

The Superintendent's Annual Report on Student Achievement Vancouver Island West School District 84

Section 22 of the *School Act* was amended to include the following:

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

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

Section 79.3 goes on to say:

“On receipt of a report submitted by a superintendent of schools under section 23(1) (b.1), the board must, on approval of the report,

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

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

The Annual Report on Student Achievement is intended to serve two main purposes:

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

The District has seen a rise in the percentage of our Grade 4 students reading at a level which meets or exceeds expectations as measured by the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA).

FSA Gr. 4 Reading Meeting-Exceeding	2006/2007	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
All Students	71%	60%	40%	53%	58%
Aboriginal Students	27%	28%	14%	23%	38%
* Beginning in 2007/08 students completed the FSA in February, almost three months earlier than in previous years. Consequently, the 2006/07 results cannot be compared to future years.					

Given the small student population, the District's data can fluctuate quite widely in any given year and thus it is important to watch trends rather than year-over-year changes.

The six-year completion rate for All Students and Aboriginal Students both rebounded slightly from their downward trend in 2010/11.

Six-Year Completion Rate	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
All Students	61%	62%	68%	46%	52%
Aboriginal Students	45%	49%	35%	13%	21%
*The six-year Dogwood completion rate is calculated by following students for six years from the time they enroll in Grade 8. The percentage of students who complete high school within six years, adjusted for migration in and out of B.C., is the rate.					

However, overall, the trends for the six-year completion rates continue downward. Investigation beyond the District level, down to the individual student level, reveals that, SD84 continues to have a number of students who spent large portions of their six years since Grade 8 in other districts, in some cases, only registering in SD84 after being unsuccessful at achieving graduation in another district. That said, SD84 has many students who did spend the past six years in our schools and have not completed within six years of Grade 8 enrollment.

In order to raise completion rates, SD84 is working with the Ministry of Education to identify and track our students who are not meeting with success on an individual basis and to work within their personal circumstances to encourage completion as quickly as possible, recognizing that sometimes that may take seven, eight, or even more years. Further, the District continues to work with each of its communities to offer adult upgrading for our older students.

The District faces many challenges particularly in the area of literacy. This is evidenced by FSA scores which, while trending slightly upward, are still well below provincial averages (see FSA data above) as well as English 10 marks which are trending downward.

English 10 Final Marks students passing (C- or better)	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/2011
All Students	95%	89%	79%	74%	67%
Aboriginal Students	90%	90%	Mask	Mask	40%
Mask refers to data which is not made available for public reports to protect student privacy due to the very small sample set from which it is drawn.					

Statistics Canada reports that more than 7 million Canadian adults can barely read and comprehend simple printed materials. Adult language and literacy skills are built on the foundation of the language skills, which are acquired over the first dozen years of life. When children are unable to develop good language and literacy skills, they ultimately suffer profound and enduring consequences including poor psychosocial development, academic failure leading to reduced employment opportunities, and an overall reduced sense of well-being.

Given the data, the goal that will have the greatest impact on student achievement is to increase literacy for all students while closing the achievement gap between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal students.

Further, current research shows that the time when students are most able to make large and consistent gains in literacy is between the ages of three and eight. Thus, in terms of maximizing achievement, it makes sense for the District to place a real emphasis on researching, implementing,

assessing, and reporting on structures and supports that address literacy at the pre-school and primary grade levels.

To this end, the Achievement Contract, Superintendent’s Report, District Literacy Plan, Early Learning Plan and Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement all include a focus on improving student literacy while closing the achievement gap between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal students. Moreover, all schools in the District have “improving student literacy” and “closing the achievement gap” listed as goals in their annual School Improvement Plans.

The SD84 Achievement Contract 2010/2011 outlines several strategies that the District is undertaking to continue to address improving student literacy and closing the achievement gap.

Strategies include implementing “Precision Reading”, a research based intervention that focuses on building reading fluency. Fluency is the ability to read with accuracy, speed and expression and is directly linked to comprehension.

Precision Reading Intervention as measured by DART and PM Benchmarks	2009-2010 (Baseline)				2010-2011 (Intervention)			
	NY	MM	FM	EX	NY	MM	FM	EX
	68	14	14	4	46	35	14	5

NY = % Not Yet Meeting Expectations

MM = % Minimally Meeting Expectations

FM = % Fully Meeting Expectations

EX = % Exceeding Expectations

For Precision Reading, the data compares the same cohort of 81 students pre and post intervention.

The District's progress towards improving student literacy and closing the achievement gap is measured using a variety of sources including Ministry data and data from our local Assessment Framework. The Assessment Framework data is collected in the Fall for assessment for learning purposes only and again in the Spring when it is also used as assessment of learning and thus appears in the District's Achievement Contract.

SD84 currently screens all kindergarten students for speech and language development as well as physical development. The District provides early intervention and support in both areas through a contracted speech language pathologist and a registered physiotherapist, respectively.

In February 2009, the Representative for Children and Youth and the Provincial Health Officer issued a joint report entitled, [Kids, Crime and Care \(Health and Well-Being of Children in Care: Youth Justice Experiences and Outcomes\)](#).

Recommendation 5 of the report states:

"...every school in British Columbia assign a single staff person to oversee education planning, monitoring and attainment of the children in care that attend their school."

School District 84 is acting on this recommendation. Our first focus is on children in care who are in continuing custody; however, we are exploring ways in which the achievement of students in other categories of care can be monitored effectively. Notwithstanding the initial focus on students who are under continuing custody orders (CCO), all children who are living out of the parental home are vulnerable. As such, school staff responsible for children in care are working with local social services officials to identify all children in care and focus on their achievement.

At this time, there is a person appointed in each school to monitor the success of children in care. Information is being shared between the District, schools, and local social services offices in order to support identified children in care.

At this time, the District and schools are working to facilitate communication with local social services offices as to the best ways to share information on children in temporary care arrangements, by agreement, or in the home of a relative.

The key measures and evidence to measure the success of children in care in School District 84 are grade-to-grade transition and six-year completion. Given the very small numbers of children in care in SD84, all results for these children are masked.