



The Superintendent's Report on Student Achievement 2008-2009

Wendy Hyer, Superintendent of Schools
December 14, 2009

BACKGROUND

Section 22 of the *School Act* includes the following:

“A board must appoint a superintendent of schools for a school district who, under the general direction of the board...

(b.1) must, on or before December 15 of a school year, prepare and submit to the board a report on student achievement in that district for the previous year.”

Section 79.3 goes on to say:

“On receipt of a report submitted by a superintendent of schools under section 23(1)

(b.1), the board must, on approval of the report,

(a) immediately, and in any event no later than January 31 of the school year in which the board receives the report, submit that report to the minister, and

(b) as soon as practicable, make the report available to the public.”

The report is intended to serve two main purposes:

- Ensure transparency and accountability for each school district in terms of it’s responsibility for improving student achievement;
- Provide information that will facilitate subsequent planning for continuing improvement of student achievement at the school and school district levels as subsequent school plans and district achievement contracts are developed.

The report is to focus on student achievement results in School District No. 67. Specific evidence and measures of student achievement in literacy and school completion are required. In addition, student achievement indicators for students of aboriginal descent must be reported. Districts may report additional areas of student achievement arising from the 2009 achievement contract. Data and evidence used to report student achievement should include provincial and local measures.

This report highlights many of the areas covered in detail in our District Progress Report, Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement, District Literacy Plan and Early Learning Program.

The Ministry of Education requires that the Superintendent’s report respond to the following questions:

1. Improving areas of student achievement

- What is improving?
- What evidence confirms this area of improvement?

Improving areas of student achievement	Evidence
The trend data of the Six-Year Completion Rate for female students has shown a slight improvement from 2003/04 to 2008/09.	<p>Six-Year Completion Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2003/04 = 83% • 2004/05 = 85% • 2005/06 = 86% • 2006/07 = 86% • 2007/08 = 86% • 2008/09 = 85%
Trend data for English 10 from 2004/05 to 2008/09 indicates that the success rates for our general population, female population, male population and aboriginal population have shown a positive trend. The gap between all population groups is negligible. District results continue to be above the provincial average.	<p>District Data English 10 Blended Final Mark of C- or Better</p> <p>Success rates for 2008/09 are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students = 98% • Female = 99% • Male = 97% • Aboriginal = 95%
Trend data for English 10 from 2004/05 to 2008/09 indicates that there is a positive trend in the number of students who achieve a final mark of C+ or better for our general population, female population, male population and aboriginal population. District results continue to be above the provincial average.	<p>District Data English 10 Blended Final Mark of C+ or Better</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students – from 63% to 72% • Female – from 72% to 80% • Male – from 53% to 65% • Aboriginal – from 42% to 63%
Grade 7 FSA Results from 2007/08 to 2008/09 have improved for our general population, female population, male population and aboriginal population. District results continue to be above the provincial average.	<p>District FSA Results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students – from 70% to 75% • Female – from 72% to 76% • Male – from 69% to 74% • Aboriginal – from 50% to 63%

2. Challenging Areas

- What trends in student achievement are of concern to you?
- What evidence gives rise to this concern?

Challenging areas of student achievement	Evidence
District wide, 31.3% of children were vulnerable on at least one scale of development in 2008/09. This is similar to vulnerability in both Wave 1 (28.3%) and Wave 2 (28.9%). This represents a consistent trend of approximately 30% of children who are vulnerable in Kindergarten.	The Early Development Instrument (EDI), which is a population-based tool, is used to measure children's development at Kindergarten entry.
The trend data of the Six-Year Completion Rate for male students has steadily declined from 2003/04 to 2008/09. While the district continues to be above the provincial average in school completion rates for our male population, this downward trend is a concern.	Six-Year Completion Data 2003/04 = 84% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2003/04 = 84% • 2004/05 = 80% • 2005/06 = 83% • 2006/07 = 84% • 2007/08 = 76% • 2008/09 = 77%
While Six-Year Completion Rates for Aboriginal students continues to be at or above the provincial average, Aboriginal completion rates remain below the completion rates for all students.	Six-Year Completion Data <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2003/04 = 54% • 2004/05 = 65% • 2005/06 = 59% • 2006/07 = 58% • 2007/08 = 49% • 2008/09 = 48%
Trend data for English 10 results indicate that there is a negligible gap in success rates for our general population, female population, male population and aboriginal population. There is, however, a gap in achievement with both the aboriginal and male populations and the female population when looking at blended final marks of C+ or better.	District Data English 10 Blended Final Mark of C+ or Better for 2008/09 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students = 72% • Female = 80% • Male = 65% • Aboriginal = 63%

