

DATE: November 1, 2016

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: Darrel Robertson, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Strategic Plan Update: Priority 1 Goal Two: Success for Every Student - Literacy

ORIGINATOR: Sandra Stoddard, Executive Director, Governance, Strategic Services and Support for Schools

RESOURCE

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REFERENCE: N/A

ISSUE

The purpose of this report is to provide the Board of Trustees with an update of the District's Strategic Plan for Priority 1 Goal Two: Success for Every Student—with a focus on Literacy. Using information and data from Alberta Education's Accountability Pillar Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs), Provincial Diploma Examinations, District Highest Level of Achievement Tests (HLATs), Reading Levels and additional initiatives that support Priority 1 Goal Two, this report focuses on areas of success and areas for growth, and is part of Administration's commitment to providing the Board of Trustees with ongoing updates on progress relative to the District Strategic Plan. This analysis will also help to inform the District's direction for the 2016-2017 operational year.

BACKGROUND

In 2014, Edmonton Public Schools formally launched its District Strategic Plan for the 2014–2018 term. The District Strategic Plan has three priorities with 10 supporting goals and outcomes. The plan serves to provide common direction and alignment between the work of the Board of Trustees, the Superintendent of Schools and District staff. The plan provides the foundation for a District culture of evidence-based decision making, assurance, and accountability.

In 2015, the District joined Alberta Education's Assurance Pilot Project. The Assurance Model provides a framework for the District to report directly on how we are doing relative to the goals and outcomes in its 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, rather than reporting on Alberta Education's Business Plan. This is foundational to creating clarity and congruence across the District relative to our local priorities.

CURRENT SITUATION

Each year, Alberta Education requires school jurisdictions to submit a Three-Year Education Plan (3YEP) and an Annual Education Results Report (AERR) by November 30. The 3YEP/AERR reports the results from all 10 of the goals and outcomes in the District's Strategic Plan from the previous school year, and highlights the District's strategies to advance its strategic priorities over the next three years.

This year, with the flexibility afforded through the Assurance Pilot, the District has established a new Assurance and Public Board Reporting Cycle in support of completing the AERR/3YEP. For the 2016-2017 school year, at each public board meeting, a high level overview and an analysis of results for one or two District Strategic Plan goals and outcomes will be presented. Trustees felt that reporting on one or two goals versus the entire Strategic Plan, would allow them to engage in more meaningful dialogue on results and strategies for moving forward thus demonstrating greater assurance and transparency to the public. As such, a monthly reporting cycle, with links to the AERR report was developed to achieve the following outcomes:

- To establish a planning and reporting cycle that considers when local and provincial data is available for analysis and to inform timely decisions.
- To use evidence to inform programming decisions that promote success for all students.
- To support a cycle of continuous improvement and reinforce how results and data drive District planning and reporting.
- To interpret and report on results in a manner that demonstrates assurance and transparency.

For this report, data has been gathered from four key sources: PATs, Provincial Diploma Examinations, the Accountability Pillar and the District's HLATs. Results are provided for the District overall, and for elementary, junior high and high school students.

At the provincial level, students in Grades 6 and 9 write PATs and high school students write Diploma examinations. The results from these tests provide the District with a snapshot of our students' progress toward achieving the student learning outcomes of the Alberta Programs of Study. Additionally, each year, students in Grades 1–9 participate in the District's HLATs for writing—a locally-developed writing assessment for literacy. Furthermore, through the District-wide Focus on Reading work, which began in the 2015–2016 school year, teachers determined and reported in June, whether students in Grades 1–6 were at, above or below grade level in reading relative to the Alberta Programs of Study. These literacy assessments all provide valuable information for teachers, administrators, parents, students and the District relative to progress being made and students that may require intervention supports.

KEY POINTS

- The Strategic Plan Update: Success for Every Student –Literacy report (Attachment I) provides information, data and descriptions of initiatives highlighting areas of success and growth relevant to the District Strategic Plan.
- The Strategic Plan Update: Success for Every Student –Literacy report contains data gathered from four key sources: PATs, Provincial Diploma Examinations, the Accountability Pillar and the District's HLATs.

ATTACHMENTS and APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I Strategic Plan Update: Success for Every Student—Literacy Report

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Strategic Plan Update: Success for Every Student—Literacy

INTRODUCTION

Educators have long known that literacy is fundamental to successful learning and living. Developing strong literacy skills in students is essential for them to reach their full potential in school, the workplace and to experience a better quality of life in future years. To discover and make meaning of the world, students need the ability to acquire, create, connect, and communicate information in a variety of situations that go beyond the foundational basics of reading and writing. As such, Edmonton Public Schools has identified *Success for Every Student* as a key goal in the District Strategic Plan, with the targeted outcome that *more students demonstrate growth and achieve student learning outcomes, with a specific focus on literacy and numeracy*. This priority in our Strategic Plan ensures that as students move through Kindergarten to Grade 12 they are provided multiple opportunities to refine their foundational skills and explore a wide variety of texts and technologies preparing them to communicate effectively (please note that numeracy will be the focus of the November 29 Strategic Plan Update report).

