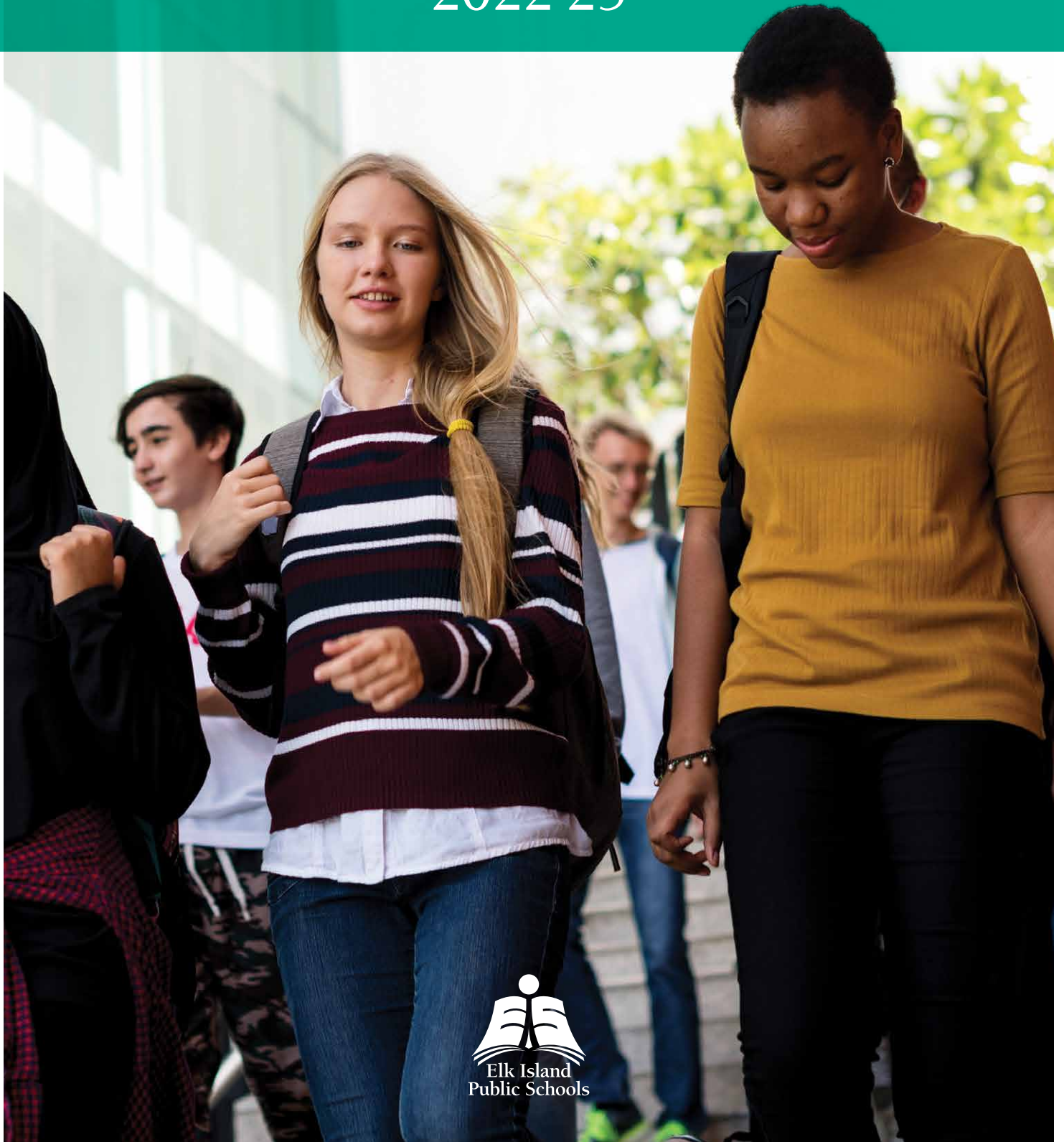


Elk Island Public Schools
Annual Education Results Report
2022-23

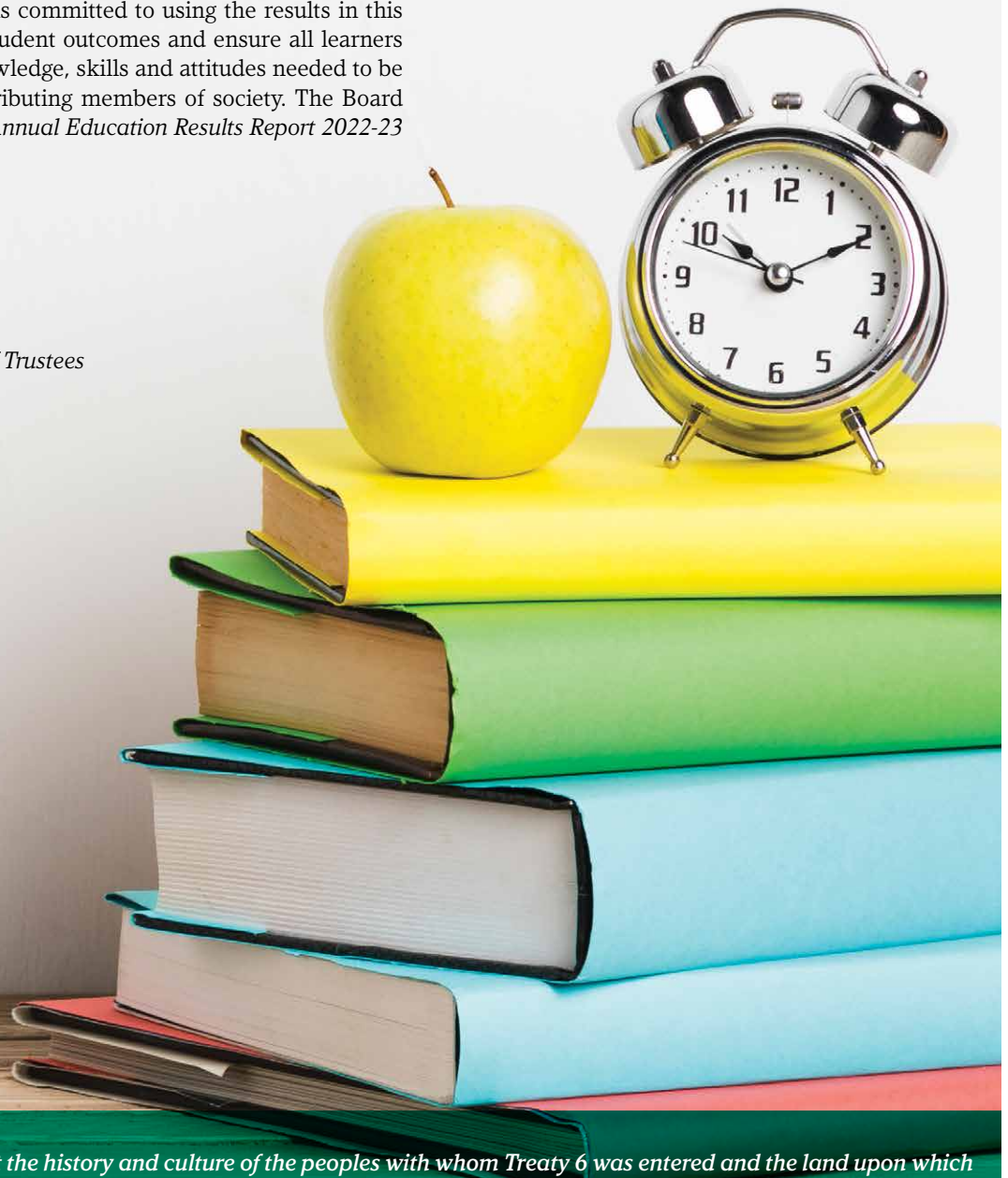


Accountability

The *Annual Education Results Report* for the 2022-23 school year was prepared under the direction of the Elk Island Public Schools Board of Trustees in accordance with the responsibilities listed within the *Education Act* and the *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act*. To the best of its abilities, the Board is committed to using the results in this report to improve student outcomes and ensure all learners can acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to be successful and contributing members of society. The Board approved the *EIPS Annual Education Results Report 2022-23* on Nov. 30, 2023.



Cathy Allen
Chair, EIPS Board of Trustees



"We acknowledge with respect the history and culture of the peoples with whom Treaty 6 was entered and the land upon which Elk Island Public Schools reside. We also acknowledge the traditional homeland of the Métis Nation and our responsibility, as Treaty 6 members, to honour the heritage and gifts of the First Peoples" – EIPS Board of Trustees

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Greetings

I'm thrilled to share with you Elk Island Public Schools' *Annual Education Results Report: 2022-23*, which explores how the Division meets its priorities and goals, growth opportunities and develops students to achieve the best possible outcomes. What shines through in this year's report are the myriad programs and initiatives taking shape divisionwide that foster educational excellence, support learning achievement, and develop young people with the skills and knowledge needed to prepare them for life after school.

As a Board, we couldn't be prouder.

That's because we're committed to providing all students with high-quality, student-centred education. That commitment is evident as you read through the *Annual Education Results Report 2022-23*. It showcases the students and staff, their efforts and achievements, and the challenges the Division faced as a whole. Through hard work, determination and evidence-based strategies, students are obtaining success, and the accomplishments are many.

Also woven through the narrative is the established collaborative approach with students, teachers, administrators, support staff, families and communities that allows everyone to collectively come together with a shared vision of strong public education. It's uplifting and inspiring.

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

Cathy Allen

Chair, EIPS Board of Trustees



The 2022-23 school year was a big year for Elk Island Public Schools. Operations returned to normal after three years of the pandemic. On top of that: the Division finally received approval for a replacement school in Sherwood Park, after more than a decade on the capital plan; we launched the new elementary curriculum; actively supported students experiencing learning gaps; embarked on a three-year engagement plan to address student accommodation concerns; rolled out Year 2 of the Division's new mental health strategy; and undertook Year 2 of the Career Pathways Strategic plan—to open up even more opportunities for students in dual-credit and off-campus programming.

Looking back, it's an incredible amount of work to undertake. But we did it, and I'm so impressed with the results, which you can read in this year's *EIPS Annual Education Results Report 2022-23*. The report details how EIPS is developing students, meeting the priorities and goals set out in the *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan: 2022-26*, supporting learning achievement, fostering educational excellence and developing learners with the skills and knowledge needed to prepare them for a lifetime.

For me, what's most notable is the network of people who make up the school community—people on the frontlines and behind the scenes—who, every day, come together to ensure high-quality, student-centred educational opportunities for all students. I am so incredibly proud of the report and the synergy we've fostered with students, teachers, administrators, support staff, families and community partners. Thank you to all of you for making that possible. Moving forward, we'll use the report to guide future planning, enhance our priorities and ensure we continue to provide high-quality learning environments where students will learn, grow and thrive.

Now, I encourage each of you to read through this year's *EIPS Annual Education Results Report*. When you do, I hope you're able to celebrate the Division's accomplishments and the role you played in achieving these. I know I did. Enjoy!

Sandra Stoddard

EIPS Superintendent



Profile and Local Context

Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) is Alberta’s sixth-largest school division, serving close to 17,750 students from kindergarten to Grade 12 in 42 schools—in Sherwood Park, Fort Saskatchewan, Vegreville, Strathcona County, Lamont County and the western portion of the County of Minburn. The Division also employs 1,540 people—925 teachers and 615 non-teaching staff—who collectively work together to continuously inspire students to achieve their full potential.

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 that 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 and help form the foundation for what 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. As well,

the Division offers a variety of educational opportunities for students that take place within, and outside, the classroom:

- five language programs—English, French, German, Ukrainian and Spanish;
- three academic programs—Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and Junior High Honours;
- faith-based programs—Alternative Christian and Logos Christian; and
- Next Step Outreach—in Sherwood Park, Fort Saskatchewan and Vegreville.

To further complement programming, the Division boasts strong extracurricular opportunities and careers and technologies programming in all its schools—STEM, construction, mechanics, computer science, sports education, foods, music, drama, special-interest clubs, athletics, plus more. Together, the diverse programming offered throughout EIPS ensures high-quality, well-rounded student-centred education that develops learners with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed, now and after they finish school.

Mission: To provide high-quality, student-centred education

BELIEF STATEMENTS

- Student growth and success are the core work of the Division.
- All students deserve equitable access to high-quality teaching and learning.
- Every student can learn and experience success.
- Success is measured by academic growth, social-emotional learning, physical well-being and the competencies required to live a life of dignity and fulfilment.
- Student growth and success are a shared responsibility between all stakeholders.
- Respectful relationships are foundational to creating an environment where teamwork and collaboration thrive.
- Decisions are informed by reliable data and made in the best interest of all students.



EIPS Four-Year Education Plan: 2022-26

Mission: To provide high-quality, student-centred education

Priority 1: Promote growth and success for all students

GOAL 1 EXCELLENT START TO LEARNING

Outcome: Kindergarten children reach developmental milestones by Grade 1.

Outcome: Students develop a strong foundation for learning through reading and doing mathematics at grade level by the end of Grade 3.

GOAL 2 SUCCESS FOR EVERY STUDENT

Outcome: Students are engaged with their learning and achieve student-learning outcomes.

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

Outcome: Self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students are engaged in holistic, lifelong learning that is culturally relevant and fosters success.

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

Priority 2: Enhance high-quality learning and working environments

GOAL 1 A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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

GOAL 2 POSITIVE LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENTS

Outcome: The Division's learning and working environments are welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and foster student and staff well-being.

GOAL 3 QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ALL

Outcome: Learning and working environments are supported by effective planning, management and investment in Division infrastructure.

Priority 3: Enhance public education through effective engagement

GOAL 1 PARENT AND CAREGIVER ENGAGEMENT

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

GOAL 2 ENGAGED AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Outcome: The Division is committed to engaging stakeholders to augment its decision-making and support student success.

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

A Closer Look: 2022-23

THE NEW CURRICULUM

In early 2022, after strong opposition from school divisions, teachers and families provincewide, Alberta Education revised, then finalized, the new provincial elementary curriculum. The revisions resulted in a delayed release of the final curriculum and changes to the implementation timeline. Instead of rolling out all subjects simultaneously, the province changed the roll-out to a phased-in approach—Division 1 followed by Division 2, starting in fall 2022. It also backed away from introducing all subjects at the same time, deciding only to introduce three subjects—mathematics, English language arts and literature, and physical education and wellness—and the remaining five later.

The Board advocated for a phased-in approach, so the change was welcome news for the Division. However, the late release of the curriculum created significant challenges for EIPS—particularly around capacity building and preparational work for the roll-out. To ensure a smooth transition for students and staff, the Board allocated new curriculum funds to help prepare teachers and confidently implement the new curriculum throughout 2022-23.

Using the Board-allocated money, EIPS concentrated its efforts on building teacher capacity and resources by establishing a New Curriculum team—made up of

seven curriculum and assessment area-expert teachers. Throughout 2022-23, the team organized professional learning opportunities, developed resource materials and assessment documents, aligned report cards and created unit plans for subjects launching in 2022-23. Simultaneously, they worked on Phase 2 of the roll-out—mathematics and English language arts and literature curriculum, grades 4 to 6, and grades K to 3 science curriculum, all launching in the 2023-24 school year.

To further prepare, the Division also worked with the Alberta School Boards Association to access provincial data related to the roll-out. The hope is to use that information to build capacity, develop more resources and ensure smooth student transitions. Looking ahead, EIPS will continue all the new curriculum efforts to build on what's already created and prepare for the new science and French language arts and literature curriculum, grades 4 to 6—launching in 2024-25.

FOCUSED LEARNING

In response to learning gaps created by the pandemic, EIPS used targeted money to support struggling elementary students in literacy and numeracy. As background, in March 2020, the province cancelled all in-school classes, leaving students to learn online at home for the rest of the school year. In 2020-21, students re-entered schools but were transitioning back and forth from in-person learning to temporary online learning. By early 2021-22, the Division noticed a portion of learners were behind academically because of the learning disruptions.

Literacy and numeracy were two key areas the Division noticed learning gaps for students. In response, the EIPS Board allocated funds, \$1 million, for the Division to develop a pandemic recovery plan. The goal: To support students negatively affected by the pandemic and the learning disruptions.

For literacy, students received regular small-group targeted intervention programming with a teacher or trained educational assistant. Students were grouped together according to identified needs and areas of struggles, which were identified through various assessment tools—Reading Readiness Screening Tool, Directed Reading Thinking, Star assessments, Words their Way, Comprehensive Phonics, Castles and Coltheart 3, and Letter Name and Sound. As well, teachers and educational assistants leading the intervention were provided with training and ongoing support from central services consultants. Schools supplied resources to support instruction and learning, including decodable books, the Heggerty Phonemic Awareness, and Guided Phonics and



Beyond. Further support was provided by consultants, building capacity among all teachers to address different learning needs within the classrooms.

Meanwhile, for numeracy, students received small-group, targeted intervention programming with a trained teacher or educational assistant. Most groups consisted of three to four students, meeting three or four times a week for 20 minutes. Instruction focused on using manipulatives to support learning, having focused conversations and students talk through their thinking, providing time for repetition and using visual supports. The teacher training mainly focused on lessons and activities based on the Building Fact Fluency kits, a comprehensive, research-based toolkit designed to help students learn addition, subtraction, multiplication and division math facts by developing deep, conceptual understanding and engaging in purposeful practice. Consultants were also available to support intervention teachers and build capacity among all teachers to support regular classroom instruction.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Throughout 2022-23, significant effort went into addressing mental health and well-being—as part of EIPS' Mental Health Strategic Plan. The plan launched in spring 2022, after seeing new challenges arise from the pandemic, particularly in terms of mental health. The most common conditions were heightened anxiety, stress and dysregulated behaviour. The Division was also observing social- and emotional-developmental delays—attributed to the loss of peer interactions, isolation and limited engagement in social activities during the pandemic.

To address these challenges, the Board stepped in and allocated additional funding to create the mental health strategic plan. The goal: To better support students' and staff's socio-emotional and positive mental health development. Year 1 involved hiring a Mental Health Advisor to set the plan in motion. Year 2, the 2022-23 school year, focused on several interconnected parts, including providing education and resources on mental health literacy, support for student mental health and well-being, capacity building and service pathways.

The Division also hosted a student forum entitled, Student Voice, to explore student engagement, mental health and well-being. Throughout the day, students discussed questions focused on diversity, equity and inclusion. The feedback was invaluable and helped inform next steps for programming and supports in these areas.

Also new, the Division introduced mental health support rooms, called Reset Rooms, in every junior high school within the Division. The rooms are spaces for students to go when feeling overwhelmed. They feature supports, resources and EIPS teachers—trained in mental health literacy and supported by the Division's counselling team.

STUDENT CAPACITY

As part of the Division's reporting requirements to Alberta Education, EIPS regularly reviews programs, enrolment and boundaries. When areas of concern are identified, the Division works to determine how best to resolve the issue. In spring 2022, EIPS rolled out the first phases of its Three-Year Engagement Plan to address student accommodations concerns. Then, in 2022-23, work continued on four key projects with the goal to improve operations and ensure high-quality education for all students.

PROJECT 1: THREE-YEAR STRATHCONA COUNTY ENGAGEMENT

Over a three-year period, EIPS is engaging school communities within Strathcona County about how best to accommodate students within the existing Division infrastructure. Specifically, how to address school capacity issues, explore attendance areas, improve system-programming transitions and enhance accommodations for French Immersion programming. In 2022-23, EIPS organized several *public engagements*, including five in-person sessions, four online surveys, and four What We Heard Reports. More consultations are planned for the 2023-24 school year. The Board will review all the feedback collected and then make final decisions about its junior high, senior high and French Immersion programming in the 2023-24 school year.



PROJECT 2: ENROLMENT PRESSURES IN FORT SASKATCHEWAN

Over the past few years, Fort Saskatchewan has experienced substantial residential growth. In fact, the growth is at a point where it affects the Division's ability to provide accommodation for students living in the area. For EIPS, addressing enrolment pressures at James Mowat Elementary was one of the most pressing issues within Fort Saskatchewan—enrolment projections indicated the school would reach capacity in 2022-23. The reason: James Mowat Elementary is the designated receiving school for the city's expanding West Park neighbourhood.

To determine how to best manage the enrolment pressures, EIPS consulted the school community extensively. *Engagements* started in June 2022—two public meetings were held, and an online survey. Attendees learned details about the enrolment issues, discussed possible solutions, asked questions and provided feedback. Then, in September 2022, EIPS continued the conversation with the school community through another public engagement meeting and online survey. Attendees discussed possible solutions, shared ideas and provided additional feedback. Two What We Heard Reports were also produced. After reviewing the feedback, related information and background documents, the Board determined piloting a random selection process at the school was the best way to address James Mowat's enrolment pressures, taking effect in the 2023-24 school year.

PROJECT 3: EIPS LOGOS CHRISTIAN PROGRAM REVIEW

Over the last few years, enrolment in the EIPS Logos Christian Program has declined significantly, making it challenging to offer fulsome Logos programming. Before a decision was made about how best to address the enrolment concerns, EIPS *consulted the Logos community* extensively. Two public meetings were held in June 2022. Attendees learned details about the enrolment issues, discussed possible solutions, asked questions and provided feedback. Then, in October 2022, EIPS continued the conversation with the school community through another public engagement meeting. Attendees discussed possible solutions, shared ideas and provided additional feedback.

Based on feedback from the engagements, EIPS delayed making a decision until after the returning student registration process closed. The delay allowed the Board to see the actual registration numbers for Logos in 2023-24, and it gave the Logos community time to promote the program leading up to the returning student registration process. In March, after the returning student registration closed, the Board reviewed the Logos enrolment for 2023-24. Again, it decreased from the year before. As such, the Board decided the best way to ensure a high-quality Logos program continues was to consolidate the elementary Logos

program at Brentwood Elementary, effective for the 2023-24 school year.

PROJECT 4: VALUE-SCOPING SESSION FOR A.L. HORTON ELEMENTARY AND VEGREVILLE COMPOSITE HIGH

Currently, EIPS has two school facilities in Vegreville. The schools provide kindergarten to Grade 12 programming to students living in the town and surrounding areas. Over the last few years, both schools have experienced a drop in enrolment, affecting program delivery and facility operations. To determine a solution, EIPS consulted stakeholders through a two-day value-scoping session in fall 2023—facilitated by START Architecture. Collectively, the group discussed ways to optimize learning environments for students at the two schools while also ensuring high-quality educational program delivery. Overall, the best-performing solution was modernizing and expanding Vegreville Composite High to accommodate a kindergarten to Grade 12 program, which is now included in the Division's *2024-27 Three-Year Capital Plan*.

ANDREW SCHOOL

In May 2023, the Board approved closing Andrew School, effective June 30, 2023. There were two main challenges EIPS was facing at the school. The first, the fire suppression and roofing systems were in poor condition, requiring more than \$3 million in upgrades. Second, student enrolment was again declining significantly. In fact, after the returning student registration process, in February 2023, enrolment dropped by 30 per cent from the year previous. The small number of students enrolled for the upcoming year meant less provincial funding, fewer staff members and a detrimental effect on student programming.

Before making a final decision about the school's future, the Board and administration spent considerable time reviewing and analyzing data and feedback collected from the community. Overall, it was determined the facility conditions, costs to address those issues, significant enrolment decline, and corresponding loss of funding meant the Division could no longer provide the high-quality educational experience elementary students in the Andrew catchment area require. So, the school needed to close.

All EIPS students, kindergarten to Grade 6, who lived within the Village of Andrew, were redesignated to Mundare School. Students who lived outside the village were redesignated to either Lamont or Vegreville, depending on where they reside, with the school-of-choice fee waived. To ensure smooth student transitions, the Division also worked with families impacted by the decision, developing the best plan possible, including facility requirements, support services and student transportation needs.

Planning and Reporting



Every year, Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) analyzes and interprets its performance and assurance reports to assess its progress toward achieving the goals and outcomes outlined in the Division’s 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, belief statements and the *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan* (pg. 4, “EIPS Four-Year Education Plan: 2022-26”) to develop new strategies to further support student learning.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE

Planning and reporting are integral to the Division’s performance-management and assurance cycles, which involve:

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

Assurance Framework

Every spring, Alberta Education allocates funds to school authorities to provide high-quality education programs for all the students they serve. The practice creates an accountability relationship that ensures transparency, annual reporting and assurance that every Alberta-based school division fulfills its delegated responsibility.

As such, EIPS has an Assurance Framework that it cycles through annually. Essentially, it's an accountability system that allows the Division to assess and demonstrate publicly its ongoing progress—through regular reporting, set processes, actions, engagement, analysis of evidence and relationship building. The result: Stakeholders and community members are developing a holistic understanding of EIPS' performance and how it's building a culture of continuous improvement.

EIPS ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK PROCESS

- Before every new Board of Trustees election, the Division engages families, students, staff and stakeholders on its *Four-Year Education Plan*, which captures EIPS' strategic direction.
- Every winter and spring, EIPS reviews the *Four-Year Education Plan*, engages stakeholders and fine-tunes the plan, detailing its priorities, goals, outcomes, strategies and performance measures.
- EIPS uses the updated education plan to inform EIPS' spring budget and school education plans—also developed with stakeholder input.
- In May, after announcing the budget, the Division and schools allocate or redirect resources to achieve the priorities and meet the responsibilities outlined in the education plans.
- In September, the Division and 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 in the education plans—focusing on student growth and achievement.
- In late fall, the Division conducts Assurance Reviews with schools and departments—using Alberta Education's assurance measures, and internal qualitative and quantitative data. The reviews complement the education plans and allow schools and departments to share their results, annual plans, successes and challenges with the Board and community. The process enables trustees, staff and families to be more aware of what's happening across the Division.
- Following the Assurance Reviews, EIPS produces an *Annual Education Results Report*. The report outlines how the Division ensures students achieve the best possible outcomes and how it meets the priorities and goals set out in the *Four-Year Education Plan*. Once reviewed and approved by the Board, the report is published and shared publicly with the government, school communities, 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 throughout the process.

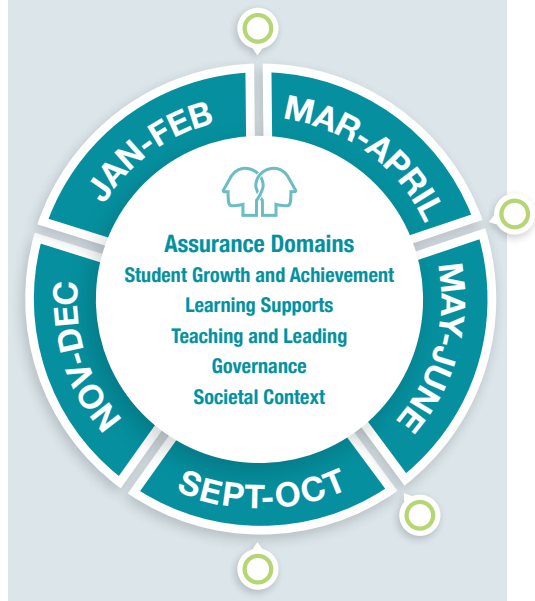
Assurance Cycle

School authorities are responsible for assuring the public they are fulfilling their responsibilities and students are successful

Assurance arises from a combination of policies, processes, actions and evidence that build public confidence in the education system.

EIPS achieves assurance through relationship building, engagement with education partners, and creating and sustaining a culture of continuous improvement and collective responsibility.

The Board further enhances assurance through ongoing communication from stakeholders, attending monthly school council meetings and participating in the Committee of School Councils meetings to gather feedback about the Division. Also, every Board Caucus meeting includes a standing generative-governance discussion, allowing trustees to share input and ideas to ultimately inform decision-making.





SEPTEMBER TO OCTOBER 2022

- AD HOC ENGAGEMENT: The Division hosted seven stakeholder public engagement sessions and one online survey as part of its Three-Year Engagement Plan to address programming and school capacity issues.

NOVEMBER 2022

- Schools engaged families to review the results from the previous year and invited school council chairs to attend the assurance reviews.

DECEMBER 2022

- The Division administered a Year-in-Review Survey to gather information on stakeholder confidence regarding EIPS' work and progress to meet the goals and outcomes listed in its *Four-Year Education Plan*.
- The Division hosted a student forum, Student Voice, for learners in grades 9 and 12 to explore student engagement, diversity and inclusion.

JANUARY 2023

- EIPS engaged the Committee of School Councils (COSC) about the *Annual Education Results Report 2021-22*.
- All schools consulted with school councils and families about school fees for the upcoming year.