3. Provide commentary or explanatory notes regarding these results

District 067 - Okanagan Skaha

All Students

	2005/06		2006/07		2007/08		2008/09	
Six-Year Completion Rate	84		85		81		82	
English 10 Avg. Exam & Course Mark	Exam	Course	Exam	Course	Exam	Course	Exam	Course
	74	70	72	73	72	72	73	74
*FSA Gr. 4 Reading Meeting-Exceeding	84		75		77		76	

Aboriginal Students

	2005/06		2006/07		2007/08		2008/09	
Six-Year Completion Rate	59		58		49		48	
English 10 Avg. Exam & Course Mark	Exam	Course	Exam	Course	Exam	Course	Exam	Course
	67	63	64	65	63	67	67	70
*FSA Gr. 4 Reading Meeting-Exceeding	67		62		67		60	

* Beginning in 2007/08 students completed the FSA in February, almost three months earlier than in previous years. Consequently, the 2007/08 and 2008/09 results cannot be compared to those of previous years.

a. Six-Year Completion Rate:

While our district continues to exceed the provincial average in school completion rates for our general population, female population, male population, aboriginal population and special education population, approximately 15% to 20% of students do not graduate within 6 years after entering Grade 8. Increasing “*the likelihood that ALL students will successfully complete their educational program*” is a clearly stated SD67 District Goal, and as a result, efforts are focused on increasing district school completion rates.

Over the past year, substantial effort has been invested in addressing the questions: “Who is not meeting success in our district?”, “Why are they not meeting with success?”, and “What can be done to improve their chances of meeting with success?” As a result of this work, which involved analysis of available data, interviews with students, class forum discussions and literature reviews, three broad areas of need have been identified as requiring attention in the future: creating and maintaining positive relationships, engaging instructional approaches and a need to conceptualize and deliver discipline differently. Further, within these three broad areas, certain groups were identified as needing more support, including students with behavioural challenges and our aboriginal population.

We continue to develop a positive working relationship with our Aboriginal partner groups. Specifically, our Local Education Agreement with the Penticton Indian Band (P.I.B.) and our Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement continues to serve as a framework that allows our efforts to be more purposeful. Through a number of meetings with our Aboriginal partner groups and professional development activities focused on engaging and empowering Aboriginal youth, we continue to: 1) Offer cultural enhancement activities that deepen our students' individual sense of culture, and 2) Develop and add curricular content that increases the cultural relevance of the students' academic programs.

b. English 10 Average Exam & Course Mark:

The final mark for a course is derived from the course mark (classroom work) and the exam mark. It is important to remember that the course mark measures performance for the duration of the course and often includes assessment of learning outcomes that can not be measured on a final exam. The exam evaluates performance through large-scale testing, and so it is important to note that the results of these two indicators may vary.

Secondary schools in the district have been reviewing grading practices and implementing Assessment for Learning strategies to ensure that the course mark is representative of the students' ability to demonstrate through varied ways the required learning outcomes of English 10.

c. FSA Grade 4 Reading Meeting-Exceeding Expectations:

Beginning in 2007/08 students completed the FSA in February, almost three months earlier than in previous years. Consequently the 2007/08 and 2008/09 results cannot be compared to those of previous years, and as a result no trend data is available.

