

Elk Island Public Schools
Annual Education Results Report
2023-24

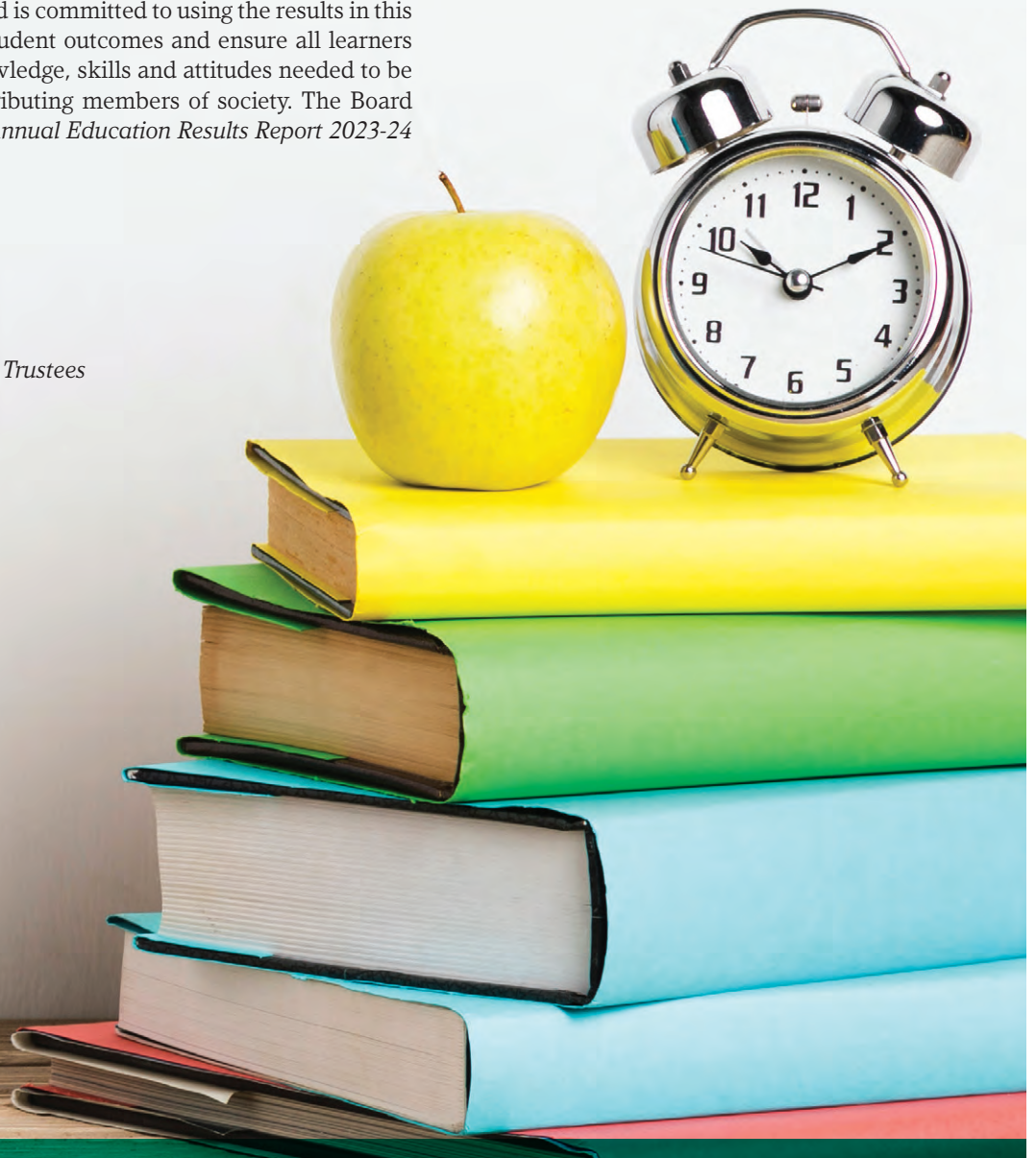


Accountability

The *Annual Education Results Report* for the 2023-24 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 *Sustainable Fiscal Planning and Reporting 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 2023-24* on Nov. 28, 2024.



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

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Each year, Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) publishes an *Annual Education Results Report* (AERR), which outlines how the Division meets its priorities and goals, identifies growth opportunities, and its successes and challenges throughout the year. Once again, the 2023-24 report confirm EIPS is successfully supporting students in reaching their full potential.

We're particularly proud of the collaborative approach we've nurtured with students, teachers, administrators, staff, families and communities. Together, we're supporting learning achievement, fostering educational excellence and equipping learners with the skills and knowledge necessary for lifelong success. Moving forward, we'll continue to enhance our efforts to make progress on our priorities and provide high-quality, student-centred environments where all students can learn, grow and thrive.

As a Board, we're pleased with the Division's results and will use them to guide future planning in the year ahead. We also invite you to read through the report, and join us in celebrating our achievements in providing great learning spaces and the best educational opportunities for all students.

Cathy Allen
Chair, EIPS Board of Trustees



MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

It's a pleasure to share with you EIPS' *Annual Education Results Report 2023-24*. The report reflects the Division's experiences over the last year—showcasing student successes, the behind-the-scenes work, opportunities for growth and the challenges we faced along the way. We launched Phase 2 of the new elementary curriculum; finalized all projects listed in the three-year engagement plan—addressing student accommodation concerns; began construction on the new Sherwood Park replacement school; developed a new allocation formula to better manage complex classrooms; rolled out new intervention strategies to better support students; expanded the Career Pathways programming; and implemented Year 3 of the Division's new mental health strategy to ensure the well-being of students and staff.

As a Division, we're incredibly proud of the results, which you can read in this year's *Annual Education Results Report*. The results reaffirm the Division's commitment to student achievement and learner needs, and that it's at the forefront of everything we do. Through a range of programs, opportunities and supports, EIPS prepares students for success and equips them with the skills and knowledge needed for a lifetime. While the results are encouraging, there are always areas to improve. We will use both, the success and growth areas, to find new and creative ways to provide the best possible educational opportunities for all learners.

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention none of this would be possible without the support of our school community—students, teachers, staff, families and community partners. Together, we've built positive relationships that allow us to rally behind one clear mission: To provide high-quality, student-centred educational opportunities for all students. Thank you to all of you for making this possible.

I encourage each of you to read through this year's *EIPS Annual Education Results Report*. When you do, I hope you celebrate the Division's accomplishments and recognize the role you played in helping EIPS get where we are. Enjoy!

Sandra Stoddard
EIPS Superintendent



The Elk Island Story. Our Story.



Courtesy: Jason Carter, carter-ryan.com

“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, best known for its breathtaking views, wood bison, bird species and small islands that dot the lake. One of those islands is Elk Island, which, according to Parks Canada, is a place frequently visited by female elk to give birth and raise their calves.

Why the island?

It's free from predators. The mother elk knows her calf will have safe entry into the world and grow and learn without worry or anxiety. Once the calf is strong enough, both mother and offspring swim back to the mainland—secure in the knowledge each can fend for themselves in the great forest.

Hence the Division's name: “Elk Island” Public Schools. Like its namesake, it, too, is a place where children are

meant to be safe and carefully nurtured—from a young age to when they're old enough to go out into the world to live their own lives. With that in mind, EIPS prides itself on being a haven of learning and connection; an island within a forest where teaching, leading and mentoring make a difference; and where every living being matters.

A message to the EIPS school community: As you navigate the remainder of this school year, remember the Elk Island story—your story, our story. Challenge yourself to do everything possible to ensure your school, classroom, office and heart are an “Elk Island” for all young ones. Your work in this will ensure all young people in the Division can, in time, swim away, prepared to deal with whatever the forest brings.

Profile and Local Context

Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) is one of Alberta’s largest school divisions, serving close to 17,950 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 1,551 people—930 teachers and 621 non-teaching staff—who work together to 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.

All students across the Division 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. The Division also offers a variety of educational opportunities for students that take place within, and outside, the classroom:

- language programming—French, German and Ukrainian;
- academic programming—Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and Junior High Honours;
- faith-based programming—Alternative Christian and Logos Christian;
- Next Step outreach programming—in Sherwood Park, Fort Saskatchewan and Vegreville; and
- lifestyle programming—Sport for Life.

To further complement programming, EIPS boasts strong extracurricular opportunities and career and technology 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: 2023-24

RESULTS

Overall, Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) is pleased with the data and results from the 2023-24 school year. The story it tells is there is plenty to celebrate—particularly the strategies and plans in place that positively impact student achievement and well-being. Both the Alberta Education Assurance (AEA) Measures and the EIPS Annual Feedback Survey are key pieces to telling that story. Collectively, their data demonstrate EIPS is doing a good job of meeting the goals and priorities outlined in its *Four-Year Education Plan: 2022-26*—ensuring success for all students, high-quality learning environments and effective engagement.

Every year, Alberta Education releases the AEA Measure results, which assess performance across all provincial school authorities. The results combine provincial testing, student outcomes and AEA survey data to evaluate success and identify areas for improvement at the school, school authority and provincial levels. Meanwhile, the EIPS Annual Feedback Survey is administered divisionwide to families, staff and students, grades 9 and 12, to gauge EIPS' progress toward meeting the goals and priorities outlined in its *Four-Year Education Plan*. Stakeholders are asked a series of questions about their experiences with EIPS and their school; the quality of education being provided to students; areas for improvement; and their confidence in EIPS' priorities and strategic direction.

As in previous years, EIPS scored high marks for the majority of its performance measures, and, for the most part, higher than the province. However, some discrepancies were seen between the province's AEA measures and the EIPS Annual Feedback Survey results. Typically, the annual results are more aligned. Looking at the Annual Feedback Survey, results improved for most measures—from student growth and achievement to teaching and leading to learning supports. However, the opposite was true for the AEA measures—results were down compared to previous years. That said, the decreases were minor, dropping, on average, by just a percentage. Also interesting, the downward trend was seen provincewide—meaning the drop wasn't isolated to EIPS.

Digging deeper into the data, where there were decreases for EIPS, it was primarily seen at the junior high level. Results for the elementary and senior high levels remained relatively consistent from previous years. The decreases are likely an anomaly isolated to the 2023-24 school year. EIPS expects numbers will quickly return to where they were in previous years. Regardless, the Division is exploring the reasons for the decreases and strategies to enhance each measured area.



FUNDING

Every year, the budget gets tighter, making operations more challenging. Like other school divisions, EIPS certainly felt the pinch as expenses continued to rise throughout 2023-24. That, along with how the province funds education, student enrolment growth and inflation, forced the Division to take a closer look at its operations to find further ways to reduce costs—looking at the needed supports and services versus those that are nice to have (see pg. 84, “Summary of Financial Results”). In the end, EIPS developed a conservative budget that supported the mission, belief statements and priorities of EIPS and its key focus areas—health and wellness, career pathways, leveraging student achievement, the new curriculum and equitable programming and infrastructure.

Looking ahead, EIPS is hopeful the province will rethink how it funds education and its funding formula. It would be more beneficial if appropriate funding was provided to account for inflationary increases, classroom complexity, technology infrastructure and security needs, and mandatory government initiatives such as online platforms for assessments and the curriculum.

In addition, there are other funding formula considerations that would help improve operations, including:

- confirming all funding earlier in the year—including

scope-specific or one-time resource allocations—to allow time to plan, staff accordingly and ensure strategic investments in public education can deliver optimal results for students;

- ensuring adequate small rural school funding for fair and equitable access to education—which, in turn, helps the corresponding small towns and villages remain viable;
- reviewing the socio-economic status funding formula—just using the average doesn't always reflect the reality of all communities; and
- covering salary increases for certificated and classified staff to deliver the best possible education, attract and retain employees in high-demand professions, and avoid labour unrest and learning disruptions.

All in all, developing a funding formula that considers these elements will help ensure success for all students and a future where they can contribute meaningfully to their communities and the province as a whole.

CURRICULUM

In 2023-24, EIPS implemented Phase 2 of the province's new elementary curriculum roll-out. Schools throughout the Division launched the new mathematics and English language arts and literature curriculum, grades 4 to 6; and the new science curriculum, kindergarten to Grade 3. To ensure smooth transitions for both students and staff, Alberta Education provided school divisions with added funding—albeit less than the year before.

Within EIPS, the focus was on building teacher capacity and developing relevant resources through its New Curriculum team—made up of five curriculum and assessment area-expert teachers. As a side note, because funding from the province was lower than the previous year, the Division reduced the team from seven members in 2022-23. As a result, fewer resources were produced, and fewer professional learning opportunities were offered. Despite that, the New Curriculum team successfully organized multiple professional learning opportunities, developed resource materials and assessment documents, aligned report cards and created unit plans for subjects launching in 2023-24. Simultaneously, they also worked on Phase 3 of the roll-out—grades 4 to 6 French Immersion language arts and literature and science, all launching in 2024-25.

Anecdotally, it appears EIPS was successful in its efforts to ensure smooth transitions. Teachers report the collective efforts by the New Curriculum team built their confidence in implementing the new curriculum. However, there is no achievement data to gauge how students accurately fared. That's because the province cancelled the Grade 6 Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs) in English language arts and literature and mathematics. Alberta Education felt

it was premature to assess students and, as such, didn't formally evaluate student achievement in these subjects.

That said, many teachers reported not using a phased-in approach to introduce the new curriculum created unfavourable challenges for students. For example, Grade 5 students didn't have the requisite from Grade 4, and the Grade 6 students didn't have the requisite from grades 4 and 5. As such, these students appeared to struggle to understand the new concepts. Looking ahead, EIPS will continue its 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.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Throughout 2023-24, work continued on 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, particularly at the junior high level.

To address these challenges, the Board stepped in with Board-allocated funding for the Division 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 and Year 2 involved putting the plan in motion and capacity building. Year 3, the 2023-24 school year, focused on education, developing and distributing resources on mental health literacy, supporting student mental health and well-being, capacity building and sharing service pathways (see pg. 62, "EIPS Mental Health Strategy").

[funding]

Classroom complexity

Given the current funding, EIPS is fielding larger class sizes and increased complexity in the classroom. In fact, in 2023-24, EIPS saw more students with specialized coding—up by more than 13%. Yet, student growth only increased by 1%. So, to better address classroom complexity, the Division will roll out a new funding allocation to ensure equitable access to education, which it's piloting in the 2024-25 school year.

Although the allocation is not new money, it's allocated differently, prioritizing schools that need it most. That means the new allocation offers administrators greater flexibility in addressing classroom complexity needs. That's because the allocation is based on an algorithm of various factors, such as provincial achievement and diploma test results and socio-economic factors. During the pilot, schools will use the funds to support student learning needs and programming specific to their school.

In terms of capacity building, efforts focused on adolescent brain development, regulation and anti-racism. Overall, feedback from staff, families and students, was well-received, with many asking the Division to provide even more resources on these topics. As such, more is planned for 2024-25.

Also, through EIPS' Mental Health Pilot Program, funded by Alberta Education, the Division established mental health support rooms, called Reset Rooms, in every junior high school within the Division. The rooms were spaces for students to go when feeling overwhelmed, featuring supports, resources and EIPS teachers—trained in mental health literacy and supported by the Division's counselling team. The 2024-25 school year is the last year of the pilot project. Knowing funding will cease in 2025-26, EIPS shifted focus for the initiative, to capacity building with staff, to provide similar support to students, but within the classroom.

ENGAGEMENT

THREE-YEAR ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Also, in 2023-24, EIPS finalized the last project listed within its *three-year public engagement plan*, which aimed to enhance programming offered throughout the Division. One of the four projects listed within the initiative, Project 1, involved engaging Strathcona County about how best to accommodate students within the Division's existing infrastructure. Specifically, how to address school capacity issues, improve attendance areas for junior high, balance senior high enrolment in Sherwood Park and enhance accommodations for French Immersion programming.

Between 2022 and 2024, significant work went into engaging stakeholders to determine the best solutions. After an exhaustive review of the stakeholder feedback, background information, trends, facts and figures, enrolment projections, attendance boundaries, available infrastructure, and input from working-group meetings with principals and staff, the Board determined the best way to address anticipated enrolment pressures in Ardrossan, enhance French Immersion program retention and balance senior high enrolment in Sherwood Park was:

- To relocate EIPS' senior high French Immersion program, grades 10 to 12, to Salisbury Composite High—effective when the Sherwood Park replacement school opens.
- To adjust Strathcona County's senior high attendance boundaries by redesignating students residing in Lakeland Ridge's junior high attendance area to Bev Facey Community High for grades 10 to 12—effective when the Sherwood Park replacement school opens.

Overall, the solution aligns with the feedback heard,

supports divisional program goals, addresses enrolment concerns and is sustainable into the future. Throughout the 2024-25 school year, EIPS plans to engage students, families and staff to ensure a smooth and successful transition for everyone.

FORT SASKATCHEWAN: REPLACEMENT SCHOOL

Additionally, EIPS started work exploring how best to manage the challenges the Division faces in Fort Saskatchewan—ageing infrastructure, the growing population and anticipated capacity pressures. The goal: To ensure all Fort Saskatchewan learners receive a high-quality, student-centred education in 21st-century learning spaces that prepare students for life after high school, develop career opportunities and help build the community, all at the same time.

To begin that work, EIPS hosted two public information sessions. The first one introduced stakeholders to the collegiate concept. The second took the form of a community conversation with school families in Fort Saskatchewan to talk about its schools and the challenges the Division faces—limited and ageing infrastructure and the region's growing population. Attendees gained insight into what the Division is doing to address these challenges, EIPS' capital plan priorities, work undertaken on the collegiate model—designed to provide students with high-demand employment training and skills in their community—and strategies moving forward. Those who came also had a chance to ask questions, share their concerns and learn how they can help. More consultations are planned to move the project forward, and the Board has included it as part of its advocacy plan for 2024-25.



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. 5, “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 to inform the next four-year education plan—such as evidence-informed decision-making; and
- communicating and engaging with stakeholders about the school division’s plans and results.

Assurance Framework

Every spring, Alberta Education allocates funds to school authorities to support the delivery of high-quality education programs for all students. The practice establishes an accountability relationship that requires transparency, annual reporting and assurance every Alberta-based school division meets its responsibilities. Within EIPS, this is facilitated through an Assurance Framework, cycled through annually. Broadly, it's an accountability mechanism for the Division to assess and publicly demonstrate its ongoing progress—through regular reporting, set processes, actions, engagement, analysis of evidence and relationship building. The result: stakeholders and community members continually gain a comprehensive understanding of EIPS' performance and its commitment to fostering 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 the Alberta Education Assurance measures, and internal qualitative and quantitative data. The reviews complement the education plans and allow schools and departments to share their results, annual education plans, successes and challenges with the Board and community. Through this process, trustees, staff and families are more aware of what's happening across the Division and the issues it faces.
- 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.

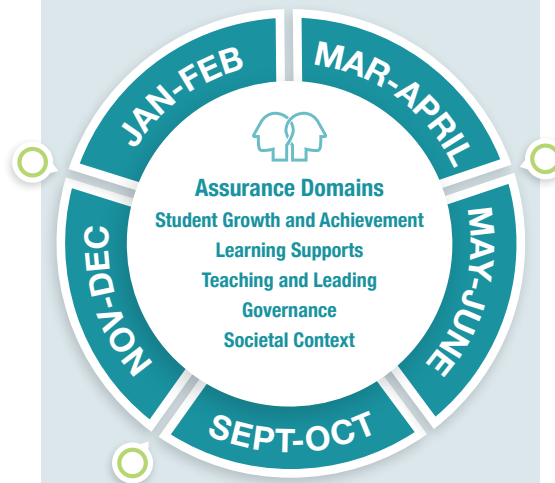
Assurance Cycle

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 by building relationships, engaging with education partners, and establishing a culture of continuous improvement and collective responsibility.

The Board strengthens its assurance by maintaining regular communication with stakeholders, including attending monthly school council meetings and participating in the Committee of School Councils meetings to gather feedback about the Division. Additionally, every Board Caucus meeting contains a standing generative-governance discussion, allowing trustees the opportunity to share input and ideas to, ultimately, inform decision-making.





OCTOBER 2023

- All EIPS Central Services departments hosted Assurance Reviews to go over the previous year's results with the Board.
- AD HOC ENGAGEMENT: The Division hosted an engagement session related to senior high French Immersion as part of its Three-Year Engagement Plan. The feedback collected strongly influenced the Board's solutions to improve operations.

NOVEMBER 2023

- All Division schools hosted Assurance Reviews to go over the previous year's results with the Board—school council chairs were also invited.
- The Division published the *EIPS Annual Education Results Report: 2022-23*.

DECEMBER 2023

- The Division administered its annual EIPS Budget Survey to gather feedback about budget-planning priorities—the Board used the survey input to help develop the 2024-25 spring budget.

JANUARY 2024

- EIPS engaged the Committee of School Councils (COSC) about the *Annual Education Results Report: 2022-23*.
- All EIPS schools consulted school councils and families about school fees for the upcoming year.
- AD HOC ENGAGEMENT: The Board approved a solution for the senior high French Immersion program and to balance senior high enrolment in Sherwood Park—both part of the Three-Year Engagement Plan. Before a decision was made, the Division consulted stakeholders about its rationale. Future consultations are planned to ensure smooth transitions.

FEBRUARY 2024

- The province administered the Alberta Education Assurance survey to gather stakeholder feedback on the assurance domains. The data helps guide decision-making.

MARCH 2024

- The Division administered its 2023-24 EIPS Annual Feedback Survey to staff, students, families and community members to gauge its progress and stakeholder confidence related to the priority and goals outlined in its *Four-Year Education Plan*—the input helps guide future decision-making and priorities.

APRIL 2024

- All EIPS schools engaged staff, families and school councils to inform budget planning and develop the 2024-25 school education plans.
- Using the feedback provided from the annual surveys and other public engagement conversations, the Division prepared a draft spring budget report and updated the *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan: 2022-26 (Year 3)*.
- AD HOC ENGAGEMENT: The Division hosted a stakeholder engagement session on how best to manage the challenges the Division faces in Fort Saskatchewan—ageing infrastructure, the growing population and anticipated capacity pressures.

MAY 2024

- The Division engaged COSC about EIPS' spring budget and the *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan (Year 3)*.
- Using the stakeholder feedback from the annual surveys, the Board approved the updated *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan: 2022-26 (Year 3)*.

JUNE 2024

- Using the stakeholder feedback from the annual surveys, the Board approved the spring budget for the 2024-25 school year and submitted it to Alberta Education.

ONGOING

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

Alberta Education Assurance Measures: Summary

Measure Category	ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS				ALBERTA			
	CURRENT RESULT	PREV YEAR RESULT	PREV 3 YEAR AVERAGE	ACHIEVEMENT RATING	CURRENT RESULT	PREV YEAR RESULT	PREV 3 YEAR AVERAGE	ACHIEVEMENT RATING
STUDENT GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT								
Student Learning Engagement	82.1	83.5	83.5	n/a	83.7	84.4	84.8	n/a
Citizenship	77.3	78.8	79	Intermediate	79.4	80.3	80.9	High
High School Completion Rate (3 years)	83.1	85.4	87.4	Intermediate	80.4	80.7	82.4	Intermediate
High School Completion Rate (5 years)	92	93	91.4	Very High	88.1	88.6	87.3	Intermediate
Grade 6 Provincial Achievement Tests: Acceptable	81.3	79.5	79.5	High	68.5	66.2	66.2	Intermediate
Grade 6 Provincial Achievement Tests: Excellence	27.4	28.6	28.6	High	19.8	18	18	High
Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests: Acceptable	70.8	73	73	Intermediate	62.5	62.6	62.6	Low
Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests: Excellence	17.1	17	17	Intermediate	15.4	15.5	15.5	Intermediate
Diploma Examinations: Acceptable	87	85	85	High	81.5	80.3	80.3	Intermediate
Diploma Examinations: Excellence	22.6	21.4	21.4	High	22.6	21.2	21.2	High
TEACHING AND LEADING								
Education Quality	87.4	88.2	88.4	High	87.6	88.1	88.6	High
LEARNING SUPPORTS								
Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning Environments	84.2	85	85.2	n/a	84	84.7	85.4	n/a
Access to Supports and Services	79.4	80.3	80.3	n/a	79.9	80.6	81.1	n/a
GOVERNANCE								
Parental Involvement	78.3	78.1	77.5	Intermediate	79.5	79.1	78.9	High

Achievement measures are based on a three-year average, categories marked "n/a" still don't have a three-year average (see pg. 89, "Appendix A"). The full Fall 2024 School Authority Results Summary for Planning and Reporting is available at: eips.ca/download/474211.

Notes

1. The COVID-19 pandemic impacted participation in the 2019-20 to 2021-22 diploma examinations. As such, school-awarded marks determined achievement in diploma courses.
2. Use caution interpreting high school completion rate results over time.
3. 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).
4. 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.
5. The 2022-23 PAT results don't include students who participated in the roll-out of the new curriculum.
6. 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.

