

# EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

November 27, 2007

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: International Baccalaureate Examination Results: May 2007

ORIGINATOR: J. Bidulock, Assistant Superintendent

RESOURCE

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## INFORMATION

### Introduction

This report provides information related to the International Baccalaureate (IB) examination results. A synthesis of the data is provided first, along with some implications for next steps for district schools offering the IB program. The report then provides a detailed analysis of the 2007 data. Finally, background information about the IB program is provided to assist in making connections between the IB examination results and the students choosing to participate in this program.

### Highlights

International Baccalaureate examination results have been analyzed and the following highlights have been identified:

- In 2007, the district averages were higher than the world averages for all IB examinations written for which there is sufficient data to report on results.
- In 2007, 160 out of 708 (22.6 per cent) of the students participating in IB examinations were registered as diploma candidates. Of this number, 148 students (92.5 per cent) were successful in obtaining their diploma.
- In comparison to 2006, a higher percentage of students were successful in obtaining their diploma but a lower percentage of students participated.
- Although there was an increase in the number of students involved in the IB program, the average number of examinations each student wrote decreased.
- The size of the program at grade 12 varies at the seven high schools that offer IB from 200 students at Harry Ainlay School to 24 students at Jasper Place School.

### Implications For Next Steps

As noted above, students enrolled in the IB program in our district high schools experience much success. However, to maintain and enhance the success of this program, the high schools offering IB may wish to consider the following ideas:

- Students in the district who are enrolled in the IB program do very well. Small class sizes may contribute to this success. Schools might consider expanding this program to a broader range of students to increase participation.
- As a program of choice, students have the opportunity to participate in a full IB diploma program, or to experience enriched programming in one or more subjects. This flexibility allows the IB program to meet the diverse needs of students and should continue to be encouraged.
- School principals report that this program benefits students in that they can achieve advanced standing in post-secondary courses if they so choose, and enhance their ability to gain early admission to post-secondary programs. School staff teaching IB courses need to ensure that students are aware of their post-secondary options related to IB programming.

### Detailed Results

Table 1 provides information about program participation in the seven district schools that offer IB.

**TABLE 1  
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FOR IB PROGRAM BY SCHOOL 2006-2007**

School	# of Students	# of Exams
Harry Ainlay	200	730
Jasper Place	24	42
M.E. Lazerte	90	305
McNally	122	374
Old Scona	120	367
Ross Sheppard	75	236
Victoria	77	138
District	708	2192

In May 2007, 708 students from seven district high schools (Harry Ainlay, Jasper Place, M. E. LaZerte, McNally, Old Scona, Ross Sheppard, and Victoria) wrote a total of 2192 IB examinations. This represents an increase of 31 students but an increase of only 18 examinations compared to the previous year. In 2006, there were 677 students who wrote a total of 2174 examinations.

Table 2 provides a comparison of district results to world results from the May 2007 IB test administration for courses in which a minimum of fifty students wrote the examination. Information on the total number of students in the world writing each examination is not available.

**TABLE 2**  
**COMPARISON OF DISTRICT IB RESULTS TO WORLD RESULTS: 2007**

Subject	Average Score (out of 7)		Number of District Students Writing
	E.P.S.	World	
English (HL)	4.89	4.79	343
History (HL)	5.10	4.96	312
Biology (HL)	4.49	4.14	344
Math Methods (SL)	5.11	4.60	325
Chemistry (SL)	4.65	3.91	301
Physics (SL)	4.93	4.06	142
French B (SL)	5.52	4.86	141

HL - Higher Level

SL - Standard Level

The 2007 district averages are higher than world averages for all of these courses. District students also wrote examinations in the following courses: German AB (SL), French AB (SL), Spanish AB (SL), Mandarin AB (SL), Mandarin B (SL and HL), Japanese AB (SL), Physics (HL), Computing Science (SL), Visual Arts A (SL), Visual Arts (HL), Theatre Arts (SL), Music Group Performance (SL), Dance (HL), and Dance (SL). The number of students participating in any of these examinations ranged from a high of 48 students to a low of one student. It would not be valid to compare district averages to world averages on such low enrolment courses.

The graphs in Appendix I provide longitudinal data from 2003-2007 of district averages relative to world averages on IB examinations. This data is calculated for each examination by taking the difference between the district average and the world average and plotting it to determine if there are any trends over the five-year time period. Only IB examinations with a substantial number of students (greater than 50) are included in this representation. As the graphs illustrate, district averages have been higher than world averages over this time frame for all courses which have a substantial enrolment except for the 2004 results, when district averages for English (HL) and History (HL) slipped below world averages. It is not legitimate to compare district averages from this year to district averages from previous years, since the difficulty levels of the examinations fluctuate from year to year.

## **Description of International Baccalaureate Program**

The International Baccalaureate (IB) program is a challenging program designed for high school students. IB is officially a two-year program, however, in our district enrolment starts in grade 10 as pre-IB courses. The mission of the IB program is to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

According to the IB student profile (IB website), IB students strive to be: inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced and reflective. A key message about the learner profile for an IB student is:

The learner profile will become the central tenet of the IB programmes and central to the definition of what it means to be internationally-minded. Thus, the IB organization is placing the focus for schools where it belongs: on learning. It is not intended to be a profile of the perfect student; rather, it can be considered as a map of a lifelong journey in pursuit of international-mindedness. It places the learner firmly at the heart of IB programmes and focuses attention on the processes and the outcomes of learning.

