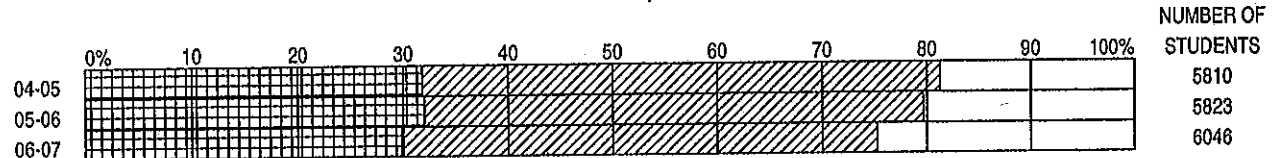
Language Arts



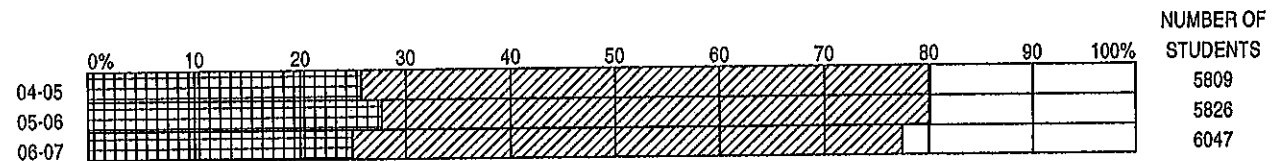
Mathematics



Science



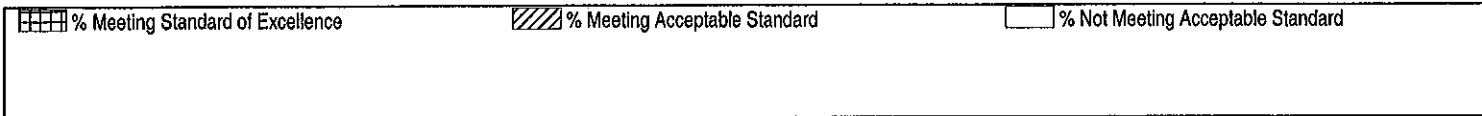
Social Studies



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT REPORT 2005-2007

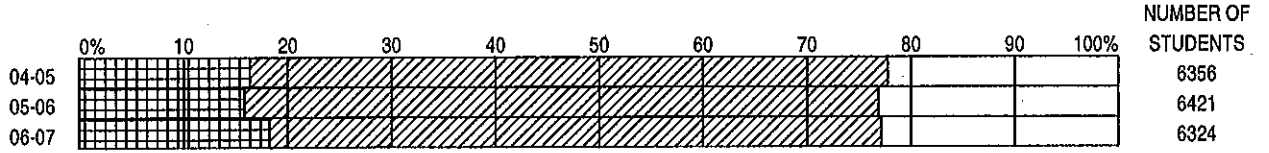
Based on Cohort Data

District

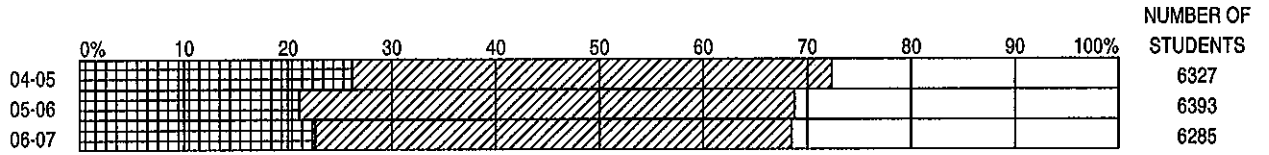


GRADE 9 ALBERTA LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT TEST (Cohort Data)

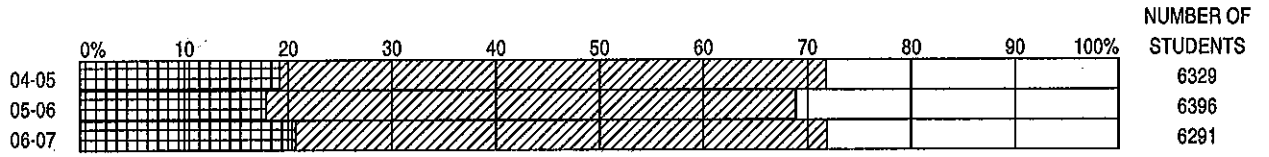
Language Arts



Mathematics



Science



Social Studies