EIPS Annual Feedback Survey: Summary 2023-24

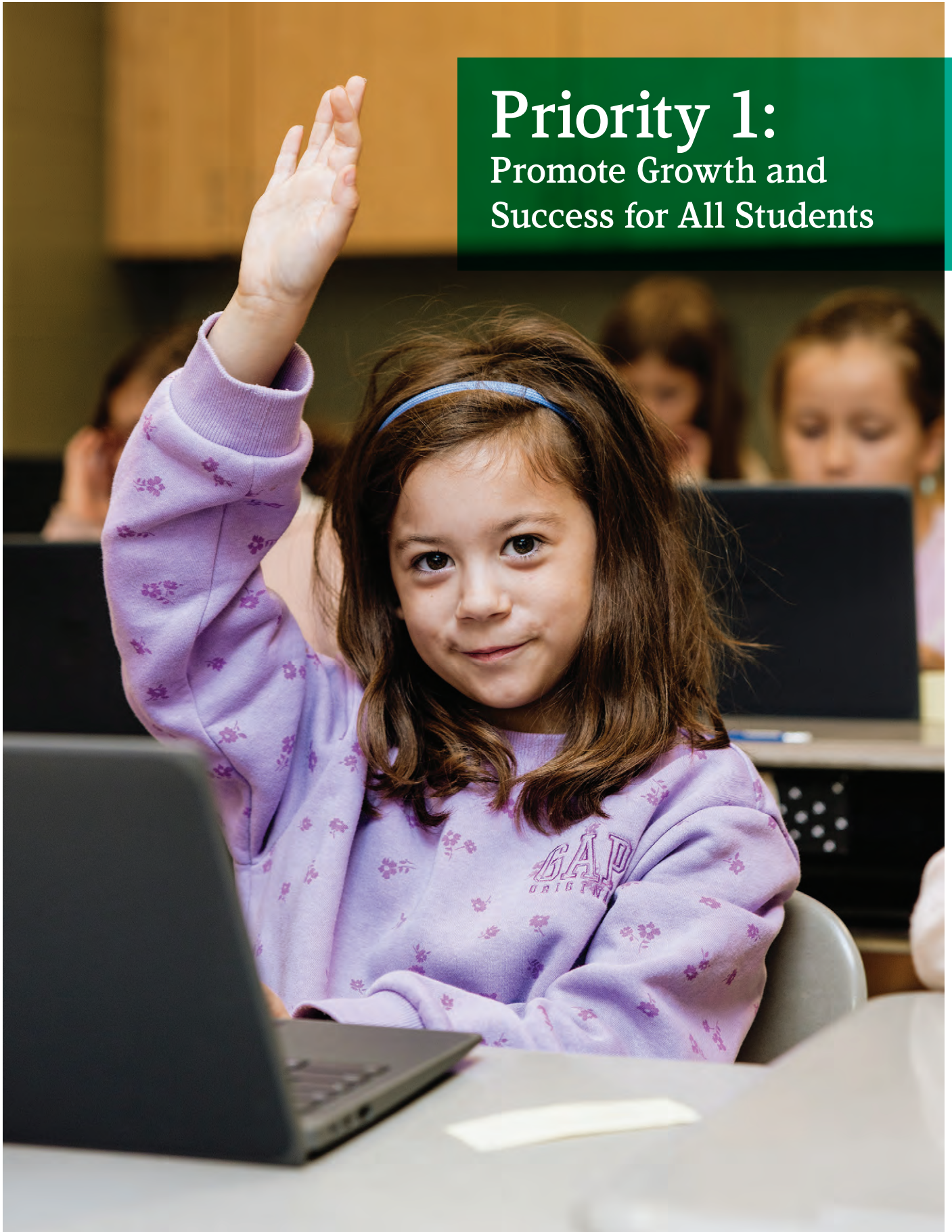
Measure Categories	ALL	FAMILIES	STUDENTS	STAFF	ACHIEVEMENT EQUIVALENT
STUDENT GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT					
<i>Stakeholder confidence:</i> EIPS provides supports and services to pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children and prepares them to enter Grade 1	94.3	92.9	94.5	95.4	n/a
Learners are demonstrating growth in literacy	82.1	84	74.8	87.5	n/a
Learners are demonstrating growth in numeracy	82.9	84.6	77.8	86.2	n/a
<i>Stakeholder confidence:</i> EIPS implements strategies to support students in demonstrating growth in literacy	94.4	92.2	92.9	98	n/a
<i>Stakeholder confidence:</i> EIPS implements strategies to support students in demonstrating growth in numeracy	95.2	92.7	94.7	98.2	n/a
Learners have an understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture and history	80.8	76.3	78.6	87.6	High
<i>Stakeholder confidence:</i> EIPS implements strategies to support the achievement and growth of self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students	94.3	94.7	90.3	97.8	Very High
Learners are learning the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to be successful in life	75.8	76.2	61.6	89.7	High
<i>Stakeholder confidence:</i> EIPS implements strategies to support and prepare students for life beyond high school	86.2	83.6	78.9	96.2	Very High
EIPS schools encourage learners to be responsible, respectful and engaged citizens	85.1	85.8	75.9	93.7	Very High
TEACHING AND LEADING					
Stakeholder satisfaction with the quality of education received at EIPS schools	84.7	81.5	79.3	93.4	Intermediate
Stakeholder satisfaction with the quality of teaching at EIPS schools	84.9	84	77.3	93.4	Intermediate
Staff agreement someone at work encourages their professional learning	94.7	n/a	n/a	94.7	Very High
EIPS' mission, beliefs and priorities make staff feel their jobs are important	93.3	n/a	n/a	93.3	Very High
LEARNING SUPPORTS					
Stakeholder agreement learners' needs are met	82.8	80.2	81	87.3	Very High
Stakeholder agreement learners are encouraged to do their best	90.8	88.1	87	97.4	Very High
Stakeholder agreement EIPS school staff care about learners	86.1	86.1	72.6	99.6	High
Stakeholder agreement EIPS schools are safe	84.8	86.9	73.6	93.8	High
Stakeholder satisfaction with the resources available to support student learning	79.9	74.3	79.4	86	High
<i>Stakeholder confidence:</i> EIPS' learning and working environments are welcoming, inclusive, respectful and safe	93.2	91.9	91.9	95.7	Very High
GOVERNANCE					
Stakeholder satisfaction with the opportunities provided to families to be involved in their child's education	79.6	82.7	65.3	90.9	High
EIPS schools keep families informed about their child's progress and achievement	84.4	86.4	71.2	95.5	Very High
There is open and honest communication within EIPS schools	77.8	80.7	66	86.7	Intermediate
<i>Stakeholder confidence:</i> EIPS provides families with meaningful opportunities to be involved in their child's education	94.8	92.7	91.9	99.8	Very High
<i>Stakeholder confidence:</i> EIPS' advocacy efforts enhance public education	92.5	89	90.9	97.6	Very High

Notes

- The 2023-24 EIPS Annual Feedback Survey—administered to families, staff and students, grades 9 and 12—gauges the Division's progress toward meeting the goals and priorities outlined in its *Four-Year Education Plan*. Stakeholders are asked about their experiences with EIPS and their school; the quality of education being provided to students; areas for improvement; and their confidence in EIPS' priorities and strategic direction as a whole.
- "ALL" is a result that represents the average percentage of the families, students and staff.
- Achievement measures are based on a three-year average, categories marked "n/a" still don't have a three-year average (see pg. 89, "Appendix A").
- In all but the stakeholder confidence questions, students include learners in grades 9 and 12. On the stakeholder confidence questions, students include Grade 12 learners, only.
- "Achievement Equivalent" is based on the Alberta Education Assurance Measure evaluation scores (see pg. 89, "Appendix A")

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	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
EIPS INTERNAL DATA					
Total number of children enrolled in the PALS programs	182	124	139	146	153
Total number of children enrolled in kindergarten	1,433	1,465	1,260	1,252	1,212
Number of children entering the PALS program with severe special needs	161 Year 1: 70 Year 2: 91	124 Year 1: 43 Year 2: 81	139 Year 1: 102 Year 2: 37	146 Year 1: 72 Year 2: 74	153 Year 1: 83 Year 2: 70
Percentage of children who completed their second year of the PALS program and no longer require a severe speech code	54.9	56.8	42.3	42.8	43.1
The percentage of Grade 3 students reading at grade level	n/a	82	81	81	82.5
The percentage of Grade 3 students performing mathematics at grade level	n/a	n/a	n/a	86.3	86.7
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	100	80	93	100
Percentage of families reporting their child is becoming ready to enter Grade 1 because of the kindergarten program	n/a	94.3	92.8	91	93.3
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: STAKEHOLDER CONFIDENCE					
Percentage of stakeholders confident EIPS provides supports and services needed to prepare pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children for Grade 1	n/a	n/a	92.3	91.3	94.3

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	2%	11%	87%	1,200	4%	16%	80%	1,213	8%	23%	69%	1,206	3%	19%	78%	1,199
Post-test	0%	4%	96%	1,224	2%	8%	90%	1,228	1%	6%	93%	1,223	1%	8%	91%	1,221

	PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT FINE MOTOR				PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT GROSS MOTOR				RESPONSIVE TIERED INSTRUCTION (RTI)			
	▲	●	■	n=	▲	●	■	n=	▲	●	■	n=
Pre-test	6%	23%	71%	1,212	2%	13%	85%	1,208	14%	27%	59%	1,202
Post-test	1%	6%	93%	1,227	0%	5%	95%	1,226	4%	1%	84%	1,221

▲ experiencing significant difficulty ● experiencing some difficulty ■ appropriate development

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, points to the early years as 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 within the Division, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, are taught by caring and responsive staff members, in high-quality early learning environments 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 areas critical for success later in life. For example, with literacy, reading at grade level by Grade 3 is a predictor of high school completion. As such, all EIPS early learning teachers work diligently and participate in ongoing professional learning—focused on research-based foundational practices. The objective: for all learners to experience one year’s growth in literacy and numeracy.

Results

During the 2023-24 school year, 1,365 children were enrolled in Early Childhood Services within EIPS—1,212 in kindergarten and 153 in pre-kindergarten programming. Comparing numbers from the previous year, pre-kindergarten enrolment increased by seven children, and kindergarten enrolment dropped by 40. Overall, enrolment remains relatively stable and consistent year over year.

EIPS’ pre-kindergarten programming is offered through 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 2023-24, EIPS offered the program at five EIPS locations—in Sherwood Park, Ardrossan, Fort Saskatchewan, Lamont and Vegreville.

Year after year, the program sees positive learner outcomes. For example, in 2023-24, 74 children entered kindergarten from the PALS program. When they started PALS, all 74 children had a severe speech-and-language-delay code. However, after finishing the program, 43.1% of those learners—with codes 47 and 48—no longer required the codes when they enter kindergarten. That’s reason to celebrate, and, even up from the previous year’s 42.8%. For these children, PALS addressed their severe speech-and-language delay challenges before they even entered kindergarten, which is huge. It helps set a strong academic foundation for the child, before even starting kindergarten, and has a long-lasting positive effect on the learner’s academic and social development.

That statistic aligns well with results from the 2023-24 EIPS Annual Feedback Survey, an annual survey the

Division conducts to gauge its progress toward meeting the goals and priorities outlined in its *Four-Year Education Plan* and stakeholder confidence. According to the survey data, 100% of respondents with a child in a pre-kindergarten program reported their child demonstrated developmental growth because of the PALS program. That percentage is up by 7% from the year before.

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 2023-24 EIPS Annual Feedback Survey indicates 93% of EIPS families report the Division’s kindergarten program prepares children for Grade 1. Likewise, 94% of

[building capacity] Playful pathways

Embracing the curiosity and creativity of children

New in 2023-24, the Division launched its inaugural EIPS Kindergarten Day, an annual professional learning day for kindergarten teachers. Throughout the day, various collaborative learning sessions were offered, all focused on play-based learning to explore and discover, including:

- cross-curricular planning;
- emotion coaching;
- numeracy;
- literacy;
- open-ended play;
- playful printing;
- open-ended art; and
- storytelling.

Following EIPS Kindergarten Day, a survey was conducted among participants. Overall, the feedback was positive. In total, 100% of respondents said the professional learning was valuable, they want to do it again and they will use what was learned in the classroom.

stakeholders—families, staff and Grade 12 students—are also confident the Division provides the needed supports and services to prepare learners, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, to enter Grade 1. These results confirm the Division's early intervention program makes an important difference for young children and those requiring added supports and services.

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 overall 2023-24 EYE-TA pre-test results, only 59% of children who completed the assessment, when entering EIPS kindergarten, met the overall developmental milestones, also called the Responsive Tiered Instruction. However, the post-test results indicate at the end of kindergarten, 84% demonstrated appropriate overall development after a year of programming—consistent with the Division's three-year trend data. Like with PALS, 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 identify children most likely to require extra support to develop their reading skills during their primary school years.

Turning to EIPS' 2023-24 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, the language and communication skills results suggest that 91% of kindergarten learners are on target to read at grade level by Grade 3—down slightly from 93% the year before. EIPS does track these student cohorts to evaluate the predictive validity of the EYE-TA—2023-24 being the first year to see the cohort measure results.

Rewind to 2020-21, for cognitive skills, 91% of that

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.

student cohort were on target to read at grade level by Grade 3. And, for language and communication, 92% were on target. In 2023-24, that same student cohort was retested using the Star Reading assessment in Grade 3—with 82.5% reading at the appropriate grade level. While the result is positive for the student cohort group, EIPS anticipated a higher percentage, given the EYE-TA results in 2020-21—91% and 92%. As such, the Division needs to explore if there is a better predictive assessment for kindergarten learners moving forward. For 2024-25, kindergarten students will complete the mandatory provincial assessment screeners.

EIPS did use the provincial-mandated assessments for students in 2023-24 (see pg. 91, "Appendix C: 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. At the end of the 2023-24 school year, all students were re-evaluated—despite reassessment only being mandated for at-risk students. Overall, all students experienced growth in both literacy and numeracy—especially those who received the small-group intervention.

Because the number of months behind or gained, isn't supplied by Alberta Education, each Division relies on internal assessments to assess and report this number, which makes it less reliable and valid across the province. Going forward, the Division will only report on results from students identified as being at-risk in the initial

screeners—to better understand how well the intervention efforts worked. EIPS is hopeful Alberta Education will norm reference this data point to make it more reliable to use, report on and inform future planning.

To complement the intervention programming, EIPS also piloted a new Reading Enrichment and Development (READ) project in 2023-24. The program aimed to improve student reading achievement through targeted intervention based on the science of reading. Seven schools participated in the program—five in Fort Saskatchewan and two in rural schools. Each school received two rounds of intervention for seven weeks, including pre- and post-intervention assessments. In total, 50 students took part in READ and received intervention in four 40-minute, small-group sessions a week. Post-intervention testing showed significant improvements for learners—specifically in letter identification, sounds and phoneme manipulation. Thanks to the success of the READ pilot project, the Division has expanded the program to include all regular program elementary schools across the Division.

[building capacity]

Setting up for success

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 supplied a series of learning kits to support schools with vertical non-permanent surface activities, build understanding and create 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.

TABLE 1: EIPS READ intervention growth – pre- and post-test results

Assessment area	PRE-TEST	POST-TEST
letter identification	50 of 52	52 of 52
letter sound	46 of 52	51 of 52
digraph sound	7 of 20	12 of 20
isolating sounds	11 of 15	15 of 15
phoneme manipulation	5 of 15	10 of 15

For children with diverse learning needs, EIPS specialists and consultants worked alongside early learning teachers to help plan programming and alternative literacy activities, such as visual supports and multi-modal opportunities. Known as an alternative to the pencil, the visual supports and multi-modal opportunities ensured all learners in the classroom had a voice and were able to participate in early writing activities. For learners needing help with regulation, consultants also created learning teams focused on coaching, modelling and multidisciplinary planning.

EIPS also used the Star Reading and Star Math assessments throughout the year. According to the Star Reading Assessment, 82.5% of students were reading at grade level at the end of Grade 3—up 1.5% from the previous year. Also, according to the Star Math assessment, 86.7% of students were performing mathematics at grade level—up 0.4% from the previous year. While, good news, the Star assessments are norm-referenced across North America, and no longer align with the new Alberta curriculum. As such, the Division has decided to discontinue using the Star assessments starting in the 2024-25 school year.

SUPPORTS AND SERVICES

For the 2023-24 PALS programs, speech-language pathologists provided a variety of supports to 109 children identified with severe speech-and-language delays. The speech-language pathologists visited PALS classrooms weekly, supporting the children enrolled, classroom teams and families. 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 204 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. Similar to PALS, EIPS offered individual intervention to kindergarten learners 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 135 children with significant challenges in the areas of regulation, self-help skills and motor skills. For milder needs, occupational therapists shared strategies and programming ideas with the PALS classroom staff at all five school sites, centring on ways to progress children’s fine-motor skills and independence. An Occupational Therapy Assistant also provided direct service to 36 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, 63 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 six 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 to PALS’s success, 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

[building capacity]

Empowering families

Developing caregiver skills and tools, so more students achieve growth

To complement professional learning, EIPS also offered several capacity-building sessions for caregivers. For the most part, these sessions helped families gain insight into their child’s development and discover strategies to support their learning, working, playing and behaving in positive ways. In total, 30 sessions were provided, ranging in focus:

- Play the Piccolo Way, which supports caregivers in identifying parenting behaviours that lead to positive cognitive, social and language developmental outcomes;
- speech and language development;
- self-care; and
- motor development.

Overall, the sessions provided families with an open door and friendly faces to chat about potential challenges their child is experiencing. Conversations of this nature are often a difficult first step for families seeking support for their child. The EIPS team helped make this process easier while also providing guidance and direction.

children were assessed in speech sounds and language skills to determine possible eligibility for Program Unit Funding and the PALS program.

The Division also offered a series of PALS engagement sessions to build family capacity and support young learners. More than 30 sessions were offered, all guided by speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists and early learning consultants. Similar opportunities were also offered to families with children in kindergarten through a series of meetings, videos and resources (see pg. 75, “Parent and Caregiver Engagement: Early learning”).

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 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 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 assessments and 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, principals will continue to review the school's annual assessment data with their early learning team and the Early Learning department—Instructional Supports and Specialized Supports. It will also use the data to inform decisions, and compare it over time. Through that, schools are in a better position 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.

EIPS will also continue to offer the speech-language assessment 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. Meanwhile, speech-language pathologists will screen all kindergarten learners 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 (see pg. 75, "Mental Health and Well-Being"). The sessions help build staff capacity to, then, support children with social-emotional challenges.

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, the Division will expand the READ program to all regular program elementary schools and build staff capacity around literacy. For numeracy, Early Learning consultants will also work with schools to build staff capacity to further support pre-kindergarten to Grade 3 numeracy.

Priority Strategy for Education Plan

EIPS will continue to ensure children reach their developmental milestones and attain solid foundational skills in the early years. Strategies for 2025-26 include:



Continue to work collaboratively within multidisciplinary teams to provide universal, targeted and specialized early childhood intervention support to address developmental delays identified in classrooms—pre-kindergarten to Grade 3.



Provide small-group modelling and side-by-side coaching to build teacher capacity in foundational literacy skills, kindergarten to Grade 3.



Create more opportunities for instructional leaders and teachers to understand and implement developmentally appropriate practices in early learning environments.



Provide early intervention for students identified as at-risk for learning disorders.



Continue to provide high-quality professional learning opportunities for staff working in early learning classrooms.



Continue to work with schools to develop intervention plans for at-risk students—using robust literacy and numeracy assessments to identify where early learners are struggling.



Provide Social Communication, Emotional Regulation and Transactional Support (SCERTS) training to staff working with early learners diagnosed with autism.



Continue offering the Reading Enrichment and Development (READ) intervention program in all elementary schools and explore how to expand the program for French Immersion learners.



As government-mandated assessments are part of kindergarten programming, EIPS will develop an overall assessment plan, September to June, to balance teacher workload with collecting student achievement data.



Continue to build caregiver capacity, in all communities EIPS serves, in strategies to support their child's learning, working, playing and behaving in positive ways.



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.

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)	ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS						ALBERTA		
		RESULTS IN %					EVALUATION ACHIEVEMENT	RESULTS IN % 2023-24	EVALUATION ACHIEVEMENT
		2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24			
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY: OVERALL									
Grade 6 Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs)	A	n/a	n/a	81.6	79.5	81.3	High	68.5	Intermediate
	E	n/a	n/a	27.9	28.6	27.4	High	19.8	High
Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs)	A	n/a	n/a	74.2	73	70.8	Intermediate	62.5	Low
	E	n/a	n/a	21.2	17	17.1	Intermediate	15.4	Intermediate
Diploma examinations	A	n/a	n/a	79.6	85	87	High	81.5	Intermediate
	E	n/a	n/a	17	21.4	22.6	High	22.6	High
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY: OVERALL ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS LEARNING OUTCOMES									
Grade 6 PATs – language arts	A	n/a	n/a	87.8	91.3	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	E	n/a	n/a	25.5	27.7	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Grade 9 PATs – language arts	A	n/a	n/a	78.8	82	78.8	Intermediate	69.5	Low
	E	n/a	n/a	14	13.1	13.3	Intermediate	11.8	Intermediate
English 30-1 diploma examinations	A	n/a	n/a	83.9	88.8	92.1	High	84.2	Low
	E	n/a	n/a	6.4	12.5	14	High	10.1	Intermediate
English 30-2 diploma examinations	A	n/a	n/a	81.3	90.9	94.1	Intermediate	85.7	Low
	E	n/a	n/a	10.4	17.1	16.1	High	12.9	Intermediate
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY: OVERALL MATHEMATIC LEARNING OUTCOMES									
Grade 6 PATs – mathematics	A	n/a	n/a	82.9	84.4	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	E	n/a	n/a	20.6	26.5	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Grade 9 PATs – mathematics	A	n/a	n/a	67.3	66.1	60.6	Low	52.7	Low
	E	n/a	n/a	22.3	16	15.4	Intermediate	14	Intermediate
Math 30-1 diploma examinations	A	n/a	n/a	77.8	76.1	80.2	n/a	75.4	n/a
	E	n/a	n/a	28.5	30.6	29.1	n/a	34.9	n/a
Math 30-2 diploma examinations	A	n/a	n/a	71.3	77.4	82.1	n/a	70.9	n/a
	E	n/a	n/a	14.7	17.2	17.6	n/a	15.4	n/a

NOTE: The pandemic resulted in the cancellation of PATs and diploma examinations in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years. And, in 2023-24, the Grade 6 PATs—for English language arts and literacy and mathematics—were cancelled. There is no data for these years.

Performance Measures	ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS					ALBERTA		
	RESULTS IN %					EVALUATION ACHIEVEMENT	RESULTS IN % 2023-24	EVALUATION ACHIEVEMENT
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24			
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY								
Parent agreement that learners find their school work interesting	76	83	81	79	75	n/a	84	n/a
Teacher agreement that learners find their school work interesting	96	96	94	92	92	n/a	91	n/a
Teachers, parents and students satisfied with the opportunity for learners to receive a broad programs of study—fine arts, career, technology, health and physical education, and well-being	83.2	85.5	85.8	86.1	85.5	Very High	82.8	Very High
Teacher, parent and student agreement students have access to the appropriate supports and services at school*	n/a	80.4	80.1	80.5	79.4	n/a	79.9	n/a
Teacher, parent and student agreement students are engaged in their learning	n/a	84.5	83.5	83.5	82.1	n/a	83.7	n/a
Teacher agreement that students are engaged in their learning	n/a	96.4	95.7	95.5	96.1	n/a	95.1	n/a
Parent agreement that students are engaged in their learning	n/a	88	86	85.8	84.2	n/a	86.7	n/a
Student agreement that they are engaged in their learning	n/a	69	69	69.1	66	n/a	69.3	n/a
Parent agreement the literacy skills their child is learning at school are useful	n/a	90	90	90	88	n/a	90	n/a
Parent agreement the numeracy skills their child is learning at school are useful	n/a	92	91	90	89	n/a	90	n/a
Parent agreement their child is learning what they need to know	n/a	81	76	77	75	n/a	79	n/a

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

* For respondent group results—teachers, parents, students—see pg. 29 of the [Fall 2024 School Authority Results Summary for Planning and Reporting](#).

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES				
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS					
My child is demonstrating growth in literacy	89	86.7	85.3	84.7	84
My child is demonstrating growth in numeracy	89	88.9	86.7	86.3	84.6
My child's individual needs are met	84.2	83.8	81.3	81	80.2
My child is encouraged to do their best	89.5	91.7	89.5	88.9	88.1
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR STUDENTS (GRADES 9 AND 12)					
Student agreement they're demonstrating growth in literacy	n/a	80.6	73.1	76.6	74.8
Student agreement they're demonstrating growth in numeracy	n/a	79.7	73.3	78.5	77.8
Student agreement their school work is interesting, and they're engaged in their learning	n/a	59.3	47.7	51.3	51.2
Student agreement they're encouraged to do their best	n/a	89	81.7	86.3	87
Student agreement their individual needs are being met	n/a	86.3	78	81.7	81
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: STAKEHOLDER CONFIDENCE					
Percentage of families, staff and Grade 12 students confident EIPS implements strategies that support students in demonstrating growth in literacy	n/a	n/a	91.1	90.8	94.4
Percentage of families, staff and Grade 12 students confident EIPS implements strategies that support students in demonstrating growth in numeracy	n/a	n/a	90.7	90.9	95.2

Performance Measures: English as Additional Language Students		ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS					ALBERTA		
		RESULTS IN %					EVALUATION ACHIEVEMENT	RESULTS IN % 2023-24	EVALUATION ACHIEVEMENT
		2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24			
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY: OVERALL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES									
Percentage of Grade 6 students who achieved the acceptable standard (A) and the standard of excellence (E) on Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs)	A	n/a	n/a	70.3	65.4	74.4	Intermediate	64.6	Low
	E	n/a	n/a	13.5	30.8	12.8	Intermediate	16.5	Intermediate
Percentage of Grade 9 students who achieved the acceptable standard (A) and the standard of excellence (E) on Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs)	A	n/a	n/a	67.6	64.8	63.6	Low	52.7	Very Low
	E	n/a	n/a	18.9	15.2	13.6	Intermediate	10.1	Low
Percentage of students who achieved the acceptable standard (A) and the standard of excellence (E) on diploma examinations	A	n/a	n/a	78.6	62.5	87.5	High	66.3	Very Low
	E	n/a	n/a	17.9	14.6	27.1	Very High	14	Intermediate
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY: SENIOR HIGH									
High school completion rate within three years of entering Grade 10	84.4	88.9	87.6	85.4	83.1	Intermediate	80.4	Intermediate	
High school completion rate within five years of entering Grade 10	90.8	89.9	91.2	93	92	Very High	88.1	Intermediate	
Annual dropout rate of students aged 14 to 18	1	3.3	2.2	1.3	1.8	Very High	2.5	Very High	
Percentage of high school students who transition to post-secondary, including apprenticeship, within six years of entering Grade 10	62.1	60.3	59.5	65.3	62.2	Intermediate	60.1	Intermediate	
Percentage of students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship	66.6	70.3	74.9	73.4	73.5	High	70.7	High	

NOTE: The pandemic resulted in the cancellation of both PATs and diploma examinations in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years. There is no data for these years.

Analysis of Results

Background

Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) is committed to the success of every student and ensuring they have the tools needed to reach their full potential. Facilitating this requires teachers to adapt their pedagogical practice to meet students' differing needs, 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: literacy and numeracy. Literacy 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 is critical for students to reach their full potential—in school, the workplace and life.

Meanwhile, as defined by Alberta Education, numeracy is "... the ability, confidence and willingness to engage with quantitative and spatial information to make informed decisions in all aspects of daily living." Therefore, 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.

Equally important is student engagement—another priority area for EIPS. That's because research increasingly shows engaged students are more likely to do well in school, have better attendance and have a hopeful outlook toward the future. As such, school engagement is key to students' successfully achieving learner outcomes. Because literacy, numeracy and student engagement are foundational to success in learning and life, all three are priorities 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 essential.

