



MEMORANDUM

January 21, 2025
Regular Board Meeting

TO	Board of Trustees
FROM	Shauna Boyce, Superintendent
ORIGINATOR	Scott Johnston, Associate Superintendent
RESOURCE	Linda Madge-Arkininstall, Division Principal, Literacy and Lifelong Learning Shaye Patras, Division Principal, Numeracy and Achievement
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 <i>Education Act</i> : 19-23, 33, 196, 197
SUBJECT	LITERACY AND NUMERACY INTERVENTIONS

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 and numeracy education and intervention aligns to Provincial grant funding for those subjects and continues the work of our schools to attend to historical learning loss. Furthermore, increasing achievement in literacy and numeracy supports our students' overall success and well-being.

REPORT SUMMARY

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

Administration would be pleased to respond to any questions.

SJ:kz



INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES: LITERACY AND NUMERACY INTERVENTIONS

JANUARY, 2025

Presented to the Board of Trustees, January 21, 2025

Scott Johnston, Associate Superintendent, Education and System Services

Resources: Shaye Patras, Division Principal, Numeracy and Achievement, Linda Madge,

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

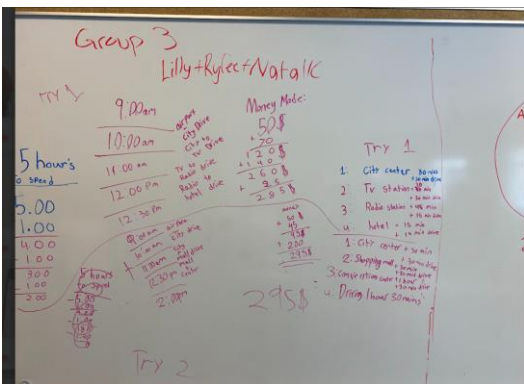
Parkland School Division is dedicated to fostering literacy and numeracy skills as essential building blocks for student success, aligning with our Vision, Mission, and Values. Literacy and numeracy provide the foundation for developing the confidence, resilience, insight, and the skills necessary for our students to thrive in, and positively impact the world, as outlined in our Vision.

Our Mission to "...assure supportive learning environments, meaningful experiences, and healthy relationships" ensures that every student has the opportunity to build resilience, embrace diverse perspectives, and achieve enduring success.

Guided by our Values of:

- Learning Opportunities that are purposeful, essential, relevant, authentic and responsive
- Excellence in achievement
- Trustworthy and respectful relationships and
- Resilience with self-awareness

Parkland School Division remains committed to employing innovative approaches to literacy and numeracy. These efforts are essential to meeting the diverse needs of our learners while preparing them for the challenges of an ever-evolving world.



Students demonstrating solutions.

In alignment with Parkland School Divisions Mission, Vision, Values and Priorities outlined above, the Instructional Services team has continued our work towards advancing literacy and numeracy skills among students and supporting teachers in implementing effective instructional practices. To this end, key areas of focus and initiatives from the 2023-24 school year that continue into the 2024-25 school year include:

- Empowering School Administration and Lead Teachers to support teachers in literacy and numeracy data analysis and the resulting programming implications.
- Facilitating Literacy and Numeracy professional learning opportunities that are reflective of areas of need identified through data.

- Improving Pedagogical practices within classrooms with a specific focus on small group instruction as a Tier 1 support in classrooms throughout Parkland School Division.
- Leveraging the pedagogical expertise of Parkland School Division teachers in Literacy and Numeracy to provide modeled lessons in PSD schools for all PSD staff.
- Supporting PSD teachers to implement new curriculum in Math, English Literature and Language Arts, and French Immersion Literature and Language Arts in Kindergarten through Grade 6.
- Supporting School Administration and Lead Teachers to align Literacy and Numeracy Grant funding with the Literacy and Numeracy needs of students in Grades 1 through 3.
- Continuing to increase the efficacy of middle years teachers in implementing small group instruction.
- Continuing to build the capacity of school-based Literacy and Numeracy lead teachers.



Staff Professional Development.

The Instructional Services team has once again seen changes to our team for the 2024-25 school year, having Mrs. Caitlin Barker and Mrs. Jamie Nielsen joining the literacy team. We are excited that Mrs. Nielsen brings with her significant experience in French Immersion classroom settings.