District students participate annually in assessments and testing to ensure that information is available to the District, schools and teachers to support effective programming and evidence-based decision making. At the provincial level, students in Grades 6 and 9 write PATs for English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies every year. High school students write Diploma examinations in these areas as well. The results from these tests provide the District with a snapshot of our students' progress toward achieving student learning outcomes of the Alberta Programs of Study.

Additionally, each year, students in Grades 1-9 participate in the District's Highest Level of Achievement test (HLATs) for writing—a locally-developed writing assessment for literacy. Furthermore, through the District-wide Focus on Reading work, which began in the 2015–2016 school year, teachers determined and reported in June, whether students in Grades 1–6 were at, above or below grade level in reading relative to the Alberta Programs of Study. These literacy assessments provide valuable information for teachers, administrators, parents, students and the District relative to progress being made and flag students that may require intervention supports.

The purpose of this report is to provide the Board of Trustees with an update on the progress the District is making in achieving its outcome relative to growth in literacy. As such, the first section of this report highlights the results of the Key Performance Indicator data including:

- PATs and Provincial Diploma Examinations
- HLAT in Writing
- District-wide Focus on Reading Reports

The second section of this report provides an analysis of the results of the Key Performance Indicators. It begins with background information including the context of today's classrooms, followed by an analysis of strengths and potential opportunities for growth. The third section of this report provides further discussion regarding the areas of strength including possible strategies that were implemented in the 2015–2016 school year that may account for the growth. Additionally section four highlights priority strategies that will be in place for the 2016–2017 school year to address potential areas for improvement.

SECTION ONE: KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs) FOR PRIORITY I GOAL TWO: SUCCESS FOR EVERY STUDENT- LITERACY

Outlined below is a summary of the data for KPIs in the area of Literacy. The results highlight data for the past five years in order to support the District in conducting a trend analysis. As well Alberta Education has provided for each of the overall District results on the Accountability Pillar data, an evaluation that summarizes overall improvement. This has been included for interpretation purposes.

The acceptable standard results for Accountability Pillar data includes both students who achieved at or above the acceptable standard and reflect the total number of students eligible to write exams. Students who are eligible to write the exam(s) but were exempted, or absent, are considered by the province to NOT be at the acceptable level.

Additionally, where possible, the data is further disaggregated to enable the examination of literacy achievement for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, English language learners, and students requiring specialized supports (which includes Gifted and Talented students). It is important to note that a more detailed analysis of achievement data with respect to closing the achievement gap for our First Nations, Métis and Inuit students will be coming as a Strategic Plan Update report to Public Board at a future date.

TABLE 1

Key Performance Indicator		Results (in percentages)					Evaluation
		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Improvement
Literacy							
Overall percentage of students in Grade 6 who achieved at or above the acceptable standard in Language Arts on Provincial Achievement Tests (Source: Accountability Pillar)	Overall (n=)	83.4 (5505)	84.4 (5624)	84.1 (5952)	83.8 (6324)	85.4 (6390)	Improved Significantly
	FNMI (n=)	66.2 (497)	70.5 (499)	69.2 (500)	64.6 (545)	73.9 (545)	+
	ELL (n=)	67.7 (774)	73.8 (963)	76.9 (1307)	76.5 (1492)	82.1 (1726)	+
	Specialized Supports (n=)	65.7 (890)	65.7 (938)	62.7 (977)	62.9 (922)	67.7 (937)	+
Overall percentage of students in Grade 6 who achieved the standard of excellence in Language Arts on Provincial Achievement Tests (Source: Accountability Pillar)	Overall (n=)	18.4 (5505)	18.8 (5624)	19.6 (5952)	22.5 (6324)	23.7 (6390)	Improved Significantly
	FNMI (n=)	3.4 (497)	4.4 (499)	3.8 (500)	9.2 (545)	7.0 (545)	-
	ELL (n=)	8.5 (774)	9.2 (963)	11.3 (1307)	13.9 (1492)	18.4 (1726)	+
	Specialized Supports (n=)	21.5 (890)	19.0 (938)	20.7 (977)	18.4 (922)	25.2 (937)	+