FEBRUARY TO MARCH 2023

- The province administered the Alberta Education Assurance survey to gather feedback from students, staff and families on the required assurance domains—the data helps guide future decision-making.
- The Division gathered feedback from staff, students and families through surveys focused on *EIPS' Four-Year Education Plan* to help guide future decision-making, priorities and budget allocations.
- AD HOC ENGAGEMENT: The Division hosted one stakeholder engagement session and one online survey as part of its Three-Year Engagement Plan to address programming and school capacity issues.

APRIL TO MAY 2023

- The Division engaged COSC about EIPS' 2022-23 spring budget and the *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan: 2022-26 (Year 2)*.
- The Division approved the spring budget and submitted its updated *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan: 2022-26* to Alberta Education for the upcoming school year.

○ AD HOC ENGAGEMENT:

- The Division hosted one stakeholder engagement session and one online survey as part of its Three-Year Engagement Plan to address programming and school capacity issues.
- The Division hosted one stakeholder engagement session on the design plans for the new Sherwood Park replacement school.

JUNE 2023

○ AD HOC ENGAGEMENT:

- The Division hosted one online stakeholder engagement session as part of its Three-Year Engagement Plan to address programming and school capacity issues.
- The Division hosted a stakeholder engagement session on the design plans for the new Sherwood Park replacement school.

ONGOING

- The Division published a quarterly newsletter for community partners, *EIPS Quarterly Update*, featuring articles about the Division, the work of the Board and the importance of public education.
- The Division published a quarterly newsletter for the school community, *EIPS Advocacy in Action*, featuring articles about the Division, the work of the Board, EIPS priorities, advocacy areas, and the importance and value of public education.

Alberta Education Assurance Measures: 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
STUDENT GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT									
Student Learning Engagement	83.5	83.5	83.5	84.4	85.1	85.1	n/a	Maintained	n/a
Citizenship	78.8	79.3	79.8	80.3	81.4	82.3	High	Declined	Acceptable
High School Completion Rate (3 years)	85.4	87.6	87	80.7	83.2	82.3	High	Declined	Good
High School Completion Rate (5 years)	93	91.2	90.6	88.6	87.1	86.2	Very High	Improved Significantly	Excellent
Provincial Achievement Tests: Acceptable	74.3	75.7	n/a	63.3	64.3	n/a	Intermediate	n/a	n/a
Provincial Achievement Tests: Excellence	19.3	22.4	n/a	16	17.7	n/a	High	n/a	n/a
Diploma Examinations: Acceptable	85	79.6	n/a	80.3	75.2	n/a	High	n/a	n/a
Diploma Examinations: Excellence	21.4	17	n/a	21.2	18.2	n/a	High	n/a	n/a
TEACHING AND LEADING									
Education Quality	88.2	88.6	89	88.1	89	89.7	High	Declined	Acceptable
LEARNING SUPPORTS									
Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments	85	85.3	85.3	84.7	86.1	86.1	n/a	Maintained	n/a
Access to Supports and Services	80.5	80.1	80.1	80.6	81.6	81.6	n/a	Maintained	n/a
GOVERNANCE									
Parental Involvement	78.1	76.9	77.9	79.1	78.8	80.3	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable

NOTE 1: Evaluation measures are based on a three-year average, categories marked "n/a" still don't have a three-year average (see pg. 77, "Appendixes").

Notes

- The COVID-19 pandemic impacted participation in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 diploma examinations. As such, school-awarded marks determined achievement in diploma course.
- Use caution interpreting high school completion rate results over time.
- Aggregated PAT results are based on a weighted average of the per cent meeting standards—Acceptable and Excellence. The weights are the number of students enrolled in each course. Courses included English language arts (grades 6, 9, 9 KAE); Français (grades 6, 9); French language arts (grades 6, 9); mathematics (grades 6, 9, 9 KAE); science (grades 6, 9, 9 KAE); and social studies (grades 6, 9, 9 KAE).
- Participation in Provincial Achievement Tests was impacted by the fires in 2019 and 2023, by the COVID-19 pandemic between 2020 and 2022, and a security breach near the end of the 2021-22 school year. 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 included 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 and Social Studies 30-2.



Priority 1: Promote Growth and Success for All Students

Goal 1: Excellent Start to Learning

Assurance Domain: Student Growth and Achievement

Local Outcome 1: Kindergarten children reach developmental milestones by Grade 1

Local Outcome 2: Students develop a strong foundation for learning through reading and doing mathematics at grade level by the end of Grade 3

Provincial Outcome: Alberta's students are successful

Early Years Performance Measures	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
EIPS INTERNAL DATA					
Total number of children enrolled in the PALS programs	169	182	124	139	139
Total number of children enrolled in kindergarten	1,253	1,433	1,465	1,260	1,260
Number of children entering the PALS program with severe special needs	142	161 Year 1: 70 Year 2: 91	124 Year 1: 43 Year 2: 81	139 Year 1: 102 Year 2: 37	139 Year 1: 102 Year 2: 37
Percentage of children who completed their second year of the PALS program and no longer require a severe speech code	n/a	54.9	56.8	42.3	42.8
The percentage of Grade 3 students reading at grade level	n/a	n/a	82	81	81
The percentage of Grade 3 students performing mathematics at grade level	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	86.3
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS					
Percentage of families reporting their child demonstrated growth in development because of the PALS program	n/a	n/a	100	80	93
Percentage of families reporting their child is becoming ready to enter Grade 1 because of the kindergarten program	n/a	n/a	94.3	92.8	91
EIPS YEAR-IN-REVIEW SURVEY					
Percentage of stakeholders confident EIPS provides supports and services needed to prepare pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children for Grade 1	n/a	n/a	n/a	92.3	91.3

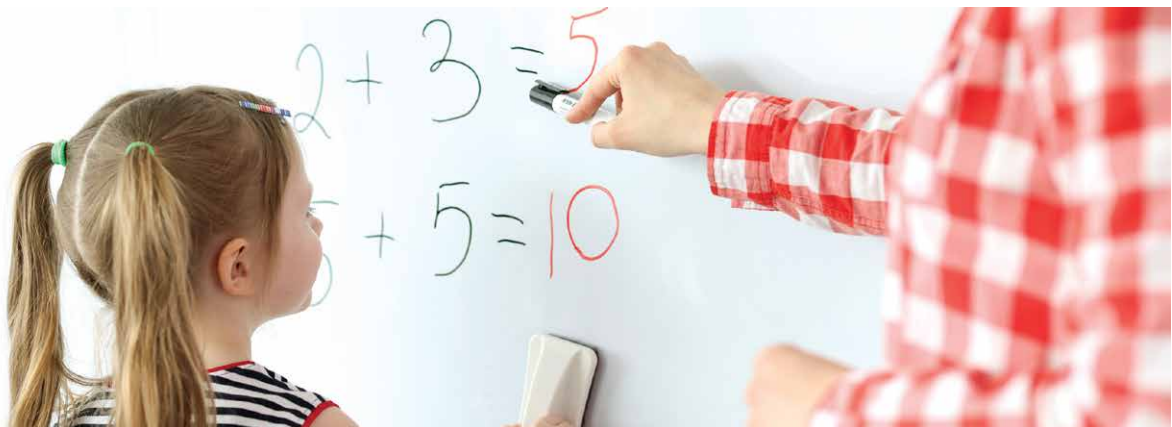
Early Years Teacher Assessment: Pre-test and post-test measures of developmental domains in kindergarten

	AWARENESS OF SELF AND ENVIRONMENT				SOCIAL SKILLS AND APPROACHES TO LEARNING				COGNITIVE SKILLS				LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION			
	▲	●	■	n=	▲	●	■	n=	▲	●	■	n=	▲	●	■	n=
Pre-test	1%	9%	90%	1,216	2%	16%	82%	1,216	6%	31%	63%	1,216	2%	17%	81%	1,216
Post-test	0%	4%	96%	1,249	1%	6%	93%	1,249	1%	4%	95%	1,249	1%	6%	93%	1,248

	PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT FINE MOTOR				PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT GROSS MOTOR				RESPONSIVE TIERED INSTRUCTION (RTI)			
	▲	●	■	n=	▲	●	■	n=	▲	●	■	n=
Pre-test	4%	23%	73%	1,216	2%	18%	79%	1,211	11%	32%	57%	1,216
Post-test	0%	5%	95%	1,248	0%	3%	97%	1,246	3%	8%	89%	1,247

▲ experiencing significant difficulty ● experiencing some difficulty ■ appropriate development

GRADE 1 STUDENTS' DATA	
January: Total number of students assessed	1,335
January: Total number of students identified as at-risk in literacy	365
End of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in literacy	344
January: The average number of months behind grade level in literacy for at-risk students	12
End of Year: The average number of months gained at grade level in literacy for at-risk students	11
January: Total number of students identified as at-risk in numeracy	290
End of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in numeracy	322
January: The average number of months behind grade level in numeracy for at-risk students	14
End of Year: The average number of months gained at grade level in numeracy for at-risk students	13
GRADE 2 STUDENTS' DATA	
Start of Year: Total number of students assessed	1,303
Start of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in literacy	360
End of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in literacy	422
Start of Year: The average number of months behind grade level in literacy for at-risk students	12
End of Year: The average number of months gained at grade level in literacy for at-risk students	12
Start of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in numeracy	267
End of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in numeracy	245
Start of Year: The average number of months behind grade level in numeracy for at-risk students	13
End of Year: The average number of months gained at grade level in numeracy for at-risk students	11
GRADE 3 STUDENTS' DATA	
Start of Year: Total number of students assessed	1,280
Start of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in literacy	240
End of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in literacy	235
Start of Year: The average number of months behind grade level in literacy for at-risk students	15
End of Year: The average number of months gained at grade level in literacy for at-risk students	11
Start of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in numeracy	170
End of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in numeracy	220
Start of Year: The average number of months behind grade level in numeracy for at-risk students	13
End of Year: The average number of months gained at grade level in numeracy for at-risk students	11



Background

Early childhood development is the first and most critical phase of human growth. In fact, a growing body of research, centred on children, between the ages of zero and six, suggests the early years are the most significant development 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 *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan: 2022-26*.

The goal sets the groundwork for implementing strategies that ensure as many children as possible, entering Grade 1, reach developmental milestones. To facilitate this, all young learners—pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and Grade 1—are taught by caring and responsive staff members in high-quality early learning environments. Those environments also are focused on purposeful, play-based programming.

Equally important is for children in kindergarten to Grade 3 to develop strong early literacy and numeracy foundations. Both are critical for success in these areas later in life. In fact, for literacy, reading at grade level by Grade 3 is a predictor of high school completion. As such, all early learners are taught by EIPS teachers who work diligently to ensure every child under their care can read at their grade level. These teachers also participate in ongoing professional learning focused on research-based foundational practices so that all students experience one-year's growth in literacy and numeracy annually.

Results

During the 2022-23 school year, 1,398 children were enrolled in Early Childhood Services within EIPS, including 1,252 kindergarten children and an additional 146 in pre-kindergarten programs. Comparing numbers from the previous year, in 2022-23, kindergarten enrolment dropped by eight students and pre-kindergarten enrolment increased by seven. Overall, though, enrolment change is stable and relatively consistent year over year.

EIPS' pre-kindergarten programming includes Play and Learn at School (PALS), an early intervention support program for pre-kindergarten children assessed with developmental delays. Those who qualify for PALS are children identified with a severe developmental delay between the ages of two-years-and-eight months and four-years-and-seven months. In 2022-23, EIPS offered the program in five EIPS locations—Sherwood Park, Ardrossan, Fort Saskatchewan, Lamont and Vegreville.

Year after year, the PALS program sees positive learner outcomes. In 2022-23, 74 children entered kindergarten from the PALS program. Of those 74, 49 children had a severe speech-and-language-delay code entering PALS. After finishing the program, 21 children entered kindergarten without a severe-speech-and-language code.

That's reason to celebrate. For these children, PALS has already addressed the severe speech and language delay challenges before they even enter kindergarten. That's huge as it sets a strong foundation the child, It also has a long-lasting positive effect on the learner's academic and social development.

Similarly, according to the 2022-23 EIPS Annual Feedback Survey, 93% of respondents with a child

in a pre-kindergarten program reported their child demonstrated growth in development because of the PALS program. These results confirm the Division's early intervention program makes an important difference for young children requiring additional supports and services.

EIPS also offered a kindergarten program in all 26 of the Division's elementary schools—a full-day, alternating-day program. Like PALS, the program sees positive outcomes for learners. In fact, feedback from the 2022-23 EIPS Annual Feedback Survey indicates 91% of EIPS families report the Division's kindergarten program prepares children for Grade 1. Correspondingly, results from the 2022-23 EIPS Year-In-Review Survey indicate 91.3% of stakeholders—families, staff, grade 12 students and community partners—are also confident the Division provides the needed supports and services to prepare learners, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, to enter Grade 1.

ACADEMIC MEASURES

Unlike elementary and secondary programming, Alberta Education does not provide school divisions with data about the impact of early learning programming. Consequently, EIPS uses internal assessments to evaluate its successes—specifically, the Early Years Evaluation – Teacher Assessment (EYE-TA). The EYE-TA is a research-based assessment tool that measures a child's development in the five domains critical to school readiness—awareness of self and environment, social skills and approaches to learning, cognitive skills, language and communication, and physical development. EIPS administers the assessment at the start of every school year and again near the end of the school year.

According to the 2022-23 overall EYE-TA pre-test results, only 693 children, 57%, who entered EIPS kindergarten, met the overall developmental milestones. However, the post-test results indicate at the end of kindergarten, 1,110 children, 89%, demonstrated appropriate overall development after a year of programming. That's up from 86% the year before. Such high post-test results clearly indicate the Division's kindergarten program is strong and growth-focused.

Interestingly, current longitudinal research points to kindergarten children's EYE-TA scores being tied to reading outcomes at ages eight and nine. In particular, it suggests the strongest EYE-TA predictors of a child's reading ability at grade level by Grade 3 are cognitive skills and language and communication. That's followed by fine-motor skills, awareness of self and environment, and social skills and approaches to learning. So, EIPS keeps this in mind, using the EYE-TA data to discern children most likely to require extra support to develop their reading skills during their primary school years.

Turning to EIPS' 2022-23 EYE-TA cognitive skills results, 93% of kindergarten learners are on target to read at grade level by Grade 3—identical to the percentage last year. Meanwhile, language and communication skills results suggest 95% of kindergarten learners are on target to read at grade level by Grade 3—up from 93% the year before. Both are strong results. EIPS does track these student cohorts to Grade 3 to evaluate the predictive validity of the EYE-TA—the first cohort measures will be available after the 2023-24 school year.

EIPS also used the provincial-mandated assessments for students in the 2022-23 school year (see pg. 14, "Alberta Education Literacy and Numeracy Screeners"). In September, students in grades 2 and 3 completed an initial assessment in literacy and numeracy. Meanwhile, Grade 1 students completed the initial assessment in January. Students identified as being at risk in literacy or numeracy were then provided small-group instruction by teachers

within their schools. That said, the per-student intervention money received from the government was provided late in the school year, which was also significantly less than in 2021-22. As a result, that impacted the amount of intervention students could receive—particularly in terms of planning and staffing.

At the end of the 2022-23 school year, all students were re-evaluated, even though the province only mandates reassessing at-risk students. The Division chose to re-assess all students to provide a more holistic achievement picture in grades 1 through 4. It's also why the Division saw some increases in students identified as at-risk in Grade 1 for numeracy, Grade 2 for literacy and Grade 3 for numeracy.

SUPPORTS AND SERVICES

For the 2022-23 PALS programs, speech-language pathologists provided a variety of supports to 146 children identified with severe speech and language delays. The speech-language pathologists visited PALS classrooms weekly, supporting the children enrolled, classroom teams and families. Specific services included assessment, individual intervention, small-group intervention, programming adaptations and strategies for families to use at home. Additionally, the speech-language pathologists helped develop Individualized Program Plans for those registered in PALS, which detail specific strategies to better support each child's goals. They also collaborated with a home team of speech-language pathologists to provide co-ordinated service delivery to children with significant communication challenges.

In the kindergarten program, speech-language pathologists received 283 referrals and provided services to children with moderate or moderate-to-severe speech and language delays. They visited kindergarten classrooms to offer either individual or classroom supports at least once every two weeks. Similarly, EIPS offered individual

The EYE-TA's five development domains are:

1. AWARENESS OF SELF AND ENVIRONMENT

A child's understanding of the world and their ability to make connections with home and community experiences.

2. SOCIAL SKILLS AND APPROACHES TO LEARNING

A child's attentiveness during classroom activities and ability to interact with peers while respecting classroom rules.

3. COGNITIVE SKILLS

A child's basic mathematics and pre-reading skills and ability to solve problems.

4. LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

A child's understanding of spoken language and 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.

intervention to students with specific speech-sound delays or language delays. Classroom strategies and supports were also provided for children with significant language delays. Other services included coaching and consultations for families with children receiving direct intervention with less significant needs.

Occupational therapy was also offered throughout the Division. Occupational therapists regularly visited PALS classrooms—providing ongoing consultation, assessment and programming to 65 children with significant challenges in the areas of regulation, self-help skills and motor skills. Occupational therapists also shared strategies and programming ideas to the PALS classroom staff at all five PALS sites for children with milder needs. The strategies all centred on ways to progress children's fine-motor skills and independence. An Occupational Therapy Assistant also provided direct service to 35 students to support advancing fine- and gross-motor skills. Other services offered by PALS occupational therapists included individual family consults and virtual sessions to support families with toileting, feeding, fine-motor skills and regulation strategies.

Meanwhile, for the kindergarten program, 70 kindergarten children used EIPS' individual occupational therapy service—available to children with significant challenges. For those with mild-moderate needs, occupational therapy was offered in the classroom using therapist-directed strategies and resources. The students were also seen by an occupational therapist once or twice throughout the year. As well, occupational therapists facilitated staff professional learning—focused on fine-motor development—regulation and ways to incorporate occupational therapy strategies into the classroom.

Lastly, EIPS provided physical therapy to children enrolled in the PALS and kindergarten programs. Children in PALS with significant gross-motor needs received physical-therapy consultation. In kindergarten, children with these needs received a consultative visit to address barriers to participation in the school environment.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Because family collaboration is essential in PALS, the Division organized a series of family engagement opportunities. The first was a speech-language assessment screening for families interested in the PALS program, which also included an opportunity to ask questions and discuss concerns about their child's development—an important first step for families seeking supports for their child. Children requiring full speech-language assessments were then scheduled for a later appointment. In total, 140 children were assessed in speech sounds and language skills to determine possible eligibility for Program Unit Funding and the PALS program.



[building capacity]

Setting up for success

Year-long, EIPS consultants work with schools to foster early learning literacy- and numeracy-rich environments. They provide resources and facilitate professional learning opportunities to focus instruction and maximize student engagement. They also have a series of learning kits to support schools with vertical non-permanent surface activities, build understanding and creating thinking classrooms

Loose Parts Play Kits for PALS and kindergarten classrooms. The kits assist 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. Divisionwide, the kits are highly sought after because of their versatility and focus on discovery and creativity during play and exploration.

Phonological Awareness Kits for kindergarten and Grade 1. The kits focus on identifying and manipulating units of oral language and sounds of spoken language. Using the kits, learners build their phonological awareness, which is a reliable predictor of later reading ability.

Alternative Letter and Number Kits for diverse-needs early learners. The kits offer hands-on, interactive experiences to help achieve literacy and numeracy outcomes. They also support educators with activities to engage children in meaningful and developmentally appropriate ways.

Early Learning Sensory Kits for early learners. The kits are complete with a learning lending library and occupational therapy activities to assist teachers working with children with sensory needs.

The Division also offered a series of PALS engagement sessions to build family capacity and support young learners. In total, 24 virtual sessions were offered, all guided by speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists and early learning consultants. Similar opportunities were offered to families with children in kindergarten through a series of meetings, videos and resources (see pg. 65, “Parent Engagement: Early learning”).

Early on, EIPS engages families to build the school-and-home relationship—integral to each child’s success

To complement these, EIPS Early Learning distributed a kindergarten questionnaire to incoming families to build the school-and-home relationship—integral to each child’s success. The questionnaire was also used to develop Getting Ready for Kindergarten, a series of divisionwide kindergarten orientation sessions hosted annually in June. The 2022-23 Getting Ready for Kindergarten sessions focused on fun ways to work on four key development areas—building independence, speech development, fine-motor skills and literacy. Other engagement efforts included the Circle of Security Parenting program, Individualized Program Plan consultations, Kindergarten Information Nights and a series of early learning emails for families to share information and collect feedback. Collectively, these allowed EIPS to gain insight into early learner needs and how to support them best.

Opportunities for Growth

Research clearly demonstrates early intervention plays a critical role in long-term learning outcomes for young learners. As such, the continued use of the EYE-TA and its data analysis is a crucial growth opportunity for the Division. Collectively, the assessment helps identify at-risk students, guide intervention planning, move teacher programming forward and ensure student achievement—a key priority for EIPS.

Looking ahead to 2023-24, principals will continue to review the school’s annual EYE-TA data with their early learning team and the Early Learning department—Instructional Supports and Specialized Supports. Using that data and comparing it over three years will allow each school to effectively support the educational needs of students, determine the children most likely to require extra support, and ensure everyone continues to learn and grow—now and in the future.

Another growth opportunity is the early learning screening. The screenings allow families to discuss their child’s potential challenges and make guidance and direction easier. Knowing who requires early intervention is an important factor for student success. Speech-language pathologists will screen all kindergarten students early in the year to ensure all needed supports are detected and delivered as early as possible. As well, because research shows children who come to school regulated and secure are more ready to learn, PALS staff will participate in the Circle of Security Classroom program. The sessions help build staff capacity to, then, support children attending EIPS with social-emotional challenges in the early years.

The final growth area for early learning is developing subject-specific consultant support. Research on long-term success in school highlights the importance of early intervention. So, to support timely intervention in literacy and numeracy, Early Learning consultants will work with schools to build staff capacity to further support pre-kindergarten to Grade 3 literacy and numeracy.

[building capacity]

Building numeracy and beyond

Developing teacher skills and tools so more students achieve growth in numeracy

Throughout 2022-23, a key focus area for EIPS was early numeracy capacity building. The Division appointed an early numeracy consultant to support schools and facilitate a new divisionwide professional learning series—the EIPS Early Numeracy Initiative. The goal was three-fold. One, to share research-based pedagogical best practices in early numeracy. Two, to offer teachers strategies and tools to help students achieve mathematical growth. And, three, to connect and link with Alberta’s new elementary curriculum.

In total, 22 elementary schools and 95 teachers participated in the in-depth training sessions. The sessions focused on building teachers’ mathematical knowledge and pedagogy. Through the initiative, early learning teachers developed expertise in:

- foundational number skills;
- designing thinking classrooms;
- high-leverage thinking practices;
- vertical non-permanent surfaces;
- small-group instruction; and
- embedded assessments.

Overall, the early learning initiative was a huge success. So much so, the Division plans to offer it again in 2023-24. It will rerun programming for the schools that didn’t participate in 2022-23. And, for schools that took it, EIPS will offer a second level to the Early Numeracy Initiative.



Priority Strategy for Education Plan

EIPS will continue its efforts to ensure children reach their developmental milestones and attain solid foundational skills in the early years. Strategies include:

-  Work collaboratively within multidisciplinary teams to provide universal, targeted and specialized early childhood intervention support and therapy to address developmental delays identified in classrooms—pre-kindergarten to Grade 3.
-  Develop ongoing online professional learning modules to build capacity in key early learning program areas, such as fine-motor progressions and early language foundations—particularly beneficial for onboarding new teachers.
-  Use robust literacy and numeracy assessments to identify where early learners are struggling.
-  Continue to work with schools to develop intervention plans for at-risk students.
-  Provide early intervention for students identified as at-risk for learning disorders.
-  Implement a pilot project for Division 1 early reading intervention in Fort Saskatchewan-based elementary schools—focused on early intervention to support an excellent start to learning and building staff capacity to support programming for all students.
-  Create more opportunities for instructional leaders and teachers to understand and implement developmentally appropriate practices in early learning environments.
-  Provide small-group modelling and side-by-side coaching, kindergarten to Grade 3. The strategy will build teacher capacity in foundational literacy—reading, writing, and English and French oral word work. It will also support more students to demonstrate growth in literacy at grade level.
-  Continue the Early Numeracy Initiative made up of four half-day capacity-building sessions focused on:
 - foundational number skills;
 - high-leverage numeracy practices;
 - small-group instruction;
 - engaging activities; and
 - embedded assessment.
-  Continue to provide high-quality professional learning opportunities for staff working in early learning classrooms.
-  Continue to build teacher capacity to successfully transition to the new curriculum—using unit-plan development, assessment development and professional learning.

Goal 2: Success for Every Student

Assurance Domain: Student Growth and Achievement

Local Outcome 1: Students are engaged with their learning and achieve student-learning outcomes

Local Outcome 2: 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			
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	ALBERTA 2022-23	ACHIEVEMENT	IMPROVEMENT	OVERALL	
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY: OVERALL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES										
Grade 6 and Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs)	A	84.5	n/a	n/a	75.7	74.3	63.3		n/a	
	E	28.5	n/a	n/a	22.4	19.3	16		n/a	
Diploma examinations	A	85.2	n/a	n/a	79.6	85	80.3		n/a	
	E	21.2	n/a	n/a	17	21.4	21.2		n/a	
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY: OVERALL ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS LEARNING OUTCOMES										
Grade 6 PATs – language arts	A	94.2	n/a	n/a	87.8	91.3	76.2	High	n/a	n/a
	E	24.7	n/a	n/a	25.5	27.7	18.4	Very High	n/a	n/a
Grade 9 PATs – language arts	A	83	n/a	n/a	78.8	82	71.4	Intermediate	n/a	n/a
	E	17.3	n/a	n/a	14	13.1	13.4	Intermediate	n/a	n/a
English 30-1 diploma examinations	A	93.8	n/a	n/a	83.9	88.8	83.7	Intermediate	n/a	n/a
	E	15.2	n/a	n/a	6.4	12.5	10.5	High	n/a	n/a
English 30-2 diploma examinations	A	91.2	n/a	n/a	81.3	90.9	86.2	Intermediate	n/a	n/a
	E	15.4	n/a	n/a	10.4	17.1	12.7	High	n/a	n/a
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY: OVERALL MATHEMATICS LEARNING OUTCOMES										
Grade 6 PATs – mathematics	A	86.3	n/a	n/a	82.9	84.4	65.4	High	n/a	n/a
	E	22.9	n/a	n/a	20.6	26.5	15.9	Very High	n/a	n/a
Grade 9 PATs – mathematics	A	69.9	n/a	n/a	67.3	66.1	54.4	Intermediate	n/a	n/a
	E	24.4	n/a	n/a	22.3	16	13.5	Intermediate	n/a	n/a
Math 30-1 diploma examinations	A	76.5	n/a	n/a	77.8	76.1	70.8		n/a	
	E	24.7	n/a	n/a	28.5	30.6	29		n/a	
Math 30-2 diploma examinations	A	78.3	n/a	n/a	71.3	77.4	71.1		n/a	
	E	17.6	n/a	n/a	14.7	17.2	15.2		n/a	

NOTE: The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the cancellation of PATs and diploma examinations in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years. As well, in 2021-22 diploma examinations were only written in June, not in January. As such, there is no data for these years.



Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES					EVALUATION			
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	ALBERTA 2022-23	ACHIEVEMENT	IMPROVEMENT	OVERALL
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY									
Parent agreement that learners find their schoolwork interesting	77	76	83	81	79	n/a	n/a		
Teacher agreement that learners find their schoolwork interesting	94	96	96	94	92	n/a	n/a		
Teachers, parents and students satisfied with the opportunity for students to receive a broad program of studies, including fine arts, career, technology, health and physical education	82.9	83.2	85.5	85.8	86.1	82.9	Very High	Improved Significantly	Excellent
Teacher, parent and student agreement students have access to the appropriate supports and services at school	n/a	n/a	80.4	80.1	80.5	80.6	n/a	n/a	n/a
Teacher, parent and student agreement students are engaged in their learning	n/a	n/a	84.5	83.5	83.5	87.3	n/a	n/a	n/a
Parent agreement the literacy skills their child is learning at school are useful	n/a	n/a	90	90	90	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Parent agreement the numeracy skills their child is learning at school are useful	n/a	n/a	92	91	90	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Parent agreement their child is learning what they need to know	n/a	n/a	81	76	77	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

NOTE: Evaluation measures are based on a three-year average, categories marked "n/a" still don't have a three-year average.

