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## MEMORANDUM

January 23, 2024  
Regular Board Meeting

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**TO** Board of Trustees

**FROM** Shauna Boyce, Superintendent

**ORIGINATOR** Scott Johnston, Associate Superintendent

**RESOURCE** Linda Madge-Arkininstall, Division Principal, Literacy and Lifelong Learning

**GOVERNANCE POLICY** Board Policy 1: Division Foundational Statements  
Board Policy 2: Role of the Board  
Board Policy 12: Role of the Superintendent

**ADDITIONAL REFERENCE** BP 1: Vision, Foundational Statements  
BP 2: Education Planning and Programming  
*Education Act: 19-23, 33, 196-197*

**SUBJECT** **LITERACY REPORT**

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### PURPOSE

For information. No recommendation required.

### BACKGROUND

The Board is charged with the responsibility of providing, for its students and their parents, an education system organized and operated in the students' best interests. It exercises this responsibility through setting of local educational policy and the wise use of resources. An ongoing focus on literacy education and intervention aligns to the Provincial Government's grant for unfinished learning (learning loss) and supports our students' success and well-being.

### REPORT SUMMARY

This Literacy Report provides an overview of the literacy intervention processes currently in place across the Division. The report includes current literacy results reporting to support an understanding of the requirement for intervention.

Administration would be pleased to respond to any questions.

SJ:kz



**PARKLAND**  
SCHOOL DIVISION

## INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES: LITERACY REPORT

**JANUARY, 2024**

Presented to the Board of Trustees, January 23, 2024

Scott Johnston, Associate Superintendent, Education and System Services

Resources: Linda Madge-Arkininstall, Division Principal, Literacy and Lifelong Learning

*Our Students Possess the confidence, resilience, insight and skills required to thrive in, and positively impact, the world.*

### BACKGROUND

Aligned with our literacy goals, Parkland School Division's Mission and Values reinforced our commitment to providing supportive learning environments, meaningful experiences, and fostering healthy relationships. We aim to create opportunities for developing resilience, gaining diversity in perspectives, and achieving enduring success. We hold a core value in the pursuit of excellence in achievement.

In the academic year 2022-2023, Instructional Services at Parkland School Division remained dedicated to fostering the enduring academic success of our students, with a continued focus on literacy. The division allocated a Division Principal and two facilitators to lead literacy learning initiatives across all schools. Our efforts were concentrated on the following key areas for implementation and improvement:



- Enhancing Instructional Leadership Skills: This involved providing research-based guidance for literacy screens/assessments, lesson development, and delivery;
- Ensuring Effective Professional development: We actively supported the implementation of the English Language Arts and Literature (K-6) and French Immersion Language Arts (K-3) new curriculum;
- Providing Equitable Funding through the Learning Loss Grant: Specifically, for Grades 1-3, we supported schools in identifying students and tailoring programming interventions in a responsive and targeted manner;
- Focusing Divisionally on Comprehensive Literacy: We continued to support schools with a divisional focus on comprehensive structured literacy programming that included the utilization of writing, small group and whole group reading instruction, and phonological awareness and word study; and
- Analyzing results from assessments to inform instruction.

These initiatives collectively contribute to creating a robust educational environment that fosters literacy, supports academic achievement, and aligns with the overarching mission and values of Parkland School Division.

### THE CURRENT STATE OF LITERACY IN PARKLAND SCHOOL DIVISION

#### Utilizing Data to Improve Understanding

During the 2022-2023 school year, and extending into the 2023-2024 school year, Instructional Services collaborated with schools to conduct comprehensive literacy assessments. The assessment completed includes:

- *Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark* for Reading Assessment (Grades 1-6): This tool provides a detailed evaluation of students' reading abilities across different grade levels and enables teachers to make informed decisions between the assessment and teaching strategies.