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, University of Alberta literacy expert George Georgiou, found 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, for 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.

In all grades, literacy is integrated into every subject to get students reading, thinking and writing about what they're taught

Year-round, countless initiatives complement literacy instruction, including Read In Week, March Book Madness, Young Authors' Conference, 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 2023-24 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 2023-24 Alberta Education Assurance (AEA) Measure 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 16 of the 16 PAT measures. It's a similar story for the diploma examination results. For the majority of measures, EIPS students scored higher than the province, 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 historical AEA data for Grade 6 English language arts PATs, the percentage of students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence is traditionally higher than the province. That said, for 2023-24, there are no results for students in English language arts and literature or mathematics. The province cancelled PATs in both subjects for the 2023-24 school year. That's because of the launch of the new elementary curriculum—it was premature to assess students so soon after the roll-out. EIPS looks forward to analyzing next year's data.

Historically, though, EIPS has excelled in the subject and above the provincial norms. The Division also

disaggregated the data, looking at how students have traditionally done on the PATs' reading and writing sections (see "Table 2"). It, too, shows higher percentages than the province. That's good news for EIPS.

TABLE 2: 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		2022-23		2023-24	
		EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA
Part A: Written	A	96.2	91.6	95.7	89.9	n/a	n/a
	E	13.5	10.8	19	15.3	n/a	n/a
Part B: Reading	A	96.1	90.2	93.6	88.6	n/a	n/a
	E	52.6	44.6	47.5	40.1	n/a	n/a

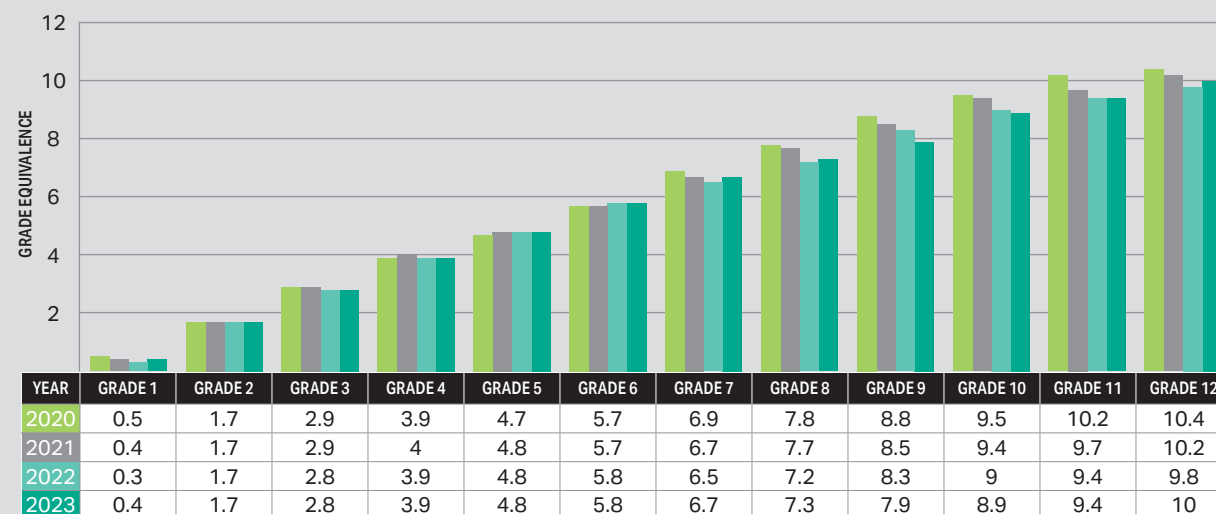
NOTE: The Grade 6 English language arts PATs were cancelled in 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2023-24. As such, no data is available for these years.

IMPROVING STUDENT OUTCOMES

To complement the AEA data, the Division also uses internal assessments to gauge student progress in literacy—using the Star Reading and Star Early Literacy assessments. Both evaluate student learning and help teachers identify learners needing additional support. In addition to screening students who are 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.

CHART 1:

EIPS Star Reading grade equivalence results – Fall 2020-23



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

Overall, the Star works best as a screening tool for teachers, not to assess overall student achievement—particularly at the secondary level. As such, the Star data plays a small assessment role in the *Annual Education Results Report 2023-24*—mainly focused on the elementary level, where the data is most robust. In fact, starting in the 2024-25 school year, the Division will no longer use the Star assessment tools and instead use the provincially mandated assessment—again, used as a teacher screening tool.

That being said, EIPS' 2023-24 Star Reading results show elementary learners are at grade level and have achieved roughly one year's growth in reading. For instance, in fall 2023, Grade 1 students scored an average grade equivalent

of 0.4. Then, in spring 2024, those same students scored an average grade equivalent of 1.7—meaning they are at grade level and achieved more than one year of growth (see pg. 25, "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

At the junior high level, EIPS Grade 9 students outperformed the province on the English language arts PAT measures—at both the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence. In fact, 86% of EIPS students met the acceptable standard, compared to 84% provincially. For the standard of excellence, 13% of EIPS Grade 9 students reached the measure, and 12% met it provincially.

[building capacity]

Supporting early learning literacy

Throughout 2023-24, significant work went into building capacity in elementary literacy, mainly working alongside teachers through classroom visits, coaching, modelling and professional learning

Co-Teaching: EIPS literacy consultants offered several in-person and virtual co-taught lessons—joining teachers during classroom instruction. Topics included structured word inquiry, poetry, writing, oral storytelling, comprehension, vocabulary and morphology. **Result:** All schools had access to the lessons, allowing the Division to provide support to a broader base.

Early Literacy Initiative (Level 1 and Level 2): A 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, the science of reading and assessing early literacy—specifically reading comprehension, fluency, phonics, vocabulary and writing skills.

New Curriculum: EIPS literacy consultants worked with teachers focusing on instructional and assessment planning with curricular objectives through various resources and learning tools. Topics included morphology, oral traditions, text forms, Read Aloud, storytelling and reading comprehension. **Result:** The effort reached all teachers at all elementary schools to ensure those teaching the new curriculum had the confidence, knowledge and needed tools and resources for smooth transitions.

Reading Enrichment and Development (READ): EIPS piloted an intervention program to support struggling readers in Grade 2—offered at elementary schools in

Fort Saskatchewan, Bruderheim and Lamont. **Result:** According to the Star Reading assessment, the average student growth equivalent worked out to 1.4 years. Given its success, the Division will expand the program to other schools throughout EIPS.

Summer Literacy Institute: EIPS organized three full days of professional learning in August. The learning session included five individual presenters who each focused on ways to enhance writing skills. **Results:** In total, 54 elementary teachers, kindergarten to Grade 6, participated—representing 21 elementary schools.

Thinking Classrooms: Division 2 teachers took part in professional learning sessions about building thinking classrooms. The sessions included language arts and social studies teachers who worked with EIPS consultants exploring thinking routines, vertical non-permanent surfaces, activities to help enhance student engagement, visual thinking and embracing ambiguity. **Result:** Together, the teachers learned new ways for students to make their thinking visible through activities to assess conversations and student learning.

Working Groups: EIPS organized various literacy-related collaborative learning opportunities throughout the Division. Consultants worked closely with the groups, coaching and modelling. **Result:** Schools and teachers throughout the Division developed new instructional strategies and tools to enhance reading and writing growth and strategies to implement the new elementary curriculum.

TABLE 3: 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		2022-23		2023-24	
		EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA
Part A: Written	A	89.4	89.6	91	88.8	89.1	87.1
	E	23.5	21.2	17.1	20.1	16.4	16.6
Part B: Reading	A	84.9	79.6	85	80.1	81.8	79.5
	E	20.3	19.6	18.9	19.9	19.3	20.3

NOTE: The Grade 9 English language arts PATs were cancelled in 2019-20 and 2020-21. As such, no data is available for these years.

Upon closer examination of the detailed data, categorized by reading and writing, EIPS’ results for 2023-24 are slightly lower than the previous year. That said, EIPS performed better than the provincial average at the acceptable standard for both reading and writing, and the results were comparable at the standard of excellence (see “Table 3”). Specifically, for writing, 89.1% of students met the acceptable standard, and 16.4% reached the standard of excellence. In comparison, the provincial level for writing saw 87.1% of students meeting the acceptable standard and 16.6% achieving the standard of excellence, reflecting a drop of 1.1% and 3.7%, respectively. What this highlights, is while EIPS experienced a slight decline, it was negligible and similar to the decreases seen across the province.

EIPS’ Grade 9 results are strong, pointing to the work being done divisionwide to push students to a high standard

In contrast, 81.8% of EIPS Grade 9 students met the acceptable standard for reading—a decrease of 3.2% from 2022-23. Provincially, the percentage only dropped by 0.6%. Looking at the data more granularly, EIPS students struggled with questions related to informational text, text organization and associating meaning. Knowing this will help inform strategies for 2024-25—such as establishing junior high writing standards; reviewing emergent text studies; facilitating literary engagements; and providing opportunities for students to engage in informational text, text organization and methods to transfer meaning into writing.

Interestingly, an area of growth was on the reading part of the PAT at the standard of excellence, with 19.3% of Grade 9 students achieving the measure. That’s up from 18.9% in 2022-23. The increase signifies progress in this area. And, overall, EIPS’ Grade 9 results are strong, pointing to the exceptional work being done divisionwide to push students to a high standard.



[building capacity]

Supporting middle-years literacy

Throughout 2023-24, significant work went into building capacity in middle-years literacy, mainly working alongside teachers through classroom visits, coaching, modelling and professional learning

Focused Intervention Learning: Using Board-allocated funding, consultants offered ongoing literacy support to teachers. **Result:** Students and teachers were given strategies to address individual literacy needs resulting from the learning disruptions between 2020 and 2022.

Middle Years Initiative: A professional learning program for teachers to share research-based pedagogical best practices and strategies to enhance student growth—focusing on instruction related to the five pillars of reading, morphology and assessment. **Result:** Those who attended gained expertise in reading intervention and literacy assessment.

New Curriculum: Literacy consultants engaged teachers to roll out Phase 2 of the new elementary curriculum—English language arts and literature, grades 4 to 6. **Result:** Those teaching the new curriculum had the needed tools and resources for a smooth transition.

Working Groups: EIPS organized various literacy-related collaborative learning opportunities for staff. Consultants worked closely with the different groups, coaching and modelling. **Result:** Schools and teachers throughout the Division developed new instructional strategies and tools to enhance reading growth.

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 2023-24, all the diploma examinations returned to normal, after two years of cancellations, following another two years of lower final mark weighting.

Rewind to 2019-20 and 2020-21. The province cancelled all diploma examinations because 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—resulting in a high degree of exam apathy. Then, in 2022-23, exams were reinstated fully but only weighted at 20% of the student’s final mark. So, 2023-24 is the first year EIPS can accurately assess Grade 12 student achievement since the pandemic hit. As such, regardless of the results, EIPS is pleased to have the achievement data available to fully understand how students are doing and if any interventions are still needed.

TABLE 4: EIPS diploma examination results – English language arts 30-1 and 30-2

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

		2018-19		2022-23		2023-24	
		EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA
English 30-1	A	93.8	86.8	88.8	83.7	92.1	84.2
	E	15.2	12.3	12.5	10.5	14	10.1
English 30-2	A	91.2	87.1	90.9	86.2	94.1	85.7
	E	15.4	12	17.1	12.7	16.1	12.9

NOTE: Diploma examinations were cancelled in 2019-20 and 2020-21—no data is available for these years. In 2021-22, diploma examinations were only written in June, not in January, and were only worth 10% of the overall student mark. In 2022-23, they were worth only 20% of the overall student mark. As such, caution is advised when interpreting the trend data.

Looking at the overall 2023-24 Grade 12 English language arts results, EIPS students outperformed the province at both the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in both English Language Arts 30-1 and English Language Arts 30-2—which is excellent. In English 30-1, EIPS saw a 3.3% increase in the percentage of students who attained the acceptable standard, climbing to 92.1%. Similarly, at the standard of excellence, the percentage jumped to 14%—an increase of 1.5%. Both percentages are higher than the provincial average and comparable to EIPS’ achievement results before the pandemic.

Similarly, for English 30-2, the percentage of students reaching the acceptable standard and standard of excellence rose in 2023-24. In total, 94.1% of students met the

acceptable standard—up by 3.2%—and 16.1% of students achieved the standard of excellence—rising by 1%. In fact, both results are even higher than they were before the pandemic. That’s welcome news for the Division.

The results clearly demonstrate EIPS was successful in helping students overcome learning gaps that may have resulted from the pandemic. These efforts included developing a senior high writing standard, implementing consistent assessment practices, standardizing writing practices and offering added writing opportunities for students. Many teachers also participated in the diploma examination marking process, which has helped keep writing standards at the forefront.

[building capacity]

Supporting senior high literacy

Throughout 2023-24, significant work went into building capacity in senior high literacy, mainly working alongside teachers through classroom visits, coaching, modelling and professional learning

Secondary Literacy Initiative: A divisionwide professional learning program for Division 3 and 4 staff to share research-based pedagogical best practices and strategies to enhance student growth, focusing on instruction and assessment. **Result:** Division 3 and 4 staff from across the Division participated in professional learning and modelling sessions, developing expertise in the science of reading, independent reading and writing, vertical non-permanent surface activities, thinking classrooms, orthographic mapping and assessments.

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

Writing Continuum: EIPS’ 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. **Result:** Thanks to these collaborative learning sessions, the continuum includes common curricular rubrics and more refined rationales that should lead to a more centralized marking scale. 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. **Result:** Participants explored text selection, morphology, essay structures, reading intervention strategies, student conferencing, small-group instruction, social studies outcomes, addressing misinformation and vertical non-permanent surface activities to ultimately enhance consistency at a micro- and macro-level.



NUMERACY

Numeracy is an essential skill needed to operate in the everyday world—at home, school, work and beyond. We rely on numbers to solve complex problems; compare costs; budget; tell time; understand patterns, shapes and measurements; and make predictions. As the world becomes increasingly more technically advanced, learners are using, accessing and interpreting information in ways that demonstrate a deep understanding of how numbers influence our daily lives. So, developing and teaching a broad set of numeracy skills is a key priority for EIPS.

Year-long, the Division works to build teacher capacity, create numeracy-rich learning environments and enhance pedagogical practices. 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 take part in activities that connect their math learning within the context of other curriculum areas. Significant work also takes place behind the scenes to build teacher capacity and enhance pedagogical practice. For 2023-24, the focus was on the Early Numeracy Initiative, Fact Fluency, Re-Thinking Secondary Math, New-Teacher Cohort, and coaching and modelling sessions. EIPS consultants also worked alongside teachers,

developing strategies rooted in making thinking visible and engaging students to enhance learning and experience competency development.

Collectively, these efforts are paying off. Students move through each year and are 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 these successes in the 2023-24 numeracy results.

Results

In the area of numeracy, EIPS students performed well overall on the Provincial Achievement Tests and diploma examinations in the 2023-24 school year. In all but one measure, the percentage of students who met the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence in mathematics was higher than the province. It was also higher in both Part A, the non-calculator section, and Part B of the exams. The data also offers growth opportunities, but generally speaking, EIPS is pleased with the results as they indicate the strategies being used by the Division for numeracy are effective—including assessment tools, early intervention, teacher resources and capacity-building initiatives.

[building capacity]

Supporting early learning numeracy

Throughout 2023-24, significant work went into building capacity in elementary numeracy, including:

Early Numeracy Initiative: A divisionwide elementary professional learning program for schools to share research-based pedagogical best practices. Level 1 focused on foundational number skills and thinking classroom instructional strategies to enhance student growth. Level 2 concentrated on math warm-up activities, exit tickets, self-assessment and thin-slicing math content. **Result:** Elementary teachers from across the Division gained expertise in engaging math exercises; low-floor, high-ceiling strategies; high-leverage thinking; thinking classrooms; and assessing numeracy.

Fact Fluency: Numeracy consultants put significant focus on elementary fact fluency, an essential component of math proficiency. Most efforts centred on professional learning and followup modelling detailing strategies to better understand number operations through mathematical discourse, problem-solving and numeracy games for incorporating rich tasks, problem-solving activities and vertical non-permanent surface math activities. **Result:** Overall, the work helped teachers balance student understanding and recalling basic mathematical facts.

Modelling and Co-Teaching: EIPS numeracy consultants created modelling and co-teaching opportunities for elementary teachers, focusing on instruction and competency development. **Result:** All elementary teachers in the Division had access to these supports, allowing them to engage in classroom-embedded professional learning that reflects best practice.

New Curriculum: Instructional Supports consultants actively engaged with teachers to build capacity around the new elementary curriculum. Dozens of professional learning sessions focused on understanding the new math curriculum and its structure, curriculum standards, prior knowledge requirements, manipulatives, best resources and strategies for approaching mathematical concepts. **Result:** Throughout the year, close to 200 elementary teachers participated, which helped ensure those teaching the new curriculum had the needed tools and resources for a smooth transition. In addition, all elementary teachers had access to resources.

Teacher Collaboration: EIPS co-ordinated collaboration opportunities for math educators. Topics included problem-solving, vocabulary, making thinking visible, vertical non-permanent surfaces, formative and summative assessments and pedagogy. **Result:** Participants gained deeper insight and access to resources to teach and assess students more effectively.

Thinking Classrooms: EIPS consultants offered several professional learning sessions focused on how to build thinking classrooms. **Result:** 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 student assessment.

ELEMENTARY

Looking at the overall AEA three-year data for Grade 6 mathematics PAT, the percentage of students meeting the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence is consistently higher than the province. That said, for 2023-24, there are no results for students in mathematics or English language arts and literature. The province cancelled PATs in both subjects for the 2023-24 school year. That's because of the launch of the new elementary curriculum—it was premature to assess students so soon after the roll-out. EIPS looks forward to analyzing next year's data.

Historically, though, EIPS has excelled in the subject and above the provincial norms. The Division also disaggregated past data, looking at how students traditionally perform on the Grade 6 PATs' Part A and Part B sections (see "Table 5"). It, too, shows strong results, and all higher percentages than the province. That's a good news story for the Division. EIPS eagerly looks forward to the 2024-25 results, in hopes it continues the trend.

TABLE 5: EIPS Grade 6 mathematics PAT results

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

		2018-19		2022-23		2023-24	
		EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA
Part A: No calculator	A	82	71.8	81.1	68.6	n/a	n/a
	E	54.8	43.5	58.2	45.1	n/a	n/a
Part B: Calculator	A	90.3	81.3	88.6	78.4	n/a	n/a
	E	24	16.9	26	17.9	n/a	n/a

NOTE: The Grade 6 mathematics PATs were cancelled in 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2023-24. As such, no data is available for these years.

JUNIOR HIGH

Moving to the AEA overall measures for Grade 9 mathematics, EIPS' results—both the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence—are consistently above the province. While higher, there does appear to be a general decline in results, also seen provincially. For example, in 2023-24, 60.6% of EIPS students met the acceptable standard, 52.7% met it provincially. That's down by 5.5% and 1.7%, respectively, from the year before. Similarly, for Part B, 72.6% of students met the acceptable standard, and 68.6% met it provincially—down by 2.6% and 2.1%, respectively, from the previous year. EIPS doesn't know the reason for the decrease yet. However, the Division is exploring why this trend is happening and will identify potential strategies in hopes of reversing it. That said, because the dip was also experienced provincially, it may be an anomaly for the 2023-24 school year. Time will tell.

TABLE 6: EIPS Grade 9 mathematics PAT results

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

		2018-19		2022-23		2023-24	
		EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA
Part A: No calculator	A	61.4	51.3	57.0	47.6	49.3	46.2
	E	25.6	21.9	18.0	17.1	19.3	19.9
Part B: Calculator	A	79.3	74.2	75.2	70.7	72.6	68.6
	E	28.7	24	19.5	17.9	18.7	17.6

NOTE: Grade 9 mathematics PATs were cancelled in 2019-20 and 2020-21. As such no data is available for these years.

Similarly, when looking at the data disaggregated between Part A and Part B, almost all of EIPS' measures rank above the province. That is, all except the standard of excellence in Part A, which is just slightly below the province, by 0.6%. Overall, however, it's still good news for the Division. The year before, 18% of students achieved the standard of excellence in Part A. In 2023-24, that percentage climbed to 19.3%, which is significant and positive.

Also interesting, even though EIPS scored higher than the province on almost all measures for parts A and B, the gap between the Division's results and the province's results is narrowing over time. For example, in 2018-19, the gap for Part A at the acceptable level was 10.2%. In 2023-24, it's only 3.1%, which is more in line with the rest of the AEA results. All in all, there is certainly room for improvement at the Grade 9 level. The hope, of course, is

[numeracy]

Future forward

A week of inspirational math gives students skills and knowledge to better understand the world around them

Schools throughout EIPS hosted Week of Inspirational Math, March 11-15. Divisionwide, students took part in numeracy activities—all aimed at developing a better understanding and appreciation for math. Lesson plans focused on games and hands-on learning exercises geared at teaching students ways to learn from their mistakes, push forward and challenge themselves to reach even greater heights.

Community members were also invited to participate. Weeklong, architects, engineers, healthcare workers, physiotherapists, sports professionals, and more visited classrooms divisionwide sharing inspirational how-to stories about math, what students are learning and its practical applications in the workforce. By the end of the week, students came away with a renewed appreciation for numeracy and logical thinking, reasoning and problem-solving strategies it helps nurture.

to eventually see percentages more reflective of pre-pandemic results. As such, EIPS will explore the results further and work to build capacity and resources for teachers to further support students and numeracy achievement throughout the next school year.

SENIOR HIGH

In terms of mathematics, 30-1 and 30-2, the 2023-24 diploma examination results are strong. Analyzing the trends in the data, the percentage of EIPS students meeting the acceptable standard is higher than the provincial average, which is excellent news. Particularly noteworthy are the increases observed in 2023-24, as the results are more in line with the typical averages seen before the pandemic. Again, this is very positive news.

TABLE 7: EIPS diploma examination results – mathematics 30-1 and 30-2

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

		2018-19		2022-23		2023-24	
		EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA
Mathematics 30-1	A	76.5	77.8	76.1	70.8	80.2	75.4
	E	24.7	35	30.6	29	29.1	34.9
Mathematics 30-2	A	78.3	76.4	77.4	71.1	82.1	70.9
	E	17.6	16.7	17.2	15.2	17.6	15.4

NOTE: Diploma examinations were cancelled in 2019-20 and 2020-21—no data is available for these years. In 2021-22, diploma examinations were only written in June, not in January, and were only worth 10% of the overall student mark. In 2022-23, they were worth only 20% of the overall student mark. As such, caution is advised when interpreting the trend data.

Specifically, the number of EIPS students meeting the acceptable standard in Mathematics 30-1 increased to 80.2% from 76.1% in 2022-23—the provincial average was 75.4%. Similarly, the percentage of EIPS students meeting the acceptable standard in Mathematics 30-2 also increased to 82.1% from 74.4% in 2022-23—11.2% higher than the provincial average, at 70.9%. Also impressive, the results for EIPS are the highest they've been, even before the pandemic, which, like in literacy, demonstrates EIPS was successful in helping students overcome learning gaps and the strategies in place work.

A slight decline was seen in the percentage of students meeting the standard of excellence in Mathematics 30-1—dropping to 29.1% from 30.6% in 2022-23. However, like the other categories, the result is still higher than pre-pandemic results. Meanwhile, in Mathematics 30-2, 17.6% of students met the standard of excellence, up from 17.2% the previous year. The province's averages were 34.9% for 30-1, and 15.4% for 30-2.

Interestingly, the diploma examinations now have a written component—introduced in 2018. It's a unique

question format that all students answer, representing a structural shift from machine-scored questions. For the written response, students in EIPS scored 2% higher than the province in Math 30-1 and 6% higher in Math 30-2. To get there, teachers have put considerable effort into developing students' skills around communication, procedural fluency and conceptual understanding.

Clearly, that work is paying off. It can be attributed to the overall growth seen in 2023-24—along with recent assessment initiatives at the school and divisional levels, strong pedagogy practices and extensive resource development. Collectively, these have helped articulate standards better and prepare students for exam expectations.

A NEW CURRICULUM

In 2023-24, schools across Alberta continued with the roll-out of the new elementary curriculum—mathematics and English language arts and literature, grades 4-6, science, grades K-3; and French Immersion language arts and literature. For EIPS, substantial work was undertaken to ensure a smooth transition and successful student learning.

- *New Curriculum team* – Made up of five curriculum teachers, EIPS continued with resource development to prepare for the 2024-25 roll-out. Together, the team developed resources, unit plans, planning tools, how-to videos, bridging documents, assessments, professional learning and aligned report cards aimed at 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.
- *Professional learning* – The Instructional Supports and New Curriculum teams 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 the available resources.
- *Curriculum micro-site* – The New Curriculum team maintained a micro-site to house the unit plans, assessments and Division-created resources—allowing for easy access. To date, the feedback from teachers is positive, whom say it helped build their 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.

[building capacity]

Supporting student numeracy

Throughout 2023-24, significant work went into building capacity in secondary numeracy, providing teachers and staff with instructional ideas, strategies and best practices, including:

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

Modelling and Co-Teaching: EIPS numeracy consultants created modelling and co-teaching opportunities for teachers, focusing on instruction and competency development. **Result:** All secondary teachers in the Division had access to these supports, allowing them to engage in classroom-embedded professional learning that reflects best practice.

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

Re-Thinking Secondary Math: A professional learning series for the secondary level, rooted in evidence-based research best practices to address classroom challenges, including rich tasks, competency development and making thinking visible to maximize feedback. **Result:** In total, 33 secondary teachers gained how-to tips and resources to foster a culture of thinking in their math classrooms.

Student Transitions: Secondary math teachers participated in multiple in-person and virtual learning sessions about student transitions moving to Grade 7 from Grade 6. The content focused on ways to ensure seamless progressions for students. **Result:** More than 15 Grade 7 math teachers participated in the sessions, and all received a toolkit to support students transitioning from the new elementary mathematics curriculum to the traditional junior high curriculum.

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

Thinking Classrooms: EIPS consultants offered several professional learning sessions focused on how to build thinking classrooms. **Result:** 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.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

Reporting achievement results for the Division's English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners is a relatively new addition to EIPS' *Annual Education Results Report*—first introduced in the 2019-20 school year. It's also a challenging area to analyze and report on year-over-year. That's because of the limited number of English language learners enrolled within the Division.