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES				
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS					
My child is demonstrating growth in literacy	86.6	89	86.7	85.3	84.7
My child is demonstrating growth in numeracy	89	89	88.9	86.7	86.3
My child's individual needs are met	84.2	84.2	83.8	81.3	81
My child is encouraged to do their best	89.5	89.5	91.7	89.5	88.9
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR STUDENTS (GRADE 9 AND GRADE 12)					
Student agreement they're demonstrating growth in literacy	n/a	n/a	80.6	73.1	76.6
Student agreement they're demonstrating growth in numeracy	n/a	n/a	79.7	73.3	78.5
Student agreement their schoolwork is interesting, and they're engaged in their learning	n/a	n/a	59.3	47.7	51.3
Student agreement they're encouraged to do their best	n/a	n/a	89	81.7	86.3
Student agreement their individual needs are being met	n/a	n/a	86.3	78	81.7
EIPS YEAR-IN-REVIEW SURVEY					
Percentage of families, staff, Grade 12 students and community members confident EIPS implements strategies that support students in demonstrating growth in literacy	n/a	n/a	n/a	91.1	90.8
Percentage of families, staff, grade 12 students and community members confident EIPS implements strategies that support students in demonstrating growth in numeracy	n/a	n/a	n/a	90.7	90.9

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 who might require additional intervention and support early. Of particular interest is literacy, which is the ability to read, view, write, design, speak and listen to allow 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 for them to reach their full potential—in school, the workplace and life in general.

Equally of interest is numeracy, 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. Like literacy, developing strong numeracy skills is essential for students to reach their full potential. Because literacy and numeracy are foundational to success in learning and life, both are priorities listed within the *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan*.

LITERACY

Literacy is about more than the ability to read or write. It's about being able to apply critical skills to help navigate the world. Students today face multiple sources of traditional and digital content, transforming how they acquire, create and interpret knowledge. So, having that literacy base early on is critical.

In fact, much of the current research points to how important it is for a child to read at grade level by Grade 3. After that, it's difficult to remediate, even with intervention and support. For instance, *The Edmonton Journal* published a story about tracking learning loss, suggesting after Grade 3, 75% of students with difficulties in reading can't catch up to their grade level later—even affecting high school completion. As such, at EIPS, it's imperative all students develop a wide-reaching set of literacy skills.

To do that, EIPS is fostering a culture of literacy divisionwide. In all grades and in all schools, literacy is being integrated into every subject to get students reading, thinking, talking and writing about the content taught. When you walk into elementary school classrooms, students are immersed in literacy experiences—from reading and writing activities to interacting with books digitally to exploring content on the internet. Meanwhile, junior high and senior high learners explore books of various genres and in all subject matters.

Year-round, countless initiatives complement literacy instruction, including Read In Week, Battle of the Books, Young Authors' Conference, speech competitions, plus more. The literacy programming also doesn't end with students—staff professional learning is ongoing. For the

most part, the focus is on literacy strategies that can be used in the classroom to improve student achievement, instruction and assessments. Sessions such as the Early Literacy Initiative, Middle Years Initiative, Secondary Literacy Initiative, Thinking Classrooms, the five pillars of reading, and various coaching and modelling programs were all offered throughout EIPS to ultimately build on each student's individual successes.

Overall, the focus on literacy is positively impacting the Division. What's developing is a reading culture where students are gaining a literacy skillset that includes the ability to read, write, listen, comprehend, evaluate and communicate. You can see this in the 2022-23 results, and what it demonstrates is that EIPS is in a stronger position than ever to support the success of all students.

Results

EIPS' overall 2022-23 Alberta Education Assurance Measures results indicate students in Grade 6 and Grade 9 are outperforming the province at both the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence. In all subject areas of the Grade 6 and Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs), EIPS scored higher in 24 of 26 PAT measures. It's a similar story for the diploma examination results. EIPS students consistently scored higher than the province at the acceptable standard category and the standard of excellence category, earning an overall provincial evaluation of "high." The remainder of this chapter delves deeper into EIPS' achievement results, including detailed data analysis, behind-the-scenes work to build capacity, growth areas and strategies going forward.

ELEMENTARY

Looking at the overall Alberta Education Assurance Measures pre- and post-pandemic trend data for Grade 6 English Language Arts PAT, the percentage of students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence is consistently higher than the province and higher than the 2021-22 results. In fact, in 2022-23, the percentage of students who achieved the acceptable level increased by 3.5%—up to 91.3% from 87.8% in 2021-22. Those meeting the standard of excellence also increased by 2.2%—increasing to 27.7% from 25.5% in 2021-22.

The Division also disaggregated the data, looking at both reading and writing (see pg. 23, “Table 1”). It, too, shows higher percentages than the province. That’s good news for EIPS.

TABLE 1: EIPS Grade 6 English Language Arts PAT results

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

		2018-19		2021-22		2022-23	
		EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA
Part A: Written	A	96.2	91.6	95.6	91.5	95.7	89.9
	E	13.5	10.8	19.6	15.7	19	15.3
Part B: Reading	A	96.1	90.2	90.4	86.5	93.6	88.6
	E	52.6	44.6	43.7	39.3	47.5	40.1

NOTE: PATs and diploma examinations were cancelled in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years. As such, no data is available for these years.

Specifically, the number of students writing at an acceptable standard saw a slight rise to 95.7% from 95.6% in 2021-22. There was, however, a slight decrease at the standard of excellence for Grade 6 students writing the language arts PAT—declining to 19% from 19.6% in 2021-22. That said, the 19% is still well above pre-pandemic levels, which was only 13.5%.

Similarly, the percentage of students reading at an acceptable standard increased by 3.2%—to 93.6% from 90.4% in 2021-22. And, at the standard of excellence, it increased by 3.8%—to 47.5% from 43.7% in 2021-22. As such, EIPS is quite pleased with the Grade 6 English Language Arts results as they have begun to return to, or surpass, pre-pandemic levels.

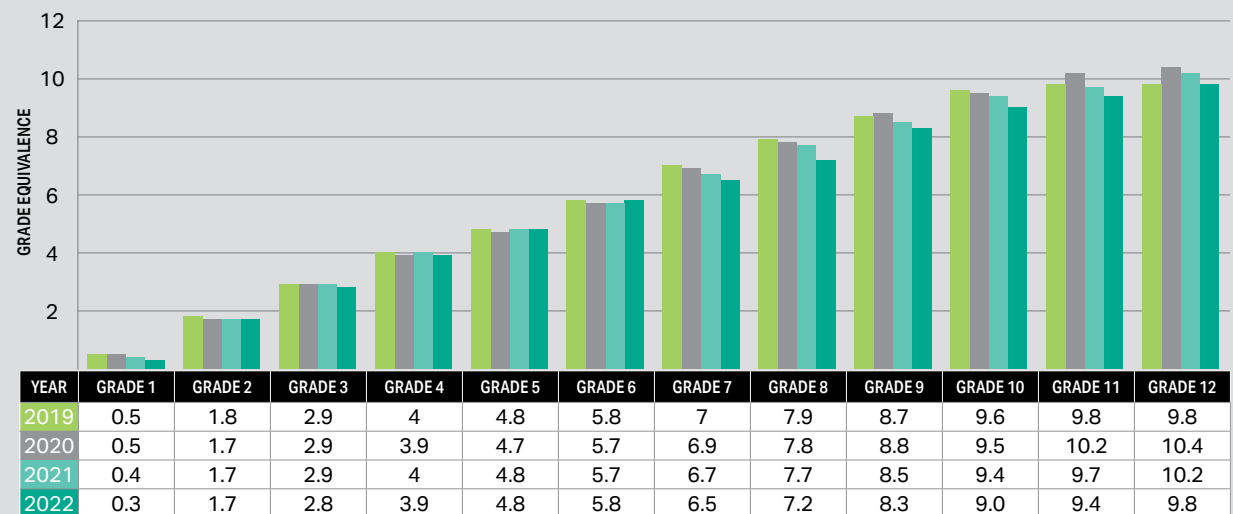
As a side note, during the pandemic, stringent public health orders were introduced to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and in-school classes were cancelled on several occasions between spring 2020 and winter 2022. That, in turn, resulted in ongoing learning disruptions, leading to a larger-than-normal proportion of students falling academically behind. Throughout 2021-22 and 2022-23, significant effort was put in place to reduce the learning loss witnessed. Therefore, achieving higher Grade 6 PAT results than pre-pandemic levels is a major accomplishment for EIPS.

IMPROVING STUDENT OUTCOMES

To complement the Alberta Education Assurance Survey, the Division also uses internal assessments to gauge student progress in literacy—using the Star Reading and Star Early

CHART 1:

EIPS Star Reading Grade Equivalence Results – Fall 2019-22



Literacy assessments. Both evaluate student learning and help teachers identify learners needing additional support. In addition to screening students struggling, the Star also helps identify students who are reading above grade level to ensure they, too, are provided with the needed support for continued growth.

Three times a year, EIPS students complete the Star Reading assessment. Grade 1 students complete the Star Early Literacy, and students in grades 2 and up complete the Star Reading. The first assessment is done at the start

[building capacity]

Supporting early learning literacy

Throughout 2022-23, significant work went into building capacity in elementary literacy, including:

Early Literacy Initiative (Level 1 and Level 2): A new divisionwide professional learning program for elementary teachers to share research-based pedagogical best practices and strategies to help more students achieve reading growth. **Result:** Elementary teachers from across the Division developed expertise in language literacy, phonemic awareness, screening tools, orthographic mapping, the five pillars of reading, decoding text and assessing early literacy—specifically reading comprehension, fluency, phonics, vocabulary and writing skills.

Coaching and Modelling: Early Learning consultants worked closely with Division 1 teachers, kindergarten to Grade 3, providing coaching and modelling. **Results:** Schools and teachers throughout the Division developed new instructional strategies and tools to enhance reading growth.

Focused Learning: Using Board-allocated funding, consultants offered ongoing literacy support to teachers. **Results:** Teachers were better equipped to address specific literacy needs resulting from the pandemic and related learning disruptions.

Workshop Model: A workshop method for teaching reading, writing and phonics. **Results:** Participants were introduced to how to use the workshop model in the classroom, with a special focus on orthographic mapping and letter-sound connections to link spellings, meanings and pronunciations.

Co-Teaching: EIPS literacy consultants offered several virtual co-taught lessons—virtually joining a teacher during classroom instruction. **Results:** More than 100 teachers took part in the virtual lessons, allowing the Division to provide support to a broader base.

New Curriculum: Early Learning consultants actively engaged with teachers implementing the new elementary English language arts and literature curriculum. **Results:** The effort ensured those teaching the new curriculum had the needed tools and resources for a smooth transition.

of the year. Another is administered in the middle of the school year. And, a third is completed near year-end.

During the pandemic, when the province cancelled PATs, the Division used the Star data to help assess student achievement in literacy. However, the Star works best as a screening tool for teachers, not to assess overall student achievement—particularly at the secondary level. As such, with the full return of PATs and diploma examinations, the Star data plays a much smaller role in this year’s *Annual Education Results Report 2022-23*—mainly focused on the elementary level, where the data is most robust.

That being said, the overall 2022-23 Star Reading results show elementary learners are at grade level and achieved roughly one year’s growth in reading. For instance, in fall 2022, Grade 1 students scored an average grade equivalent of 0.3. Then, in spring 2023, those same students scored an average grade equivalent of 1.6—meaning they are at grade level and achieved more than one year of growth (see pg. 23, “Chart 1”). A similar trend is seen at each elementary grade, implying learners are reading at their grade level and experiencing at least one year’s growth. Meanwhile, at the secondary level, Star Reading results are consistent year over year—implying consistent growth.

JUNIOR HIGH

Like the Grade 6 results, the overall assurance measures result for EIPS Grade 9 Language Arts students meeting the acceptable standard are higher than the provincial percentage. In fact, 82% of EIPS students met the acceptable standard, compared to 71.4% provincially. Meanwhile, the percentage of EIPS students reaching the standard of excellence is relatively comparable with the province—13.1% of EIPS students met the standard, and 13.4% met it provincially.

TABLE 2: EIPS Grade 9 English Language Arts PAT results

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

		2018-19		2021-22		2022-23	
		EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA
Part A: Written	A	89.4	89.6	90.6	88.6	91	88.8
	E	23.5	21.2	19.1	18.1	17.1	20.1
Part B: Reading	A	84.9	79.6	83.2	81	85	80.1
	E	20.3	19.6	21.5	21.3	18.9	19.9

NOTE: PATs and diploma examinations were cancelled in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years. As such, no data is available for these years.

Upon closer examination of the detailed data, broken down for reading and writing, EIPS’ results were higher than the year before and even before the pandemic. They were also above the provincial results for both reading and

writing at the acceptable standard (see pg. 24, "Table 2"). At the standard of excellence, EIPS' 2022-23 results are comparable to the province, although they did experience a slight dip from the previous year and pre-pandemic levels. Reading results dropped to 18.9%, down from 21.5% in 2021-22 and 20.3% in 2018-19. Writing results declined to 17.1% from 18.1% in 2021-22 and 23.5% in 2018-19.

To address this decline, the Division plans to establish junior high writing standards, review emergent text studies and facilitate literary engagements in grades 7 to 9. Overall, though, EIPS' Grade 9 results are strong, pointing to the exceptional work being done at the school level to help students overcome any learning gaps that may have resulted from the pandemic. Historically, closing learning gaps at the secondary level is far more challenging than at the elementary level. So, to see fairly static results, and even some increases, between 2018-19, 2021-22 and 2022-23, is a reason to celebrate.

[building capacity]

Supporting middle years literacy

Throughout 2022-23, significant work went into building capacity in junior high literacy, including:

Middle Years Initiative: A new professional learning program for Division 2 and 3 teachers to share research-based pedagogical best practices and strategies to enhance student growth, with special focus on instruction and assessment. **Results:** Attendees gained expertise in reading intervention and literacy assessment.

Focused Learning: Using Board-allocated funding, consultants offered ongoing literacy support to teachers. **Results:** Teachers were better equipped to address literacy needs resulting from recent learning disruptions.

Workshop Model: A workshop method for teaching reading, writing and phonics—followed by in-class and modelling support. **Results:** Participants learned how to use a workshop model in the class, focusing on collaborative planning, small groups and individual work.

Thinking Classrooms: EIPS consultants offered several Thinking Classroom learning sessions. **Results:** Language arts and social studies teachers explored new ways to implement vertical non-permanent surface activities in the classroom.

Common Exams: A working committee—made up of Division 3 teachers and literacy consultants—developed and fine-tuned the junior high final exams. **Results:** The common exams help establish assessment consistency, build teacher capacity and align with the curriculum.

New Curriculum: Literacy consultants engaged teachers to roll out Phase 2 of the new elementary curriculum. **Results:** Those teaching the new curriculum had the needed tools and resources for a smooth transition.

SENIOR HIGH

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 language arts is consistently higher than the province. Also positive, in 2022-23, all the diploma examinations returned to normal, after two years of cancellations. It's worth noting, the 2022-23 diplomas were weighted differently, comprising just 20% of a student's final mark instead of 30%.

Rewind to 2019-20 and 2020-21. The province cancelled all diploma examinations as a result of the pandemic and the resulting in-school class cancellations. In 2021-22, diploma examinations returned, but only the June exams and these were weighted at just 10% of a student's final mark. The low weighting resulted in a high degree of exam apathy. So, 2022-23 is the first time since the pandemic hit that EIPS can accurately assess Grade 12 student achievement. As such, regardless of the results, EIPS is pleased to have the achievement data available to better understand how students are doing and if any interventions are needed.

TABLE 3: EIPS English Language Arts Diploma Examination results – 30-1 and 30-2

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

		2018-19		2021-22		2022-23	
		EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA
English 30-1	A	93.8	86.8	83.7	78.8	88.8	83.7
	E	15.2	12.3	6.4	9.4	12.5	10.5
English 30-2	A	91.2	87.1	81.4	80.7	90.9	86.2
	E	15.4	12	10.4	12.2	17.1	12.7

NOTE: Diploma examinations were cancelled in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years—no data is available for these years. As well, in 2021-22, diploma examinations were only written in June, not in January, and were only worth 10% of the overall student mark. As such, caution is advised when interpreting the trend data.

Looking at the overall 2022-23 Grade 12 English language arts results, EIPS students outperformed the province at both the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in both English 30-1 and English 30-2—which is excellent. In English 30-1, EIPS saw an increase in the percentage of students who attained the acceptable standard, by 5.1%. Similarly, at the standard of excellence, the percentage jumped by 3.1%.

Although this is a drastic increase, caution is advised when comparing data from 2022-23 with 2021-22. The reason: As previously mentioned, in 2021-22, the January exams were cancelled and the June diplomas were only worth 10% of the student's final mark, resulting in exam apathy.

Looking closer, numbers are up from 2021-22, but still not as high as they were before the pandemic. In 2022-23, 88.8% of students achieved the acceptable standard, and 12.5% achieved the standard of excellence. Meanwhile, in 2018-19, 93.8% achieved the acceptable standard, and 15.2% achieved the standard of excellence results.

Similarly, for English 30-2, the percentage of students reaching the acceptable standard increased, by 9.5%, and the standard of excellence, by 6.7%. Still, students are just below pre-pandemic levels at the acceptable standard. However, at the standard of excellence, students surpassed EIPS' 2018-19 results, up by 1.7%—that's welcome news for EIPS. As such, to boost student achievement results, EIPS plans to focus efforts on student writing strategies by developing a senior high writing standard, consistent assessment practices, writing practices and more writing opportunities for students to help more students reach acceptable and excellent standards.



[building capacity]

Supporting senior high literacy

Throughout 2022-23, significant work went into building capacity in senior high literacy, including:

Secondary Literacy Initiative: A new divisionwide professional learning program for Division 4 staff to share research-based pedagogical best practices and strategies to enhance student growth, with special focus on instruction and assessment. **Results:** Division 4 staff from across the Division participated in professional learning and modelling sessions, developing expertise in the science of reading, reading identity, independent reading and writing, vertical non-permanent surface activities, thinking classrooms, orthographic mapping and assessments.

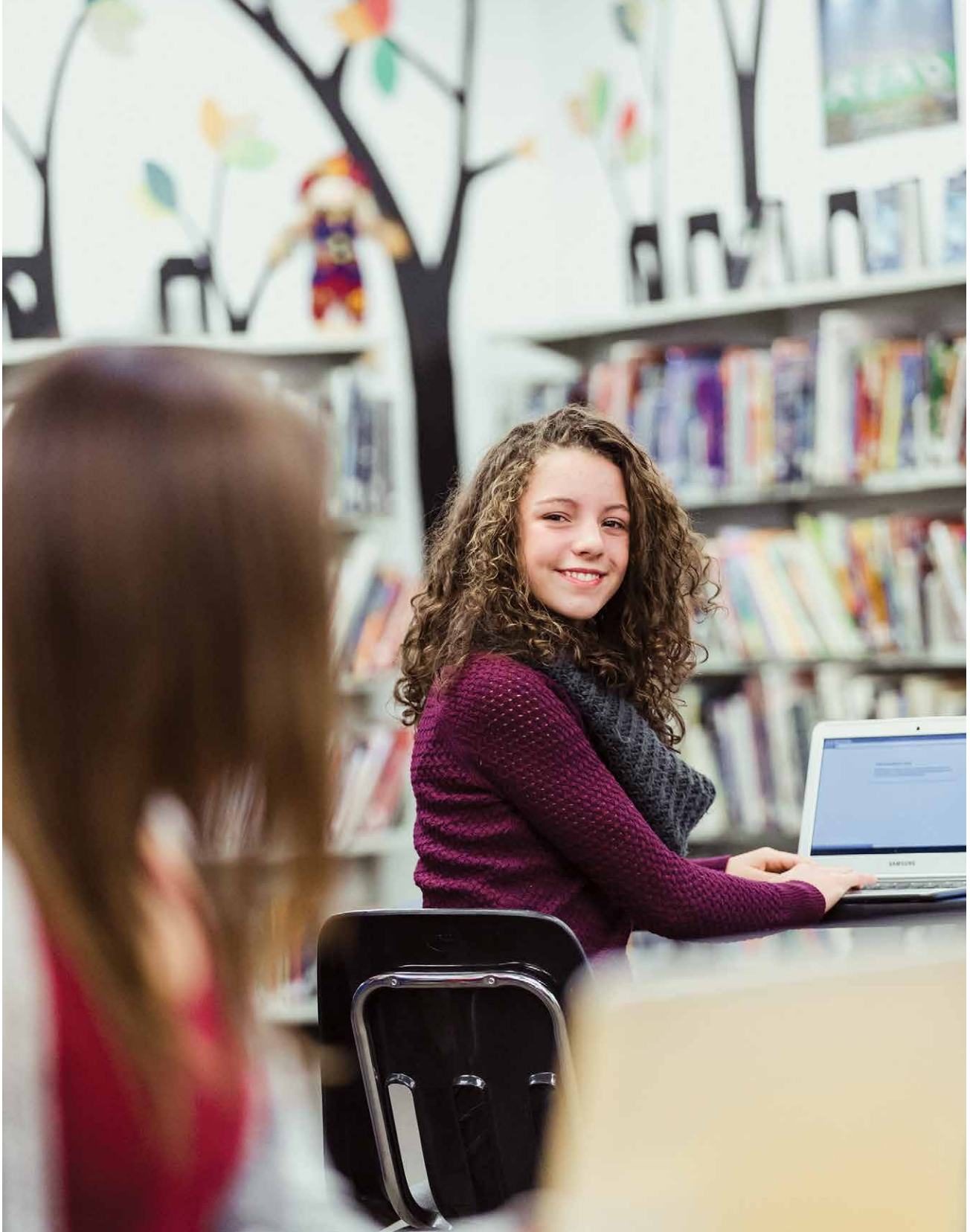
Focused Learning: Using Board-allocated funding, consultants offered ongoing literacy support to teachers. **Results:** Teachers were better equipped to address specific literacy needs that resulted from the recent learning disruptions.

Lexia: Select Grade 10 students, reading below grade level, piloted the Lexia learning program—an online platform designed to improve reading through word study, grammar exercises and reading comprehension. **Results:** According to an exit survey, 50% of the students agreed or strongly agreed the program helped them grow their vocabulary. Another 41% agreed or strongly agreed the program helped them improve their grammar and reading comprehension.

Common Exams: A working committee—made up of Division 4 teachers and literacy consultants—developed the writing component of the senior high final exams. **Results:** Once fully implemented, the common exams will help establish assessment consistency, build teacher capacity and better align with the curriculum.

Writing Continuum: The secondary literacy consultant worked with secondary English language arts teachers to enhance the Division's new Senior High Writing Continuum—used to assess student writing. **Results:** Thanks to this work, the continuum now includes common curricular rubrics and more refined rationales. Long term, the Division hopes to expand the continuum in junior high language arts and social studies classes.

Teacher Cohorts: Throughout the year, EIPS organized ongoing opportunities for teachers in grades 9 to 12 to come together to share best practices. **Results:** Participants explored text selection, essay structures, reading intervention strategies, student conferencing, small-group instruction and vertical non-permanent surface activities to ultimately enhance consistency at a micro- and macro-level.



NUMERACY

Like literacy, numeracy is an essential skill needed to operate in the everyday world—at home, school, work and beyond. We rely on numbers to solve problems; compare costs; budget; tell time; understand patterns, shapes and measurements; and even play sports. As the world is becoming increasingly more technically advanced, learners are using, accessing and interpreting numbers in ways unimaginable, even a decade ago. So, developing and teaching a broad set of numeracy skills is a key priority for EIPS.

Year-long, consultants work to build capacity and create numeracy-rich environments divisionwide. It's integrated into every grade and every subject in ways that engage students in mathematical thinking, problem-solving and reasoning. Students learn concepts and skills to support numeracy. They also take part in activities that connect their math learning within the context of other curriculum areas. Daily, learners practice math journaling, numeracy warm-ups, math word walls and fact fluency. They also actively participate in ongoing Division initiatives to further build each student's math growth—including the Week of Inspirational Math, Math Olympics, Pi Day, FIRST Robotics, Coding Quest, Minecraft New School Design Challenge and various STEM-related competitions.

Meanwhile, significant work also takes place behind the scenes to build teacher capacity and enhance pedagogical practice. In 2022-23, the focus was on the Early Numeracy Initiative, Fact Fluency, Re-Thinking Secondary Math, New-Teacher Cohort, and coaching and modelling sessions.

Collectively, these efforts are paying off. Students move through each year, gradually exposed to more mathematical understanding, fluency, problem-solving and reasoning. Through this, they're gaining a wide-reaching numeracy skill set and are well-positioned to respond to the world around them—in both familiar and unfamiliar situations. You can see this in the 2022-23 numeracy results.

Results

In the area of numeracy, EIPS students performed exceptionally well on the Provincial Achievement Tests and diploma examinations in the 2022-23 school year. In general, the percentage of students who met the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in mathematics was consistently higher than the provincial average. It was also higher in both Part A, the non-calculator section, and Part B of the exams. Overall, EIPS is pleased with the results. They indicate the learning gaps caused by the pandemic are being bridged, and the strategies used by the Division for numeracy are effective—lesson plans,

assessment tools, early intervention, teacher resources and capacity-building initiatives.

ELEMENTARY

Trends in data from both pre- and post-pandemic indicate the percentage of EIPS students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in Grade 6 mathematics is consistently higher than the province. In 2022-23, the overall percentage of students meeting the acceptable standard in Grade 6 mathematics was 84.4%, and the percentage of EIPS students meeting the standard of excellence was 26.5%—the provincial results were 65.4% and 15.9%, respectively.

EIPS students outperformed the province at both the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in mathematics

Interestingly, EIPS' standard of excellence result is the highest it's been in years. As well, both EIPS averages for Grade 6 mathematics, in the acceptable standard and standard of excellence categories, improved from the previous year—up by 1.5% at the acceptable standard and by 6.3% at the standard of excellence.

Digging deeper, disaggregating for Part A and Part B of the PAT, the data also reveals higher results than the province at both the acceptable standard and standard of excellence (see pg. 4, "Table 4"). The percentage of students achieving the standard of excellence for Part A also rose—by 0.4% from the year before. And, students meeting the acceptable and excellence levels for Part B also increased—rising by 2.2% and 6.5%, respectively.

TABLE 4: EIPS Grade 6 Mathematics PAT results

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

		2018-19		2021-22		2022-23	
		EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA
Part A: No calculator	A	82	71.8	82.6	67.9	81.1	68.6
	E	54.8	43.5	57.8	39	58.2	45.1
Part B: Calculator	A	90.3	81.3	86.4	76.9	88.6	78.4
	E	24	16.9	19.5	13.8	26	17.9

NOTE: PATs and diploma examinations were cancelled in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years. As such, no data is available for these years.

There was, however, a slight dip seen at the acceptable standard for Part A—falling by 1.5%. That said, the decrease is consistent with the trends in mathematic data from pre-pandemic levels. Collectively, though, the Grade 6 math results demonstrate students didn't experience the learning loss expected, nor to the extent anticipated. That

speaks volumes about the outstanding work taking place within the Division, and at the school level, to ensure students overcome learning gaps and improve student achievement in numeracy.

[building capacity]

Supporting early learning numeracy

Throughout 2022-23, significant work went into building capacity in elementary numeracy, including:

Fact Fluency: Numeracy consultants put significant focus on elementary fact fluency, an essential component of mathematical proficiency. Most effort was centred around professional learning and followup modelling detailing strategies for incorporating rich tasks, problem-solving activities and vertical non-permanent surface math activities. **Results:** Overall, the work helped teachers balance student understanding and recalling basic mathematical facts.

Early Numeracy Initiative: A new divisionwide elementary professional learning program for schools to share research-based pedagogical best practices, foundational number skills and thinking classroom instructional strategies to enhance student growth—through instruction and assessment. **Results:** Elementary teachers from across the Division developed expertise in engaging math exercises; low-floor, high-ceiling strategies; high-leverage thinking; thinking classrooms; and assessing numeracy.

Teacher Collaboration: EIPS co-ordinated numerous collaboration opportunities for math educators. Topics included problem-solving, vocabulary, formative and summative assessments and pedagogy. **Results:** Collectively, participants gained deeper insight and access to resources to teach and assess students more effectively.

New Curriculum: New Curriculum consultants actively engaged with teachers and area experts to prepare for the next phases of the new elementary curriculum roll-out—grades 4 to 6 mathematics and the new science curriculum. **Results:** The effort ensured those teaching the new curriculum had the needed tools and resources for a smooth transition.

