

Elk Island Public Schools
Annual Education Results Report
2019-20



Accountability

The *Annual Education Results Report* for Elk Island Public Schools for the 2019-20 school year was prepared under the direction of the Board of Trustees in accordance with the responsibilities under the *Education Act* and the *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act*. The Board is committed to using the results in this report, to the best of its abilities, to improve outcomes for students and to ensure all students in the school authority can acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to be successful and contributing members of society. The *Annual Education Results Report 2019-20* was approved by the Board on Nov. 26, 2020.



Trina Boymook
Chair, Board of Trustees



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Greetings

The 2019-20 school year was certainly like no other—a global pandemic and the suspension of all in-school classes. It was, and remains, a challenging time for all of us. As a Division, we’ve had to learn new routines and face obstacles we couldn’t even imagine at the start of the school year. Despite these circumstances, we rose to the occasion to ensure all students’ success.

That’s evident in this year’s *Annual Education Results Report 2019-20*, which outlines how Elk Island Public Schools’ developing students to achieve the best possible outcomes. What the 2019-20 AERR demonstrates is even with the challenges posed by the pandemic, the Division continues to provide students with a high-quality education, support learning achievement, and develop learners with the skills and knowledge needed to help them succeed. These are tremendous accomplishments and the combined result of the determination and hard work of EIPS students, teachers, administrators, support staff, families and community partners.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I invite you to read the report and join us in celebrating our achievements in providing excellent learning environments and the best educational opportunities for all students.

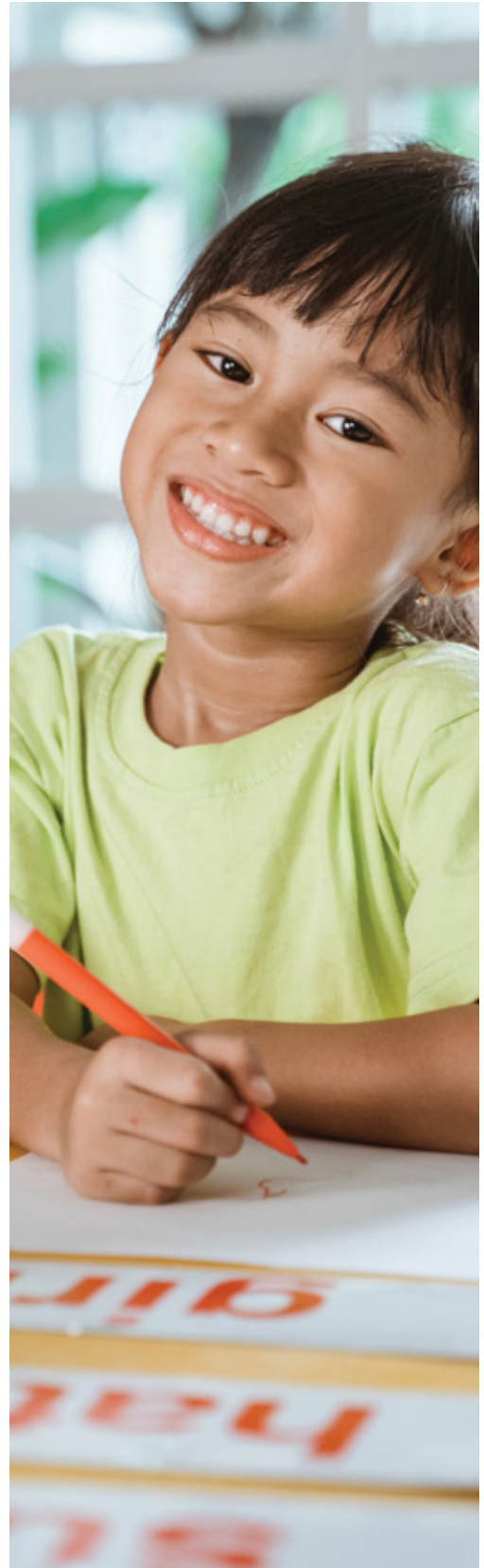
Trina Boymook
Chair, Board of Trustees

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact our school communities, Elk Island Public Schools remains committed to providing high-quality, student-centred educational opportunities for all students to learn and grow. That commitment is illustrated perfectly in this year’s *Annual Education Results Report 2019-20*, which details how the Division’s performing and its plans to improve student learning going forward. What shines through most is how the Division, in spite of all the challenges related to COVID-19, continues to meet both the priorities and goals set out in the Four-Year Education Plan.

In March, when the province cancelled all in-school classes because of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Division acted quickly and made the best of a continually evolving situation. Staff met the challenges and ensured students had the skills and knowledge needed to transition to the next grade level. They did this through commitment, perseverance, flexibility and creativity. Similarly, students and families did a remarkable job continuing to learn in a time of complete uncertainty. I am so proud of our staff, students and school families who have collectively gone above and beyond, adapted quickly, and rallied behind one clear vision: providing exceptional education for all students.

Looking ahead, we will continue to work together to support a common purpose to promote the growth and success of all students.

Mark Liguori
Superintendent



Profile and Local Context

Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) is the sixth-largest school division in Alberta, serving approximately 17,000 students from kindergarten to Grade 12 in 43 schools—in Sherwood Park, the City of Fort Saskatchewan, the Town of Vegreville, Strathcona County, Lamont County and the western portion of the County of Minburn. The Division also employs 1,367 people—861 teachers and 506 non-teaching staff—all of whom work together to inspire students to learn, grow and succeed.

Every day, staff and students are encouraged to pursue opportunities to discover and develop their passions. They're provided with a range of high-quality educational programs and resources to ensure their success. Core academic subjects, optional courses and complementary programs, such as Career and Technology Studies, Off-Campus Education and second-language courses, take place in inclusive learning environments that form the foundation for whatever they choose to do next. Students also have access to a continuum of classroom supports and services, including specialized learning environments; early intervention and counselling services; and consultative services such as speech-language, hearing, vision, occupational therapy and physical therapy.

Well-rounded educational opportunities take place within, and outside, the classroom. EIPS offers myriad types of programming in this area, including five language programs—English, French, German, Ukrainian and Spanish; two academic programs—Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate; faith-based programs—Alternative Christian, Logos Christian; and the Next Step Outreach program. To complement programming, the Division also boasts strong extracurricular opportunities in all its schools—music, drama, special-interest clubs, athletics and more. Collectively, these contribute to a well-rounded education that's developing learners with the skills and knowledge needed to help them succeed and take on the world.

EIPS' mission is to provide high-quality, student-centred education that builds strong, healthy communities

EIPS VALUES

- Commitment to being a student-centred learning organization.
- Decisions are made in the best interests of all students.
- Integrity, honesty and respect are essential.
- Flexible and engaging learning opportunities are key to student achievement.
- Recognition that every student can learn and experience success.
- Partnerships play a valuable role in meeting the needs of students.



A Closer Look: Challenges in 2019-20

INFRASTRUCTURE

Over the last few years, one community within Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) has experienced strong residential growth—Fort Saskatchewan. The growth is at a point where it affects the Division’s ability to provide accommodation for students living within the area. Looking ahead, the Division’s enrolment is projected to continue to rise. In fact, in five years, EIPS expects its enrolment to hit more than 18,000—with the highest growth area in Fort Saskatchewan. To continue to provide high-quality, student-centred education that builds strong, healthy communities, the Division needs a solution to manage the growth and address student capacity issues.

Short-term, EIPS plans to accommodate students through its 2020-21 Modular Classroom Plan. However, it’s a temporary solution. By 2028, all schools in the city are expected to reach maximum capacity. Long-term, to accommodate students, it’s critical EIPS receives funding for a new junior-senior high school in Fort Saskatchewan.

Meanwhile in Sherwood Park, the greatest concern is from Sherwood Heights Junior High and accommodating students should the school experience a major system failure given its age and current Facility Condition Index Value. To ensure high-quality learning environments for students, the Board of Trustees continues to advocate for a replacement school for Sherwood Heights Junior High.

FUNDING

The 2019-20 school year presented significant funding challenges for EIPS. The provincial budget was delivered much later than usual—in fall 2019, as opposed to spring 2019. Provincewide, the late release created implications for education. Within EIPS, the budget revealed a shortfall of roughly \$5.5 million from what was estimated in the spring. The Division chose to access its operating reserves to absorb the funding gap, for that year only. In spring 2020, EIPS wasn’t able to do that. As a result, the Division adjusted the programs and services it offers to students to ensure a balanced budget for the 2020-21 school year. Some of the strategies included reducing allocation amounts for schools and Central Services departments, restructuring the Supports for Students department, eliminating Continuing Education’s non-credit and Home Education programs, and lowering carryforward amounts for schools and departments to 1%. That said, EIPS is using all available resources to ensure it meets the priority, goals and outcomes listed within its Four-Year Education Plan, and all students have the necessary skills to transition to the next grade or world of work.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In March 2020, the World Health Organization declared a global COVID-19 pandemic. Shortly after, Alberta’s Chief Medical Officer of Health ordered the suspension of all in-school classes. Immediately, the Division’s priorities shifted to alternative learning—done almost entirely online—and the health and safety of students and staff. EIPS’ *Annual Education Results Report 2019-20* reflects this context. For example, Provincial Achievements Tests and diploma examinations were cancelled resulting in insufficient data. The Division assessment data is also incomplete because of the in-school class suspension. Consequently, the results provided within this year’s *Annual Education Results Report* are based on quantitative and qualitative internal Division and the provincial Accountability Pillar data. Collectively, the results demonstrate how EIPS met its priorities, goals and outcomes throughout the year.



EIPS Four-Year Education Plan

Priority 1: Promote growth and success for all students

GOAL 1 EXCELLENT START TO LEARNING

Outcome: More children reach developmental milestones by Grade 1.

GOAL 2 SUCCESS FOR EVERY STUDENT

Outcome: More students are engaged in school and achieve student-learning outcomes.

Outcome: More students achieve a minimum of one year's growth in literacy and numeracy.

Outcome: Self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and English Second Language students are demonstrating growth and achievement.

Outcome: More students are supported and prepared for life beyond high school.

Priority 2: Enhance high-quality learning and working environments

GOAL 1 POSITIVE LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENTS

Outcome: The Division's learning and working environments are welcoming, inclusive, respectful and safe.

GOAL 2 QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ALL

Outcome: Student learning is supported through the use of effective planning, management and investment in Division infrastructure.

GOAL 3 A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Outcome: The Division uses evidence-based practices to support and enhance the quality of teaching, learning and leading.

Priority 3: Enhance public education through effective engagement

GOAL 1 PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Outcome: Student learning is supported and enhanced by providing meaningful opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's education.

GOAL 2 ENGAGED AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Outcome: The Division is committed to engagement and advocacy to enhance public education.

Planning and Reporting



Every year, Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) analyzes and interprets its performance and results reports to assess its progress toward achieving the goals and outcomes outlined in the Division’s Four-Year Education Plan. The assessment includes examining and reporting on local measures, provincial measurement information and evaluations received from Alberta Education. The Division then compares these with its mission, values and Four-Year Education Plan (see pg. 4, “Profile and Local Context”) to develop new strategies that further support student learning.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE

The planning and results reporting are integral to the Division’s accountability and performance-management cycle, which involves:

- developing and updating plans based on results, contextual information and provincial direction;
- incorporating stakeholder input based on engagement activities at various points throughout the process, as appropriate;
- preparing budgets that allocate or re-direct resources to achieve priorities and meet responsibilities;
- implementing research, practicing informed strategies to maintain or improve performance—within and across domains—and focusing on student growth and achievement;
- monitoring implementation and adjusting efforts, as needed;
- measuring, analyzing and reporting results;
- using results to identify areas for improvement and to develop strategies and targets for the next plan—such as evidence-informed decision-making; and
- communicating and engaging with stakeholders about school authority plans and results.



ACCOUNTABILITY AND ASSURANCE

Every spring, Alberta Education allocates funds to school boards to fulfill their delegated responsibilities of providing education programs for the students they serve. The practice creates an accountability relationship between Alberta Education and Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS), which requires transparency and the obligation to answer for, and publicly report on, the spending of public funds and the results achieved.

In addition, school authorities are responsible for providing assurance to their stakeholders that they are fulfilling their responsibilities and students are successful. The key to building public assurance is engaging education partners in the Division's planning and reporting cycle. Within EIPS, that planning and results reporting are integral to the Division's assurance cycle—which involves set processes, actions and analysis of evidence. Collectively, it helped to create a culture of continuous improvement. EIPS' assurance process includes:

- Before the election of a new Board of Trustees, the Division engages families, students, staff and key stakeholders to develop its Four-Year Education Plan, which captures the Division's strategic direction.
- Every spring, EIPS reviews the Four-Year Education Plan and fine-tunes it, which involves stakeholder engagement to develop the Division's goals, outcomes, strategies and success measures.
- The revised Education Plan informs the EIPS spring budget and individual Schools Education Plans—also developed with input from staff and school families.
- After announcing the budget, the Division and its schools allocate or re-direct resources to achieve the priorities and meet the responsibilities outlined in the education plans.
- In September, the Division and its schools begin implementing the education plans, using research-based practices, engaging in professional learning, and working to maintain or improve performance in the goals outlined—focusing on student growth and achievement.
- In November, Results Reviews for the previous year take place for the Division and schools—using the Accountability Pillar and internal qualitative and quantitative data. The review complements the education plans and allows schools and departments to share their results, annual plans, successes and challenges with the Board and community. Collectively—trustees, staff and families—gain a holistic understanding of what's happening throughout the Division.
- Following Results Reviews, EIPS publishes its *Annual Education Results Report*. The report outlines how the Division's ensuring students achieve the best possible outcomes and meeting the priorities and goals set out in the Four-Year Education Plan. Then, the Board of Trustees reviews and approves the report. Once approved, it's shared with the government, school communities, the Committee of School Councils and posted online at eips.ca.
- For the remainder of the year, EIPS and schools monitor the implementation of the education plans and adjust efforts, as needed—incorporating stakeholder input based on engagement activities at various points throughout the process.

Assurance Cycle

School authorities are responsible for providing assurance they are fulfilling their responsibilities and students are successful.

The assurance arises from the combination of policies, processes, actions and evidence that help build public confidence in the education system. It is achieved through relationship building, engagement with education partners, and creating and sustaining a culture of continuous improvement and collective responsibility.

ONGOING GENERATIVE GOVERNANCE

The Board of Trustees consistently reviews emails from stakeholders, and attends monthly school council meetings and Committee of School Councils meetings to gather input and feedback about the Division. Also, a standing generative-governance item is on every Caucus Committee meeting for trustees to share feedback and guide decision-making.



APRIL

- The Division prepares a budget and develops a draft Education Plan for the upcoming school year.
- Schools engage staff and families about budget planning and the priorities for the School Education Plan.
- The Division engages the Committee of School Councils (COSC) about the Division budget and Four-Year Education Plan.

○ APRIL 2020 AD HOC ASSURANCE

- Parent survey: The safe return to school during COVID-19 to inform the re-entry plan.

MAY

- Division submits to Alberta Education its Education Plan for the upcoming school year.

○ JUNE 2020 AD HOC ASSURANCE

- Parent survey: School re-entry planning.

○ AUGUST 2020 AD HOC ASSURANCE

- Parent survey: In-school learning and out-of-school learning.

NOVEMBER

- Schools engage families to review the results from the previous year and invite them to engage in the results-review process.
- The Division engages COSC about the *Annual Education Results Report* for the Division.

JANUARY

- The Accountability Pillar survey is administered to gather feedback from staff, families and students in all assurance domains to guide future decision-making.

○ JANUARY 2020 AD HOC ASSURANCE

- Public engagement: All EIPS schools conducted consultations with families about school fees for the 2020-21 school year.

MARCH

- The Division gathers feedback from staff and families through an EIPS survey focused on the assurance domains to guide future decision-making.
- In the last year of the Board's four-year term, the Division engages students, staff, families and community members to provide input to develop a new Four-Year Education Plan for the Division.

○ MARCH 2020 AD HOC ASSURANCE

- Staff survey: The safe return to school during COVID-19 to inform re-entry.

May 2020 Accountability Pillar Overall Summary

Measure Category	ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS			ALBERTA			MEASURE EVALUATION		
	CURRENT RESULT	PREV YEAR RESULT	PREV 3 YEAR AVERAGE	CURRENT RESULT	PREV YEAR RESULT	PREV 3 YEAR AVERAGE	ACHIEVEMENT	IMPROVEMENT	OVERALL
SAFE AND CARING SCHOOLS									
Safe and Caring	88.6	88.2	88.1	89.4	89	89.2	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
STUDENT LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES									
Program of Studies	83.2	82.9	83.0	82.4	82.2	82	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Education Quality	89.5	88.9	89.4	90.3	90.2	90.1	High	Maintained	Good
Dropout Rate	1.7	1.7	1.6	2.7	2.6	2.7	Very High	n/a	n/a
High School Completion Rate (3 yr)	84.4	83.3	83.1	79.7	79.1	78.4	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
STUDENT LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT (GRADES K-9)									
PAT: Acceptable	n/a	84.5	84.1	n/a	73.8	73.6	High	Improved	Good
PAT: Excellence	n/a	28.5	26.8	n/a	20.6	20	Very High	Improved Significantly	Excellent
STUDENT LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT (GRADES 10-12)									
Diploma: Acceptable	n/a	85.2	85.5	n/a	83.6	83.4	High	Maintained	Good
Diploma: Excellence	n/a	21.2	22.1	n/a	24	23.5	High	Maintained	Good
Diploma Examination Participation Rate (4+ Exams)	60.9	58.1	56.8	56.4	56.3	55.6	High	Improved Significantly	Good
Rutherford Scholarship Eligibility Rate	66.6	64.7	62.7	66.6	64.8	63.5	Intermediate	n/a	n/a
PREPARATION FOR LIFELONG LEARNING, WORLD OF WORK, CITIZENSHIP									
Transition Rate (6 yr)	62	62.6	62.1	60.1	59	58.5	High	Maintained	Good
Work Preparation	81.2	80.7	79.2	84.1	83	82.7	High	Improved	Good
Citizenship	80.3	80.0	80.2	83.3	82.9	83.2	High	Maintained	Good
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT									
Parental Involvement	78.9	77.7	78.1	81.8	81.3	81.2	High	Maintained	Good
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT									
School Improvement	80.2	81	80.2	81.5	81	80.9	High	Maintained	Good

*Evaluation measures are based on a three-year average (see pg. 62, "Appendix").