For instance, in 2023-24, only four EAL students wrote the English 30-1 diploma examination, five wrote the English 30-2 exam, nine wrote the Mathematics 30-1 exam, three wrote the Mathematics 30-2 exam and five wrote the Social Studies 30-1 exam. It's a similar story for the PATs. In 2023-24, only 39 EAL students wrote the Grade 6 assessments and 28 students wrote the Grade 9 assessments. With so few students, if one student does or doesn't reach the acceptable standard or standard of excellence, it significantly sways the overall achievement results, positively or negatively.

With that in mind, what the 2023-24 PAT results reveal, like all other students within EIPS, EAL students outperformed the province in all subjects and measures except for the standard of excellence in Grade 6 social studies and Grade 9 social studies. In Grade 9 English language arts, 65.6% of EAL students earned the acceptable standard,

and 6.9% met the standard of excellence—provincially, the results were 56.9% and 5.4%, respectively. And, in mathematics, 58.6% of EAL students attained the acceptable level, while 13.8% earned the excellence level—provincially, the percentages were 46.7% and 11.5%, respectively.

Students within EIPS, including EAL students, outperformed the province in almost all subjects and measures

At the senior high level, 66.7% of EAL students graduated with a high school diploma within three years of entering Grade 10, which translates to six out of nine students—down by 6.5% from the previous year. Also, the 2023-24 EAL dropout rate is on par with the dropout rate for all other EIPS students, at 3.1%—earning a provincial achievement rating of “high.” Meanwhile, 57.9% of students transitioned to post-secondary education within six years of entering Grade 10 and 50% of EAL students qualified for the Rutherford Scholarship.

Overall, it's fair to conclude EIPS is improving its ability to meet the needs of EAL learners. Despite this, there is more to do. And, there are growth opportunities in the area of EAL to ensure these students attain similar levels to other students in EIPS.

Opportunities for Growth

An ongoing growth area for EIPS is supporting and developing school-based instructional approaches and embedding strong pedagogy into curriculum resources. One strategy it will use is vertically aligning content between grade levels to establish collaborative teams—critical given the new elementary curriculum. EIPS will also continue to develop curriculum supports and resources for teachers who need them, such as morphology, and prepare for the roll-out of the new social studies curriculum in 2025-26.

In terms of literacy, the Division will concentrate on structured word inquiry, thinking classrooms, the science of reading, focused writing and developing writing exemplars. It will also develop professional learning community opportunities to enhance collective efficacy, pedagogical practices and student outcomes. EIPS is also committed to ensuring an excellent start to learning. As such, in 2024-25, EIPS will expand its elementary literacy program entitled, Reading Enrichment and Development (READ). Offered in elementary schools divisionwide, the program aims to improve student reading achievement through targeted intervention based on the science of reading.

Meanwhile, for numeracy, the Division will align elementary assessment standards and simultaneously develop teacher capacity in this area. It will also create collaborative teacher-learning opportunities and develop new resources and tools to enhance mathematics achievement results—particularly 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. Additionally, the Division has invested significant effort in developing new Partners for Science Kits to align with the new curriculum. In 2024-25, the Division plans to launch the latest kits with the goal of improving student outcomes.

Finally, ongoing capacity building in literacy and numeracy continues to be a focus area. Throughout 2024-25, EIPS will review, facilitate and support professional learning sessions, and develop professional learning communities to provide teacher collaboration opportunities focused on sharing best practice and evidence-based pedagogical research. The goal: To improve instruction and assessment practice.



Priority Strategy for Education Plan

EIPS is committed to implementing research-based strategies to promote student growth and success. Strategies for 2025-26 include:



Continue to use multidisciplinary teams to support learners with complex needs—across all feeder-school groupings.



Implement high-leverage instructional and assessment practices to support literacy and numeracy growth and a culture of thinking across classrooms.



Introduce new tools to enhance recall in math fact fluency and task development.



Continue to build capacity and resources around the new elementary curriculum to ensure smooth transitions for students and teachers—particularly for the new elementary social studies roll-out.



Continue the Division's work to develop and refine common exams for the junior high and senior high grades.



Continue building new Partners for Science learning kits to support rich curricular experiences.



Continue to build capacity around elementary and junior high writing through onboarding, standards development, writing assessments and single-point rubrics.



Continue to build teacher and school-staff capacity in system programs and inclusive settings to ensure all students have access to high-quality programming.



Continue literacy intervention programming, such as Reading Enrichment and Development, to address learning gaps.



Provide professional learning opportunities to principals and assistant principals to develop instructional leadership skills and enhance school education plans.



Offer focused professional learning opportunities to improve the Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Test results in both language arts and mathematics.



Continue to support teachers to develop and implement intervention plans that ensure more students demonstrate growth in literacy and numeracy.



Establish collaborative teacher-learning opportunities where staff can critically reflect on their practices, share insights and challenge one another to, ultimately, lead to improved teaching practices and student outcomes.

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: Self-Identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students	ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS					ALBERTA			
	RESULTS IN %					EVALUATION ACHIEVEMENT	RESULTS IN % 2023-24	EVALUATION ACHIEVEMENT	
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24				
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY									
Percentage of Grade 6 students who achieved the acceptable standard (A) and the standard of excellence (E) on Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs)	A	n/a	n/a	75	68.2	64.5	Low	48.7	Very Low
	E	n/a	n/a	15.9	23.5	14.5	Intermediate	7.3	Very Low
Percentage of Grade 9 students who achieved the acceptable standard (A) and the standard of excellence (E) on Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs)	A	n/a	n/a	59.5	61.8	53.5	Very Low	41.4	Very Low
	E	n/a	n/a	10.6	5.5	7.6	Very Low	6.1	Very Low
Percentage of students who achieved the acceptable standard (A) and the standard of excellence (E) on diploma examinations	A	n/a	n/a	79	82.9	84.9	High	76.9	Low
	E	n/a	n/a	10.2	13.4	17.7	Intermediate	11.8	Low
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY: SENIOR HIGH									
High school completion rate within three years of entering Grade 10	72.9	85.4	77.2	75.2	69.8		Low	58.6	Low
High school completion rate within five years of entering Grade 10	77.7	80.9	86.9	88	86.8		Intermediate	69.4	Intermediate
Annual dropout rate of students aged 14 to 18	4.3	2.1	0	2.6	2.5		Very High	5.2	Very High
Percentage of high school students who transition to post-secondary, including apprenticeship, within six years of entering Grade 10	47.1	40.4	43	56	49.9		n/a	36.8	n/a
Percentage of Grade 12 students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship	29.5	34.7	40.2	39.1	29.1		n/a	18.5	n/a

NOTE: The pandemic resulted in the cancellation of both PATs and diploma examinations in 2019-20 and 2020-21. There is no data for these years.

Performance Measures	RESULTS				
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
EIPS INTERNAL DATA					
Number of students who self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit, as of June 30	1,132	1,285	1,291	1,282	1,210
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	77.9	75.8	76.4	79.2	76.3

Performance Measures	RESULTS				
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
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	77.4	73.2	76.8	78.6
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: STAKEHOLDER CONFIDENCE					
Percentage of families, staff and Grade 12 students confident EIPS implements strategies to support the achievement and growth of self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students	n/a	n/a	92.8	92.7	94.3

Analysis of Results

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 commitment is continually finding ways to build on self-identified students’ strengths and growth. EIPS does this 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*. Each is used to provide First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners with culturally relevant learning opportunities; build capacity to address First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner needs; and strengthen 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 2023-24, 1,210 students within EIPS identified as First Nations, Métis or Inuit. That’s down by 72 students from the previous year, but it’s an increase of 374 students from six years ago. It should be noted, too, over the past year, schools were tasked with ensuring students identified as First Nations, Métis or Inuit, were all coded correctly. In so doing, the work revealed there were some inaccurate codes previously entered, which are now corrected. Those corrections likely account for part of the overall drop in numbers seen in 2023-24 from 2022-23.

All in all, in the last four years, the number of self-identified students within EIPS has remained relatively consistent. Given the number is stable year-over-year, EIPS believes the majority of First Nations, Métis or Inuit students have self-identified with the Division. Looking

ahead, EIPS expects the number to remain around the 1,200 students mark, which is a significant number of students self-identifying. For the Division, what that indicates is a growing sense of pride among school families in Indigenous culture and heritage—complemented by the Division’s efforts to create conditions for welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments.

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

In terms of school projects, every school throughout EIPS organized Indigenous-focused projects. Each project was also guided by one of four criteria:

1. the project offers direct supports for Indigenous students;
2. the project offers professional learning focused on the *Teaching Quality Standard* and *Leadership Quality Standard*;
3. the project explores the relationship with land—beyond a performative land acknowledgment; or
4. the project features reconciliation activities outlined by the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action*.

Each project was also 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 with 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.

These projects, along with the three other criteria, are making an impact. Every year, the Division conducts the EIPS Annual Feedback Survey—administered to families, staff, students and community members—to gauge its progress toward meeting the goals and priorities outlined in its *Four-Year Education Plan* and stakeholder confidence. The 2023-24 results for Indigenous education efforts are impressive. Overall, 79% of students agree they have an understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture and history—up by 2% in 2022-23. Also, 94% of respondents are confident EIPS implements strategies to support the achievement and growth of self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students—an increase of 2% from 2022-23. The high confidence confirms the Division's efforts around Indigenous education are having a positive impact and are sustainable year to year.

ACADEMIC MEASURES: PROVINCIAL

The 2023-24 provincial data available from the Alberta Education Assurance (AEA) 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 remains low at 2.5%—compared to the provincial average of 5.2%. The dropout rate is also fairly comparable to all other EIPS students, 1.8%—both are good news results.

EIPS is seeing the achievement gap narrow—that is something to celebrate

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 down from the year before—falling to 50% from 56% in 2022-23. Conversely, the provincial average for this measure rose to 37% from 36%. Overall, though, 50% for EIPS is an improvement from its three-year average, 47%. So, that, too, is positive. However, it's lower than EIPS would like and lower than all EIPS students. So, looking ahead, EIPS hopes to improve in this area over the next few years.

In terms of high school completion, the three-year rate for self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students was 70% in 2023-24. The year before, it was 75%. Obviously, the drop is disappointing. It's also consistent with the drop seen in completion rates of all students within EIPS—likely the result of higher diploma weightings and fewer unallocated credits awarded to Grade 12 students—post-pandemic (see pg. 44, "Students are supported and prepared for life beyond high school").

The positive news, though, is that EIPS' 70% three-year completion rate is significantly higher than the provincial result of 59%. Also, the 2023-24 five-year high school

TABLE 8: EIPS First Nations, Métis and Inuit results—English language arts PATs and diploma examinations

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

		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
		EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA
PAT: Grade 6 English Language Arts	A	92.2	76	93.3	79.8	n/a	n/a
	E	28.6	16	9.6	9.4	n/a	n/a
PAT: Grade 9 English Language Arts	A	77.8	71.9	86.8	70.8	77.8	70.3
	E	11.1	5.3	4.4	6.4	6.3	6.6
Diploma examinations: English Language Arts 30-1	A	92.6	73.5	87.8	78.3	84.2	81.7
	E	7.4	4.4	7.3	6.1	10.5	6.9
Diploma examinations: English Language Arts30-2	A	81.0	82.1	82.9	86.5	93.8	86
	E	9.5	9.2	4.9	9.9	16.7	10.8

completion rate for self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students was 87%, which is in line with the five-year completion rate for all students, at 92%. Big picture, the Division is seeing the achievement gap narrow in this area. That is something to celebrate.

Turning to the 2023-24 academic results. Self-identified students within EIPS did not complete Provincial Achievement Tests (PAT) in Grade 6 for language arts and literacy and mathematics—given the new elementary curriculum roll-out. For the Grade 9 PATs, self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students attending EIPS outperformed the province in all subjects other than French language arts—at both the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence. The lower result in French language arts is likely because of the small sample size.

In English language arts, Grade 9 self-identified students performed significantly above the province in terms of meeting acceptable standards—that’s despite the decline seen from last year. In total, 61% of EIPS students who self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit reached the acceptable standard, compared to 78% in 2022-23—the provincial average was 49.5%. Looking ahead, EIPS will intentionally engage students in texts that are meaningful to them. Part of that includes providing a lending library full of materials from First Nation, Métis, and Inuit authors to bolster engagement and improve results overall.

Meanwhile, 5% of Grade 9 self-identified students met the standard of excellence—compared to 4.7% provincially. Similarly, in mathematics, 52% of EIPS self-identified students in mathematics reached acceptable standards—compared to 29% across the province. Another 5.4% of EIPS Grade 9 self-identified students achieved the standard of excellence, which is on par with the provincial average.

And, in social studies, 8.6% of EIPS students who identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit achieved the standard of excellence—compared to 6.3% provincially.

Moving to the diploma examination results, EIPS students identifying as First Nations, Métis or Inuit outperformed the province in mathematics and English language arts. In fact, 94% of students achieved the acceptable standard in English Language Arts 30-2, which is almost 8% above the province and 11% higher than the previous year. Percentages for the standard of excellence in both English language arts courses increased, which is significant considering the relatively flat values for Alberta students.

For English Language Arts 30-1, self-identified students outperformed the province in the acceptable standard and standard of excellence—a three-year trend. Students attending EIPS were 2.5% ahead of the province for acceptable standard and 3.6% ahead for the province in standard of excellence. That is partly thanks to recent divisional efforts: to access a more comprehensive selection of literary texts and sources; to represent Indigenous experiences; and to avoid negative cultural stereotypes in the classroom setting and common exams.

Diploma examination results for mathematics, both 30-1 and 30-2, were exceptional. The percentage of self-identified First Nations, Métis or Inuit students who met the acceptable standard in Mathematics 30-1 increased to 77%, which is almost 13% above the provincial average. At the standard of excellence, 27% of self-identified met the measure, which continues to climb year after year, far outpacing Alberta. Similarly, for Mathematics 30-2, 79% of students met the acceptable standard—also up from 70% in 2022-23. However, at the standard of excellence, it declined to 7% from 17% in 2022-23.

TABLE 9: EIPS First Nations, Métis and Inuit results—mathematics PATs and diploma examinations

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

		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
		EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA	EIPS	ALBERTA
PAT: Grade 6 Mathematics	A	81.3	51.6	76.7	55.2	n/a	n/a
	E	18.8	4.7	19.2	7.3	n/a	n/a
PAT: Grade 9 Mathematics	A	62.3	37.8	55.9	41.5	52.2	39.0
	E	10.4	5.8	5.4	5.5	9.0	6.5
Diploma examinations: Mathematics 30-1	A	71.4	50.9	72.7	60.6	77.3	64.4
	E	7.1	10.5	22.7	15.0	27.3	17.0
Diploma examinations: Mathematics 30-2	A	70.6	55.5	69.6	65.8	77.8	64.8
	E	11.8	7.3	17.4	12.1	7.4	10.1

ACADEMIC MEASURES: INTERNAL

In terms of internal achievement screening, throughout 2023-24, EIPS continued using the Star Reading assessment to evaluate student achievement in literacy and 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. 25, “Success for All Student: Improving student outcomes”). Chart 2 provides information about how First

[building capacity]

Train the trainer

Indigenous lead teachers, who are provided instructional time at all EIPS schools, are an extension of the EIPS First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team. They play an essential role in supporting students, staff, parents and caregivers, and schools. As such, significant effort goes into building lead teacher capacity

Throughout 2023-24, 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: land-based teachings and foundational knowledge, balancing pedagogy with technology and engaging in an Indigenous worldview. 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 team also provided resources for schools connected to National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Project of Heart, Have a Heart Day, Moose Hide Campaign, Bear Witness Day, Métis Week, National Indigenous History Month and National Indigenous Peoples' Day.

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 revamped its 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. The EduKits were lent out to schools across EIPS, with a 100% sign-out rate for each kit all year.

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 2022 and fall 2023, the grade equivalence (GE) gains for self-identified First Nations, Métis or Inuit students were positive. The Star Reading results reveal minimal literacy learning gaps between First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and all students in EIPS. Elementary and junior high First Nations, Métis and Inuit students saw similar growth in reading levels as all other students. That, in turn, is an improvement from last year, where EIPS saw a discrepancy in growth compared to the junior high and senior high levels. Results also show continued GE gains. Also positive, self-identified secondary students had a higher GE growth rate than all other students, meaning they showed more growth than other students throughout the year.

Overall, 64% of all self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students showed one year's growth in reading. That's the same percentage as the year before and on par with the percentage for all EIPS students demonstrating one year's growth. 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 58%, which is up by 1% from the year previous, and on par with the Division. Overall, self-identified students are demonstrating growth and at pretty much the same GE as all other students, except in Grade 4 and Grade 10. For these grades, the GE was lower for self-identified students than for all other students by 0.2 and 0.5, respectively.

Chart 3 provides more details on how First Nations, Métis or Inuit self-identified students performed on the Star Math assessment—assessing achievement at the start of each grade and progress from year to year. Similar to literacy, between fall 2022 and fall 2023, the GE gains for self-identified students were positive. Students saw growth between their fall scores in one grade and their fall scores in the subsequent grade. That said, two grade groups, Grade 6 and Grade 8, did start the school year with lower scores than students entering the same grade the year before.

NEW ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

Finally, to support the continued roll-out of the new elementary curriculum, the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team was instrumental in ensuring all Division-developed resources, in all subjects, 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 to ensure the kits reflect the new science programs of study—with the same focus on co-creating learning experiences that are authentic, appropriate and relevant. The team also worked to embed Indigenous ways of knowing, learning and being directly into the science lessons—supplemented by purchasing additional resources. The goal: To create science kits for learners, kindergarten to Grade 6, with an authentic Indigenous worldview infused within both lessons and activities.

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

[success]

Building blocks

How EIPS is creating deeper understanding through relationships with Indigenous Peoples

To facilitate relationship building with Indigenous Peoples, EIPS has a First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team, made up of an Advisor and two consultants. Collectively, they work with schools, administration, lead teachers, families and community organizations to support and build relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. They're also tasked with ensuring Knowledge Holders are continually 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.

and the Alberta Regional Chief for the Assembly of First Nations. Throughout 2023-24, Elder Wilson offered wisdom and guidance to the EIPS First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team. He also helped guide the Division through its second annual round dance.

The First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team also worked to strengthen relationships with other Elders, Knowledge Holders and local Indigenous community members. In so doing, Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Holders were available to support student and staff learning and bring authentic Indigenous knowledge, pedagogies and perspectives into each EIPS school. What's resulted: high-quality learning experiences for Indigenous students and staff, and all students and staff within EIPS.

To further build on being in relation, EIPS continued to host its Indigenous family gatherings. Three gatherings were hosted in 2023-24. Each was facilitated by the EIPS First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team. The gatherings provided space, supper and cultural activities for participants, such as beading and art. It also gave attendees a chance to connect with other families, build community, share hopes and discuss truth-telling and reconciliation within EIPS. By their very nature, the gatherings also helped inform next steps for the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team.

An Indigenous Cultural Camp for lead teachers was also organized in spring 2024—hosted by the Division's First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team. All attending lead teachers took part in a series of land-based activities, traditions and teachings—led by community-based Elders and Knowledge Holders. Overall, feedback from the camp was positive, with many excited to share what they learned with students. EIPS hopes to host a similar camp for students in 2024-25.

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

Community partnerships in 2023-24 included the Rupertsland Institute for Métis Education, which provides academic and cultural supports for Métis students to boost their successful transition from senior high to post-secondary studies. Other community partnerships included Elk Island National Park, Beaver Hills Biosphere and Strathcona Wilderness Centre. All three assisted the Division with providing land-based learning experiences for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

Finally, because being in relation to the land also includes the land EIPS resides on, school communities divisionwide added outdoor rock circles to enhance school-based sharing circles. Lesson plans included Indigenous perspectives, knowledge and plant teachings. The Division also installed interactive signage for visitors

CHART 2:

Literacy – EIPS multi-year Star Reading results for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students

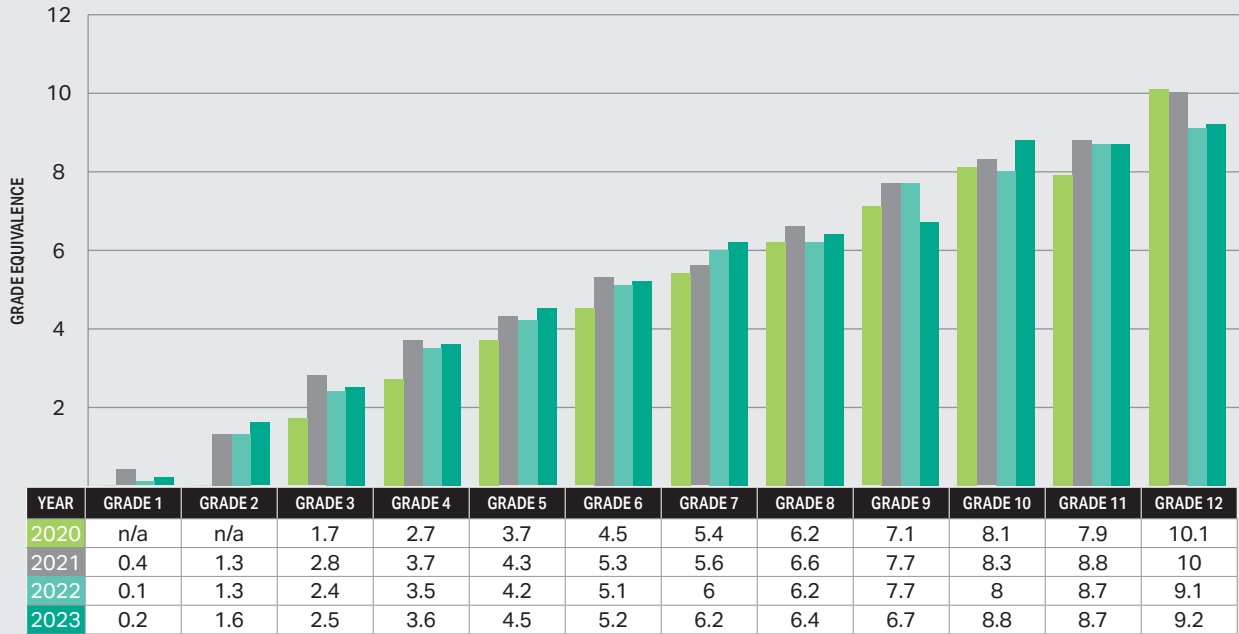
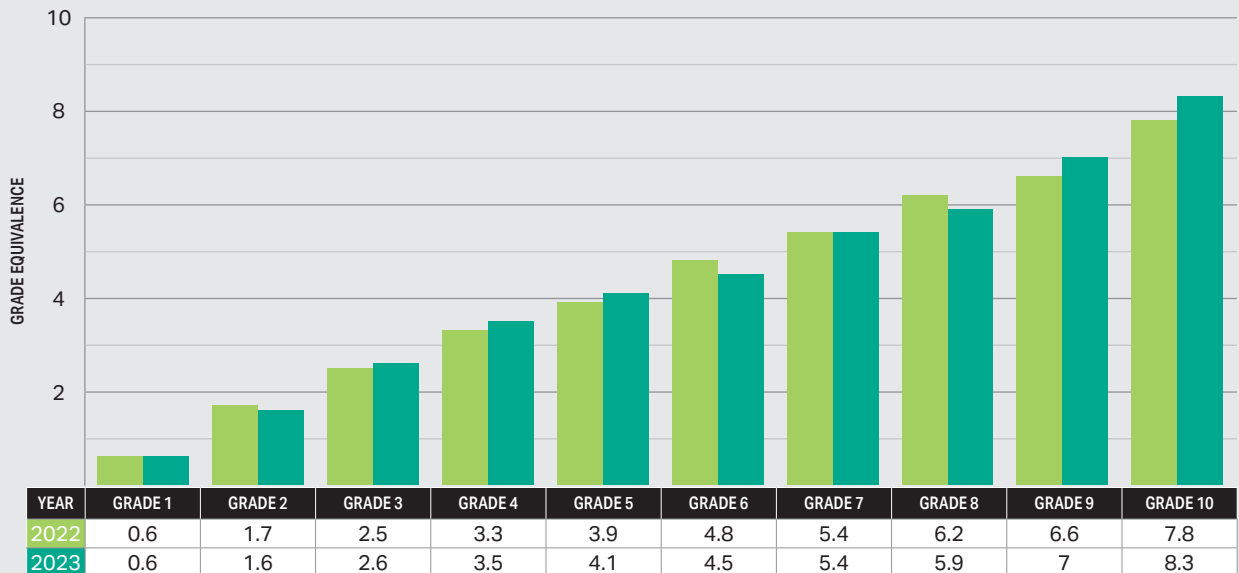


CHART 3:

Numeracy – EIPS multi-year Star Math results for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students



to learn more about native plants growing in various land-based learning spaces throughout the Division—at six schools and EIPS Central Services. Each sign, shaped in a wood slice, highlights a specific plant species with a QR code for students, staff and community members to learn and hear teachings about—narrated by an Elder in Nakota, Michif, Cree, French and English.

Thanks to these efforts, more students and staff are exploring land-based learning methods, are being in relation, honing knowledge and developing their understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture and history.



[building capacity]

A path to reconciliation

Deepening understanding through land-based activities

Storytelling, music, dance and food all play a role in the Division's efforts to build knowledge and understanding about Indigenous history, traditions and perspective. In 2023-24, schools throughout the Division found creative ways to embed Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum. Activities included land-based learning projects; traditional oral histories; the Seven Sacred Teachings of love, respect, courage, honesty, wisdom, humility and truth; the Project of Heart; the Blanket Exercise; and hearing stories from intergenerational residential-school survivors.

The Division also provided targeted, small-group teachings to students throughout EIPS communities and schools. These included smudging, beading, tufting, medicine walks, language, powwow dancing, drumming, protocol offerings and wakhkohtowin—translated to relationality and kinship. Large-group teaching also took place through land acknowledgments and smudging, for both students and staff. Collectively, the Division is starting to see a dialogue develop between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, which it hopes will lead to understanding and a shared experience.

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 First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team, 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 teachers, collaborating with teacher cohorts and participating in lead-teacher modelling initiatives.

The third area for growth is expanding 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. As well, 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.






Finally, EIPS will also work to build staff capacity around Indigenous perspectives and available opportunities for students. The strategy will include focused professional learning and nurturing the concept of being in relation. The goal is two-fold: for self-identified students to continue to feel supported in their learning, and to continue to build divisionwide knowledge and understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture and history.



