First Nations and Métis Education
June 2010

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Cover Photo: Westview Community School Pow Wow Dance Troupe
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Introduction

The Ministry of Education in its document *Inspiring Success: Building Toward Student Achievement* set an expectation that each school division will create a First Nations and Métis Education Plan that aligns with the Continuous improvement Framework. In response to this expectation, the school division’s first step was to discover the current state of First Nations and Métis education in the school division by examining a set of disaggregated student assessment data to identify the learning strengths and challenges of First Nations and Métis students.

This report is the first analysis of the learning outcomes of First Nations and Métis students prepared by the school division. In subsequent reports, more data will be available and more complex analyses possible though the use of data warehouse software which will be available in the fall of 2010.

This report contains four sections. The first section examines two frameworks of indicators of the success of First Nations and Métis students. One framework is the traditional analysis of student achievement using student assessment data and graduation rates. The second framework suggests a more holistic approach to measuring the success of First Nations and Métis learners.

The second section describes the demographics and social conditions of First Nations and Métis people in Prince Albert. This social context outlines the many barriers facing First Nations and Métis children and youth as they attempt to succeed in the school system. As well, statistics about the number and location of First Nations and Métis learners in the school division are provided.

The components of the school division’s First Nations and Métis Education Plan and the initial steps toward this plan’s development are described in the third section. This report, the Board of Education’s Three Year Plan and the Letter of Intent with the Prince Albert Grand Council are important contributions to the plan’s development.

Finally, the educational outcomes of First Nations and Métis students are compared to those of non-First Nations and Métis students using graduation rates and student assessment data. The results of the 2007 and 2009 Reading Assessment for Learning and the 2009 school division Common Mathematics Assessment are presented with some limited commentary. The Appendix contains many graphs that illustrate the assessment data in some detail.

The data indicate that graduation rates for First Nations and Métis students are improving. However, the results of student assessment data are mixed. In subsequent reports a clearer picture will emerge because more assessment data will be available, these data will span more school years and new data warehouse software will enable richer data analyses.
First Nation and Métis Students: Two Frameworks to Measure Success


“By broadening the conventional scope of inquiry to a more holistic one, this framework provides a more complete picture of Aboriginal learning. Indeed, a new narrative emerges that supersedes the all-too familiar and distressing storyline that centers on learning deficits and academic shortcomings among Aboriginal youth.” p 5

This holistic framework has two components. The first, Sources and Domains of Knowledge, suggests that First Nations and Métis students need to learn from and about culture, language and tradition. Further, the model recognizes that “Aboriginal learning is a highly social process that serves to nurture relationships in the family and throughout the community.” p 5 Finally, the central role that Elders play in the promotion of lifelong learning is emphasized.

The second component is the Lifelong Learning Journey and it advocates that success should be measured using indicators such as access to early learning programs, high school completion rates, and enrolment in post-secondary programs. Additional indicators include informal and experimental learning opportunities and access to broadband internet services. Informal and experiential learning “helps foster a desire to learn among Aboriginal youth while helping with the acquisition of new skills.” p 6 Access to broadband internet services is an important to facilitate lifelong learning opportunities.

The holistic framework provides school divisions with some alternative indicators of student success but data are not available for many of these new indicators. Holistic indicators can not replace this school division’s current list of academic achievement indicators but rather will augment them. (Both models are illustrated in Figures 2, 3 and 4.)

During the 2010-2011 school year, this school division along with the Ministry of Education, and three other school divisions, Regina Public, Northern Lights and Ile-a-la Crosse, will be working together to create a holistic assessment tool that supports First Nations and Métis students. More details about this work will be available early in the fall.

The school division currently has a substantial amount of student assessment data which, as mentioned in the Introduction, will soon be available for detailed analysis. Figure 1 illustrates the school division’s student assessment data sets. This Figure, along with the information in the Academic Assessment Framework, shows that the data are not only annual but span several years. Therefore, a longitudinal analysis of the progress of individual students, groups of students or the whole school body will be available. In the future, teacher prepared elementary progress reports (Prekindergarten to Grade 8) and data from the Early Development Instrument will also be available. (The EDI is an annual questionnaire measuring Kindergarten children's ‘readiness for school’ across several areas of child development.)