- *Words Their Way Spelling Inventory Assessment* (Grade 1-9): This inventory focuses on spelling proficiency, offering insights into students' grasp of spelling concepts allowing teachers to provide differentiated instruction on specific spelling patterns.
- *Reading Comprehension Assessment Tool* (RCAT) for Grades 7-9:(English) 3-9 (French) Piloted last year in four schools and is now being used in all of the schools is designed to gauge reading comprehension skills among students in the upper grades. It provides valuable information regarding areas that require focused instruction, aiding in the development of targeted teaching strategies.
- *Writing Assessment* (Grades K-9): This assessment aims to evaluate students' writing skills across various grade levels establishing consistent writing practices and enabling teachers to collaborate on implementing impactful strategies.

#### Provincially Required Assessments:

- *Letter, Sound Recognition* (LeNS): Administered to Grades 1-4, this assessment focuses on evaluating students' proficiency in recognizing letters and sounds. This information is used to differentiate and target instruction.
- *Castles and Colheart* (CC3) (Decoding and Word Recognition Assessment): Conducted in Grades 1-4, CC3 assesses students' abilities in decoding and word recognition and proficiency in recalling both familiar and irregular words. The results from this assessment identify targeted areas of phonological awareness.

These assessments serve as valuable tools to gather data on students' literacy levels and provide a foundation for tailoring instructional strategies. The collaborative effort between Instructional Services and schools demonstrates a commitment to data-driven decision-making, fostering a deeper understanding of students' literacy skills and informing targeted intervention to support their academic growth.

#### Formative Evaluations to Guide Programming

Fountas and Pinnell Instructional Reading Scores: Grades 1-6				
	2021 (June)	2022 (June)	2023 (June)	2023 (November)
Students Reading ABOVE Grade Level:	19%	21%	22%	24%
Students Reading AT Grade Level:	37%	34%	46%	48%
Students Reading BELOW Grade Level:	44%	45%	32%	28%

Reading Comprehension Assessment Tool (RCAT): English and French (Grades 7-9)			
	2022 (September)	2023 (June)	2023 (November)
Students Reading ABOVE Grade Level:	16%	8%	21%
Students Reading AT Grade Level:	55%	54%	52%
Students Reading BELOW Grade Level:	29%	37%	27%

Divisional Writing Assessment Grades 1-9		
	2022 (March)	2023 (November)
Students Reading ABOVE Grade Level:	10%	10%
Students Reading AT Grade Level:	69%	68%
Students Reading BELOW Grade Level:	21%	22%

French Language Arts Reading GB+ Benchmarking - French Immersion Schools Grades 1-6		
	2023 (June)	2023 (November)
Students Reading ABOVE Grade Level:	17%	18%
Students Reading AT Grade Level:	32%	28%
Students Reading BELOW Grade Level:	51%	54%

Appendix A (below) compiles the Provincial Examination Results and Diploma Examinations. Instructional Services is committed to working with the grades 6-9 teachers and providing support through professional development opportunities and participating in their collaborative team time.

### LITERACY INTERVENTION RESULTS – LEARNING LOSS (1-4) AND GRANT FUNDING

During the 2022-2023 year, 48% of Grades 1-4 students required literacy intervention. Students made significant gains and by June 30, 2023, only 23% were identified as “at risk.” The outcomes of the intervention programs affirm our commitment to addressing learning gaps and providing tailored support to students, ensuring they are on a trajectory toward meeting academic benchmarks. The data-driven approach reinforces the ongoing deviation to improving literacy outcomes for our students.

Alberta Education Letter Name and Sound Test (LeNS) and Castles and Colheart 3 (CC3) 2002-2023				
	Grade 1* (LeNS)	Grade 2 (LeNS and CC3)	Grade 3 (CC3)	Grade 4 (CC3)
Number of Students Assessed (Pre-Assessment) (September 2022 Gr. 2-4, January 2023 (Gr. 1):	865	868	934	924
Number of Students Identified as At-Risk:	257	176	267	199
Average Number of Months Behind Grade Level for At-Risk Students:	5.3	8.2	12.2	20.2
Total Number of Students Identified as At-Risk Post Assessment (June 2023):	194	104	180	131
Average Number of Months Gained above baseline for At-Risk Students:	0.5	4.5	4.3	3.8

\*Grade 1 Assessments began in January, as per Alberta Education, and not September.