Key Performance Indicator		Results (in percentages)					Evaluation
		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Improvement
Literacy							
	(n=)						
Overall percentage of students in Grade 9 who achieved at or above the acceptable standard in Language Arts on Provincial Achievement Tests (Source: Accountability Pillar)	Overall (n=)	78.1 (5644)	79.4 (5819)	77.8 (5735)	78.1 (5979)	78.7 (5993)	Maintained
	FNMI (n=)	48.9 (476)	59.1 (533)	54.7 (530)	56.2 (491)	53.6 (476)	-
	ELL (n=)	51.3 (357)	61.7 (574)	66.2 (783)	64.6 (1059)	68.5 (1043)	+
	Specialized Supports (n=)	30.8 (536)	39.4 (591)	38.5 (610)	56.5 (819)	54.5 (825)	-
Overall percentage of students in Grade 9 who achieved the standard of excellence in Language Arts on Provincial Achievement Tests (Source: Accountability Pillar)	Overall (n=)	18.3 (5644)	18.7 (5819)	18.4 (5735)	16.8 (5979)	18.9 (5993)	Improved
	FNMI (n=)	3.4 (476)	3.8 (533)	5.1 (530)	4.3 (491)	4.2 (476)	=
	ELL (n=)	3.4 (357)	6.4 (574)	6.1 (783)	7.2 (1059)	9.3 (1043)	+
	Specialized Supports (n=)	0.7 (536)	1.9 (591)	5.1 (610)	22.2 (819)	21.1 (825)	-
Overall percentage of students who achieved at or above the acceptable standard on English 30-1 diploma examination (Source: Accountability Pillar)	Overall (n=)	82.3 (5205)	81.2 (5098)	82.0 (5029)	80.1 (5072)	81.8 (5248)	Maintained
	FNMI (n=)	71.9 (171)	72.4 (181)	75.5 (196)	75.7 (181)	81.8 (231)	+
	ELL (n=)	63.4 (202)	51.8 (228)	48.0 (302)	49.8 (450)	59.0 (571)	+
	Specialized Supports (n=)	61.6 (73)	62.0 (71)	59.0 (100)	54.0 (100)	62.1 (145)	+
Overall percentage of students who achieved the standard of	Overall (n=)	10.8 (5205)	11.0 (5098)	11.2 (5029)	10.1 (5072)	10.2 (5248)	Maintained

Key Performance Indicator		Results (in percentages)					Evaluation
		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Improvement
Literacy							
excellence on English 30-1 diploma examination (Source: Accountability Pillar)	FNMI (n=)	2.9 (171)	3.9 (181)	6.1 (196)	4.5 (181)	3.9 (231)	-
	ELL (n=)	2.5 (202)	2.2 (228)	3.6 (302)	1.1 (450)	3.0 (571)	+
	Specialized Supports (n=)	4.1 (73)	2.8 (71)	2.0 (100)	3.0 (100)	3.4 (145)	+
Overall percentage of students who achieved at or above the acceptable standard on English 30-2 diploma examinations (Source: Accountability Pillar)	Overall (n=)	83.6 (2018)	81.9 (2173)	83.0 (2393)	80.4 (2394)	82.2 (2463)	Maintained
	FNMI (n=)	89.4 (208)	86.7 (240)	85.6 (243)	80.9 (209)	89.4 (254)	+
	ELL (n=)	63.7 (201)	54.9 (266)	60.7 (392)	63.9 (476)	67.3 (547)	+
	Specialized Supports (n=)	79.2 (221)	75.0 (224)	75.1 (277)	74.1 (313)	80.3 (325)	+
Overall percentage of students who achieved the standard of excellence on English 30-2 diploma examinations (Source: Accountability Pillar)	Overall (n=)	7.2 (2018)	7.9 (2173)	8.7 (2393)	7.0 (2394)	7.6 (2463)	Maintained
	FNMI (n=)	7.2 (208)	4.2 (240)	7.2 (243)	7.9 (209)	11.0 (254)	+
	ELL (n=)	1.0 (201)	1.9 (266)	1.0 (392)	1.9 (476)	2.4 (547)	+
	Specialized Supports (n=)	4.1 (221)	1.8 (224)	2.9 (277)	4.2 (313)	5.2 (325)	+
Percentage of students in Grades 1-9 demonstrating at or above grade level in writing. (Source: HLAT)	Overall (n=)	n/a	n/a	82.4 (53422)	79.2 (57151)	79.3 (58192)	+
	FNMI (n=)	n/a	n/a	n/a	59.6 (4738)	59.3 (4619)	-
	ELL (n=)	n/a	n/a	n/a	74.9 (15792)	74.5 (16580)	-
	Specialized Supports	n/a	n/a	n/a	46.1 (6459)	48.0 (6142)	+

Key Performance Indicator		Results (in percentages)					Evaluation
		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Improvement
Literacy							
	(n=)						
Percentage of students in Grades 1-6 demonstrating at or above grade level in reading. (Source: District-wide Focus on Reading data reports)	Overall (n=)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	74.8	baseline
	FNMI (n=)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	53.5	baseline
	ELL (n=)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	66.7	baseline
	Specialized Supports (n=)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	52.2	baseline

**HLAT results include only District students, not Fort McMurray students*

SECTION TWO: ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Context of Results

As Edmonton’s population continues to grow and change, so does the diversity of our schools. Edmonton Public Schools classrooms today welcome and serve a diverse range of students, including those new to Canada, children in need of specialized supports and services, and those self-identifying as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit. As well, our schools must support and program for students facing a range of socio-economic, social and emotional factors that may impact learning. The data presented in this report is gathered from various sources, and reflects the District’s literacy results and the areas of focus moving forward that are identified to meet the needs of our diverse student population.