Thinking Classrooms: EIPS consultants offered several professional learning sessions focused on how to build thinking classrooms. **Results:** Math and science teachers explored new ways to implement vertical non-permanent surface activities in the classroom—all aimed at enhancing student engagement, visual thinking and assessment.

Co-Teaching: EIPS numeracy consultants created virtual co-taught lessons—a consultant virtually joins a teacher during classroom instruction. **Results:** More than 100 teachers took part in the virtual lessons, allowing the Division to provide support to a broader base.

JUNIOR HIGH

Similarly, trends in data from both pre- and post-pandemic results show the percentage of EIPS students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in Grade 9 mathematics is consistently higher than the province. In fact, according to the 2022-23 Alberta Education Assurance Measures results, the percentage of all EIPS students who met the acceptable standard was 11.7% higher than the province at the acceptable standard. At the standard of excellence, EIPS scored 2.5% higher than the province. That’s significant and epitomizes the internal work within the Division around numeracy.

Despite the high marks, the overall percentage of EIPS students meeting the acceptable standard and standard of excellence did drop. At the acceptable standard, it declined to 66.1% from 67.3% in 2021-22—the provincial average was 54.4% in 2022-23 and 53% in 2021-22. And, at the standard of excellence, the percentage fell to 16% from 22.3% the year previous—the provincial averages were 13.5% and 16.7%, respectively. The results are also lower than in 2018-19, right before the pandemic.

TABLE 5: EIPS Grade 9 Mathematics PAT results

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

		2018-19		2021-22		2022-23	
		EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA
Part A: No calculator	A	61.4	51.3	53.9	47.8	57	47.6
	E	25.6	21.9	19.8	19.5	18	17.1
Part B: Calculator	A	79.3	74.2	78.7	70.6	75.2	70.7
	E	28.7	24	27.5	22.4	19.5	17.9

NOTE: PATs and diploma examinations were cancelled in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years. As such, no data is available for these years.

Looking closer, in Part A of the Grade 9 math PAT, the percentage of students meeting the acceptable standard actually increased by 3.1%. That’s very positive. Where it fell was at the Part A standard of excellence—dropping by 1.8%—and in both Part B categories. The percentage of students meeting the acceptable level decreased by 3.5% and 8% at the excellence level.

The Division feels the decline is most likely the result of pandemic-related learning gaps. Throughout 2022-23, teachers worked hard to mitigate those learning gaps, especially with the most at-risk students. The assurance data suggests, to a large degree, this occurred. However, more work is clearly needed. So, despite having trend data higher than the province, the Division feels there's room for improvement in the area of Grade 9 mathematics. As such, EIPS will develop new strategies and build capacity to further support students and numeracy achievement through the next school year.

SENIOR HIGH

In terms of mathematics, 30-1 and 30-2, the 2022-23 results are strong. Looking at trends in data, pre- and post-pandemic, the percentage of EIPS students meeting the acceptable standard is higher than the province, which is excellent. Most notable, though, were the increases seen in 2022-23.

The number of EIPS students meeting the standard of excellence in Mathematics 30-1 increased to 30.6% from 28.5% in 2021-22 and 24.7% in 2018-19—the provincial averages were 29%, 23% and 35%, respectively. Similarly, the percentage of EIPS students meeting the standard of excellence in Mathematics 30-2 also increased to 17.2% from 14.7% in 2021-22—the provincial averages were 15.2% and 11.8%, respectively. Also interesting, the number is on par with pre-pandemic results. As well, in Mathematics 30-2, 77.4% of students met the acceptable standard—similar to pre-pandemic results, up from 71.3% the previous year. The province’s averages were 71.1% and 61.5% respectively.

TABLE 6: EIPS Mathematics Diploma Examination results – 30-1 and 30-2

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

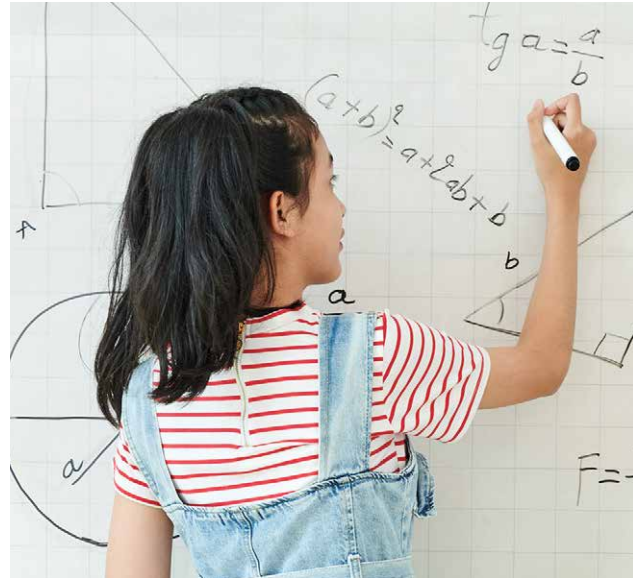
		2018-19		2021-22		2022-23	
		EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA
Mathematics 30-1	A	76.5	77.8	77.8	63.6	76.1	70.8
	E	24.7	35	28.5	23	30.6	29
Mathematics 30-2	A	78.3	76.4	71.3	61.5	77.4	71.1
	E	17.6	16.7	14.7	11.8	17.2	15.2

NOTE: Diploma examinations were cancelled in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years—no data is available for these years. As well, in 2021-22, diploma examinations were only written in June, not in January. As such, caution is advised when interpreting the trend data.

A decline was seen in the percentage of students meeting the acceptable standard in Mathematics 30-1—dropping to 76.1% from 77.8% in 2021-22. However, like the other categories, the result aligns with pre-pandemic results. That said, caution is advised when interpreting the trend data. As mentioned, in 2021-22, the January diploma examinations were cancelled because of the pandemic. Meaning, students only wrote exams in June, and the data only includes half the school population.

Again, EIPS’ 30-level math results are strong. In fact, in previous years, other than 2021-22, the percentage of students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence was often below the provincial values. To now see all results above the province and increases in three of the four categories is reason to celebrate. The improvement is likely the result of recent initiatives launched within the Division to improve numeracy

divisionwide, better prepare students for the diploma examinations and provide classroom support. Obviously, that work is paying off and contributing to the high marks on the diploma examinations.



MATH MATTERS

The Star Math assessment suggests EIPS’ effort to gauge student process and support early intervention is paying off

Like literacy, EIPS uses internal assessments to complement the Alberta Education Assurance Measures. In previous years, the Division’s numeracy assessment tool was the Math Intervention Programming Instrument (MIPI). However, the assessment tool had several limitations. So, in 2022-23, EIPS introduced a new numeracy assessment, the Star Math—used to gauge student progress in numeracy and help teachers identify learners needing additional support and those performing above grade level. EIPS students in grades 2 through 10 completed the Star Math assessment, one at the start of the course and another near the end.

While Star Math does offer data to help assess student achievement in numeracy, it’s best used as a screening tool for teachers. That being said, EIPS’ 2022-23 Star Math results indicate noteworthy numeracy achievements by students. The most notable: the discernible rise in grade-level equivalence measures from fall 2022 and spring 2023 assessments—growing on average by 0.97—showing one year’s academic growth.

Over the next few years, the Division will use the Star Math to develop trend data. Typically, at least three years of data is required to make trend assumptions. So, for now, the 2022-23 Star Math data provides a baseline to begin comparing year over year.

[building capacity]

Supporting student numeracy

Throughout 2022-23, significant work went into building capacity in secondary numeracy, providing teachers and staff with instructional ideas, strategies and best practices, including:

New-Teacher Cohort: Throughout the year, EIPS organized ongoing sessions for junior high math teachers, relatively new to their positions, to come together to share best practices and take part in modelling and coaching opportunities. **Results:** Participants gained confidence in ways to incorporate effective mathematical teaching principles and high-leverage practices into the classroom.

Teacher Collaboration: EIPS co-ordinated numerous collaboration opportunities, for math educators. Topics included problem-solving, vocabulary, formative and summative assessments and pedagogy. **Results:** Collectively, participants gained deeper insight and access to resources to teach and assess students more effectively.

Re-Thinking Secondary Math: A professional learning series for the secondary level, grades 7-12, to promote vertical alignment of content, vocabulary and pedagogy. **Results:** In total, 21 secondary teachers gained resources and a wealth of knowledge geared toward fostering a culture of thinking within their math classroom.

New Curriculum: New Curriculum consultants actively engaged with teachers and area experts to prepare for the next phases of the new elementary curriculum

roll-out—grades 4 to 6 mathematics and the new science curriculum. **Results:** The effort ensured those teaching the new curriculum had the needed tools and resources for a smooth transition.

Thinking Classrooms: EIPS consultants offered several professional learning sessions focused on how to build thinking classrooms. **Results:** Math and science teachers explored new ways to implement vertical non-permanent surface activities in the classroom—all aimed at enhancing student engagement, visual thinking and assessment.

Common Exams: A working committee—made up of teachers and consultants—tasked with developing and fine-tuning the junior high and senior high final exams. **Results:** Ongoing. Once fully implemented, the common exams will help establish assessment consistency, build teacher capacity and better align assessments with the curriculum.

Co-Teaching: EIPS numeracy consultants created virtual co-taught lessons—a consultant virtually joins a teacher during classroom instruction. **Results:** The lessons were viewed by more than 100 teachers, offering needed support to a wider base.

INTRODUCING A NEW CURRICULUM

In 2022-23, schools across Alberta rolled out the new elementary curriculum—mathematics, English language arts and literature, and physical education and wellness. EIPS undertook significant work to ensure a smooth transition and successful student learning.

- *New Curriculum Team* – Using Board-allocated funds, EIPS established a New Curriculum team, made up of seven curriculum leads and assessment-area experts. Together, they developed resources, unit plans, planning tools, how-to videos, bridging documents, assessments and professional learning and aligned report cards to ensure smooth student transitions.
- *Working sessions* – Elementary teachers and consultants participated in several working sessions throughout the year—sharing feedback and insight. Collectively, they developed a holistic understanding of the new curriculum, the scope-and-sequence documents and long-range plans to implement the curriculum across all EIPS elementary schools.

- *Onboarding* – Meetings were organized with Instructional Supports; Specialized Supports; and First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education leads to enhance resources—focused on instructional best practices, high-leverage tasks and differentiation.
- *Professional Learning* – The New Curriculum team also offered several professional learning sessions with grade cohorts. All sessions explored the new curriculum, the unit plans and available resources. The team also collected ongoing teacher feedback and developed a vetting process to ensure teachers, peers and consultants reviewed all resources.
- *Curriculum Micro-Site* – The New Curriculum team worked with Information Technologies to create a micro-site to house the unit plans, assessments and Division-created resources—allowing easy access for teachers. To date, the feedback from teachers is positive, many of whom say it helped build confidence.

EIPS will continue this work to further build capacity and ensure teachers can effectively implement the next phases of the new curriculum roll-out.

Opportunities for Growth

An ongoing growth area for EIPS is supporting and developing school-based instructional approaches. One strategy it will use is vertically aligning content between grade levels to establish collaborative teams—critical given the new elementary curriculum. The Division will also spend considerable time addressing mathematics achievement results at the junior high level. As mentioned in the "Results" section, EIPS' Grade 9 math results are strong. However, there is room for improvement, and the Division will work to strengthen results in this area.

EIPS is also committed to ensuring an excellent start to learning. As such, in 2023-24, it will pilot an intervention program to support struggling readers entitled, Reading Enrichment and Development—being offered at elementary schools in Fort Saskatchewan, Bruderheim and Lamont. If the program is successful, the Division will expand it to other schools throughout EIPS.

Finally, ongoing capacity building in literacy and numeracy continues to be a focus area. Throughout 2023-24, EIPS will review, facilitate and support professional learning sessions and create teacher collaboration opportunities to share best practices and evidence-based pedagogical research. The goal: To improve instruction and assessment practice rigour.

Priority Strategy for Education Plan

EIPS is committed to implementing research-based strategies to promote growth and success for all students. Strategies include:

-  Continue to build teacher capacity focused on smooth transitions for students and teachers—including unit-plan development, assessment development and professional learning. The strategy ensures teachers confidently and effectively implement Phase 2 of the new curriculum roll-out launching in 2023-24—mathematics and English language arts and literature, grades 4 to 6, and science and French Immersion language arts and literature, kindergarten to Grade 3.
-  Continue to use multidisciplinary teams to support learners with complex needs—across all feeder-school groupings.
-  Continue to build teacher and school-staff capacity in system programs and inclusive settings to ensure all students have access to visual, high-quality programming.
-  Implement high-leverage instructional and assessment practices to support growth in literacy and numeracy and a culture of thinking across all classrooms—using focused professional learning on small-group instruction, fact fluency, vertical non-permanent surfaces, workshop modelling and the five pillars of reading.
-  Provide professional learning opportunities to principals and assistant principals to develop their instructional leadership skills and enhance school education plans.
-  Continue to assess and identify students who are achieving results below grade level in both literacy and numeracy.
-  Focus efforts to improve the Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Test results in language arts and mathematics. Professional learning will include enhancing research-based instructional and assessment practices, maximizing conversations and facilitating robust classroom feedback to support student growth.
-  Continue to support teachers to develop and implement intervention plans that ensure more students demonstrate one year's growth in literacy and numeracy.
-  Work collaboratively with Elk Island Catholic Schools to develop Partners for Science kits that align with the new curriculum.
-  Continue the Division's work developing a senior high humanities writing continuum.
-  Continue the Division's work developing senior high common exams for physics, chemistry and English language arts: Part A.
-  Continue to provide professional learning opportunities on oral language instruction in French Immersion classrooms.
-  Continue to support teachers to implement the new French Immersion curriculum.

GOAL 2: Success for Every Student

Assurance Domain: Student Growth and Achievement

Local Outcome 3: Self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students are engaged in holistic, lifelong learning that is culturally relevant and fosters success

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		
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	ALBERTA 2022-23	ACHIEVEMENT	IMPROVEMENT	OVERALL
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY: 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	76.8	n/a	n/a	62.2	62.8	40.5	n/a	
	E	16.6	n/a	n/a	11.5	8.6	5.5	n/a	
Percentage of students who achieved the acceptable standard (A) and the standard of excellence (E) on diploma examinations	A	80.6	n/a	n/a	79	82.9	74.8	n/a	
	E	11.7	n/a	n/a	10.2	13.4	11.3	n/a	
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY: SENIOR HIGH									
High school completion rate within three years of entering Grade 10	70.9	72.9	85.4	77.2	75.2	57	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
Annual dropout rate of students aged 14 to 18	1.5	4.3	2.1	0	2.6	5.1	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Percentage of high school students who transition to post-secondary, including apprenticeship, within six years of entering Grade 10	44.2	47.1	40.4	43	56	35.5	Intermediate	Improved	Good
Percentage of Grade 12 students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship	49.3	53.8	65.3	56.3	62.7	43.9	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable

NOTE: The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the cancellation of PATs and diploma examinations in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years. As well, in 2021-22 diploma examinations were only written in June, not in January. As such, there is no data for these years.

Performance Measures	RESULTS				
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
EIPS INTERNAL DATA					
Number of students who self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit, as of June 30	906	1,132	1,285	1,291	1,282
Percentage of schools that created a First Nations, Métis and Inuit project proposal and received funding	100	100	100	100	100
Percentage of schools that have a First Nations, Métis and Inuit education lead	100	100	100	100	100
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS					
Percentage of families who feel their child has an understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture and history	78.2	77.9	75.8	76.4	79.2
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR STUDENTS (GRADES 9 AND 12)					
Percentage of students who agree they have an understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture and history	n/a	n/a	77.4	73.2	76.8
EIPS YEAR-IN-REVIEW SURVEY					
Percentage of families, staff, Grade 12 students and community members confident EIPS implements strategies to support the achievement and growth of self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students	n/a	n/a	n/a	92.8	92.7

Background

Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) and Alberta Education are committed to creating and sustaining welcoming and safe learning environments for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. Part of that is a promise to continue to find ways to build on self-identified students' strengths and growth by fulfilling treaty responsibilities; critically analyzing Division structures and procedures; and capacity-building centred on the *Teaching Quality Standard*, *Leadership Quality Standard* and the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action*. As well, by focusing on three key areas: providing First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners with culturally relevant learning opportunities; building capacity to address First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner needs; and strengthening foundational knowledge about Indigenous cultures and a shared history.

Results

Every year, EIPS works hard to ensure all students achieve academic growth. Overall, the Division is successful in accomplishing this. However, an area of continuous focus is ensuring academic growth for students who self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit. That's because, until recently, there appeared to be a visible achievement gap among self-identified students. Since 2016, the Division has made a conscious effort to ensure self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students engage in holistic, culturally relevant, lifelong learning that fosters success. Thanks to that work, the gap is lessening annually.

In 2022-23, 1,282 students within EIPS identified as First Nations, Métis or Inuit. That's down by nine students from the previous year, but an increase of 376 students from five years ago. Looking at the last three years, the number of self-identified students within EIPS has stayed

relatively the same. Now stabilized, EIPS believes the vast majority of First Nations, Métis or Inuit students have now self-identified with the Division. To see so many students self-identifying is significant, indicating a sense of pride in Indigenous culture and heritage. It also suggests the Division's creating conditions for welcoming, inclusive, respectful and safe learning environments.

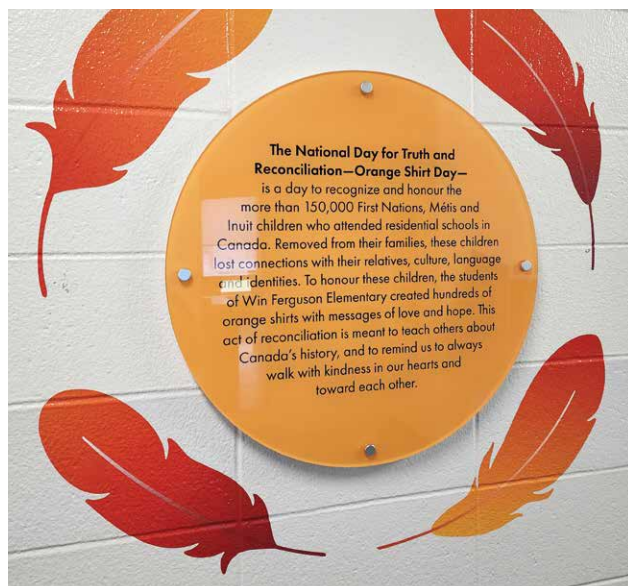
For EIPS, this is a huge success, achieved through a multi-pronged approach. One, by using First Nations, Métis and Inuit funding to support school projects and EIPS Central Services initiatives. Two, by supporting learning achievement. Three, by finding ways to build relationships with the community. Four, through capacity building. And, five, by strengthening foundational knowledge about Indigenous cultures and a shared history.

Schools throughout EIPS all organized Indigenous-focused projects, guided by one of four key criteria:

- direct supports for Indigenous students;
- professional learning focused on the *Teaching Quality Standard* and *Leadership Quality Standard*;
- exploration of the relationship with Land and moving beyond a performative land acknowledgment; and
- reconciliation activities outlined by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's 94 calls to action.

Each project was pre-approved and vetted by EIPS' First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team—based on the Division-developed Indigenous Education Project Funding Formula. The formula ensures consistency and calculates how to distribute project money to each school. As well, to enhance the project, the Division provided each school a detailed guide entitled, *A Guide to Promising Practices to Support First Nations, Métis and Inuit Funding Allocation*. The guide includes all funding criteria and helpful practices to direct work.

Collectively, these efforts are making an impact. Every year, the Division conducts a Year-in-Review



Survey—administered to families, staff, Grade 12 students and community members—to gauge stakeholder confidence in how the Division is meeting the priorities set out in its *Four-Year Education Plan*. The 2022-23 results for Indigenous education efforts are impressive. In total, 92.7% of respondents are confident EIPS implements strategies to support the achievement and growth of self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students—on par

[building capacity]

Train the trainer

Indigenous lead teachers are an extension of the EIPS First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team. They play an essential role in supporting students, staff and schools with Indigenous education. As such, significant effort goes into building lead teacher capacity

Throughout 2022-23, EIPS provided First Nations, Métis and Inuit lead teachers with myriad resources, opportunities and supports to enhance their pedagogical practice. A significant number of professional learning sessions were offered—all co-ordinated through the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team. The focus: Indigenous school projects, a trip to the Indigenous Peoples Experience at Fort Edmonton Park and land-based learning at the Cooking Lake-Blackfoot Provincial Recreation Area. Elders and Knowledge Holders were also included in these sessions to further develop teacher capacity.

The First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team also supported self-identified lead teachers in building capacity by offering leadership opportunities—facilitating the Blanket Exercise and Giant Floor Map activity. Efforts also centred on deepening understanding of the *Teaching Quality Standard*, *Leadership Quality Standard*, and curriculum supports for EIPS students and staff to bring Indigenous histories, perspectives and pedagogies into classroom practice. The First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education consultant also worked with several Division schools to co-plan and co-teach lessons to weave subject curricular-learning objectives with Indigenous perspectives and knowledge.

New resources were also added to the Division's lending library—housed at the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Centre, which includes hundreds of titles by Indigenous authors and illustrators. Titles were added to the kindergarten to Grade 12 section—both in English and French—and the teacher professional learning collection. The centre also continued to lend out the highly popular EduKits—created for pre-kindergarten to Grade 12. The kits contain cross-curricular connections, including physical education, health, music, language arts, science, information and communications technology, arts and mathematics. Even with the addition of a second set of kits, demand still outpaces availability with a 100% sign-out rate of each kit throughout the school year.

with the 2021-22 data. The high-confidence level confirms the Division's efforts around Indigenous education are having a positive impact, and are sustainable year to year.

ACADEMIC MEASURES: PROVINCIAL

The 2022-23 provincial data available from the Alberta Education Assurance Measures Survey for students within EIPS who self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit include the high school dropout rate, post-secondary transitions, high school completion percentages and provincial examinations. Overall, the results are encouraging, particularly the annual dropout rate for First Nations, Métis or Inuit self-identified students, aged 14-18, which remained low at 2.6%—compared to the provincial average of 5.1%. The dropout rate is also comparable to all other EIPS students, 1.5%—both are good news results.

Also important, the percentage of senior high self-identified Indigenous students who transition to post-secondary, including apprenticeships, within six years of entering Grade 10. It's up from the year before—rising to 56% from 43% in 2021-22. Conversely, the provincial average for this measure decreased to 35.5% from 37.7%. Despite the increase, the percentage is still lower than all other EIPS students, which was 65.3%. So, EIPS hopes to improve in this area over the next few years. The good news: The gap is already decreasing.

In 2022-23, the three-year high school completion rate for self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students was 75.2%. The year before, it was 77.2%. So, the drop is disappointing. Big picture, the percentage is still above the pre-pandemic levels—70.9% in 2018-19. It's also significantly above the provincial result of 57%.

Turning to the 2022-23 academic results, within EIPS, self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students outperformed the province in most Grade 6 and Grade 9 subjects—at both the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence. There were only three measures that students were below—all at the Grade 9 standard of excellence category. One of those was in English language arts, 4.4% of Grade 9 self-identified students, within EIPS, achieved the standard of excellence—the provincial average was 6.4%. In mathematics, 5.4% of EIPS Grade 9 self-identified students achieved excellence—the provincial average was just slightly higher at 5.5%. And, in social studies, 5.5% of EIPS students who identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit achieved the standard of excellence—compared to 7% provincially. Again, in all other categories, self-identified EIPS students scored higher than the province.

Highlights from the 2022-23 PAT results include the Grade 6 and Grade 9 English language arts and mathematics results. For English language arts, 82.4% of EIPS students who self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit reached the acceptable standard, compared to 60.6%

Building blocks

How EIPS is creating deeper understanding through relationships with Indigenous Peoples

To further facilitate relationship building with Indigenous Peoples, EIPS added to its First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team, hiring a second Cultural Advisor in 2022-23. The added role meant the Division could better work with schools, administration, lead teachers, families and community organizations to support and build relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. The Cultural Advisor was also tasked with ensuring new Knowledge Holders were introduced to EIPS and provided opportunities to share culturally appropriate teachings and experiences—for both self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, and the general school population. Other initiatives included:

- assist Indigenous students and their families;
- nurture relationships between families and schools;
- provide cultural, academic, emotional and social support;
- host regular sharing circles and meetings with self-identified Indigenous students;
- create culturally rich safe spaces for self-identified Indigenous students to build connections and positive self-awareness; and
- offer language-learning and cultural activities—beading, smudging, round dance and cultural clothing design—to encourage a sense of cultural belonging and pride.

Along with a new Cultural Advisor, a First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education secretary position was also added to provide administrative support.

provincially. Similarly, in Grade 6 mathematics, 65.9% of self-identified EIPS students reached the acceptable standard, compared to 42% across the province.

In Grade 9, the Division saw comparable results. In English language arts, 77.5% of EIPS students who self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit reached the acceptable standard. The provincial average was 49.2%. Meanwhile, 51.5% of EIPS self-identified students in mathematics reached acceptable standards, compared to 28.7% across the province.

Digging deeper, comparing pre-pandemic Grade 6 results, the overall English language arts PAT results show 82.4% of self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students met the acceptable standard in 2022-23—falling from 97.6% in 2018-19. Meanwhile, the percentage of students meeting the standard of excellence rose to 14.1% from 11.1% in 2018-19. The provincial averages were 60.6% and 7.1%, respectively. Despite the decrease, it's not a significant drop and it's much higher than the province, pointing to the exceptional work taking place in EIPS classrooms and the focused intervention support provided to students to mitigate learning loss.

In Grade 9, the pre- and post-pandemic results for self-identified First Nations, Métis or Inuit students in Grade 9 English language arts tell a similar story. In 2022-23, the percentage of students who met the acceptable standard fell to 77.5% from 79.7% in 2018-19. At the standard of excellence, numbers also dropped to 3.9% from 9.4% in 2018-19. The provincial averages were 49.2% and 4.4%, respectively. That said, like the Grade 6 results, the Grade 9 data suggests minimal learning loss.

Moving to the diploma examination results, EIPS students who self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit outperformed the province in most categories.

Results were only lower in one subject at the acceptable standard and three at the standard of excellence. Most impressive was the percentage of self-identified students who achieved the acceptable standard and standard of excellence in Chemistry 30 and Science 30. In chemistry, 94.4% of students met the acceptable standard, and 33.3% met the standard of excellence. The provincial averages were 70% and 24%, respectively. For science, 94.4% of EIPS self-identified students met the acceptable standard, and 44.4% met the standard of excellence—compared to 75.3% and 18.7% in the province, respectively.

With respect to the English Language Arts 30-1 diploma examinations, the pre- and post-pandemic results indicate the percentage of self-identified First Nations, Métis or Inuit students who met the acceptable standard dropped in 2022-23. While still high, the percentage did fall to 87.8% from 96.6% in 2018-19. The number of students who met the standard of excellence also declined to 7.3% from 13% in 2018-19. The provincial averages were 78.3% and 6.1%, respectively. Overall, though, the learning loss was minimal. However, there is room for growth to reach pre-pandemic levels.

That wasn't the case for English Language Arts 30-2. Self-identified EIPS students experienced significant learning loss at this level. The percentage of self-identified First Nations, Métis or Inuit students who met the acceptable standard dropped to 82.9% from 93.5% in 2018-19. Although there is a slight increase from the previous year, 81%, it's still low compared to pre-pandemic levels. Percentages were also lower for the standard of excellence, which fell to 4.9% from 12.9% in 2018-19. Based on this result, one can conclude the pandemic had a far greater negative impact on self-identified students in the English Language Arts 30-2 stream than those in the 30-1 stream.

For the diploma examinations, in Mathematics 30-1, the percentage of self-identified First Nations, Métis or Inuit students who met the acceptable standard also fell to 72.4%—down from 78.9% in 2018-19. Meanwhile, the percentage meeting the standard of excellence increased to 22.7%—up from 5.3% in 2018-19. That’s good news. The provincial averages were 60.6% and 15%, respectively. For Mathematics 30-2, 69.6% of students met the acceptable standard—that, too, is up from 66.7% in 2018-19. However, at the standard of excellence, it declined to 17.4% from 20% in 2018-19. The provincial averages were 65.8% and 12.1%, respectively.

ACADEMIC MEASURES: INTERNAL

In terms of internal achievement screening, throughout 2022-23, EIPS continued using the Star Reading assessment to evaluate student achievement in literacy. It also introduced the Star Math to assess student achievement in numeracy. Both are assessment tools schools use to gauge student learning and identify any learners requiring intervention support (see pg. 23, “Success for All Student: Improving student outcomes”).