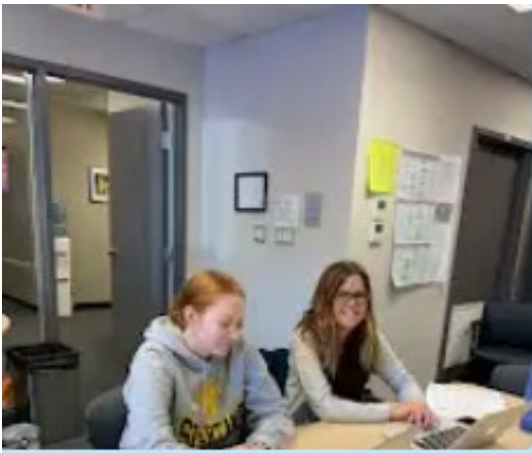
### TEACHING AND LEADING: STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR IMPROVED LITERACY RESULTS

In our commitment to improving literacy outcomes, Instructional Services has implemented intentional interventions from September 2022 to December 2023. Our strategic approach involves fostering continuous collaboration between school administration and Instructional Services, resulting in several key initiatives:

- Literacy Results Review: We conduct reviews of literacy results with each school, collaboratively determining professional development plans to address specific needs;
- New Learn Alberta Curriculum Implementation: Our efforts include support for the implementation of the new Learn Alberta Curriculum to enhance literacy instruction through professional development;

- Professional Development for K-6 Teachers: Literacy Facilitators provide targeted professional development sessions in English Language Arts and Literature for K-6 and French Immersion teachers K-3, with survey feedback indicating an overall "Excellent" rating;
- Literacy Lead Teachers: Designated Literacy Leads in schools, initiated in the 2021-2022 school year, continue to meet as a cohort, focusing on literacy topics and sharing insights with their respective staff on professional development days;
- French Immersion Initiatives: A lead French Immersion working group was formed, creating resources such as a French phonological awareness screen, GB+ reading targets, and a French Immersion reading behavior checklist guide for teachers;
- Comprehensive Literacy Professional Development: Intentional focus on small group reading, vocabulary, and writing, along with literacy benchmarking;
- Division-Wide Writing Rubrics and Writing Scope and Sequence: We collaborate to develop grades K-9 Scope and Sequence and French writing rubrics for grades K-4;
- Division-Wide Literacy Resources: Collaboration with administration and literacy leads resulted in the creation of centralized literacy resources within each school, facilitating easy access to school-wide research-based literacy resources; and
- Reading Comprehension Assessment Tool (RCAT): Introduction of RCAT in Grades 5-9, provided teachers with insights into class strengths and weaknesses, administered three times a year.

These initiatives demonstrate our dedication to strategic planning and ongoing efforts to enhance literacy outcomes throughout Parkland School Division.



Literacy: Professional Development in Action

## LOOKING FORWARD: 2024-2025

As we look ahead to 2024-2025, we are committed to building upon the achievements and progress in literacy. Our strategic initiatives include:

- The continuation of Literacy Facilitators and Lead Teachers: We will sustain the presence of Literacy Leads in each school to coordinate and provide ongoing support for literacy improvement and interventions across all grade levels;
- The continued implementation of a *French Immersion Working Group*: The French Immersion working group will persist in its efforts, focusing on developing writing rubrics and ensuring consistency in administering GB+ reading assessments within the French Immersion program. We have also accessed consultants through ERLC (Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium) to provide new curriculum professional development;
- The continued implementation of Universal Screeners: We will continue using universal screeners to detect and identify specific areas requiring attention in literacy instruction, both in whole-group and small-group settings;
- The provision for professional development: Instructional Services remains committed to addressing the evolving needs of our staff by providing a range of opportunities;
- The support for Kindergarten: We will provide instructional support to our Kindergarten staff;
- The enhancement of support for teachers in grades 7-9, Knowledge and Employment and Transitions programs;
- The establishment of a resource bank to facilitate access for staff working with English as an additional language (EAL) students; and
- The facilitation of opportunities for teachers to engage in cross-school classroom visits and collaborative sessions with grade-level teams across the division.

