

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

November 25, 2003

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Consulting Services – Focus on Teaching and Learning

ORIGINATOR: D. Barrett, Assistant to the Superintendent

RESOURCE
STAFF: Judy Craig, Carolyn Lewis, Matt Walker

INFORMATION

In June 2003, the senior high principal group submitted a proposal requesting the services of three full-time high school consultants who would provide in-house training on AISI Best Practices. This plan would allow the training of high school staff to be customized to meet specific district, school, and department needs. The consultants would ensure that all components of best practices training were consistent, including modeling and coaching. To ensure the consultants were readily available to schools, the high schools purchased their services in advance, with the rates paid by each school pro-rated to their student population. Additional service was also purchased from Student Assessment to assist with assessment practices and Credit Enrolment Units (CEU) funding guidelines.

To date the consultants have provided a range of direct services to the majority of high schools, and service varies from a few hours of consultation to many hours of planning, presenting, and working with staff groups. We expect that the hours of service will be distributed fairly equitably by the end of the year.

The types of services provided might include but are not limited to the following:

- Professional development sessions, full day or half day.
- One hour sessions at staff or Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) meetings on particular topics
- Department meetings or retreats
- Meetings with department heads from all schools
- Senior High Special Needs Coordinator Meeting
- Analysis of school results data
- Provision of planning and resource support to Instructional Leadership Teams
- Planning and participating in Instructional Walk-through school visits
- Introducing formative assessment theory and practices to staff
- Facilitating inter-visitations to observe best practices in action
- Special requests from schools (Individualized Assessments, Programming for Underachievers, Effective Questioning, Engaging all the Learners, Differentiated Instruction in the Classroom)
- One on one work with individual teachers

Since the service we provide is based on specific school plans and requests, the range of session topics is equally varied. The following titles give some sense of the areas of interest.

- Reading Strategies that Engage All Learners
- Formative Assessment Directly Affects Results
- Reading Best Practices
- Intervention Strategies for Underachievers
- Integrating Content Area Strategies and Cooperative Learning
- Cooperative Learning in Math Classrooms
- Taking High Achievers to Excellence
- Consistency Among Classrooms Impacts Achievement
- Organization Practices that Lead to Increased Achievement

Several members of Consulting Services staff work with Student Achievement Services on the district focus on Supporting Teaching and Learning. Carolyn Lewis is a member of the presentation team for the training sessions, while Judy Craig and Matt Walker attend the sessions for high schools. This has enabled our team to participate in, and facilitate the use of Instructional Walk-throughs both in schools and between schools. These opportunities to see colleagues in their classrooms have proven to be an exciting initiative of the district.

In addition to continuing to meet the specific requests of schools, the consultant team hopes to provide direction in identification and use of interim assessment measures that are consistent with formative assessment practices. As well we hope to provide assistance to schools in data collection and analysis of student achievement, attendance and retention patterns. Finally, we hope to support the ongoing training of teachers in best practices through the development of collaborative groups that will provide opportunities for professional dialogue and sharing of expertise.