

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 57 (PRINCE GEORGE)

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT ON STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

December 2011

Brian D. Pepper, Superintendent of Schools

BACKGROUND

The *School Act* states that the Superintendent of Schools must prepare a yearly report on student achievement. The report must be submitted to the Board of Education in a public board meeting and must then be submitted to the Minister of Education and made available to the general public by January 31st.

The annual report is intended to serve two main purposes:

1. Ensure transparency and accountability for each school district in terms of its responsibility for improving student achievement by having the Superintendent of Schools comment in public.
2. Provide a mid-year look at student achievement by reflecting on progress to date and considering new information that will facilitate district planning for student achievement.

IMPROVING AREAS OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Percentage of students who are making successful transitions to higher grades:

District transition rates continue to improve and are generally at or above provincial percentages for all students.

All Students SD. 57	Gr 6 %	Gr 7 %	Gr 8 %	Gr 9 %	Gr 10 %	Gr 11 %
2009	98	98	97	96	91	76
2010	98	98	98	96	94	81

Transitions from one grade to the next are an important measure of student success as they indicate the percentage of our students who are meeting with success at their current grade level and able to move forward academically into the next grade. The grade 11 transition rate has moved above 80% for the first time. This should lead to improved graduation and six-year completion rates in upcoming years.

Percentage of Aboriginal students who are making successful transitions to higher grades:

School District No. 57's Aboriginal student transition rate is generally above the provincial Aboriginal average. The gap between Aboriginal and all students in School District No. 57 also continues to narrow. This means we are doing a better job meeting the needs of Aboriginal learners.

Aboriginal Transition 2010	Gr 6	Gr 7	Gr 8	Gr 9	Gr 10	Gr 11
Province %	97	97	94	90	84	73
SD57 %	96	99	97	93	88	73

Six-year completion rate continues upward trend:

The six-year completion rate illustrates the percentage of students who graduate within six years of entering grade 8. In 2006-2007 the six-year completion rate for all students was 65.5%. In 2010-2011 the six-year completion rate for all students is 71.4%. This represents a 6% improvement over 5 years.

Eligible Grade 12 graduation rate continues upward trend:

The eligible grade rate describes those students who are enrolled in sufficient courses to meet requirements to graduate during the same school year.

	All Students SD 57 %	All Students Prov. Avg. %	Aboriginal Students SD 57 %	Aboriginal Students Prov. Avg. %
2006-07	91	94	82	87
2007-08	95	95	88	90
2008-09	93	95	87	90
2009-10	94	95	88	90
2010-2011	95	94	92	88

The 2010-2011 school year saw our district results for all students and Aboriginal students climb above the provincial averages. During the five-year span illustrated in the above table all student results improved 4% and at the same time Aboriginal results improved 10%. The gap between Aboriginal and all students is narrower than it has ever been!

Students in our district (all students) continued to perform well on the required provincial examination subject areas as follows:

English 10 (pass or better)	90%*
Math 10 (pass or better)	83%
Science 10 (pass or better)	88%
Social Studies 11 (pass or better)	91%*
BC First Nations Studies 12 (pass or better)	88%
English 12	90%

*equal to provincial average (All Students)

Aboriginal students in our district continued to perform well in all five required provincial examination subject areas as follows:

English 10 (pass or better)	81%*
Math 10 (pass or better)	83%**
Science 10 (pass or better)	83%*
Social Studies 11 (pass or better)	81%*
BC First Nations Studies 12 (pass or better)	85%
English 12 (pass or better)	88%*

*equal to or above provincial average (Aboriginal)

**equal to achievement percentage SD57 All Students Math 10 (Foundations and Pre-Calculus)

CHALLENGING AREAS

Achievement gap between Aboriginal students and all students as a group:

Aboriginal student achievement results are lower than the results for all students. The Aboriginal six-year completion rate is approximately 20% lower than the rate for all students. Aboriginal Transition grade 11 to grade 12 is 8% lower than all students and required provincial exams (Math 10, English 10, Science 10, Socials 11 or BC First Nations 12, and English 12) are lower in the range 3-10%. FSA reading, writing and numeracy grades 4 and 7, meeting or exceeding expectations again illustrates that Aboriginal results are 8-15% lower than scores for all students.