In the 2015–2016 school year, Edmonton Public Schools served a total of 92,227 students including 8,044 students who self-identified as First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, 11,779 students who require specialized supports and services and 22,107 English language learners (as of September 30, 2015). This was an increase of 2,707 students overall; this includes an increase of 165 FNMI students, 506 students who require specialized supports, and 1,703 English language learners. The increasing enrollment of students with diverse needs contributes to an increase in classroom complexity.

The following section provides an assessment of provincial data and local District data disaggregated for elementary, junior high and high school. Additionally, where possible, the data is analyzed to enable the examination of literacy achievement for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, English language learners, and students requiring specialized supports. This level of information enables the District to further understand areas of strength and areas for growth to target improvement initiatives moving forward. Additionally, District’s Highest Level of Achievement test (HLATs) for writing and District Reading Level results, will be analyzed and comparison of these results to Provincial Achievement test results will be provided.

Elementary: Grade 1–6 Analysis of Literacy Data

Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs)

Overall, the percentage of District students meeting the acceptable standard in Grade 6 English language arts increased this year from 83.8 per cent to 85.4 per cent as compared to a slight increase from 82.8 per cent to 82.9 per cent for the province. The percentage of District students meeting the standard of excellence in Grade 6 English language arts increased this year from 22.5 per cent to 23.7 per cent as compared to an increase from 19.5 per cent to 20.4 per cent for the province. Trends in the data, over the past five years indicates that the percentage of District students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in Grade 6 English language arts have been consistently higher than those of the province.

For comparative purposes when PAT data was disaggregated to examine the results on English language arts in the section of the test measuring reading versus writing, 90.4 per cent achieved the acceptable standard in reading and 88.1 per cent in writing. Additionally, when the PAT data is disaggregated to reflect achievement of English language learners (ELL), First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and students requiring specialized support, the improvement for these populations is noteworthy. Data analysis revealed that:

- The percentage of ELL students achieving at the acceptable standard improved five per cent from the previous year; increasing from 76.5 per cent to 82.1 per cent. These results are almost on par with our overall District average. Additionally, five year trend data shows that this is an overall increase of 14.4 per cent since 2012.
- First Nations, Métis and Inuit students' achieving at the acceptable level improved 9.3 per cent from the previous year; increasing from 64.6 per cent to 73.9 per cent. While these results are lower than the overall acceptable standard for the District, this recent data demonstrates the District's commitment to closing the achievement gap is having a positive impact on achievement for the District's First Nations, Métis and Inuit students at the elementary level.
- Furthermore, students requiring specialized supports who were achieving at the acceptable level improved 4.8 per cent from the previous year, increasing from 62.9 per cent to 67.7 per cent. It is important to note that many of the students identified as requiring specialized supports and services are assessed as being below grade level and are on Individualized Program Plans.
- Comparing results over the past five years, the percentage of District students achieving at the Standard of Excellence increased as well. District ELL students increased 9.9 per cent, from 8.5 per cent in 2012 to 18.4 per cent in 2016. District FNMI students increased 3.6 per cent, from 3.4 per cent to 7.0 per cent and students requiring specialized supports, including
- Gifted and Talented Students, increased 3.7 per cent, from 21.5 per cent to 25.2 per cent.

District Highest Level of Achievement Test (HLAT) in Writing and District Reading Achievement

In 2015–2016, District students maintained their performance in writing as measured by the District's Highest Level of Achievement Test (HLAT). There were 79.3 per cent of students in Grade 1–9 who achieved at or above grade level in writing.

Additionally, in 2015–2016, baseline information about Grade 1–6 student performance in reading was gathered from District teachers in relation to whether their students were reading at, above or below grade level. The first year of data collection indicates that 74.8 per cent of students in Grades 1–6 were reading at or above grade level as evaluated by their teacher in relation to the reading outcomes in the Alberta Program of Studies for English language arts.

The District recognizes that teacher professional judgment is key in determining the reading and writing achievement of their students. While internal District data (such as HLATS and Reading Level) is lower than the PAT data, the purposes of the District data collection is to inform programming and to determine which students on a yearly basis, might require additional supports. It is through the provision of targeted support to those that need it most, that overall literacy results on Accountability Measures continue to improve. Overall, the District has much to be proud of in its data related to literacy in the elementary grades.