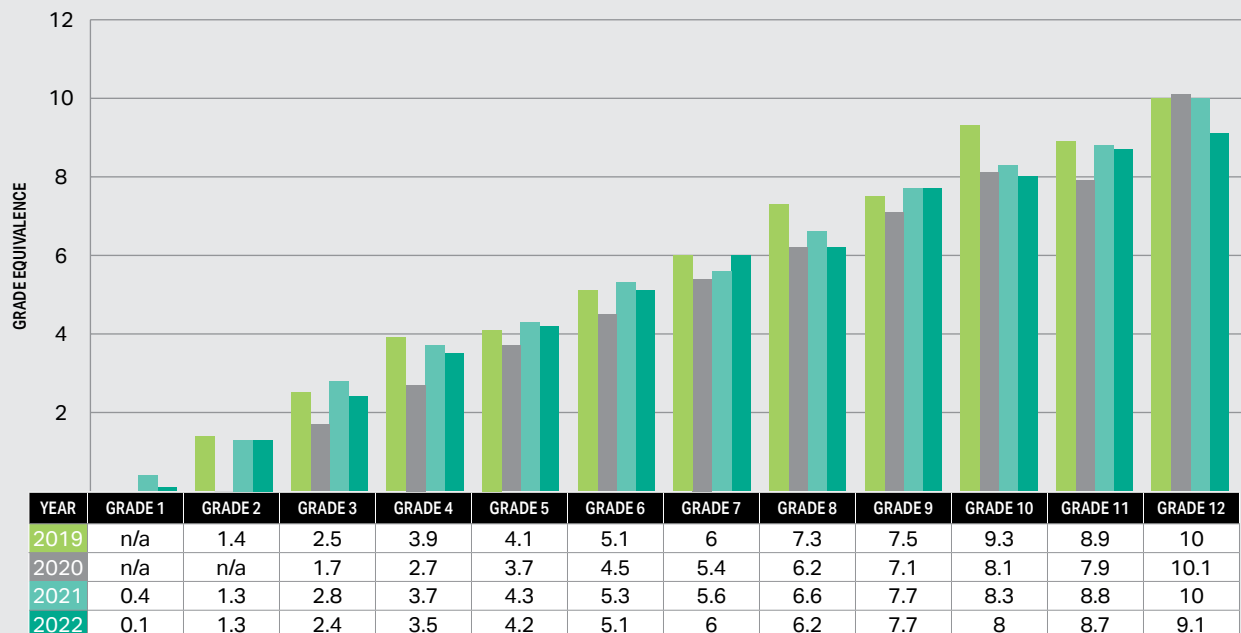
Chart 2 provides information about how First Nations, Métis or Inuit self-identified students perform on the Star Reading assessment—assessing achievement at the start of each grade and progress from year to year. Generally,

between fall 2018 and fall 2019, the grade equivalence (GE) gains for self-identified First Nations, Métis or Inuit students were positive. In 2020, the pandemic and subsequent school closures resulted in a drop in GE gains. However, results rose to pre-pandemic levels in fall 2021 and fall 2022. Meaning, self-identified students are again seeing positive GE gains, the school closures were the cause of the learning gap in 2020, and achievement progress is now stabilized.

The Star Reading results do reveal minimal literacy learning gaps between First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and all students in EIPS. Elementary First Nations, Métis and Inuit students saw similar growth in reading levels as all other students. However, at the secondary level, there were discrepancies. For example, in Grade 7, students who identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit experienced noticeably less growth in literacy than all other EIPS students—self-identified students had a GE growth score of 0, and all other students had a 0.4 increase in GE. Meanwhile, self-identified students in Grade 10 saw significantly more growth than all other EIPS students in literacy—self-identified students had a GE score increase of 0.9, and all other students had a 0.2 GE increase.

Overall, though, 64% of all self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students showed one year’s growth in reading. That’s on par with the percentage for all EIPS

**CHART 2:
EIPS Multi-Year Star Reading Results – First Nations, Métis and Inuit students**



students demonstrating one year's growth, at 65%. So, again, big picture, the results are positive and indicate the Division's work to address First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner needs is making a difference in reading.

Turning to numeracy, the Division's Star Math results indicate the percentage of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students demonstrating growth was 57%, which is on par with the Division average of 58%. Overall, self-identified students, are growing at the same grade equivalency as all other students, except in Grade 5, Grade 7 and Grade 8. For these grades, the GE was lower for self-identified students than all other students by 0.3, 0.4 and 0.3, respectively.

Unfortunately, this being the first year EIPS has had students write the Star Math assessment, there is no year-over-year data to see growth over time. Instead, the Division will analyze the data over the coming years as students continue to write the Star Math assessment.

NEW ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

Finally, to support the roll-out of the new elementary curriculum, the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team was instrumental in ensuring all Division-developed resources were culturally relevant and included an appropriate, authentic Indigenous voice. The team worked closely with EIPS' New Curriculum lead teachers in planning lessons, vetting resources and providing constructive feedback. They also worked closely with the Partners for Science project, revamping it to reflect the new science programs of study—with the same focus on co-creating learning experiences that are authentic, appropriate and relevant. Related elementary learning kits were also built, by the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team, containing land-based activities, plans and materials—all supporting the new curriculum.

Being in Relation

To create deep understanding and tell powerful truths about First Nations, Métis and Inuit histories, traditions and perspectives requires being in relation with Indigenous communities. As such, EIPS has maintained its relationship with Elder Wilson Bearhead, a member of the Wabamun Lake Indian Band who has served in many key leadership roles, including Chief in his community, Grand Chief of the Confederacy of Treaty 6 First Nation and the Alberta Regional Chief for the Assembly of First Nations. For example, in 2022-23, Wilson offered wisdom and guidance to EIPS' First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team. He also guided the Division in launching its first round dance in March 2023. And, he supported EIPS' in organizing a Candle Day—previously postponed because of the pandemic and related public health restrictions.

The First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team also

worked to strengthen relationships with other Elders, Knowledge Holders and local Indigenous community members. The benefit: Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Holders support student and staff learning by bringing authentic Indigenous knowledge, pedagogies and perspectives into each EIPS school. What resulted was high-quality learning experiences for Indigenous students, and staff, and all students and staff within EIPS.

[building capacity]

All about the land

Celebrating Indigenous culture through land-based learning

Under Elder Wilson Bearhead's guidance, the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team continued its work creating Indigenous outdoor learning spaces at schools throughout the Division. To date, the Division's created 13 land-based learning spaces in Bruderheim, Fort Saskatchewan and Sherwood Park. The spaces allow students, staff and community members to come and learn from the land, and be living embodiments of Canada's land acknowledgment and treaty obligations. More are planned for Uncas Elementary, Ardrossan Elementary, Pine Street Elementary, F.R. Haythorne Junior High and Mills Haven Elementary.

EIPS Central Services also houses an Indigenous outdoor learning space, which it uses to host various events and projects, including several professional learning experiences for Division teachers. The EIPS site also features several native Indigenous plants, and plans for a storyboard explaining each plant's significance. Looking ahead, the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team hopes to offer a similar setup at each school-based outdoor learning space, with signage directing visitors to a web page to learn about the foliage directly from Elders and Knowledge Holders.

In addition to the outdoor learning spaces, EIPS and schools worked with several community partners—Métis Crossing, Elk Island National Park, Beaver Hills Biosphere and Strathcona Wilderness Centre—to provide land-based learning experiences to Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. The partnerships allowed the Division to enhance events and activities to commemorate better the heritage, diverse cultures and contributions of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit. Some of these include: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Project of Heart, Have a Heart Day, Blanket Exercises, Moose Hide Campaign, Bear Witness Day, Métis Week and National Indigenous Peoples' Day. New in 2022-23, EIPS used the Strathcona Wilderness Centre to add a new lesson component to its land-based learning program, focused on Métis history. Collectively, through these partnerships, more students and staff are experiencing land-based learning, are in relation with the land, and developing their knowledge and understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture and history.

To further build on being in relation, EIPS hosted an Indigenous Cultural Camp in June 2023. Specifically, the camp was hosted by the Division's First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team, with support from Woodbridge Farms Elementary and the Strathcona Wilderness Centre. Participants took part in various land-based activities, led by community-based Elders and Knowledge Holders. Feedback from both participants and staff was overwhelmingly positive. It also highlighted how partnerships between the Division, families, Elders and community members offer immeasurable opportunities for relationship building, developing a sense of belonging and creating cultural pride.

To create deep understanding and tell powerful truths requires being in relation with Indigenous communities

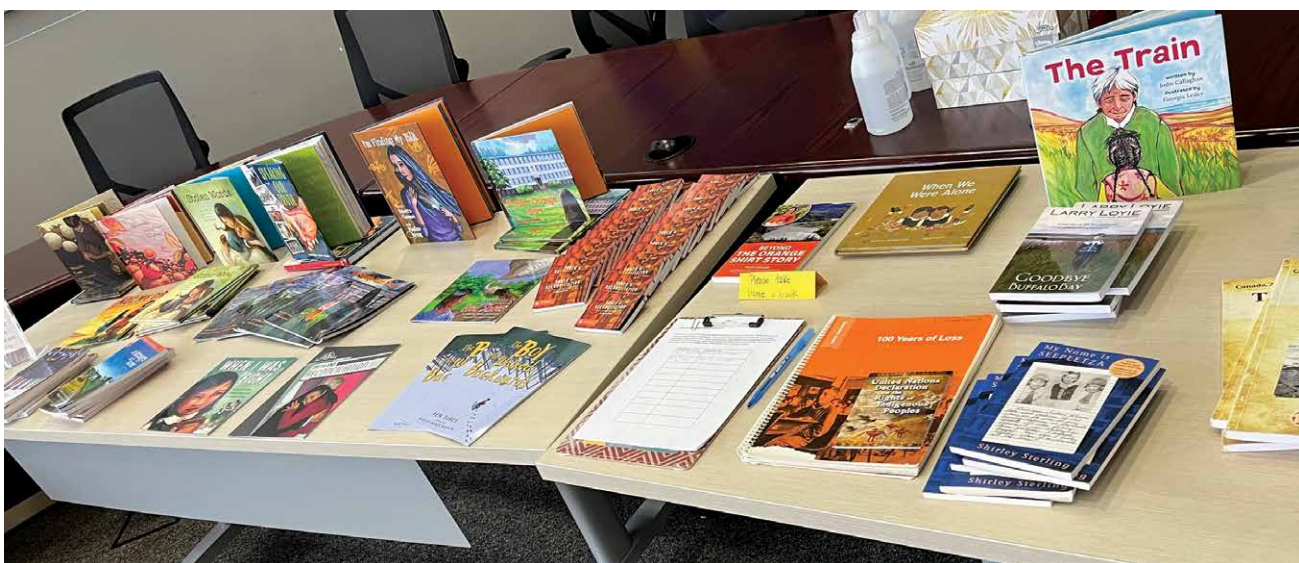
The Division also continued offering its Indigenous family gatherings. Three gatherings were hosted in 2022-23. Each was facilitated by the EIPS First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team, with special guests such as Elder Wilson Bearhead; Connie Kulhavy, a nationally renowned workshop facilitator and Métis cultural presenter; and Natalie Pepin, an Edmonton-based Métis artist and storyteller. The gatherings provided space, supper and a cultural activity for participants. It also gave families a chance to connect, build community, share hopes and discuss truth-telling and reconciliation within EIPS. For the Division, the gatherings also helped inform next steps for the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team.

Opportunities for Growth

An area of concern for EIPS is the low percentage of self-identified Indigenous senior high students transitioning to post-secondary school, including apprenticeship programs, within six years of entering Grade 10. As such, this is recognized as a growth area for the Division, the cultural advisors and senior high Indigenous lead teachers. Work in this area will also involve supports for secondary teachers and lead teachers to improve literacy and numeracy achievement results for self-identified students.

Another growth area is providing ongoing support for teachers to embed First Nations, Métis and Inuit learnings into the curriculum. EIPS First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team will continue co-planning with school staff and co-teaching with individual teachers. It will also focus on ensuring the new curriculum taught to EIPS students incorporates culturally relevant; authentic; and appropriate resources, content and perspectives. To do that, it will work with the Division's new elementary curriculum teacher planning groups, collaborating with teacher cohorts and participating in lead-teacher modelling initiatives.

The third area for growth is the outdoor learning spaces and deepening student and staff relationships with the land. The First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team will continue to work closely with schools to develop effective ways to introduce and enhance land-based learning across the Division, woven through curricular learning outcomes. And, lastly, EIPS plans to work with schools to implement promising teaching and learning practices that support numeracy learning outcomes for students who self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit—with particular attention at the secondary level.





Priority Strategy for Education Plan








First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education

EIPS is committed to supporting teachers and administrators to effectively, authentically and respectfully implement the *Teaching Quality Standard* and *Leadership Quality Standard* competencies related to First Nations, Métis and Inuit education. Strategies include:

-  Work with school administrators and teachers to effectively incorporate land-based learning into their practice.
-  Assist educators to weave First Nations, Métis and Inuit history, culture and perspective into lesson plans—respectfully and authentically.
-  Work with new curriculum teachers to help embed Indigenous ways of knowing, learning and doing within divisional resources.
-  Work with First Nations, Métis and Inuit school leads and consultants to deepen Indigenous foundational knowledge.
-  Create and facilitate effective and responsive professional learning.
-  Work with teachers to create Partners for Science resources that incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing, learning and doing into hands-on learning experiences.

Fostering Belonging

EIPS is also committed to supporting Indigenous students and families in fostering a sense of belonging in their school community. Strategies include:

-  Provide cultural advisors to support individual schools and student groups.
-  Host a land-based learning and cultural camp in the spring 2024.
-  Continue efforts building relationships with Elders and Knowledge Holders.
-  Co-ordinate school visits to cultivate and facilitate authentic cultural teachings in schools.
-  Continue to host round dance events in schools, including one divisionwide round dance for all school communities.
-  Support students, grades 9 and 12, through a learning exercise where they create ribbon skirts.
-  Host three Indigenous family engagement nights aimed at relationship building and providing engaging cultural teachings.

GOAL 2: Success for Every Student

Assurance Domain: Student Growth and Achievement

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

Provincial Outcome: Alberta's students are successful

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES						EVALUATION		
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	ALBERTA 2022-23	ACHIEVEMENT	IMPROVEMENT	OVERALL
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY									
High school completion rate of students within three years of entering Grade 10	83.3	84.4	88.9	87.6	85.4	80.7	High	Declined	Acceptable
High school completion rate of students within four years of entering Grade 10	89.2	87.9	89.1	92.1	90.7	86.5	High	Maintained	Good
High School completion rate of students within five years of entering Grade 10	88.2	90.8	89.9	91.2	93	88.6	Very High	Improved Significantly	Excellent
Annual dropout rate of students aged 14 to 18	1.7	1.7	1.4	1.5	1.6	2.5	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Percentage of Grade 12 students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship	64.7	66.6	70.3	74.9	73.4	71.9	High	Improved	Good
Percentage of high school students who transition to post-secondary, including apprenticeships, within six years of entering Grade 10	62.6	62.1	60.3	59.5	65.3	59.7	High	Improved Significantly	Good
Percentage of parents and teachers who agree students are taught attitudes and behaviours will make them successful at work when they finish school	80.7	81.2	84.6	81.9	80.2	83.1	High	Maintained	Good

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES				
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS					
My child is being taught knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to be successful in life	80.9	81.9	82.2	78.2	79.1
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR STUDENTS (GRADE 9 AND GRADE 12)					
I feel supported by my school as I prepare for life beyond high school	n/a	n/a	68.9	62.2	62.9
Percentage of students who agree they're learning the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to succeed in life	n/a	n/a	59	56.6	60.2
EIPS YEAR-IN-REVIEW SURVEY					
Percentage of families, staff, Grade 12 students and community members confident EIPS implements strategies that support and prepare students for life beyond high school	n/a	n/a	n/a	77.4	78.7

Analysis of Results

Background

Keeping students motivated and engaged as they work to finish senior high requires a collaborative effort throughout the entire kindergarten to Grade 12 public education system. That's because senior high completion is a fundamental building block influencing other educational and life goals. Simply put, if a student doesn't complete senior high, it impacts 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.

Results

The Alberta Education Assurance Measures are tools EIPS uses to stay informed about how it's doing relative to achieving outcomes that lead to success beyond senior high. The 2022-23 results confirm the Division continues to show positive achievement in several important areas for senior high students. For example, the Division's five-year high school completion rate is strong, which received a provincial achievement rating of "very high" and "improved significantly." In fact, an impressive 93% of EIPS students graduated within five years of entering Grade 10—up from the previous three-year average of 90.6%. Provincewide, the percentage was 88.6%. Similarly, EIPS' dropout rate earned a provincial rating of "very high," at just 1.6%, compared to the provincial average of 2.5%. Also noteworthy, 73.4% of Grade 12 students who graduated were eligible for the Rutherford Scholarship—earning, and maintaining, a provincial evaluation rating of "high."

In terms of preparing students after senior high, according to the 2022-23 Alberta Education Assurance Survey, 80.2% of teachers and parents agree EIPS teaches students the attitudes and behaviours needed to make them successful after they finish school. That's down from 81.9% the previous year, and below the provincial average of 83.1%. However, on the 2022-23 EIPS Annual Feedback Survey: For parents and caregivers, 79.1% of families reported their child's learning the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to succeed in life, which is up from the previous year, 78.2%. In fact, the percentage of families "very satisfied" increased significantly to 22.1% from 19.8%. Overall, EIPS is pleased with the results. It shows EIPS is doing a good job of preparing students for life after senior high. That said, the Division feels even more can be done.

Also positive, according to the EIPS Annual Feedback Survey, EIPS saw a small increase in the number of students feeling supported by their school as they prepare for life beyond high school, increasing to 62.9% from 62.2%. The Division also "improved significantly" on its Alberta assurance measure for the percentage of high school students who transition to post-secondary, including apprenticeships, within four years and six years of entering Grade 10. Within four years, 44% of students move to post-secondary—up by 3.7%. Within six years, 65.3% of students move to post-secondary—also up, by 5.8%. Both results are noticeably higher than the provincial averages—40.2% and 59.7%, respectively.

CAREER PATHWAYS

Rewind to 2021-22, EIPS was concerned about the number of students reporting feeling supported as they prepare for different career pathways. In response to that feedback, the Division hosted a student forum with learners in



[building capacity]

The big picture

Throughout 2022-23, EIPS continued its capacity-building efforts to support Career and Technology Foundations (CTF) and Career and Technology Studies (CTS) programming through various initiatives:

Career and Technology Collaboration – CTF and CTS instructors collaborated to improve course descriptions, stimulate innovative ideas and enhance assessment methods. CTS teachers also joined forces to devise assessment strategies and enhance their CTS expertise. Similarly, senior high CALM teachers and junior high health teachers participated in professional learning, exploring the province's vision for career education and developing strategies to incorporate that vision within EIPS. Looking ahead, EIPS plans to conduct more collaborative professional learning sessions to build its CTF and CTS resource repository. The goal: To enhance school capacity so all students are prepared for life beyond senior high.

Career Pathways Facilitators – Every EIPS senior high school appointed a Career Pathways facilitator who served as the primary contact for students. Year-long, the facilitator worked with students and their families, exploring career options and guiding the off-campus and dual-credit programming. Looking ahead, the Division will next add the Career Pathways facilitator model into junior high and elementary schools starting in the 2023-24 school year.

Career Pathways Information Sessions – The Division hosted a series of Career Pathways information sessions, specifically for the Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP), dual-credit, green certificate and work experience options to enhance student preparedness beyond their senior high years. These sessions provided comprehensive insights into career pathways programming and featured a dedicated question-and-answer segment with EIPS program specialists. The sessions were all hosted virtually and in-person during regular intervals throughout the year, with more than 250 people attending.

grades 9 and 12, asking a series of questions to gain insight on how to better support, prepare and transition students for life after senior high. EIPS used the feedback to help enhance its Career Pathways programming by shifting its instructional practices for Career and Technology Foundations (CTF), Career and Technology Studies (CTS), CALM, and Health and Life Skills 7-9. The Division also hosted 22 career pathways professional learning sessions, reaching more than 150 teachers.

Work also continued on developing and implementing a strategic plan for Career Pathways programming—from kindergarten to Grade 12. Four key focus areas make up the plan:

- *Awareness (K-4)* – Students in kindergarten to Grade 4 build career awareness through curriculum-related teaching and learning, career days, field trips, guest speakers and natural discussion connecting curriculum to potential career sectors. The Division also worked with the New Curriculum team to identify these connections within the curriculum units.
- *Understanding (5-9)* – Through CTF programming, students in grades 5 to 9 explore various occupational clusters, identify passions and uncover areas of interest to better understand career possibilities.
- *Readiness (10-12)* – Through CTS programming and on-site activities, senior high students develop knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for entry into the workplace or post-secondary education.
- *Communication (K-12)* – Using various communication tools, staff, students, families and the community build a common language and understanding of career pathways. The tools include monthly newsletters, resources and ongoing advertising of student opportunities, such as dual-credit courses, RAP positions and career preparation.

[building capacity]

Your Future: Post-secondary and career fair

Connecting students to discover the right career path

Again, by popular demand, EIPS hosted its annual Your Future: Post-secondary and Career Fair—open to students in grades 9 through 12. Hosted in October, the event gathered together universities, colleges, polytechnics and industry experts all at a single venue, making it the largest event of its kind in Alberta. There, students and their families had the opportunity to engage with some of Alberta's leading post-secondary institutions and employers, pose questions, consult with experts, and gain insights into future career trends. In total, the event attracted more than 800 attendees.

Using this framework, the Career Pathways team developed an interactive Career Week repository of resources aligned with the five career clusters to help teachers, students and families start conversations and explore different pathways. Schools were also provided with a link to the *EIPS Career Pathways Newsletter* to include in their own communication for students and families to help guide and support career education in classrooms from kindergarten to Grade 12. To complement the plan, the Division also facilitated a series of teacher-collaborative sessions, grades 7-12, to support transitions from CTF to CTS instruction and enhance the clarity of the different CTF course titles and descriptions.

In terms of career education credits, EIPS students earned 2,123 credits in 2022-23. That translates to an impressive 53,075 work hours by students. Of those, 660 credits were earned through RAP, totalling 16,500 work hours. As well, 13 students earned 84 credits toward the Green Certificate, with four completing the technician

TABLE 7: **Career Pathways professional learning offerings 2022-23**

Session Descriptions	SESSIONS	PARTICIPANTS
CTF: Course descriptions, challenge ideas, assessment	5	28
CTS: Bridging to apprenticeship pathways, assessment	6	26
CTF-CTS Vertical Alignment: Working to structure CTF programming to CTS and collegiate-level courses	3	27
LDC: Reviewing and writing updated programs of study for Locally Developed courses	3	11
Health and Life Skills: Creating strategies and resources to meet the province's Career Education direction	1	8
CALM: Creating strategies and resources to meet the province's Career Education direction	1	7
IT and Career Pathways: Reviewing current trends and careers in AI	3	45

certification through Alberta Forestry and Agriculture. Dual-credit programming is another ongoing focus area for EIPS. Through this, students were able to start several apprenticeship opportunities throughout 2022-23, ranging from mechanics to esthetics.

TABLE 8: Students Starting EIPS Apprenticeship CTS courses – 2022-23

	2021-22	2022-23
automotive service	187	126
cabinetmaking	32	n/a
cooking and baking	225	244
hairstyling and esthetics	276	244
welding	27	24

As well, EIPS received a \$100,000 enhancement grant through the province to support its dual-credit option. The funds were used to roll out a new welding apprenticeship program to increase student access to industry-standard facilities. All four of EIPS’ fabrication classrooms had upgrades and inspections completed in 2022-23. To complement the apprenticeship, the Division purchased more than \$128,000 in new supplies and equipment for the new classrooms for student use. It also purchased 15 virtual reality welders for its CTF programming. Students also participated in four new dual-credit courses—human development, foundations in industry workplace safety,

accounting principles and sociology—bumping the number of students accessing dual-credit programming to 96 from 51 in 2021-22.

In addition to apprenticeships and dual-credit programming, EIPS continued its partnerships with Norquest College, Portage College, Olds College and AT Safety Training. The partnerships allow schools to offer a selection of introductory post-secondary courses to senior high students. Students who complete the course earn both senior high credit and post-secondary credit, at the same time.

TABLE 9: EIPS post-secondary course offerings – 2022-23

Introductory post-secondary course	NO. OF STUDENTS COMPLETED
accounting principles	1
American sign-language	1
animal health technician	3
computer science coding and robotics	0*
foundations in industry workplace safety	33
human development	30
power engineering	2
psychology	22
sociology	2

Note: In the process of transitioning to a new school division

[building capacity]

Partnership with purpose

A new collegiate school and leading-edge programming

During the 2022-23 academic year, the Division formally submitted a proof of concept and business application to Alberta Education for a collegiate school—a proposed replacement school for Fort Saskatchewan High and Rudolph Hennig Junior High, grades 7-12. The idea: To provide leading-edge space and programming to better assist students preparing for careers, employment, apprenticeships and post-secondary education. The Fort Saskatchewan location is ideal for the collegiate educational model as it’s within Alberta’s Industrial Heartland—home to more than 40 medium- to large-sized corporations specializing in a range of industries, including petrochemical, carbon capture, and supply and services. EIPS already has an established and positive relationship with several of these companies, including Agrium Inc., Dow Chemical Co., Shell Scotford and Sherritt International Corp. Given these existing relationships, EIPS feels once the collegiate model is approved, it can formalize partnerships immediately.



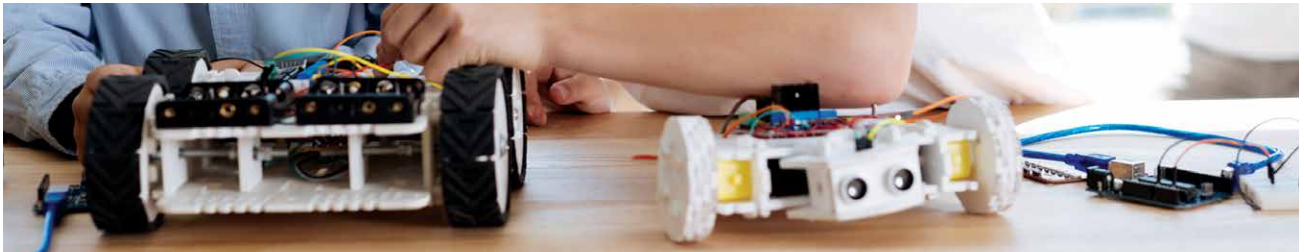
Opportunities for Growth

While the Division is pleased with its five-year high school completion and dropout rates, there is room for growth in providing enhanced support for students transitioning to post-senior high. As such, EIPS will ensure its Career Pathways strategic plan aligns with insights gathered through engagement efforts—Alberta Assurance Measures Survey, EIPS Annual Feedback Survey and Student Voice. It will also continue engaging families to empower them with the means to assist their child in career planning and preparing for life after senior high.

A more obvious growth area is enriching career education throughout EIPS—through capacity-building efforts, particularly around teacher collaboration and incorporating age-appropriate career exploration into classroom curriculum. It will also focus on incorporating CTS and CTF programming learner competencies—critical

thinking, problem-solving, information management, creativity and innovation, communication, collaboration, cultural and global awareness, and personal growth and well-being. As well, it plans to incorporate these essential skills into the elementary CTF programming, grades 5 and 6, aiming to equip students with the skills to navigate unfamiliar or challenging situations successfully.

Lastly, EIPS will continue to build and develop its community partnerships to facilitate and enhance programming—off-campus education, dual-credit courses, post-secondary programs and work-integrated learning opportunities. It will also work with community partners and local businesses within the Heartland Industrial area to further develop the proposed collegiate school in Fort Saskatchewan. Ultimately, through these collective efforts, the Division is better positioned to prepare students for life after they graduate from senior high.



Priority Strategy for Education Plan

EIPS is committed to supporting students to ensure they are prepared for life after senior high. Strategies include:



Align career clusters and regular programming so career discussions are naturally integrated into the curriculum.



Work with elementary teachers to develop relevant career and technology foundations courses—for students in grades 5 to 6.



Work with junior high career and technology foundations teachers to build course challenges that align with the program of studies.



Continue efforts to review the Division's career and technology foundations and career and technology studies programming.



