Date: January 29, 2025   **Agenda Item:** 8.4

To: Board of Trustees

From: Shawna Warren, Superintendent

Originator(s): Jonathan Konrad, Deputy Superintendent, Education Services
Shannon Requa, Director of Education Planning
Nicole Farwell, Curriculum Coordinator

Subject: **Literacy Report**

Background:

Literacy has traditionally been thought of as reading and writing. Although these are essential components of literacy, today our understanding of literacy encompasses much more. Literacy is a lifelong journey that commences with language acquisition from infancy, and its acquisition is influenced by ongoing instruction and practice. Alberta Education defines literacy as *the ability, confidence and willingness to engage with language to acquire, construct and communicate meaning in all aspects of daily living*. Through effective teaching methods and timely assessments, coupled with purposeful interventions, nearly every child can master the skills of reading and writing.

Status & Relationship to Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLQS):

This report aligns with the SLQS in the following way:

COMPETENCY: (1) Building Effective Relationships
INDICATORS: a. collaborating with community and provincial agencies to address the needs of students and their families.

COMPETENCY: (7) Supporting Effective Governance
INDICATORS: c. ensuring that all students in the school authority have the opportunity to meet the standards of education set by the Minister of Education;
d. ensuring that the board's plans, resource allocations, strategies and procedures lead to the achievement of its goals and priorities; and
l. facilitating ongoing public communication about the board's operations and the achievement of its goals and priorities.

Governance Implications:

Education Act
Board responsibilities
33(1) A board, as a partner in education, has the responsibility to

(a) deliver appropriate education programming to meet the needs of all students enrolled in a school operated by the board and to enable their success,
 (b) be accountable and provide assurances to students, parents, the community and the Minister for student achievement of learning outcomes,
 (d) ensure that each student enrolled in a school operated by the board and each staff member employed by the board is provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging,

Policy 105: Vision, Mission and Values
Working together as a team of trustees, parents, community, staff and students, we create safe, respectful and collaborative learning environments where students are prepared to meet and excel at the challenges presented by the global community.

225: Role of the Board
The Board shall be accountable and provide assurances to students, parents, the community and the Minister for student achievement of learning outcomes
    4. Develops and implements a reporting and accountability system on any matter the Minister prescribes

Administration is prepared to respond to questions at the January 29, 2025, Public Board meeting.

Attachment(s):
1.   Literacy Assessment, Instruction and Support Report January 2025

Literacy Assessment, Instruction and Support Report

Literacy Assessments 2024/25

Division and provincial benchmark and screening assessment tools help teachers better understand students' current or developing literacy skills. Literacy screeners allow teachers to program more accurately and design learning materials for student growth and success. They are not used for grading purposes. In 2024/25 the Division removed Fountas and Pinnell as a division wide assessment in response to the growing number of screeners required by Alberta Education.

Phonological Awareness Screening Test (PAST) /Teste de Dépistage de la Conscience Phonologique (TDCP)
- Students in Kindergarten can complete the PAST in January to help understand a student's development of phonological awareness.

Random Automatized Naming (RAN)/Dénomination Rapide Sérielle (DRS)
- Students in kindergarten and grade 1 complete the RAN/DRS in order to understand a student's speed and automaticity (fluency).

Letter Name-Sound (LeNS)/NSIe
- The LeNS is designed to ensure that a child has the foundational phonics skills that are needed to develop into an independent reader.

Castles and Coltheart (CC3)
- The CC3 assessment tests the key processes in single word reading, which are phonological decoding and whole word recognition. The assessment is designed to help identify the nature of a child's reading difficulties and can provide direction for next steps.

Reading Comprehension Assessment (RCAT)
- This tool assesses reading comprehension levels and growth in 5 pillars of reading comprehension skills.