Junior High: Grade 7–9 Analysis of Literacy Data

The percentage of District students meeting the acceptable standard in Grade 9 English language arts increased this year from 78.1 per cent to 78.7 per cent as compared to an increase from 75.6 per cent to 77.0 per cent for the province. Trends in the data over the past five years indicate that the percentage of District students meeting the acceptable standard in Grade 9 English language arts has been consistently higher than that of the province. The percentage of District students meeting the standard of excellence in Grade 9 English language arts increased this year from 16.8 per cent to 18.9 per cent as compared to an increase from 14.4 per cent to 15.2 per cent for the province. Trends in the data over the past five years indicate that while the percentage of District students meeting the standard of excellence in Grade 9 English language arts has remained relatively static, results have been consistently higher than that of the province. For comparative purposes, when PAT data was disaggregated to examine the results on English language arts in reading versus writing, 81.4 per cent of students achieved the acceptable standard in reading and 89.8 per cent in writing.

When the PAT data is disaggregated to reflect achievement of English language learners, First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and students requiring specialized support, the improvement for these populations is as follows:

- The percentage of ELL students' achieving at the acceptable standard improved 3.9 per cent from the previous year, increasing from 64.6 per cent to 68.5 per cent. Five year trend data shows that this is an overall increase of 17.2 per cent since 2012.
- First Nations, Métis and Inuit students' achieving at the acceptable level showed a slight decrease from the previous year from 56.2 per cent to 53.6 per cent. However, five year trend data shows an increase of 4.7 per cent since 2012.
- Furthermore, students requiring specialized supports achieving at the acceptable level showed a slight decrease from 56.5 per cent to 54.5 per cent. However, five year trend data shows an increase of 23.7 per cent since 2012.

District Highest Level of Achievement Test (HLAT) in Writing

In 2015–2016, District students maintained their performance in writing as measured by the District's Highest Level of Achievement Test (HLAT), with 79.3 per cent of students in Grade 1–9 achieving at or above grade level in writing. For comparative purposes when HLAT data was disaggregated to examine only our Grade 9 results, 77.8 per cent were writing at or above grade level, as compared to 88.1 per cent achieving acceptable standard in writing on the English language arts PATs.

As noted under the elementary section, the District recognizes that teacher professional judgment is key in determining the reading and writing achievement of their students. While internal District data (such as HLATS) provides different information than the PATs, it is the triangulation of this data that provides valuable information for teachers, administrators, parents, students and the District relative to students

that may require intervention supports. It is through the provision of targeted support to those that need it most, that the goal of success for every student in the area of literacy will be realized.

Overall, while we are encouraged that District results are above the province in Grade 9 English language arts, the data for Junior High, for all populations, is lower than the results for elementary. Last year, the District wide Focus on Reading (DFR) was initially targeted to build capacity at the elementary level. It is hoped that as the DFR extends to building capacity in assessing reading relative to the curricular outcomes in junior high language arts in the 2016–2017 school year, the same improvements will be noted over time. It is critical that as a District, the gains noted in elementary continue throughout the educational journey of a student.

High School: Analysis of Literacy Data

Overall, the percentage of District students meeting the acceptable standard in English language arts 30-1 increased this year from 80.1 per cent to 81.8 per cent as compared to a slight increase from 86.5 per cent to 86.8 per cent for the province. Trends in the data over the past five years indicate that the percentage of district students meeting the acceptable standard in English language arts 30-1 has remained relatively static and consistently lower than the province. The percentage of District students meeting the standard of excellence in English language arts 30-1 was maintained, increasing from 10.1 per cent to 10.2 per cent as compared to a decrease from 11.4 per cent to 10.7 per cent for the province. It is important to note that while the English 30-1 results for the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence are below the province, the District's participation rate in the 30-1 stream continues to be higher than the province. This means that more students have additional post-secondary doors open to them.

When the English 30-1 English Diploma data is disaggregated to reflect achievement of English language learners, First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and students requiring specialized support, the data analysis revealed that:

- The percentage of ELL students achieving at the acceptable level was 59.0 per cent. This is considerably lower than the overall District average. Likely high school students that qualify as English language learners struggle with the reading and writing demands of a new language and expectations at a 30-1 level.
- The percentage of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students' achieving at the acceptable level was 81.8 per cent, which is identical to the overall District Average. Five year trend data shows that this is an overall increase of 9.9 per cent since 2012.
- The percentage of students requiring specialized supports who challenged the 30-1 Language Arts Diploma exam and met the acceptable standard was 62.1 per cent.

Overall, the percentage of District students meeting the acceptable standard in English 30-2 increased this year from 80.4 per cent to 82.2 per cent as compared to an increase from 88.6 per cent to 89.1 per cent for the province. Trends in the data over the past five years indicate that the percentage of District students meeting the acceptable standard in English language arts 30-2 has remained consistently lower than those of the province. The percentage of District students meeting the standard of excellence in English language arts 30-2 increased this year from 7.0 per cent to 7.6 per cent as compared to an increase from 11.2 per cent to 12.3 per cent for the province. Trends in the data over the past five years indicate that the percentage of District students meeting the standard of excellence in English Language Arts 30-2 has remained consistently lower than those of the province. These results may also be a reflection on the fact that more District students challenge the 30-1 class.