THE CURRENT STATE OF LITERACY AND NUMERACY IN PARKLAND SCHOOL DIVISION

Using Data to Inform Programming and Practice

During the 2023-24 school year, Instructional Services worked with schools to complete the following numeracy assessments:

Elk Island Numeracy Screen

In Sept 2023, May 2024 and Sept 2024 Grade 1-6 teachers in Parkland School Division administered the Elk Island Numeracy Screening Assessment to all students. This assessment is preferred for its emphasis on evaluating students' conceptual understanding of mathematics, particularly in the areas of Numbers, Patterns, and Algebra. Furthermore, it aligns directly with the Mathematics Learning Progression Strands outlined by Dr. Lynne McGarvey (2018).

Parkland School Division Elk Island Numeracy Screen 2023-2024 to 2024-2025			
GRADE	SEPT 2023 AVG TEST SCORE	SEPT 2024 AVG TEST SCORE	APPROXIMATE MONTHS GROWTH
Grade 1	81%	75%	10
Grade 2	68%	57%	9
Grade 3	59%	60%	10
Grade 4	56%	33%	8
Grade 5	31%	36%	10
Grade 6	32%	39%	10

The table above follows a cohort of students as they progress through grades. Although the rows are labeled by grade level, the data in each column corresponds to the same cohort at different points in time. For example, the data in the 'Grade 1, 2023' column reflects this cohort's performance in Grade 1 during 2023, while the 'Grade 2, Sept 2024' column reflects the same cohort's performance in Grade 2 in September 2024.

Based on the data in the table above, several observations can be made.

1. We are seeing consistency in academic performance within most cohorts from year to year. Students are gaining approximately one year's growth in one academic year. This indicates that teachers are managing the demands of new curriculum implementation;
2. Students in grades 1-3 are, generally, demonstrating strong curricular understanding year over year, with greater challenges existing in grades 4-6. This is likely attributed to several factors including the more recent release of the gr 4-6 curriculum (September 2023) as well as the increased rigor within that curriculum; and
3. We continue to have significant work to do to close the gap for our students' lagging numeracy skills in all grades.

It is important to note that the norms below represent the cut score for students falling into the bottom 25 percentile.

Elk Island Numeracy Screen Norms/Cut Scores Sept 2023 & Sept 2024		
Grade	At Risk Test Score September 2023	At Risk Test Score September 2024
1	73%	72%
2	56%	56%
3	34%	44%
4	39%	42%
5	16%	22%
6	15%	24%

The data in the table above serves as a reference for the achievement of Parkland School Division students on the Elk Island Numeracy Screen. For example, in order to be considered "not at risk" in September 2024, students in grade 1 had to score at least 72% on their assessment. Conversely, students in grade 6 had to score only 25% to be considered "not at risk".

Parkland School Division Cohort Data 2023/24 - 2024/25	
Grade	Change in Number of Students Identified as At Risk
1 to 2	-54
2 to 3	+56
3 to 4	+39
4 to 5	+60
5 to 6	+102
TOTAL	+203

In its second year of implementation, the Elk Island Numeracy Screen has provided data that was not previously available for Parkland School Division. The results in the table above highlight the need for continued focus on our most struggling students. Notably, the percentage of students identified as "At Risk" entering Grade 2 in 2024/25 has decreased significantly, indicating that instructional strategies in Kindergarten and Grade 1 are yielding positive outcomes. However, the data also shows an increase in "At Risk" identifications among students in Grades 2-6, emphasizing the need for sustained efforts to achieve similar improvements in these grades.

Math Intervention Programming Instrument (MiPi) Grades 7-9

The successful administration of the Elk Island Numeracy Screen in 2023-24 in grades 1-6, accompanied by the purposeful data available to support programming led to an expansion of administration in the 2024-25 school year with grades 1-9 completing the Elk Island Numeracy Screen. The transition from the MiPi in grades 7-9 to the Elk Island Screen makes year over year comparison unreliable thus the data below represents only the MiPi for grades 7-9 for the 2023-24 school year.

2023-24 Math Intervention/Programming Instrument (MiPi) Grades 7 through 9		
Grade	<u>% of Students Who Require Attention SEPT 2023</u>	<u>% of Students who require attention JUNE 2024</u>
7	63%	51%
8	63%	47%
9	72%	48%

While the data in the table above represents some growth for students in grades 7-9, given that the assessment measures the same outcomes in September and June we would anticipate stronger growth rates than those being demonstrated. As such, much work remains to ensure that we are meeting the learning needs of our grade 7-9 students.