Work with senior high staff to enhance learning supports and developmental needs as students transition into adulthood.



Expand the Take Our Kids to Work Day, to also include a Division Career Day.



Host EIPS' annual Your Future: Post-Secondary and Career Fair in the fall—for students in grades 9 to 12.



Support each EIPS senior high to establish a school-based career fair event in spring 2024.



Continue efforts to enhance student opportunities by exposing them to multiple career options—work experience, off-campus education, apprenticeships, certifications, mentoring and job shadowing.



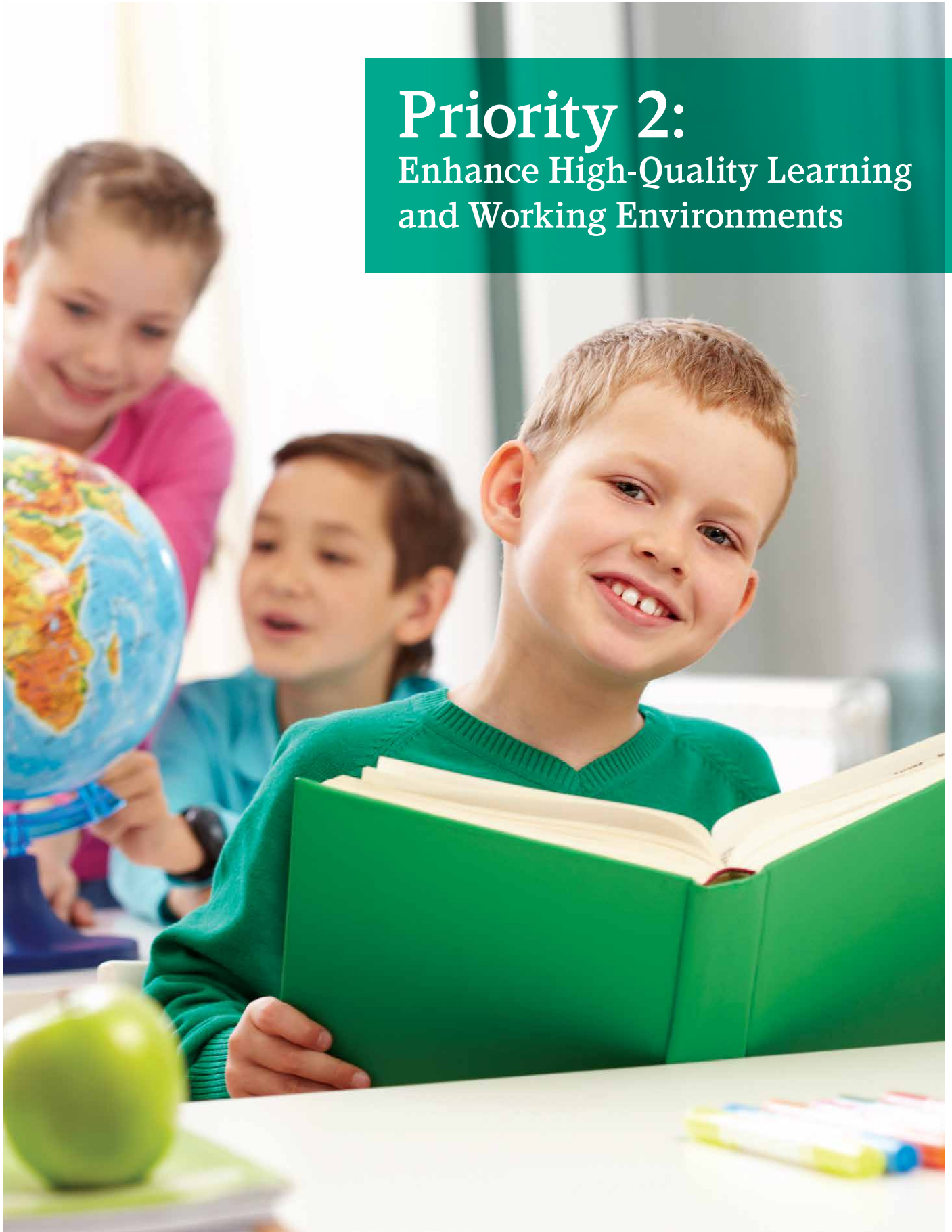
Work with community partners and local businesses within the Heartland Industrial area to support and promote the proposed collegiate school in Fort Saskatchewan.



Identify local community partners and local businesses to help enhance the Division's career and technology studies programming.

Priority 2:

Enhance High-Quality Learning
and Working Environments



Goal 1: 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		
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	ALBERTA 2022-23	ACHIEVEMENT	IMPROVEMENT	OVERALL
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY									
Teachers reporting in the past three to five years the professional learning and in-servicing received was focused, systematic and contributed significantly to their professional growth	84.2	86.4	86.6	85.8	86.6	82.2	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
Teachers reporting over the past three years professional learning opportunities made available through EIPS focused on the Division's priorities	87	91	94	90	89	n/a	High	Declined	Acceptable
Teachers reporting over the past three years professional learning opportunities made available through EIPS effectively addressed their professional learning needs	83	85	86	84	85	n/a	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
Teachers reporting over the past three years professional learning opportunities made available through EIPS significantly contributed to their professional learning	83	84	84	83	85	n/a	Intermediate	Improved	Good
Teacher, parent and student satisfaction with the overall quality of basic education	89.9	89.5	89.3	88.6	88.2	88.1	High	Declined	Acceptable
Teachers, parents and students indicating EIPS schools have improved or stayed the same in the last three years	81	80.2	82.8	75.6	76.7	75.2	High	Declined	Acceptable
Parents satisfied with the quality of teaching at their child's school	91	90	92	90	89	n/a	High	Declined	Acceptable
Parents satisfied with the quality of education their child is receiving at school	91	92	91	92	91	n/a	Very High	Maintained	Excellent

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES				
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS					
Families satisfied with the quality of education their child's receiving at their school	88.6	86.4	86.9	83.9	83.2
Families satisfied with the quality of teaching at their child's school	88.4	86.4	88.5	85.1	83.8
Families satisfied with the leadership in their child's school	81.2	80.9	84.2	79.1	80.2
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR STAFF					
Staff who agree there is someone at work who encourages their professional learning	94.4	94	94.6	91.2	93.8
Staff who agree they've had opportunities to grow at work in the last year	94.1	94.8	92.7	92.2	94.4
Staff who agree their colleagues are committed to doing quality work	97	97.6	97.1	95.2	97.1
Staff who agree they receive recognition or praise for doing good work	89.9	88.8	90.2	86.6	87.1
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR STUDENTS (GRADES 9 AND 12)					
Students who are satisfied with the quality of education they receive	n/a	n/a	84.7	77.1	80
Students who are satisfied with the quality of teaching at their school	n/a	n/a	85.6	75.9	79.3
Students who are satisfied with the leadership at their school	n/a	n/a	67.9	61.7	64.5

Background

Lifelong learning is a value supported and promoted throughout the Division. Research indicates teaching qualities and leadership qualities in schools are vital to boosting student achievement. As such, for maximum effectiveness, teachers, staff, school administrators and Division leaders need ongoing opportunities to enhance their knowledge and abilities. In turn, it leads to the adoption of best educational practices and improved student learning outcomes. Therefore, it's crucial EIPS pays close attention to how it's training and supporting all educators, education leaders and classified staff. Ultimately, when all staff members have opportunities to learn and grow in their respective areas, the Division flourishes as a whole.

Equally essential is sustaining EIPS' culture of excellence and accountability. One of the ways the Division does this is by using and analyzing multiple data sets to identify strength areas and opportunities for growth. The data then helps the Division refine and modify its goals and strategies, find efficiencies and effectively manage resources.

Results

Overall, feedback from the 2022-23 Alberta Education Assurance Survey indicates strong employee satisfaction with the professional learning offered within EIPS. For example, 86.6% of EIPS teachers agree the professional learning and in-servicing received from the Division are focused and systematic. As well, 89% of teachers reported the professional learning opportunities offered focus on EIPS' priorities. These results are impressive and indicate the Division continues to provide high-quality professional learning to staff that collectively contributes to teachers' instructional practice. It also demonstrates the learning offered is tightly tied to the *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan*—a living document the Division uses to guide its work and improve teaching and learning outcomes.

To add to the Alberta Education Assurance Survey, EIPS also conducted a feedback survey for staff in spring 2023—completed by all Division employees, certificated and classified. The results complement the provincial measures. Ninety-three per cent of staff reported having someone at work who encourages their professional learning; 94.4% said they have opportunities at work to learn and grow; 97.1% reported their colleagues are committed to doing quality work; and 87.1% of employees felt they received recognition or praise for doing good work—all ranking slightly higher than the year previous. The increase is likely because of EIPS' belief in the importance of professional learning and its connection to student growth and achievement.

EIPS' quality-of-education results are also strong. On the Alberta Education Assurance Survey, 88.2% of teachers, families and students reported being satisfied with the overall quality of basic education—earning a provincial evaluation rating of “high.” Also, 91% of families were satisfied with the quality of education at

their child's school—earning the evaluation rating “very high.” Similarly, 89% of families reported being satisfied with the quality of teaching at their child's school—again earning a provincial evaluation rating of “very high.” Like with staff, EIPS conducted a feedback survey for parents and caregivers, producing similar results as the provincial measures. Collectively, the feedback indicates a high level of satisfaction with the Division's quality of education.

That said, the data also revealed growth areas for EIPS, particularly around the Division's improvement over the last three years. Looking at the Alberta Education Assurance Survey, 76.7% of teachers, families and students agreed or strongly agreed the jurisdiction has improved or stayed the same in the last three years. That's not a bad score, and it's up from 75.6% the year before. However, it is down from the three-year Division average of 79.5%. So, improving the quality of education for all students and professional learning for staff will continue to be a focus area for improvement in 2023-24. The goal: To raise that measure so it aligns better with the three-year average.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Year-round, EIPS strives to offer all employees a range of focused professional learning opportunities that support and complement the priorities and goals listed in the *Four-Year Education Plan*. One of the ways it develops these opportunities is through Professional Growth Plans—completed annually by all probationary, permanent and continuing-contract employees. Each plan is pertinent to the employee's position and reflects their professional learning goals and objectives—while also aligning with the quality standard and related education plans. Collectively, these help foster instructional improvements, professional growth and enhanced practice for all employees.

EIPS Human Resources also hosts several annual learning sessions for employees. One of which was Off to

a Good Start, an orientation program for new employees organized before every school startup. In 2022-23, Off to a Good Start was offered to 30 new teachers and 31 new classified staff. The aim is to prepare new employees—in terms of Division expectations, colleagues and available supports—to help transition into their new surroundings.

Human Resources also ran an Assistant Principal Community of Practice program, formerly called the Division Mentorship Program. The program is open to all assistant principals, runs year-long and acts as a leadership mentoring opportunity. The sessions, all led by experienced principals, Division leaders and HR professionals, focus on the *Leadership Quality Standard* and operational best practices. In 2022-23, topics included supervision, staff evaluations, administrative procedures, *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and budgeting to support student learning. Overall, the program was well received and offered assistant principals needed support and guidance.

Lastly, the department hosted the 2023 Classified Staff Professional Learning Day, which took place on May 5. Throughout the day, classified staff—business managers, secretaries, registrars, educational assistants and other classified groups—participated in multiple centrally co-ordinated professional learning sessions. They also heard from renowned keynote speaker Tina Varughese, a diversity and cross-cultural communication expert, who shared insights into the human side of unconscious bias. She also facilitated one of the 53 break-out sessions. Varughese's session focused on better workplaces. Overall, the day was a huge success, and the break-out sessions were all well-received.

SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS

Supports for Students also hosted numerous professional learning sessions for certificated employees, ongoing throughout the year. For the most part, the sessions focused on capacity building in the areas of early learning literacy; numeracy; discipline; crisis intervention; career pathways; curriculum; assessment; achievement-data analysis; First Nations, Métis and Inuit education; counselling; mental health; and inclusive practices. The department also put significant work into building common core-subject final exams for the secondary grades. The process involved blueprinting the curriculum to develop exam questions, which also served as a valuable form of professional learning. The long-term goal, of course, is to offer consistent assessments and reporting practices divisionwide.

EARLY LEARNING

Year-long, EIPS consultants worked with schools to foster early learning literacy- and numeracy-rich environments. They provided resources and facilitated professional



learning opportunities to focus instruction and maximize student engagement. They also used various educational kits to further support schools. The kits ranged in focus from vertical non-permanent surfaces to building understanding to thinking classrooms (see pg. 17, “Setting up for success”). Several professional learning sessions also took place focusing on high-leverage instructional practices and creating welcoming and inclusive classrooms, including:

- Instructional Support Plans and Communicating;
- Student Learning Videos for Educators;
- EYE-TA Training for New Teachers;
- EYE-TA Training for Administrators;
- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention;
- Individualized Program Plans;
- Occupational Therapy Strategies in the Classroom;
- Speech-Language Strategies in the Classroom;
- Social Learning;
- Circle of Security Classroom;
- Strategies to Support Diverse Learners;
- Fine-Motor Progressions;
- Language Facilitation Strategies;
- Positive Behaviour Strategies; and
- SCERTS Training for all PALS staff.

LITERACY AND NUMERACY

In addition to early learning, EIPS consultants also worked with schools to foster literacy- and numeracy-rich environments—again providing resources and facilitating professional learning opportunities to focus instruction and maximize student engagement. For the most part, the professional learning sessions focused on instruction and assessment through various workshops, modelling and coaching opportunities.

Enhancing learning

Throughout 2022-23, EIPS offered extensive professional learning opportunities focused on literacy and numeracy. Some of these included:

Literacy:

- Middle Years Literacy Initiative
- Secondary Literacy Initiative
- new curriculum implementation
- common exam development
- thinking classrooms
- Lexia learning program
- mentorship programs
- read, writing and phonics workshops
- Focused Learning
- Senior High Writing Continuum creation

Numeracy:

- Fact Fluency
- new teacher cohort mentorship
- collaboration session
- Re-Thinking Secondary Math
- new curriculum implementation
- mentorship programs
- common exam development
- thinking classrooms
- Focused Learning

Overall, the Division's focus on literacy and numeracy is building collective capacity divisionwide, where reading and math are integrated into every subject and every grade. The result: A culture of literacy and numeracy is forming within the Division, better positioning students to succeed and meet their full potential.

FRENCH IMMERSION

To build capacity in French Immersion, EIPS had a French-speaking consultant organize multiple professional learning opportunities, including an Early Literacy in French Immersion Initiative. The focus: To prepare elementary teachers for the launch of the new French Immersion language arts and literature curriculum. The consultant also organized a guest-speaker series, exploring ways to balance structured literacy instruction with real-world francophone experiences to instill a love

of reading—also open to other school divisions for added networking opportunities.

In addition to the professional learning sessions, classroom visits were also organized to demonstrate pedagogical best practices to help engage students and share French language books—written by francophone authors. As well, Year 2 of the Oral Communication Project was piloted, a capacity-building initiative to enhance students' oral communication skills. All four French Immersion elementary schools took part, with both Division 1 and Division 2 teachers helping to co-create resources, teaching strategies of key conversational phrases, and a scope and sequence document to build elementary conversational French skills.

Now complete, the Division plans to adapt the project to develop and refine its French Immersion Division common exams. The common exams will ensure assessment consistency, build teacher capacity and align with the curriculum and the needs of French Immersion students. Already, the Division has developed several quality-sourced French literacy resources, researched second-language literacy learning strategies and identified immersion best-instructional practices.

Looking ahead, EIPS will continue offering the Early Literacy French Immersion Initiative. It will also find new ways to build capacity in French Immersion, including added supports and resources. Through this, the Division's in a better position to offer robust programming and boost student achievement in French Immersion.

FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT EDUCATION

For the 2022-23 school year, Indigenous education capacity building focused on deepening understanding of the *Teaching Quality Standard, Leadership Quality Standard*, and curriculum supports for EIPS students and staff. Ongoing professional learning occurred on designated days, at school-based staff meetings and through in-house targeted workshops. Several professional learning sessions were offered to support the outdoor learning spaces, led by an Indigenous community member at the land-based learning space located at EIPS Central Services (see pg. 38, "All About the Land").

Some schools also worked with the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team, developing ways to bring Indigenous histories, perspectives and pedagogies into classroom practice. The First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education consultant also worked with several Division schools to co-plan and co-teach lessons that weave subject curricular-learning objectives in with Indigenous perspectives and knowledge. These experiences also helped teachers build confidence and capacity to then create space for Indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing within the classrooms.

NEW ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

Preparing for the launch of the new elementary curriculum was another considerable focus area for the Division, particularly in terms of capacity building. All year, EIPS offered professional learning centred on the new curriculum and EIPS' curriculum scope-and-sequence document—an internal summary of what to teach, the sequence to teach it and intended learning outcomes. The Division also established a New Curriculum team, made up of seven curriculum and assessment area-expert teachers. Funded by Board-allocated money, the team's mission: To ensure a successful curriculum roll-out divisionwide. Relatively quickly, the group developed unit plans focused on sound pedagogy and instructional practices to achieve learner outcomes. In collaboration with Instructional Supports consultants, the team also organized multiple professional learning opportunities, created resource materials for staff, developed assessments and reporting standards, and organized unit plans for Phase 2—the subjects launching in fall 2023.

Opportunities for Growth

Although the Division is pleased with the feedback from staff about professional learning, more needs to be done to support the current, and potential, leadership staff. Right now, Division demographics suggest 51% of EIPS principals and 68% of assistant principals have less than five years of experience—for example, in 2022-23, EIPS hired two new principals and five assistant principals. As such, it's essential the Division continues offering support and training for these roles to ensure high-quality education and successful student learning.

One strategy the Division will use to support leadership staff is offering a New Principal Community of Practice, including a formal mentorship program and various leadership-development programs. Another approach is continuing the Assistant Principal Community of Practice program (see pg. 49, "Human Resources"). It's also exploring new and engaging ways to support capacity building for

leadership roles—specifically to enhance the *Leadership Quality Standard* and instructional leadership. In fact, in 2023-24, a cohort of administrators and Human Resources will work to develop and formalize the approach to develop administrators who possess the knowledge, skills and attitudes outlined in the *Leadership Quality Standard* and best serve students.

Another growth area concerns improving students' and staff's mental health and well-being outcomes. As such, EIPS will execute Year 2 of its Foundations of Counselling Programming Community of Practice, which seeks to build capacity, nurture collaboration and engage with counsellors throughout the Division. The goal: To support more students and ensure mental health needs don't significantly impact learning or school experiences.

A third growth area is capacity building for staff who support school teams across EIPS. In fact, the Division plans to develop and pilot a new Foundations of Consulting program throughout 2023-24. The new program will provide onboarding guidance and resources to new Instructional Supports, Specialized Supports and Early Learning consultants. It will also offer capacity-building opportunities for all EIPS Central Services consultants to better support schools. If successful, the Division will continue offering, and build on, the Foundations of Consulting annually.

Interestingly, while building capacity is an essential component of EIPS operations, the qualitative data from the EIPS Annual Feedback Survey: For staff suggests the amount of professional learning the Division offers is sometimes overwhelming and can result in frequent classroom-teacher absences. So, to address this concern, the Division will make sure to prioritize its professional learning activities in 2023-24. It will also ensure all offered activities focus on high-leverage instructional strategies and align with the Division's and each school's education plans for staff to better balance their professional learning needs with being present in the classroom.

Making a difference through professional learning

Every year, EIPS invests heavily in offering, supporting and promoting professional learning opportunities for all staff to improve student learning. In addition to the learning already noted, EIPS also offered:

- PowerSchool training – open to all secretaries
- Business Manager training – open to business managers and secretaries
- Librarian training – open to all school librarians
- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention – open to all staff
- Supports for Students training – open to Division teachers
- Lunch-and-Learn – open to business managers, secretaries
- Job Information Questionnaire training – open to all staff
- Unified Talent Instructor training – open to Division trainers
- Crucial Conversations – open to all staff



Priority Strategy for Education Plan

EIPS will continue its efforts to support and enhance the quality of teaching, learning and leading. Strategies include:

-  Continue to demonstrate how Division resources are allocated to meet the priorities, goals and outcomes listed in the *Four-Year Education Plan*.
-  Streamline business processes, structures and responsibilities.
-  Find efficiencies through the Division's Atrieve ERP system, PowerSchool, Permission Click and workflow software.
-  Develop systems and processes to enhance evidence-based decision-making throughout the Division by developing data dashboards.
-  Enhance common communication structures across the Division to support all staff.
-  Continue to support teaching and leadership quality through professional learning, supervision and evaluation processes.
-  Develop targeted and functional professional learning opportunities for classified and certificated staff focused on key competencies and required certification for specific positions—tracked using PowerSchool's Unified Talent software.
-  Continue to provide professional learning and resources that support the new curriculum.
-  Develop a training program to support educational assistants working with students who have complex needs.
-  Continue efforts to develop onboarding sessions for new hires and leadership-readiness workshops for successful transitions into new positions.
-  Deliver targeted professional learning for administrators focused on finances, budget and just-in-time training. The Division will also record all sessions for easy access.
-  Provide targeted professional learning to administrators focused on instructional leadership—during leadership meetings, after-school sessions and Lunch-and-Learn sessions.
-  Continue to offer professional learning focused on student achievement results in literacy and numeracy—both priority areas for the Division.
-  Provide professional learning to teachers through virtual co-taught lessons—a consultant virtually joins the teacher during classroom instruction. The strategy provides teachers with needed support and allows EIPS consultants to support multiple teachers simultaneously.
-  Use the Foundations of Counselling Community of Practice to build capacity among Division counsellors and identify those who aspire to a counselling role.
-  Develop and pilot the Foundations of Consulting curriculum and program to support the collective capacity building of multidisciplinary support teams.
-  Continue to provide targeted professional learning opportunities to staff related to specific areas of focus within the Mental Health Strategic Plan.
-  Complete—and implement the findings of—the classified Salary Compensation Analysis.

Goal 2: Positive Learning and Working Environments

Assurance Domain: Learning Supports

Local Outcome: The Division's learning and working environments are welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and foster student and staff well-being

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

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES						EVALUATION		
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	ALBERTA 2022-23	ACHIEVEMENT	IMPROVEMENT	OVERALL
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY									
Teachers, parents and students who agree their learning environments are welcoming, caring, respectful and safe	n/a	n/a	86.8	85.3	85	84.7	n/a	n/a	n/a
Parents who agree teachers care about their child	n/a	n/a	92	89	90	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Teachers, parents and students who agree students are learning the importance of caring for others	n/a	n/a	72	71	69	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Teachers, parents and students who agree students are safe at school, learning the importance of caring for others, learning respect for others and treated fairly in school	88.2	88.6	89.4	88.3	88.1	87.5	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Parents who agree their child is safe at school	92	92	94	92	91	n/a	Very High	Declined	Good
Students who agree their teachers care about them	n/a	n/a	81.3	80	80.3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Teachers, parents and students who are satisfied with the accessibility, effectiveness and efficiency of programs and services offered to students in their community	72.5	74	73.6	74.7	74.2	72.9	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
Students who agree they are safe at school	83	83	84	82.3	83.3	n/a	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Teachers, parents and students who are satisfied students model active citizenship	80	80.3	80.4	79.3	78.8	80.3	High	Declined	Acceptable
Parents satisfied with the special support their child receives at school	81	81	76	65	78	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

NOTE : Evaluation measures are based on a three-year average, categories marked "n/a" don't have a three-year average.

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES				
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR STAFF					
I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work	93.6	95.4	94.9	96.9	92.4
The mission, values, priorities and goals of EIPS make me feel my job is important	93.2	95.1	95.9	90.5	92.5
I receive recognition or praise for doing good work	89.9	88.8	90.2	83.7	87.1
Someone at work cares about me as a person	97.2	97.6	97.5	97.7	97.7
Overall, I am satisfied with my school or department as a place to work	92.8	91.1	93.3	91.9	91.6
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS					
The school staff care about my child	89.9	89.4	90	86.4	88.2
My child's school encourages students to be a responsible, respectful and engaged citizen	n/a	n/a	90.1	87.1	88
My child's school is safe	91.2	90.7	89.2	97.8	87.6

RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES

Performance Measures

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR STUDENTS (GRADES 9 AND 12)					
Students who agree their school encourages learners to be responsible, respectful and engaged citizens	n/a	n/a	80.5	73.8	75
Students who feel the staff at their school care about them	n/a	n/a	76	68.3	72.6
Students who agree their school expects students to behave responsibly, and if not, are dealt with fairly	n/a	n/a	71.6	66.4	67.3
Students who agree their individual needs are met at school	n/a	n/a	86.3	78	81.7
Students who agree their school is safe	n/a	n/a	83.5	73.3	74.4
EIPS YEAR-IN-REVIEW SURVEY					
Percentage of families, staff, Grade 12 students and community members confident EIPS' learning and working environments are welcoming, inclusive, respectful and safe	n/a	n/a	n/a	89.7	90.9

Analysis of Results

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 and staff with classrooms, schools and environments that are welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and encourage 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 2022-23 Alberta Education Assurance Survey results demonstrate EIPS does an excellent job with its learning environments. Briefly, 85% of teachers, parents and students agree their learning environments are welcoming, caring, respectful and safe. Another 90% of parents and 80% of students agree teachers care about learners. Eighty-three per cent of students feel safe in their school, and 91% of parents agree. As well, 88% of teachers, parents and students agree learners are treated fairly and are learning the importance of caring and respect for others.

These results are echoed in EIPS' Annual Feedback Survey—administered to both families and students. Annually, the Division conducts the survey with both groups to gauge its progress toward meeting the goals and priorities outlined in its *Four-Year Education Plan*. Respondents are asked a series of questions about their experiences with EIPS and its schools, the overall performance of the Division, the quality of education being provided to students and areas for improvement. Similar to the provincial survey, the survey data confirms the Division is doing a good job of providing welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments. In fact, 88% of families and 75% of students agree EIPS schools

encourage learners to be responsible, respectful and engaged citizens. As well, 88% of families and 74% of students strongly agree or agree their school is safe.

Both surveys also reveal a growth area for the Division—building student respect. In the Alberta Education Assurance Survey, only 69% of parents and 62% of learners agree students at school respect each other. In the EIPS Annual Feedback Survey results, 88% of families and 81% of Grade 12 students strongly agree or agree teachers care about the learners. However, only 67% of Grade 9 students strongly agree or agree.

The reason this is a focus area is because students are more likely to engage in healthy behaviours and succeed academically if they feel connected to the school and believe others care about them. For example, according to a recent *Development and Psychopathology* journal article entitled, “School connectedness as a protective factor against childhood exposure to violence and social deprivation,” school connectedness is the strongest predictive factor for both males and females against substance abuse, school absenteeism and taking part in violence. With that in mind, EIPS intends to build its efforts to better integrate intentional strategies that help enhance school connectedness.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Looking beyond the survey data, challenges related to peer interactions and behaviours at school have cropped up over the last few years—likely pandemic-related. So, in 2022-23, considerable work went into prioritizing supports and initiatives in this area. One focus area was ensuring whole-school participation in various healthy relationship-building activities, such as Bullying Awareness Week, Pink Shirt Day, Seven Sacred Teachings, Leader in Me, and more, to promote positive behaviours and respect.

Professional learning was another critical focus area for the Division. For the most part, the sessions centred on classroom mental health and trauma-informed strategies. Overall, teachers found the strategies helpful, particularly for promoting positive mental health and regulated emotions.

One such session was the virtual Mental Health Literacy training, which narrowed in on ways schools can best support student mental health, mental distress and mental illness. Pre-training and post-training feedback indicate the session was well-liked and effective in building understanding around how mental health impacts school success. Thanks to the positive uptake, the Division plans to re-run the training again in 2023-24.

Other related initiatives include a mental health literacy project and learning sessions on brain architecture training, challenging behaviours and restorative practices. The Mental Health Literacy research project was developed out of the University of Calgary. EIPS was one of only a handful of school divisions participating. The university is trying to find new ways to integrate mental health best practices into the elementary curriculum. In total, 21

Division 2 classes, from eight EIPS schools, participated in the project. For those who participated, the feedback was positive and beneficial for students.

Also new in 2022-23 was a Brain Architecture training, which focused on building staff capacity to better support students experiencing heightened stress—taken by more than 300 staff from 14 schools. There was also a session on challenging behaviours, which was facilitated by Lori Desautels, an acclaimed neuroscientist who works out of Butler University specializing in childhood social, emotional and cognitive well-being. Desautels highlighted key principles to support students exhibiting challenging behaviours through the lens of relational and neuroscience-informed practices—80 staff members took part in a half-day workshop, and 90 in a full-day followup session. The Division also offered restorative practices training to 23 staff. Overall, feedback was positive, with many saying the sessions helped build capacity and offered needed support.