Notes

- Overall evaluations can only be calculated if both improvement and achievement evaluations are available.
- Student participation in the survey was impacted between 2014 and 2017 because of the number of students who respond through OurSCHOOL/TFM (Tell Them From Me).
- Aggregated PAT results are based on a weighted average of per cent meeting standards—Acceptable, Excellence. The weights are the number of students enrolled in each course. Courses include English language arts (grades 6, 9, 9 KAE), Français (6e et 9e année), French language arts (6e et 9e année), mathematics (grades 6, 9, 9 KAE), science (grades 6, 9, 9 KAE), social studies (grades 6, 9, 9 KAE).
- Participation in Provincial Achievement Tests was impacted by the fires in May to June 2016 and May to June 2019. Use caution when

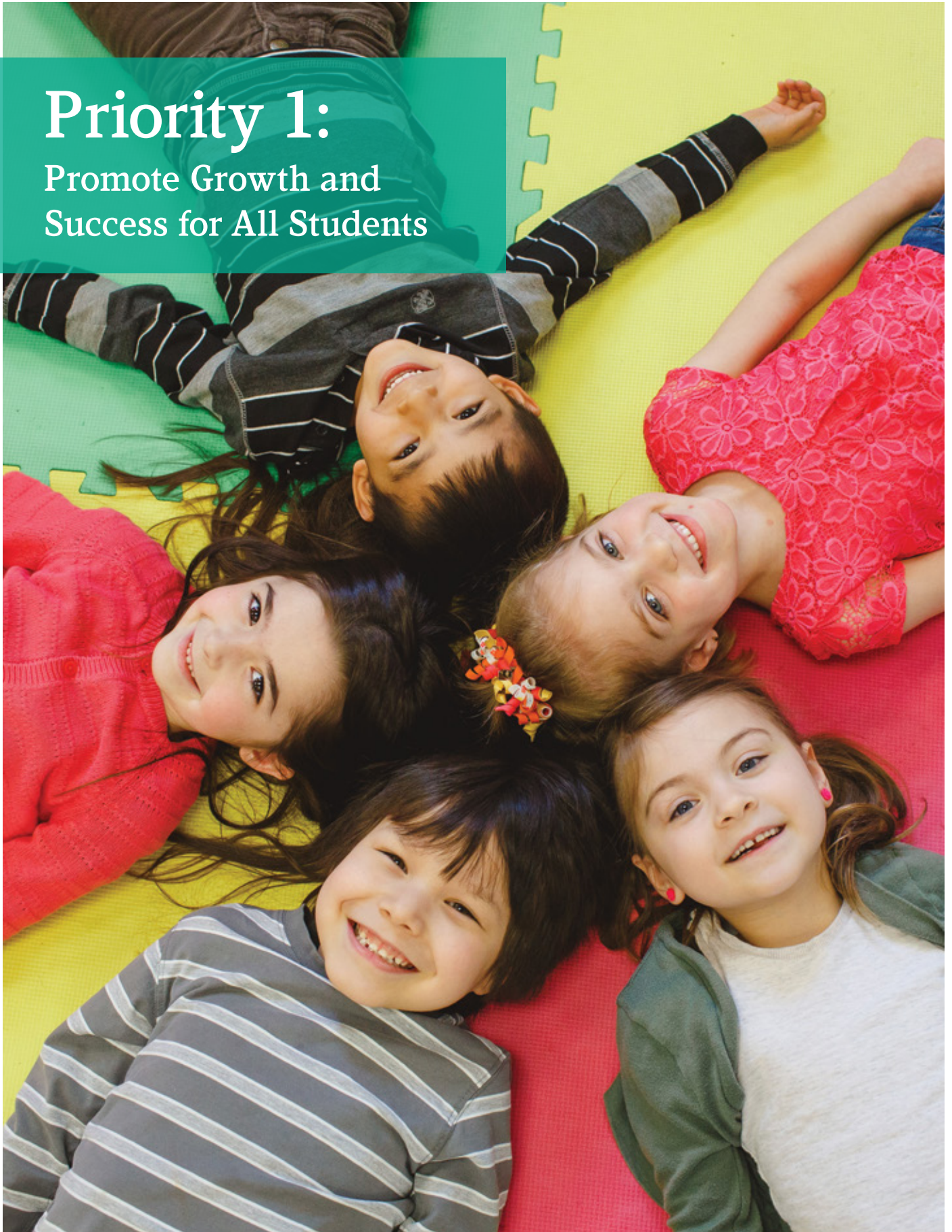
interpreting trends over time for the province and those school authorities affected by these events.

- Aggregated diploma examination results are a weighted average of per cent meeting standards—Acceptable, Excellence. The weights are the number of students writing the diploma examination for each course. Courses include English Language Arts 30-1, English Language Arts 30-2, French Language Arts 30-1, Français 30-1, Mathematics 30-1, Mathematics 30-2, Chemistry 30, Physics 30, Biology 30, Science 30, Social Studies 30-1, Social Studies 30-2.
- Participation in diploma examinations was impacted by the fires in May to June 2016 and May to June 2019. Use caution when interpreting trends over time for the province and those school authorities affected by these events.

- Weighting of school-awarded marks in diploma courses increased to 70% from 50% in the 2015-16 school year. Use caution when interpreting trends over time.
- The 2016 results for the three-year High School Completion and Diploma Examination Participation Rate are adjusted to reflect the correction of the Grade 10 cohort.
- Improvement evaluations are not calculated for school and school authority dropout and Rutherford Scholarship eligibility rates. Starting in 2019, an updated methodology was applied to more accurately attribute results in cases where students receive programming from more than one provider within a school year. Use caution when interpreting school and school authority results over time.

Priority 1:

Promote Growth and
Success for All Students



Goal 1: An Excellent Start to Learning

Assurance Domain: Student Growth and Achievement

Local Outcome: More children reach developmental milestones by Grade 1

Provincial Outcome: Alberta's students are successful

Early Years Demographics

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Total number of children enrolled in PALS programs	75	130	169	182
Total number of children enrolled in kindergarten	1,357	1,274	1,253	1,433
Kindergarten children with mild or moderate and severe special needs	218	191	199	309
Percentage of children with mild or moderate and severe special needs	20.5	22.9	25.9	30.4

Performance Measures

PERCENTAGE OF KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN MEETING	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2018-19	2019-20
All developmental milestones	n/a	n/a	n/a	53.4	n/a
Awareness of self and environment measures	n/a	n/a	n/a	87.5	n/a
Social skills and approaches to learning measures	n/a	n/a	n/a	78.4	n/a
Cognitive measures	n/a	n/a	n/a	59.4	n/a
Physical-development measures	n/a	n/a	n/a	79.5	n/a
Fine-motor measures	n/a	n/a	n/a	69.1	n/a
Gross-motor measures	n/a	n/a	n/a	76	n/a

Analysis of Results

Background

Early childhood development is the first and most critical phase of human growth. In fact, a growing body of research, centred on families and children between the ages of zero and six, suggests the early years is the most significant period in an individual's life. That's why Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) identifies an "excellent start to learning" as a goal in its Four-Year Education Plan. The goal sets the foundation for implementing strategies to ensure as many children as possible, entering Grade 1, reach developmental milestones. As such, young learners—pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and Grade 1—are taught by caring, and responsive staff members in high-quality early learning environments focused on purposeful, play-based programming.

Young learners are taught by caring staff in high-quality learning environments focused on purposeful, play-based programming



Results

Alberta Education doesn't provide divisions with data about the impact of early learning programming. Consequently, EIPS launched a new kindergarten tool, Early Years Evaluation – Teacher Assessment (EYE-TA). Introduced last year, the EYE-TA is a research-based assessment tool that measures children's development in five domains important to school readiness.

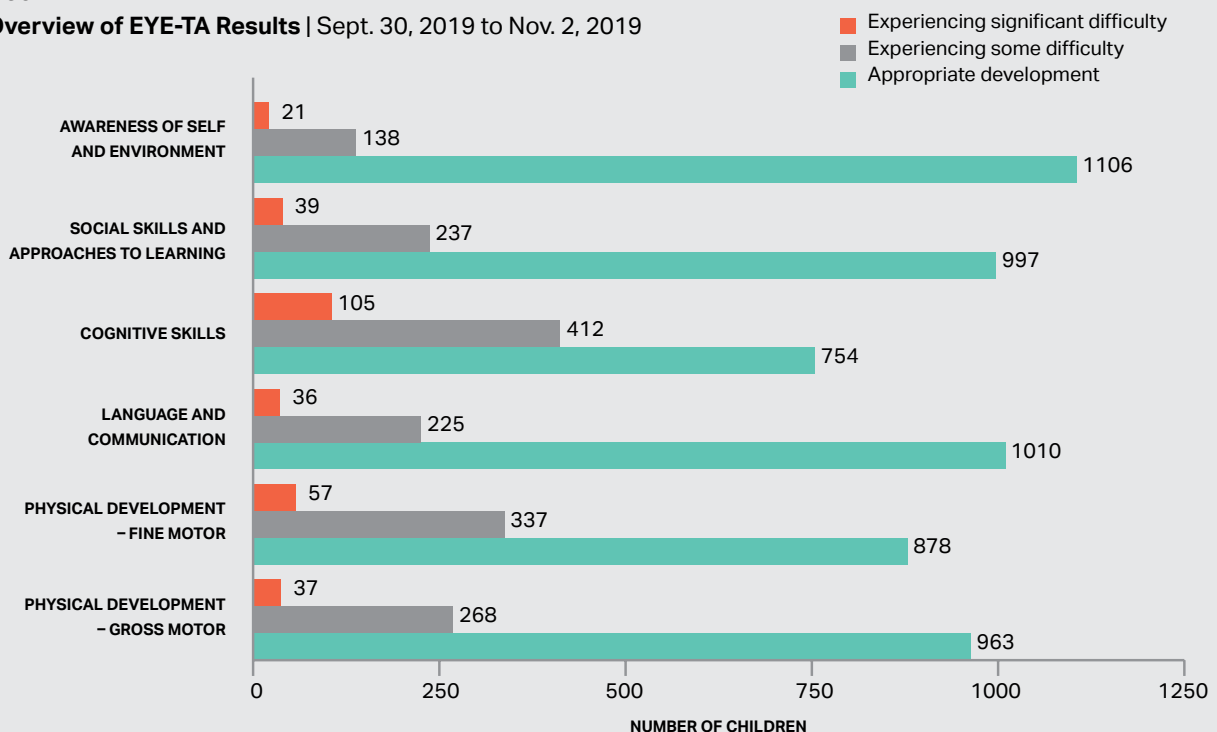
The EYE-TA's five development domains are:

- 1. AWARENESS OF SELF AND ENVIRONMENT**
A child's understanding of the world and his or her ability to make connections with home and community experiences.
- 2. SOCIAL SKILLS AND APPROACHES TO LEARNING**
A child's attentiveness during classroom activities and his or her ability to interact with peers while respecting classroom rules.
- 3. COGNITIVE SKILLS**
A child's basic mathematics and pre-reading skills and his or her ability to solve problems.
- 4. LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION**
A child's understanding of spoken language and his or her ability to express thoughts and feelings.
- 5. PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**
 - **FINE MOTOR** – A child's ability to perform small movements that require hand-eye co-ordination.
 - **GROSS MOTOR** – A child's ability to perform large movements involving arms, legs and body.

Longitudinal research demonstrates kindergarten children's EYE-TA scores are strongly related to their reading outcomes at age eight or nine. The EYE-TA's measures of Cognitive Skills and Language and Communication are the strongest predictors of a child's ability to read at grade level by Grade 3, followed by Fine-Motor Skills, Awareness of Self and Environment, and Social Skills and Approaches to Learning. EIPS uses the EYE-TA data to discern the children who are most likely to require extra support developing their reading skills during the primary school years. Figure 1 offers an overview of EIPS' kindergarten EYE-TA results between September 2019 and November 2019. Because of the cancellation of in-school classes, EIPS couldn't administer a spring post-test. Without that data, it's not possible to accurately measure the impact of the Division's programming and intervention support.

FIGURE 1

Overview of EYE-TA Results | Sept. 30, 2019 to Nov. 2, 2019



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

During the 2019-20 school year, 1,615 children were enrolled in Early Childhood Services (ECS) within EIPS, including 1,433 kindergarten children and an additional 182 in pre-kindergarten programs—up by 13 from the year previous. The Division served 281 children who met Program Unit Funding (PUF) criteria and another 210 children who met mild or moderate criteria in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs.

To support EIPS early learners' success, the Division offered early intervention support through the pre-kindergarten Play And Learn at School (PALS) program in Sherwood Park, Ardrossan, Fort Saskatchewan, Lamont, Mundare and Vegreville. The program supports pre-kindergarten children assessed with either severe developmental delays, or mild or moderate developmental delays. To qualify for PALS, children with severe developmental delays must be between the ages of two-years-and-eight months and five years. Meanwhile, children assessed with mild or moderate developmental delays, must be between the ages of three-years-and-eight-months and five years.

Kindergarten programming was available in all 26 of the Division's elementary schools, offered as a full-day, alternating-day program. Additional funding was provided by the Board to cover costs associated with its Enhanced Kindergarten initiative. The aim of the initiative is to support successful transitions into Grade 1 by offering extra help to children who aren't meeting developmental expectations.

For the 2020-21 school year, EIPS had to downsize the Enhanced Kindergarten initiative because of changes in provincial funding. Currently, the Division's exploring ways to still offer the initiative, albeit, with less dollars. One option is to establish a pilot project targeting children who require extra small-group intervention—determined by the EYE-TA—and tracking the intervention up to Grade 3. The reason to track to Grade 3 is because the ability to read at grade level by Grade 3 is a predictor of high school completion. So, long-term, investing early and measuring the impact of early intervention by Grade 3 longitudinally is beneficial. With less provincial funding for early years programming, the Division needs to rethink how it offers the service, and research areas with the highest impact to ensure resources are allocated accordingly.

In addition to the Enhanced Kindergarten initiative, various supports were provided to early learners by the Supports for Students department. EIPS speech-language pathologists (SLPs) provided one-to-one intervention, facilitated small-group activities and lead whole-class activities. SLPs also provided services and supports to children in PALS, kindergarten and school-age classrooms. In total, 148 (81%) children enrolled in the PALS program



received regular speech-language treatment or regular consultative visits, with an SLP assistant available to provide additional support. Of those children, 135 (74%) were assessed by a SLP. Division SLPs also visited individual schools to work with kindergarten children and elementary students every week. Through that work, 473 (33%) kindergarten children were assessed by an EIPS SLP, and 429 children (30%) received ongoing speech and language supports—inclusive of children with severe, moderate or mild disabilities and delays.

Another support was occupational therapy. Once a week, occupational therapists visited PALS classrooms to provide ongoing support to 158 (87%) children. In kindergarten, occupational therapists provided services on a rotating schedule. A total of 184 (13%) kindergarten children received ongoing occupational-therapy support—inclusive of 98 children with severe and 86 students with moderate or mild disabilities and delays. EIPS also provided universal occupational-therapy support services to kindergarten classrooms where all students benefited from growth in this area.

Physical-therapy support was also available to all children enrolled in PALS and kindergarten. During the 2019-20 school year, children in PALS received ongoing physical-therapy consultations in small-group and whole-class activities. In kindergarten, seven children with severe disabilities and delays received ongoing consultative physical-therapy support. By using a group approach it allowed the Division to support more students than in previous years.

BUILDING CAPACITY

In the 2019-20 school year, the Division expanded the Loose Parts Play Kits for PALS and kindergarten classrooms. The kits aid in problem-solving; fine- and gross-motor development, hand-eye co-ordination, language and vocabulary building, mathematical and scientific thinking, literacy, and social and emotional development. Thanks to the kit's versatility, children had more ways to discover and be creative during play and exploration.

Similarly, the use of the Phonological Awareness Kits continued in both kindergarten and Grade 1 classrooms –as a shared resource. The kits focus on identifying and manipulating units of oral language and sounds of spoken language. Overall, the kits support phonological awareness, which is a reliable predictor of later reading ability.

New this year, the Early Learning department collaborated with occupational therapists to create kits that help diverse-needs learners access their literacy and numeracy goals. The kits allow learners to have hands-on, interactive experiences with letters and numbers. They also support educators with activity ideas to engage children in meaningful and developmentally appropriate ways. A range of sensory kits were also developed with engaging activities to further enhance and support learning.

The Division also created literacy bag prototypes for kindergarten staff. The bags include various learning materials aimed at engaging diverse learners in literacy outcomes. As well, an English-language-learning consultant and speech-language pathologists worked together to develop a website specifically aimed at supporting teachers who have English language learners in their classrooms.

To further build staff capacity, EIPS developed multiple professional learning sessions and materials for staff. Some of the sessions or materials include: Neuro-Relational Framework to Support Social-Emotional and Learning Needs of Young Learners, Levels of Support in Early Learning, Early Learning Multi-Disciplinary Teams, Universal Occupational Therapy Strategies in the Classroom, Instructional Support Plans and Communicating Student Learning Videos for Educators, Using Early Learning Kits in the Classroom, EYE-TA Training for Teachers, EYE-TA Training for Administrators, Autism, Mental Health, Non-Violent Crisis Intervention, ISP Training and Positive Behaviour Strategies.

Additionally, the Supports for Students department paid for all schools to participate in the Wee Read program during the 2019-20 school year. The program, which focuses on children in kindergarten and Grade 1, helps strengthen language and literacy skills, while at the same time, helps develop an excitement for reading. Through the program, community volunteers visited schools within the Division, sharing their love of books by reading aloud, playing vocabulary games and telling stories about what inspired them when they were children.

RESPONSE TO COVID-19

When the World Health Organization declared a global pandemic and Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health ordered the suspension of in-school classes, programming shifted to online supports for early learners. EIPS developed packages for families while learners were at home. A shared drive was created and organized to support teachers with usable resources. The Early Learning department also collaborated with the Division's assistive technology team, made up of a consultant, SLPs and occupational therapists, to create videos with embedded symbolic language. The result: children with complex communication needs were able to see their mode of communication included in daily classroom activities. An Early Learning website was also constructed to support PALS and kindergarten teachers specifically. The Division also created countless activities to engage families, including a series of social-emotional resources and at-home activities.





PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Individual and group-based Family Oriented Programming (FOP) sessions were provided to families and children in the PALS program, outside of the regular centre-based programming hours. The FOP sessions helped families gain insight into their child's development and discover strategies to support their learning, working, playing and behaving in positive ways. In total, EIPS provided 18 FOP sessions to PALS parents throughout the year.

While in-school classes were cancelled, the Division offered online speech-language screening for families interested in the PALS program. Sixteen families took advantage of the opportunity. Children requiring full speech-language assessment were scheduled for an appointment in the fall. Families also had the chance to ask questions and discuss concerns about their child's development with a speech-language pathologist. Children were screened in speech sounds and language skills to determine possible eligibility for Program Unit Funding and the PALS program. The sessions provided families with friendly faces to chat with about potential challenges their child is facing. Conversations of this nature are often a difficult first step for families seeking supports for their child. The EIPS team helped make this process easier while also providing guidance and direction.

Families also played an integral role in the Instructional Support Plan (ISP) process—both in the development of student ISPs and the regular review of these documents. As a result, it enhanced understanding around individual

student-learning needs and strengths; communication among families, students and teachers; and the development of long-term plans to help families with transitions and future planning for their child.

Orientation sessions were organized for both PALS and kindergarten families. Individual orientation sessions were offered to PALS parents with their child's teacher. These collaborative sessions included discussions about the child's interests and strengths, specific needs, parental hopes and goals, communication protocols, transportation arrangements and the first day of school. The goal: To provide families and teachers an opportunity to start developing common objectives for each child's success.

Because of COVID-19 restrictions, Kindergarten Information Nights were different than normal. Each EIPS school with a kindergarten program provided information to families using email, social media, phone calls, videos and handouts. Families were introduced to what a typical day in kindergarten is like, informed about the importance of play-based learning and given an opportunity to ask questions. Early Learning also developed a Kindergarten Questionnaire for parents to fill out and return to schools. The questionnaire was meant as a way to start the school-and-home relationship with families and teachers—integral to each child's success. In the fall, the schools then used a staggered-entry to allow early learners and families to get comfortable with the new surroundings, before the startup of school.

Opportunities for Growth

In terms of early learning, there are two key opportunities for growth. The first is a direct result of COVID-19 and the suspension of in-school classes. Because of the suspension, EIPS was unable to administer the EYE-TA post-test to kindergarten students. The post-test measures the impact of the strategies implemented in the kindergarten classrooms and is critical for the Division when making programming decisions. Data-informed decisions allow EIPS to determine what strategies will have the most impact on children to support them in meeting their developmental milestones—essential for success in Grade 1. Data from the EYE-TA will help move teacher programming and student achievement forward, which is a key priority for EIPS.

The second is the continuation of the Early Learning Screening sessions. The sessions allow families to discuss potential challenges their child is having and make guidance and direction easier. Knowing who requires early intervention is an important factor for student success. As such, EIPS will continue with the process.



Priority Strategy for Education Plan

EIPS will continue its efforts to ensure more children reach developmental milestones by Grade 1. Strategies include:



Recent changes to the Program Unit Funding forced the Division to reconfigure the PALS program at Pine Street Elementary and École Parc Élémentaire to align with the budget reductions. EIPS will assess and evaluate the new program's effectiveness and adjust accordingly.



Using the EYE-TA student results, EIPS will create an action plan to support students at a higher risk of not meeting developmental milestones. The plan will include targeted support to students and prioritizing areas of most need to align with the current fiscally reality.



