

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

November 7, 2006

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: L. Thomson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Deepening Literacy Instruction - AISI Project Update

ORIGINATOR: T. Parker, Executive Director

RESOURCE
STAFF: Sig Jensen, Corrie Ziegler

INFORMATION

This report will provide detailed information about one of the district's Cycle 3 Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AIS I) projects: Deepening Literacy Instruction. It will include a general overview of the project, information on professional development and how project progress will be communicated, both internally and externally.

Overview of Project

The Deepening Literacy Instruction AIS I project will enhance the literacy of all students and target extra support to students who are struggling with literacy skills at the elementary and junior high levels. Communication, whether it is written, oral or representational, enhances student achievement across the curriculum. Early intervention and ongoing support for students at risk positively impacts student success and high school completion. District data indicates that students who do not read at grade level are less likely to complete high school. Conversely, students who are reading at or above grade level are more likely to complete high school. The project schools will enhance literacy for all of their students by developing school-level literacy leaders and being more intentional about using research-based literacy strategies to address students' strengths and needs.

The goals for the Deepening Literacy Instruction project include:

- Extending the application of literacy strategies by teachers to include direct and explicit instruction to meet a diverse range of learner needs. This goal will be met through collaboration and a focus on precise literacy strategies.
- Developing a system of identification, ongoing monitoring, and support for students at risk for all schools.
- Providing teachers with the necessary resources to assist all students to gain confidence in their abilities as readers and writers as they make important transitions.
- Offering teacher-leader training to build literacy expertise and to facilitate a collaborative literacy approach to support all learners.

Professional Development

Project professional development (PPD) has been designed after extensive consultation with participating schools. Each of the PPD sessions this year will have the following key components:

- An opening segment for all project schools to build common understanding and common language.
- Breakout sessions to address specific areas of literacy expertise.
- “School stories” that link literacy expertise to practice.
- A leadership component addressing the implementation of deepened literacy instruction.
- Time for schools to plan in their cohort groups.
- Opportunities to examine relevant resources.

Communication

Consultation and feedback will be key components of the Project Leadership Team’s work over the three years of the project. An interactive communication plan involving surveys, school visits and small-group meetings will keep the PLT and the project schools connected. The goal of this communication will be to interconnect and interrelate project work with the work being done at the school and cohort levels.

Summary

The Deepening Literacy Instruction Project supports the Board priorities to increase student achievement in literacy and to ensure high-quality teaching and learning. Literacy skills are at the heart of much learning that takes place in our schools. The lessons learned by the 36 schools in literacy project will be important lessons for the entire district into the future.

LT:gj

APPENDIX I –List of the Schools involved in the Deepening Literacy Instruction AISI Project

Schools Involved in the Deepening Literacy Instruction AISI Project:

Athlone	John A. McDougall
Belgravia	John Barnett
Belmont	Kameyosek
Belvedere	Kirkness
Bisset	Lansdowne
Brightview	Mayfield
Crawford Plains	Menisa
Delwood	Montrose
Donnan	Overlanders
Fraser	Prince Charles
Fulton Place	Princeton
Glendale	Queen Alexandra
Hazeldean	Rio Terrace
Holyrood	Sakaw
Homesteader	Scott Robertson
Horse Hill	Sifton
Inglewood	Sweet Grass
J. A. Fife	Youngstown