Literacy Assessment Timeline 2024/25

Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
LeNS/NSIe (Gr. 1,2)				LeNS/NSIe (K, Gr. 1)				LeNS/NSIe **POST** (Gr. 1,2)	
PAST/TDCP (gr.1)				PAST (K)					
RAN /DRS (gr1)				RAN (K)					
CC3 (Gr 2-4)				CC3 (Gr. 1-4)				CC3 **POST** (Gr 1-4)	
RCAT (5-12)				RCAT (5-12)				RCAT (5-12)	

Formative Literacy Data September 2024		
Grade	**Assessment**	**Percentage Requiring Additional Support 2024**
1	LeNS - English	26.4
1	PAST - English	29.4
1	RAN - English	35.8
2	LeNS - English	23.7
2	CC3 - English	25.1
3	CC3 - English	28.5
4	CC3 - English	15.2

Formative Literacy Data French Immersion September 2024		
Grade	**Assessment**	**Percentage Requiring Additional Support 2024**
1	NeS	15.8
1	PAST	42.1
1	RAN	57.9
2	LeNS - French	38.5
2	CC3 - French	15.4
3	CC3 - French	66.7
4	CC3 - French	3.7

RCAT Data - Fall 2024

Grade	5	6	7	8	9	10-1	10-2	20-1	20-2	30-1	30-2
Average Score (%)	53.5	58.1	69.5	57.5	54.8	58.5	51.2	72.2	49.1	52.8	43.5

Empowered Learning for Teachers and Students: Implemented Support for Improved Literacy

This year the Division has continued to provide multiple opportunities for teachers and administrators to build their own understanding of literacy development and how to use this understanding to impact student learning. In the 2024/25 school year, we are building our own understanding after having the support of Dr. Miriam Ramzy and Dr. Michelle Bence. Supports in place include:

- Education Planning team support to interpret literacy screening results and plan for responsive teaching.
- New Curriculum PD Menu has several sessions that support the components of a structured literacy program. Teachers are able to choose one or more of these sessions as part of their new curriculum professional development.
- Education Planning team and Edu-Best staff support for schools implementing the RCAT as this is the second year of implementation for all schools.
- French Immersion K-8 teachers are attending 3 full day PD sessions with Edmonton Catholic French Immersion teachers at ECSD.
- K-9 Learning Coaches in each school to coordinate and support ongoing attention to literacy improvement.
- data analysis of assessment data to inform instruction at classroom, small group and individual levels.

Planned Support

- Support ongoing Video on-demand literacy PD for Sturgeon Public Schools educators.
- Building SPS literacy kits that will engage Indigenous knowledge alongside literacy skills. Teachers will be able to sign these kits out for two weeks at a time.
- Review and implement effective structures for ongoing Division-level mentoring for new teachers and school leaders.
- Collaborate with principals to explore opportunities within literacy programming in schools.
- Build an administrative team "look for" list when doing classroom walkthroughs, to support the recognition and coaching of strong literacy instruction in all teachers.

Learning Interruption Grant - Literacy Intervention

For the 2024/25 school year, Sturgeon Public Schools received just over $30,000 through the Learning Interruption Grant. With this money, SPS has hired a half time Literacy/Numeracy Intervention teacher to provide daily small group instruction for up to 5-6 weeks to grade 4 students in a pull-out model. This teacher will move between three schools with the highest number of students requiring additional support. Students will be chosen for this extra support based on literacy screening data and classroom teacher recommendations. The conclusion of the intervention at our first school has demonstrated

growth in literacy skills both in terms of reading words and understanding the meaning behind the text.

Empowered Learning for Teachers and Students

This year, alongside implementing structured literacy initiatives and professional development opportunities, our division has navigated the challenges associated with government-mandated screeners. These assessments, while offering valuable insights into student needs, have posed significant logistical and financial pressures on schools.

To address these challenges, administration encourages the Board to advocate for:

- Extended testing windows at the beginning of the year to facilitate relationship building and ensure effective administration during critical instructional periods.
- Additional funding for substitute teacher coverage to minimize disruptions to classroom learning.
- Streamlined data entry processes to reduce the administrative burden on teachers and school leaders.

These advocacy efforts, in collaboration with Alberta Education, aim to balance the benefits of the mandated screeners with the practical realities of classroom instruction, ultimately prioritizing student and staff wellbeing while maintaining high-quality learning environments.