The mission of this program, as described in the IB literature, is that it includes a wide diversity of students. However, many district schools place restrictions on who can participate in the program, based primarily on academic criteria such as entrance tests and interviews.

Students registered as IB diploma students are required to complete the following in their grade 12 year:

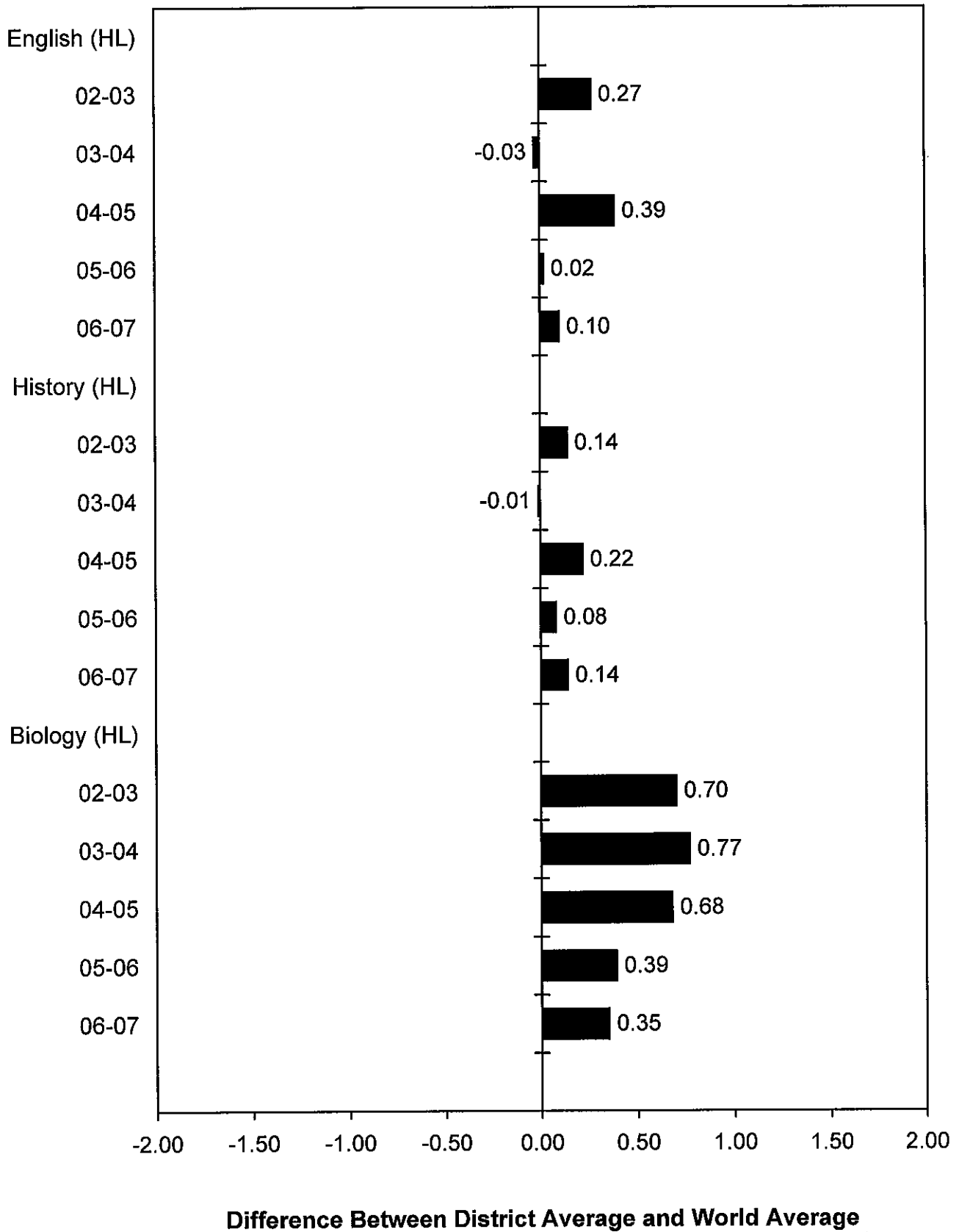
- write six IB examinations;
- complete Theory of Knowledge, an interdisciplinary course intended to stimulate critical reflection on the knowledge and experience gained inside and outside the classroom;
- complete the “Creativity, Action, Service” (CAS) component of the program which encourages students to share their energy and special talents with others; and
- complete an extended essay which provides students the opportunity to do an in-depth investigation of a topic of special interest.

Upon completion of the full IB diploma program, students receive a diploma certifying completion. This diploma is useful in obtaining university admission, and is widely recognized throughout the world. Some IB courses are recognized as equivalent to university level courses and universities may award entering students with credit.

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APPENDIX I - Comparison of District Averages and World Averages on IB Examinations  
2003 to 2007

**Comparison of District Averages and World Averages  
On IB Examinations 2003 to 2007**



### Comparison of District Averages and World Averages On IB Examinations 2003 to 2007

