



“Bringing Learning to Life”

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
ON
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

December 2008

Submitted by Kathy Bedard
Superintendent of Schools/CEO
School District No. 85
(Vancouver Island North)

Background

Section 22 of the School Act requires that the Superintendent of Schools prepares and submits a report to the Board of Education on student achievement in the district for the previous year. This report must be submitted to the Board of Education on or before December 15 of a school year. Upon approval of the report, the Board must submit the report to the Minister no later than January 31st, and make the report available to the public.

Purpose

The report on student achievement has two main purposes:

- To ensure transparency and accountability for the school district’s ongoing responsibility to improve student achievement.
- To provide information to shape and influence plans at the school and district level that focus and support improvements in student learning.

The report focuses on student achievement results in literacy, numeracy, and school completion, as well as on aboriginal student achievement. Both provincial and local data are referenced.

Areas of ongoing strength

- Primary Writing-- an average of 83.6% of aboriginal students met or exceeded expectations on the Grade 4 Writing FSA from 2002/03 to 2006/07, compared to an average of 92.6% of non-aboriginal students.
- Graduation rate of aboriginal and non-aboriginal students —an average of 61.2% of first time aboriginal grade 12 students in our district graduated from 2002/03 to 2006/07 compared to the provincial average of 53.2%, while an average of 83.4% of non-aboriginal first time grade 12 students in our district graduated during the same time period compared to the provincial average of 77.2%.
- The six year completion rate of students with special needs – in every year from 2002/03 to 2006/07 the percentage of students with special needs successfully completing high school within six years has been consistently higher than the provincial average, with the difference averaging 14.4%.

Report on Early Years Achievement (Preschool-Grade 3):

<i>Improving Areas of Student Achievement</i>	<i>Challenging Areas</i>	<i>Actions and Interventions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2006-2007 grade 1 cohort improved from 51% meeting the District Standard in reading (PM Benchmarks) to 69% in grade 2. • Aboriginal students in this cohort improved from 35% to 41%. • 98% of the grade 3 students who wrote the spring 2008 DART (District Assessment of Reading Team) met or exceeded expectations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31% of students did not meet the District Standard in reading at the end of grade 2 in 2007/08; 59% of Aboriginal students did not meet this standard. • The gap between non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal achievement on the grade 3 DMA (Diagnostic Math Assessment) increased from 10% in 2007 to 12% in 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Learning Support Teacher coordinates parent literacy initiatives in cooperation with the Mount Waddington Family Literacy Society. • Pilot a Strong Start Outreach Program. • Bi-monthly Kindergarten teacher meetings support the implementation of the Kindergarten Learning Project (KLP). • Oral language is the focus of two Aboriginal Network of Performance Based Schools projects. • Some FNEL students are engaged in fluency building activities two times a week. • Two schools with a high number of at-risk students are implementing a whole-school guided reading program. • Supplement the “Reading Zone” and classroom libraries with up-to-date, multi-leveled resources appealing to primary students. • Numeracy support in-service is being provided to First Nations In-School Support Workers, Special Education Workers, and Learning Assistance Resource Teachers.

Report on Middle Years Achievement (Grades 4-9):

<i>Improving Areas of Student Achievement</i>	<i>Challenging Areas</i>	<i>Actions and Interventions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The achievement of grade 7 students on FSA Reading shows an improving trend. • The participation and achievement of grade 9 students on the DART improved significantly in 2008. • There is an improving trend in Aboriginal results in grade 7 FSA Writing, and the achievement gap is narrowing. • The achievement of Aboriginal grade 8 students on the DMA improved significantly in 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade 4 and 7 FSA Writing results over the past 5 years tell us that our students continually meet expectations at a minimal level. • The majority of grade 3, 6 and 9 Aboriginal students continue to meet expectations at a minimal level on the DART assessments. • Only 35% of Aboriginal students met the District Standard on the grade 5 DMA. • Only 55% of all grade 8 students and 45% of all grade 9 students met the District Standard on the DMA in 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a District Writing initiative. • Continue to in-service teachers about BARC (Boys and Aboriginal Reading Comprehension) strategies. • Provide up-to-date and relevant classroom reading materials for boys and Aboriginal students. • In-service First Nations In-school Support Workers, Special Education Workers and LARTs on effective intervention strategies for teaching math. • The Numeracy Support teacher provides extra support in schools where students did not meet expectations on the DMA and the Numeracy FSA. • Support the implementation of the new math curriculum by providing in-service and resources to grade 8 teachers.

Report on Graduation Years Achievement (Grades 10-12):

<i>Improving Areas of Student Achievement</i>	<i>Challenging Areas</i>	<i>Actions and Interventions</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion rates for Aboriginal students and students with Special Needs have been improving over the past four years, as have their graduation rates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average marks on the English 10 exam have declined each year. • Successful transitions from grades 10-11 and 11-12 continue to be a challenge for Aboriginal students. • Successful transitions from grades 10-11 and 11-12 continue to be a challenge for students with special needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve high school teachers in district projects to improve reading and writing. • Support an action research project to improve school completion rates. • Provide opportunities for teachers to learn about and use assessment for learning practices. • In-service teachers about effective teaching practices across grades and subjects, and support and encourage their use. • Schools to monitor student attendance and develop response plans. <p style="text-align: right;">(cont'd...next page)</p>

Report on Graduation Years Achievement (Grades 10-12):
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<i>Improving Areas of Student Achievement</i>	<i>Challenging Areas</i>	<i>Actions and Interventions</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our six year Dogwood completion rate, while improving, still leaves 42% of Aboriginal students (07/08) and 46 % of students with Special Needs (06/07) without the necessary credentials for post secondary options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a communication process to identify students who are at risk during transitions and ensure supports are in place for those students. • Investigate options other than suspension for discipline.

Planning for results

We expect that our actions and interventions will lead to improvement in the student achievement areas noted. We will monitor results to see if our expectations are being realized and adjust our efforts if necessary.

The challenging areas noted in this report are reflected in the student achievement objectives of our Achievement Contract. School, district and provincial achievement data inform our planning for improvement at all levels. We are focusing on improving all student achievement with an emphasis on aboriginal student achievement.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathy Bedard
 Superintendent of Schools/CEO
 Vancouver Island North School District 85

Approved: December 8, 2008



Leighton Wishart, Chairperson
 Board of Education