

## 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.

Please note that in the following data tables, Ab = Aboriginal, N-Ab = Non-Aboriginal, and Msk = Masked to protect students’ identities due to less than five students being assessed.

The District is seeing improving results in Six Year Dogwood Completion Rates, English 10 average exam marks, and the pass rates for Social Studies 11, BC First Nations 12, English 12, Biology 12, and Principles of Math 12.

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Six-Year Completion Rate	72%	61%	62%	68%
English 10 Average Exam Mark	61%	57%	62%	63%
Pass Rates	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	
Social Studies 11	77%	91%	100%	
BC First Nations 12	100%	-	100%	
English 12	95%	100%	100%	
Biology 12		100%	100%	
Principles of Math 12		60%	100%	

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.

A prime example of this is the six-year completion rate for Aboriginal students which sank to 35% in 2008/09 after rising for three of the past four years and being above provincial average in two of those years.

Six-Year Aboriginal Completion Rate	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
District	23%	24%	58%	45%	49%	35%
Province	48%	50%	49%	49%	48%	

The District faces many challenges particularly in the area of literacy. This is evidenced by benchmark scores on the FSA (which are lower than provincial average and continue to decline), and lower than provincial average marks in provincially examinable English language arts courses.

All Students	2005/06		2006/07		2007/08		2008/09	
English 10 Avg. Exam & Course Mark	Exam	Course	Exam	Course	Exam	Course	Exam	Course
	61	62	57	71	62	63	63	58
*FSA Gr. 4 Reading Meeting-Exceeding	59		71		60		40	
Aboriginal Students	2005/06		2006/07		2007/08		2008/09	
English 10 Avg. Exam & Course Mark	Exam	Course	Exam	Course	Exam	Course	Exam	Course
	49	59	46	68	48	59	49	54
*FSA Gr. 4 Reading Meeting-Exceeding	50		27		28		14	

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

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, 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.

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. The initial rosters of children in care have been updated in consultation with local social services offices. 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, schools, and local social services offices are still working on 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.