Priority Strategy for Education Plan

BUILDING CAPACITY

EIPS is committed to effectively, authentically and respectfully supporting teachers and administrators in implementing the *Teaching Quality Standard* and *Leadership Quality Standard* competencies related to First Nations, Métis and Inuit education. Strategies for the 2025-26 school year include:

-  Work with schools to effectively incorporate land-based learning into their practice.
-  Assist educators in engaging in Indigenous perspectives in their teaching practice.
-  Create and facilitate effective and responsive professional learning.
-  Work with new curriculum teachers and consultants to meaningfully engage in First Nations, Métis and Inuit ways of knowing, learning and doing.
-  Work with First Nations, Métis and Inuit school leads and consultants to deepen Indigenous foundational knowledge.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND BEING IN RELATION

EIPS is also committed to supporting Indigenous students and families in fostering a sense of belonging in their school community. Strategies for the 2025-26 school year include:

-  Provide cultural advisors to support individual schools and student groups.
-  Continue to host a divisionwide round dance for all school communities.
-  Continue efforts to build relationships with Elders and Knowledge Holders.
-  Co-ordinate school visits to cultivate and facilitate authentic cultural teachings in schools.
-  Continue to host a land-based learning and cultural camp.
-  Host Indigenous family engagement gatherings to help build relationships and provide 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; Alberta’s K-12 education system is well-governed and managed

Performance Measures	ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS					EVALUATION ACHIEVEMENT	ALBERTA	
	RESULTS IN %						RESULTS IN %	EVALUATION ACHIEVEMENT
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24		2023-24	
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY								
High school completion rate of students within three years of entering Grade 10	84.4	88.9	87.6	85.4	83.1	Intermediate	80.4	Intermediate
High School completion rate of students within five years of entering Grade 10	90.8	89.9	91.2	93	92	Very High	88.1	Intermediate
Annual dropout rate of students aged 14 to 18	1	3.3	2.2	1.3	1.8	Very High	2.5	Very High
Percentage of students eligible for a Rutherford Scholarship	66.6	70.3	74.9	73.4	73.5	High	70.7	High
Percentage of high school students who transition to post-secondary, including apprenticeships, within six years of entering Grade 10	62.1	60.3	59.5	65.3	62.2	Intermediate	60.1	Intermediate
Percentage of parents and teachers who agree students are taught attitudes and behaviours to make them successful at work when they finish school	81.2	84.6	81.9	80.2	79.9	High	82.8	High

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES				
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS					
My child is being taught knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to be successful in life	81.9	82.2	78.2	79.1	76.2
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR STUDENTS (GRADES 9 AND 12)					
I feel supported by my school as I prepare for life beyond high school	n/a	68.9	62.2	62.9	63.7
Percentage of students who agree they’re learning the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to succeed in life	n/a	59	56.6	60.2	61.6
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: STAKEHOLDER CONFIDENCE					
Percentage of families, staff and Grade 12 students confident EIPS implements strategies that support and prepare students for life beyond high school	n/a	n/a	77.4	78.7	86.2

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

Results from the Alberta Education Assurance (AEA) survey help EIPS stay informed about how it's doing relative to achieving outcomes that lead to success beyond senior high. Data from the 2023-24 AEA survey 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 remains strong, with an impressive 92% of EIPS students graduating within five years of entering Grade 10. Provincewide, the percentage was 88%. Similarly, EIPS' dropout rate is just 1.8%. That's impressive, especially compared to the provincial average of 2.5%. Both measures earned a provincial rating of "very high" (see, eips.ca/about-us/planning-and-results). Also noteworthy, 73.5% of students 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 survey, 80% of teachers and parents agree EIPS teaches students the attitudes and behaviours needed to make them successful after they finish school. That's good news, and, consistent with the results from last year. That said, it is below the provincial average of 83%. EIPS would expect the two results to be more aligned. So, after digging a bit deeper into the data, the results show the percentage of students and parents who are "very satisfied" increased in 2023-24, which is good news. But, so did the proportion of students and parents who are "very dissatisfied," mostly at the junior high level, which the Division believes is a one-time anomaly.

EIPS also conducts its own annual survey, the 2023-24 EIPS Annual Feedback Survey. Results from that survey show 86% of respondents—made up of school families, staff, Grade 12 students and community members—are confident that EIPS implements strategies that support and prepare students for life after high school. The result is up significantly from the previous year, 79%, and aligns with the provincial AEA result, which provides further evidence the AEA dip is a one-off. However, to ensure it is, EIPS is looking into why its AEA result is down in this area and simultaneously working with junior high teachers to help rectify any concerns.

In fact, EIPS has already expanded its career education efforts into the junior high grades. Phase 1, launched in 2023-24, included building relationships with careers and technology foundations (CTF) teachers—working directly with them, providing ongoing professional learning and revamping CTF course descriptions. In 2024-25, the Division will roll out Phase 2, offering even more professional learning, building teacher engagement and establishing Career Pathways facilitators at all junior high schools (see pg. 46, "The big picture"). The goal: To align

all the CTF courses with the career and technology studies (CTS) course outlines and strengthen connections between curriculum outcomes and the related occupations.

Turning to areas of concern, the Division is focused on two measures. The first: Alberta Education's assurance measure for the percentage of high school students transitioning to post-secondary, including apprenticeships, within six years of entering Grade 10—dropping to 62% from 65%. Although lower, the result is higher than the province by more than two percentage points and comparable to EIPS' three-year average data for the measure. Interestingly, though, when you look closer into the results, the percentage of graduates choosing to move into apprenticeships over academic post-secondary programs is climbing—rising to 121 students in 2023-24 from 86 in 2022-23. While EIPS is still trying to determine why that is, the reason may be the culmination of: the recent population growth leading to fewer available post-secondary spots and higher university entrance requirements, inflationary costs, EIPS' renewed emphasis on career pathways opportunities and the province's push for more skilled local tradespeople.

A second area relates to the number of students feeling supported by their school as they prepare for life beyond



[building capacity]

The big picture

Throughout 2023-24, 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 strengthen their CTS expertise. Similarly, senior high career and life management 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 and Technology Teacher Conference – EIPS continues to work collaboratively with neighbouring school divisions to support student learning in CTS. In 2023-24, Bev Facey Community High was selected as the host site for the annual Career and Technology Studies, Career and Technology Foundations Teacher's Conference. The conference brought together more than 250 teachers from across the province—35 from EIPS—and more than 50 presenters and vendors to learn and collaborate on new and current career and technology education trends.

Career Pathways Facilitators – Every EIPS senior high, and most junior 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. In-school Career Pathways facilitators helped to increase Division capacity in career education. In 2023-24, every month, the senior high facilitators met for professional learning and brought the learnings and information back to the schools. Meanwhile, junior high facilitators became the school contact for important and related information. In 2024-25, senior high Career Pathways facilitators will continue to meet monthly. The goal is to build capacity to better support students as they prepare to transition to life beyond secondary school. Career Pathways will also host two junior high professional learning meetings and continue to identify facilitators in the elementary and junior high schools.

Career Pathways Information Sessions – The Division hosted a series of career education 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 100 people attending.

high school. On the 2023-24 EIPS Annual Feedback Survey, only 64% of students, grades 9 and 12, reported feeling supported in this area. Obviously, 64% is lower than EIPS would like. That said, year-over-year, the percentage increases, which, in all likelihood, is because of an intentional divisionwide push to find new strategies to support students in career planning and preparing for life after senior high (see pg. 46, "Career Pathways").

Overall, EIPS is pleased with its career education results. They show EIPS is doing a good job of preparing students for life after senior high. As such, the Division will continue its efforts in this area, working with and supporting schools, students and families from kindergarten to Grade 12.

CAREER PATHWAYS: FOCUS

Rewind to 2021-22, EIPS introduced a new performance measure on its annual feedback survey—the number of students reporting feeling supported as they prepare for different career pathways. Back then, only 62% of learners reported feeling supported. Immediately, the Division

got to work with its Career Pathways team, who put a new strategic plan in place, revamped course scope and sequence documents; shifted instructional practices for CTF, CTS, CALM, and health and life skills courses; and developed focused professional learning opportunities for staff around career education. It also established career education leads at every senior high school, who now work one-on-one with students exploring career options, and worked hard to grow its network of community partners to ensure all students, regardless of where they live, can access high-quality, practical and relevant work experience opportunities.

As already touched on, thanks to that work, EIPS is slowly seeing an increase in the percentage of students who feel supported in their career exploration, rising a percentage point every year. The hope: To bring the percentage into the 70s over the next few years. That means continuing to offer regular professional learning, Career Pathways facilitators, collaborative teacher-learning opportunities, related engagement sessions and aligning curriculum outcomes with age-appropriate career exploration.

In 2023-24 alone, EIPS hosted 15 career pathways professional learning sessions, reaching more than 116 teachers (see pg. 46, “The big picture”). The Division also hosted fairs throughout the year, including its annual Your Future: Post-Secondary and Career Fair—open to students in grades 9 through 12. As well, each senior high school hosted its own mini career fair. Schools also were given increased responsibility to support these, which, in turn, heightened teacher engagement and created excitement around career education with students, families and community members—many of whom volunteered their time hosting a booth relevant to their work sectors.

TABLE 10: Career Pathways professional learning offerings 2023-24

	SESSIONS	PARTICIPANTS
Careers Pathways: Facilitators, senior high	12	75
Health and Life Skills: Creating strategies and resources to meet the province’s career education direction	2	39
CALM: Creating strategies and resources to meet the province’s career education direction	1	2

Work also continued around implementing and fine-tuning a Career Pathways strategic plan, for kindergarten to Grade 12. Four key focus areas make up the plan:

- *Awareness (K-4)* – Kindergarten to Grade 4 students build career awareness through curriculum-related teaching and learning, career days, field trips, guest speakers and natural discussion connecting curriculum to potential career sectors. It also includes ongoing Division work 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. The health and life skills curriculum was also aligned with BIONIC programming, with a special focus on life-learning choices, including career education and lesson plans.
- *Readiness (10-12)* – Through CTS programming, on-site activities, and a collegiate model, senior high students develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to enter 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 newsletters, resources and ongoing student opportunities notices, such as dual-credit, RAP positions and career preparation.

Using this framework, the Career Pathways team maintained an interactive repository of resources aligned with

the four focus areas 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. The aim: To help guide and support career education in classrooms from kindergarten to Grade 12. Additionally, the Division 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.

[development]
Adapting for change

A new collegiate model school promises to offer more options for students that give them a head start on future career endeavours

Over the last few years, Fort Saskatchewan has experienced significant growth. In fact, it’s the fastest-growing community within EIPS. One of the reasons for that is the Industrial Heartland. Already, it’s home to more than 40 companies, and many more major projects are underway or under study, which is putting, or will soon put, enrolment pressures on many of the city’s schools.

Coupled with the growth, is the age of most EIPS school buildings in Fort Saskatchewan. Many are nearing end of life, causing various operational and programming challenges for the Division. These only add to the capacity issues in Fort Saskatchewan.

To address the growth and the ageing infrastructure, EIPS has also formally requested the province, through its *EIPS Three-Year Capital Plan*, fund a new junior-senior high replacement school, grades 7-12, to replace Fort Saskatchewan High and Rudolph Hennig Junior High—with the ability to add 200 student spaces.

EIPS envisions a collegiate model for the replacement school—or a connected skills centre—to provide secondary students with leading-edge spaces and programming that prepares them for specific post-secondary opportunities—be it in the trades, university or the world of work. So, when students leave senior high, they have the knowledge and skills to go into the field they want to be in, including:

- power engineering;
- skilled trades, such as welding and mechanics;
- health-care;
- early childhood education; or
- other professional designations.

Ultimately, the goal is to provide learners with 21st-century spaces; to prepare them to work in the sectors that exist within the areas they live in—both now and in the future; and ultimately, ensure they contribute to the prosperity of the community in which they live. Through that, EIPS can ensure it provides high-quality, student-centred education to every student in Fort Saskatchewan.

CAREER PATHWAYS: WORK EXPERIENCE

In terms of career education credits, EIPS students earned 2,170 credits in 2023-24. That translates to an impressive 53,750 work hours by students. Of those, 946 credits were earned through RAP, totalling 23,650 work hours by 54 students. Another 1,174 credits were earned by 180 students through the work experience program, totalling 29,350 work hours. EIPS also secured 226 worksites for the program—used by 234 students. And, 17 students earned 50 credits toward the green certificate, with two completing their Equine Production Technician Level 1 certification.

TABLE 11: Career Pathways dual-credit offerings 2023-24

Introductory post-secondary course	2022-23	2023-24
accounting principles	1	n/a
American sign language	1	4
animal health technician	3	6
computer science coding and robotics	n/a	2
foundations in industry workplace safety	33	60
global and sustainable tourism	n/a	1
health care aide: roles and responsibilities	n/a	16
health care aide: human body, chronic illness and disease	n/a	19
human development	30	24
power engineering	2	2
psychology	22	24
sociology	2	2
sports management: training for performance	n/a	1

In terms of dual-credit programming, students took advantage of the Division’s apprenticeship opportunities available throughout 2023-24—ranging from mechanics to esthetics (see pg. 49, “Table 12”). EIPS also received a \$100,000 enhancement grant, through the province, to support its dual-credit options. The funds were used to upgrade several CTS labs throughout the Division, including the purchase of:

- new esthetics technology;
- cosmetology tools and chairs;
- two tire-changing machines for mechanics programming;
- three industrial stand mixers, one industrial dishwasher and two industrial freezers for culinary arts programming;
- various welding equipment, such as new jackets and gloves; and

- 15 new virtual reality welders for its CTF programming, accessed by 135 junior high students through the Division’s lending library.

Also exciting, EIPS partnered with NorQuest College to become one of the first school divisions to offer dual-credit health care aide (HCA) programming. Two courses were offered: HCA: The Human Body, Chronic Illness and Disease; and HCA: Roles and Responsibilities—two of nine courses required to complete the Health Care Aide certification in Alberta. Students enrolled also had access to the NorQuest teaching lab and the St. Joseph Community Hospital, which they used to interact with health-care professionals, ask questions and explore opportunities in the medical sector. After completing the course, the awarded credits count toward their high school diploma and related post-secondary education.

Three other dual-credit courses were introduced in 2023-24: global and sustainable tourism, sports management and foundations in industry safety training. Again, after completing the course, all credits earned, count toward the student’s high school diploma and related post-secondary programming. Thanks to the added courses, the number of EIPS students who accessed dual-credit programming rose to 161 in 2023-24 from 96 in 2022-23.

**[building capacity]
Blazing a new path**

A trip to Texas morphed into a voyage of discovery

In February 2024, Career Pathways staff travelled to Lake Jackson, Texas. The purpose: To tour Brazosport High School’s Career and Technical Education Center, a newly opened collegiate school that gives students direct pathways to post-secondary education and careers. EIPS staff spent two days meeting with staff, learning about the school, its programming and the various community partnerships. “The school’s focus is on providing ‘education with purpose,’” says Kristin Sawchuk, EIPS’ Career Pathways Supervisor who was part of the team that toured Brazosport. “Everything taught at the school had a rationale behind it. Everyone understood the ‘why’ behind the lessons. And, everyone was working together using a collaborative approach—staff, students, families, community members and industry.”

That’s precisely what EIPS hopes to emulate back at home through its proposed collegiate-style school, or skills centre, in Fort Saskatchewan. The hope is to receive provincial funding to support the collegiate model and enhance learning by building on partnerships the Division already has with Alberta Education, Advanced Education and local industry organizations. Through that, EIPS is better positioned to provide leading-edge spaces and programming to assist students in preparing for careers, employment, apprenticeships and post-secondary education.

Similarly, enrolment in apprenticeship programming increased in 2023-24—rising by 70 students. For the most part, the rise was seen in hairstyle and esthetics. The reason is most likely because the Division added an additional staff journeyperson at Salisbury Composite High, meaning more students could take the highly sought-after program. Those who complete the program receive advanced credit to MC College to complete their journey-person certification. Meanwhile, 121 students participated in EIPS’ automobile services apprenticeships, 24 students took welding apprenticeships, and 209 had cooking and baking apprenticeships. Similar to hairstyle and esthetics, once completing the programs, the credits count toward a student’s first year of post-secondary.

TABLE 12: EIPS apprenticeship CTS courses

	2022-23	2023-24
automotive service	126	121
cooking and baking	244	209
hairstyling and esthetics	244	335
Registered Apprenticeship Program	33	53
welding	24	24

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



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 refine its Career Pathways strategic planning and align it with insights gathered through its *Annual Education Results Report 2023-24*. That includes developing strategies to enhance staff engagement, expanding its career education efforts, and building counsellor capacity in career education and post-secondary transitions. It will also work closely with EIPS’ Specialized Supports team to further develop a *Division Counsellor Handbook*, a guide for school counsellors with career advice and exploration. As well, as in previous years, the Division will find ways to 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 collaborative teacher-learning opportunities. As such, it will also continue its 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. There are also 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. As well, it wants to progress a collegiate-style school in Fort Saskatchewan. The goal, of course: To ensure all learners receive a high-quality, student-centred education in world-class learning spaces—spaces that prepare students for life after high school, develop career opportunities and help build the community, all at the same time.



Priority Strategy for Education Plan

EIPS is committed to supporting students to ensure they are prepared for life after senior high. Strategies for the 2025-26 school year include:

-  Continue to identify Career Pathway facilitators in each EIPS school, K-12.
-  Build resources to support in-school career exploration to coincide with Take Our Kids to Work Day.
-  Continue to work with junior high career and technology foundations teachers to build course challenges that align with the program of studies.
-  Continue efforts to establish a secondary collegiate school, or skills centre, in Fort Saskatchewan.
-  Continue to work with elementary teachers to naturally integrate career discussions into learning activities.
-  Continue to build partnerships within the Industrial Heartland area to enhance career exploration and development opportunities.
-  Continue to work with junior high and senior high core subject teachers to identify careers that are possible if students have an interest in specific subject areas.
-  Continue efforts to enhance student opportunities by exposing learners to multiple career options—work experience, off-campus education, apprenticeships, certifications, mentoring and job shadowing.
-  Work with the school-counsellor group to build capacity around career exploration and career education opportunities post-graduation.
-  Continue to develop and build lending library resources for career education in schools.
-  Continue to host Your Future: Post-Secondary and Career Fair.
-  Update, fine-tune and implement a strategic plan for Career Pathways.

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	ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS					EVALUATION ACHIEVEMENT	ALBERTA	
	RESULTS IN %						RESULTS IN % 2023-24	EVALUATION ACHIEVEMENT
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24			
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY								
Teachers reporting in the past three to five years the professional learning and in-servicing received from the school authority was focused, systematic and contributed significantly to their professional growth	86.4	86.6	85.8	86.6	86.8	Intermediate	81.1	Low
Teachers reporting over the past three years professional learning opportunities made available through EIPS focused on the Division's priorities	91	91	90	89	90	High	88	High
Teachers reporting over the past three years professional learning opportunities made available through EIPS effectively addressed their professional development needs	85	86	84	85	85	Intermediate	78	Low
Teachers reporting over the past three years professional learning opportunities made available through EIPS significantly contributed to their professional development	84	84	83	85	84	Intermediate	77	Low
Teacher, parent and student satisfaction with the overall quality of basic education	89.5	89.3	88.6	88.2	87.4	High	87.6	High
Teacher satisfaction with the overall quality of basic education	96.8	96.7	95.6	95	95.6	High	93.9	Intermediate
Parent satisfaction with the overall quality of basic education	85.7	86.3	84.5	83.8	82.3	High	83.8	High
Student satisfaction with the overall quality of basic education	86.1	84.8	85.6	85.7	84.2	Intermediate	84.9	Intermediate
Teachers, parents and students indicating EIPS schools have improved or stayed the same in the last three years	80.2	82.8	75.6	76.7	76.9	High	75.8	Intermediate
Parents satisfied with the quality of teaching at their child's school	90	92	90	89	91	Very High	90	Very High
Parents satisfied with the quality of education their child is receiving at school	92	91	92	91	89	Very High	90	Very High

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES				
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS					
Families satisfied with the quality of education their child's receiving at their school	86.4	86.9	83.9	83.2	81.5
Families satisfied with the quality of teaching at their child's school	86.4	88.5	85.1	83.8	84
Families satisfied with the leadership in their child's school	80.9	84.2	79.1	80.2	77.2

RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES

Performance Measures

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR STAFF					
Staff who agree there is someone at work who encourages their professional learning	94	94.6	91.2	93.8	94.7
Staff who agree they've had opportunities to grow at work in the last year	94.8	92.7	92.2	94.4	95.3
Staff who agree their colleagues are committed to doing quality work	97.6	97.1	95.2	97.1	98.2
Staff who agree they receive recognition or praise for doing good work	88.8	90.2	86.6	87.1	89.8
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR STUDENTS (GRADES 9 AND 12)					
Students who are satisfied with the quality of education they receive	n/a	84.7	77.1	80	79.3
Students who are satisfied with the quality of teaching at their school	n/a	85.6	75.9	79.3	77.3
Students who are satisfied with the leadership at their school	n/a	67.9	61.7	64.5	63.6

NOTE: The EIPS Annual Feedback Survey: For staff also includes results from the 2024 EIPS Staff Engagement Survey.

Analysis of Results

Background

Lifelong learning is a value supported and promoted throughout the Division. Research indicates leadership and the quality of teaching in schools are vital to boosting student achievement. As such, for maximum effectiveness, teachers, staff, school administrators and Division leaders all need ongoing opportunities to enhance their knowledge, skills and abilities. That, in turn, leads to the adoption of best educational practices and improved student-learning outcomes. Therefore, it's crucial Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) pay close attention to how it trains and supports 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 2023-24 Alberta Education Assurance (AEA) survey indicates strong employee satisfaction with the professional learning offered within EIPS. For example, 87% of EIPS teachers agree the professional learning and in-servicing received from the Division are focused and systematic and contributed significantly to their professional development—provincially, the percentage is noticeably lower, 81%. As well, 85% of teachers said the Division's professional learning addressed their development needs, and 90% reported the professional learning opportunities offered focus on EIPS' priorities. These results continue to be 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 AEA survey data, EIPS also conducted its EIPS Annual Feedback Survey: For staff in spring 2024—completed by all Division employees, certificated and classified. The results complement the provincial measures. Ninety-five per cent of staff reported having someone at work who encourages their professional learning—up by 1% from 2022-23; another 95% said they have opportunities at work to learn and grow—up by almost 1%; 98% reported their colleagues are committed to doing quality work—again up by 1%; and 90% of employees felt they received recognition or praise for doing good work—also up, by almost 3%. The consistent increases are

likely the result of EIPS' ongoing belief in the importance of professional learning and connecting that learning to student growth and achievement.

EIPS' education quality results are also strong. On the AEA survey, 87% of teachers, families and students reported being satisfied with the overall quality of basic education—earning a provincial evaluation rating of “high.” Also, 89% of families were satisfied with the quality of education at their child's school—earning the evaluation rating “very high.” Similarly, 91% 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 also conducted the feedback survey with parents and caregivers, producing comparable results as the provincial measures—82% are satisfied with the quality of education at their child's school and 84% are satisfied with the teaching at their child's school. Collectively, the feedback indicates a high level of satisfaction with the Division's quality of education.

That said, the data also revealed areas for growth for EIPS—particularly around the Division's improvement over the last three years. Looking at the AEA survey, 77% 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, as it received a provincial rating of “high,” and is up slightly, by 0.2%, from the year before. However, it is below pre-pandemic results—81% in 2018-19 and 80% in 2019-20.

Looking deeper into the AEA survey data in terms of whether the Division improved or stayed the same in the last three years, student results remain consistent over

time, the parent and caregiver result is slowly increasing, and the teacher result is where the decline is seen. So, for EIPS, it will focus its efforts on improving the quality of education for all students and providing high-quality, professional learning for staff. The goal: To raise that measure back to the 80th percentile, for all three stakeholder groups.

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 enhance best practices for all employees.

EIPS Human Resources also hosted several learning sessions for employees. One of which was Off to a Good Start, an annual orientation program for new employees organized before school startup. In 2023-24, Off to a Good Start was offered to 27 new teachers and 17 new classified staff. The orientation helped prepare new employees—in terms of Division expectations, colleagues and available supports—to more smoothly transition into their position.

EIPS also launched a new two-part Leadership Development program—comprised of two program streams, Year 1 and Year 3. The Leadership Development Year 1 program was open to all teachers interested in exploring leadership opportunities. Meanwhile, the Year 3 program ran year-long, was open to new assistant principals and functioned as a mentoring opportunity. The sessions—led by experienced principals, assistant principals, Division leaders and HR professionals—focused on the *Leadership Quality Standard* and operational best practices. Topics included fostering effective relationships, a day in the life of an assistant principal, instructional leadership, leading a learning community, responding to a larger context and full-cycle recruitment. Overall, the program was well received and offered assistant principals and aspiring leaders needed support and guidance.

Lastly, in spring 2024, EIPS hosted a Classified Staff Professional Learning Day. The theme: Drive Determines Distance. 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 Lisa “Longball” Vlooswyk, who is also an eight-time Canadian

[building capacity]

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
- Unified Talent Instructor training – open to Division trainers
- Crucial Conversations – open to all staff

long-drive national champion, a Long Drivers of America Tour Champion and a Callaway Golf sponsored athlete. Vlooswyk shared her journey to the top of the golf world through goal setting and perseverance. The takeaway for EIPS staff: find what drives you, commit to it and success will come. In addition to the keynote session, Vlooswyk also offered a break-out learning session at the professional learning day—one of 52 sessions offered during the annual event. Overall, the day was a huge success, with the break-out sessions all well-received.

SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS

Numerous professional learning opportunities were also offered through Supports for Students. 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 curriculum to develop exam questions, which also served as a valuable form of professional learning. The long-term goal, of course, is to offer students consistent assessments and reporting 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. 18, “Setting up for success”). Several professional learning sessions also took place focusing on high-leverage instructional practices and creating welcoming and inclusive classrooms, including:

- EYE-TA Training for New Teachers;
- Non-Violent Crisis Intervention;
- Individualized Program Plans;
- Occupational Therapy Strategies in the Classroom;
- Speech-Language Strategies in the Classroom;
- Social Learning;
- Strategies to Support Diverse Learners;
- Fine-Motor Progressions;
- Language Facilitation Strategies;
- Positive Behaviour Strategies; and
- EIPS Kindergarten Day



[building capacity] Learning forward

Throughout 2023-24, significant work went into building capacity to enhance teacher practices and student experiences, including:

Educational Assistant Internship: EIPS launched a new internship program in hopes of retaining more educational assistants (EAs). **The what:** Removing geographic and financial barriers to quality training through a 16-week, professional learning experience offering coaching, tailored training, online modules, a community of practice and mentorship. Stream 1 included prospective EAs with no prior experience. Stream 2 included EAs currently working in classrooms with no formal training. **The result:** The program proved instrumental in building capacity within EIPS. Those who took part gained valuable skills and knowledge to then enhance their effectiveness in supporting diverse student needs. Given the program's success, EIPS plans to offer it again in Semester 2 of 2024-25.