FSA Reading and Writing Grades 4 and 7 percentages, meeting and exceeding expectations are below the provincial average:

	School District No. 57 All Students	Province All Students	Difference (+,-)
Reading 4 Meeting Expectations + Exceeding Expectations %	64%	69%	-5%
Reading 7 Meeting Expectations + Exceeding Expectations %	61%	66%	-5%
Writing 4 Meeting Expectations + Exceeding Expectations %	64%	73%	-9%
Writing 7 Meeting Expectations + Exceeding Expectations %	68%	72%	-4%

Provincial data indicates a correlation between FSA grade 7 reading results, English 10 provincial exam results and English 12 provincial exam results. Students who are meeting or exceeding expectations as measured on FSA reading grade 7 usually pass the English 10 and English 12 provincial exams. It is important that all students are meeting or exceeding expectations in reading in the elementary grades.

Numeracy results are below the provincial average:

	School District No. 57 All Students	Province All Students	Difference (+,-)
FSA Mathematics 4 Meeting Expectations + Exceeding Expectations %	54%	67%	-13%
FSA Mathematics 7 Meeting Expectations + Exceeding Expectations %	48%	62%	-14%
Math 10 Provincial Required Exam 2011	83%	92%	-9%

DISTRICT INTERVENTIONS AND PROGRAMS

Mathematics Enhancement Project

A team of math teachers support and enhance math teaching and learning. Five secondary and elementary math teachers are based in five Prince George “families of schools.” Five goals of the project:

1. Build relationships and connections within and between schools, classes and teachers, and build the comfort level of teachers of math by team learning, planning and teaching.
2. Work with each school and its teaching staff to determine what the focus will be in the school and in the “family of schools” and to ensure that math teachers are using current intended learning outcomes and teaching and learning strategies.
3. Work collaboratively with teachers to share information and successful practices, implement suggestions and where possible team-teach ideas or strategies.
4. Help schools and teachers with interventions for students not meeting with success.
5. Offer suggestions for structures to support and improve math teaching and learning in the district.

The Math Enhancement Project began in February 2011 and has been met with enthusiasm by teachers throughout the district.

Learning Team Grants (Literacy, Numeracy, Aboriginal Education, Technology, Assessment)

To further collaboration within the district Learning Team Grants have continued to gain momentum. As a district, we have moved from collaborating within the school, to collaboration between schools and across the district. Learning Team Grants offer release time to teachers to collaborate on an inquiry question and develop a plan to share the findings of the work.

Senior Learning Team

The team consists of members from Aboriginal Education, Curriculum and Instruction, Student Support Services, Centre for Learning Alternatives, Technology, Human Resources, Assistant Superintendents, and the Superintendent. The team is a think-tank with an action-oriented approach to innovation. This year we have implemented projects which include: utilizing personal electronic devices in classrooms, building online communities, developing professional growth plans, initiating a process to re-invent rural education and providing all elementary and secondary schools with a wireless environment to assist student engagement and learning.

Community Development Board

The school district, Ministry of Children and Family Development, Intersect, RCMP, City of Prince George, Northern Health, and the Ministry of Social Development have joined together to coordinate service delivery in our community. The Board will address issues related to youth crime, alternate education, and early learning from an "executive sponsorship" perspective. The Board is action oriented with three projects initiated in the fall of 2011 that directly involve school district staff and students: CASEY (Communities Against Sexual Exploitation of Youth); Communities That Care evidence based program – "Positive Action" – Family Parenting Program; Integrated Reponse Team to develop a "wrap around approach" for vulnerable youth and youth in crisis.

Equitable Allocation of Resources to Meet the Needs of our Most Vulnerable Students

District staff review student performance data and identify schools with higher proportions of vulnerable students. Extra resources have been provided to these schools through CommunityLINK funding and through the district budget process. Many of these vulnerable schools have high proportions of Aboriginal students. Improvement in the results of Aboriginal students in the Primary Project Schools has been noted. Primary Project Schools have targeted resources and consistent instructional strategies with a particular focus on oral language development. To ensure continued gains in the Primary Project Schools, the project has been reviewed and is in the process of being revised in order to keep the focus on interventions to meet the needs of vulnerable learners.

Five Aboriginal Learning Foci – Available to all School District No. 57 Students

1. Rediscovery and Traditional Environmental Knowledge

One full-time Aboriginal Education Worker working within a family of schools to integrate Aboriginal perspectives into classrooms and curriculum.

