

EIPS QUARTERLY UPDATE

WINTER 2024

EIPS IN THE NEWS

A quiet place in school for stressed-out students
Edmonton A.M., CBC Radio

AI in schools: Educators must prepare students
CityNews Edmonton

Mother of LGBTQ+ daughter starts petition over new restrictive Alberta policies
Edmonton Journal

EIPS Trustee Seutter resigns
The Sherwood Park and Strathcona County News

Honours program arrives at Rudolph Hennig Junior High
Heartland News

Fort Saskatchewan students receive first-hand introduction to booming STEM profession
The Fort Saskatchewan Record

FOR STARTERS

I'm absolutely thrilled to share with you

[Elk Island Public Schools' Annual Education Results Report 2022-23.](#)

Every year, we publish the report detailing how the Division is meeting its priorities, supporting students to achieve the best possible outcomes and its plans for continued improvement. What shines through in this year's report are the myriad programs and initiatives taking place divisionwide to foster educational excellence, support learners and develop young people with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful.

Through storytelling, achievement data and photos, the report showcases the students and staff who make up EIPS—their efforts and achievements. It also highlights the successes and challenges the Division faced as a whole over the last year. Woven throughout is this collaborative approach EIPS has established with students, teachers, administrators, support staff, families and communities that allows everyone to come together and rally behind a shared vision of strong public education.

It's uplifting and impressive, and, as a Board, we couldn't be prouder. That's why we've dedicated this entire issue of the *Quarterly Update* to EIPS' *Annual Education Results Report 2022-23*, which I encourage you all to read in detail. For now, here are some of the highlights from the report. Enjoy!

Cathy Allen,
Board Chair, Elk Island Public Schools

INSIDE EIPS

Pink Shirt Day took place on February 28, an annual event celebrated countrywide to promote kindness, healthy relationships and bullying prevention. This year's theme was "lift each other up." That's exactly what EIPS students did. Garbed in pink shirts, learners took part in various school-based activities—all focused on lifting others up. Pink Shirt Day is one of several annual initiatives schools take part in to encourage kindness and healthy relationships. Collectively, these help to build student engagement, school spirit and the importance of unity, inclusivity and diversity.



Ribbon Skirt-Shirt Day took place on February 7. Students and staff wore ribbons skirts and ribbon shirts to honour the day—aimed at celebrating, recognizing and learning more about Indigenous traditions and culture. Traditionally, ribbon skirts are worn by Indigenous women, girls and gender-diverse individuals during ceremonies and special community events and represent strength, pride and identity.



INBOX

Has the Board made a decision about its French Immersion program yet?

Yes. After an exhaustive review, the Board approved a solution it believes is the best path forward for the program and students. That is: To relocate EIPS' senior high French Immersion program, grades 10-12, to Salisbury Composite High—effective when the new Sherwood Park replacement school opens, expected in the 2026-27 school year. Overall, the approved solution addresses the anticipated enrolment pressures in Ardrossan and low French Immersion program retention. The Board also approved an adjustment to Strathcona County's senior high attendance boundaries by redesignating the Lakeland Ridge area to Bev Facey Community High—again, effective when the replacement school opens. The change ensures balanced enrolment at both senior highs in Sherwood Park, and long-term sustainability. Looking ahead, EIPS plans to engage families and staff to develop an implementation plan to ensure a smooth transition for everyone when the changes take effect. For more information visit eips.ca.

EIPS ANNUAL EDUCATION RESULTS REPORT 2022-23: HIGHLIGHTS

Every year, EIPS publishes an Annual Education Results Report, which outlines the Division’s Four-Year Education Plan, opportunities for growth and how it’s supporting students to achieve the best possible outcomes. Collectively, the Division uses the report to guide its work and enhance learning going forward. Read the full report at eips.ca.