When English 30-2 Diploma data is disaggregated to reflect achievement of English language learners, First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and students requiring specialized support, the data analysis revealed that:

- The percentage of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students' achieving at the acceptable level was 89.4 per cent, which is above the 82.2 per cent District Average.
- The percentage of ELL students achieving at the acceptable level was 67.3 per cent.
- The percentage of students requiring specialized supports who challenged the 30-2 Language and met the acceptable standard was 80.3 per cent

SECTION THREE: 2015-2016 SUPPORTS TARGETED TO INCREASE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN LITERACY

Formal Literacy Intervention Programs:

In the 2015–2016 school year, there was an increase in the percentage of students achieving both the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence on Grade 6 and 9 PATs, as well as 30-1 and 30-2 English language arts Diploma Exams. This increase is in part due to schools across the District providing a range of informal and formal literacy interventions to meet the needs of students not yet reading and writing at grade level. The formal literacy interventions will be highlighted below. Catchments and schools use many informal intervention strategies to support students in the area of literacy. Trustees will be able to gather further information about informal literacy interventions through their attendance at catchment and school Results Reviews.

Formal literacy interventions, especially Reading Recovery, Levelled Literacy Intervention (LLI), and Middle Years Literacy Intervention (MYLI), had significant impact on student reading achievement. In 2015–2016, 49 schools provided formal, pull-out literacy interventions to students through the provision of Reading Recovery, Middle Years Literacy Intervention, and/or Levelled Literacy Intervention to 711 students.

- Fifty-two students in Grade One participated in a complete Reading Recovery Program.
 - Reading Recovery is a one on one intervention.
 - Students receive a series of daily lessons, individually designed and delivered to meet their learning needs.
 - The intention is to accelerate the pace of learning with the aim to close the gap between the student and their average achieving classroom peers within 12–20 weeks
 - 73 per cent of students who completed their series of lessons in Reading Recovery made accelerated or substantial progress. This means that these students are anticipated to make progress in reading with no further formal reading interventions.
- Two hundred and twenty-five (Grades 1–6) students who participated in a complete LLI program (16 weeks or more) achieved, on average, a growth of 7.7 months in reading.
 - Ideally, LLI is taught five times per week for approximately 80 lessons and 16-20 weeks. 40 per cent of the students receiving LLI participated in a full program. However, due to scheduling, late starts, absences and student moves, full delivery was not possible for many students.
 - Average reading growth for all students was 6.4 months over an average of 15 weeks or 48 lessons. Average reading growth for students who were given fewer than 4 lessons per week was 5.7 months.
 - ELL students made an average of 6.4 months of reading growth.
 - FNMI students made an average 5.8 months of reading growth.
 - Students coded for Special Needs (coded 51, 54, and 63) made an average of 6.4 months reading growth.

- Ninety-eight (Grades 3–9) students who participated in MYLI on average gained 1.1 years growth in reading in 48 lessons. For students who received five lessons per week, this represented about 12 weeks in the program (allowing for holidays and occasional absences).
 - The following chart shows the results for specific groups of students. Results were calculated for these students and then extrapolated to show the average number of lessons it would have taken them to gain one year’s growth in reading. Three groups were examined–FNMI students, ELL students and students with a special needs coding for Strategies. Students who were coded in other special needs categories also participated in MYLI, but the numbers of students in each category were too small to record reliable statistics.

	Overall Results	FNMI	ELL (eligibility 300, 301,303)	Strategies (eligibility 131)
Average number of lessons to gain one year’s growth in reading	44	38	45	57

- Schools also provided a range of informal literacy intervention supports to students requiring additional supports in reading.
- All schools have regular access to Inclusive Learning school-linked teams. School-linked teams are consultative and collaborative, bringing together multiple perspectives, diverse expertise and a variety of supports for individual students, school staff and entire classrooms. The Pyramid of Intervention: A Framework for Supporting all Students guides collaborative conversations between school staff, families and Inclusive Learning consultants to ensure more students achieve at grade level.
- In 2015–2016, 12,349 requests for service were submitted for Inclusive Learning multi-disciplinary teams.
 - 1826 requests for service were acted upon specific to standardized academic assessments to support with identification of students in Grades 2–12 in identifying students with learning disabilities or confirming on-going need for support.

Literacy Intervention Professional Learning Support:

Building capacity in teacher expertise in formal reading intervention strategies for individual and small groups such as Reading Recovery, LLI and MYLI was a focus for the 2015–2016 school year.