Grade 4 FSA results for 2007/08 and 2008/09 are above the provincial averages for our general population, female population, male population and aboriginal population. As well, in 2008/09 our district participation rate was 92%, which is 8% above the provincial average of 84%.

Results indicate that there is a gap in achievement with both our male and aboriginal populations and that of our female population.

4. Comment on progress made with respect to goals and targets set out in your last achievement contract citing evidence of this progress?

Goal: To improve student success in reading.

Literacy data collected at the school level indicates that throughout the grade levels there are 5% to 11% of students who are “Not Yet Meeting (NYM)” expectations in reading. Although we have a small percentage of students NYM expectations in reading, we have a significant number of students who are “Minimally Meeting (MM)” expectations, ranging from 37% to 53%, depending on the grade level.

FSA results indicate that approximately 16% of Grade 4’s and 18% of Grade 7’s are “Not Yet Meeting Expectations” in reading. Grades 4 and 7 FSA results for 2007/08 and 2008/09 are above the provincial averages for our general population, female population, male population and aboriginal population.

At this point in time, there is no trend data at the district or provincial level. The evidence that is available suggests that more boys than girls fall into the NYM and MM range and more aboriginal students fall into the NYM and MM range than non-aboriginal students.

Goal: To increase the likelihood that ALL students will successfully complete their educational programs with a positive sense of optimism, purpose and control.

Transition rates from 2003/04 to 2007/08 have remained relatively constant for all grade levels and are similar to provincial transition rates. The transition rates of the female population are similar to those of the male population. Aboriginal transition rates, however, are lower than the transition rates for the general population from Grade 8 through to Grade 12, with the gap increasing as students progress to the next grade.

Similarly, as mentioned earlier, six-year school completion rates are slightly above the provincial rates, but appear to have reached a plateau.

Goal: To improve student success in numeracy.

At this point in time, there is no trend data at the district or provincial level.

FSA results at the Grade 4 level have improved for all students, increasing from 72% “Meeting or Exceeding” expectations to 76% in 2009, which is 10% above the provincial average. Aboriginal student results indicate that 60% are “Meeting or Exceeding” expectations compared to a provincial average of 47%.

FSA results at the Grade 7 level mirror the provincial trend. The percentage of students “Meeting or Exceeding” expectations shows a decline from Grade 4 to 7 in all of our populations. Further, district FSA results for all students (60%) are slightly below the provincial average of 63%.

At the school level, the District Math Assessment (DMA) is used to assess success in numeracy at the Grade 3, 5 and 8 levels. Results from the DMA show a similar pattern to the FSA results. Student success rates decline as students move from Grade 3 through to Grade 8. As well, there is a gap between the results of our general population and our aboriginal population.

Summary:

School District No. 67 has much to celebrate. We are proud of the diversity of programs offered to students and the success of our students at all levels in the system. District results are above the provincial average in most areas. Our provincial pass rates and exam marks are improving. Despite these strengths, we recognize that there are still a number of students who are not experiencing success. Subsequently, School District No. 67 is continuing to pursue the vision of “improving the achievement of all students – each and every student”.

For the past several years, School District No. 67 has supported a tremendous amount of work around two major cornerstone strategies for improving student achievement: 1) to develop student transition/intervention strategies in order to close the achievement gap; and 2) to increase student engagement in classrooms in order to enhance learning for all. These long term change efforts are dependent on distributive leadership, support and resources. Further, system change is incremental.

For the first few years of the improvement process the district focus has been on building capacity, supporting staff in deepening their knowledge, understanding and classroom practice. The improvement focused on developing readiness in the schools and district so that promising classroom practices and intervention/transition programs were supported and developed. Assessment for learning practices, differentiated instruction, effective grading practices, strategies to enhance school connectedness, restorative justice, Tribes, Friends and SMART Learning are examples of promising practices that the district has built capacity around.