Using Enhanced Kindergarten resources, EIPS will establish a pilot project that targets children who need extra small-group intervention—as determined by the EYE-TA. The Division will also track the impact of the intervention to Grade 3.



Early Learning consultants will develop and deliver an out-of-school package for children in PALS and kindergarten who choose not to return to in-school classes because of COVID-19.

Goal 2: Success for Every Student

Assurance Domain: Student Growth and Achievement

Local Outcome 1: More students are engaged in school and achieve student-learning outcomes

Local Outcome 2: More students achieve a minimum of one year's growth in literacy and numeracy

Provincial Outcome: Alberta's students are successful

Performance Measures

—percentage of students who achieved the acceptable standard (A) and the standard of excellence (E)

		RESULTS					EVALUATION			
		2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	ALBERTA 2018-19	ACHIEVEMENT	IMPROVEMENT	OVERALL
ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR: OVERALL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES										
Grade 6 and Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs)	A	82	83.6	84.4	84.5	n/a	73.8			
	E	24.5	25.1	26.7	28.5	n/a	20.6			
Diploma Examinations	A	85.2	85.7	85.5	85.2	n/a	83.6			
	E	19.3	22.7	22.3	21.2	n/a	24			
Grade 6 PATs – Language Arts	A	90.7	92.2	94.6	94.2	n/a	83.2			
	E	26.1	24.1	26.4	24.7	n/a	17.8			
Grade 9 PATs – Language Arts	A	84.5	86.1	85.6	83	n/a	75.1			
	E	18.9	17.6	18	17.3	n/a	14.7			
English 30-1 Diploma Examinations	A	92.6	92.3	90.4	93.8	n/a	86.8			
	E	11.6	11	13.1	15.2	n/a	12.3			
English 30-2 Diploma Examinations	A	95.1	94.6	94.3	91.2	n/a	87.1			
	E	18.9	14.8	14	15.4	n/a	12.1			
ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR: OVERALL MATHEMATICS LEARNING OUTCOMES										
Grade 6 PATs – Mathematics	A	81.6	80.7	87	86.3	n/a	72.5			
	E	16.9	17.8	20.9	22.9	n/a	15			
Grade 9 PATs – Mathematics	A	75	77.5	69.3	69.9	n/a	60			
	E	18.1	19.4	19.4	24.4	n/a	19			
Math 30-1 Diploma Examinations	A	69.2	74	75.9	76.5	n/a	77.8	The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the cancellation of both PATs and diploma examinations. Therefore, these areas have no achievement-measure ratings for the 2019-20 school year.		
	E	19.4	30	30.3	24.7	n/a	35.1			
Math 30-2 Diploma Examinations	A	76.9	78	77.7	78.3	n/a	76.5			
	E	16.2	17.7	17	17.6	n/a	16.8			

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES					EVALUATION		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	ACHIEVEMENT	IMPROVEMENT	OVERALL
ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR: CITIZENSHIP								
Teacher, parent, student agreement students model the characteristics of active citizenship	79.8	80.1	80.5	80	80.3	Good	Maintained	Acceptable
Parent agreement students find schoolwork interesting	76	79	76	78	76	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
Parent agreement students can get the help they need at school with reading and writing	N/A	N/A	92.0	93.3	92.7	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Teachers, parents and students satisfied with the opportunity for students to receive a broad program of studies, including fine arts, career, technology, and health and physical education	83.4	83.3	82.7	82.9	83.2	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Teacher, parent and student agreement programs for children at-risk are easy to access and timely	81.5	82.7	81.6	83.5	82.8	n/a	n/a	n/a
EIPS PARENT SURVEY								
My child is demonstrating growth in literacy	n/a	n/a	n/a	88.3	86.6			
My child is demonstrating growth in numeracy	n/a	n/a	n/a	88.8	89			
My child's individual needs are met	n/a	n/a	n/a	86.7	84.2			
My child is encouraged to do his or her best	n/a	n/a	n/a	90.7	89.5			

Analysis of Results

Background

Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) is committed to the success of every student and ensuring they have the tools needed to reach their full potential. Facilitating this requires teachers to adapt their pedagogical practice to meet the differing needs of students, use meaningful assessments to inform a broad range of teaching strategies, and identify students early who might require additional intervention and support. Because literacy and numeracy are foundational to success in learning and life, both are priorities in the Division's Four-Year Education Plan.

Literacy is the ability to read, view, write, design, speak and listen in a way that allows people to communicate effectively. Strong literacy skills ensure the ability to read and write and the capacity to apply these skills effectively to acquire, create, connect and communicate information in various situations. Developing strong literacy skills in students is critical if they're to reach their full potential in school, the workplace and life. Meanwhile, numeracy is defined by Alberta Education as "... the ability, confidence and willingness to engage with quantitative and spatial information to make informed decisions in all aspects of daily living." A numerate individual has the confidence and awareness to know when and how to apply quantitative and spatial understanding at home, school, work and in the community. Developing strong numeracy skills in students is critical if they're to reach their full potential.

Results

LITERACY RESULTS

For the 2019-20 school year, provincial achievement data isn't available for the Provincial Achievement Tests (PAT) and diploma examinations. That's because all PATs and diploma examinations were cancelled as a result of COVID-19 and the suspension of in-school classes. Annually, EIPS uses the provincial achievement data to determine how well students are doing in literacy and numeracy overall. Given the lack of provincial achievement data, results reported for this section of the *Annual Education Results Report* are based on the Division's overall PATs and diploma examinations data between the 2015-16 and 2019-20 school years. Results from the Star 360 Reading Assessment and Math Intervention Programming Instrument (MIPI) data offer further evidence about how EIPS ensures more students achieve a minimum of one year's of growth in literacy and numeracy.

LANGUAGE ARTS RESULTS

Trends in data over the past five years indicate the percentage of EIPS students meeting the acceptable standard, and the standard of excellence in Grade 6 English Language Arts is consistently higher than the province. Overall, in 2018-19, 94.2% met the acceptable standard, and 24.7% met the standard of excellence. Comparably, provinciewide, 83.2% of students met the acceptable standard, and 17.8% met the standard of excellence.

Likewise, the percentage of EIPS students meeting the acceptable standard, and the standard of excellence in Grade 9 English Language Arts is also consistently higher than the province. According to the 2018-19 Accountability Pillar results, 83% of EIPS students met the acceptable standard, and 17.3% met the standard of excellence—provincial scores were 75.1% and 14.7%, respectively.

With diploma examination scores, trends in the data over the past five years indicate the percentage of EIPS students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in English 30-1 is consistently higher than the province. In the 2018-19 school year, the percentage of EIPS students who achieved the acceptable standard was 93.8%, up from 90.4%. And, 15.4% met the standard of excellence, which is up slightly from the previous year. Comparably, provinciewide, 86.8% of students achieved the acceptable standard and 12.3% the standard of excellence.

In English 30-2, the percentage of students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence is higher than the province. The overall percentage of EIPS students who met the acceptable standard in English 30-2

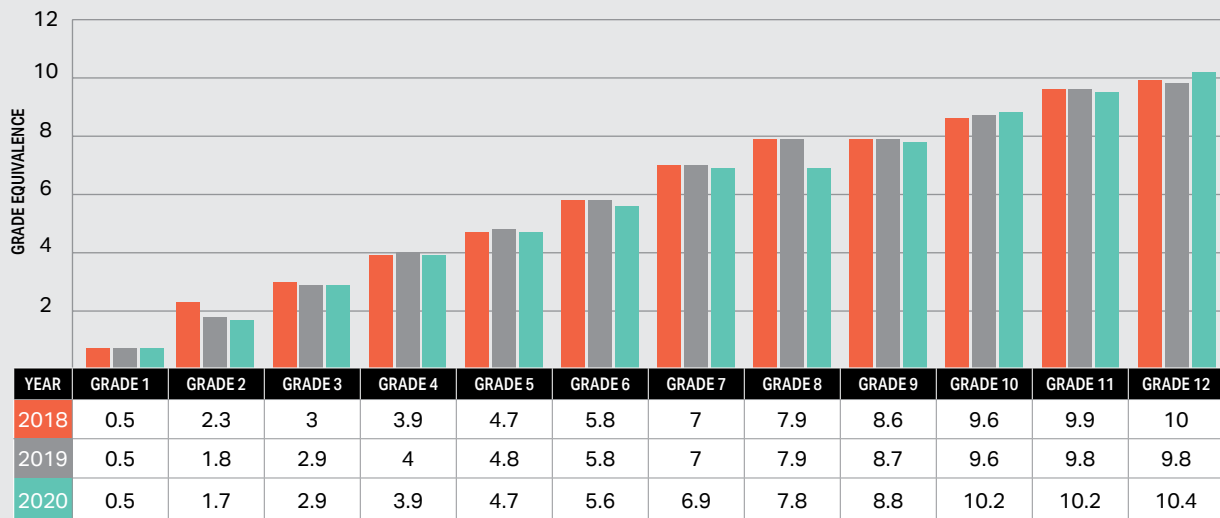
was 91.2%, and 12.1% achieved the standard of excellence. Provincial results were 87.1% and 12.1%, respectively.

The Star 360 Reading Assessments and Star 360 Early Literacy Assessments continued in 2019-20. Typically, the tests are administered twice a year to provide teachers with screening and growth information about a student's, in grades 1 to 12, reading abilities. In the 2019-20 school year, a total of 1,137 students wrote the Star 360 Early Literacy Assessment and 13,420 students wrote the Star 360 Reading Assessment.

Because of the cancellation of in-school classes, EIPS didn't administer the second test in spring 2020. Without the second test, determining comparisons and growth data is challenging. EIPS can, however, analyze the data between fall 2019 and fall 2020. In this time frame, EIPS students who wrote the Star 360 increased the Grade Equivalence (GE) to 0.84. Similarly, the average Scaled Score (SS), which corresponds to about one year's growth, increased to 102.

Chart 1 represents EIPS' average grade equivalence for students for the 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 school years. Overall, the data suggests one year's growth is achieved when you track a group of students from year to year. For example, in September 2018, Grade 1 students scored an average grade equivalence of 0.5. Then in September 2019, those same students, now in Grade 2, scored an average grade equivalence of 1.8—equalling more than a year's growth. And, in September 2020, when the group was in Grade 3, students scored an average grade equivalence of three—again equalling more than one year's growth.

CHART 1
EIPS Grade Equivalence | Fall of 2018-19 and 2019-20



What makes the STAR 360 so useful is its ability to identify students who are struggling in reading. The tool provides teachers with screening information about each student's reading level, grades 1 through 12, and suggestions for instructional strategies and student groupings. During the school year, those students who were reassessed showed consistent growth—determined by measuring individual student starting points and the amount of improvement made. In addition to screening students struggling, the Star 360 also identifies students who are reading above grade level to ensure they too are provided with the needed support for continued growth.

Using this approach to assessment, intervention and tracking improvement, puts the Division in a better position to support, and enhance literacy skills across

all grade levels and achieve the goal of more students achieving a minimum of one year's growth in literacy.

An area EIPS needs to focus for 2020-21, is around students who were on intervention plans last fall. Looking at Chart 2, it highlights comparison information from fall 2019 and fall 2020. What it illustrates is anticipated gains in literacy, for those students who were on intervention plans did not materialize—likely the result of the in-school class cancellations. However, Chart 2 also illustrates the in-school class cancellation did not result in an increase in the achievement gap for students who were not on intervention plans. Maintaining achievement during a pandemic is an area of success—and a direct result of the Division's efforts in literacy.

CHART 2

Intervention Screening Report: Reading | Fall 2019 and 2020

BENCHMARK CATEGORIES (DIVISION)	SR FALL 2019	SR FALL 2020
At or Above Benchmark	47.6	47.6
On Watch	16.7	17.4
Intervention	18.2	16.7
Urgent Intervention	17.5	18.4
No Data		

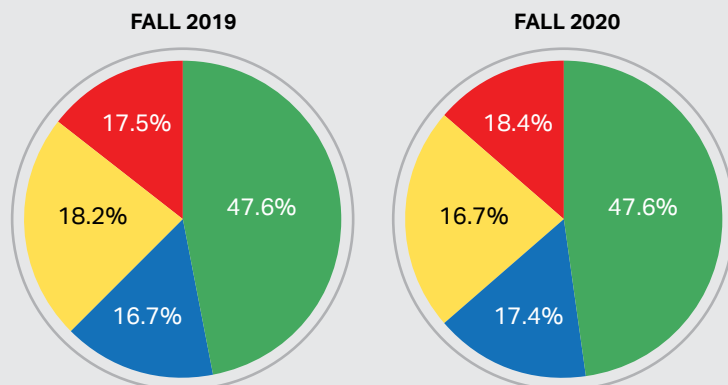
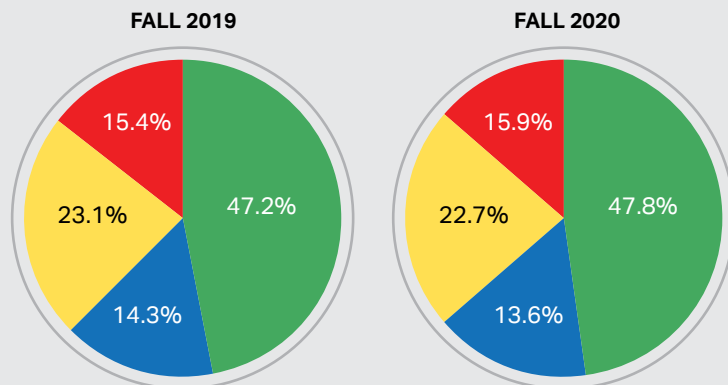


CHART 2.2

Intervention Screening Report: Early Literacy | Fall 2019 and 2020

BENCHMARK CATEGORIES (DIVISION)	SR FALL 2019	SR FALL 2020
At or Above Benchmark	47.2	47.8
On Watch	14.3	13.6
Intervention	23.1	22.7
Urgent Intervention	15.4	15.9
No Data		





BUILDING CAPACITY

Throughout the 2019-20 school year, EIPS focused its attention on literacy programs initiated divisionwide. Once again, consultants worked with Division I and Division II elementary literacy leads. Each lead was identified by a school and participated in various professional learning sessions. The knowledge gained was then shared with colleagues during staff meetings, school-based professional learning days or other collaborative sessions.

The Division continued the Lucy Calkins' reading-and-writing workshops. The focus: grade-group collaboration, planning, correlating the workshops to curriculum and creating divisional documents. As followup, the Division planned to host a Lucy Calkins Homegrown Writing Workshop, delivered by the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. Unfortunately, COVID-19 forced the Division to postpone the session to 2020-21. Along with the workshop, the pandemic made the Division rethink how to offer professional learning—post-March 2020. Once students transitioned to alternative learning, all professional learning went virtual with consultants supporting teachers using various online platforms.

For French Immersion teachers, the Division brought in Renée Bourgoin, the author of several academic and pedagogical resources in the areas of literacy acquisition and pedagogy, biliteracy, at-risk and struggling second-language readers, cross-linguistic transfer, and inclusion in language immersion. Bourgoin spent a full day with all EIPS French Immersion teachers from kindergarten to Grade 8. She also presented a resource to help French Immersion teachers support second-language readers entitled, *Soutenir les lecteurs en langue seconde*.

At the secondary level, the Division worked with English language arts teachers and leaders to discuss emergent issues, concerns and sound instructional practices. Overall, EIPS worked with teachers and leaders throughout the Division. Work continued around analyzing diploma examinations and PAT results to determine professional learning goals. The sessions were scoped and sequenced to optimize teacher learning—based on data areas that indicate the most benefit to departments and individuals. Topics included:

- teaching film in the ELA classroom;
- teaching the commentary as a personal response to text;
- abandoning the five-paragraph structure;
- 21st-century texts;
- authentic grammar;
- data to inform classroom practice;
- senior high interdisciplinary literacy;
- voice in academic writing; and
- co-constructing meaning with mentor texts.

NUMERACY RESULTS

Similarly, data trends over the past five years indicate the percentage of EIPS students meeting the acceptable standard, and the standard of excellence in Grade 9 mathematics is consistently higher than the province. According to the 2018-19 Accountability Pillar results, the percentage of all EIPS students who met the acceptable standard increased to 69.9% from 68.9%, and 24.4% achieved the standard of excellence. Provincially, 60% of students met the acceptable standard category, and 19% met the standard of excellence.

In terms of Mathematics 30-1, trends in data over the past five years indicate the percentage of EIPS students meeting the acceptable standard is slightly lower than the province—the exception being the 2016-17 school year. In 2018-19, the percentage of students meeting the acceptable standard in Mathematics 30-1 increased to 76.5% from 75.9%. And, the percentage of students meeting the standard of excellence decreased to 24.7% from 30.3%. Provincially, 77.8% of students achieved the acceptable standard, and 35.1% achieved the standard of excellence.

On the other hand, in Mathematics 30-2, the percentage of students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence is consistently higher than the province. Overall, the percentage of students meeting the acceptable standard increased to 78.3% from 77.7%, and the percentage of students meeting the standard of excellence increased to 17.6% from 17%—provincially, the percentages were 76.5% and 16.8%, respectively. It's important to note, a written-response component, worth 25% of the total exam, was added to the Mathematics 30-1

and Mathematics 30-2 exams in the 2018-19 school year. As such, use caution when interpreting the trend data.

As well, in almost all grades across the Division, student MIPI marks were higher compared to the previous year (see Table 1). Improved results were most notable in Grade 10. EIPS also developed a new MIPI test for students in Mathematics 10-3 and Mathematics 10C, which better assists teachers in identifying students needing intervention support at the senior high level.

BUILDING CAPACITY

EIPS numeracy consultants worked with schools to promote and foster numeracy-rich environments and plan school-based numeracy projects. EIPS continued its focus on incorporating strong pedagogical practices across the Division, such as the Guided Math Framework to cultivate small-group instruction, Number Talks to target mental mathematics and Student Manipulative Kits to support diverse learning styles. Working alongside EIPS consultants, various schools also offered numeracy family nights where parents and students came to the school to participate in numeracy-rich games and activities. Overall, the numeracy family nights helped promote a positive attitude toward numeracy at home.

Another focus area was secondary mathematics—driven by assessment results. At the senior high level, EIPS created common Math 30-1 unit exams to address the spread between school-awarded and diploma grades. The Division also reviewed the common Math 7 and Math 8 final exams, to ensure they reflect the same style and format as the Grade 9 mathematics PAT. At a more granular level, working groups contributed to the development of

TABLE 1
EIPS MIPI Results | 2016-2019

Grade	MIPI AVERAGE				NUMBER OF STUDENTS			
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2016	2017	2018	2019
Grade 2	77	83	80	82.4	1,326	1,329	1,362	1,329
Grade 3	73	75	71	74.4	1,422	1,261	1,308	1,335
Grade 4	71	73	70	71.3	1,391	1,403	1,364	1,311
Grade 5	75	77	69	68	1,169	1,272	1,448	1,298
Grade 6	76	78	69	70	1,182	1,148	1,351	1,388
Grade 7	66	69	67	69	1,155	1,179	1,174	1,331
Grade 8	68	69	69	69.3	1,194	1,142	1,173	1,156
Grade 9	62	66	63	62.1	1,155	1,103	1,073	1,018
Grade 10	49	54	50	n/a	969	943	967	n/a
Grade 10-3	n/a	n/a	n/a	52.3	n/a	n/a	n/a	215
Grade 10C	n/a	n/a	n/a	72.1	n/a	n/a	n/a	627
TOTAL STUDENTS					10,963	10,780	11,220	11,008

unit assessments for grades 7, 8 and 9, which vertically align with expectations on the non-calculator section of the Grade 9 PAT.

Numeracy professional learning also focused on the alignment and standards relating to Math 30-1 and Math 30-2. For example, one professional learning session entitled, “Crash Course in Teaching Math 30,” examined the program of studies, diploma examination expectations and text book misalignments. As well, vertical non-permanent surfaces were used to support the development of instructional strategies. These work as both an engagement tool and a resource to develop student competencies in problem-solving, communication and fluency with procedures.

