



## Algoma District School Board

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September 23, 2014 (FINAL)

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Algoma District School Board's First Regular Board Meeting held on Tuesday September 23, 2014

### REVIEW OF EQAO RESULTS

On September 17<sup>th</sup>, the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) publicly released the 2014 school and school-board results from its primary and junior division assessments of Reading, Writing and Mathematics, written by students in Grades 3 and 6 respectively. EQAO reports provide school communities with information that contributes to understanding each student's achievement in relation to the provincial standard.

Superintendent Brenda O'Neill commented, ***"EQAO results provide us with a snapshot of student achievement. Board and school personnel use the results as a source of information to assist with school and board improvement planning. By analyzing the results we are able to compare data, review strategies and determine next steps for instruction and professional learning."***

#### ***Elementary Primary and Junior Division Reading, Writing and Mathematics Results***

The Algoma District School Board's Grade 3 students maintained the number of students achieving Levels 3 & 4 at 58% in Reading; increased to 65% in Writing; and experienced a decrease to 54% in Math. This compares to Provincial results which showed the Province achieving 70% in Reading; 78% in Writing; and 67% in Math.

ADSB staff is extremely pleased with the increased achievement results in Grade 6, where the number of students achieving Levels 3 & 4 increased to 76% in Reading; increased to 69% in Writing; and increased by 8% in Mathematics to 53% from the previous year. This compares to Provincial results which showed the Province achieving 79% in Reading; 78% in Writing; and 54% in Math.

Media reporting has placed significant attention on the decline in math scores across the province. The Algoma District School Board showed a decrease in primary math results, but an increase in junior math results.

Director of Education Lucia Reece noted, ***"Our EQAO results give us valuable data over time, and our staff use this data to analyze school trends and develop next steps for instruction. Like many other Boards in the province, we will be thoroughly reviewing our results, particularly in math, to determine next steps. We are committed to continuous improvement and will be working to support our staff and our student learning needs."***

### UPDATE ON SEPTEMBER ENROLMENTS

#### **Elementary**

The September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014 Junior Kindergarten (JK) to Grade 8 enrolment is currently 6242 students, an increase of 101 students from the projected numbers of 6141 as contained in the April, 2014 Director's Report. To accommodate the increase in enrolment, Administration has added 5 classes across the Board.

There are 1228 students currently enrolled in JK and SK for this school year, an increase of 115 students from the projected enrolment of 1113. This is an increase of 107 JK students and 8 SK students from the projection in April 2014. The Grade 1 to 8 enrolment is 5014 students, a decrease of 14 students from projected numbers of 5028 in April 2014.

## **Secondary**

The projected enrolment in April 2014 for the Regular Secondary Program was 3543 students. On September 15, 2014, 3621 students registered. This equates to an increase of 78 students at the secondary level.

The Algoma Education Connection (AEC) includes students enrolled in Urban Aboriginal, Teen Parenting Program, Sault College Connection and Prince Charles Secondary School. AEC currently has a total enrolment of 280 students. These programs are still enrolling students and the numbers may change, due also in part to the Board's Re-engagement Strategy.

## **RE-ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Superintendent Joe Maurice updated Trustees on the implementation of the Re-Engagement Initiative. Under the Re-Engagement Initiative, staff at each secondary school are assigned as Re-Engagement Leads to identify School Leavers. School Leavers are students who have left school without completing an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. As in past years, Re-Engagement Leads began to contact these students in August and are assisting them in finding secondary programs to assist in getting them back into school. This is an ongoing initiative that will continue throughout the year. The Ministry has funded this initiative for grades 12 and 12+, however, within the Algoma District School Board, Re-Engagement Leads work with School Leavers at all grade levels. In the 2013-2014 school year, there was an increased focus on the implementation of Supervised Alternative Learning (SAL) as an alternative program for some School Leavers and on greater outreach to First Nation, Metis and Inuit students through community partners. This focus will continue in the 2014-2015 school year.

In 2013-2014, over 500 School Leavers were contacted by schools throughout the Algoma District School Board. Of these School Leavers, 57 came back to school and completed enough credits and other graduation requirements to earn their Ontario Secondary School Diploma by the end of June, including 13 First Nation, Metis and Inuit students. With the increased focus on SAL as a potential re-engagement program, 45 School Leavers came back to school and entered a SAL program. As a result of participating in SAL, one of these students completed enough credits and other requirements to earn an Ontario Secondary School Diploma by the end of June. In a review of the impact of Re-Engagement strategies over the long term, it was noted that in June 2011, 15% of the graduating class across the ADSB planned on returning to secondary school the following September to do a fifth year of high school. However, by June 2014, this number had dipped to 8.5%. Keeping more students on track through the Re-Engagement Initiative is one factor that has helped in reducing this number.

## **ACCOMMODATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**

In June 2014, the Algoma District School Board approved placing William Merrifield Public School under Accommodation Review. The review would focus on school closure, accommodating the JK-8 program and students currently housed at William Merrifield in nearby existing elementary schools for September 2015.

With the Trustees' approval of the identification of William Merrifield as "Under Review Status" the next steps include the Board appointing a local Accommodation Review Committee (ARC). The Board approved the local ARC for William Merrifield VC Public School at Tuesday night's Board meeting.

**William Merrifield VC Public School Local ARC** will consist of the following individuals:

Chair of School Council	Sherri Dean
A Community Member	Ruby Blue
Municipal Representative	Don McConnell
Principal	Carol Lucio
Staff member	Elena Palazzi
Superintendent	Joe Maurice

Four public information meetings are required as part of the process. The first of these four meetings has been set for **Tuesday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014** at 7pm and will take place at Wm Merrifield. Public Consultation is a vital step and requires input from a range of school and community members. The intent of the Public consultation meetings is to include the full involvement of an informed, local community.

The remaining three meetings will be confirmed and notice of these meetings will appear on the board's website at [www.adsb.on.ca](http://www.adsb.on.ca). Minutes and agendas for each of these meetings will also appear on our website.

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