- Literacy intervention professional learning support (initial training and continuing contact) was provided to 77 intervention teachers to support the provision of Reading Recovery, Leveled Literacy Intervention and Middle Years Literacy Intervention to students.
- One hundred and eighty-seven professional learning sessions and 533 coaching sessions were provided to teachers delivering Reading Recovery, Leveled Literacy Intervention and Middle Years Literacy interventions; this represents an increase of 112 professional learning sessions and an increase of 105 coaching sessions over the previous year.
- Adapted Literacy Interventions for French immersion and bilingual program students were provided.

Additional professional learning sessions were offered to build teacher capacity in research based high impact literacy strategies for whole class instruction.

- A total of 2,620 teachers received 248 in-service sessions and 619 coaching or consultation sessions to support their literacy professional learning for whole classroom support. These sessions were provided through catchment groups, leadership groups or through central sessions. Topics included strategies such as, Guided Reading, Shared Reading, Reading and Writing Workshop, Read Aloud, and Paired Reading to name a few.
- The District's Literacy Best Practices Professional Learning Day was attended by 220 educators. District literacy consultants provided 38 sessions at catchment professional learning days.
- A literacy consultant provided whole school high school literacy support to one school, and began expansion into a second school.
- The six literacy summer institutes were attended by 205 teachers.
- The Student Assessment team provided support with the analysis of school and catchment literacy results.
- Professional learning sessions were offered at First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Lead Teacher sessions, catchments, schools, District Literacy Days. Staff shared strategies for weaving First Nations, Métis, and Inuit culturally responsive resources and supports with curriculum. Sessions included Evaluating First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Resources, and Re-envisioning Literacy Curriculum through Indigenous Perspectives. As a result of the professional learning sessions, lead teachers and educators have increased their capacity to effectively engage First Nations, Métis and Inuit students in their literacy engagement leading to a positive measurable increase.
- The first year of a Language and Literacy Project has been completed within the portfolio of Early Years. This program prototype was designed to build teacher capacity and support children identified as at-risk for literacy difficulties. Children who had speech, language or communication needs as identified through EYE-TA results and Mild/Moderate or Program Unit Funding (PUF) as well as English language learners were included in this pilot project. A deep dive into research and current best practices by a multi-disciplinary team supported classroom teachers through a coaching model and allowed for the creation of five videos intended to capture the five most reliable strategies related to literacy development: oral language; phonological awareness; vocabulary; print awareness; and reciprocal teaching. These videos will be used to support further professional development. As part of this project a professional learning community was also created to support evidence based strategies around language and literacy development as children transition from early years programming to Grades 1 and 2.
- Literacy leadership development was provided to 60 principals and emerging leaders through the District's Leadership Development Framework, including two modules: Leading through Quality Literacy Programming, and Literacy Coaching: The Way to Excellence.

Development of Literacy Resources

In the 2015–2016 school year a number of literacy resources were developed to support teachers in the classroom.

- Fifty-four curriculum-based checklist tools to support formative and summative assessment of reading were developed for English language arts Grades 1 to 12, and over 100 curriculum-based checklist tools in total for six bilingual program language arts (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Spanish).
- A Guided Reading online learning module was developed.
- A total of 54 draft teacher handbooks for Grades 1 to 9 to support the assessment and teaching of the reading-related outcomes of English language arts and bilingual program language arts (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Spanish) were developed; additionally, six draft teacher handbooks to

support teachers in assisting students to meet the reading demands of mathematics were developed.

- Inclusive Learning staffs worked collaboratively with staff from Curriculum and Resource Development to support the creation of literacy tools and supporting with implementation of District literacy goals.
- First Nations, Métis, and Inuit staffs continue to develop and share literacy resources, and review resources for use on the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit website.
 - Recommended First Nations, Métis, and Inuit novel studies and literacy seed kits were developed and accessed by 28 District schools.
 - The Unit continues to support an annotated, web-based bibliography of recommended First Nations, Métis, and Inuit literature and resources on the District book reviews website. A goal of these literacy resources is to assist educators in providing culturally appropriate resources. Google Analytics indicates a significant number of new users access it as a resource.
 - Culturally responsive edukits continue to be developed, including a new Métis Edukit, First Nations Early Learning Edukit. Edukits contain literature, cultural items, lesson plans and background information for educators. The kits were borrowed by 41 schools and Edukits were duplicated this year to meet increased demand.
 - An amiskwaciy wâskahikan EduSite was also developed.
 - All of the Edukits and Edusite are developed in collaboration with educators and community members, including Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Cultural Advisers.
- Resources were created (videos and tip sheets) to support classroom teachers in recognizing and utilizing research based best practices to support language and literacy development in the early years.