Collaborative Learning – For counsellors: EIPS hosted collaborative learning opportunities for counsellors. **The what:** Three sessions were held using a professional learning community model to build counsellor capacity. At the sessions, attendees shared ideas and best practices, discussed topics of interest, participated in just-in-time training, to ultimately, enhance their practice. **The result:** The sessions were offered to all EIPS school counsellors—all of whom reported the sessions helped improve their existing knowledge and skill sets—and will lead to more consistent divisionwide approaches.

Autistic spectrum disorders (ASD): EIPS provided ASD training to teachers and educational staff. **The what:** A four-part series focused on evidence-based best practices around supporting students with ASD. **The result:** Through a series of professional learning sessions, 108 participants gained insight, knowledge and resources geared toward learning with ASD.

SPECIALIZED SUPPORTS

Throughout the year, EIPS Specialized Supports consultants worked with schools to ensure an inclusive education system that meets the diverse needs of all learners. Specialized Supports also helped maintain and enhance the Division's educational quality by providing co-ordinated and timely assistance to staff that included responsive and universally designed instructional practices. Several professional learning sessions also took place throughout the year—all focused on high-leverage strategies to create welcoming, caring and safe school communities, including:

Professional learning session	NO. OF SESSIONS OFFERED	NO. OF STAFF TRAINED
Non-Violent Crisis Intervention	16	308
Autism Spectrum Disorder	4	108
LGBTQ2S+ Lead Training	1	40
Brain Architecture	3	105
Stress, Brain Development and Learning	5	130
Educational Assistant Community of Practice	3	20
The Educator Nervous System: Dr. Lori Desautels	1	80

Furthermore, to professional learning sessions, EIPS' Assistive Technology team supported more than 150 students and their teachers, using 11 new communication devices—all approved for complex communicators. The aim, of course, was to ensure all students had an opportunity to engage in the classroom community.

EIPS also participated in an Educational Assistant Pilot project, designed to provide support and training for educational assistants within the Division. In total, 10 educational assistants participated in the pilot, which included six modules of study. Overall, educational assistants reported the training positively impacted their professional growth and enabled them to do a better job supporting students in the classroom.

LITERACY AND NUMERACY

Along with early learning and specialized supports, 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.

Throughout the year, EIPS also offered extensive professional learning opportunities focused on literacy and numeracy. Some of these included:

Professional learning session	NO. OF SESSIONS OFFERED	NO. OF STAFF TRAINED
Artificial Intelligence	2	75
Assessment	21	163
Literacy	38	874
Numeracy	34	473
Split Grades	2	22
Summer Literacy Institute	12	192

In addition, EIPS hosted a new teachers cohort, which met four times throughout the year. Consultants provided opportunities for teachers, relatively new to their positions, to come together to share best practices and take part in modelling and coaching opportunities. The result, participants gained confidence in ways to incorporate effective teaching principles and high-leverage practices into their classrooms.

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.

[professional learning]

Championing French language

Using language to immerse students in French culture

To build capacity in French Immersion, EIPS' French-speaking consultant organized multiple professional learning opportunities for teachers, kindergarten to Grade 12. Overall, 26 sessions were hosted and 175 staff attended. **The goal:** To create resources and improve oral language throughout French Immersion classrooms, including an Early Literacy in French Immersion Initiative. **The focus:** To prepare and build confidence in teachers as they roll out the new French Immersion language arts and literature curriculum. **Plus:** A guest-speaker series was also offered, which explored strategies to balance structured literacy instruction with real-world francophone experiences to instill a love of reading. And, several classroom visits were organized to demonstrate pedagogical best practices to help engage students and share French language.

FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS AND INUIT EDUCATION

For the 2023-24 school year, Indigenous education capacity building continued to focus 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.

In total, 55 lead teachers were provided with three professional learning sessions. Each focused on land-based teachings and foundational knowledge, balancing pedagogy with technology and learning about an Indigenous worldview. Elders and Knowledge Holders were also included in these sessions to further develop teacher capacity and relationships throughout EIPS (see pg. 40, “Being in relation”). The result: Lead teachers obtained knowledge and understanding to better support self-identified First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and families.

For school- and central-based administrators, they were provided professional learning throughout the year—with a focus on smudging and land acknowledgments. Meanwhile, schools worked with the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team, developing ways to bring Indigenous histories, perspectives and pedagogies into classroom practice. First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education consultants also worked with schools to co-plan and co-teach lessons that weave subject curricular-learning objectives in with Indigenous perspectives and knowledge. Collectively, these experiences helped teachers build confidence and capacity to then create space for Indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing within their classrooms.

NEW ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

In 2023-24, schools across Alberta continued to implement the new elementary curriculum, focusing on mathematics and English language arts and literature, grades 4-6; science, K-3; and French Immersion language arts. EIPS undertook significant efforts to ensure a smooth transition and successful student learning (see pg. 7, “A Closer Look”). The New Curriculum team, comprised of five individuals, developed resources, unit plans, planning tools, instructional videos, bridging documents and assessments to support teachers in the classroom.

Elementary teachers and consultants also participated in collaborative working sessions to share feedback and insights, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the new curriculum and its implementation across all EIPS elementary schools. To complement the work, multiple professional learning sessions were offered with grade cohorts, exploring the new curriculum, unit plans and available resources. The Division established a common vetting process through these sessions to ensure teachers and consultants review the available resources. As a result, teachers gained confidence in teaching the new curriculum and how to effectively teach it within the classroom.



Opportunities for Growth

Although the Division is pleased with the feedback from staff about professional learning, more can be done to support current, and potential, leadership staff. Right now, the Division’s demographics suggest 24% of EIPS principals and 41% of assistant principals have less than five years of experience in their roles—in 2023-24, EIPS hired two new principals and two assistant principals. As such, it’s critical 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 is offering a leadership prep program and a new principal community of practice. The latter will involve mentorship and leadership-development programs. The leadership prep program will have three distinct leadership cohorts—Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3. Year 1 will be an introductory program for certificated staff interested in pursuing school administration by exploring several concepts and themes around leadership, and instructional practices. Year 2 will build on concepts learned in Year 1, linking *Leadership Quality Standard* within the context of EIPS. And, Year 3 will encompass a cohort group of new assistant principals working collectively to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes laid out in the *Leadership Quality Standard*.

A second growth area is capacity building for educational assistants. Specifically through a new 16-week Educational Assistant Internship pilot program. Through the program, new education assistants will be provided with rigorous and practical training in the area of complex classrooms. The aim: To accommodate the recruitment and retention of educational assistants in school divisions throughout Alberta.

Another continued growth area is capacity building and developing strategies to enhance the quality of teaching, learning and leading through evidence-based practices. That means adjusting professional learning as needed to meet the needs of schools and classrooms and providing inclusive programming focused on rigour and excellence. To support this, the Division is committed to enhancing and expanding the skills, knowledge and overall abilities in complex classrooms and Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (see pg. 6, "A Closer Look"). Simultaneously, it will offer collaborative response training on tiered supports for students, classrooms and schools throughout the Division.

A fourth area is finding ways to continue the Reset Room project. EIPS needs to alter the program as it is too expensive to run as is. So, EIPS plans to build staff capacity related to co-regulation and supporting diverse needs in the classroom. To supplement that work, the Division also plans to offer more restorative practice training through information sessions and a play-shop approach, which includes mentorship, modelling and coaching.

Finally, EIPS will offer more professional learning to educational assistants. Specifically, those working with complex students and in classrooms—becoming more normative. These learning opportunities will explore what a complex classroom is, ways to manage classroom complexity and best practices. The goal, of course, is success for all students.

Priority Strategy for Education Plan

EIPS will continue to support and enhance the quality of teaching, learning and leading. Strategies for the 2025-26 school year include:

-  Develop targeted and functional professional learning opportunities, such as collaborative learning, online modules, modelling and coaching, for classified and certificated staff—focused on key competencies and required certification for specific positions tracked using the PowerSchool Unified Talent software.
-  Continue to provide professional learning and resources to support the new curriculum.
-  Facilitate internships for educational assistants to build capacity.
-  Continue building capacity through initiatives guided by the Mental Health Strategic Plan.
-  Continue to 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.
-  Build counsellor capacity and teacher capacity through relevant and targeted professional learning opportunities.
-  Conduct a systematic review of the specialized system programming options for students, ensuring a continuum of student supports.
-  Develop an integrated student support plan, replacing instructional support plans, to improve overall Division programming.
-  Find efficiencies through the Division's PowerSchool, Atrieve, Permission Click and workflow software.
-  Develop systems and processes to enhance evidence-based decision-making throughout the Division by developing an online data dashboard.
-  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.
-  Continue efforts to develop onboarding sessions for new hires and leadership-readiness workshops for successful transitions into new positions.
-  Provide targeted professional learning to administrators focused on the *Leadership Quality Standard*—accompanied by a Division-developed resource repository for all participants.
-  Implement the findings of the classified Salary Compensation Analysis—completed in the 2024-25 school year.

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	ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS					ALBERTA		
	RESULTS IN %					EVALUATION ACHIEVEMENT	RESULTS IN % 2023-24	EVALUATION ACHIEVEMENT
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24			
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY								
Teachers, parents and students who agree their learning environments are welcoming, caring, respectful and safe	n/a	86.8	85.3	85	84.2	n/a	84	n/a
Teachers who agree their learning environments are welcoming, caring, respectful and safe	n/a	95.3	94	93.1	93.1	n/a	91.6	n/a
Parents who agree their learning environments are welcoming, caring, respectful and safe	n/a	86.4	84.6	84.2	83.2	n/a	85.3	n/a
Students who agree their learning environments are welcoming, caring, respectful and safe	n/a	78.6	77.4	77.8	76.3	n/a	75.2	n/a
Parents who agree teachers care about their child	n/a	92	89	90	90	n/a	91	n/a
Teachers, parents and students who agree students are safe at school, are learning the importance of caring for others, are learning respect for others and are treated fairly in school	88.6	89.4	88.3	88.1	87.4	High	87.1	High
Parents who agree their child is safe at school	92	94	92	91	92	Very High	92	Very High
Students who agree their teachers care about them	n/a	81.3	80	80.3	80.7	High	79.7	High
Teachers, parents and students who are satisfied with the accessibility, effectiveness and efficiency of programs and services offered to students in their community	74	73.6	74.7	74.2	73.7	Intermediate	71.9	Low
Students who agree they are safe at school	83	84	82.3	83.3	82.3	Very High	81	High
Teachers, parents and students who are satisfied students model active citizenship	80.3	80.4	79.3	78.8	77.3	Intermediate	79.4	High
Teachers who are satisfied students model active citizenship	93.8	94.8	92.1	92	91.4	Intermediate	89.8	Intermediate
Parents who are satisfied students model active citizenship	76.8	75.6	75.3	73.9	71.9	Intermediate	78.7	High
Students who are satisfied students model active citizenship	70.2	70.9	70.3	70.6	68.6	High	69.6	High
Parents satisfied with the special support their child receives at school	81	76	65	78	68	n/a	78	n/a

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

RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES

Performance Measures

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR STAFF					
I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work	95.4	94.9	96.9	92.4	93.3
The mission, values, priorities and goals of EIPS make me feel my job is important	95.1	95.9	90.5	92.5	93.8
I receive recognition or praise for doing good work	88.8	90.2	83.7	87.1	89.8
Someone at work cares about me as a person	97.6	97.5	97.7	97.7	98.1
Overall, I am satisfied with my school or department as a place to work	91.1	93.3	91.9	91.6	93.7
The Division or school encourages learners to be responsible, respectful and engaged citizens	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	93.7
I feel staff care about students	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	99.6
Staff expect students to behave responsibly and are dealt with fairly	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	82.5
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS					
The school staff care about my child	89.4	90	86.4	88.2	86.1
My child's school encourages students to be a responsible, respectful and engaged citizen	n/a	90.1	87.1	88	85.8
My child's school expects students to behave responsibly and are dealt with fairly, if not	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	62.8
My child's school is safe	90.7	89.2	97.8	87.6	86.9
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	80.5	73.8	75	75.9
Students who feel the staff at their school care about them	n/a	76	68.3	72.6	73.6
Students who agree their school expects students to behave responsibly, and if not, are dealt with fairly	n/a	71.6	66.4	67.3	66.1
Students who agree their individual needs are met at school	n/a	86.3	78	81.7	81
Students who agree their school is safe	n/a	83.5	73.3	74.4	73.6
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: STAKEHOLDER CONFIDENCE					
Percentage of families, staff and Grade 12 students confident EIPS' learning and working environments are welcoming, inclusive, respectful and safe	n/a	n/a	89.7	90.9	93.2

NOTE: The EIPS Annual Feedback Survey: For staff also includes results from the 2024 EIPS Staff Engagement Survey.

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 learning and working environments that are welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and encourage a sense of belonging. In these environments, students are best able to learn and develop social responsibility, and staff are well-positioned to experience success and feel engaged.

Results

The 2023-24 Alberta Education Assurance (AEA) survey results demonstrate EIPS does an excellent job creating welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments. Briefly, 84% of teachers, parents and students agree their learning environments are welcoming, caring, respectful and safe. Another 90% of parents and 81% of students agree teachers care about learners. Eighty-two per cent of students feel safe in their school, and 92% of parents agree. As well, 87% of teachers, parents and students agree learners are learning the importance of caring for others, learning respect for others and are treated fairly in school.

These results are echoed in EIPS' 2023-24 Annual Feedback Survey—administered to families, students and staff. Every year, the Division conducts the survey with all 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 Annual Feedback Survey data confirms the Division is doing a good job of providing welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments. In fact, 86% of families and 76% of students agree EIPS schools encourage learners to be responsible, respectful and engaged citizens. As well, 87% of families and 74% of students strongly agree or agree their school is safe.

There is a juxtaposition in results between the AEA survey and the EIPS Annual Feedback Survey. In the 2023-24 AEA survey, 68% of parents were satisfied with their child's specialized support and services, enabling them to be a successful learner—down 10% from the previous year. However, in the EIPS Annual Feedback Survey, 81% of students responded their individual needs are met at school. As such, an area of focus for 2024-25 is to ensure parents are aware of the supports provided to students, and ensure schools are working with their parent and caregiver community to provide appropriate supports for students.

Looking ahead, EIPS will continue to strive to create positive learning and working environments. The reason: 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

Mental health and well-being continued to be a Division priority throughout 2023-24. That's because both serve as foundations for learning, belonging and social participation at school. All efforts in this area were guided by EIPS' Mental Health Strategic Plan, which details responsive and proactive strategies to best support students' well-being—including lesson plans, strategies, partnerships, professional learning and engagement. One of those focus areas was ensuring whole-school participation in healthy relationship-building activities, such as Bullying Awareness Week, Pink Shirt Day, Seven Sacred Teachings, Leader in Me, and more—all 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 said they found the strategies helpful, particularly for promoting positive mental health and regulated emotions.

Students are more likely to have healthy behaviours and succeed academically when they feel connected to the school

One such session was a workshop entitled "The Educator Nervous System," facilitated by Lori Desautel, an assistant professor at Butler University who specializes in social and relational neuroscience in education. During the workshop, Desautel introduced staff to foundational principles of co-regulation. Specifically, the relationship between the regulation of adults and the students they instruct. Overall, the feedback from those who participated was tremendously positive—many of whom asked for more capacity building in this area. So much so, the positive uptake laid the groundwork for related sessions offered throughout the year.

Following Desautel's workshop, EIPS offered a series of additional workshops at the school level entitled, "Stress, Brain Development and Learning." More than 130 staff members took part in these, which focused on the impact of stress on adolescent brain development and learning. Of those who attended, most reported being more confident in their ability to support student regulation in the classroom during daily instructions. Similarly, co-regulation training was also provided to schools—70 sessions were offered in 13 schools. For the most part, staff reported they were better equipped to support students' learning and mental health needs in their classrooms. As well, eight school

[building capacity]

EIPS mental health strategy

Throughout 2023-24, significant effort went into building staff capacity around mental health and well-being—as part of EIPS' Mental Health Strategic Plan. The main focus areas were co-regulation, brain architecture, understanding racism and building our collective knowledge of neurodiversity. The goal: To support students' and staff's socio-emotional and positive mental health development

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, anti-racism, 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.

Reset Rooms

EIPS also established Reset Rooms in all 14 of its junior high schools. The Reset Rooms acted as support centres for students. Each room featured a continuum of evidence-based mental health resources and services for students and their families. Essentially, the rooms were spaces for students when feeling overwhelmed—supervised by an EIPS teacher trained in mental health literacy and supported by the Division's specialized supports teams. Feedback from school staff, students and families was positive. Increasingly, strategies used in Reset Rooms are being incorporated by teaching staff into their teaching practice.

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.

teams, including an administrator on each team, attended two full days of restorative practices training focused on the importance of nurturing positive school-community cultures rooted in respect and relationships.

The Division also introduced schools, staff and families to a new Brain Architecture game, which explored how brains develop, how life circumstances can influence brain development and the relevance for school staff working with students. In total, 105 staff took part from five EIPS schools. There were also 28 EIPS school family members who participated—all of whom offered positive feedback post-game. Anecdotally, families reported the activity helped build their understanding, knowledge and confidence related to supporting co-regulation with their children. The hope is these activities will build consistent support approaches to better serve learners.

Work was also done around 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 an understanding of how mental health impacts school success. Thanks to the positive uptake, the Division plans to re-run the training again in 2024-25. Meanwhile, other related initiatives included brain architecture training, challenging behaviours and restorative practices.

Reset Rooms were also established in all junior highs—with more than 27,000 visits

The Division also participated in a Mental Health Literacy research project—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—all of whom reported the topics covered and practices discussed have practical benefits for students.

To support safe school environments, 16 Non-Violent Crisis Intervention sessions were attended by 308 staff members. The sessions provided guidance on topics including verbal de-escalation, safety and trauma-informed approaches to supporting students. Each session was taught by one of three EIPS trainers, who provided training and followup support to staff. Reset Rooms were also established in all junior highs. The rooms were staffed by an EIPS teacher trained in mental health literacy and offered mental health support for students. In 2023-24, the rooms were visited by students more than 27,000 times, and the overall feedback from students was positive. In fact, 90% of school staff said the Reset Rooms positively impacted its school culture (see pg. 62, "EIPS mental health strategy").



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 2023-24 school year, more than 400 students participated in the program, receiving meals and snacks every day.

Thanks to these collective efforts, there is a general consensus among teachers, families and students EIPS learning environments are welcoming, caring, respectful and safe. That’s something the Division is proud of. And, it’s something it intends to build on going forward.

FOSTERING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT FOR STAFF

The Division’s efforts to enhance working environments for staff are paying off, too. According to the 2023-24 EIPS Annual Feedback Survey, 92% of certificated staff and 95% of classified staff feel they have the resources and materials needed to do their work. Similarly, 94% of both certificated and classified staff feel the mission, belief statements, priorities and goals of EIPS make their job important. Other highlights include: 99% of certificated staff and 98% of classified staff feel someone at work cares about them; and 93% of certificated staff and 95% 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 and Alberta Health Services.

[health and wellness]
Course offerings
Also offered through EIPS are various occupational health and safety courses. Some of these include:

- Respect in the Workplace** – Completed by 1,047 people
- Health and Safety** – 2,305 modules completed
- Emergency Preparedness** – 3,503 modules completed
- First Aid** – completed in-house by 69 people
- Leadership for Safety Excellence** – delivered to all new principals, assistant principals, directors and assistant directors
- Asbestos Awareness** - delivered to staff within Facility Services and Custodial Services.

Opportunities for Growth

Respectful relationships and positive mental health are ongoing growth areas for the Division. So, throughout 2023-24, the Division put a lot of effort into this area focusing on prevention, early identification, early intervention, treatment referral and followup requirements. The Division will continue in this same vein throughout 2024-25—as part of Year 5 of its Mental Health Strategic Plan. Specifically, it will focus on building staff capacity to support students learning in increasingly complex classrooms.

The Reset Room project is another area for growth. That's because funding, past the 2025-26 school year, isn't adequate to sustain the Reset Room concept at each junior high. As such, the Division plans to shift the Reset Room concept. Instead of dedicating a room and staff member, it will identify mental health leads at each junior high to build capacity around regulation and available resources. The leads will also coach and model evidence-based strategies for the classroom, to support student success.

Also, a growth area, as mentioned in the "Results" section, is ways to enhance respectful student relationships within EIPS. To improve in this area, the Division will create opportunities to nurture connections between staff, staff and students, and home and school. To complement this work, the Division will continue to support the use of restorative practices, trauma-informed approaches, Non-Violent Crisis Intervention training and the Violence-Threat Risk Assessment when necessary. As well, the Division will continue providing anti-racism professional learning opportunities to all staff.

Finally, EIPS will continue to maintain its Certificate of Recognition (COR) and implement recommendations from the COR audit. In 2024-25, the Division will focus on health and safety training, job-hazard assessment documentation, communicating site-specific hazards and controls, and identifying and communicating near misses and incident reporting.

Priority Strategy for Education Plan

EIPS will continue to ensure its learning and working environments are welcoming, caring, respectful, safe and foster student and staff well-being. Strategies for the 2025-26 school year include:



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



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



Provide targeted professional learning opportunities for staff focused on reducing barriers for students, anti-racism and discrimination. The goal: To develop a respectful Division culture where all students, staff and families feel they belong.



Continue to build the Division's counsellor community of practice.



Continue to use Violence-Threat Risk Assessment and Traumatic Event Systems processes to increase safety and well-being for staff, students and families.



Provide internal training for staff through divisional "train the trainer" opportunities.



Review and refine EIPS' Mental Health Strategic Plan, focusing on strategies to support students' social-emotional well-being and mental health—through enhancing partnerships; building staff capacity; and increasing engagement with students, staff and caregivers.



Collaborate with CASA Mental Health to expand the Division's CASA classrooms to the rural areas.



Provide ongoing classroom complexity training opportunities to school administrators and staff.



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



Investigate strategies to support employee health and wellness.

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

Performance Measures	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: STAKEHOLDER CONFIDENCE					
The percentage of staff, families and Grade 12 students confident EIPS supports student learning through effective planning, managing and investing in Division infrastructure	n/a	n/a	n/a	88.4%	91.5%
EIPS FACILITIES					
Overall school-utilization rate	75	72	74	76	78
Number of new, replacement or modernization capital projects funded versus requested	0 of 1	0 of 1	0 of 1	1 of 3	1 of 3
Approved modular unit classrooms	1 relocated	6 relocated	1 relocated	3 demolished 2 relocated	2 new
Number of modular units installed and hooked up with occupancy for school startup	1	6	1	0 (2 late)	2
Number of projects completed as part of the Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal program	151	161	119	59	74
Number of projects completed as part of the Capital Maintenance Renewal program	n/a	4	5	5	5
Number of maintenance projects completed	457	450	208	318	331
Number of work orders requested	10,455	9,470	10,074	10,977	10,431
Percentage of work orders completed	93	96	94	96	91%
Total grant amount: Plant Operations and Maintenance	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$16,266,356
Total grant amount: Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$2,238,477
Total grant amount: Capital Maintenance Renewal	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$1,143,128
Deferred maintenance costs	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$30,015,794
Five-year maintenance costs	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$196,870,418
<i>EIPS Annual Feedback Survey: Percentage of parents who rate the physical condition of their child's school as excellent, good or fair</i>	80.6	96.1	95.2	95.7	96.3
<i>EIPS Annual Feedback Survey: Percentage of students in Grade 9 and Grade 12 who rate the physical condition of their school as excellent, good or fair</i>	n/a	91.2	83.7	86.5	86.1

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
EIPS INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Number of schools rewired to Category 6 standards	18	21	23	25	26
Number of schools funded with evergreening technology	0	3	32	40	31
Number of schools with 100 Mbps bandwidth	7	2	1	3	2
Number of schools with 150 Mbps bandwidth	n/a	n/a	n/a	6	7
Number of schools with 200 Mbps bandwidth	27	6	6	11	13
Number of schools with 250 Mbps bandwidth	n/a	n/a	n/a	1	1
Number of schools with 300 Mbps bandwidth	1	28	28	13	11
Number of schools with 400 Mbps bandwidth	1	1	1	1	0
Number of schools with 500 Mbps bandwidth	1	1	1	1	2
EIPS TRANSPORTATION					
Number of bus riders at the end of June	9,041	7,380	7,859	9,132	10,272
Number of buses	157	161	160	173	176
Average bus ride time (in minutes)	29.3	27.5	29	27.5	26.5
Percentage of buses with a GPS tracking system	100	100	100	100	100
Number of parents and students who participated in the Little Elk Island Adventure bus-safety program	862	846	907	922	1,094
The number of professional learning sessions offered to Student Transportation staff	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4
The number of recorded bus incidents	22	18	22	34	35
The number of positive behaviour cards distributed	n/a	n/a	96	65	127
The number of bus-evacuation and safety sessions offered	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	110
The percentage of contractors and school administrators compliant with Student Transportation policies and procedures	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	86

Analysis of Results

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 2023-24 school year, EIPS' Facility Services department oversaw a range of projects, from new construction to general maintenance to finding operational efficiencies. One of the most significant projects undertaken was the new Sherwood Park replacement

school. Throughout the year, EIPS worked closely with Alberta Education and Alberta Infrastructure, finalizing the replacement school's design and all required documents to move the project to the construction phase, which officially began in June 2024. Once complete, the new school will replace École Campbelltown and Sherwood Heights Junior High—all in one building—to accommodate more than 1,000 students, kindergarten to Grade 9.

Another substantial project focused on balancing

enrolment within the Division's schools. There are several reasons why it's important for schools to have balanced enrolment. One is the ability to offer equitable opportunities for all students. The other is the Division's ability to maximize its infrastructure through healthy utilization rates, which protects the Division if there is a shift in provincial funding or any infrastructure needs arise.