These initiatives reinforce our commitment to continuous improvement. Through these strategic actions, we aim to further advance literacy outcomes and create a supportive, enriching educational experience for the entire school community.

## APPENDIX A: PROVINCIAL ACHIEVEMENT AND DIPLOMA EXAMINATION RESULTS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 6										
Participation Rates										
	2021-2022				2022-2023				Comparison	
	PSD		AB		PSD		AB			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	+/-	GAP
Enrolled	908	100	56,095	100	958	100	52,106	100	-	-
Writing	822	90.5	47,534	84.7	885	92.4	43,892	84.2	+1.9	+8.2
Absent	72	7.9	5,848	10.4	59	6.2	5,702	10.9	-1.7	-4.7
Excused	14	1.5	2,713	4.8	14	1.5	2,512	4.8	-	-3.3
Results Based on Number Enrolled										
	2021-2022				2022-2023				Comparison	
	PSD		AB		PSD		AB			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	+/-	GAP
Acceptable	713	78.5	42,663	76.1	795	83.0	39,683	76.2	+4.5	+6.8
Excellence	133	14.6	10,588	18.9	173	18.1	9,601	18.4	+3.5	-0.3
Below Acceptable	109	12.0	4,871	8.7	90	9.4	4,209	8.1	-2.6	+1.3
Not Available	86	9.5	8,561	15.3	73	7.6	8,214	15.8	-1.9	-8.2
Results Based on Number Writing										
	2021-2022				2022-2023				Comparison	
	PSD		AB		PSD		AB			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	+/-	GAP
Acceptable	713	86.7	42,663	89.8	795	89.8	39,683	90.4	+3.1	-0.6
Excellence	133	16.2	10,588	22.3	173	19.5	9,601	21.9	+3.3	-2.4
Below Acceptable	109	13.3	4,871	10.2	90	10.2	4,209	9.6	-3.1	+0.6
Top 3 items (description) and Gap to Province					Bottom 3 items (description) and Gap to Province					
+5.9	Use context clues to determine an accurate synonym to a word in an excerpt from a novel.				-7.7	Identify the meaning of a word using context in an excerpt from a novel.				
+3.6	Synthesize details to draw a conclusion from information in a cartoon				-6.4	Determine the point where the narrator's mood changes in a poem.				
+2.9	Recall a detail from an excerpt from a novel				-5.4	Identify an explicit detail in an excerpt from a novel.				

High/Low Gap = 13.6%

The high/low gap presents the range between the demonstrated standard, and the lowest demonstrated standard. More than 40,000 students are assessed by the same measures, and we can use the provincial sample size to diagnostically address and improve areas where we are lower than the province, and share successful strategies when we are more proficient in a measure than the province.

FRENCH LANGUAGE ARTS 6 ANNÉE										
Participation Rates										
	2021-2022				2022-2023				Comparison	
	PSD		AB		PSD		AB			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	+/-	GAP
Enrolled	106	100	3496	100	106	100	3131	100	-	-
Writing	93	87.7	3312	94.7	104	98.1	2923	93.4	+10.4	+4.7
Absent	13	12.3	144	4.1	2	1.9	151	4.8	-10.4	-2.9
Excused	0	0	40	1.1	0	0	57	1.8	0	-1.8
Results Based on Number Enrolled										
	2021-2022				2022-2023				Comparison	
	PSD		AB		PSD		AB			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	+/-	GAP
Acceptable	59	55.7	2687	76.9	68	64.2	2429	77.6	+8.5	-13.4
Excellence	2	1.9	369	10.6	1	0.9	390	12.5	-1.0	-11.6
Below Acceptable	34	32.1	625	17.9	36	34.0	494	15.8	+1.9	+18.2
Not Available	13	12.3	184	5.3	2	1.9	208	6.6	-10.4	-4.7
Results Based on Number Writing										
	2021-2022				2022-2023				Comparison	
	PSD		AB		PSD		AB			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	+/-	GAP
Acceptable	59	63.4	2687	81.1	68	65.4	2429	83.1	+2.0	-17.7
Excellence	2	2.2	369	11.1	1	1.0	390	13.3	-1.2	-12.3
Below Acceptable	34	36.6	625	18.9	36	34.6	494	16.9	-2.0	+17.7
Top 3 items (description) and Gap to Province					Bottom 3 items (description) and Gap to Province					
-4.9	Déduire le sens d'un mot selon le contexte. (Deduce the meaning of a word based on context).				-24.4	Identifier ce que représente l'expression des visages des personnages. (Identify what the expressions of the characters represent).				
-7.0	Déduire le sens d'un mot selon le contexte.				-24.0	Identifier ce qu'indique une citation. (Identify what a quote says).				
-7.1	Déduire le sens d'un mot selon son contexte.				-22.9	Déduire pourquoi l'auteur emploie un point d'exclamation. (Deduce why the author uses an exclamation point).				