The Ministry of Education District Review Team visited the district on April 6-10, 2008 and offered this recommendation:

“Balance the need to implement innovative strategies with the time needed to reflect, to assess strategies for effectiveness, and to consolidate practices.”

The next step in improvement for the district is to “focus and deepen the work”, meaning taking the capacity we have built and strategically supporting the implementation of effective practices throughout the system. Moreover, it is critical to be reflective in our work; to determine whether or not the changes implemented are impacting the achievement results for all students in classrooms and schools. In an effort to expand our capacity, collaboration and commitment, the district has moved to an inquiry based school planning process.

5. Discuss the connectedness of the Achievement Contract (District Progress Report), Superintendent’s Report, District Literacy Plan, Early Learning Plan and Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement.

The goals set out in the District Progress Report, District Literacy Plan, Early Learning Plan and Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement all align with and support the youth within our schools and communities. The Superintendent’s report identifies the progress the district has made in terms of improving student achievement in relation to the goals and provides direction for subsequent planning to further enhance student success. Communicating the connections between these documents is ongoing and serves to increase awareness of both the successes and challenges of improving student achievement.

6. Report on the implementation of Recommendation #5 of the Representative of Children and Youth regarding Children in Care.

Implementation of Children in Care Initiative

	Yes/No	Comment
Is a person appointed in each school to monitor the success of children in care (CIC) and promote appropriate interventions?	Yes	Our Director of Instruction (Student Support Services) has forwarded the names of each school contact to Dean Goodman at the Ministry of Education.
Have initial rosters of CIC been updated in consultation with local MCFD offices?	Yes	
Is information shared between district, schools and MCFD in a manner consistent with the interests of CIC?	Yes	
Are children in temporary care arrangements, by agreement or in the home of a relative included in monitoring and support functions?	No	As per the email from James Gorman, Ref: 131700, the partner groups are exploring ways in which the achievement of students in other categories of care can be monitored effectively. In conversations with MCFD an effective, accurate system for monitoring children in temporary care arrangements is not yet available.

Additional steps and activities the district has implemented regarding the Representative’s recommendation:

The documents titled “*Kids, Crime and Care - Health and Well-Being of Children in Care: Youth Justice Experiences and Outcomes*”, (2009) and “*Joint Educational Planning and Support for Children and Youth in Care: Cross Ministry Guidelines*” have been reviewed and discussed by all school-based administrators at a district meeting.

All school designates have received a copy of “*Joint Educational Planning and Support for Children and Youth in Care: Cross Ministry Guidelines*” as well. A spreadsheet has been developed to record information at both the school and district level, which will provide a student profile of each student.

School District No. 67 implements a number of practices that are identified in the document “*Effective Practices to Improve Educational Outcomes for Children and Youth in Care*”, including:

- Connecting vulnerable youth with an adult mentor or role model
- Providing literacy intervention to students reading below grade level
- Implementing Tribes
- Implementing the FRIENDS for Life program at the Grade 4/5 level in all schools (mandatory) and at the Grade 7 level (optional)
- Piloting the BC Fun Friends program at the primary level
- Offering a variety of clubs and activities for students in all schools
- Implementing the six key learning practices of Assessment for Learning in schools

Further steps and activities the district is planning to undertake regarding the Representative’s recommendation:

Meeting with all designates to review the information gathered and identify further plans to assist students in meeting with success.

What measures and evidence will be used to monitor the educational attainment of Children in Care in your School District?

Evidence to be used includes:

- Gathering information on reading level for each student.
- Determining whether students are not yet meeting, minimally meeting, fully meeting or exceeding expectations in each of the core areas, and implementing plans accordingly.
- Determining whether goals in the IEP have been met (if designated).
- Gather information in regards to inclusion in extra-curricular activities.

Concluding remarks:

The Board of Education and district and school staffs are working hard at improving the life chances for all our students. District conversations about our successes and challenges are hopeful and positive, with an increased focus on each and every student. I would like to acknowledge and thank the staff, parents and Board for their collective effort in enhancing student achievement in School District No. 67.