Providing Services to Students and Families

- Four English as a Second Language (ESL) Reception Centres continued to serve schools. Reception Centers were situated at Harry Ainlay, Jasper Place, J Percy Page, and Queen Elizabeth schools. Community schools referred families to the Reception Centres, where they were welcomed by ESL teacher consultants who conducted English language assessments and Intercultural consultants who conducted family interviews. In 2015–2016, the ESL Reception Centres received 978 requests for service. 384 requests were processed for family interviews.
- 7.7 FTE Intercultural consultants and an Intercultural program coordinator served schools, to provide cultural bridging, conduct family interviews, provide first language support for meetings and parent conferences, as well as parent information evenings. Intercultural consultants provided language and culture support in the following languages: Arabic; Chinese (Cantonese, Mandarin); East Indian (Hindi, Gujarati, Punjabi, and Urdu); Somali and Vietnamese. In addition to District staff, the Diversity Education Unit maintains on a yearly basis, a roster of part-time hourly Intercultural workers, who are called upon on an as need basis to provide service for a variety of languages and cultures.

SECTION FOUR: PRIORITY STRATEGIES MOVING FORWARD

To advance the outcome that more students demonstrate growth and achieve learner outcomes with a specific focus on literacy, the District will pursue the following strategies:

- The District Wide Focus on Reading will continue to develop additional ways to support student development of the essential life skill of reading. This focus will support schools in identifying students who require interventions and ensure these students receive informal and formal interventions. Key elements of the focus will be:
 - Building further capacity in elementary teachers to accurately assess reading levels consistently across the District, using a variety of reading assessment tools and newly developed, curriculum-based grade-level tools and handbooks.
 - Building capacity for assessing and reporting student reading achievement with a specific focus on strengthening these skills in junior high. Working with lead teachers in junior high to determine next steps, resources and professional learning required to move this work forward in Division III.
 - Continuing Year Two of pilot project with a volunteer cohort of elementary and secondary schools to explore ways reading levels can be reported to support the development of student intervention plans and strategies.
 - Exploring ways in which the District-wide focus on reading information for students requiring specialized supports and services can be integrated into the electronic Learner Support Plans.
- Expanding professional development for Kindergarten to Grade 12 teachers with a focus on research-based approaches in the area of literacy to further develop their expertise in literacy instruction. Strategies include:
 - Throughout the year offer Foundations of Literacy and other research-based professional learning sessions to build capacity in balanced literacy practices across all grades. Consultants are available to provide additional support to teachers through coaching and feedback.
 - Offer One Day Reading and One Day Writing Institutes for schools wanting to implement Lucy Calkins Reading and Writing program across their grades. Institutes will be provided for each grade from Kindergarten to Grade 8.
 - Offer week long summer institutes to deepen teacher capacity in literacy on a variety of literacy topics.
 - Enhance the opportunities for teachers to be trained to deliver Reading Recovery. Onsite coaching will be provided. For schools not able to offset the cost of the FTE required to do the one on one intervention required for certification, schools can apply for dollars through the Equity Fund.
 - Enhance the opportunities for teachers to be involved in Leveled Literacy and Middle Years Literacy Intervention training.
 - Enhance the opportunities for high school teachers to receive training in three high school intervention models. 1.0 FTE is available for each Leadership group to support delivery of a model in their school to work with students requiring interventions if school budgets cannot cover the costs. The intent is to build literacy instruction and intervention capacity at the high school level. Coaching will be provided. This work will also set the stage for preparing high schools to assess reading levels when the District Wide Focus on Reading implementation plan reaches Division IV.
 - Work with junior high lead teachers to develop junior high literacy expertise and a reading resource packages that blends together best practices in an easy use guide for teachers.
 - Bring in key literacy expertise such as Douglas Fisher, Richard Allington and Lucy Calkins to provide on-site presentations to further build understanding of research based best practices.

- Continue to offer specialized supports and services, through the Inclusive Learning Unit, to schools by:
 - Working with schools to identify priorities for service, and supporting the development of universal, targeted and specialized interventions using a pyramid of intervention approach. For students requiring intensive interventions, work with teachers to develop goals for student growth and customized strategies, and introduce a Reading Specialist as part of the process to work with the classroom teacher.
 - Supporting students with complex needs as they transition through the education system.
 - Focusing on emergent literacy by working to develop capacity in staff to work with students who have significant difficulties by introducing symbolic communication, core vocabulary, and emergent reading and writing skills.
 - Providing Inclusive-Learning school-linked service teams to build the capacity of all District staff to create the best learning environments for students through classroom consultation, specialized assessments, professional and parent sessions.
 - Providing targeted interventions, supports, and services to kindergarten students identified through the Early Years Evaluation—Teachers Assessment who require language or literacy interventions
 - Continue to provide English as a second language consultants on multi-disciplinary teams assigned to schools to provide consultation, ESL assessment, classroom coaching, and professional learning opportunities. In particular, offer seven professional learning topics in the 2016–2017 school year.