So, to accommodate this, Facility Services worked with the Division to execute its Three-Year Engagement Plan, which focused on projects to improve operations. Through the engagement, the Division made several operational decisions to enhance enrolment, capacity and programming for students—such as relocating its senior high French Immersion program, balancing enrolment at the elementary and secondary levels and managing student capacity in Fort Saskatchewan (see pg. 8, "A Closer Look"). Facility Services also oversaw the closure of Andrew School, demolishing three modular classroom units at Uncas Elementary and decommissioning a modular classroom unit at Westboro Elementary. Through these efforts, EIPS' school utilization rate rose to 78%, up from 76% the previous year. The increase bodes well for the Division.

A new provincial requirement also falls under the purview of Facility Services: establishing joint-use planning agreements with each municipality EIPS serves—Andrew, Bruderheim, Chipman, Fort Saskatchewan, Lamont County, the Town of Lamont, the County of Minburn, Mundare, Strathcona County and Vegreville. The agreements are intended to lay out a process for the municipality and school boards to discuss matters related to the planning, development and use of school sites; transfers or disposal of land allocated for schools; and servicing school sites on reserve land. They also establish a framework for the reciprocal uses of school and municipal facilities. EIPS' first agreement was with Bruderheim and was officially implemented in January 2023. The second one was with the Village of Chipman. It was executed in December 2023. Facility Services will work to finalize the remaining six over the coming year.

Other major projects completed included managing the positioning and infrastructure hook-ups for two new modular classroom units at Ardrossan Elementary; 349 maintenance, operations and custodial projects; 12 lease agreements, 26,503 after-hours rental bookings and 91% of the 10,431 general EIPS work orders received. In terms of large maintenance projects, the department completed 74 Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal (IMR) projects and five Capital Maintenance Renewal projects—ranging from interior and exterior upgrades to replacing school electrical and mechanical systems. As well, it completed three capital reserve projects—the Salisbury Composite High's stormwater project, landscaping at SouthPointe School and a new entranceway at Next Step Sherwood Park.

The Division aims to focus more on preventative and maintenance projects; however, it is constrained by the funding it receives from the province. In 2023-24, EIPS received just under \$20 million for building maintenance. In contrast, the annual cost for deferred maintenance alone exceeded \$30 million, and the projected maintenance costs over the next five years total nearly \$197 million. A shortfall that significant limits what the Division can do each year.

EFFICIENCIES

Facility Services continued its work to improve operational efficiency. In terms of building operations, the department maintains an asset-management system, which assists the Division in managing and investing in its infrastructure. Through the system, EIPS can easily incorporate Alberta Infrastructure requirements and allocate resources. Facility Services also uses a building automation system (BAS) for energy management, which allows it to access, control and monitor all its building systems using one centralized control. In 2023-24, the department piloted a new reprogrammed BAS at James Mowat Elementary, which improved the school's energy efficiency by 5%. Given its success, more are planned for 2024-25.

[building capacity]

Adapting for change

Throughout 2023-24, Facility Services engaged in initiatives to enhance awareness and overall operations

Ten-Year Roofing Plan: The department developed a comprehensive plan to outline its roofing priorities and areas of significant interest over the next 10 years. The department then used the plan to inform its IMR projects for the 2024-25 school year.

Building Access Control Project: Facility Services worked with IT and school administrators to develop the Division's new *Administrative Procedure 538: Building Security and Door Locking*. The goal: To enhance building security and student safety.

Utility Tracking: Over the year, Facility Services collected and recorded energy consumption data, which the Division will use, going forward, to inform its budget planning and future work.

Asbestos Awareness Training: In collaboration with EIPS' Occupational Health and Safety Specialist, the department facilitated various professional learning sessions for Division staff to build awareness about vermiculite in older buildings—what it looks like, how to keep workspaces safe and potential health risks.

Electronic Field Level Hazard Assessment Tool: With the help of Information Technologies, the department developed a digital, mobile-friendly version of its Electronic Field Level Hazard Assessment Form. Since its roll-out, the response has been positive by all users.

Air quality was another focus area. All EIPS air filters were upgraded to the Merv 9A filter, and a new three-year cleaning cycle was implemented for all building air ducts and heating coils. Now in place, EIPS anticipates receiving the National Air Filtration Association's Clean Air Award—an annual accreditation given to organizations that maintain clean and healthy workplaces while, at the same time, implementing strategies to reduce overall operating costs.

Other efficiencies included overseeing Year 2 of a five-year custodial services contract to maintain and improve the overall building cleanliness rate—EIPS' cleanliness average is rated at 94%, which is up by 2% from 2022-23. The Division also signed a five-year contract for electricity supply to ensure budgeting consistency and stabilize Division costs. Finally, Facility Services oversaw several lighting fixture upgrades to LEDs—replacing 250 light fixtures divisionwide, resulting in estimated energy cost savings of \$4,000 annually.

COMMUNICATION

Building relationships within and outside EIPS' Facility Services is an ongoing priority for the department. Doing so enhances communication, creates clarity around project timelines and allows for regular status updates. So, in 2023-24, to further improve in this area, the department updated its *Workflow and Funding Guide: For schools*. The guide details funding responsibilities between Facility Services and schools and helps ensure Division infrastructure is protected in a consistent, measurable and sustainable manner. The department also started a playground guide for administrators and fundraising groups. Once complete, schools will use the step-by-step guide when planning a new or upgrading an existing playground.

Collectively, these efforts are paying off, as demonstrated in EIPS' most recent Annual Feedback Survey, an online survey that EIPS uses to gauge its progress toward meeting the goals and priorities outlined in its *Four-Year Education Plan*. In 2023-24, 92% of EIPS stakeholders—families, staff and Grade 12 students—reported they are confident EIPS supports student learning through effective planning, managing and investing in Division infrastructure. That result, which is up by more than 3% from the previous year, is significant and illustrates nicely the quality of infrastructure throughout EIPS.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Throughout 2023-24, the Division's Information Technologies (IT) department worked diligently to ensure strong IT infrastructure divisionwide, with a specific focus on three key areas: infrastructure management, data operations, and security and compliance. These efforts were all

[building capacity]

Leveraging technology

EIPS is creating a culture of excellence by pairing technology and learning.

As technology advances, it's critical staff are equipped with the relevant technological acumen to excel. That's why, in 2023-24, EIPS developed a professional learning plan focused on leveraging technology. The goal: To enhance staff skills and knowledge. By targeting key tools such as PowerSchool and Permission Click, the plan included 29 worker bee sessions and just-in-time training opportunities—relevant to employees' day-to-day tasks. These sessions covered a range of topics, including yearly responsibilities, new operational processes, data processing, basic form usage, and reporting features in both PowerSchool and Permission Click.

Additionally, the plan incorporated Mimecast training aimed at building staff capacity in understanding cybersecurity. Specifically, training focused on email security and phishing prevention, helping staff identify and mitigate potential email-based threats, thereby strengthening the Division's overall security posture. Posts training: staff who participated said the sessions helped to improve their efficiency, confidence and capacity around the technology platforms—in turn, supporting the Division's overall strategic goals.

aimed at supporting learning, resource management and the overall education experience. That's because strong information technology infrastructure is crucial for providing students with the best possible learning environments and supporting them in reaching their full potential.

Early in the year, the IT team developed a strategy to replace existing networking equipment, such as wireless access points, with new TP-Link devices—offering enterprise-level architecture, without ongoing licensing costs for long-term savings. In May, the new equipment arrived, which was then tested, configured and deployed at 11 school sites—Bruderheim School, Davidson Creek Elementary, Fort Saskatchewan Christian, Fort Saskatchewan Elementary, Fort Saskatchewan Next Step, Fultonvale Elementary Junior High, Lamont Elementary, Mills Haven Elementary, Mundare School, SouthPointe School and Salisbury Composite High. The goal: To reduce financial burdens while maintaining reliable, high-performance wireless access across all schools and administrative offices—to the benefit of approximately 1,550 staff and 17,950 students.

EIPS is still waiting on the final results. Initial findings indicate substantial cost savings. In fact, it projects savings of more than \$1 million, in hardware and licensing, over a 10-year period. That, in turn, will allow for more future infrastructure reinvestment and upgrades. Given the success

of the initial roll-out, EIPS plans to expand it across all locations—ensuring a more sustainable and scalable infrastructure for long-term technology growth.

The Division also improved Fort Saskatchewan's network infrastructure. IT and Facility Services worked collaboratively to upgrade the cabling and bandwidth at Fort Saskatchewan High to the Division's Category 6 standard. As a result, the upgrade improved and enhanced connectivity across the school for wired and wireless connections. Now complete, the work ensures wiring standards are met for future device and networking considerations. The IT department also reviewed and adjusted bandwidth allocations at several other schools, which were based on internal system reports and wide-area network reports to ensure optimal performance.

In terms of evergreening in 2023-24, work continued replacing and upgrading identified Division technology. For the most part, this included replacing ageing Microsoft Windows devices and Chromebooks. A total of 719 Windows devices were replaced—no longer compatible with Windows 11. Similarly, 849 Chromebooks were replaced—those replaced had expired auto-update expiration dates. That's because, as of October 2025, Windows 10 will reach its end-of-support date. So, throughout 2024-25, IT will continue to decommission its non-compatible devices.

In an effort to make data interoperable and accessible, the Division also launched a new analytics dashboard for schools—using Microsoft's Power BI software. The new dashboard consolidates Alberta Education Assurance Measure results, internal survey data and other performance measures for easy interpretation and use. The idea is that the dashboard will help schools better understand their assurance and achievement results, inform decision-making and improve their school education plans. Next year, IT plans to expand the dashboard to also include EIPS' Central Services departments.

Finally, in terms of security and compliance, IT worked on various projects to bolster the Division's cybersecurity posture. A cybersecurity analyst was hired, which allowed for a dedicated individual to manage alerts and improve systems and protocols related to cybersecurity and cybersecurity awareness. Critical infrastructure and tools were also added to the Division's technology resources—particularly the full deployment of the Microsoft Defender suite and Microsoft Sentinel, a security information and event management system. Collectively, these tools have improved the Division's security outcomes, visibility into security events, and user-and-device security compliance.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is the third component of quality infrastructure for EIPS. In 2023-24, the Division transported 10,272 students on 176 buses—up by 1,140 riders and three buses. With the added buses, the department was able to add six additional bus routes. The added buses also helped reduce the average ride time for students, dropping by one minute to 26.5 minutes. That, in part, is the result of Student Transportation's continued efforts to evaluate rider growth and how to improve routes for students amid the continued bus operator shortage across the province.

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 the IT infrastructure 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 routes and ride times. All buses are also equipped with the Tyler Drive tablets, offering added benefits to bus operators and families, including:

- turn-by-turn route directions;
- riders 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.

[student transportation]

Better together

New video-surveillance equipment promises better student management

Each Student Transportation school bus has a digital video-recording system, which records and stores data for several weeks or months. The reason for video-surveillance equipment is to ensure and protect the safety of the operator and students on board. For example, video surveillance allows for non-biased, factual and accurate reviews. It also allows a reviewer to have a precise timeline of events and dismiss any false claims or accounts. Student Transportation staff regularly review the video recordings to monitor both student and operator conduct. Video is also examined to handle student discipline issues, and when Student Transportation receives complaints. In 2023-24, Student Transportation fully upgraded the equipment, ensuring better student management support for bus operators. The installation took place year-long and will officially launch in the 2024-25 school year.

Another aspect of ensuring student safety is effective student management. As such, each EIPS bus operator is trained in strategies to prevent problem behaviour, ensure riders abide by the code of conduct, conduct ongoing safety drills with passengers and consistently reward positive behaviour. In fact, in 2023-24 alone, Student Transportation conducted 110 bus-evacuation drills, recorded just 35 bus incidents and awarded 127 positive behaviour cards—up by 48% from the previous year. The department also worked diligently with schools and bus contractors to ensure compliance with the National Safety Code by conducting regularly scheduled audits.

As in previous years, the department offered its always-popular Little Elk Island Adventure—a bus-safety program for first-time riders. The locally developed program educates children and families about school bus procedures and safety, positive rider behaviour and bus expectations. In 2023-24, 1,094 families participated in the program—up by close to 200 families, which is significant and speaks to the need of the program. Overall, the 2023-24 Little Elk Island Adventure was a huge success, with a 99% participant satisfaction rate of “very good” or “excellent”—many of whom reported feeling more comfortable about their child taking the bus post-event.

Lastly, throughout spring 2024, Student Transportation spent considerable time preparing for the upcoming school year. Several route optimizations were conducted. Specifically, Student Transportation began a five-year plan with its bus contractors. It also assessed the number of bus routes needed for the upcoming year, using student data from the returning student registration form. As well, the department conducted a complete divisionwide route optimization, including the addition of seven bus routes to account for increased student ridership. After completion, tentative bus schedules and bus fees were sent to families, in late April, with fees due June 30. Startup preparations continued into July and August as the department printed and mailed bus passes and information letters to all rider families.

Growth Opportunities

FACILITY SERVICES

Building relationships within and outside EIPS’ Facility Services is an ongoing opportunity for growth. Doing so enhances communication and collaboration, creates clarity around 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.



[building capacity]

Ride on

Through focused professional learning, EIPS is enhancing bus rides for students

Professional learning was offered to staff, contractors and operators throughout 2023-24. As in previous years, Student Transportation delivered two in-person, full-day learning sessions—in fall 2023 and spring 2024. Topics included: Tyler Drive tablets, best practices for incident reporting, student management strategies and process reporting. One-on-one training was also offered, on an as-needed basis. These included a ride-a-long to assist operators with the Tyler Drive tablets, student behaviour strategies and route reviews. Also, midway through the year, the department provided interactive online training to staff, through Drivafy, which focused on student management. Many bus operators, new and experienced, reported the interactive training and strategies discussed were beneficial and appropriate for student management on buses.

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 TECHNOLOGY

Looking ahead, Information Technologies plans to continue supporting an effective and efficient enterprise system. The department's focus aligns with EIPS' broader education and business priorities, emphasizing sustainable IT management, enhanced collaboration and strengthened cybersecurity. Key initiatives include:

Establish infrastructure and service-management strategies – Building on the strategic technology infrastructure roadmap, the department will develop sustainable IT asset management strategies aligning with educational and operational priorities—such as consistent customer service experiences for service-desk customers and improving end-user satisfaction and efficiency. The goal: To ensure all IT service management strategies support the organization's evolving needs.

Develop a communication matrix with an integrated-systems approach – As part of a larger effort to enhance communication and collaboration, the IT department will create a comprehensive communication matrix—key collaboration use, effective solutions, Microsoft Teams and supporting resources—to ensure the chosen communication solution best fits the organization's needs.

Cybersecurity enhancements – recognizing the importance of a robust IT security program, the department will develop a scalable and systematic incident response program that meets both educational and operational needs. Efforts will also refine security governance and

management by clarifying stakeholder accountabilities and responsibilities. Additionally, the department will draft an artificial intelligence security procedure to address applicable risks.

Furthermore, IT will ensure alignment with the Division's education goals by regularly consulting with the education-technology team. Examples of this work include close collaboration on IT asset management strategies, customer-service improvements and designing new systems to support professional learning for end-users.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Student Transportation will continue to monitor student capacity concerns and optimize routes as necessary—focusing on high-growth areas—to find even more opportunities to provide safe and efficient transportation to EIPS students. Student management is another focus area for the department. Specifically, working with bus operators and school administration to effectively support one another and ensure student success. Changes to the infrastructure of video-surveillance equipment will assist bus operators and school administration in student conduct resolution.

Something Student Transportation struggles with is recruiting and retaining bus operators. So, the department plans to work with contractors and develop a campaign to attract operators to the Division. And, to help retain operators, the department will continue to build bus operator capacity through professional learning, concentrating primarily on student management and rider safety.

Priority Strategy for Education Plan

FACILITY SERVICES

Throughout the 2025-26 school year, Facility Services will carry out the following strategies:



Continue to improve infrastructure reliability and increase equipment life cycles through ongoing and effective asset management and regular preventative maintenance.



Continue to work with Alberta Infrastructure through the construction phase of the new Sherwood Park replacement school to ensure it's ready to welcome students by the startup of school in 2026-27.



Continue to work with the Division's municipal partners to establish and maintain joint-use and planning agreements.



Implement Year 1 of EIPS' Ten-Year Roofing Plan—taking into account funding limitations.



Build awareness divisionwide about hazardous materials within EIPS—such as potential locations with vermiculite; awareness training; and best practices to ensure the health and safety of students, staff and community members.



Continue to advance the Division's energy-management initiative, which aims to reduce consumption and costs by replacing failed building components with higher-efficiency equipment.

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

Throughout the 2025-26 school year, Information Technologies (IT) will carry out the following strategies:

-  Continue IT infrastructure management efforts by managing and maintaining the Division's servers, networks, data centres, cloud-infrastructure management, virtualization and storage.
-  Develop policies and procedures to govern the management and use of EIPS' IT resources.
-  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.
-  Build on the Division's IT security and IT systems and infrastructure compliance through risk assessments, vulnerability management and compliance audits.
-  Continue IT service-management efforts by delivering and supporting IT services, incident management, change management and service-level management.
-  Continue IT efforts around data operations through data integration, visualization, quality, automation and governance.
-  Ensure effective records and information management by developing and implementing record retention policies, training programs and best practices.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Throughout the 2025-26 school year, Student Transportation will carry out the following strategies:

-  Continue efforts to enhance operations using Student Transportation's IT infrastructure—such as organizational management software, the Tyler Drive tablets, and route-optimization technology focusing on video surveillance.
-  Continue to provide targeted professional learning to bus operators focused on a range of topics, including skill development, student management, adverse road conditions, safety standards and EIPS policies and procedures.
-  Collaborate with school administration and departments to build bus operator capacity, expertise and best practices.
-  Continue to build capacity with students and families about school-bus safety—through education and communication.
-  Work with bus contractors to recruit and retain more bus operators for the Division.
-  Continue to ensure bus contractor and school administration compliance with legislation and EIPS policies and procedures.
-  Streamline Student Transportation's online reporting tools into a single platform to house all complaints, concerns and student-conduct management information.
-  Continue to ensure safe and efficient transportation for all students.
-  Continue to monitor, and be guided by, Student Transportation's standards document to ensure consistent service levels.
-  Continue to work with the department's routing software provider to improve productivity, expand software limitations and reduce manual-data entry.

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	ELK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS					EVALUATION ACHIEVEMENT	ALBERTA	
	RESULTS IN %						RESULTS IN %	EVALUATION ACHIEVEMENT
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24			
ALBERTA EDUCATION ASSURANCE SURVEY								
Parents and teachers satisfied with parental involvement in decisions about their child's education	78.9	77.4	76.9	78.1	78.3	Intermediate	79.5	High
Parents satisfied with parental involvement in decisions about their child's education	67.6	66.3	65.6	67.5	69.6	High	74.4	Very High
Teachers satisfied with parental involvement in decisions about their child's education	90.3	88.5	88.3	88.7	87.1	Intermediate	84.6	Low
Parents who agree students have access to the appropriate supports and services at school	n/a	73.1	70.7	69.9	68.4	n/a	75.4	n/a

NOTE: Achievement measures are based on a three-year average, categories marked "n/a" still don't have a three-year average (see pg. 89, "Appendix A").

Performance Measures	RESULTS IN PERCENTAGES				
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS					
Families satisfied with the opportunity to be involved in decisions about their child’s education	80	77.5	73.7	81.7	82.7
Families who agree there is open and honest communication within their child’s school	83.3	84.9	80.9	82.5	80.7
Families who agree the school keeps them informed about their child’s progress and achievement	87.1	87.2	86.6	85.7	86.4
Families who agree the Division’s commitment to engaging families in matters that affect public education	n/a	79.2	73.6	68.9	69.8
Families who agree the Division is committed to ongoing advocacy for public education	n/a	74.9	69	67.7	67.6
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: STAKEHOLDER CONFIDENCE					
Families, staff and Grade 12 students confident EIPS provides meaningful opportunities for families to be involved in their child’s education	n/a	n/a	84.6	89.6	94.8

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 a collaborative approach with school families and working together to ultimately improve student achievement and success.

Results

According to the 2023-24 Alberta Education Assurance (AEA) survey data, 78% of EIPS families and teachers are satisfied with the Division’s parental involvement—which aligns with the 2022-23 result and up from 77% in 2021-22. The result also aligns nicely with the 2023-24 EIPS Annual Feedback Survey. In total, 83% of families indicate being satisfied with the opportunity to be involved in decisions at their child’s school—up by 1% from the year previous and 9% from 2021-22. Another 94% of families, staff and students are confident EIPS provides meaningful

opportunities for parents and caregivers to be involved in their child’s education—rising by close to 5% from the previous year and almost 10% in 2021-22.

Other feedback includes 81% of families reporting open and honest communication within their child’s school. Another 86% of families feel EIPS schools keep families informed about their child’s progress and achievement. Collectively, these results infer EIPS families are content with their school involvement and communication.

That said, more can be done, especially in the area of engagement. The 2023-24 EIPS Annual Feedback Survey revealed only 70% of respondents were satisfied with the Division’s commitment to engaging families in matters that affect public education, and only 68% were satisfied with the Division’s commitment to ongoing advocacy for public education. The percentages are fairly consistent year over year, since the pandemic. So, the Division plans to develop strategies to improve in these two areas going forward.

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 on family collaboration and working jointly to benefit children. In 2023-24, more than 30 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.

81% of families feel there is open communication at their school, and 86% say schools keep them informed

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. 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 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 (see pg. 19, “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 produced two information videos for families—as part of its Mental Health Strategic Plan (see pg. 62, “EIPS mental health strategy”). Video 1 focused on school attendance. Video 2 delved into the importance of mental health. Supports for Students also hosted three education sessions on brain development and brain architecture—two in Sherwood Park and one in Fort Saskatchewan. Post-session, the feedback from attendees was all positive, and all reported feeling more informed about how the central nervous system controls thought, movement and emotion.

To complement the information session, the Division worked hard promoting the Caregiver Education Series, hosted by Recovery Alberta. Sessions were all 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 continued to offer 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.

Other initiatives included teaming 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 2024.

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 2023-24. Each was facilitated by the EIPS First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team. The gatherings provided space, supper and cultural activities for participants, such as beading and art. It also gave attendees a chance to connect with other families, build community, share hopes and discuss truth-telling and reconciliation within EIPS. The topics discussions also helped inform next steps for the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team.

Other initiatives included a Round Dance at F.R. Haythorne Junior High, a 13-week Michif language class and a Métis kitchen party—boasting more than 140 attendees who enjoyed dinner, fiddle music and dance—sash dancing and the Red River jig. The EIPS First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education team also facilitated ribbon-skirt and ribbon-shirt workshops—open to grades 9 to 12 students. Each participant brought a support person to help make the ribbon skirt or shirt. A special thanks to Knowledge Keeper Natalie Pepin, Lloyd Cardinal, Taryn Donald and Danielle Booker for leading the workshops.

EIPS regularly engages families to guide planning, decision-making and strategies—aimed at enhancing student outcomes

In terms of communication, the team published newsletters and online blogs to share relevant news and initiatives with families. For events, the team co-ordinated an Indigenous Cultural Seasonal Camp for lead teachers, in partnership with Strathcona Wilderness Centre and community-based Elders and Knowledge Holders. It also hosted a divisionwide round dance to help elicit a sense of community, cultural pride and belonging. There was also substantial work put into fostering meaningful relationships with local Indigenous community members and a relationship with the land, or “being in relation.”

CAREER PATHWAYS

Once again, in 2023-24, 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 invited universities, colleges, polytechnics and industry experts together, all 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 500 attendees.

To complement Your Future, EIPS’ Career Pathways department also arranged post-secondary fairs at the senior high schools and supported three senior high in hosting 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 senior high.

Along with 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 programming 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 2024, 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 2024-25 school year. Once finalized, each school followed up with families to review and go over the upcoming fee schedule.

Roughly, around the same time as the fee consultations, the Division conducted its annual EIPS Budget Survey to gather information from stakeholders on what priorities the EIPS Board should consider when planning for the upcoming year. In total, 1,491 respondents provided input, which the Board used to develop the 2024-25 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. In total, 4,874 respondents completed the survey. Annually, the Division uses the feedback from the survey to gauge its progress toward meeting the goals and priorities outlined in its *Four-Year Education Plan*. Parents and caregivers are asked a series of questions about their experiences with EIPS and the school their child attends, the quality of education provided, improvement areas and their confidence in EIPS’ strategic direction. Collectively, the Division uses the survey feedback to help guide future planning, decision-making and strategies—all aimed at enhancing student learning and better serving the wider community.

Other engagement efforts included public consultations



to build support for a new collegiate-style junior-senior high replacement school in Fort Saskatchewan. After an exhaustive engagement process, the Division finalized its Three-Year Engagement Plan, deciding to relocate its senior high French Immersion program to Salisbury Composite High, and adjust Strathcona County's senior high attendance boundaries for Lakeland Ridge to Bev Facey Community High—both effective in 2026-27. It also adjusted the French Immersion junior high attendance boundaries for Cambrian Crossing. All decisions aligned with feedback heard and was sustainable into the future.

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 (58) 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 was supported through the Division's Committee of School Councils. School

council representatives met regularly with the Board of Trustees and EIPS senior administration. In the 2023-24 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 and virtually—allowing for more robust dialogue.

Some of the agenda topics included the *Annual Education Results Report 2022-23*, the Division's Assurance Cycle, the Mental Health Strategic Plan, the *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan: 2022-26*, the role of school councils, annual reports, new provincial legislation on sexual orientation and gender identity, Administrative Procedure 538, Alberta School Council Engagement Grant, the 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 2023-24, the number of schools represented at each meeting ranged between 15 and 26, totalling a median representation of 18 schools—up by three 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 remains a growth area for the Division. Specifically, EIPS will continue to offer information sessions related to mental health, Indigenous education, early learning, attendance and career pathways. The Division's assurance framework will ensure the Division considers input from school families and community members as part of its decision-making process. As well, schools will continue to encourage school families' involvement and input at school council meetings, parent-student-teacher interviews, performances, open houses and special events.

Priority Strategy for Education Plan

Fostering even more engagement with EIPS parents and caregivers is an ongoing priority for EIPS. Strategies for the 2025-26 school year include:



Continue to offer and promote 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 planning post senior-high.



Continue to offer and promote information sessions and resources to support families prepare 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.



Promote the Division's and school-based Career Day and Take Our Kids to Work Day.



Continue all assurance framework efforts and offer opportunities for school families to provide input on divisional decision-making topics.



Facilitate best practices sessions to identify engagement strategies—elementary, junior high and senior high—so schools can improve two-way communication with school families.