LOCAL PROFILE AND CONTEXT

EIPS is Alberta’s sixth largest school division, serving approximately 17,760 students from kindergarten to Grade 12 in 42 schools—in Sherwood Park, Fort Saskatchewan, Vegreville, Strathcona County, and Lamont County and the western portion of Minburn County. The Division also employs 1,540 people who work collectively to inspire students to learn, grow and succeed.

Thanks to its size, EIPS is able to provide students with a range of learning opportunities, from pre-kindergarten to Grade 12. These include specialized, faith-based, language, career pathways, academic and outreach programs. That, coupled with strong extracurricular opportunities, family supports and numerous student services, ensures all learners receive a well-rounded education that develops their skills and knowledge.

The 2022-23 school year was a big year for EIPS. Operations returned to normal, the new elementary curriculum launched, funding for a replacement school was approved, and multiple engagements and Division strategies were underway. It required an incredible amount of work. To make it happen, everyone within EIPS came together and stayed committed to the priorities and goals listed in the [Four-Year Education Plan](#).

New Elementary Curriculum Launch

In spring 2022, the province released the new elementary curriculum, with three subjects launching in the 2022-23 school year—mathematics and English language arts and literature (K-3) and physical education and wellness (K-6). The Division had to build capacity and an implementation plan.

The Board allocated resources for EIPS to quickly create an implementation plan, develop high-quality resources and ensure smooth transitions.

Student Capacity

As part of the Division’s reporting requirements to Alberta Education, EIPS reviews programs, enrolment transitions and boundaries regularly. The Division identified four areas of concern, related to student accommodations.

The Board directed EIPS to develop a public engagement strategy to determine community-derived solutions to address the areas of concern.

Learning Loss and Mental Health

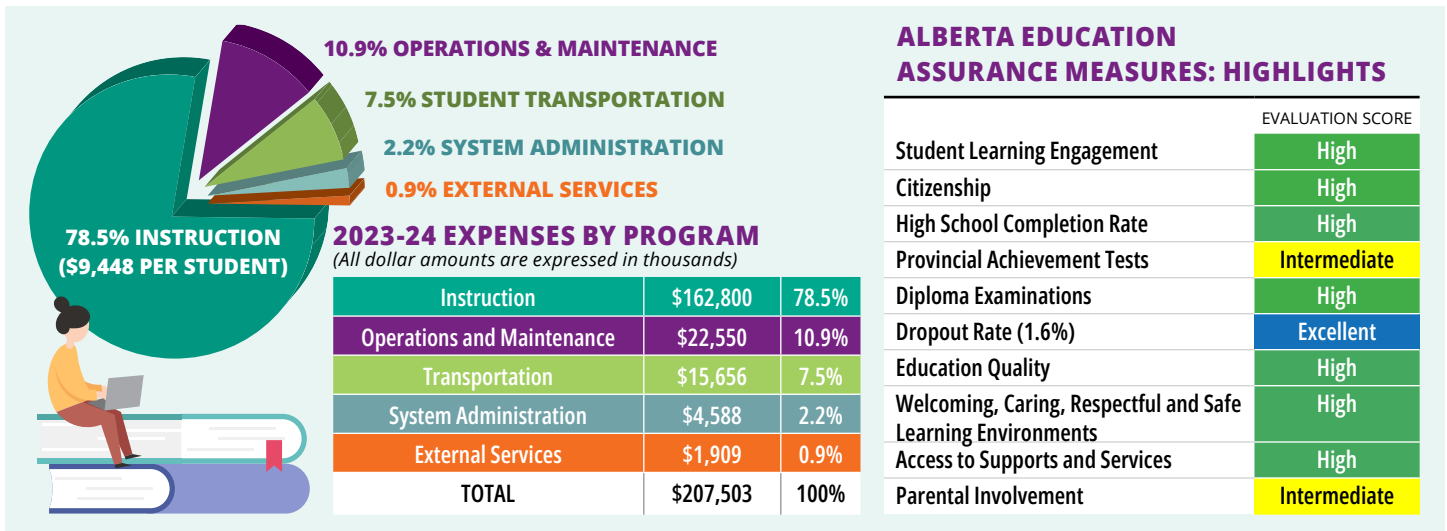
With school operations back to normal, significant work went into addressing learning gaps and mental health challenges resulting from the pandemic. Many students showed signs of learning loss, and a higher-than-normal number of students presented with heightened mental health challenges—stress, anxiety, dysregulation.