NEW CURRICULUM

Curriculum is an important component of ensuring success for all learners. In preparation for the new curriculum, and understanding the political context, the elementary education team focused its work using the following learning statement: “Intentional planning fosters conceptual understanding and learning transfer.” What the statement implies is professional learning around the new curriculum is beneficial regardless of whether the draft curriculum is implemented.

As such, the elementary team hosted four, one-hour workshops for administrators. Each workshop focused on one of four main concepts contained within the curriculum—both the current and the draft curriculum. The four main concepts include:

- planning
- pedagogy
- conceptual understanding
- learning transfer

After attending the workshops, administrators took what they learned and shared it with their school sites through related workshops. Professional learning around the new curriculum also included a teacher-in-residency program and learning sessions. The teacher-in-residency program was completed by the Associate Superintendent and elementary team. They first developed new curriculum lesson plans. After developing the plans, they spent three days in 10 EIPS schools teaching the lessons and debriefing with the teachers. A video then followed, showcasing the developed lessons to use as part of the professional learning plan.

Similarly, three learning sessions were planned around the new draft curriculum. Kindergarten to Grade 6 teachers who took part in a half-day professional learning session comparing the current curriculum to the draft curriculum—focusing on the philosophy and program of studies. All kindergarten to Grade 4 teachers received

two full-day sessions addressing unit planning, lesson planning, assessment development and collaboration across schools. EIPS scheduled a third learning session but cancelled it because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meanwhile, the secondary education team focused on ways to mindfully target building individual teacher capacity—before the new draft curriculum's even created to ensure the shift in pedagogy begins early. For the most part, the professional learning centred on a lead-teacher model, which incorporated grade-level groupings to begin the conversation about curriculum and how to develop readiness. There were also half-day sessions with administrators before leadership meetings. Again, the sessions focused on readiness, next steps and ways to build capacity. Other professional learning, included exploring verbs associated with specific learning outcome, completing a card sort of the competencies and studying the overarching philosophy of concept-based instruction.

RESPONSE TO COVID-19

In March 2020, the World Health Organization declared a global COVID-19 pandemic, and the province suspended all in-school classes. Immediately, the Division's focus shifted to an online alternative-learning model. EIPS consultants worked full time to support teachers and students shift to the alternative-learning model. Consequently, EIPS teachers transitioned relatively quickly using Google Meet for synchronous teaching and Google Classroom to distribute resources, materials and assignments. Consultants supported this shift through professional learning in the following areas:

- grade-group cohorts for online literacy instruction;
- grade-group cohorts for online numeracy instruction;
- how-to tips for using Google Classroom and Google Meet; and
- assessment in an online environment.

Consultants also provided teachers with opportunities to meet in small groups and one-on-one situations to focus on the teacher's and student's needs in real-time.

Three websites were also developed to support school communities during the in-school class suspension. The first website was for internal Division use. The website included resources for teachers related to online instruction, navigating online tools, assessment and reporting. The second website was for EIPS families and students. It included Division updates, information and resources to successfully navigate the alternative-learning model. Finally, the third website was for elementary students and featured optional activities and lessons related to physical education, art, music and French as a second language.

Opportunities for Growth

EIPS anticipates learning gaps for students in both literacy and numeracy as a result the cancellation of in-school classes. Tools such as the STAR 360 and MIPI, and a new locally developed writing screenshot for students in grades 1 to 6 will help identify some of these gaps. In fall 2020, EIPS received money from the federal government to address issues related to COVID-19. The Division will use some of those funds at the school level to address these gaps in learning.



Priority Strategy for Education Plan

For the 2020-21 school year, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact schools—particularly in terms of out-of-school learning and in-school learning. As such, EIPS will implement the following strategies:

A Mitigate learning gaps by assessing literacy and numeracy three times a year, in October, January and March; tracking students below grade level; and developing intervention plans.

(A+2)²
B Redeploy consultants and hire additional teachers to support out-of-school learning. It will also enhance consistency in rigour across online teaching for language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.



Establish multidisciplinary teams to support complex learners across feeder-school groupings.



Deploy consultants to assist with in-school learning and out-of-school learning.



Build capacity around Brightspace, the new online learning-management system, with teachers, students and school families.

GOAL 2: Success for Every Student

Assurance Domain: Student Growth and Achievement

Local Outcome 3: Self-Identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and English Second Language students are demonstrating growth and achievement

Provincial Outcome: First Nations, Métis and Inuit students in Alberta are successful

Performance Measures of Self-Identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students

		RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES						EVALUATION		
		2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	ALBERTA 2019-20	ACHIEVEMENT	IMPROVEMENT	OVERALL
ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR: OVERALL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES										
Percentage of Grade 6 and Grade 9 students who achieved the acceptable standard (A) and the standard of excellence (E) on Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs)*	A	65.3	69.2	72.4	76.8	n/a	n/a			
	E	17.3	14.6	15.0	16.6	n/a	n/a			
Percentage of students who achieved the acceptable standard (A) and the standard of excellence (E) on diploma examinations*	A	79.3	83.0	86.7	80.6	n/a	n/a			
	E	11.2	18.1	9.2	11.7	n/a	n/a			
ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR: SENIOR HIGH										
High school completion rate within three years of entering Grade 10		69.3	63.1	63.9	70.7	72.8	55.8	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
Annual dropout rate of students aged 14 to 18		2.6	3.4	5.1	1.5	4.3	5.5	Intermediate	n/a	n/a
Percentage of high school students who transition to post-secondary, including apprenticeship, within six years of entering Grade 10		44.4	46.4	48.6	44.2	47.1	35	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
Percentage of Grade 12 students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	53.8	n/a	Low	n/a	n/a

* The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the cancellation of both PATs and diploma examinations. Therefore, these areas have no achievement-measure ratings for the 2019-20 school year.

Performance Measures

	RESULTS				
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
INTERNAL EIPS DATA					
Number of students self-identifying as First Nations, Métis and Inuit as of June 30	710	837	900	906	1132
Percentage of schools that created a First Nations, Métis and Inuit project proposal and received funding	35	70	100	100	100
Percentage of schools that have a First Nations, Métis and Inuit education lead	n/a	100	100	100	100
EIPS PARENT SURVEY: SPECIALIZED SUPPORTS					
Percentage of families who feel their child has an understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture and history	n/a	n/a	76.2	78.2	77.9



Performance Measures of English as a Second Language students	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES						EVALUATION			
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	ALBERTA 2019-20	ACHIEVEMENT	IMPROVEMENT	OVERALL	
ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR: OVERALL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES										
Percentage of Grade 6 and Grade 9 students who achieved the acceptable standard (A) and the standard of excellence (E) on Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs)*	A	72.5	72.4	84.5	66.8	n/a	n/a			
	E	13.6	13.8	18.3	15.3	n/a	n/a			
Percentage of students who achieved the acceptable standard (A) and the standard of excellence (E) on diploma examinations*	A	70.8	65.3	57.5	77.8	n/a	n/a			
	E	11.2	10.7	12.5	16	n/a	n/a			
ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR: SENIOR HIGH										
High school completion rate within three years of entering Grade 10		31.8	80.8	64.9	71.4	90	73.3	Very High	Improved	Excellent
Annual dropout rate of students aged 14 to 18		0	3.4	0	3.5	1	2.2	Very High	n/a	n/a
Percentage of high school students who transition to post-secondary, including apprenticeship, within six years of entering Grade 10		86.9	n/a	54.9	55.7	65.5	65.7	High	Maintained	Good
Percentage of Grade 12 students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship		36.4	51.9	53.6	40.0	61.2	55.6	Intermediate	n/a	n/a

*The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the cancellation of both PATs and diploma examinations. Therefore, these areas have no achievement measure ratings for the 2019-20 school year.

Analysis of Results

Background

An examination of the achievement gap between First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, and other students across the province, underscores the need for action. Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) and Alberta Education are committed to boosting educational outcomes. Some of the ways it's doing this are by providing First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners with culturally relevant learning opportunities; building capacity to effectively address First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner needs; and strengthening knowledge and understanding about Indigenous history, treaty rights, lands and languages.

The 2019-20 school year is the first year Alberta Education requires school divisions to analyze and report achievement for English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. Alberta Education defines an ESL student as, "someone who first learned to speak, read and write a language other than English and whose level of English language proficiency precludes them from full participation in learning experiences provided in class." Effective instruction for ESL students needs to support the achievement of grade-level learning outcomes and promote language acquisition. EIPS believes all teachers, in all subject areas, share the responsibility for language development and the provision of various supports to ensure the success of all students. EIPS uses proficiency benchmarks for ESL as the foundation for determining language proficiency levels and programming needs.



Results

FIRST NATION, MÉTIS AND INUIT EDUCATION

EIPS works hard to ensure all students, including those who choose to self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit, achieve academic growth. As of June 2020, 1,132 EIPS students identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit, which is up by 226 students from last year. It's a significant increase and an indicator that 1) more students are proud to acknowledge their culture and heritage, and 2) the Division is creating the conditions for a welcoming, inclusive, respectful and safe environment.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit funds received from Alberta Education were used to support school projects and central initiatives. As a result, all Division schools completed projects that offered direct supports for Indigenous students; professional learning around the Teaching Quality Standard and Leadership Quality Standard; and advanced reconciliation within the framework of the Truth and Reconciliation's 94 calls to action.

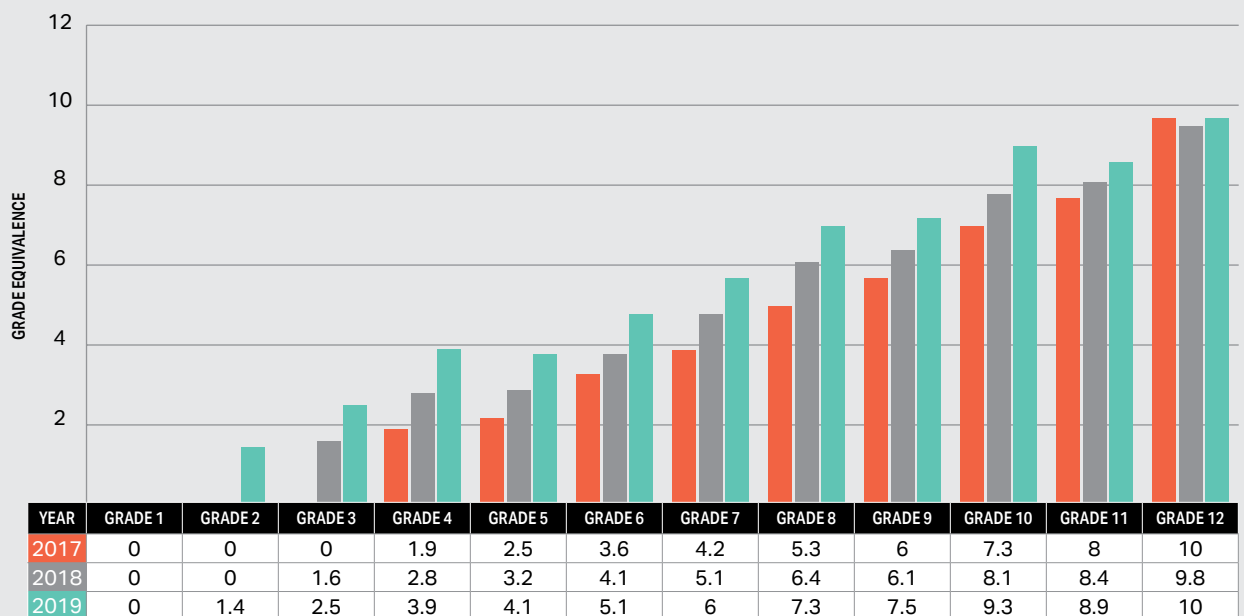
In the spring, all schools submitted Indigenous-related project proposals for the 2020-21 school year. To ensure project consistency, EIPS also developed a formula to determine how to distribute project money to schools—detailed in a new document entitled, *A Guide to Promising Practices to Support First Nations, Métis and Inuit Funding Allocation*. The guide includes funding criteria and offers helpful practices to guide work.

EIPS also continued its focus on literacy, numeracy and effective instructional practices related to First Nations, Métis and Inuit education. The Star 360 Reading Assessment and the Math Intervention Programming Instrument (MIPI) data help support efforts in these areas. Specifically, school administration uses data from both assessment tools to identify students who require intervention support in literacy and numeracy. Targeted supports, funded with First Nation, Métis, and Inuit dollars through the projects mentioned above, were also used to boost educational outcomes for student, who identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit.

In terms of Star 360 results, Chart 3 provides information about how First Nations, Métis or Inuit students perform on the Star 360 assessment as they move up in grades. Overall, with the exception of grades 11 and 12, students are growing an average of 0.75 to one grade equivalence (GE) per year—the goal is one year's growth.

Chart 3 demonstrates the average GE over the past three years—using the fall Star 360 testing window. It's important to know the data compares the same cohort of students. For example, using the Current Grade 4 data, in 2019, the group's average GE was 3.9. In 2018, that same group was in Grade 3 with an average GE of 2.8. And, in 2017, when the group was in Grade 2 the average GE was 1.9.

CHART 3
First Nations, Métis or Inuit Grade Equivalence using the Star 360



Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is no available data for the 2019-20 Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs) and diploma examinations. However, the 2018-19 results help provide additional context in terms of achievement for students within EIPS who self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit. According to the 2018-19 EIPS Accountability Pillar results, 76.8% of self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students met the acceptable standard on all PATs—up from 69.2% in 2016-17 and 72.4% in 2017-18. The 2018-19 provincial average was 54%. Similarly, 16.6% of self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students met the standard of excellence on all PATs—the provincial percentage was 7.4%.

Examining the PAT results, course-by-course, the scores within EIPS for self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, are considerably higher than the province in all Grade 6 and Grade 9 subjects at the acceptable standard and at all but two at the standard of excellence.

In Mathematics 6, 73% of EIPS students who identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit met the acceptable standard, and 12.4% met the standard of excellence. These results are noteworthy because they earned an overall standing of “good” and “acceptable.” Previously, these were identified as areas of “issue” and “concern” in 2017-18. That year, only 68.1% and 5.8% of EIPS students who identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit met the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence, respectively.

Additionally, in Science 9, 80% of EIPS students who identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit met the acceptable standard, up from 69.5% in 2017-18. Similarly, 25.7% met the standard of excellence. The 2017-18 provincial averages were 52.8% and 10.2%, respectively. These results earned the Division an overall standing of “excellent,” which is impressive considering they were “acceptable” in the 2017-18 school year. Furthermore, comparing the 2017-18 and 2018-19 Science 9 acceptable standard results of EIPS students who identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit with those of all EIPS students, it illustrates the achievement gap has closed significantly to 4.7% from 14.3%.

In terms of the 2018-19 overall diploma examinations, results for self-identified First Nations, Métis or Inuit students within EIPS were maintained, with a decrease at the acceptable standard to 80.6% from 86.7% and an increase to 11.7% from 9.2% at the excellence standard. The results suggest the Division closed the achievement gap at the level of excellence.

Looking closer, English 30-1 and Science 30 both received an overall rating of “excellent” for students who identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit. In English 30-1, 95.7% of students achieved the acceptable standard compared to 84.4% for the province, and 13% achieved excellence compared to 5.4% for the province. In Science 30, 100% of students who self-identify as First Nations, Métis

or Inuit achieved at the acceptable standard, and 28.6% met excellence. Comparatively, the provincial results were 81.3% and 10%, respectively. Meanwhile, in Physics 30, the overall results were deemed “acceptable” with 81.8% of students who self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit meeting the acceptable standard and 18.2% meeting the standard of excellence. In 2017-18, these were identified as areas of “issue” and “concern” at 71.4% and 0% respectively.

BEING IN RELATION

Another key focus area was relationship building with community elders. A significant part of that effort included continuing the Division’s relationship with Elder Wilson Bearhead, a member of the Wabamun Lake Indian Band who served as a Chief in his community, Grand Chief of the Confederacy of Treaty 6 First Nations and Alberta Regional Chief for the Assembly of First Nations. Throughout the year, he worked with 35 schools, where his teachings and presence were warmly received and valued. Staff also appreciated his ability to connect with students and their families, especially children in care.

In addition to working in schools, Elder Bearhead offered several professional learning sessions, including several learning circles for school staff and lead teachers, multiple blanket exercises, two Indigenous Peoples’ Giant Floor Map presentation and a presentation on the Moose Hide Campaign’s Safe Space Safe Place initiative. He also assisted the Division with developing a draft smudging administrative procedure and a guiding document. In June 2020, Elder Bearhead officially retired as EIPS’ Elder in Residence. While his presence is missed, his teachings and contributions continue to guide the Division’s efforts.

To prepare for Elder Bearhead’s departure, the Division hired a First Nations, Métis and Inuit Advisor, Jeremy Albert, in May 2020. In his role, he ensures the high-quality, culturally meaningful teachings continue, while also providing support to students, educators, leaders and school families. His primary functions include providing timely and direct cultural and academic supports to self-identified First Nations, Métis or Inuit students and their families; allocating and monitoring divisionwide targeted First Nations, Métis and Inuit funding to schools; monitoring annual school Indigenous education projects; and promoting truth and reconciliation by creating and fostering respectful relationships between Indigenous communities and the Division.

BUILDING CAPACITY

For the 2019-20 school year, work continued on leading and deepening understanding of the Teaching Quality Standard, Leadership Quality Standard, and curriculum

supports for EIPS students and staff. Ongoing professional learning took place on professional learning days, at school staff meetings and through in-house targeted workshops. Indigenous teachings were shared in classes, including kindergarten, senior high foods studies, Division II social studies and junior high science. Some schools also worked with the First Nation, Métis and Inuit Centre developing ways to bring Indigenous histories, perspectives and pedagogies into classroom practice. Other efforts included exploring land-based learning, Lunch-and-Learns and staff-meeting presentations.

Particularly noteworthy, the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Centre also participated in multi-division think-tank initiatives, land-based learning and working groups, and regular gatherings of Indigenous consultants throughout Treaty 6—organized by the Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium. To ensure effective use of the Indigenous Peoples’ Giant Floor Map resource, the centre created documents and sample lesson plans to accompany the map.

As in previous years, EIPS continued to add resources to the Division’s lending library—housed at the centre and includes hundreds of titles by First Nations, Métis or Inuit authors and illustrators. Titles were added to the kindergarten to Grade 12 section—both in English and French—and the teacher professional learning

collection. It also continued to lend out the highly popular EduKits—created three years ago and contain cross-curricular connections including physical education, health, music, language arts, art, science, information and communications technology, and mathematics. Last year the kits had a 100% sign-out rate, which speaks to their relevance and versatility.

All schools have a First Nations, Métis, and Inuit education lead, who participate in a range of professional learning and they share back with school staff. The First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team offered a powerful learning opportunity for leads that included a teaching circle with Elder Bearhead exploring the importance of creating ethical spaces for Indigenous students and their families. In fact, following the teaching circle many schools created or modified ethical spaces within their buildings.

Also notable is the work of a group of lead teachers who co-ordinated an awareness, remembrance and celebration entitled, Candle Day: Honouring the Spirit of Every Child. The idea for the event was inspired by Elder Bearhead’s experience at the final hearing of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, held in Edmonton in 2014. Unfortunately, the event was postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The group plans to reschedule it when the province lifts public-health restrictions.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

After successfully applying to Shell Canada, nine schools in Fort Saskatchewan and Bruderheim School created Indigenous outdoor learning spaces for staff, students and community to use to learn from the land. To create the outdoor spaces, schools worked closely with the First Nations, Métis and Inuit team to incorporate their own story with the land and journey with Elder Wilson, the curriculum, Indigenous teachings, reciprocity and student responsibility in the spaces.

In addition, schools continued to support Orange Shirt Day, Project of Heart, Have a Heart Day, Blanket Exercises, Moose Hide Campaign, and Bear Witness Day. Several schools also continued exploring land-based learning and fostering relationships with Métis Crossing and Strathcona Wilderness Centre—through professional learning and school field trips. In fact, Woodbridge Farms Elementary developed year-long land-based learning sessions through a partnership with Strathcona Wilderness Centre. Meanwhile, Salisbury Composite High, Fort Saskatchewan High and Ardrossan Junior Senior High School took self-identified students to a variety of post-secondary open houses and career fairs, including the Yellowhead Tribal College Open House and Rupertsland Institute's Career Fair. And, Mills Haven Elementary partnered with the Moose Hide Campaign to develop sample lesson plans for teachers across Canada.

