

Superintendent's Report on Achievement 2006/2007

Presented at a Public Meeting of the North Vancouver Board of Education

December 11, 2007

Section 22 of the *School Act* was amended in the spring of 2007 and now includes the following:

“A board must appoint a superintendent of schools for the 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 school year.”

Section 79.3 continues:

“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 the 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.

Improving areas of student achievement

What area is improving?

Continued improvement has been made in the readiness of Kindergarten students, including Aboriginal students, in both reading and numeracy. Support for students with special needs continues to improve, having a positive impact on their personal achievement.

While reading achievement continues to be strong throughout Grades 1 through 7, improvement has been noted in the percentage of students who are achieving success in reading at Grade 10.

.../2

What evidence confirms this area of improvement?

Evidence of improved reading readiness for Kindergarten students is through the administration of the *Test of Phonological Awareness (TOPA)* following the implementation of intervention strategies. Evidence of improvement in numeracy is through the implementation of the North Vancouver School District's *K/1 Numeracy Assessment*. Evidence of continued improvement for students with special needs has been observed through their accomplishments in relation to their Individual Education Plans (IEP) and as reported by the District Review Team.

Improved reading achievement for Grade 10 students has been evidenced through the results of the Grade 10 Provincial examination results.

Challenging Areas

What trends in student achievement are of concern to you?

Inconsistent results for Aboriginal students continue to be of significant concern. While there is evidence of improvement in reading and numeracy, particularly in relation to Kindergarten and early intervention, the early success experienced in achievement results does not currently appear to have had a lasting effect.

Six-year completion rates for Aboriginal students continue to be below the provincial average and significantly lower than for non-aboriginal students.

What evidence gives rise to this concern?

The evidence that gives rise to concerns for our Aboriginal students is attendance rates, transition rates, and six-year completion rates. We have been tracking attendance of all Aboriginal students and have been carefully monitoring the transition rates for our secondary students. While some minor improvements have been observed in both attendance and transitions, these gains have been nominal. Six-year completion rates have been widely variable as a consequence of the limited number of students in the cohort groups and the challenges associated with transition through the secondary grades.

What plans are in place or under development in these areas of concern?

We are in the process of building our capacity to track students more effectively through the use of software that will improve our ability to deepen understanding of both learners and school populations to assist us in monitoring early intervention and identifying those strategies that have made a difference for student achievement.

The School District has established strong partnerships with the First Nations communities and through the effective implementation of the District Aboriginal Advisory Council has begun to foster improved relationships for the benefit of our students. We will be reviewing our six-year completion rate data to make contact with students directly to help determine the factors that may have contributed to their challenges to achieve completion within the six-year period and to help identify supports that may have made a difference for these students.

Other

What other observations, inferences or conclusions are drawn from district data?

Student achievement in the school district continues to be at a consistently high level in relation to provincial averages. However, a heavy dependence on external data may lead to a degree of complacency that diverts attention from the pursuit of continued improvement on an individual student basis. There is an emerging understanding of the need to find more authentic assessment practices in support of consistent planning for improving student achievement.

How does the district evidence and data inform planning for improved students achievement?

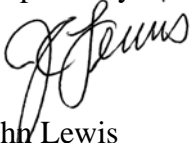
The School District has been encouraged through the 2007 District Review to develop a user-friendly software environment for storage and analysis of student achievement data, focusing on the use of authentic assessment evidence in ways that are useful, first and foremost, to teachers.

Furthermore, the District Review has suggested,

the establishment of a district-wide protocol for implementing authentic assessment practices in support of teachers better understanding the learning needs of children, while at the same time providing school-wide and district-wide assessment evidence that can be used for organizational planning and improvement. This approach of using consistent authentic assessments, preferably based on B.C. Performance Standards, will not only be good for students, it will reduce the reliance on external provincial measures.

The School District has developed plans to embrace the suggestions of the District Review Team and has integrated these suggestions into the 2007-08 Accountability Contract: *Transition Plan*.

Respectfully submitted,



John Lewis
Superintendent of Schools