

## EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

September 30, 2003

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: A. McBeath, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Student Achievement Services

ORIGINATOR: D. Barrett, Assistant to the Superintendent

RESOURCE

STAFF: Audrey Gardiner, Kathy McCabe, Tanni Parker, Ken Tranter; Corrie Ziegler

### INFORMATION

Student Achievement Services was created in 2001 with the express purpose of providing support and assistance to schools to improve student achievement. Currently the student achievement team consists of four principals and one assistant principal. The work of Student Achievement Services is framed around the District Priorities, the Year Three Expectations and is guided by the District Targets and Process Goals. The following statement guides the work:

*Student Achievement Services provides leadership and support for all district staff to ensure that together we achieve superb results from all students.*

### WORK IN SCHOOLS

The Student Achievement Services team works directly with individual school principals and lead teachers to support consistent, day-to-day practical application of effective, research based teaching practices to enhance student achievement. The team's collective first hand experience, as teachers and school administrators, provides schools with the support needed to achieve superb results from all students. Some examples of services include:

- assistance in the creation of professional development plans
- 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
- initiating/enhancing collaboration within schools and across the district.

### TRAINING FOR PRINCIPALS AND LEAD TEACHERS

Student Achievement Services also develops and delivers training for principals and instructional leadership team members. This training has three major facets: sessions held at the conference center, training sessions held at schools, and coaching training.

### Conference Centre Training Sessions

Conference centre training sessions are held four times per year and provide research based content and processes that support schools as they work to improve student achievement. Training packages are responsive to school needs. Training packages are developed, planned and written through a collaborative process with teachers, principals, Consulting Services, Resource Development, Student Assessment, and Communications. Training packages are presented by a Presentation Team, which includes assistant principals, principals, consultants and Student Achievement Services staff. These presenters were selected by the superintendent. Ongoing support and coaching is provided to the Presentation Team, to ensure the delivery of training packages is polished, professional and consistent throughout the school year.

### Training Sessions Held at Schools

Student Achievement Services also organizes instructional walk-through visits at schools four times throughout the year. The purpose of this vital professional development activity is to enhance the instructional leadership skills of principals and lead teachers. During the instructional walk-through small groups of principals and teachers, led by a facilitator, visit classrooms looking for evidence of effective teaching and best practices. Their observations are guided by a researched based list of indicators. Facilitated discussions immediately following the classroom visits assist principals and lead teachers to clarify what they have observed, reflect on their own individual school practices and apply this information to their own school setting.

### Coaching Training

As part of the focus work, principals have been assigned a principal colleague who serves as their coach. Research (Costa and Garmston) states regular coaching visits assist principals in transferring the theory presented at training to real implementation in their schools.

Student Achievement Services leads training sessions to provide coaches with effective coaching skills and protocols to use on their coaching visits to schools. Specific coaching questions are provided at the end of each training session. These questions assist principals in linking the content and process with the work that they are doing in their schools. All principals in Student Achievement Services are responsible for coaching a number of principals in the district, as are other staff in central who had been principals in the past.

### Central Decision Unit Staff Training

Student Achievement Services also plans and coordinates monthly training sessions for central decision units. The purpose of these sessions is to heighten awareness of the focus work in schools and determine more efficient and effective ways each decision unit can better support the work of superb results from all students.

## **AISI**

This year, Student Achievement Services is responsible for the design and monitoring of AISI (Alberta Initiative for School Improvement). This entails monitoring school plans to ensure they meet the criteria set out by the district, as well ensuring funds are being spent in the appropriate categories.

## **TARGETS**

Student Achievement Services has created targets and indicators of success. Our success as a service provider is closely aligned with how schools measure their success: achievement test results, HLAT results, diploma results, and high school completion rates. As well, internal targets have been set around the number of school visits made by members of the team, and the number of positive responses from training and instructional walk-through evaluation forms.

## **SUMMARY**

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

*CZ/cz*