Families were invited to participate in many Indigenous events, which saw a robust attendance—thanks to growing trust

Other related events included an invitation to participate in Cindy Blackstock's Spirit Bear Day in Edmonton to share a song EIPS music teachers co-created with Elder Bearhead, and an invitation to speak at the annual College of Alberta School Superintendents. Regrettably, these events were cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, EIPS was intentional in including the parent community in its work around Indigenous education. Families throughout the Division were invited to participate in many of the school-hosted activities and events. Several schools continued to host family teas and feasts, which saw a robust attendance—thanks to growing trust between families and the Division.

RESPONSE TO COVID-19

As with all programming throughout the Division, the focus shifted when the province cancelled in-school classes. Elder Bearhead transitioned to virtual platforms to continue his work with self-identified students. Sharing circles also moved online—Elder Bearhead facilitated two,

focused on a shared journey and expressing gratitude, and another two introduced Jeremy Albert to the EIPS family. The First Nations, Métis and Inuit team also recorded videos of Elder Bearhead sharing teachings, stories and positive messages for EIPS students. Literacy and numeracy support materials and suggestions for use in other subject areas, as part of virtual classrooms, were created for each video. Overall, the videos were welcomed and well-received, generating more than 1,000 views on social media. Finally, to recognize Indigenous History Month and National Indigenous Peoples the Division compiled, created and shared easy-to-access resources for schools.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Reporting achievement results for the Division's English as a Second Language (ESL) learners is a new addition to the *Annual Education Results Report*. Without current Provincial Achievement Tests and diploma examination data, forming an objective and holistic analysis is challenging. However, by analyzing the internal data and provincial results available, it's fair to conclude EIPS is improving its ability to meet the needs of ESL learners.

In September 2019, the Division hired an ESL consultant, resulting in performance measure increases. In terms of high school completion rates, 90% of ESL students graduated with a high school diploma within three years of entering Grade 10, which equates to 27 out of 30 students. It's a significant increase from 71.4% the previous year. Similarly, the ESL dropout rate was 1%, which is down from 3.5% the previous year. That number represents only one student, between the ages 14 and 18, who dropped out of school in the 2019-20 school year. As such, EIPS' provincial achievement measure rating is "very high."

In terms of post-secondary transition rates within six years of entering Grade 10, six out of 12 ESL students transitioned to post-secondary education and one to an apprenticeship. Considering the estimated out-of-province post-secondary registrations, this equates to 65.6% for ESL students—up from 54.9% the previous year. Finally, the Rutherford Scholarship eligibility rate for ESL students was 65.6%—up from 40% the last year.

Reflecting on the previous year, it's believed focusing on benchmarking language proficiency and using the results to target language instructional strategies for each ESL learners benefited students' success. Furthermore, the tracking of the Star 360 and MIPI data for all students and developing intervention strategies for those requiring additional support also helped all students, including ESL learners.

Opportunities for Growth

FIRST NATION, MÉTIS AND INUIT EDUCATION

A concern for EIPS is the fluctuating dropout rate. As such, it remains an opportunity for growth for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. Another growth area is ongoing support for teachers around embedding First Nations, Métis and Inuit learnings into the curriculum. A third area for growth is around outdoor learning spaces. Using the grant money from Shell, EIPS created nine outdoor Indigenous learning spaces. The spaces offer a valuable opportunity to enhance land-based learning across the Division.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE






For EIPS, the greatest growth area in ESL is improving results on the Grade 9 PAT exams. EIPS' data suggests there is some disparity in reading and writing, with an almost 9% drop in reading on the 2018-19 PATs.



Priority Strategy for Education Plan



FIRST NATION, MÉTIS AND INUIT EDUCATION

EIPS is committed to ensuring Division teachers develop and apply foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit history and perspective for the benefit of all students, staff and community members. To this end, EIPS will focus on the following strategies:

-  Continue to develop resources and targeted professional learning experiences to support teachers in meeting the First Nations, Métis and Inuit competencies, as outlined in the 2019 Teaching Quality Standard and Leadership Quality Standard.
-  Continue to develop and share resources—print, people, digital and land—that support making space within the curriculum for Indigenous histories, cultures and perspectives.
-  Continue to focus on strategies to decrease the dropout rate. Establish a plan to identify First Nations, Métis and Inuit students who are not experiencing success and may be at-risk for dropping out. Additionally, develop intervention support that incorporates the guidance of elders and other research-based best practices related to traditional ways of learning.
-  Support land-based learning initiatives within EIPS schools and target professional learning through partnerships with Elk Island National Park and Strathcona Wilderness Centre. The partnerships will support existing and draft programs of study for students in kindergarten to Grade 12.
-  Continue to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit consultants and their work with senior high schools throughout the Division to develop strategies and supports to grow achievement in the standard of excellence category for the diploma examinations.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

EIPS is committed to ensuring ESL learners continue to grow and achieve. As such, EIPS will focus on the following strategies:

-  Continue benchmarking assessments and using results to target strategies for ESL learners across all classrooms.
-  Continue to track reading of ESL students and targeting interventions for those who require support.

GOAL 2: Success for Every Student

Assurance Domain: Student Growth and Achievement

Local Outcome 4: More students are supported and prepared for life beyond high school

Provincial Outcome: Alberta's students are successful

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES						EVALUATION		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	ALBERTA 2019-20	ACHIEVEMENT	IMPROVEMENT	OVERALL
ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR: HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION									
High school completion rate of students within three years of entering Grade 10	82.1	81.2	84.6	83.3	84.4	78.4	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Annual dropout rate of students aged 14 to 18	2.2	1.9	1.1	1.7	1.7	2.7	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Percentage of Grade 12 students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship	62.3	60.8	62.5	64.7	66.6	63.5	Intermediate	Improved	Good
Percentage of students writing four or more diploma examinations within three years of entering Grade 10	55.7	55.7	56.4	58.1	60.9	55.6	High	Maintained	Good
ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR: TRANSITION AND CAREER PLANNING									
Percentage of high school students who transition to post-secondary, including apprenticeships, within six years of entering Grade 10	62.4	63	63.2	60.5	62	58.5	High	Maintained	Good
Percentage of teachers and parents who agree students are taught attitudes and behaviours that will make them successful at work when they finish school	79	77.8	79	77.8	81.2	84.1	High	Improved	Good
EIPS PARENT SURVEY: TRANSITION AND CAREER PLANNING									
My child is being taught knowledge skills and attitudes necessary to be successful in life	n/a	n/a	n/a	80.9	81.9	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Analysis of Results

Background

Keeping students motivated and engaged as they work to finish senior high requires a collaborative effort from the entire kindergarten to Grade 12 system. Senior high completion is a fundamental building block that influences other educational and life goals. If a student doesn't complete senior high, it can impact their quality of life as an adult. As such, preparing all students to graduate and transition into post-secondary education, the world of work, and life is a fundamental outcome of public education.

Achieving that outcome was particularly challenging this year. In March 2020, the World Health Organization declared a global COVID-19 pandemic. Soon after, Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health suspended all in-school classes. Immediately, Elk Island Public Schools' (EIPS) focus shifted to find new ways to promote and prepare students for life beyond school, using an alternative-learning model.



Results

The Accountability Pillar report is a tool EIPS uses to stay informed about how it's doing relative to achieving outcomes that lead to success beyond senior high. The 2019-20 results confirm the Division continues to show positive achievement in several important areas for senior high students.

Overall, the Division's high school completion rate and dropout rate both received a provincial achievement rating of "very high." In total, 84.4% of EIPS students graduated within three years of entering Grade 10—up from 83.3% the previous year. Provincewide, the percentage was 78.4%. Similarly, EIPS' dropout rate was only 1.7%—compared to the provincial average of 2.7%.

Also noteworthy, the number of students eligible for the Rutherford Scholarship increased in 2019-20 to 66.6%—up from 64.7% the previous year. The percentage of students who wrote four or more diploma examinations within three years of entering Grade 10 increased to 60.9%, compared to 55.6 % provincewide. In fact, EIPS' overall achievement rating in this area was rated "high" and "improved significantly," which bodes well for the Division considering, this was an area of concern in the 2016-17 school year.

Another area of continuous focus: Ensuring more students are supported and prepared for life beyond high school. As such, in addition to academics, EIPS prepares students for success in ways that support their transition into the world of work. That's evident in the Accountability Pillar results, where 81.2% of teachers and families agree students are taught attitudes and behaviours that make them successful at work when they finish school—up from 77.8% the previous year. The increase is likely the result of the Division's efforts related to programming offerings at the junior high and senior high levels.

BUILDING CAPACITY

Last year, EIPS supported Career and Technology Foundations (CTF) teachers in effective planning and assessment. CTF courses provide students in grades 5 through 9 the opportunity to explore interests and career possibilities, which is the foundation for the Career and Technology Studies (CTS) offered in senior high. This year, EIPS aligned its CTF courses with the CTS career clusters. It also provided schools with resources and professional learning opportunities to build a career focus into CTF challenges. For example, Vegreville Composite High created a Grade 7 design-studies course, which incorporates mathematics, science and art curriculum to ultimately create a dream space.

CAREER PATHWAYS

To support students around success beyond high school, the Division hosted a Registered Apprenticeship Placement (RAP) information session for families and students. The information evening coincided with several high school open houses and, as a result, wasn't well attended. The low attendance prompted a shift in the way EIPS delivers information about career pathways programming. From that point on, off-campus co-ordinators worked with each senior high to deliver important programming information to students and families. Off-campus co-ordinators also worked with CTS teachers to plan and host an Industry Night information session. The event was meant to supplement the RAP Information Evening. However, because of COVID-19, the event is postponed until the province lifts the public-health restrictions.

Other initiatives planned or implemented included the Invention Convention, Investigate! Invent! Innovate!, Scratch Day, Coding Quest and Makerspace. Collectively these programs provided students opportunities to explore a variety of potential careers. Although scheduled for the 2019-20 school year, both the Invention Convention and Coding Quest were cancelled because of the pandemic and resulting cancellation of all in-school classes.

An event that did take place before the pandemic was a trade show hosted by EIPS entitled, Your Future: Post-Secondary and Career Fair. Every year the event brings together more than 40 universities, colleges, polytechnics, private schools and sector experts in one place—the largest of its kind in Alberta. Students and family members met with some of the top post-secondary institutions in Canada, asked questions, talked to experts and learned about future career trends. To date, it was the most well-attended show, and "the best run event," according to vendors.

One of the reasons for its success was the rise in industry partners. The high number of partners allowed organizers to divide the room into two key areas: post-secondary and industry partners. Also, for the first time, Strathcona County participated in the fair, representing several new sectors, such as emergency response, parks and recreation, fleet services and administration. After the fair, the county hired two EIPS students through the RAP program to work in its fleet-services department. Meanwhile, another EIPS student received a junior forest rangers placement for the summer, again after attending the event.

In terms of off-campus opportunities, the 2019-20 results don't offer a holistic picture of programming because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the 2018-19 school year, EIPS students earned a total of 3,364 credits (84,100 work hours). Of those, 965 credits were earned through RAP, totalling 24,125 work hours. In the 2019-20 school year, EIPS had to suspend off-campus placement because



of the pandemic. The fallout: multiple student lay-offs and at least six students losing their RAP placements. As a result, credits and work hours dropped in the 2019-20 year. In total, EIPS students earned 2,011 work experience credits (20,275 work hour), and 540 credits earned through RAP, totalling 1,350 work hours.

Another focus for EIPS was increasing the dual-credit opportunities for students. Using a \$50,000 Dual Credit Startup Funding Grant from Alberta Education, the Division purchased equipment to expand two apprenticeship programs at Salisbury Composite High—the Auto Service Technician program and Hairstyling and Esthetics program. In total, 43 students took advantage of the Auto Service Technician program, two of whom are on track to complete the first-year auto technician service exam. Another six students completed the Automotive Service Technician first-period apprenticeship exam and three started full-time apprenticeships at large car dealerships in the area.

Similarly, 19 additional students took the Hairstyling and Esthetics program, all of whom are working toward their esthetics certification. Also, two hairstylists and four estheticians transitioned into post-secondary training, two students completed esthetician certification, and another two students plan to finish their esthetics certification exam in the 2020-21 school year. Overall, both programs continue to grow in interest and are at capacity year-over-year.

EIPS also used the Dual Credit Startup Grant to grow apprenticeship programs at other Division schools. For example, Bev Facey Community High and Vegreville

Composite High, both received funds to upgrade their food studies facilities. As a result, both schools now offer apprenticeship programs for cooking and baking, and certification for safe food-handling. Bev Facey Community High's cosmetology program also received money to grow its apprenticeship-level programming, which starts in the 2020-21 school year.

Other 2019-20 highlights include the expansion of the power engineering program, which expanded to three schools. An additional steam-time placement was added at Shell Scotford, allowing for three student placements. EIPS also partnered with Sherwood Park-based AT Safety Training Inc. to offer the Foundations in Industry Workplace Safety Training. The course is a five-credit CTS course that provides certification in Fall Protection, CSTS2020, WHIMIS, H2S, Confined Space, Ground Level Disturbance, Transportation of Dangerous Goods, Detection and Control of Flammable Substances. In 2019-20, three senior high schools and 40 students participated in the course. However, like many other career pathway programs, it was cancelled because of COVID-19. That said, students continued with their studies thanks to the career pathways consultant and the alternative-learning model receiving credits and certification.

Lastly, EIPS received an additional \$50,000 Dual Credit Startup Grant to explore new opportunities with post-secondary partners. Currently, the Division is working with NorQuest College to offer various university transfer courses in its senior highs. Some of the courses include introductory psychology, anatomy and physiology.

Opportunities for Growth

While EIPS is pleased with the overall results, preparing students for life after school is an ongoing priority. As such, the Division will continue to focus on providing intentional communication about off-campus education, dual-credit and post-secondary opportunities. It will also explore ways to expand these opportunities. Additionally, EIPS will continue to focus on supporting the development of competencies—critical thinking, problem-solving, managing information, creativity and innovation, communication, collaboration, cultural and global citizenship, and personal growth and well-being. These are attributes students use when encountering unfamiliar or challenging situations and, ultimately, help prepare them for life after senior high.



Priority Strategy for Education Plan

As part of its efforts to support students in being prepared for life after high school EIPS will continue to:



Work with schools in engaging families about ways to support their child prepare for life after senior high—specifically as it relates to career planning and life-skills preparation.



Work with Portage College to build awareness with senior high students about its free university transfer courses.



Develop and implement more dual-credit courses based on student interest, teacher expertise and availability from local colleges and businesses.



Continue to apply for the Dual Credit Startup Grant to offer a cabinetmaking apprenticeship program in cabinetmaking, university transfer courses, an educational assistant program through Portage College, and Foundations in Industry Workplace Safety Training with AT Safety Training.



Work with Division employees who are journeypersons—chefs, cabinetmakers, millwrights, hairstylists—to develop more apprenticeship-level CTS courses.

Priority 2:

Enhance High-Quality Learning
and Working Environments



GOAL 1: Positive Learning and Working Environments

Assurance Domain: Learning Supports

Local Outcome: The Division's learning and working environments are welcoming, inclusive, respectful and safe

Provincial Outcome: Alberta's students are successful; Alberta's K-12 education system is well-governed and managed

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES						EVALUATION		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	ALBERTA 2019-20	ACHIEVEMENT	IMPROVEMENT	OVERALL
ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR: WELCOMING, SAFE, INCLUSIVE RESPECTFUL AND CARING									
Teachers, parents and students in agreement: students are safe at school, are learning the importance of caring for others, learning respect for others and are treated fairly in school	87.7	88.1	88.1	88.2	88.6	89.4	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Parents who agree teachers care about their child	89	88	88	89	91	n/a	Very High	Improved	Excellent
Students who agree their teachers care about them	79.7	81.3	80.3	83	81	n/a	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
Students who agree they are safe at school	83	83.7	82.7	83	83	n/a	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
Parents who agree their child is safe at school	93	91	92	92	95	n/a	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Teachers, parents and students who agree each child and youth belongs, is supported and is successful in his or her learning	82.9	83.6	86	85	84.5	n/a	High	Improved	Good
ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR: CITIZENSHIP									
Teachers, parents and students who are satisfied students model active citizenship	79.8	80.1	80.5	80	80.3	n/a	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR: SPECIALIZED SUPPORTS									
Teachers, parents and students satisfied with the accessibility, effectiveness and efficiency of programs and services offered for students in their community	73.3	71.6	72.1	72.5	74	75.2	High	Maintained	Good
Families satisfied with the special support their child has received at school	80	86	79	81	81	n/a	High	Maintained	Good

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES				
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
EIPS STAFF ENGAGEMENT SURVEY					
I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work	95	93	94.3	93.6	95.4
The mission, vision and goals of EIPS make me feel my job is important	92	93	91.7	93.2	95.1
I receive recognition or praise for doing good work	88	89	85.8	89.9	88.8
Someone at work cares about me as a person	96.2	97.5	96.5	97.2	97.6
Overall, I am satisfied with my school or department as a place to work	91	92.9	88.7	92.8	91.1
EIPS PARENT SURVEY					
The school staff care about my child	89.4	88.7	87.7	89.9	89.4

Background

A key priority for Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) is for all students to experience success—academically and personally—and become contributing members of society. To this end, the Division is committed to providing all students with a classroom and school environment that is welcoming, inclusive, respectful and encourages a sense of belonging. In this environment, students are best able to learn and develop social responsibility. Equally important, is creating this same environment for EIPS staff so they, too, experience success and feel engaged.

Results

The 2019-20 Accountability Pillar results illustrates EIPS is doing a good job of creating learning environments that are welcoming, inclusive, respectful and safe. Overall, 88.6% of teachers, parents and students agree students are safe at school, are learning respect for others and are treated fairly. Another 91% of parents and 81% of students agree teachers care about their child. As well, 83% of students feel safe in their school, and 95% of parents agree.

Similarly, results from the 2019-20 EIPS Parent Survey, an annual survey to gather feedback from families related to the three priorities outlined in the Four-Year Education Plan, corroborate findings from the Accountability Pillar. In total, 89.4% of parents agree or strongly agree teachers care about their child, and 90.6% agree or strongly agree school is safe for their child. These results reaffirm the Division's ongoing efforts to build staff awareness and capacity to promote positive relationships and prevent bullying behaviours.

Efforts the Division has taken to continually achieve these results include ongoing work to incorporate a comprehensive school-health approach in all EIPS facilities—focused on building welcoming, inclusive, respectful and safe school environments. EIPS also supports multiple divisionwide health-promotion activities with an intentional focus on promoting positive behaviours and mental health and wellness, such as Bullying Awareness Week and Pink Shirt Day. In addition, the Division continues to play an active role with two provincially funded mental health capacity building (MHCB) projects—one in Strathcona County at Ardrossan Junior Senior High, Fultonvale Elementary Junior High and Lakeland Ridge; and the other in Vegreville, which EIPS is the banker board. The goal: To develop and support positive mental health and healthy relationships in children, youth, families and in-school personnel.

Furthermore, the Division, in partnership with the Eastern Edge Regional Collaborative Services Delivery and Alberta Health Services Addiction and Mental Health, offered ongoing caregiver information sessions—for

parents, caregivers and school professionals. The sessions covered a variety of topics, including technology and the teenage brain, respectful limit setting with adolescents, cannabis information, understanding depression, breaking the cycle of anxiety, building executive functioning skills, sleeping your way to better mental health and test anxiety. Even during the suspension of in-school classes, these sessions continued, albeit virtually, to ensure those who needed help had access to resources.

Nutrition is another focus area for the Division. Particularly noteworthy is EIPS' School Nutrition Program. Funded by Alberta Education, the program ensures all students at participating schools—Lamont Elementary and Bruderheim School—have access to well-balanced and healthy meals and snacks. Continuing the program during the in-school class suspension was especially important. EIPS used the program's funding to support community food banks in April, May and June. Food banks used the money to ensure students and their families had continued access to healthy meals and snacks.