2. Elders and Indigenous Knowledge

One full-time Aboriginal Education Worker dedicated to working with schools to access Elders to enrich curriculum and have Elders be a part of their schools community and provide insight, knowledge and support for staff, students and family.

3. Restitution and Restorative Practice

One full-time Aboriginal Education Worker who helps schools and classrooms to learn what restitution and restorative practice is and to look for ways these practices can be introduced to classrooms.

4. Youth Leadership

One full-time Aboriginal Education Worker who works with schools to start up Aboriginal Youth and Leadership Programs.

5. Culture and Language

This focus, guided by one full-time Aboriginal Education Worker, works with schools to integrate culture into the curriculum.

ACHIEVEMENT CONTRACT TARGETS

Literacy

The number of students and parents participating in Ready, Set, Learn and StrongStart programs will increase each year. With full StrongStart programs in 8 schools and 2 StrongStart Outreach programs serving an additional 5 schools, attendance figures point to greater participation in 2011-2012.

In one year, performance results on the required provincial exams (Math 10, Science 10, English 10, Social Studies 11, and English 12) will improve by 1%.

By June 2012, learning teams of teachers, facilitated by the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, will develop rubrics to measure the use of formative assessment strategies and differentiated instruction strategies in each classroom.

By June 2012, members of the Senior Learning Team will develop a database that contains a personal profile of every student.

Completion Rates

In one year, we will improve the completion rates by all students to "at or above" the provincial rate. This means an 8% increase in the number of students who receive a Certificate of Graduation within 6 years of entering grade 8.

Aboriginal Education

In one year, we will improve the grade-to-grade transition rates of Aboriginal students, grades 6-11, to match the district rate of all students. The following table shows the percentage increase for each grade level required to meet this target:

Grade 6	+2%
Grade 7	target met
Grade 8	+1%
Grade 9	+3%
Grade 10	+6%
Grade 11	+8%

In one year, performance results on the required provincial exams (Math 10, Science 10, English 10, Social Studies 11, and English 12) will improve by 1%.

CHILDREN IN CARE

Meeting the Needs of Children in Care

The principal or designate monitors the success of children in care in each school. The Superintendent is the district level contact for senior staff at the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Categories of Children in Care

We have approximately 250 children in care with continuing custody orders, temporary custody orders, and children in voluntary care arrangements or living on their own.

Effective Communication

The Superintendent is the district level contact for the Ministry of Children and Family Development. At the school level, principals, learning assistance teachers, and classroom teachers communicate on a regular basis with Ministry of Children and Family Development social workers, foster parents and residential care home staff. School Base Team and Extended School Base Team are the school level structure for problem solving related to academic performance and social and emotional issues. The Integrated Response Team, which becomes operational in late winter 2012 will provide support to children in care in crisis situations and where ongoing vulnerability impacts engagement or performance at school.

Tracking Achievement

In order to ensure that monitoring and structures are having an impact on achievement the following data is collected and utilized as appropriate: IEP progress (where applicable), FSA results, school base team/extended school base team minutes, required provincial examination scores, course completion, report cards, attendance and behaviour records.

EARLY LEARNING

Kindergarten Assessment

Until recently the district tracked kindergarten student performance using DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills). A significant concern is the time standardization of the test. This means test results were neither valid nor reliable.

EDI (Early Development Indicator) is an instrument we utilize to look for vulnerability across our district.

This year we are piloting DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment) for kindergarten students in our Primary Project Schools. This instrument allows the teacher to gauge the kindergarten reader's independent reading level and identify students who are working "below proficiency." These students may need further assessment, perhaps accessing district resources via School Based Team and Extended School Based Team.

We understand the Ministry of Education may be suggesting a pre-K screening instrument as well as performance standards for Kindergarten children. Our hope is the performance standards will be a guide for assessing play-based learning.

THEORY INTO PRACTICE – THE NORTHERN LEARNING CENTRE

Beginning September 2012, our district will be offering another choice program. The initial cohort will include grade 8 and 9 students. The Northern Learning Centre program is learner focused with a mission to ensure each student is ready for the realities of the 21st Century and equipped with skills, attitudes, experiences and mindsets to be successful. Driven by teaching professionals working closely with community, the program will promote creativity and innovation, collaboration, teamwork, leadership, cross cultural understanding, self reliance, ongoing career learning, communication and media literacy, and promote a lifestyle of caring for personal health.

The “development team” is confident the program will result in increased student achievement and learning engagement.