The Board invested significant resources into a recovery plan to enhance supports for students, families and staff. Schools initiated intervention plans, and the Division launched a new Mental Health Strategic Plan.

School Closure

Andrew School’s poor facility conditions, repair costs and declining enrolments made providing required education experiences impossible.

The Board approved the closure of Andrew School, effective June 30, 2023.



Based on the Four-Year Education Plan 2022-26

PRIORITY 1: Promote Growth and Success for All Students

Results

Early learning: Families agree the kindergarten program prepares children for Grade 1.

Literacy and numeracy: PAT and diploma examination results are consistently higher than the province.

Indigenous education: Overall educational outcomes for Indigenous students are improving, and consistently higher than the province.

Career pathways: EIPS continues to see strong results related to senior high achievement—thanks, in part, to the myriad career pathway programming.

Assurance: Stakeholders are confident students develop the skills needed to succeed after finishing school.

Priority Strategies 2023-24

- Continue building teacher capacity in literacy, numeracy, student engagement and assessment practices.
- Continue using multi-disciplinary teams to support complex learners.
- Implement high-leverage instructional and assessment practices to support growth in literacy and numeracy.
- Continue developing foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives.
- Continue efforts to prepare students in career planning and transitions to post-secondary.

PRIORITY 2: Enhance High-Quality Learning and Working Environments

Results

Learning environments: Families are satisfied with the quality of education their child receives at school.

Working environments: Staff agree EIPS is a positive place to work.

Infrastructure: Families are satisfied with EIPS' infrastructure.

Assurance: EIPS stakeholders are confident the Division's environments are welcoming, inclusive, respectful and safe.

Priority Strategies 2023-24

- Build capacity related to staff competencies for leadership, teaching and support positions.
- Implement Year 3 of EIPS' Mental Health Strategic Plan to better support students and staff.
- Expand services for students with learning, developmental and health needs.
- Execute Year 3 of EIPS' Three-Year Engagement Plan.
- Continue efforts to enhance secure, safe, robust and reliable technology access.

Priority 3: Enhance Public Education Through Effective Engagement

Results

Engagement: Families agree schools keep them informed about their child's progress and achievement.

Governance: The Board worked diligently to ensure it communicated EIPS' standpoint on a range of topics—the value of public education, funding, new curriculum, mental health, supports and infrastructure projects.

Assurance: Stakeholders are confident EIPS provides meaningful opportunities for family involvement.

Priority Strategies 2023-24

- Build capacity for families to help support their child's education journey.
- Continue assurance framework efforts.
- Continue developing new ways to engage families and school communities.
- Promote effective communication and build relationships with elected government officials.
- Develop and maintain focused advocacy plans.



Building Assurance

In 2022-23, some of the ways EIPS built assurance, include:

- FALL**
 - Annual Assurances Reviews
 - *EIPS Annual Education Results Report*
 - Year-in-Review Survey
- WINTER**
 - School Fee Consultations
 - *Four-Year Education Plan* review
 - Alberta Education Assurance Survey
 - EIPS Annual Feedback surveys – families, staff and students
- SPRING**
 - Spring Budget – using survey feedback
 - *EIPS Four-Year Education Plan: 2022-26*
 - Three-Year Engagement Plan – Year 2
- ONGOING**
 - *Advocacy in Action* – quarterly newsletter
 - *EIPS Quarterly Update* – newsletter
 - Regular communication – school newsletters, news releases and email