BUILDING CAPACITY

To create a climate and culture conducive to learning, EIPS' Supports for Students department promoted social-emotional learning opportunities geared toward school staff. Employees who took part learned ways to integrate positive mental health, healthy relationships and positive behaviour supports into the school and community's fabric. These professional learning sessions explored positive behaviour supports in the classroom; working with students with autism, sexual orientation and gender identity support, non-violent crisis intervention, and a trauma-informed approach to support mental health. Even with COVID-19 and the cancellation of in-school classes, these learning series continued using an online platform.

As well, each EIPS school had an assigned safe-contact staff member to support students, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Each safe-contact member attended meetings and workshops to ensure access to the proper tools and resources to properly support students and adults in their schools.

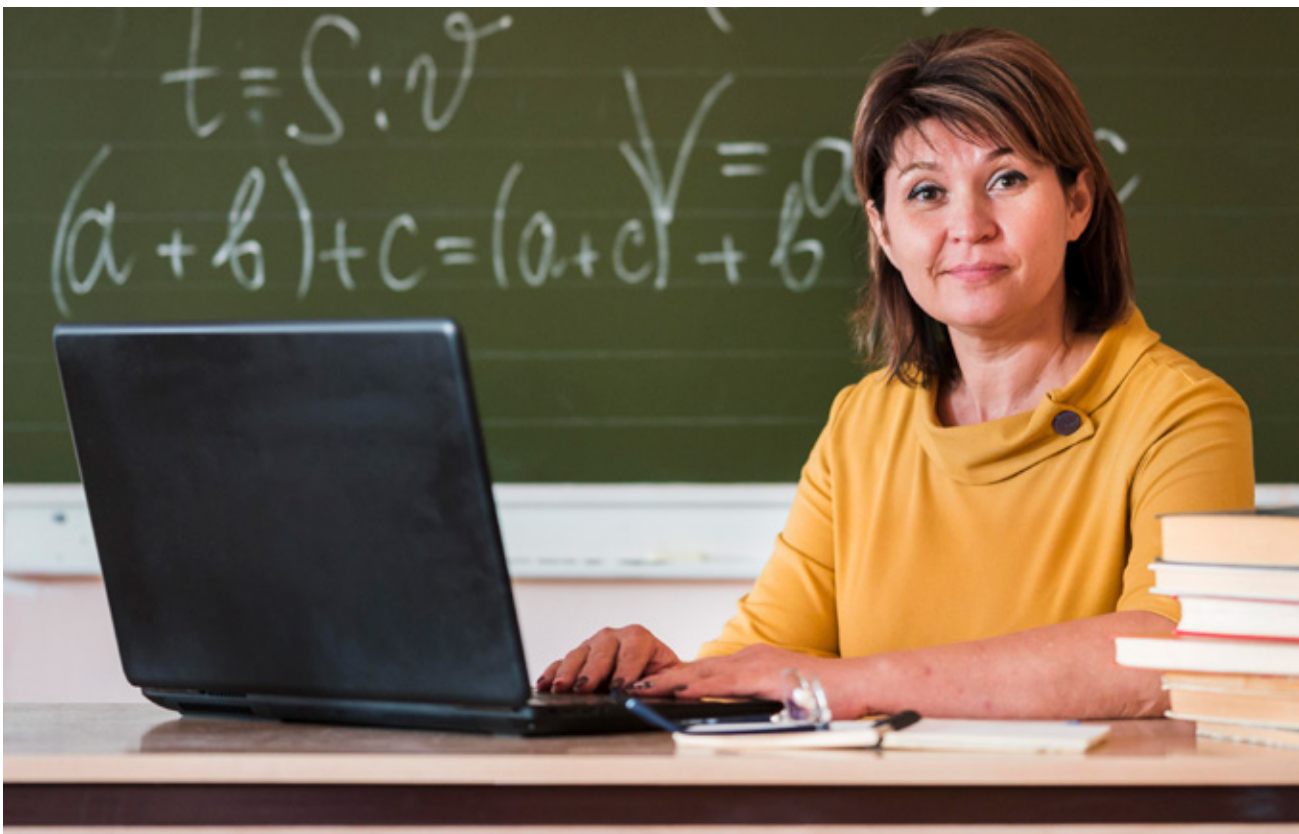
Year-long, the Division continued to use The Violence Threat Risk Assessment protocol, an approach that involves a network of local partners that work together to prevent violence in schools and the community. Partners include the RCMP, Children's Services, Family and Community Services, Alberta Health Services and Primary Care Networks. In total, EIPS had five certificated trainers, by the Crisis Prevention Institute, and two more trainers who offered the Non-Violent Crisis Intervention training, again through the Crisis Prevention Institute. Overall, 263 certificated and classified staff attended Non-Violent Crisis Intervention sessions in the 2019-20 school year.

Other professional learning opportunities included the Connect to Respect training and the Occupational Health and Safety Orientation—taken by 395 employees. A total of 4,339 online health-and-safety courses were completed using Safetyhub, an online safety training platform—since 2017-18 staff have completed 12,335 Safetyhub courses. As well, staff completed 1,462 COVID-19 Job Hazard Assessment modules, 1,255 Hour-Zero COVID-19 training modules, 1,381 WHMIS 2015 training modules and 17,474 emergency preparedness courses.

FOSTERING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT FOR STAFF

Equally important is the Division's continued effort to enhance quality-working environments for staff, which is paying off. The 2019-20 Staff Engagement Survey indicates 94.9% of EIPS certificated staff and 96.4% of classified staff feel they have the resources and materials needed to do their work. Similarly, 96.2% of certificated and 91.6% of classified staff feel the mission and goals of EIPS make them feel their job is important. Other highlights include: 97.9% of certificated staff and 96.9% of classified staff feel someone at work cares about them; and 90.2% of certificated staff and 92.7% of classified staff are satisfied their school or department is a good place to work.

New to the 2019-20 Staff Engagement Survey were a set of questions gauging staff perceptions about EIPS' COVID-19 health-and safety-protocols. As expected, in times of uncertainty, some staff did respond to these questions as "unsure." Overall, however, 91.5% of certificated staff and 94.1% of classified staff indicated the Division does a good job of sharing information about COVID-19. As well, 85.2% of certificated staff and 91% of classified staff strongly agree or agree the Division cares about their health and safety. Collectively, these are strong indicators of staff engagement and positive working environments for Division employees.



Opportunities for Growth

In September 2020, the province dissolved all Regional Collaborative Service Delivery (RCSD) partnerships across Alberta. RCSD partnerships served as a way for regional school authorities to work collaboratively with Alberta Health Services, Community and Social Services and Children’s Services to ensure children, youth and families have access to the supports they need to be successful at school. For years, EIPS was part of the Eastern Edge RCSD. Now, in absence of the partnership, it’s vital students and their families continue to have access to needed health-care supports and resources—such as speech-and-language therapy, occupational therapy, complex communication and mental health.

As result, in 2020-21, EIPS entered into a partnership with other school divisions that were part of the former Eastern Edge RCSD to offer educational services to students with low-incidence needs—visually impaired, deaf and hard of hearing, complex communication. The group will also work on ways to include former community partners as well. Not an easy task, as these community partners are no longer funded to support schools.

Also, healthy relationships and positive mental health continue to require deliberate efforts to ensure promotion and prevention, early identification, early intervention, treatment and followup takes place for students who require the services. So, this is another growth area for

EIPS—particularly important this year given the pandemic. For many students and staff, COVID-19 creates heightened anxieties and fears about the present and future. Changes in routines, such as the suspension of in-school classes and the school re-entry, further exacerbate mental health conditions. As such, throughout 2020-21, EIPS will work to support the mental health and wellness of all staff and students.


It will also continue to provide education and support to school staff about mental health literacy and service pathways for students in need of help. And, as always, the Division will continue to support all schools implementing sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) resources, restorative practices, trauma-informed approaches, Non-Violent Crisis Intervention training for staff and the Violence Threat Risk Assessment, when necessary.




Priority Strategy for Education Plan


EIPS will continue its efforts to ensure its learning and working environments are welcoming, inclusive, respectful and safe. Strategies include:


 Ensure all health-and-safety protocols, as outlined in the *EIPS COVID-19 Guidelines* are in place across the Division.


 Support staff through online training, resources, materials and activities to ensure EIPS successfully meets the social-emotional needs of staff, students and families—with a focus on the school re-entry.

 Ensure human resources’ guidelines align with the heightened COVID-19 health-and-safety protocols.

 Maintain the Division’s Certificate of Recognition and address any factors that could affect EIPS’ Certificate of Recognition status.

 Enhance professional learning for staff around restorative practices, self-regulation, positive behaviour supports, trauma-informed strategies and mental health.

 Continue to offer sessions related to health and wellness for families.

 Co-ordinate with government agencies and community partners to provide professional learning, awareness and access to resources related to welcoming, inclusive, respectful and safe learning environments.

GOAL 2: Quality Infrastructure for All

Assurance Domain: Learning Supports

Local Outcome: Student learning is supported through the use of effective planning, management and investment in Division infrastructure

Provincial Outcome: Alberta's K-12 education system is well-governed and managed

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES				
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
EIPS FACILITIES					
Overall school-utilization rate	74	77	75	73	75
Number of new, replacement or modernization capital projects funded versus requested	1 of 5	1 of 4	3 of 4	1 of 4	0 of 1
Approved modular unit classrooms	9 approved	11 approved 3 demolished	0 approved	1 approved 8 demolished 3 relocated	1 relocated
Number of modular units installed and hooked up with occupancy for school startup	9	11	n/a	0 (4 late)	1
Number of projects completed as part of the Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal program	103	175	127	121	151
Number of maintenance projects completed	128	212	201	340	457
Number of work orders requested	7,304	8,043	7,844	8,723	10,455
Percentage of work orders completed	100	99.6	93	99	93
EIPS Parent Survey: Percentage of parents rating the physical condition of their child's school excellent, good or fair*	n/a	n/a	n/a	81.14	80.6
EIPS TECHNOLOGY					
Number of schools completing the reconfiguring of Active Directory	n/a	38	40	40	Not tracking
Number of Central Services servers migrated to a virtual environment at the Central Data Centre	80	90	75	77	Not tracking
Number of school servers migrated to a virtual environment	50	76	160	120	Not tracking
Number of schools rewired to Category 6 standards	3	6	10	15	33
Number of schools funded with evergreening technology	21	24	26	31	0
Number of schools with fibre connections right to the curb	32	38	43	43	Not tracking
Number of schools with 100 Mbps bandwidth*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	7
Number of schools with 200 Mbps bandwidth*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	27
Number of schools with 300 Mbps bandwidth*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1
Number of schools with 400 Mbps bandwidth*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1
Number of schools with 500 Mbps bandwidth*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1
EIPS TECHNOLOGY					
Number of bus riders at the end of June	8,927	9,304	9,369	9,271	9,041
Number of buses	152	160	161	153	157
Average bus ride time	29.5	28.5	28.4	28.6	29.3
Percentage of buses installed with GPS tracking systems	100	100	100	100	100
Number of parents and students who participated in the Little Elk Island Adventure bus-safety program	395	420	548	853	862

*New measure

Background

Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) is committed to providing high-quality learning and working environments. The Division does this through effective planning and managing of its infrastructure, which includes facilities, technology and the transportation of students.



Results

FACILITY SERVICES

Throughout the 2019-20 school year, the Facility Services department oversaw many projects, including project managing the Heritage Hills Elementary replacement school. The new replacement school—completed on schedule and in time for the 2020-21 school startup—also included the fit-out of furniture and equipment, seasonal work and a playground installation. Similarly, the department handled the closing of Wye Elementary, which Heritage Hills Elementary replaces. The abatement of the school took place in the 2019-20 school year. The demolition is slated for the 2020-21 school year.

In terms of modular classrooms, the department relocated one modular unit to SouthPointe School from Wye Elementary. It also managed the re-roofing of the Truco modular units at Ardrossan Elementary and SouthPointe Schools. Other tasks included completing 457 maintenance, operations and custodial projects; 151 Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal (IMR) projects; and 10,455 work orders—some of which were carry-overs from the previous year. As well, to stimulate the economy, the Government of Alberta initiated a Construction Maintenance Renewal (CMR) program in 2019-20. Through the program, EIPS received an additional \$3.9 million to begin immediate construction on 13 major projects—all with an expected completion date of fall 2020.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

EIPS continued to leverage the recent migration to virtual servers, as reported in the *Annual Education Results Report* over the past four years. With the data-centre virtualization project complete, the focus shifted to network connectivity and reliability. Some school sites experienced connectivity and latency issues during the 2019-20 school year—mostly because of issues related to VOIP telephone service and internet response times. The Division engaged both its network provider and consultant services to help resolve these issues.

In early 2020, EIPS noticed improvements. However, testing and reporting abilities were hindered because of the pandemic and the cancellation of in-school classes. The Division used new and existing network monitoring software to determine if the connection issues were internal or service-provider related. Unfortunately, there wasn't enough internal network traffic during the in-school class suspension to determine if a bandwidth or configuration issue exists. As such, EIPS continues to monitor and strategize to ensure a secure, robust and reliable IT environment.

With the temporary reduction of evergreening funding, the Division also focused efforts on IT asset management reporting. By doing so, EIPS improved its ability to have quick and accurate reporting of its IT assets—essential moving forward, given the uncertainty of evergreening funding in the coming years. Many schools also had to loan technology equipment to staff and students to make the emergency alternative-learning model accessible. During this time, providing reliable remote connectivity and student information systems support was key. In fact, the Help Desk's ticket requests significantly increased. Throughout, the IT team worked collaboratively to support users for at-home work and learning.

The Information Technology department also successfully implemented a change advisory board. The new process allows the department to manage the Division's various software using a decision matrix. It also ensures efficient use of funding and preventing any system duplications. The department now plans to expand the process to schools and EIPS Central Services to assist with change management.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is another component of quality infrastructure. In the 2019-20 school year—September 2019 to when the province cancelled all in-school classes—EIPS transported 9,041 students on 157 buses with an average ride-time of 29 minutes and 28 seconds. Additional buses were added for two reasons: 1) to support the transportation of students to Vegreville and Lamont because of Andrew School's grade reconfiguration, and 2) for capacity issues

on buses in Fort Saskatchewan and Sherwood Park. For students attending schools in Vegreville and Lamont, there was a slight ride-time increase, of approximately 30 seconds—again, the result of the senior high program at Andrew School closing. Overall, given the urban-rural mix, divisionwide ride times are favourable.

Safety was again the priority for the department as it transports students to and from school. EIPS Student Transportation is a leader in the province in this area—thanks to the technology it uses, such as GPS, student scan cards, the Child Check-Mate system and video-surveillance monitoring. The technology is also useful for managing and optimizing rides, ensuring students are accounted for when getting on and off the bus, and assisting with student management.

Student Transportation continues to offer the Little Elk Island Adventure, a bus-safety program for first-time riders. The program is locally developed and educates children and families about school bus procedures and safety. The number of families taking part increased slightly from the previous year. Overall, the Little Elk Island Adventure helps improve student awareness and behaviour on Division buses and gives families a clear understanding of student expectations while riding EIPS buses.

During the suspension of in-school classes, Student Transportation stayed in contact with bus operators to ensure staff retention for the 2020-21 school year. Student Transportation placed phone calls to all bus operators to stay connected, see how they were managing during the pandemic and seek feedback. The communication was well-received by all bus operators. It also illustrates the positive effect conversation elicits.

In the spring and summer of 2020, Student Transportation spent a great deal of time preparing for the school re-entry and ensuring protocols, as outlined by the province and EIPS, were in place. It also established a cleaning process that encompassed a deep clean of buses twice daily, cleaning high-touch areas at transfer sites and a daily disinfection process with an electrostatic sprayer. In addition, the department developed a personal protective equipment policy for students and bus operators. All students must wear masks at bus stops, while riding the bus and at transfer sites. Similarly, bus operators have to wear masks at all times and a shield at bus stops and transfer sites when children board and disembark buses. The policy also included the purchase of various personal protective equipment, such as cleaning products, hand sanitizers for students boarding the bus, and electrostatic sprayers.

Opportunities for Growth

FACILITY SERVICES

Building relationships within and outside the department continues to be an opportunity for growth as it enhances communication around project timelines and status updates. As such, Facility Services will continue to improve communication between its department, school administrators and all other EIPS departments. The goal: To ensure healthy, high-quality learning and working environments and facilities.

Another growth area with respect to Division infrastructure is finding a solution to address student capacity issues. Over the last few years, EIPS has experienced strong residential growth in Fort Saskatchewan. The growth is at a point where it affects the Division's ability to provide accommodation for students living within the area. To continue to provide high-quality, student-centred education that builds strong, healthy communities, the Division needs a solution to manage the growth and address student capacity issue. Short-term, EIPS plans to accommodate students through its 2020-21 Modular Classroom Plan. However, it's a temporary solution. By 2028, all schools in that city are expected to reach maximum capacity. In Sherwood Park, the greatest concern is the deterioration of Sherwood Heights Junior High and accommodating students should the school experience a major system failure given its age and current Facility Condition Index value.

The Division needs a solution to manage growth and address student capacity issues

A third area for growth for the department is the continued use of the one-stop, service-centre experience. Since launching in 2017, the feedback from school administrators is overwhelmingly positive. More visitations by the Facility Services Management Team and small-group meetings between directors and principals will further enhance the relationship process.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

Information Technologies will continue to improve the feature utilization of existing systems, including PowerSchool and the atrieveERP system. With the increasing need for a robust online-learning experience and the enterprise-management approach to systems, EIPS also shifted to an online learning-management system, Brightspace, in the 2020-21 school year. As such, the department will dedicate a significant amount of time developing the platform and building capacity around it.

Additionally, Information Technologies has aligned the Division's education goals by including the education-technology team with the information technologies department. There are many functions within the Information Technologies portfolio that the educational-technology team can help with in terms of context and consultation. Some of this includes configuration design and process support to guide training and professional learning for end-users.

Currently, the network and server teams use ageing server hardware. So, the department will upgrade the technology stack in its data centre. Continued network- and infrastructure-design improvements are also essential. As such, the network and server teams will work closely to improve the network's stability while providing seamless access to core education and business systems. Furthermore, participating in relevant professional learning will ensure the implementation of new hardware is successful and provide knowledge for ongoing support. These upgrades are critical to safe and reliable access for students for both in-school learning and out-of-school learning.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION







Student Transportation will continue to review route optimization to find even more opportunities to provide safe and efficient transportation to EIPS students—while also operating within the scope of the transportation budget. Other growth areas for the department include recruitment and retention of bus operators and ensuring safe transportation during the COVID-19 pandemic.








Priority Strategy for Education Plan





Throughout the upcoming school year, Facilities Services will carry out the following strategies:

-  Continue to use the one-stop, service-centre email for all maintenance, operation, and Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal requests. It will also explore other process efficiencies to enhance communication around project timelines and status updates.
-  Perform VFA and Azzier data analysis to prioritize projects.
-  Continue to advocate, through its three-year and 10-year capital plan, for funding to build a new junior-senior high school in Fort Saskatchewan and a replacement school for Sherwood Heights Junior High in Sherwood Park. EIPS conducted value scoping sessions for both areas and will use the information collected in the two sessions to inform capital planning and ensure the best infrastructure decisions.
-  Implement a three-year modular plan. Then, use that data to revise and update the Division's three-year capital plan and 10-year facility plan.
-  Enable stewardship in all EIPS facilities through procurement and preventative maintenance practices.
-  Ensure occupational health-and-safety protocols such as protective barriers, signage, increased custodial and cleaning practices are in place and monitored.

Throughout the upcoming school year, Information Technologies will carry out the following strategies:

-  Implement and support Brightspace, the Division's online learning-management system.
-  Migrate all file-server data to Division SharePoint sites with enabled records retention policies.
-  Use Division systems to establish digital workflows to support both records management and digital student records, including enhancements to the atrieveERP system and the PowerSchool forms solution.