Utilizing Literacy Data to Drive Instructional Practices

During the 2023-2024 school year, and extending into the 2024-2025 school year, Instructional Services collaborated with schools to conduct comprehensive literacy assessments. The assessments administered include

- Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark for Reading Assessment (Grades 1-6): This tool provides an evaluation of students' reading abilities across different grade levels, helping teachers make informed decisions about their reading instruction.
- Words Their Way Spelling Inventory Assessment (Grade 1-9): Focusing on spelling proficiency, this inventory offers valuable insights into students' understanding of spelling concepts allowing teachers to provide differentiated instruction on specific spelling patterns.
- RCAT (Reading Comprehension Assessment Tool) for Grades 7-9 (English) 4-9 (French): The RCAT is designed to evaluate reading comprehension skills in older students in the upper grades. It identifies areas needing targeted instruction and informs effective teaching strategies.
- Writing Assessment (Grades K-9): This assessment measures students' writing abilities across grade levels, promoting consistent writing practices and fostering teacher collaboration on impactful instructional strategies.

Fountas and Pinnell Instructional Reading Scores: Grades 1-6					
	June 2021	June 2022	June 2023	June 2024	September 2024
Students Reading above Grade Level:	19%	21%	22%	24%	61%
Students Reading at Grade Level:	37%	34%	46%	46%	
Students Reading below Grade Level:	44%	45%	32%	30%	39%

The overall trend shows progress, particularly in reducing students below grade level and increasing those at grade level by September 2024. A sustained focus on targeted interventions and enrichment can ensure continued success.

Reading Comprehension Assessment Tool (RCAT): English and French (Grades 7-9)					
	September 2022	June 2023	November 2023	June 2024	September 2024
Students Reading above Grade Level:	16%	8%	21%	11%	16%
Students Reading at Grade Level:	55%	54%	52%	55%	63%
Students Reading below Grade Level:	29%	37%	27%	34%	21%

The data reflects overall progress, with the most notable improvement being the reduction in students reading below grade level (from 37% to 21%). This improvement, coupled with the rise in students reading at grade level, indicates success in implementing effective strategies. Focused, consistent support for high-achieving reading and struggling students will help sustain and build on these gains.

Divisional Writing Assessment Grades 1-9				
	March 2022	November 2023	March 2024	November 2024
Students Writing above Grade Level:	10%	10%	13%	12%
Students Writing at Grade Level:	69%	68%	68%	68%
Students Writing below Grade Level:	21%	22%	19%	21%

The data reveals a consistency in students writing at grade level but highlights slow progress in increasing the number of students writing above grade level and persistent challenges for those below grade level. To address these patterns, we will focus on enrichment opportunities and targeted interventions for struggling writers, ensuring growth across all groups.

French Language Arts Reading GB+ Benchmarking - French Immersion Schools Grades 1-6				
	June 2023	November 2023	June 2024	September 2024
Students Reading above Grade Level:	17%	18%	20%	18%
Students Reading at Grade Level:	32%	28%	32%	31%
Students Reading below Grade Level:	51%	54%	48%	51%

While there is steady progress, there is still important work to be done, particularly for students reading below grade level. We will continue to prioritize targeted strategies and supports to improve reading comprehension for all learners.

Provincially Required Assessments:

- LeNS (Letter, Sound Recognition): 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.
- 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.

New Provincially Required Assessments (2024-2025):

- PAST (The Phonological Awareness Screening Test (PAST): Administered to Kindergarten and Grade 1, the PAST is designed to assess students' ability to manipulate syllables and phonemes in spoken words.
- RAN (Rapid Automatized Naming): Conducted with Kindergarten and Grade 1 students, the RAN test assesses fluency and speed by asking the child to name a set of items as quickly as they can.

These assessments provide valuable insights into students' foundation literacy skills, allowing teachers to identify specific areas of strength and need.

The LeNS and CC3 assessments, administered in grades 1-4, help target instruction by evaluating letter-sound recognition, decoding abilities, and word recognition, including irregular words.

For Kindergarten and Grade 1, the PAS and RAN assessments on phonological awareness, and fluency, ensuring that early literacy gaps are identified and addressed.