In addition to mental health, EIPS also offers a School Nutrition Program. Funded by Alberta Education, the program ensures all students at participating schools—Lamont Elementary and Bruderheim School—have daily access to well-balanced, healthy meals and snacks. In the 2022-23 school year, 410 students participated in the program, receiving meals and snacks every day.

FOSTERING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT FOR STAFF

The Division's efforts to enhance working environments for staff are paying off, too. According to the 2022-23 EIPS Annual Feedback Survey, 91% of certificated staff and 95% of classified staff feel they have the resources and materials needed to do their work. Similarly, 92% of both certificated and classified staff feel the mission, belief statements, priorities and goals of EIPS make their job important. Other highlights include: 97% of certificated staff and 99% of classified staff feel someone at work cares about them; and 91% of certificated staff and 93% of classified staff are satisfied their school or department is a good place to work. Collectively, these are strong indicators of staff engagement and positive working environments for Division employees.

One of the drivers behind these results stems from the Division actively promoting the Alberta School Employee Benefit Plan's Employee and Family Assistance Program, a proactive health and wellness program providing support services to staff and their families. The program offers confidential, short-term counselling services for employees with work performance issues. Various mental health, emotional-health and wellness resources are also available through the Division's Alberta School Employee Benefit Plan, Inkblot Health and Alberta Health Services.

Health and wellness course offerings

Also offered throughout EIPS are various occupational-health-and-safety learning and safety courses. Some of these included:

Connect to Respect – completed by 2,207 people

Safetyhub: health and safety – 30,155 modules completed

Safetyhub: respiratory illness – 3,540 modules completed

Safetyhub WHMIS – 1,926 modules completed

Emergency Preparedness – completed by 16,374 people

First Aid – completed by 317 people

Leadership for Safety Excellence – delivered to all new principals, assistant principals, directors and assistant directors

[building capacity]

A mental health strategy

Throughout 2022-23, significant effort went into building staff capacity around mental health and well-being—as part of EIPS' Mental Health Strategic Plan. The plan launched in late 2021-22 as a way to address the mental health challenges the Division was facing in the wake of the pandemic. The goal: To support students' and staff's socio-emotional and positive mental health development. Year 1 involved hiring a Mental Health Advisor to set the plan in motion. Year 2, focused on several interconnected parts, related to providing more education, resources and supports around mental health

Social-emotional well-being

Considerable effort was dedicated to creating school climates and cultures conducive to learning. The Division offered several socio-emotional professional learning opportunities, centred on integrating positive mental health, healthy relationships and positive behaviour into schools and classrooms. Other related professional learning sessions focused on working with neurodiverse students, providing sexual-orientation and gender-identity support, best practices for multilingual learners, trauma-informed behaviour strategies, brain health and stress, attendance and re-engagement, supporting students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, mental health literacy, and a trauma-informed approach to support mental health. Each EIPS school also assigned a safe-contact staff member to assist students better. Each safe-contact member attended meetings and workshops. They also had access to adequate tools and resources to support students and staff in their schools.

Student Voice

The Division hosted a student forum entitled, Student Voice, to explore student mental health and well-being. In total, 150 students, grades 9 and 12, participated. Throughout the day, participants were asked a series of questions about diversity, equity and inclusion; supports; and career pathways. The feedback was invaluable and helped inform next steps for programming and supports in these areas.

Reset Rooms

As part of the Division's Mental Health Strategic Plan, EIPS also accessed a provincial mental health grant—in partnership with Strathcona County Family and Community

Services—to set up Reset Rooms in all 14 of its junior high schools. Now complete, the Reset Rooms act as support centres for students. Each room features a continuum of evidence-based mental health resources and services for students and their families. Essentially, the rooms are spaces for students to go when feeling overwhelmed—supervised by an EIPS teacher who's trained in mental health literacy and supported by the Division's counselling team.

Overall, the feedback from students is positive. Within the first 90 days of launching, the Reset Rooms recorded more than 10,000 student visits—many of whom reporting the rooms supported their regulation and overall learning. In fact, 82% of students said they felt either a little or a lot better after spending time in the Reset Room. As such, given the success of the project, EIPS plans to maintain the Reset Rooms in 2023-24.

Violence-Threat Risk Assessment Protocol

Also embedded within the Mental Health Strategic Plan is EIPS' work with its Violence-Threat Risk Assessment Protocol—used to respond to a threat within the Division. It involves a network of local partners who work together to prevent violence in schools and the community. Partners include local RCMP, Children's Services, Family and Community Services, Alberta Health Services and Primary Care Networks. EIPS is also part of a Tri-Protocol Agreement, the first of its kind in North America, which includes the Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol, Traumatic Event Systems Protocol and a Suicide Prevention Protocol. Division training is ongoing and includes both Crisis Prevention and Non-Violent Crisis Intervention.

Opportunities for Growth

Respectful relationships and positive mental health are ongoing growth areas for the Division. So, throughout 2022-23, the Division focused a lot of its efforts on prevention, early identification, early intervention, treatment referral and followup requirements. The Division will continue in this same vein, throughout 2023-24, as part of Year 3 of its Mental Health Strategic Plan.

Also, a growth area, as mentioned in the "Results" section, is new ways to enhance respectful student relationships within EIPS. To improve in this area, the Division will focus on creating opportunities to nurture connections between staff, staff and students, and home and school. It will also continue providing education and support to school employees about mental health literacy and service pathways for those who need help.

To complement this work, the Division will carry on supporting the use of sexual-orientation and gender-identity resources, restorative practices, trauma-informed approaches, Non-Violent Crisis Intervention training and the Violence Threat Risk Assessment, when necessary.

Finally, to support staff's and students' mental health and well-being, EIPS plans to launch a new divisionwide professional learning initiative in fall 2023. EIPS will bring together all staff to participate in a full day of professional learning themed: "Our Students, Our Stories, Our Strength." The hope is through the event, employees will gain a sense of connectedness with each other, understand their valuable contribution to the Division, and feel both welcomed and cared for by EIPS. Hence, being part of a working and learning environment that's welcoming, caring, respectful, safe, and fosters positive well-being.



Priority Strategy for Education Plan

EIPS will continue efforts to ensure its learning and working environments are welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and foster student and staff well-being. Strategies include:



Continue offering supports and services consistent with inclusive education principles.



Continue to support schools to enhance programming and services for students with learning, developmental and health-related needs—enrolled in specialized system programs and inclusive classrooms.



Continue all efforts to create and sustain welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments—through partnerships, professional learning, awareness campaigns and resource tools.



Maintain the Division's Occupational Health and Safety Certificate of Recognition and address any factors affecting the status or obstructing continuous improvement.



Use Board-allocated funds to implement Year 3 of the Division's Mental Health Strategic Plan, focused on supporting students' social-emotional well-being and mental health through enhancing partnerships; building staff capacity; and increasing engagement with students, staff and caregivers.



Continue to offer professional learning to build capacity to implement best practices related to anti-racism and discrimination. The goal: To develop a respectful Division culture where all students, staff and families feel they belong.



Collaborate with CASA Mental Health to establish a CASA Classroom in Fort Saskatchewan to improve student access, grades 4 to 6, to mental health supports and services.

Goal 3: Quality Infrastructure for All

Assurance Domain: Learning Supports

Local Outcome: Learning and working environments are supported by effective planning, management and investment in Division infrastructure

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

RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES

Performance Measures	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
EIPS YEAR-IN-REVIEW SURVEY					
Stakeholders confident EIPS supports student learning through effective planning, managing and investing in Division infrastructure	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	88.4%
EIPS FACILITIES					
Overall school-utilization rate	73	75	72	74	76
New, replacement or modernization capital projects funded versus requested	1 of 4	0 of 1	0 of 1	0 of 1	1 of 3
Approved modular unit classrooms	1 approved 8 demolished 3 relocated	1 relocated	6 relocated	1 relocated	3 demolished 2 relocated
Modular units installed and hooked up with occupancy for school startup	0 (4 late)	1	6	1	0 (2 late)
Completed Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal projects	121	151	161	119	59
Completed Capital Maintenance Renewal projects	n/a	n/a	4	5	5
Number of maintenance projects completed	340	457	450	208	318
Number of work orders requested	8,723	10,455	9,470	10,074	10,977
Percentage of work orders completed	99%	93%	96%	94%	96%
<i>EIPS Annual Feedback Survey: Families who rate their child's school's physical condition as excellent, good or fair</i>	81.1%	80.6%	96.1%	95.2%	95.7%
<i>EIPS Annual Feedback Survey: Students who rate their school's physical condition as excellent, good or fair</i>	n/a	n/a	91.2%	83.7%	86.5%
EIPS TECHNOLOGY					
Number of schools rewired to Category 6 standards	15	18	21	23	25
Number of schools funded with evergreening technology	31	0	3	32	40
Number of schools with 100 Mbps bandwidth	n/a	7	2	1	3
Number of schools with 150 Mbps bandwidth	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	6
Number of schools with 200 Mbps bandwidth	n/a	27	6	6	11
Number of schools with 250 Mbps bandwidth	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1
Number of schools with 300 Mbps bandwidth	n/a	1	28	28	13
Number of schools with 400 Mbps bandwidth	n/a	1	1	1	1
Number of schools with 500 Mbps bandwidth	n/a	1	1	1	1
EIPS TRANSPORTATION					
Number of bus riders at the end of June	9,271	9,041	7,380	7,859	9,132
Number of buses	153	157	161	160	173
Average bus ride time (in minutes)	28.6	29.3	27.5	29	27.5
Percentage of buses with a GPS tracking system	100	100	100	100	100
Little Elk Island Adventure participants	853	862	846	907	1,350

Background

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

Results

FACILITY SERVICES

Throughout the 2022-23 school year, EIPS' Facility Services department oversaw a range of projects, from new construction to general maintenance upkeep. One of the most significant projects undertaken was the Salisbury Composite High Stormwater Project, which involved replacing the school's entire stormwater system, costing just under \$1 million. Phase 1 of the project entailed removing and replacing the under slab, ceiling suspension system, ceiling tile and stormwater piping. There was also significant landscaping and repaving required to complete Phase 1. The Division now plans to move to Phase 2, the finishing work, with a completion date sometime in the 2023-24 school year.

Another significant project was a much-needed renovation of the food labs at Ardrrossan Junior Senior High and F.R. Haythorne Junior High. Over the summer months, substantial work went into upgrading the labs, replacing almost everything. Now complete, both schools can offer enhanced programming to students.

Other major projects completed by Facility Services included demolishing three modular classroom units at Uncas Elementary and relocating another two to SouthPointe School from École Campbelltown. The department also continued its work with ACI Architecture Inc., Alberta Infrastructure and Strathcona County on the new Sherwood Park replacement school—replacing École Campbelltown and Sherwood Heights Junior High. The department hopes to have a contractor and the development permit finalized in late 2023.

Additionally, Facility Services completed 318 maintenance, operations and custodial projects, 59 Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal (IMR) projects and 10,977 general EIPS work orders. The province also provided EIPS \$1.56 million through the Capital Maintenance Renewal program. Facility Services used the funds for five capital projects, which, for the most part, included roof and heating upgrades.

Facility Services has also worked hard to find efficiencies within its buildings and operations. The two most recent

initiatives relate to custodial contracts and a building automation system. In spring 2023, the Division tendered a contract for its custodial services. Nine contractors were selected over a five-year term. As a side note, EIPS' cleanliness average is rated at 92%—scored through an internal audit process. The rating is quite high, 10% above the Division's acceptable standard. So, collectively, the nine contracted companies are tasked with maintaining, or improving, that overall building cleanliness rate.

Similarly, Facility Services also tendered its waste management services, in partnership with Elk Island Catholic Schools. So far, the tender has proved favourable. The hope is to soon put a plan in place for the Division's organic waste handling.

In terms of facility efficiencies, EIPS has a building automation system (BAS), which allows Facility Services to access, control and monitor all its building systems using one centralized control. After conducting a BAS systems checkup, the results revealed a few schools with failed infrastructure and pneumatic problems. Most identified issues were minor. However, six critical pneumatic upgrades were identified at Bruderheim School, Clover Bar Junior High, Glen Allan Elementary, Lamont Elementary, Mills Haven Elementary and Win Ferguson Elementary. Facility Services addressed all identified problem areas. The Division improved its energy efficiency by 10% to 15% thanks to the upgrades.

Also, the Division upgraded its air-quality system in 2022-23—as part of Phase 1 of improving the Division buildings' overall air quality. All air filters were upgraded to the Merv 9A filter—from the Merv 6. Facility Services also put a plan in place to implement a three-year cleaning cycle for all building air ducts and heating coils. Once in place, EIPS anticipates receiving the National Air Filtration Association's Clean Air Award—annually given to organizations that maintain clean and healthy workplaces while, at the same time, implement strategies to reduce overall operating costs.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

Throughout 2022-23, Information Technologies (IT) focused on two key areas: network connectivity and reliable access. In fall 2022, the department finished its



remediation work to improve EIPS' connectivity and latency issues—specifically its network and voice-over-internet protocol phone services. IT also worked with the Division's internet provider, at a co-location site, to install a Meet-Me connection. The new connection allows a direct line to the Division's wide-area network, ultimately offering a more reliable internet service. After completing each project, IT monitored the network throughout the rest of the year. The result: The Division's network is both reliable and stable.

Significant work also went into improving the Division's network cabling and bandwidth allocations. Specifically, the department worked with Facility Services on two large Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal projects—replacing the network data cabling at École Parc Élémentaire and Pine Street Elementary. At both schools, IT updated the network cabling to the Division's Category 6 standard. The department also reviewed each school's bandwidth allocation. All were adequate for 2022-23. However, IT did adjust bandwidth at specific sites—increasing or decreasing it—based on internal system reports and wide-area network reports.

Finally, IT continued replacing and upgrading the Division's technology identified in EIPS' Evergreening Plan—an ongoing requirement. The first project took place in the 2021-22 school year—replacing all of the Division's ageing Chromebooks. With the bulk now replaced, the department plans to continue the project annually, on an as-needed basis.

The second project was launched in 2022-23—replacing the Division's ageing Microsoft Windows devices that are no longer compatible with Microsoft Windows 11. As a side note, the reason IT needs to replace these is because Windows 10 reaches its end-of-support cycle in October 2025. To date, EIPS has replaced 2,180 devices. Looking ahead, IT expects to upgrade the remaining 594 non-compatible devices by Aug. 31, 2025.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is another component of quality infrastructure for EIPS. In the 2022-23 school year, the Division transported 9,132 students on 173 buses—up by 13 from the previous year. With the added bus routes, the department was able to transport an additional 1,273 riders, which also helped decrease the average ride time for students, dropping by two minutes to 27 minutes—the shortest it's been in more than six years.

A key focus area for Student Transportation was, again, student safety while transporting riders to and from school. In fact, EIPS Student Transportation is a leader in the province in this area—thanks to some of the technology it uses, such as GPS, student scan cards, the Child Check-Mate system and video-surveillance monitoring. The department also uses software to manage and optimize rides. And, new in 2022-23, the department installed Tyler Drive tablets on all buses, offering added benefits to bus operators, including:

- turn-by-turn route directions;
- rider stop lists;
- real-time updates to bus route changes;
- rider registrations—manually registering riders on and off the bus, when necessary;
- access to pertinent student information;
- access to EIPS bus routes information; and
- pre- and post-inspection forms.

Also, the ever-popular Little Elk Island Adventure—a bus-safety program for first-time riders—was again offered in 2022-23. The locally developed program educates children and families about school bus procedures and safety. In the 2022-23 school year, 433 families participated in the program—up by close to 200 families, which is significant. Like previous years, the post-event feedback shows the program was a huge success, boasting a satisfaction rate of 97%. Overall, the program is a win-win for families and the Division. Families feel more comfortable about their child taking the bus. Meanwhile, it also allows the department to communicate clearly about positive rider behaviour and bus expectations.

Professional learning was also offered year-long. Annually, Student Transportation delivers an in-person, full-day learning session at the start of each school year. In 2022-23, topics included the Tyler Drive tablets, best practices, strategies, reporting processes and dealing with student behaviour. As well, midway through the year, the department provided interactive online training to staff, through Drivafy, which focused on student management.

Lastly, Student Transportation spent significant time preparing for the upcoming school year over the summer. Several route optimizations were conducted. A full route optimization was completed for the Village of Andrew area—resulting from the Andrew School closure. The department also conducted smaller-scale route optimizations for all bus routes to adapt to Alberta Education’s new eligibility criteria. On top of these, Student Transportation simultaneously co-ordinated and facilitated onboarding for new bus operators and the Mandatory Entry-Level Training.

Opportunities for Growth

FACILITY SERVICES

Building relationships within and outside EIPS’ Facility Services is an ongoing opportunity for growth. Doing so enhances communication, creates clarity around project timelines and allows for regular status updates. As such, the department will continue to find ways to improve communication internally, with school administrators, EIPS departments and the municipalities in the

communities it serves. The goal: To ensure healthy, high-quality learning and working environments. Other areas for growth include:

- preventative strategies to reduce breakdowns in buildings and equipment;
- service delivery to limit overdue work orders;
- Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal and Capital Maintenance Renewal planning to enhance long-term project planning;
- strategies to create even more efficiencies within the department and all Division buildings; and
- program and student accommodation reviews to improve overall operations.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

Looking ahead, Information Technologies plans to continue supporting an effective and efficient enterprise system. Focus areas include:

- expanding PowerSchool use;
- developing a communication matrix with an integrated systems approach;
- building a visual Power BI dashboard for the Division to enhance insight, data analysis and reporting; and
- cyber-security enhancements.

There are also many functions within Information Technologies that benefit from the education-technology team involved, particularly in terms of context and consultation. Examples include configuration design and process support to guide training and professional learning for end-users. As such, the department will also ensure its efforts remain aligned with the Division’s education goals by regularly consulting with EIPS’ education-technology team.







STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Student Transportation will continue to review route optimization—focusing on high-growth areas—to find even more opportunities to provide safe and efficient transportation to EIPS students. Another focus area for the department is using the recently installed Tyler Drive tablets to ensure all bus routes are as streamlined as possible, including stops and ride times, to gain maximum efficiency. As mentioned in the "Results" section, the tablets feature route directions, a rider stop list, pre- and post-inspection forms and a rider registration when a scan pass is absent. Additionally, the department plans to continue efforts to enhance bus operator professional learning, concentrating on student management and rider safety.

Priority Strategy for Education Plan

FACILITY SERVICES

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

-  Continue to improve infrastructure reliability and life cycles through effective asset management and a comprehensive computer maintenance management system.
-  Continue addressing maintenance and upgrade needs through regular preventative, Capital Maintenance and Renewal, and Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal projects.
-  Implement Year 3 of EIPS' Three-Year Engagement Plan—using stakeholder feedback to inform decisions about attendance areas, program location and student accommodations.
-  Work with Alberta Education to move the new Sherwood Park replacement school forward.
-  Complete Phase 2 of the Salisbury Composite High Stormwater Project.
-  Continue to advance the Division's energy management program to reduce consumption and costs.






INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

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

-  Continue infrastructure management efforts by managing and maintaining the Division's IT infrastructure—servers, networks, data centres, cloud-infrastructure management, virtualization and storage.
-  Build on the Division's IT security and IT systems and infrastructure compliance through risk assessments, vulnerability management and compliance audits.
-  Ensure the availability and recoverability of the Division's IT systems and infrastructure during a disaster through backup and recovery procedures, disaster-recovery planning and business-continuity planning.
-  Continue data operations efforts through data integration, visualization, quality, automation and governance.
-  Continue IT service management efforts by delivering and supporting IT services, incident management, change management and service-level management.
-  Ensure effective records and information management by developing and implementing record retention policies, training programs and best practices.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

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

-  Streamline the department's software to build capacity and enable data sharing across platforms—PowerSchool and SchoolMessenger.
-  Continue guiding schools and contractors through their National Safety Code compliance, which helps ensure safe drivers and safe vehicles to transport riders.
-  Continue using Tyler Drive tablets on all school buses—training bus operators on best practices.
-  Continue route optimization of all bus routes to align with recent changes to Alberta Education's *Funding Manual for School Authorities 2023-24 School Year*.
-  Provide bus-operator training focused on tactics to reduce minor vehicle collisions and decrease student conduct incidents.

Priority 3:

Enhance Public Education
Through Effective Engagement



Goal 1: Parent and Caregiver Engagement

Assurance Domain: Governance

Local Outcome: Student learning is supported and enhanced by providing meaningful opportunities for parents and caregivers 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					ALBERTA 2022-23	EVALUATION		
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23		ACHIEVEMENT	IMPROVEMENT	OVERALL
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY									
Parents and teachers satisfied with parental involvement in decisions about their child's education	77.7	78.9	77.4	76.9	78.1	79.1	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
Parents who agree their family's encouraged and supported in helping their child be successful in learning	n/a	n/a	73.1	70.7	69.9	75.7	n/a	Maintained	n/a

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES				
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS					
Families satisfied with the opportunity to be involved in decisions at their child's school	79.8	80	77.5	73.7	81.7
Families who agree there is open and honest communication within their child's school	84	83.3	84.9	80.9	82.5
Families who agree the school keeps them informed about their child's progress and achievement	88	87.1	87.2	86.6	85.7
Families who agree the Division's commitment to engaging families in matters that affect public education	n/a	n/a	79.2	73.6	68.9
Families who agree the Division is committed to ongoing advocacy for public education	n/a	n/a	74.9	69	67.7
EIPS YEAR-IN-REVIEW SURVEY					
Percentage of families, staff, Grade 12 students and community members confident EIPS provides meaningful opportunities for families to be involved in their child's education	n/a	n/a	n/a	84.6	89.6

Analysis of Results

Background

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



Results

According to the 2022-23 Alberta Education Assurance Survey data, 78.1% of EIPS families and teachers are satisfied with the Division's parental involvement—up from 76.9% in 2021-22. The result also aligns nicely with the 2022-23 EIPS Annual Feedback Survey. In total, 81.7% of families indicate being satisfied with the opportunity to be involved in decisions at their child's school—up by 8% from the year previous. Another 89.6% of families, staff and students agree EIPS provides meaningful opportunities for parents and caregivers to be involved in their child's education—rising by 5% from the previous year.

Other feedback includes 82.5% of families reporting open and honest communication within their child's school. Another 85.7% of families feel EIPS schools keep families informed about their child's progress and achievement. Collectively, the results suggest EIPS families are content with their school involvement and communication.

That said, more can be done, especially in the area of engagement. The 2022-23 EIPS Annual Feedback Survey revealed only 68.9% of respondents were satisfied with the Division's commitment to engaging families in matters that affect public education, and only 67.7% were satisfied with the Division's commitment to ongoing advocacy for public education. So, the Division plans to focus on these two areas in 2023-24.

EARLY LEARNING

Regular communication with new school families is an ongoing focus area for the Division. The Play and Learn at School (PALS) program is a good example. The program relies heavily on family collaboration and working jointly to benefit children. In total, 24 virtual PALS Engagement Sessions were hosted by speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists and early learning consultants. The sessions focused on 11 topic areas, all aimed at supporting young learners. PALS occupational therapists also facilitated individual family consultations and an early learning team that provided multiple virtual sessions to support families in learning new strategies to enhance toileting, feeding, fine-motor development and self-regulation.

Additionally, schools held orientation sessions for PALS and kindergarten families. For PALS, individual orientation sessions were offered, which 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. PALS families also had the opportunity to share information about their child through a survey sent out before school startup.

At the kindergarten level, every EIPS elementary school hosted a Kindergarten Information Night. Families

had the opportunity to meet staff, tour the school, explore a typical kindergarten day and learn about play-based learning. EIPS also created a new email newsletter for early learning families. The aim: To share information and resources, and collect feedback. A weekly contest was connected to the email newsletter to gather additional input and offer caregivers the opportunity to share ideas and ask questions—garnering 958 responses in total. Subsequently, families and teachers were able to begin their work together to develop common objectives for each child's success.

89.6% of stakeholders agree EIPS provides meaningful opportunities to be involved in their child's education

Other engagement efforts included the Getting Ready for Kindergarten orientation series, Circle of Security Parenting program, consultations to develop Individualized Program Plans and a weekly early learning email for families to share information and collect feedback (see pg. 17, "Parent Engagement: Early learning"). Collectively, these enabled EIPS to gain a deeper understanding of the needs of early learners and how to support them best.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

In terms of mental health, EIPS continued the Circle of Security Parenting, an attachment-based parenting education program to help families better understand and build on their relationships with their children. Through an eight-part learning series, caregivers explored the different ways children express attachment and how life experiences can impact how others respond to children—in positive and negative ways. Early Learning also partnered with Strathcona County's Mental Health Capacity Building department to offer a caregivers learning series called, Preparing for Kindergarten. Through the learning series, caregivers learned new tools to help children navigate emotions and feelings common when starting school.

Again, in 2022-23, the Division promoted the Caregiver Education Series, in partnership with Alberta Health Services Addiction and Mental Health. Sessions are free and focused on student mental health—geared toward parents, caregivers, teachers and community members. Session topics included anxiety, ADHD, depression, self-harm, technology, teens and teaching leadership skills, communication, resiliency, and more.

EIPS also worked at two mental health booths at Fort Saskatchewan's fall Connect the Fort event. The booths aimed to engage parents and caregivers about youth mental health through a series of games and activities themed around relationships, mental health and well-being.

Other initiatives included partnering with Fort

Saskatchewan Family and Community Support Services for the screening of *The Great Depression*, a documentary about the value of relationships and social connection. Before the screening, EIPS hosted an information table with resources about mental health, well-being and the benefits of consistent school attendance. The Division also teamed up with Strathcona County's Family and Community Support Services to deliver a 90-minute workshop on the risks of school avoidance—exploring the cycle of anxiety, school attendance data, and how-to tips to deal with feelings of worry and fear. EIPS plans to repeat the workshop in fall 2023.

FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT EDUCATION

The EIPS First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team continued offering its Indigenous family gatherings—three in-person gatherings were offered in 2022-23. Each was facilitated by the EIPS First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team. The gatherings provided space, supper and a cultural activity for participants. It also gave attendees a chance to connect with other families, build community, share hopes and discuss truth-telling and reconciliation within EIPS. They also helped inform next steps for the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team.

Other initiatives included communication, event and support strategies. In terms of communication, the team published newsletters and online blogs to share relevant news and initiatives with families. For events, the team coordinated an annual Spring Indigenous Cultural Seasonal Camp, in partnership with Strathcona Wilderness Centre and community-based Elders and Knowledge Holders, and hosted a divisionwide round dance—under the guidance of Elder Wilson Bearhead—to help elicit a sense of community, cultural pride and belonging.

New this year, the EIPS First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team also facilitated a two-day ribbon-skirt workshop—open to grades 9 to 12 students. Each participant brought a support person to help make the ribbon skirt. A special thanks to Elder Heather Poitras, who grew up near Kehewin Cree Nation in Treaty 6 and a registered member of the Sawridge First Nation of Treaty 8, for leading the ribbon-skirt teachings; and Noella Steinhauer, an associate professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta and owner of W Dry Goods and Gifts, for supplying the sewing kits and sharing important teachings during the workshop.

Substantial work also went into fostering meaningful relationships with local Indigenous community members and a relationship with the land, or "being in relation." To aid in that, EIPS hired a second cultural advisor tasked with supporting Indigenous students and their families and facilitating small-group cultural experiences for self-identified students.

CAREER PATHWAYS

Once again, in 2022-23, EIPS hosted its ever-popular Your Future: Post-secondary and Career Fair—an annual event open to students in grades 9 through 12. Held in the fall, the fair is the largest event of its kind in Alberta, with universities, colleges, polytechnics and industry experts all together in one room. There, students and their families had the opportunity to engage with some of Alberta's leading post-secondary institutions and employers, pose questions, consult with experts, and gain insights into future career trends. In total, the event attracted more than 800 attendees.

To complement Your Future, EIPS' Career Pathways department supported two senior high schools to host career fairs on a smaller scale—held at the school during the school day. Both events were well-attended, the feedback was positive, and helped engage students in preparing for life beyond high school.

In addition to the fairs, EIPS hosted a series of Off-Campus Information Evenings for families and the local community to learn more about the Division's Registered Apprenticeship Program, the Green Certificate program and Work Experience courses. The sessions, held both in-person and virtually, provided comprehensive insights into career pathways programming and featured a well-received question-and-answer segment with EIPS program specialists.