Throughout the upcoming school year, Student Transportation will carry out the following strategies:

-  Continue efforts related to route optimization and efficient transportation of students within existing buses.
-  Continue efforts around driver training, recruitment and retention.
-  Ensure safe transportation during the COVID-19 pandemic.
-  Migrate toward a web-based transportation software.

GOAL 3: A Culture of Excellence and Accountability

Assurance Domain: Teaching and Leading

Local Outcome: The Division uses evidence-based practices to support and enhance the quality of teaching, learning and leading

Provincial Outcome: Alberta has excellent teachers, school leaders and school-authority leaders

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES					EVALUATION		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	ACHIEVEMENT	IMPROVEMENT	OVERALL
ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR								
Teachers reporting in the past three to five years the professional learning of in-servicing received from the school authority was focused, systematic and contributes significantly to their professional learning	84.8	87.3	85.2	84.2	86.4	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Teachers reporting over the past three years professional learning opportunities made available through the jurisdiction have been focused on the priorities of the jurisdiction	90	91	89	87	91	Very High	Improved	Excellent
Teachers reporting over the past three years professional learning opportunities made available through the jurisdiction have effectively addressed their professional learning needs	83	85	83	83	85	Very High	Improved	Excellent
Teachers reporting over the past three years professional learning opportunities made available through the jurisdiction have significantly contributed to their ongoing professional learning	82	85	84	83	84	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Teacher, parent and student satisfaction with the overall quality of basic education	n/a	88.5	89.3	88.9	89.5	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Teachers, parents and students indicating their schools in their jurisdiction have improved or stayed the same in the last three years	80	80.2	79.5	81	80.2	High	Maintained	Good
Parents satisfied with the overall quality of basic education	90	91	88	91	91	Very High	Improved	Excellent
Parents satisfied with the quality of teaching at their child's school	90	91	88	91	91	Very High	Improved	Excellent

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES				
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
EIPS PARENT SURVEY					
Families satisfied with the quality of education their child's receiving at their school	91.6	91	85.5	88.6	86.4
Families satisfied with the quality of teaching at their child's school	89.8	89.5	85.5	88.4	86.4
Families satisfied with the leadership in their child's school	83.8	83.3	78	81.2	80.9
EIPS STAFF ENGAGEMENT SURVEY					
There is someone at work who encourages my professional learning	94	94.5	91.2	94.4	94
This last year, I have had opportunities at work to grow	94	95.1	92.9	94.1	94.8
My colleagues are committed to doing quality work	88	96.8	96	97	97.6
I receive recognition or praise for doing good work	88	89	85.5	89.9	88.8

Background

Lifelong learning is a value supported and promoted within the Division. In education, research points to teaching quality and school leadership as the most important factors in raising student achievement. For teachers, staff, school administrators and Division leaders to be as effective as possible, they need ongoing opportunities to expand their knowledge and skills. Collectively, these lead to the implementation of the best educational practices and great learning for students. As such, it's critical to pay close attention to how new and experienced educators are trained and supported. The same is true for educational leaders and classified staff. Ultimately, when all staff have opportunities to learn and grow, in their respective areas, Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) as a whole, flourishes.

Results

Overall, feedback from both the 2019-20 Accountability Pillar survey and divisionally administered surveys indicate a high degree of satisfaction among employees about the professional learning offered within EIPS. Using the 2019-20 Accountability Pillar, 86.4% of EIPS teachers feel the Division consistently provides focused, effective, professional learning opportunities that support teachers' professional learning needs—up from 84.2% the previous year. As a result, more teachers also report the professional learning opportunities offered within the Division effectively and significantly address or contribute to their professional development.

Similarly, 91% of teachers agree the professional learning opportunities offered, over the past three years, focused on the jurisdiction's priorities. As such, it's fair to extrapolate the Division's professional learning is tightly tied to its Four-Year Education Plan. Overall, the data illustrates the professional learning offered within EIPS is impactful and contributes to teachers' instructional practice and ongoing professional development.

To complement the Accountability Pillar, EIPS also conducted a staff-engagement survey in spring 2020. The survey was completed by all Division employees—certificated and classified. What the results suggest is the Division has conclusively established a culture of learning throughout the organization. In fact, on all related measures, the responses continue to improve. Particularly notable, 94% of staff reported there is someone at work who encourages their professional learning; 94.8% said they have opportunities at work to learn and grow; 97% reported their colleagues are committed to doing quality work; and 88.8% of employees felt they received recognition or praise for doing good work.

BUILDING CAPACITY

On an annual basis, all probationary, permanent and continuing-contract staff develop, implement and review a Professional Growth Plan. Each plan is pertinent to the employee's position and reflect their professional learning

goals and objectives. The Professional Growth Plans demonstrate a relationship to the quality standard for all staff, and incorporate the education plans of the school, the Division and Alberta Education. Overall, they help foster improvements in instruction, professional growth and improved practice of all Division employees.

As in previous years, new staff members were invited to participate in Off to a Good Start (OTAGS), an EIPS-led orientation conference for new employees. In the 2019-20 school year, the Division offered OTAGS in a reduced form—because of budget constraints—to secretaries, business managers and registrars. The Division only hired two new probationary teachers, as such, they didn't participate in OTAGS. Instead, they received a one-on-one teacher mentor for onboarding support.

Additionally, all principals and assistant principals had the opportunity to participate in six instructional coaching sessions. The sessions were hosted by Sandra Herbst, an author, speaker, coach, consultant and educator with extensive leadership experience in the area of instructional coaching. Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Unfortunately, because of COVID-19 and related public-health restrictions, the Division cancelled the remaining four sessions

The Division also hosted a Classified Professional Learning Day, with 520 classified employees attending the keynote speaker session. The session featured Doug Keeley—a leading communicator, serial entrepreneur, and self-professed “leadership junkie”—who discussed how storytelling fuels leadership, culture and success. In addition, the Supports for Students department hosted numerous sessions throughout the year. For the most part, the sessions focused on capacity building in the areas of literacy; numeracy; discipline; crisis intervention; early learning; career pathways; curriculum; assessment; analysis of achievement data; First Nations, Métis and Inuit history and culture; land-based learning; counselling; and inclusive practices.

Opportunities for Growth

Although the Division is pleased with the feedback from staff about professional learning, COVID-19 presents new challenges—specifically the inability to conduct face-to-face sessions. As such, exploring engaging ways to support building capacity through virtual platforms is essential throughout the 2020-21 school year. Similarly, because Division consultants were re-deployed to support out-of-school learning, one-on-one professional coaching—in literacy and numeracy—is on hold until further notice. As such, EIPS needs to find other ways to support individual teacher practice and sustain momentum in the Readers’ Workshop and Writers’ Workshop.

Furthermore, EIPS is using two new online platforms—a new learning-management system, called Brightspace, and a new enterprise resource planning system, atrieveERP. As such, the Division will focus a significant amount of its professional learning efforts to building capacity for these new platform. Professional learning around Brightspace is the priority. The reason: If the province moves to Scenario 2 or Scenario 3, it’s essential students and teachers can easily navigate the platform for successful out-of-school learning. In addition to Brightspace and atrieveERP, professional learning around PowerSchool is another growth area for the Division.



Priority Strategy for Education Plan

EIPS will continue its efforts to ensure it’s supporting and enhancing the quality of teaching, learning and leading. Strategies include:




Develop a targeted professional learning and communication plan to build capacity for teachers, educational assistants, leadership staff, students and families with Brightspace. Efforts include professional learning days and sessions, weekly learning tasks, one-on-one support and creating an online video-learning series.



Develop targeted functional professional learning for classified and certificated staff focused on key competencies required for specific positions—with a system to track competencies and required certifications.



Continue developing onboarding sessions for new hires and comprehensive leadership-readiness workshops to ensure the successful transition into new positions.



Priority 3:

Enhance Public Education
Through Effective Engagement

GOAL 1: Parent Engagement

Assurance Domain: Governance

Local Outcome: Student learning is supported and enhanced by providing meaningful opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's education

Provincial Outcome: Alberta's K-12 education system is well-governed and managed

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES					EVALUATION		
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	ACHIEVEMENT	IMPROVEMENT	OVERALL
ACCOUNTABILITY PILLAR								
Parents and teachers satisfied with parental involvement in decisions about their child's education	78.1	78.1	78.4	77.7	78.9	High	Maintained	Good
Parents satisfied their family is encouraged and supported in helping their child be successful in learning	n/a	n/a	n/a	80.3	82.4	Very High	Improved	Excellent

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES				
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
EIPS PARENT SURVEY					
Families satisfied with the opportunity to be involved in decisions at their child's school	80.5	79.2	77.5	79.8	80.0
Families that agree there is open and honest communication within their child's school	80.2	79.7	81.2	84	83.3
Families that agree the school keeps them informed about their child's progress and achievement	86	86.1	86.4	88	87.1

Analysis of Results

Background

Recognizing the vital role parents and guardians play in education is foundational to everything Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) does. Divisionwide, parents are regarded as a child's first teacher and a key influencer in shaping learning attitudes. Their involvement in EIPS schools is continually encouraged, and as a result, their contributions make schools better places to learn and grow. As such, the Division is committed to nurturing this collaborative approach with its families and working together to, ultimately, improve student achievement and success.

Results

The 2019-20 Accountability Pillar data indicates 78.9% of EIPS parents and teachers are satisfied with the parental involvement taking place within the Division—up from 77.7% the year before. That number aligns with results from the EIPS Parent Survey, conducted in March 2020. In the survey, 80% of families indicate satisfaction with the opportunity to be involved in decisions at their child's school; 83.3% of families report open and honest communication within their child's school; and 87.1% say EIPS schools keep parents informed about their child's progress and achievement. Collectively, these results suggest EIPS families are content with their involvement and communication with schools. While this remains relatively consistent year-to-year, it's a continuous focus area for the Division.

BUILDING CAPACITY

Last year, the Division explored ways to support further parent engagement in health and wellness. The result: EIPS partnered with the Eastern Edge Regional Collaborative Services Delivery and with Alberta Health Services Addiction and Mental Health, to offer a series of information sessions for parents, caregivers, and school professionals on a variety of topics, including technology and the teenage brain, respectful limit setting with adolescents, cannabis information, understanding depression, breaking the cycle of anxiety, building executive functioning skills, sleeping your way to better mental health and test anxiety. Even during the suspension of in-school classes, these sessions continued, albeit virtually, to ensure those who needed help had access to resources.

Communicating with new families was another area of focus for the Division. One of the ways EIPS accomplished this was by offering orientation sessions for both Play and Learn at School (PALS) families and kindergarten families. Individual orientation sessions were offered to PALS parents with their child's teacher. These collaborative sessions included discussions about the child's interests and strengths, specific needs, parental hopes and goals, communication protocols, transportation arrangements and what to expect on the first day of school.

In addition, the Division provided individual and group-based Family Oriented Programming (FOP) sessions to families and children in the PALS program, outside of the regular centre-based programming hours. The FOP sessions help families gain insight into their child's development and discover strategies to support their learning, working, playing and behaving in positive ways. In total, 18 FOP sessions were provided to PALS families throughout the year.

Families also played an integral role in the Instructional Support Plan (ISP) process—both in the development of student ISPs and the regular review of these documents. As a result, it enhanced understanding around individual student learning needs and strengths; communication among families, students and teachers; and the development of long-term plans to help families with planning for their child.

ENGAGING FAMILIES

In January, all EIPS schools conducted consultations with their families about school fees for the upcoming year. At each consultation, principals outlined current school fees for courses, noon supervision, activities and extracurricular initiatives. Families were then asked to provide input. Using the feedback gathered—and parameters approved by the Board of Trustees—principals, developed school fee schedules for the 2020-21 school year. As a followup, schools scheduled a second meeting to go over the new fee schedules with families. Unfortunately, some of the meetings were cancelled because of COVID-19 and related public-health restrictions.

Part of those restrictions included the cancellation of all in-school classes and the switch to an alternative-learning model—with students learning at home and, mostly, online. Families became instant partners in education. To support this relationship, the Division established a website dedicated to families and students with needed communication, resources and information to navigate the alternative-learning model. To complement this, EIPS also created a second website for elementary students with content and optional learning activities related to physical education, art, music and French.

Meanwhile, in the absence of in-person classes, the Division offered online speech-language screening to families interested in the PALS program, which 16 families took advantage of. Children were screened in

speech sounds and language skills to determine Program Unit Funding and the PALS program eligibility. Those who required full speech-language assessment were referred on for more comprehensive screening, scheduled in fall 2020. The sessions allowed families to ask questions and discuss concerns about their child's development with a Speech-Language Pathologist. Conversations of this nature are often a difficult first step for families seeking support for their child. The EIPS team helped make this process easier, while also providing guidance and direction.

As well, EIPS was intentional in including the school community in its work around Indigenous education. Schools invited families to participate in many First Nations, Métis and Inuit activities and events. Several schools continued to host family teas and feasts throughout the fall and winter. In fact, attendance at these events was noticeably more robust as trust continues to grow between families and the Division.

Additionally, EIPS organized several engagement opportunities with school families. In September 2019, it met with school council members to better understand what consultation methods are most meaningful for families. The Division also conducted several surveys to collect feedback on specific topics, including two surveys about the school re-entry plan, one survey about out-of-school learning and the annual EIPS Parent Survey. Other engagement included regular school communication and monthly newsletters—used to inform students and families about what's taking place within the school and Division. News releases further enhanced communication by informing families about recent successes, decisions and challenges within the Division. Plus, all EIPS schools used various social media platforms to further connect with families.

Each EIPS school council is supported through the Division's Committee of School Councils. School council representatives meet regularly with the Board of Trustees and EIPS senior administration. In the 2019-20 school year, the group met six times to discuss topics impacting the Division and the provincial education system—meetings continued throughout the pandemic, virtually. Some of the agenda topics included the *Education Act*, the *Choice in Education Act*, the Division budget for 2019-20 and 2020-21, engaging parents, student transportation, Alberta's new funding framework, staying connected during COVID-19, navigating Google Classroom, EIPS's draft Four-Year Education Plan, assessment during COVID-19; the Alternative Learning Toolkit, and more. Following each meeting, school council representatives who participated, shared the discussion topics with their own school council members. In 2019-20, the number of schools represented at each meeting ranged between 17 and 27, totalling an average representation of 19 schools at the meetings—consistent with the previous year.






Opportunities for Growth

Although the Division is pleased with the feedback from families about parental involvement, it's committed to continually improve and refine its engagement process. As such, it remains a growth area for the Division. Specifically, EIPS will ensure it considers input from EIPS families and community members before implementing decisions about school education plans, Division priorities and programming within schools and departments.



Priority Strategy for Education Plan

Fostering even more engagement with EIPS school families is an ongoing priority for EIPS. Throughout the 2020-21 school year, strategies include:

-  Engage stakeholders in discussions about infrastructure requirements in Sherwood Park and Fort Saskatchewan.
-  Continue to offer professional learning sessions to support families in engaging their child about health and wellness topics.
-  Provide resources to families about ways to support a child's growth in the areas of literacy and numeracy.
-  Engage stakeholders to develop the priorities for the new EIPS Four-Year Education Plan.
-  Implement the assurance framework with school families.
-  Continue to disseminate timely information internally and externally, so everyone within EIPS is well-informed and aware.
-  Continue to expand communication with EIPS families through updates, newsletters, news releases and social media platforms.
-  Continue to inform EIPS families about the initiatives and events taking place throughout the Division.
-  Continue to offer consistent experiences for families to learn about each school's results and provide input into the School Education Plan.

GOAL 2: Engaged and Effective Governance

Assurance Domain: Governance

Local Outcome: The Division is committed to engagement and advocacy to enhance public education

Provincial Outcome: Alberta's K-12 education system is well-governed and managed

Performance Measures	RESULTS				
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
EIPS INTERNAL DATA					
Number of advocacy areas specifically identified and addressed by the Board of Trustees	n/a	5	9	3	2
Number of advocacy letters sent to the minister of education	n/a	7	10	4	5
Number of formal meetings with the minister of education or provincial ministers	n/a	8	6	3	4
Number of formal meetings with Alberta's members of the legislative assembly	n/a	7	6	2	6
Number of formal meetings with mayors in the EIPS jurisdiction	n/a	4	11	2	4
Number of media advocacy articles, radio and television interviews	n/a	9	23	21	84

Analysis of Results

Background

Advocating for students, in a manner that affects sustainable funding and shapes educational policy, plays a critical role in delivering a strong educational system. Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) is committed to enhancing policy and practices that best support students' learning needs and successes—from early learning through to high school completion, and beyond. Within EIPS, the Board of Trustees' role as an education advocate extends beyond the Division's boundaries. It continually and actively ensures local and provincial governments understand the Division's local issues and advocates strongly for excellence in public education. To do this, the Board develops and maintains an ongoing advocacy plan and strategically partners with other school boards and associations to strengthen its advocacy efforts.

Results

Throughout 2019-20, the EIPS Board worked diligently to ensure the Division's voice was heard on various topics impacting the Division, such as local Board autonomy, engagement of boards and school jurisdictions in government decision-making, adequate education funding, the *Education Act*, addressing student capacity issues and ageing infrastructure. Despite the cancellation of in-school classes, the Board continued all efforts to increase public awareness around these issues by engaging the media, government, industry associations, Division families and surrounding community. In March, the focus shifted to virtual platforms because of the pandemic and the public-health restrictions in place.

These efforts were further strengthened through the Board's Advocacy Committee. Every year the committee develops key messages for the Board's advocacy areas and

refines and executes a strategic advocacy plan based on the topics identified by the Board. For the 2019-20 school year, the two key focus areas were education funding and autonomous school boards.

In terms of media, 50 news releases were distributed resulting in various interviews secured with both local and mainstream news organizations including *The Sherwood Park-Strathcona County News*, *The Fort Saskatchewan Record*, *The Lamont Leader*, *Vegreville News Advertiser*, *The Strathcona Bugle*, *Edmonton Journal*, *ThreeSixty Alberta*, *Mix 107.9*, *FortSaskatchewanOnline*, *Country 106.5*, *CBC Television*, *CBC Radio*, *CTV* and *Global*. In total, 635 news stories were published—84 of which focused on the Board's advocacy topics. To accompany these interviews, 17 sets of key messages were developed. Ongoing Board columns were also published in four local newspapers. Collectively, these showcase the innovative learning taking place within the Division, the vibrant

partnerships the Division has established, and why EIPS is an exceptional place to learn and work.

Advocacy messaging was heard during many association and education-based meetings, with the Alberta School Boards Association, Canadian School Boards Association and various levels of government. At all of these, the Board shared its successes, challenges and concerns. Thanks to these efforts, the Board has established an understanding with its stakeholders about EIPS' needs and the issues facing education. The ongoing communication has also helped foster respect and develop a productive working relationship with other elected officials.

These efforts were complemented by various advocacy initiatives, including five advocacy letters written to provincial ministers, four formal meetings with the provincial ministers, six meetings with members of Alberta's legislative assembly and four formal meetings with mayors in the jurisdiction. Numerous informal meetings were also co-ordinated with municipal and

provincial officials to share insight on a range of topics impacting the Division (see pg. 51, "Results").

Finally, the Board worked hard to ensure good communication with its constituents, families and other community members. Trustees presented monthly Board Reports at school council meetings, the Committee of School Council meetings and at regular Board meetings. Trustees also remain committed to its public engagement strategy, which outlines the tactics and tools to use in all EIPS consultation efforts. Using the strategy as a framework, the Board successfully reached out to Division families and key stakeholders on a range of topics, from programming to school-capital projects to the school re-entry plans. Through these efforts, the Board is better informed. The result: A collective understanding of what the needs of EIPS are and why making education a high priority is important within the province.




Opportunities for Growth

While the Board has developed strong and productive working relationships with various elected officials in the communities EIPS serves, nurturing and further strengthening these is essential. As such, in the 2020-21 school year, the Board will continue to foster and build these relationships to ensure regular dialogue continues and community consensus is maintained about issues requiring feedback to formulate workable solutions. Additionally, for the 2020-21 school year, the Board developed an advocacy plan centred around education funding, the value of public school education in Alberta and autonomous school boards. The plan includes strategies, tactics and key messaging, which the Board will use to advocate for the Division. The Board will also develop other opportunities to strengthen additional advocacy areas, as identified.