By using this data, educators can differentiate instruction effectively, support students' literacy growth, and foster strong reading foundations.

Alberta Education Letter Name and Sound Test (LeNS)		
	Grade 1	Grade 2
2022-2023		
September: Total Number of Students Assessed	909	868
September: Total Number of Students Identified as At-Risk	312	264
June: Total Number of Students Identified as At-Risk	191	159
2023-2024		
September: Total Number of Students Assessed	813	909
September: Total Number of Students Identified as At-Risk	189	269
June: Total Number of Students Identified as At-Risk	110	147

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

The steady decline in at-risk students across both grades suggests that targeted interventions and supports are effectively improving foundational reading skills. Continued focus on early identification and timely support will further enhance outcomes for at-risk learners.

Alberta Education Castles & Coltheart Test 2 (CC3)				
	Grade 1 *	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4
September 2022				
Number of Students Assessed	912	885	895	350
Number of Students Identified as At-Risk	257	176	267	199
June 2023				
Total Number of Students Identified as At-Risk	194	104	180	131
September 2023				
Number of Students Assessed	831	909	877	419
Number of Students Identified as At-Risk	194	219	223	197
June 2024				
Total Number of Students Identified as At-Risk	163	188	216	172

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

**Grade 5 Assessments reflect performance in Fountas & Pinnell reading levels. These are not normed by Alberta Education.

Across all the grades, the number of at-risk students decreased from September to June, indicating that interventions are helping students move out of the at-risk category. The growing achievement gap in grades 3 and 4 indicates a need for tailored approaches to prevent further regressions.

Literacy and Numeracy Provincial Achievement Test Results

ELA, FLA, and Math PAT Results June 2024						
Subject/Grade	PSD % Acceptable Standard	+/- From 2022-23	ALBERTA % Acceptable Standard	PSD % Standard of Excellence	+/- From 2022-23	ALBERTA % Standard of Excellence
ELA 9	74.9	-2.8	69.5	10.6	-1.1	11.8
Math 9	54.2	-4.4	52.7	14.1	-0.7	14.0
FLA 6	80.3	+16.1	69.9	8.2	+7.3	9.3
FLA 9	83.6	+9.3	76.6	2.7	-4.4	10.6

**English Language Arts and Literature and Mathematics Provincial Achievement Tests were not available for grade 6 students throughout Alberta in 2023-24.*

**Detailed Provincial Achievement Test and Diploma Exam Results can be found in the Parkland School Division Annual Education Results Report*

Parkland School Division students saw significant improvement in our results within our French Immersion programs. Increases year over year at both the Acceptable Standard and the Standard of Excellence in Grade 6 as well as at the Acceptable Standard in Grade 9 are very promising and reflect a significant focus at both the school and division level.

While Parkland School Division students also exceeded the provincial average at the Acceptable Standard in English Language Arts 9 and Math 9, we saw a slight decrease year over year in these areas. Additionally, Parkland students remain behind our provincial counterparts at the Standard of Excellence in these subjects.

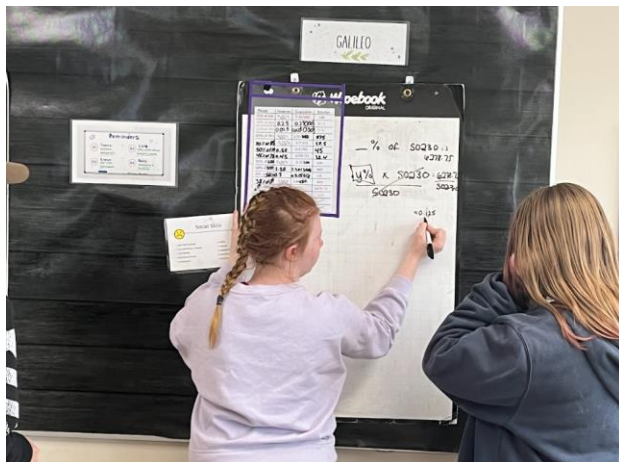
Literacy and Numeracy Diploma Exam Results

ELA and Math DIP Results June 2024						
Subject/Grade	PSD % Acceptable Standard	+/- From 2022-23	ALBERTA % Acceptable Standard	PSD % Standard of Excellence	+/- From 2022-23	ALBERTA % Standard of Excellence
ELA 30-1	83.0	+1.2	84.2	13.7	+1.2	25.5
ELA 30-2	89.2	-1.6	85.7	13.1	0.2	12.9
FLA 30-1	89.2	-10.8	95.3	0	-8.6	8.6
MATH 30-1	77.2	-5.3	75.4	26.7	+3.0	34.9
MATH 30-2	84.2	+1.0	70.9	14.5	-0.4	15.4