High/Low Gap = 29.3



ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS 9										
Participation Rates										
	2021-2022				2022-2023				Comparison	
	PSD		AB		PSD		AB			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	+/-	GAP
Enrolled	847	100	35521	100	849	100	56255	100	-	-
Writing	742	87.6	28956	81.5	768	90.5	47191	83.9	+2.9	+6.6
Absent	95	11.2	4938	13.9	63	7.4	6505	11.6	-3.8	-4.2
Excused	10	1.2	1627	4.6	18	2.1	2559	4.5	+0.9	-2.4
Results Based on Number Enrolled										
	2021-2022				2022-2023				Comparison	
	PSD		AB		PSD		AB			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	+/-	GAP
Acceptable	630	74.4	24739	69.9	660	77.7	40155	71.4	+3.3	+6.3
Excellence	75	8.9	4577	12.9	99	11.7	7526	13.4	+2.8	-1.7
Below Acceptable	112	13.2	4217	11.9	108	12.7	7036	12.5	-0.5	+0.2
Not Available	105	12.4	6565	18.5	81	9.5	9064	16.1	-2.9	-6.6
Results Based on Number Writing										
	2021-2022				2022-2023				Comparison	
	PSD		AB		PSD		AB			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	+/-	GAP
Acceptable	630	84.9	24739	85.4	660	85.9	40155	85.1	+1.0	+0.8
Excellence	75	10.1	4577	15.8	99	12.9	7526	15.9	+2.8	-3.0
Below Acceptable	112	15.1	4217	14.6	108	14.1	7036	14.9	-1.0	-0.8
Top 3 items (description) and Gap to Province					Bottom 3 items (description) and Gap to Province					
+6.2	Identify what the speaker's reflections in specified lines of a poem reveal about her memory of an experience.				-4.8	Recognize the rhetorical device used to enhance the description of the conflict faced by the speaker in specified lines of a poem.				
+5.2	Determine from context what is revealed about a character's resolution in a frame of a cartoon.				-3.8	Identify the reason underlying the writer's inclusion of a parenthetical comment in specified lines of an excerpt from a novel.				
+4.5	Determine from context the meaning of a word in an excerpt from a novel.				-3.3	Identify what a writer suggests about a personal experience in an excerpt from a nonfiction book.				

High/Low Gap = 11.0%

FRENCH LANGUAGE ARTS 6 ANNÉE										
Participation Rates										
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	PSD		AB		PSD		AB			
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Excellence	2	2.2	369	11.1	1	1.0	390	13.3	-1.2	-12.3
Below Acceptable	34	36.6	625	18.9	36	34.6	494	16.9	-2.0	+17.7
Top 3 items (description) and Gap to Province					Bottom 3 items (description) and Gap to Province					
-4.9	Déduire le sens d'un mot selon le contexte. (Deduce the meaning of a word based on context).				-24.4	Identifier ce que représente l'expression des visages des personnages. (Identify what the expressions of the characters represent).				
-7.0	Déduire le sens d'un mot selon le contexte.				-24.0	Identifier ce qu'indique une citation. (Identify what a quote says).				
-7.1	Déduire le sens d'un mot selon son contexte.				-22.9	Déduire pourquoi l'auteur emploie un point d'exclamation. (Deduce why the author uses an exclamation point).				

High/Low Gap = 29.3