Priority Strategy for Education Plan

Identifying issues and advocating on behalf of EIPS and provincial education is a continued priority in the 2020-21 school year. Specific strategies include:

-  Promote effective communication and build relationships with elected officials.
-  Develop and maintain a focused advocacy plan for the 2020-21 school year.
-  Strategically partner with organizations and other school boards to enhance advocacy efforts.
-  Continue to meet with all levels of government to advocate, engage and participate in consultations to ensure EIPS' voice is heard.

-  Continue to work with media to ensure key messages and advocacy areas are strategically in the hands of the public and decision-makers.
-  Continue to use the Division's public engagement strategy to guide all public engagement efforts—at the Division and school levels.
-  Develop new initiatives to engage and mobilize the Division's families and school communities.

Financials and Reports

Summary of Financial Results 2019-20

The EIPS budget provides stability for schools, maintains essential central services required for Division operations, and supports the mission and values of the Division (see pg. 4, “Profile and Local Context”).

Key Highlights from 2019-20

A year-end deficit of \$1.5 million lowered the accumulated surplus to \$18.3 million. The accumulated surplus is the primary indicator of the financial resources EIPS has available to provide future services. Accumulated surplus includes investment in Board-funded tangible capital assets (\$6.2 million), unrestricted surplus, operating reserves (\$11.3 million) and capital reserves (\$800,000).

Operating reserves of \$4.2 million are designated for use by schools and departments to support future years and for specific initiatives approved by the Board. The unallocated Division reserve, which is \$7.1 million, or 4% of the EIPS budget, provides financial stability for the Division. The minimum level is 2%, or approximately \$4 million. The balance of capital reserves is \$800,000, as of Aug. 31, 2020. These reserves are for the purchase of future unsupported capital assets.

Revenue was less than budget by \$10.1 million, primarily in provincial grant funding because of changes to the funding model, including the elimination of class-size funding and school-fee grants; reduction in government funding as a result of the cancellation of in-school classes; and reduced infrastructure maintenance and renewal spending. In addition, fees, sales and services, fundraising and donation revenues were less than budget because of the cancellation of in-school classes. These changes were offset, somewhat, by the provincial one-time transition funding and increased program-unit enrolment.

Expenses were \$10.2 million less than budgeted, primarily the result of adjusted spending on staffing; contracted services and supplies—the result of the closure of in-school classes, including reduced transportation costs and savings from temporary layoffs; and adjustments made to provincial funding.

Instruction spending comprised 79% of the total budget, or 81% when capital is excluded, which equates to \$8,740 per student. Also, board and system administration spending was 3.5% of total expenses—below the 3.6% maximum imposed by Alberta Education.

More information about EIPS’ audited financial statements is available at eips.ca/about-us/financial-information/audited-financial-statements.

School Generated Funds

The unexpended school generated funds (SGF) were \$1.9 million, as of Aug. 31, 2020. SGF revenues in the year were \$4.7 million and comprised of:

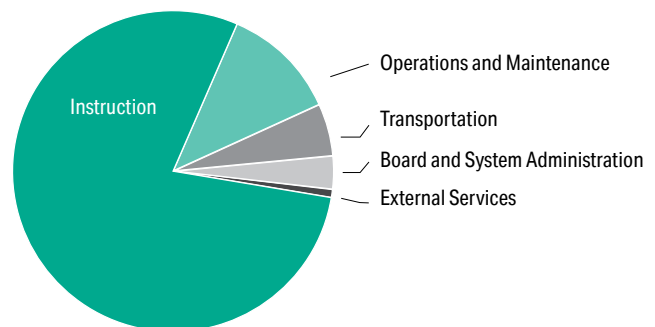
- fees of \$2.2 million—such as field trips, athletics, noon-hour supervision;
- sales and services of \$1.6 million—such as cafeteria and food programs, graduation;
- fundraising of \$300,000; and
- donations and grants of \$600,000.

SGF expenses during the year totalled \$4.5 million.

2019-20 Expenses by Program

Program	Amount	Percentage
Instruction	\$147,162	78.7%
Operations and Maintenance	\$22,563	12.1%
Transportation	\$9,585	5.1%
Board and System Administration	\$6,575	3.5%
External Services	\$1,018	0.5%
TOTAL	\$186,903	100%

All dollar amounts are expressed in thousands





Budget Summary 2020-21

The 2020-21 budget has an operating deficit of \$4.7 million, which is offset by operating reserves. Revenue decreased by \$5.4 million to \$196.8 million, while expenses increased by the same margin to \$201.5 million from the 2020-21 Spring Budget.

ACCUMULATED SURPLUS

The Division projects a \$13.6 million accumulated surplus, as of Aug. 31, 2021, comprised of:

- \$7.5 million in operating reserves
 - Schools and Central Services – \$1.1 million
 - Division unallocated – \$6.4 million, or 3.15% of the EIPS operating expenses

NOTE: The balance is \$2.4 million above the minimum level set by EIPS, which is 2%, or approximately \$4 million.

- \$121,000 in capital reserves
- \$6-million investment in Board-funded tangible capital assets

RESERVE USE

Capital items funded from Division capital reserves

- \$114,000 for the purchase of vehicles for Facilities Services
- \$540,000 to cover costs for wireless improvements

STUDENT ENROLMENT: 16,969, AS OF SEPT. 30, 2020

- A decrease of 501 students, 2.9%, from what was anticipated in the 2020-21 Spring Budget.
- A decrease of 431 students, 2.5%, from Sept. 30, 2019.

STAFF DECREASED TO 1,322.3 FTE

(certificated 873.7 FTE, classified 493.5 FTE)

- An increase of 26 FTE, (2%), from the 2020-21 Spring Budget
- A decrease of 61.6 FTE, (4.4%), from the 2019-20 Fall Budget

COMPENSATION, INSTRUCTIONAL AND ADMINISTRATION SPENDING

- No projected economic increase—all staff salaries have a 0% increase. Inflationary salary costs are related to grid movement and benefit costs.
- Instruction spending comprises 77.2% of the total budget and 79.2% when capital is excluded, which equates to \$9,493 per student.
- System administration spending is \$4.48 million, or 2.2% of total expenses—within the \$6.21-million grant provided by Alberta Education.

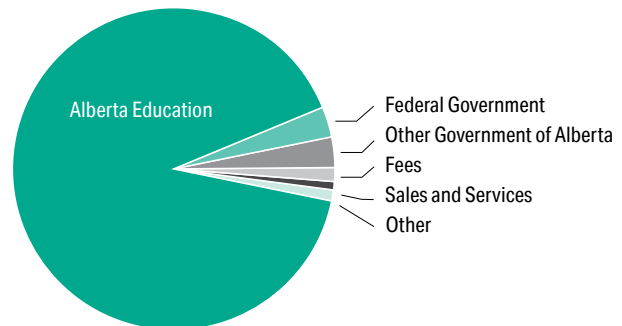
Revenues and Expenses Analysis 2020-21 Budget

STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENSES	2020-21 SPRING BUDGET	2020-21 FALL BUDGET	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
REVENUES				
Government of Alberta – Alberta Education	\$176,830	\$178,347	\$1,517	0.9%
Government of Alberta – Other	4,836	6,153	1,317	27.2%
Federal Government	-	6,115	6,115	-
Fees	4,969	2,911	(2,058)	(41.4%)
Other Sales and Services	2,658	1,211	(1,447)	(54.4%)
Other	2,102	2,080	(22)	(1.0%)
TOTAL	191,395	196,817	5,422	2.8%
EXPENSES				
Instruction	151,958	155,504	3,546	2.3%
Operations and Maintenance	27,272	29,353	2,081	7.6%
Transportation	11,767	11,995	228	1.9%
Board and System Administration	4,824	4,478	(346)	(7.2%)
External Services	290	203	(87)	(29.9%)
TOTAL	196,111	201,533	5,422	2.8%
OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	\$(4,716)	\$(4,716)	\$ (0)	0%

All dollar amounts are expressed in thousands

2020-21 Revenues by Source

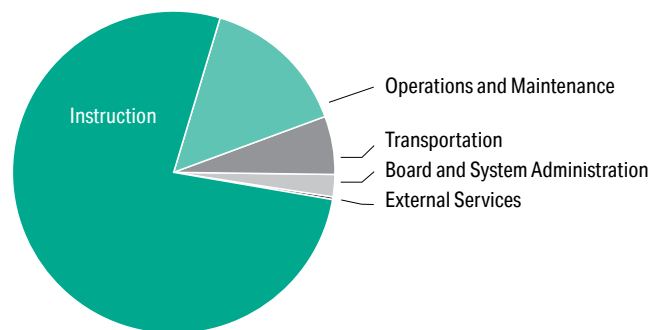
Alberta Education	\$178,347	90.6%
Other Government of Alberta	\$6,153	3.1%
Federal Government	\$6,115	3.1%
Fees	\$2,911	1.5%
Sales and Services	\$1,211	0.6%
Other	\$2,080	1.1%
TOTAL	\$196,817	100%



All dollar amounts are expressed in thousands

2020-21 Expenses by Program

Instruction	\$155,504	77.2%
Operations and Maintenance	\$29,353	14.6%
Transportation	\$11,995	6%
Board and System Administration	\$4,478	2.2%
External Services	\$203	0.1%
TOTAL	\$201,533	100%



All dollar amounts are expressed in thousands

Division Reports

Capital and Facility Projects

Throughout the 2019-20, Facility Services was actively involved in several school-capital construction projects—totalling more than \$26.9 million. In all capital projects, EIPS follows Alberta Infrastructure processes and government bylaws—municipal, provincial and federal.

Projects completed or currently in progress include:

- The Heritage Hills Elementary replacement—opened to students on Sept. 1, 2020.
- Wye Elementary abatement—completed fall 2020
- Wye Elementary demolition—slated for completion in fall 2020.
- Modular unit relocation—to SouthPointe School from Wye Elementary.
- Re-roofing of all Truco modular units at Ardrossan Elementary and SouthPointe School.
- Custodial, maintenance and operations work included 457 projects; 10,455 maintenance work orders; 151 Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal projects and 13 major projects through the Construction Maintenance Renewal program.

The EIPS Three-Year Capital Plan is available at eips.ca/about-us/planning-and-results.





Parent Involvement

The Division will share the *Annual Education Results Report 2019-20* with the Committee of School Councils in January 2021. At the school level, achievement results were shared with school councils in November 2020. School councils were also given the opportunity to provide input into their school education plans (see pg. 8, "Accountability and Assurance").

Timelines and Communication

EIPS strives to ensure families and communities can easily access the *Annual Education Results Report 2019-20*. The report is available from any member of the Board of Trustees, the Office of the Superintendent, or online at eips.ca, along with additional supplementary information.

Whistleblower Protection

Section 32 of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act* (2013) requires all school authorities to include an annual report of disclosures in its *Annual Education Results Report*. During the 2019-20 school year, there were no disclosures within EIPS. For a copy of the legislation or for more information and resources, visit the Public Interest Commissioner's website at yourvoiceprotected.ca.

Appendixes

Accountability Pillar Overall Summary Measure Evaluation Reference

ACHIEVEMENT EVALUATION

Achievement evaluation is based on comparing current-year data to a set of standards, which remain consistent over time. The standards are calculated by taking the three-year average of baseline data for each measure across all school jurisdictions and calculating the five, 25, 75 and 95 percentiles. Once calculated, these standards remain in place from year-to-year to allow for consistent planning and evaluation. The table below shows the range of values defining the five achievement evaluation levels for each measure.

Measure	Very Low	Low	Intermediate	High	Very High
Safe and Caring	0 - 81.51	81.51 - 85.05	85.05 - 90.15	90.15 - 94.1	94.1 - 100
Program of Studies	0 - 2.28	2.28 - 6.43	6.43 - 11.18	11.18 - 15.71	15.71 - 100
Education Quality	0 - 81.9	81.90 - 88.81	88.81 - 94.35	94.35 - 97.1	97.1 - 100
Drop Out Rate	0 - 3.7	3.70 - 8.52	8.52 - 14.55	14.55 - 18.92	18.92 - 100
High School Completion Rate (3 yr)	0 - 78.73	78.73 - 92.86	92.86 - 100	100 - 100	100 - 100
PAT: Acceptable	0 - 0	0 - 5.21	5.21 - 16.67	16.67 - 23.04	23.04 - 100
PAT: Excellence	0 - 54.07	54.07 - 76.74	76.74 - 86.06	86.06 - 92.18	92.18 - 100
Diploma: Acceptable	0 - 6.15	6.15 - 18.46	18.46 - 29.38	29.38 - 34.62	34.62 - 100
Diploma: Excellence	0 - 73.06	73.06 - 80.94	80.94 - 90.03	90.03 - 91.69	91.69 - 100
Diploma Exam Participation Rate (4+ exams)	0 - 4.57	4.57 - 10.29	10.29 - 16.08	16.08 - 23.77	23.77 - 100
Rutherford Scholarship Eligibility Rate	0 - 57.63	57.63 - 68.32	68.32 - 78.44	78.44 - 84.84	84.84 - 100
Transition Rate (6 yr)	0 - 14.01	14.01 - 18.7	18.7 - 29.21	29.21 - 35.39	35.39 - 100
Work Preparation	0 - 44.98	44.98 - 61.19	61.19 - 73.82	73.82 - 82.4	82.40 - 100
Citizenship	0 - 1.59	1.59 - 6.06	6.06 - 13.68	13.68 - 17.02	17.02 - 100
Parental Involvement	0 - 69.65	69.65 - 80.38	80.38 - 87.98	87.98 - 95.79	95.79 - 100
School Improvement	0 - 2.27	2.27 - 8.63	8.63 - 14.51	14.51 - 19.76	19.76 - 100

Notes

1. For all measures except, dropout rate: The range of values at each evaluation level is interpreted as greater than or equal to the lower value, and less than the higher value. For the "Very High" evaluation level, values range from greater than or equal to the lower value to 100%.
2. Dropout rate measure: As dropout rate is inverse to most measures—lower values are better—the range of values at each evaluation level is interpreted as greater than the lower value and less than or equal to the higher value. For the "Very High" evaluation level, values range from 0% to less than or equal to the higher value.

IMPROVEMENT TABLE

For each jurisdiction, improvement evaluation consists of comparing the current-year result for each measure with the previous three-year average. A chi-square statistical test is used to determine the significance of the improvement. The test takes into account the size of the jurisdiction in the calculation to make improvement evaluation fair across jurisdictions of different sizes. The table below shows the definition of the five improvement-evaluation levels based on the chi-square result.

EVALUATION CATEGORY	CHI-SQUARE RANGE
Declined Significantly	3.84 + (current < previous 3-year average)
Declined	1 - 3.83 (current < previous 3-year average)
Maintained	less than 1
Improved	1 - 3.83 (current > previous 3-year average)
Improved Significantly	3.84 + (current > previous 3-year average)

OVERALL EVALUATION TABLE

The overall evaluation combines the achievement evaluation and improvement evaluation. The table below illustrates how the achievement and improvement evaluations are combined to get the overall evaluation.

IMPROVEMENT	ACHIEVEMENT				
	VERY HIGH	HIGH	INTERMEDIATE	LOW	VERY LOW
Improved Significantly	Excellent	Good	Good	Good	Acceptable
Improved	Excellent	Good	Good	Acceptable	Issue
Maintained	Excellent	Good	Acceptable	Issue	Concern
Declined	Good	Acceptable	Issue	Issue	Concern
Declined Significantly	Acceptable	Issue	Issue	Concern	Concern

Definitions for Measures and Key Terms

The **First Nations, Métis and Inuit** results reported for the Accountability Pillar include students who self-identified as First Nations, Métis or Inuit on student registration forms. School authorities must report on Accountability Pillar results for First Nations Métis, and Inuit students in education plans and annual education results reports for monitoring and improving education outcomes.

High School Completion Rate (three-year) is the percentage of students in the Grade 10 cohort who completed high school by the end of their third year, adjusted for attrition.

- High school completion is defined as receiving an Alberta high school diploma, certificate of high school achievement or high school equivalency; entering a post-secondary level program at an Alberta post-secondary institution; registering in an Alberta apprenticeship program; or earning credit in a minimum of five Grade 12 courses, including a language arts diploma exam course and three other diploma examination courses.

Post-Secondary Transition Rate (six-year) is the percentage of students in the Grade 10 cohort who entered a post-secondary-level program at an Alberta-based post-secondary institution or registered in an Alberta-based apprenticeship program within six years of entering Grade 10—adjusted for attrition.

- An estimate of the out-of-province post-secondary enrolment is applied based on the numbers of funded Alberta students attending post-secondary institutions out of the province.

Diploma Examination Participation Rate (four-plus exams) is the percentage of students in the Grade 10 cohort who wrote four or more diploma examinations by the end of their third year of high school—adjusted for attrition.

- A student isn't considered a diploma examination participant, if they don't have an examination mark.

Dropout Rate is the percentage of students, 14 to 18 years, registered in Alberta's kindergarten to Grade 12 system who dropout the following year—adjusted for attrition.

- An initial age-specific cohort of students, 14 to 18 years, is established for a given school year, excluding the following groups: students who aren't registered on September 30 of the school year; students registered in schools not affiliated with Alberta, such as Lloydminster; students registered in schools under provincial or federal

authorities; students identified as having a moderate or severe cognitive or severe multiple disabilities; visiting and exchange students; and students attending Hutterite colony schools.

- A student who was in Alberta's education system is considered to have dropped out if:
 - there is no evidence of their participation in the Alberta education system the following school year, including in Alberta-based post-secondary and apprenticeship programs; or
 - they didn't complete high school (see pg. 65, "High School Completion Rate").

Rutherford Scholarship Eligibility Rate is the percentage of Alberta Grade 12 students who have met the eligibility criteria for a Rutherford Scholarship based on course marks in grades 10, 11 and 12.

- Students must have completed at least one Grade 12 course. Students in the following categories are excluded: students who aren't registered on September 30 of the school year; students registered in schools not affiliated with Alberta, such as Lloydminster; students registered in schools under provincial or federal authorities; students identified in the Grade 12 school year as having a moderate or severe cognitive disability or severe multiple disabilities; students identified in the Grade 12 school year as visiting and exchange students; and students 20 years of age or older on September 1 of the school year.

Provincial Achievement Test Results (acceptable and excellence) are based on all students in each grade—total enrolment in the grade plus the ungraded students in the corresponding year of schooling. Results are calculated for each test. The overall result is the average of each test's results, weighted by the number of students enrolled.

- *PAT: Acceptable* per cent of students who achieve the acceptable standard on Grade 6 and Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests.
- *PAT: Excellence* per cent of students who achieve the standard of excellence on Grade 6 and Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests.
- In Spring 2020, the province cancelled all PATs as a result of COVID-19 and the suspension of in-school classes.

Diploma Examination Results (acceptable and excellence)

are based on the numbers of students writing each diploma exam. The overall diploma exam result is the average of each exam weighted result, by the number of students writing.

- *Diploma: Acceptable* per cent of students who achieve the acceptable standard, 50%, on a diploma examination.
- *Diploma: Excellence* per cent of students who achieve the standard of excellence, 80%, on a diploma examination.
- In Spring 2020, the province cancelled all diploma examinations as a result of COVID-19 and the suspension of in-school classes.

Survey Measures

In public, separate and francophone schools, all students in grades 4, 7 and 10; their parents; and teachers are included in the Accountability Pillar survey. In charter schools and Level 2 private schools, students in Grade 4 and above; their parents; and all teachers are included in the Accountability Pillar survey.

- The measure results for parents and teachers are calculated by aggregating the responses to all questions that comprise the measure.
- The measure result for students is calculated by first aggregating the responses to questions within each grade grouping and then taking a simple average across grade groups.
- The overall measure result is calculated by taking the simple average of measure results for parents, teachers and students.

SOURCE: Alberta Education