As outlined in the previous table, Parkland School Division saw mixed results in English Language Arts, French Language Arts and Math Diploma Exams in the 2023-24 school year. While slight increases were achieved at the Acceptable Standard for ELA 30-1 and Math 30-2, PSD students saw a decline in our results at the acceptable standard for ELA 30-2, FLA 30-1 and Math 30-1.

Instructional Services - Our Work Continues

Based on the data outlined throughout this report, the work of the Instructional Services team in the area of Literacy and Numeracy continues to evolve. In particular, a continued focus in Numeracy skill development and building



conceptual understanding of mathematical concepts for our students in grades 2-6 is essential. Continuing to support our teachers in this work will require ongoing professional development accompanied by at-elbow support.

School-Based Literacy and Numeracy Plans

Fall planning meetings were held with each school's administration and the Instructional Services team to review data and develop targeted literacy and numeracy plans to address areas for growth. A key focus of these meetings has been strengthening literacy and numeracy programming in Grades 4-6 classrooms. Mid-point meetings in January will follow up on this work, providing an opportunity to review updated

literacy and numeracy data, including January screening results, and to discuss progress and next steps.

Literacy and Numeracy Leads have been trained to analyze data to inform instructional practices. They are encouraged to support teachers in interpreting data and applying insights in the classroom. Facilitators also play a key role by assisting with data analysis and providing guidance on instructional strategies to address identified literacy and numeracy gaps.

Literacy and Numeracy Grant

In the 2024-25 school year, the previous *Learning Loss and Learning Disruption* grant for Grades 1-4 was replaced by the *Literacy and Numeracy Grant* targeting students in Grades 1-3.

Here's an edited version with consistent verb tense:

"Following a review of the 2023-24 funding distribution model and consultations with school administrators, this year PSD shifted to a "Facilitator in Residence" program for virtually all PSD schools with Grades 1-3. Through this program, a Facilitator collaborates with school administrators and teachers to identify a focus area in literacy or numeracy based on assessment data. The team develops targeted instructional strategies and resources to address the identified need and provides teachers with the support required to implement these strategies. Pre- and post-assessments measure the effectiveness of the strategies and inform future planning."

New Curriculum Implementation

The Literacy and Numeracy teams continue to support teachers in their transition to the new curriculum. The 2024-25 school year marks the third year of curriculum implementation. New curricula in English Language Arts and Literature, as well as Mathematics, have already been implemented for Kindergarten to Grade 6 during the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years. This year, the implementation extends to include French Immersion grades 4-6, ensuring that educators working in both English and French programs are equipped with the resources and support needed to successfully deliver the updated curriculum.

The ongoing support of these curricula is taking various forms including:

- **Professional development sessions** in Literacy and Numeracy during Site-Directed PD and Self-Directed PD
- Professional development provided to Literacy and Numeracy leads through regularly scheduled Lead meetings including:
 - Ensuring all Screens are implemented successfully;
 - Learning how to analyze the data from screens to inform programming
 - Leading pedagogical shifts in classrooms for literacy and mathematics;
- Modeled lessons by facilitators, Division Principals, and teacher leaders to support pedagogical best practices that align with individual school literacy and numeracy plans
- A continued focus on supporting our French Immersion teachers and administrators with French-speaking facilitators who are able to model lessons, assist with translation, and support with pedagogical approaches for immersion settings.
- Supporting school-based administration and literacy and numeracy leads teachers in analyzing data from screening tools is a key focus. This process includes collaborating to identify gaps in understanding and sourcing resources to address specific programming needs. We are encouraged by the growing teacher capacity in this area and look forward to building on the progress to achieve even greater success.
- Purposeful professional learning opportunities to support teachers in the effective use of Literacy and Numeracy resources to support their instruction and new curriculum implementation. Specifically, professional development for Mathology, Math Up, and Manipulatives to support concrete understanding of new mathematical concepts. In terms of literacy, there has been a focus on professional development with UFLI, Bug Club Morphology, Morpheme Magic, and Adrienne Gear resources.



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.