ENGAGING FAMILIES

In winter 2023, all EIPS schools consulted families about school fees for the upcoming year. Principals outlined the current school fees—used for courses, noon supervision, educational activities and extracurricular initiatives. Families were then asked to provide input about the fees and expectations for the following year. Using that feedback, and EIPS' Board-approved fee parameters, principals developed their school fee schedules for the 2023-24 school year. Once finalized, each school followed up with families to review and go over the upcoming fee schedule.

Around the same time as the fee consultations, the Division conducted its annual EIPS Year-in-Review Survey to gather information about stakeholder confidence on how the Division is doing relative to results reported in the *EIPS Annual Education Report 2021-22*. The survey also included a budgeting question, asking stakeholders what priorities the EIPS Board should consider when drafting the 2023-24 spring budget. In total, 1,593 respondents provided input. The Board used the feedback to revise its *Four-Year Education Plan: 2022-26* and help develop the 2023-24 EIPS budget.

Then, in March, the Division consulted staff, students and families again through its EIPS Annual Feedback

Survey—an online stakeholder survey distributed to school families, staff and students in grades 9 and 12. The Division uses the feedback from the survey to gauge how it's meeting the priorities, goals and outcomes identified in the *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan* and develop strategies to better serve students and the wider community.

Other engagement efforts included 14 public consultations as part of the Three-Year Engagement Plan and two information sessions related to the design of the new replacement school in Sherwood Park. As well, the Division sent 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, EIPS schools used social media platforms as another way to connect with families.

Lastly, 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 2022-23 school year, the group met seven times to discuss topics impacting the Division and the province's education system. EIPS was pleased to once again host these meetings in person—during the pandemic meetings were

all virtual—allowing for more robust dialogue. Some of the agenda topics included the *Annual Education Results Report 2021-22*, the new curriculum, the Divisions' Three-Year Mental Health Strategic Plan, EIPS' Assurance Cycle, *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan: 2022-26*, the provincial election campaign and advocacy, the EIPS' Three-Year Engagement Plan, the Division's upcoming budget and how-to tips on reading the Alberta Education Assurance results.

Following each meeting, school council representatives shared the discussion topics with their own school council members. In 2022-23, the number of schools represented at each meeting ranged between 13 and 25, totalling an average representation of 15 schools—down by one school from the previous year.

Opportunities for Growth













The Division is pleased with the opportunities it provides relative to building capacity and engaging families in their child's learning. That said, there is room for improvement. As such, parent and caregiver engagement remain a growth area for the Division. Specifically, EIPS' assurance framework will ensure the Division considers input from school families and community members as part of its decision-making process.





Priority Strategy for Education Plan

Fostering even more engagement with EIPS parents and caregivers is an ongoing priority for EIPS. Strategies include:

-  Continue to offer professional learning sessions, information and resources to support families in engaging with their child about health and wellness, early learning, literacy and numeracy development, and post-senior-high planning.
-  Continue to offer information sessions and resources to support families in preparing their child for kindergarten.
-  Continue to offer family engagement sessions—hosted by speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists and early learning consultants—focused on capacity building to support young learners.
-  Engage families to present at the Division Career Day and participate in the Bring Your Child to Work Day.
-  Continue all assurance framework efforts and offer opportunities for school families to provide input on divisional decision-making topics.
-  Finalize all projects listed in EIPS' Three-Year Engagement Plan. Decisions made will ensure future students continue receiving a high-quality education.
-  Continue communication efforts with EIPS families about the Division's progress in meeting the goals and outcomes outlined in the *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan: 2022-26*.
-  Continue communicating Division news, information and updates with EIPS families—emails, newsletters, news releases and social media posts.
-  Develop a school-family communications platform to combine all Division, school and teacher communications—including absence reporting and digital-form submissions.
-  Continue to host three annual engagement gatherings with families who self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit. The goal: To build relationships and engage in respectful conversations.
-  Continue to build capacity with school council representatives by covering the Alberta School Councils' Association membership costs and sponsoring registrations for the association's annual School Councils Conference.
-  Continue to engage with EIPS' Committee of School Councils as a tool for information gathering and input related to Division decision-making.

Goal 2: Engaged and Effective Governance

Assurance Domain: Governance

Local Outcome 1: The Division is committed to engaging stakeholders to augment its decision-making and support student success

Local Outcome 2: 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				
	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
EIPS INTERNAL DATA					
Number of advocacy areas specifically identified and addressed by the Board	3	2	5	7	9
Number of advocacy letters sent to the Minister of Education, ministers or Alberta's members of the legislative assembly	4	5	7	4	11
Number of formal meetings with the Minister of Education or provincial ministers	3	4	0	8	1
Number of formal meetings with Alberta's members of the legislative assembly	2	6	2	5	2
Number of formal meetings with mayors and reeves within the EIPS jurisdiction	2	4	2	7	7
Number of media advocacy articles, radio and television interviews	21	84	138	158	179

Analysis of Results

Background

The key to building public assurance in the Division is ongoing engagement with educational stakeholders and school communities. As such, the Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) Board of Trustees actively engages education stakeholders and continually seeks out public engagement opportunities. Doing this helps sustain the Division's culture of continuous improvement, builds a collective responsibility and helps inform decision-making to support student achievement.

Considerable emphasis is also placed on Board advocacy efforts extending beyond just EIPS' boundaries. Through thoughtful advocacy planning and strategic partnerships, trustees ensure local and provincial governments understand the Division's successes, challenges and overall needs. The goal: To ensure policies, funding and practices that best support students' learning needs and successes—from early learning to senior high completion, and beyond.

Results

Throughout the 2022-23 school year, the EIPS Board of Trustees worked diligently to ensure the Division's voice was heard on various topics, including the value of public education; student transportation; learning gaps; mental health and well-being; adequate and predictable education funding; autonomous school boards; the new curriculum; infrastructure requirements—particularly the need to replace Sherwood Heights Junior High; and student capacity concerns.

To increase public awareness around these issues, the Board engaged the media, government, industry associations, Division families and the surrounding community.

The Board's Advocacy Committee further strengthened these areas by developing an annual advocacy plan. The document outlined the Board's work plan, information about each focus area, the key messages for each topic and the short-term and long-term objectives. It also detailed the advocacy strategies and tactics needed to advocate for each area effectively. The goal: To ensure the Division continues to offer high-quality, student-centred learning, where all students can achieve success.

There was also a concentrated media component, to ensure all stakeholders were aware of the Division's successes and challenges. In total, 65 news releases were distributed, resulting in several interviews secured with local and mainstream news organizations, including *Calgary Herald*, *CBC News*, *City News*, *Country 106.5*,

CTV News, Edmonton Journal, FortSaskOnline, Global News, Mix 107.9, The Fort Saskatchewan Record, The Lamont Leader, The Sherwood Park–Strathcona County News, Town and Country Today, Vegreville News Advertiser and Yahoo! News. Through these, 463 news stories were published about EIPS—179 of those were focused on Board advocacy topics.

To accompany the media interviews, three sets of key messages were developed—all relating to the Board advocacy efforts. Ongoing Board columns were also published in four local newspapers, along with two Board-focused newsletters: The *EIPS Board Quarterly Update* and *EIPS Advocacy in Action*. The *EIPS Board Quarterly Update* is a newsletter distributed to elected officials and Division partners featuring articles about the Division, what's new and the work of the Board. Similarly, the *EIPS Advocacy in Action* is a quarterly newsletter sent to EIPS families and staff highlighting the work of the Board, the Division's priorities, advocacy focus areas and efforts, and the value

[building capacity]

Through advocacy

To build capacity, the Board put considerable work into ensuring advocacy messaging was heard at various association and education-based meetings—including with the Alberta School Boards Association, the Canadian School Boards Association, and numerous provincial and national meetings. The Board also shared its successes, challenges and concerns with all levels of government—federal, provincial and municipal. To do so, the Board formally submitted 11 advocacy letters to elected officials, including the Minister of Education.

The Board also arranged a formal meeting with the Minister of Education, two formal meetings with Alberta's legislative assembly members and seven 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.

The 2022-23 school year was also an election year for the province. To ensure education was top of mind, the Board developed an election strategy. Information pamphlets were created, and trustees met with every local candidate to discuss pressing Division topics—such as infrastructure, Board autonomy and the value of public education.

Thanks to these ongoing efforts, the Board has successfully established an understanding with its stakeholders. That, in turn, has led to greater overall awareness about EIPS' needs and issues facing public education. The work has also helped foster respect and a productive working relationship with other elected officials.

of public education. Collectively, these showcased 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.

Significant effort was also put into public engagement, all using the Division's Public-Engagement Strategy, which outlines the tactics and tools to use in all EIPS consultation efforts. In 2022-23, the Board reached out to Division families and key stakeholders on a range of topics, including the assurance measures, Board and budget priorities, school capital and capacity projects, and mental health and well-being issues. The two most prominent engagements: the Assurance Framework and the EIPS Three-Year Engagement Plan.

As part of the EIPS Assurance Framework, EIPS conducted a Year-In-Review Survey to help gauge stakeholder confidence in EIPS' priorities and strategic direction. The survey was open to all school families, staff, Grade 12 students and community partners, covering a range of topics that reflect on the year before—student growth and achievement, learning supports, teaching and leading, governance and resource allocations. Every year, the Board, and Division, use the feedback to help guide future decision-making and strategies to ultimately enhance student learning.

Later in the year, stakeholders were engaged again through the online EIPS Annual Feedback Survey. Every year, the Division conducts the survey to measure its progress toward meeting the goals and priorities outlined in its *Four-Year Education Plan*. Families, staff, and students in grades 9 and 12 were asked a series of questions about their experiences with EIPS, the overall performance of the Division, the quality of education and areas for improvement. Similar to the Year-in-Review survey, the input helps the Board and Division develop new strategies to better serve students and the wider community.

Trustees also used the feedback gathered to update the *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan: 2022-26 (Year 2)*, which details the Board's mission, belief statements, priorities and goals. It also outlines the performance measures and strategies the Division will use to meet the listed priorities and outcomes. Trustees analyze that survey data to ensure the education plan remains responsive to student and community needs and focused on continuous improvement.

Meanwhile, the Board also executed Year 2 of the Division's Three-Year Engagement Plan. The plan identifies where the Division can improve operations to best serve students, and outlines projects and timelines for engagements over the next three years (see pg. 6, "A Closer Look: Challenges in 2022-23"). In total, public consultations were held for five different projects—including nine in-person engagement sessions and five online surveys.

The strategy ensures EIPS continues offering high-quality education to all students—now and well into the future.

Substantial effort was also spent advocating for a new replacement school for École Campbelltown and Sherwood Heights Junior High—listed on the *EIPS Three-Year Capital Plan* for more than a decade. Countless meetings took place with trustees and the province—with members of the legislative assembly and the Minister of Education. Some meetings were formal, while others were informal through phone conversations and networking events. Then, in spring 2023, the province approved funding for the replacement school construction, which will offer kindergarten to Grade 9 programming. It's still too early to know when exactly construction will begin. Right now, the Board anticipates the replacement school opening in the 2026-27 school year.

Throughout all of this, the Board worked hard to ensure thorough and ongoing communication with its constituents, families and other community members. Topics ranged from the Sherwood Park replacement school to modular classroom needs to funding and reserve use. Monthly, trustees presented Board Reports at school council meetings, the Committee of School Councils meetings and regular Board meetings. As previously mentioned, the Board also engaged community partners

and school families on an ongoing basis through its newsletters, *EIPS Board Quarterly Update* and *EIPS Advocacy in Action*—both featuring articles about the Division, what's new, the work of the Board and the value of public education.

Opportunities for Growth

While the Board has developed productive working relationships with stakeholders and elected officials in the communities EIPS serves, nurturing and further strengthening these is essential. As such, in the 2023-24 school year, the Board will continue to foster and build these working relationships. The Board will also fine-tune its advocacy plan, listing focus areas for the 2023-24 school year. Four long-standing advocacy items are education funding, the value of public education, autonomous school boards and infrastructure. The plan will also include strategies, tactics and key messaging, which the Board will use to advocate for the Division. Again, the objective is, through these efforts, the Division will continue providing high-quality, student-centred education, meeting the priorities and outcomes listed in the *Four-Year Education Plan*, and offering the best educational opportunities for all students.

Priority Strategy for Education Plan

Identifying issues, engaging stakeholders and advocating for EIPS and a strong provincial public education system are continued priorities for the 2023-24 school year. Strategies include:

-  Continue to promote effective communication and build relationships with all elected officials.
-  Continue to meet with all levels of government to advocate, engage and participate in consultations to ensure EIPS' voice is heard.
-  Develop and maintain a focused advocacy plan to enhance public education.
-  Continue to work with the media to ensure key messages and advocacy areas are clearly communicated to members of the public and key decision-makers.
-  Continue to advocate for a new collegiate school, grades 7-12, in Fort Saskatchewan.
-  Continue to engage and collaborate with the Committee of School Councils to move advocacy areas forward.
-  Continue all assurance framework efforts. And, ensure the Division offers opportunities for school families to provide input.
-  Continue to ensure EIPS meets the goals and outcomes outlined in the *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan: 2022-26*.
-  Continue to publish the *EIPS Board Quarterly Update*, featuring articles about the Division, what's new, and the work of the Board. The newsletter is published four times a year and distributed to elected officials and Division partners.
-  Continue to produce the Board's *Advocacy in Action* newsletter, distributed four times a year to EIPS families. Articles highlight the work of the Board, EIPS priorities, and advocacy areas and efforts—all focused on the importance and value of strong public education.

Financials and Reports

Summary of Financial Results 2022-23

The Elk Island Public Schools (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. 3, “Profile and Local Context”).

Key Highlights from 2022-23

A year-end deficit of \$5.3 million and a \$9-million restatement—resulting from the new asset retirement obligation accounting standard—decreased the Division’s accumulated surplus to \$8.3 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 (\$8 million);
- asset retirement obligation (-\$9.3);
- unrestricted surplus, operating reserves (\$7.4 million); and
- capital reserves (\$2.2 million).

With the school year now complete, the Division’s operating reserve, \$3.7 million, is designated for use by schools and departments to support future years. Meanwhile, EIPS’ allocated reserves, \$100,000, are set aside for targeted projects or initiatives. And, the unallocated reserve, \$3.6 million, offers the Division financial stability. Additionally, EIPS’ capital reserves balance—\$2.2 million as of Aug. 31, 2023—allows the Division to purchase unsupported capital assets and complete large-scale capital projects.

In terms of revenue, it was greater than anticipated in the spring budget, by \$5.7 million. That’s because after developing the spring budget, the Division received additional grant funding from the province (\$4.5 million)—for the teacher salary settlement, curriculum, fuel-price contingency and mental health. As well, enrolment increased, which resulted

in an added \$1 million, and rising interest rates generated higher investment income, \$800,000, for the Division.

For EIPS expenses, these were \$1.5 million greater than budgeted in the spring budget, primarily because of spending related to the additional provincial grants. The added spending was offset by increased carry-forward amounts for schools and central services to access in 2023-24.

Overall, instruction spending comprised 79% of the total budget, which equates to \$9,452 per student when capital expenditures aren’t considered. The remainder of spending was on operations and maintenance (11%), transportation (7%), system administration (2%) and external services (1%).

School Generated Funds

The unexpended school generated funds (SGF) were \$2.5 million as of Aug. 31, 2023. SGF revenues in the year were \$7.5 million and comprised of:

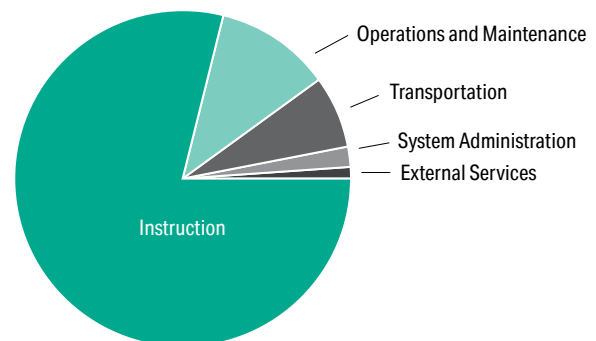
- fees of \$3.7 million—for example, field trips, athletics, noon-hour supervision;
- sales and services of \$2.5 million—for example, cafeteria and food programs, graduation;
- fundraising of \$335,000; and
- donations and grants of \$959,000.

SGF expenses during the year totalled \$7.1 million.

2022-23 Expenses by Program

Program	Amount (\$ thousands)	Percentage
Instruction	\$160,124	79%
Operations and Maintenance	\$22,899	11%
Transportation	\$14,106	7%
System Administration	\$4,807	2%
External Services	\$2,626	1%
TOTAL	\$204,562	100%

NOTE: All dollar amounts are expressed in thousands



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

[EIPS audited financial statements](#) [Alberta’s audited financial statements](#)



Budget Summary 2023-24

The 2023-24 Fall Budget Report includes an operating deficit of \$1.05 million, which is offset by operating reserves. Revenue increased by \$1.5 million to \$206.46 million from the Spring Budget Report, while expenses decreased by \$585,000 to \$207.5 million.

RESERVES

(anticipated as of Aug. 31, 2024)

EIPS' reserve projections include balances of:

- \$7.25 million in operating reserves
 - Central Services – \$435,000
 - Schools Operations – \$1.25 million
 - School Generated Funds – \$2.14 million
 - Division allocated – \$0
 - Division unallocated – \$3.43 million

NOTE: The provincial cap on the reserve balance is 3.2% of 2022-23 expenses. The minimum balance is 1%—approximately \$6.55 million and \$2.05 million, respectively.

- \$965,000 million in capital reserves. The capital items funded from capital reserves include:
 - Building Management System – \$181,000
 - Salisbury Composite High Stormwater Project– \$842,000
 - School Bus – \$164,000

STUDENT ENROLMENT IS 17,760, AS OF SEPT. 29, 2023

- An increase of 277 students, 1.6%, from what was anticipated in the 2023-24 Spring Budget Report.
- An increase of 300 students, 1.7%, from Sept. 29, 2022.

STAFFING: INCREASED TO 1,372.58 FTE

- Certificated 874.07 FTE, Classified 498.51 FTE
- An increase of 33.67 FTE, 2.5%, from the 2023-24 Spring Budget Report.

COMPENSATION, INSTRUCTIONAL AND ADMINISTRATION SPENDING

- Compensation increased by 2%, effective Sept. 1, 2023—in accordance with the certificated settlement ratified June 2022. As approved by the Board, classified staff received the same increase in pay as certificated staff.
- Instruction spending comprises 78.5% of the total budget and 80.5% when capital is excluded, which equates to \$9,448 per student.
- System administration spending is \$4.59 million, or 2.2% of total expenses, which is within the \$6.19 million grant provided by Alberta Education. EIPS distributed the additional funds for other divisional uses, as allowed in the *Funding Manual for School Authorities 2023-24 School Year*.

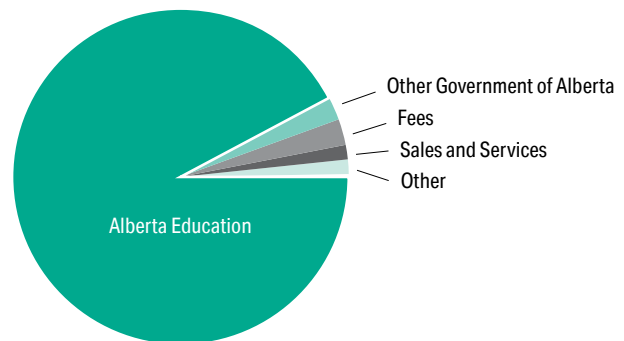
Revenues and Expenses Analysis 2023-24 Budget

STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENSES	2023-24 SPRING BUDGET	2023-24 FALL BUDGET	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
REVENUES				
Government of Alberta – Alberta Education	\$189,877	\$190,921	\$1,044	0.5%
Government of Alberta – Other	4,377	4,556	179	4.1%
Fees	5,091	5,091	-	0%
Other Sales and Services	2,765	2,821	56	2%
Other	2,842	3,066	224	7.9%
TOTAL	204,952	206,455	1,503	0.7%
EXPENSES				
Instruction	162,363	162,800	437	0.3%
Operations and Maintenance	23,298	22,550	(748)	(3.2%)
Transportation	15,871	15,656	(215)	(1.4%)
Board and System Administration	4,534	4,588	54	1.2%
External Services	2,022	1,909	(113)	(5.6%)
TOTAL	208,088	207,503	(585)	(0.3%)
OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	\$(3,136)	\$(1,048)	\$2,088	(66.6%)

NOTE: All dollar amounts are expressed in thousands

2023-24 Revenues by Source

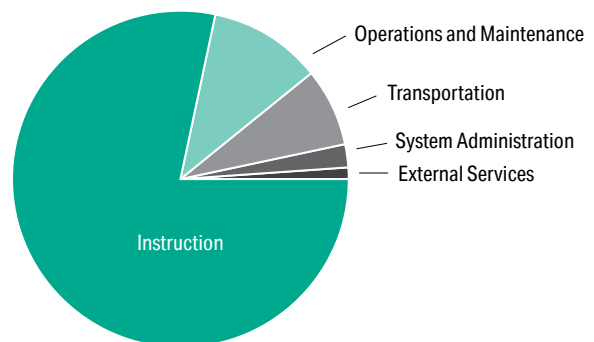
Alberta Education	\$190,921	92.5%
Other Government of Alberta	\$4,556	2.2%
Fees	\$5,091	2.5%
Sales and Services	\$2,821	1.4%
Other	\$3,066	1.5%
TOTAL	\$206,455	100%



NOTE: All dollar amounts are expressed in thousands

2023-24 Expenses by Program

Instruction	\$162,800	78.5%
Operations and Maintenance	\$22,550	10.9%
Transportation	\$15,656	7.5%
System Administration	\$4,588	2.2%
External Services	\$1,909	0.9%
TOTAL	\$207,503	100%



NOTE: All dollar amounts are expressed in thousands

Division Reports

Capital and Facility Projects

Throughout the 2022-23 school year, Facility Services was actively involved in school-capital projects—totalling more than \$9.33 million. For all capital projects, EIPS follows Alberta Infrastructure processes and government bylaws—municipal, provincial and federal. Projects completed or currently in progress include:

- Project-managed two modular classroom unit relocations—to SouthPointe School from École Campbelltown.
- Project-managed three modular classroom unit demolitions—Uncas Elementary.
- Project-managed the Salisbury Composite High Stormwater project.
- Oversaw a new playground for Bruderheim School.
- Upgraded various school mechanical-cooling systems.
- Assisted with the design drawings for the new replacement school in Sherwood Park.
- Renovated the food labs at Ardrossan Junior Senior High and F.R. Haythorne Junior High.
- Completed five major projects (\$1.56 million) through the Capital Maintenance Renewal program.
- Completed 59 (\$2.26 million) Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal projects.
- Completed 318 maintenance, operations and custodial projects.
- Completed 10,977 general EIPS work orders—with 96% completed.

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 2022-23* with the Committee of School Councils in January 2024. At the school level, achievement results were shared with school councils in November 2023. School councils were also given the opportunity to provide input into their school education plans.

Timelines and Communication

EIPS strives to ensure families and communities can easily access the *Annual Education Results Report 2022-23*. 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

The *Public Interest Disclosure Act* (2019) requires all school authorities to include an annual report of disclosures in its *Annual Education Results Report*. During the 2022-23 school year, there were no disclosures within EIPS. For a copy of the legislation, or for more information, visit the Public Interest Commissioner's website at yourvoiceprotected.ca.



Appendixes

Alberta Education Assurance Measures: 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
Citizenship	0 - 66.3	66.3 - 71.63	71.63 - 77.5	77.5-81.08	81.08 - 100
Three-Year High School Completion	0 - 65.95	65.95 - 74.1	74.1 - 84.79	84.79 - 89	89 - 100
Five-Year High School Completion	0 - 72.59	72.59 - 80.82	80.82 - 89.18	89.18 - 91.96	91.96 - 100
Provincial Achievement Tests: Acceptable	0 - 66.07	66.07 - 70.32	70.32 - 79.81	79.81 - 84.64	84.64 - 100
Provincial Achievement Tests: Excellence	0 - 9.97	9.97 - 13.44	13.44 - 19.56	19.56 - 25.83	25.83 - 100
Diploma Examinations: Acceptable	0 - 71.45	71.45 - 78.34	78.34 - 84.76	84.76 - 87.95	87.95 - 100
Diploma Examinations: Excellence	0 - 9.55	9.55 - 12.59	12.59 - 19.38	19.38 - 23.2	23.2 - 100
Education Quality	0 - 80.94	80.94 - 84.23	84.23 - 87.23	87.23 - 89.6	89.6 - 100
Parental Involvement	0 - 70.76	70.76 - 74.58	74.58 - 78.5	78.5 - 82.3	82.3 - 100

Notes

- For all measures 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%.

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

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Results – The province requires all school authorities to report First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Alberta Education Assurance results in their annual education plans and annual education results reports. The results include all students who self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit on student registration forms. The goal is to improve monitoring to enhance education outcomes.

High School Completion Rate – The percentage of students in the Grade 10 cohort who completed high school by the end of their third year or fifth 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 course and three other diploma examination courses.

Post-Secondary Transition Rate (six-year) – The percentage of students in the Grade 10 cohort who enter a post-secondary 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 number of funded Alberta students attending post-secondary institutions out of the province.

Diploma Examination Participation Rate (four-plus exams) – 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 – 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 is established for a given school year, excluding the following student groups:

- not registered as of September 29;
- registered in a school unaffiliated with Alberta;
- the registered school is under provincial or federal authority;
- identified as having moderate- or severe-cognitive disability or multiple severe disabilities;

- visiting and exchange students; and
- attending a Hutterite colony school.

A student registered 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. 79, "High School Completion Rate").

Rutherford Scholarship Eligibility Rate – 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:

- not registered as of September 29;
- registered in a school unaffiliated with Alberta;
- the registered school is under provincial or federal authority;
- identified, in the Grade 12 school year, as having a moderate- or severe-cognitive disability or multiple severe disabilities;
- visiting or exchange student in the Grade 12 school year; and
- 20 years or older as of September 1.





Provincial Achievement Test Results – Based on all students in a 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* – the percentage of students who achieve the acceptable standard on Grade 6 and Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests.
- *PAT: Excellence* – percentage of students who achieve the standard of excellence on Grade 6 and Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests.

In the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years, the province cancelled PATs because of COVID-19 and related disruptions in learning.

Diploma Examination Results – Based on the number of students writing each diploma examination. The overall diploma examination result is the average of each exam's weighted result, by the number of students writing.

- *Diploma: Acceptable* – the percentage of students who achieve the acceptable standard, 50%, on a diploma examination.
- *Diploma: Excellence* – the percentage of students who achieve the standard of excellence, 80%, on a diploma examination.

In the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years, the province cancelled diploma examinations because of COVID-19 and related disruptions in learning.

Survey Measures – In public schools, separate schools and francophone schools, all students in grades 4, 7 and 10; their parents; and teachers are included in the Alberta Education Assurance Survey. In charter schools and Level 2 private schools, students in Grade 4 and above; their parents; and all teachers are included in the Alberta Education Assurance Survey.

- The measure result 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 data for parents, teachers and students.

SOURCE: Alberta Education

The Elk Island Story. Our Story.



“We must be able to name where we come from and who our people are. By knowing this, we then have a better understanding of who we are and who we can be”

— Elder Wilson Bearhead

In the centre of what is now known as Elk Island National Park is Astotin Lake. The lake is dotted with small islands, one of which is called Elk Island. Parks Canada reports Elk Island is the place where female elk swim to give birth. Why the island? It's a place free of predators, where a mother elk knows her calf will have safe entry into the world and where it can grow and learn without worry or anxiety. Once the calf grows strong, both mother and offspring swim back to the mainland—secure in the knowledge that each can fend for themselves in the great forest.

Hence the Division's name: “Elk Island” Public Schools, where children are meant to be safe and carefully nurtured from a young age until they are old enough to swim out and into their own lives. EIPS is a haven of learning and connection, and it's an island within a forest where teaching, leading and mentoring make a difference and where every living being matters.

To the school community: As you head into the remainder of this school year, remember the Elk Island story—your story, our story. Challenge yourself to do everything in your power to ensure your school, classroom, office and heart are an “Elk Island” for all young ones. Through this, let your work ensure all young people within the Division can eventually swim away, prepared to deal with whatever the forest brings.