Offer French Immersion information sessions for school families.



Continue to engage with EIPS' Committee of School Councils as a tool for information gathering and input related to Division decision-making.



Continue public engagement efforts and stakeholder feedback processes to help inform decision-making and ensure students receive high-quality, student-centred 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 to regularly communicate with families and stakeholders about the Board of Trustees' advocacy plan, why it's important and the activities undertaken related to advancing the advocacy work.



Continue communicating Division news, information and updates with EIPS families and stakeholders—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 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.



Prepare online mental health resources for parents and caregivers.



Continue to offer and promote information sessions related to infrastructure, planning and capital projects to ensure stakeholders are informed, engaged and can advocate on behalf of the Division.

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				
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
EIPS INTERNAL DATA					
Number of advocacy areas specifically identified and addressed by the Board	2	5	7	9	4
Number of advocacy letters sent to the Minister of Education, ministers or Alberta's members of the legislative assembly	5	7	4	11	7
Number of formal meetings with the Minister of Education or provincial ministers	4	0	8	1	7
Number of formal meetings with Alberta's members of the legislative assembly	6	2	5	2	2
Number of formal meetings with mayors and reeves in the EIPS jurisdiction	4	2	7	7	5
Number of media advocacy articles, radio and television interviews	84	138	158	179	154
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS					
Percentage of parents and caregivers satisfied with the Division's commitment to engaging families in matters that affect public education	n/a	79.2	73.6	68.9	69.8
Percentage of parents and caregivers satisfied with the Division's commitment to advocating for public education	n/a	74.9	69	67.7	67.6
EIPS ANNUAL FEEDBACK SURVEY: STAKEHOLDER CONFIDENCE					
Percentage of families, staff and Grade 12 students confident in EIPS' advocacy efforts to enhance public education	n/a	n/a	84.6	89.6	92.5

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 places a strong emphasis on regularly engaging education stakeholders and actively seeking out public consultation opportunities. The approach is crucial to maintaining the Division's culture of continuous improvement, fostering a collective responsibility and making informed decisions 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 2023-24 school year, the EIPS Board of Trustees worked diligently to ensure the Division's voice was heard on several topics, including the value of public education; mental health and well-being; adequate and predictable education funding; autonomous school boards; the new curriculum; critical infrastructure requirements and classroom complexity. As such, considerable work went into building awareness around these issues.

For instance, the Board has an Advocacy Committee, which developed an annual advocacy plan. The plan outlined the Board's advocacy focus areas, related advocacy strategies, background information, key messages, and short-term and long-term objectives. Year-long, the Board also engaged the media, government, industry associations, Division families and the surrounding community on all mentioned advocacy topics. The goal,

of course, is to ensure the Division continues offering high-quality, student-centred learning, where all students can achieve success.

378 news stories were published about EIPS—of those, 154 related to the Board’s advocacy focus areas

Throughout the school year, there was also a concentrated media component to ensure all stakeholders were aware of the Division’s successes and challenges. In total, 58 news releases were distributed, resulting in several interviews with local and mainstream news organizations, including *ATA News*, *City News*, *Calgary Herald*, *CBC News*, *Country 106.5*, *CTV News*, *Daily Herald Tribune*, *Edmonton Journal*, *Education News Canada*, *Globe and Mail*, *Global News*, *Heartland News*, *Mix 107.9*, *The Fort Saskatchewan Record*, *The Lamont Leader*, *The Sherwood Park–Strathcona County News*, *Town and Country Today* and *Vegreville News Advertiser*. Through this combined effort, 378 news stories were published about EIPS—154 of those related to the Board’s advocacy topics.

To accompany the media interviews, 15 sets of key messages were developed—all relating to the Board’s advocacy efforts. Ongoing Board columns were also published in four local newspapers, along with a six-part Board Myth Busting series and two Board-focused newsletters: *The EIPS Board Update* and *EIPS Advocacy in Action*. The Board Myth Busting series aimed at combating misinformation and rumours while also highlighting important facts about EIPS’ work, priorities and goals. The *EIPS Board Update* newsletter was 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* was sent to school families and staff, highlighting the work of the Board, the Division’s priorities, advocacy focus areas and efforts, and the value of public education. Collectively, these showcase the innovative learning taking place within the Division, the vibrant partnerships the Division has established and why EIPS is an exceptional place to learn and work.

Significant effort was also put into public engagement, all using the Division’s Public-Engagement Strategy, which outlines the process and tools to use in all EIPS consultation efforts. In 2023-24, the Board reached out to Division families and key stakeholders on a range of topics, including assurance measures, Board and budget priorities, school capital projects, enrolment challenges and mental health and well-being issues. The Board’s most prominent engagements areas in 2023-24: the Assurance Framework and a replacement school in Fort Saskatchewan.

As part of the EIPS Assurance Framework, EIPS conducted its annual EIPS Budget Survey to gather feedback

to help plan its funding priorities. Open to all school families, staff, Grade 12 students and community partners, the Board used the survey input to develop the 2024-25 spring budget. Later in the year, stakeholders were engaged again through the online EIPS Annual Feedback Survey. Every year, the Division conducts the survey to measure stakeholder confidence and gauge 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, areas for improvement and their confidence in EIPS’ strategic direction. The input gathered guides the Board, and Division, in planning, decision-making, and strategy development to better serve students and the wider community.

One of which, is the *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan*. Trustees analyzed the survey data to update Year 3 of the plan, which details the Division’s priorities and goals,

[building capacity] Advocacy matters

EIPS students deserve the best. So, to enhance their continued success, the Board’s advocacy efforts also involve co-ordinated strategies to raise awareness

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. It also shared its successes, challenges and concerns with all levels of government—federal, provincial and municipal. That ongoing communication has also helped foster respect and a productive working relationship with other elected officials.

For example, the Board formally submitted seven advocacy letters to elected officials, including the Minister of Education. As well, it arranged seven formal meetings with provincial ministers, including Education Minister Demetrios Nicolaides; two formal meetings were arranged with Alberta’s legislative assembly members; and five formal meetings with mayors in the jurisdiction. Additionally, throughout the year, there were numerous other informal meetings co-ordinated with municipal and provincial officials to share insight on a range of topics.

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 aim, of course, is to build community support and empower advocates to ensure education remains a high-priority issue across Alberta.

performance measures and strategies to use to meet the listed priorities and outcomes. Overall, the survey feedback helped the Board ensure its education plan remained responsive to stakeholder needs and focused on continuous improvement.

The Board also actively advocated and engaged the community and elected officials on its infrastructure needs—namely a replacement school in Fort Saskatchewan. Throughout 2023-24, the Board hosted two public consultation meetings in Fort Saskatchewan to talk about its schools and the challenges the Division faces—in terms of limited space, ageing infrastructure and the region’s growing population. Attendees gained insight into what the Division is doing to address these challenges and about EIPS’ capital plan priorities. They also heard details about the Division’s plans for a collegiate model junior-senior high program—designed to provide students with high-demand employment training and skills in their community—and strategies moving forward. Those who came also had a chance to ask questions, share their concerns and learn how they can help. The Board hopes, through these efforts, the province will soon grant the funding needed for the new collegiate style junior-senior high replacement school. When granted it will ensure 21st-century learning spaces for students in Fort Saskatchewan, allow for new partnership opportunities to better prepare students and help build the community.

Coupled with the advocacy and engagement efforts, the Board also worked to ensure thorough and ongoing communication with constituents, families and other community members. Topics ranged from infrastructure needs to funding and reserve use to enhancing school programming and supports for learners. Monthly, trustees presented Board Reports at school council meetings, the Committee of School Councils meetings and regular Board meetings. They attended regular meetings with the Alberta School Board Association, liaising with other school

[lead]

Advocacy in action

In addition to the Assurance Framework and the Fort Saskatchewan replacement school, other advocacy and engagement areas included:

- The Board finalized Year 3 of the Three-Year Engagement Plan, which identifies where the Division can improve operations to best serve students, and outlines projects and timelines. The goal: To ensure EIPS continues offering high-quality education to all students—now and well into the future.
- The Board completed needed final details to begin construction on the new replacement school in Sherwood Park, which was listed on the *EIPS Three-Year Capital Plan* for more than a decade. To make funding a reality, numerous meetings took place between trustees and other elected officials. EIPS anticipates the replacement school opening in the 2026-27 school year.
- The Board continued to advocate for cross-ministry support to address issues arising from socio-economic inequity, its impact on the classroom and more support for mental health resources.

boards and developed and shared consistent messaging, questions and common concerns to bring forward to the Education Minister and Alberta Education representatives.

Finally, as previously mentioned, the Board engaged the school community through its newsletters, *EIPS Board Update* and *EIPS Advocacy in Action*—both newsletters feature articles about the Division, what’s new, the work of the Board and the value of public education. Collectively, these help ensure EIPS continues offering high-quality, student-centred educational experiences that reflect the priorities and goals listed within the *Four-Year Education Plan*.

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 2024-25 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 2024-25 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, processes 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. Finally, with the trustee elections ahead in October 2025, the Board will work on succession planning for the newly elected Board of Trustees through the recently formed Governance and Evaluation Committee.



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 Division and the Board. Strategies for the 2025-26 school year 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 all assurance framework efforts. And, ensure the Division offers opportunities for school families to provide input.
-  Continue to work with the Board and media to ensure key messages and advocacy areas are clearly communicated to members of the public and key decision-makers.
-  Continue to engage and collaborate with the Committee of School Councils to move advocacy areas forward.
-  Continue to advocate for the Division's *Three-Year Capital Plan* priorities.
-  Continue to send letters to elected officials to further the Board's advocacy efforts.
-  Continue to work with colleagues through the Alberta School Boards Association to further advocacy efforts.
-  Develop and fine-tune a new four-year education plan for the school years 2026-30 and ensure EIPS meets the goals and outcomes outlined in the plan.
-  Plan and facilitate onboarding for a newly elected Board of Trustees.
-  Continue communicating with families about the Board of Trustees' yearly advocacy plan and share information and activities related to work being undertaken throughout the year to meet those goals and objectives.
-  Build stakeholder awareness about the work of the Board through storytelling, regular Board reports, newspaper columns, the Board Myth Busters series, *EIPS Board Update* publication and the Board *Advocacy in Action* newsletter—featuring articles about the Division, what's new, engagement opportunities and the Board's advocacy areas and efforts—all focused on the importance and value of strong public education.

Financials and Reports

Summary of Financial Results 2023-24

The Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) budget provides stability for schools, maintains essential central services required for Division operations, and supports the mission and belief statements of the Division (see pg. 4, "Profile and Local Context").

Planning for Success

The 2023-24 Spring Budget Report, approved by the Board of Trustees in May 2023, included \$194.6 million of budgeted revenue from the Alberta government, school fees of \$5.1 million—charged to families on a cost-recovery basis—and \$5.3 million for sales, fundraising, donations, investment income and other revenue. EIPS also planned to access \$3.1 million of Division reserves to support instructional spending. Overall, spending was budgeted with a focus on instructional expenditures to support the priorities listed in the *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan* and ensure the Division continued providing high-quality, student-centred education.

Financial Results from 2023-24

REVENUES

EIPS recognized revenues of \$214.4 million for the 2023-24 school year—ending Aug. 31, 2024. Revenues included \$199.8 million from the province; \$4.8 million from school fees; and \$9.8 million from sales, fundraising, donations, investment income and other revenue.

EXPENSES

For 2023-24, the biggest expense was classroom instruction, at 78% of the Division's total spending. That works out to an approximate per-student cost of \$9,540—excluding capital expenditures—and includes \$145.3 million of spending on salaries and benefits for instructional and support staff. The next highest cost was operating and maintaining school buildings (11%)—including utilities, insurance, maintenance and custodial services. Following that, student transportation (8%), system administration (2%) and external services (1%).

ACCUMULATED SURPLUS

EIPS ended the 2023-24 school year with a surplus of \$3.2 million, which increased the Division's accumulated surplus to \$11.5 million. The accumulated surplus is the Division's primary indicator of its financial resources available to provide future services—made up of operating reserves (\$11.6 million), capital reserves (\$2.5 million), and tangible capital assets and the asset retirement obligation (-\$2.6 million).

2023-24 Expenses by Program

Instruction	\$164,402	78%
Operations and Maintenance	\$23,714	11%
Transportation	\$16,544	8%
System Administration	\$4,552	2%
External Services	\$2,035	1%
TOTAL	\$211,247	100%

NOTE: All dollar amounts are expressed in thousands

Notable Financial Transactions

- After finalizing the 2023-24 fall budget, EIPS received additional grant money from the province, totalling \$1 million. The added dollars were used to support student learning loss, through the province's learning disruption funding; provide low-incidence supports; fund supplemental enrolment growth; and enhance the School Nutrition Program.
- In spring 2024, EIPS received \$3.8 million in proceeds from the one-time sale of non-capital assets, which was unbudgeted. The surplus funds increased EIPS' operating reserves and are available for use in future years.
- Enrolment growth, a rise in transportation funding, and inflationary cost increases resulted in the Division's highest annual operating spending in history, totalling \$211.5 million.
- EIPS purchased \$700,000 of capital items, which included equipment, vehicles, and computer hardware and software.
- Facility Services completed \$3.6 million worth of major building and site improvements on schools across the Division.
- The Division also managed more than \$8-million worth of spending through school generated funds—fees collected by schools for optional courses and programming, lunch supervision, extracurricular opportunities, field trips, fundraising, donations and other sales and services.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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

Budget Summary 2024-25

The 2024-25 Fall Budget Report includes an operating deficit of \$2.5 million, which is offset by operating reserves (\$2.11 million) and asset retirement obligation amortization (\$390,000). Revenue increased by \$4.39 million to \$210.65 million from the Spring Budget Report, while expenses increased by \$5.08 million to \$213.15 million.

RESERVES

(anticipated as of Aug. 31, 2025)

EIPS' reserve projections include balances of:

- \$10.59 million in operating reserves
 - Central Services – \$435,000
 - Schools Operations – \$1.27 million
 - School Generated Funds – \$2.13 million
 - Division Allocated – \$3.81 million
 - Division Unallocated – \$2.95 million

NOTE: The provincial cap on the reserve balance is 6% of 2023-24 expenses. The minimum balance is 1%—approximately \$12.67 million and \$2.11 million, respectively.

- \$209,000 in capital reserves. The capital items funded from capital reserves include:
 - Chiller Replacement at Salisbury Composite High – \$1 million
 - VOIP Phone System – \$548,000
 - Information Technology Infrastructure – \$150,000
 - School Buses – \$627,000

STUDENT ENROLMENT IS 17,949, AS OF SEPT. 27, 2024

- An increase of 136 students, 0.8%, from what was anticipated in the 2024-25 Spring Budget Report.
- An increase of 189 students, 1.1%, from Sept. 29, 2023.

STAFFING: INCREASED TO 1,367 FTE

- Certificated 875.35 FTE, Classified 491.65 FTE
- An increase of 42.74 FTE, 3.2%, from the 2024-25 Spring Budget Report.

COMPENSATION, INSTRUCTIONAL AND ADMINISTRATION SPENDING

- There are no compensation increases for 2024-25.
- Instruction spending comprises 77.9% of the total budget and 80% when capital is excluded, which equates to \$9,518 per student.
- System administration spending is \$4.51 million, or 2.1% of total expenses, which is within the \$6.55 million grant provided by Alberta Education. EIPS distributed the additional funds for instructional costs, as allowed in the *Funding Manual for School Authorities 2024-25 School Year*.



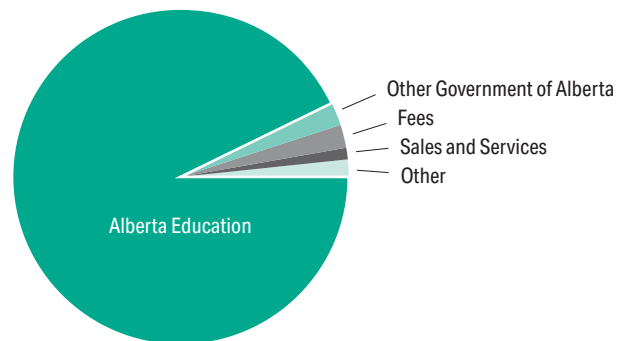
Revenues and Expenses Analysis 2024-25 Budget

STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENSES	2024-25 SPRING BUDGET	2024-25 FALL BUDGET	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
REVENUES				
Government of Alberta – Alberta Education	\$191,351	\$195,658	\$4,307	2.3%
Government of Alberta – Other	\$4,441	\$4,461	\$20	0.5%
Fees	\$4,733	\$4,758	\$25	0.5%
Other Sales and Services	\$2,677	\$2,712	\$35	1.3%
Other	\$3,061	\$3,064	\$3	0.1%
TOTAL	\$206,263	\$210,653	\$4,390	2.1%
EXPENSES				
Instruction	\$162,036	\$166,129	\$4,093	2.5%
Operations and Maintenance	\$23,341	\$24,105	\$764	3.3%
Transportation	\$17,053	\$17,413	\$360	2.1%
System Administration	\$4,491	\$4,515	\$24	0.5%
External Services	\$1,154	\$990	\$(164)	(14.2%)
TOTAL	\$208,075	\$213,152	\$5,077	2.4%
OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	(\$1,812)	(\$2,499)	(\$687)	(37.9%)

NOTE: All dollar amounts are expressed in thousands

2024-25 Revenues by Source

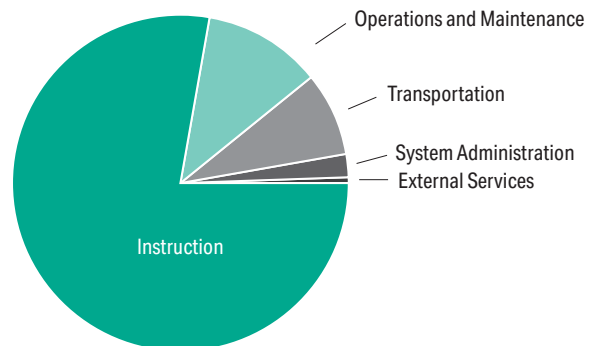
Alberta Education	\$195,658	92.9%
Other Government of Alberta	\$4,461	2.1%
Fees	\$4,758	2.3%
Other Sales and Services	\$2,712	1.3%
Other	\$3,064	1.4%
TOTAL	\$210,653	100%



NOTE: All dollar amounts are expressed in thousands

2024-25 Expenses by Program

Instruction	\$166,129	77.9%
Operations and Maintenance	\$24,105	11.3%
Transportation	\$17,413	8.2%
System Administration	\$4,515	2.1%
External Services	\$990	0.5%
TOTAL	\$213,152	100%



NOTE: All dollar amounts are expressed in thousands

Division Reports

Capital and Facility Projects

Throughout the 2023-24 school year, Facility Services was actively involved in school-capital projects—totalling more than \$6.11 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 the placement and hook-ups of two new modular classroom units—Ardrossan Elementary.
- Decommissioned one modular classroom unit—Westboro Elementary.
- Completed Phase 2 of the Salisbury Composite High Stormwater project.
- Oversaw a playground upgrade at Lamont Elementary.
- Upgraded various school electrical and mechanical systems.
- Worked with the province to finalize the Sherwood Park replacement school’s design and all required documents to move into the construction phase.
- Completed five major projects through the Capital Maintenance Renewal program.
- Completed 18 Infrastructure Maintenance and Renewal projects.
- Completed 349 maintenance, operations and custodial projects.
- Completed 10,431 general EIPS work orders—with 91% 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 2023-24* with the Committee of School Councils in January 2025. At the school level, details about achievement results were shared with school councils in November 2024. 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 2023-24*. 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 (Whistleblower Protection) Act* requires all school authorities to include an annual report of disclosures in its *Annual Education Results Report*. During the 2023-24 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
Grade 6 Provincial Achievement Tests: Acceptable	0 - 58.97	58.97 - 68.15	68.15 - 76.62	76.62 - 83.55	83.55 - 100
Grade 6 Provincial Achievement Tests: Excellence	0 - 7.3	7.30 - 12.45	12.45 - 19.08	19.08 - 30.09	30.09 - 100
Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests: Acceptable	0 - 62.37	62.37 - 67.35	67.35 - 76.70	76.70 - 81.94	81.94 - 100
Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Tests: Excellence	0 - 9.69	9.69 - 13.44	13.44 - 18.38	18.38 - 23.38	23.38 - 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
In-Service Needs	0-76.10	76.10-82.23	82.23-88.14	88.14-91.8	91.8-100
Programs of Study	0-66.31	66.31-72.65	72.65-78.43	78.43-81.59	81.59-100
Safe and Caring	0-77.62	77.62-81.05	81.05-84.5	84.5-88.03	88.03-100

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

Appendix B

2023-24 EIPS PAT and Diploma Results

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

		EIPS			ALBERTA		
		ALL	FNMI	EAL	ALL	FNMI	EAL
English Language Arts and Literacy 6	A	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	E	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
French Language Arts 6	A	81.7	50	n/a	69.9	56.9	74.5
	E	15.1	0	n/a	9.3	2.9	12.7
Mathematics 6	A	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	E	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Science 6	A	84.8	68.4	76.9	68.8	51.4	63.8
	E	37.5	18.4	23.1	24.8	12.3	18.4
Social Studies 6	A	81.3	64.5	74.4	68.5	48.7	64.6
	E	27.4	14.5	12.8	19.8	7.3	16.5
English Language Arts 9	A	78.8	61.3	65.5	69.5	49.5	56.9
	E	13.3	5	6.9	11.8	4.7	5.4
French Language Arts 9	A	82.1	n/a	n/a	76.6	63.8	67.8
	E	11.5	n/a	n/a	10.6	5.6	9.2
Mathematics 9	A	60.6	44.3	58.6	52.7	28.7	46.7
	E	15.4	7.6	13.8	14	4.8	11.5
Science 9	A	77.1	61.7	75.9	67.6	46	57.7
	E	23.5	8.6	27.6	20.8	8.5	14.2
Social Studies 9	A	65.7	43.2	51.7	60.5	39	49.4
	E	16.2	8.6	3.4	15.8	6.3	9.6
English Language Arts 30-1	A	92.1	84.2	n/a	84.2	81.7	61.3
	E	14	10.5	n/a	10.1	6.9	2.7
English Language Arts 30-2	A	94.1	93.8	n/a	85.7	86	70
	E	16.1	16.7	n/a	12.9	10.8	5.2
French Language Art 30-1	A	90.9	n/a	n/a	95.3	88.9	85.7
	E	9.1	n/a	n/a	8.6	0	19
Mathematics 30-1	A	80.2	77.3	88.9	75.4	64.4	64
	E	29.1	27.3	11.1	34.9	17	27.6
Mathematics 30-2	A	82.1	77.8	n/a	70.9	64.8	57.7
	E	17.6	7.4	n/a	15.4	10.1	9
Social Studies 30-1	A	87	84.4	n/a	85.2	79.1	70.5
	E	18.9	12.5	n/a	18.7	10.6	10.7
Social Studies 30-2	A	84.5	85.5	71.4	77.6	72.9	63.2
	E	10.6	10.9	28.6	12.7	6.6	8.3
Biology 30	A	86.5	80	n/a	83.1	72.8	69.7
	E	32.9	22.9	n/a	33.7	17	23.6
Chemistry 30	A	86.4	95.8	85.7	82.9	78.2	73.2
	E	32.4	33.3	28.6	38	23.5	29.6
Physics 30	A	83.9	78.6	n/a	85.1	80.4	71.3
	E	39.8	35.7	n/a	43.1	23.2	32.9
Science 30	A	89.4	80	n/a	81.3	78.1	69
	E	28.2	25	n/a	24.6	18.5	16.2

Notes: The full Fall 2024 School Authority Results Summary for Planning and Reporting is available at: eips.ca/download/474211.

Alberta Education Literacy and Numeracy Screeners

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
GRADE 1: STUDENT DATA					
January: Total number of students assessed	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,335	1,236
January: Total number of students identified as at-risk in literacy	n/a	n/a	n/a	365	155
End of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in literacy	n/a	n/a	n/a	344	185
January: The average number of months behind grade level in literacy for at-risk students	n/a	n/a	n/a	12	11
End of Year: The average number of months gained at grade level in literacy for at-risk students	n/a	n/a	n/a	11	6
January: Total number of students identified as at-risk in numeracy	n/a	n/a	n/a	290	233
End of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in numeracy	n/a	n/a	n/a	322	288
January: The average number of months behind grade level in numeracy for at-risk students	n/a	n/a	n/a	14	11
End of Year: The average number of months gained at grade level in numeracy for at-risk students	n/a	n/a	n/a	13	9
GRADE 2: STUDENT DATA					
Start of Year: Total number of students assessed	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,303	1,310
Start of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in literacy	n/a	n/a	n/a	360	301
End of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in literacy	n/a	n/a	n/a	422	357
Start of Year: The average number of months behind grade level in literacy for at-risk students	n/a	n/a	n/a	12	12
End of Year: The average number of months gained at grade level in literacy for at-risk students	n/a	n/a	n/a	12	6
Start of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in numeracy	n/a	n/a	n/a	267	256
End of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in numeracy	n/a	n/a	n/a	245	248
Start of Year: The average number of months behind grade level in numeracy for at-risk students	n/a	n/a	n/a	13	10
End of Year: The average number of months gained at grade level in numeracy for at-risk students	n/a	n/a	n/a	11	8
GRADE 3: STUDENT DATA					
Start of Year: Total number of students assessed	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,280	1,313
Start of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in literacy	n/a	n/a	n/a	240	266
End of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in literacy	n/a	n/a	n/a	235	271
Start of Year: The average number of months behind grade level in literacy for at-risk students	n/a	n/a	n/a	15	15
End of Year: The average number of months gained at grade level in literacy for at-risk students	n/a	n/a	n/a	11	6
Start of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in numeracy	n/a	n/a	n/a	170	164
End of Year: Total number of students identified as at-risk in numeracy	n/a	n/a	n/a	220	221
Start of Year: The average number of months behind grade level in numeracy for at-risk students	n/a	n/a	n/a	13	12
Start of Year: The average number of months behind grade level in numeracy for at-risk students	n/a	n/a	n/a	11	8

NOTE: At the end of the 2023-24 school year, all students were re-evaluated—despite reassessment only being mandated for at-risk students. Going forward, the Division will only re-assess students identified as being at-risk in the initial screeners.

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 senior 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 the province'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 a 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.

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.

NOTE: 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.

NOTE: 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 measured result for parents and teachers is calculated by aggregating the responses to all questions that comprise the measure.
- The measured 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



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