All these assessment and demographic data can be disaggregated by ethnic group and therefore, a more and more accurate picture of the success of First Nations and Métis learners will be available.
Student Data Sets

Academic Achievement Framework

Student Academic Achievement
The Board of Education has a goal to eliminate the academic gap between First Nations and Métis students and the general student population. Student academic success is measured through the analysis of student assessment data from several common provincial and school division assessments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>School Division Measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Academic Achievement</td>
<td>Reading Developmental Reading</td>
<td>Annual student assessment data from Kindergarten to Grade 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Early Literacy Screen</td>
<td>Annual student assessment data from Kindergarten to Grade 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment for Learning</td>
<td>Student assessment data: Gr 4, 7 and 10 (2007 and 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing Assessment for Learning</td>
<td>Student assessment data: Gr 5, 8 and 11 (2008 and 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Levels of Literacy and</td>
<td>Mathematics School Division</td>
<td>Annual student assessment data from Kindergarten to Grade 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>Common Math Assessment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment for Learning</td>
<td>Student assessment data: Gr 5, 8 and 11 (2005, 2007 and 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching Treaties</td>
<td>Annual survey results for Gr 7 students and Gr 4 and 7 teachers and their administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continuous Improvement Framework</td>
<td>Number of First Nations and Métis student graduates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Indicators</td>
<td>Number of years to complete graduation requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduation Rates</td>
<td>Average marks, course registrations, credits earned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Persistence to Graduate</td>
<td>How students transitioned from one year to the next</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Holistic Lifelong Learning Measurement Framework

Sources and Domains of Knowledge
Lifelong learning for Aboriginal people is rooted in relationships with the natural world and the world of people (i.e., the self, the family, ancestors, clan, community, nation and other nations) and their
experiences with languages, spirituality, traditions and ceremonies.

These complex relationships and experiences are represented in all of the Holistic Lifelong Learning Models as **Sources and Domains of Knowledge**, though the ways in which they are represented reflect the unique perspective of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people.


### Figure 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources and Domains of Knowledge</th>
<th>Domain Indicator</th>
<th>Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) Measure</th>
<th>School Division Measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World of People</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>insufficient data available</td>
<td>insufficient data available</td>
<td>No data available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Family support</td>
<td>Strength of ties with family members</td>
<td>No data available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family involvement</td>
<td>Importance of parental engagement in school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elders</td>
<td>Exposure to Elders</td>
<td>Amount of time spent with Elders</td>
<td>Description of Elder services; Number of Elders; Number of students served</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Community support</td>
<td>Degree of support from others in the community</td>
<td>No data available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural history</td>
<td>insufficient data available</td>
<td>insufficient data available</td>
<td>No data available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional skills</td>
<td>Use of traditional skills</td>
<td>Participation in traditional hunting, fishing or trapping</td>
<td>No data available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land use</td>
<td>insufficient data available</td>
<td>insufficient data available</td>
<td>No data available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages, Traditions and Cultures</td>
<td>Language vitality</td>
<td>Sources of support for children learning their Aboriginal language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of Aboriginal language</td>
<td>Degree of Aboriginal language use at home</td>
<td>No data available</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditions and ceremonies</td>
<td>Participation in cultural ceremonies</td>
<td>Description of children in traditional cultural activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Cultural vitality</td>
<td>Availability of support for children to learn their culture and history</td>
<td>Description of cultural activities in schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality</td>
<td>Practice of spiritual teachings</td>
<td>How Métis maintain their spiritual well-being</td>
<td>No data available</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The Lifelong Learning Journey

Aboriginal people view learning as a lifelong process that begins at birth and progresses through childhood, youth and adulthood. This process is represented in each of the Holistic Lifelong Learning Models, and represents the full range of learning opportunities that occur across the life cycle and in a variety of settings (school, home, community, workplace and the land). (Source of text and table: Canadian Council on Learning (2009). *The State of Aboriginal Learning in Canada: A Holistic Approach to Measuring Success*. Pages 17 and 31)

### Figure 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Lifelong Learning Journey</th>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) Measure</th>
<th>School Division Measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infants and Children (0-5)</td>
<td>Early childhood education (ECE)</td>
<td>Enrolment in ECE opportunities</td>
<td>Type of child-care arrangement used</td>
<td>Participation rates for Kids First, school-based day care, Prekindergarten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Availability of Aboriginal-specific ECE programs</td>
<td>Does child-care arrangement promote Aboriginal values?</td>
<td>No data available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early learning in the home</td>
<td>Reading to children</td>
<td>Proportion of children who read or were read to daily</td>
<td>Description of PreK and K language program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early development milestones</td>
<td>Level of school readiness</td>
<td>Proportion of children who are 'not ready' for school</td>
<td>Early Development Instrument (data available in 2010-2011)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth (6 to 18)</td>
<td>Learning in school</td>
<td>Dropout rate</td>
<td>Proportion of incomplete high school learning</td>
<td>Graduation rates; credit attainment; school attendance and transience rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School attendance</td>
<td>Degree of absenteeism from school</td>
<td>Attendance rates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning at home and in the community</td>
<td>Participation in extra-curricular activities</td>
<td>Membership lists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Participation in clubs or groups</td>
<td>Team rosters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Participation in sports</td>
<td>Class lists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Participation in arts or music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Community involvement</td>
<td>Youth volunteerism rates</td>
<td>No data available</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2

Demographics and Social Conditions

On September 30, 2009, there were 2672 First Nations and 1270 Métis students registered in schools of the Saskatchewan Rivers School Division. These students represents 44.2% of the total student population. Since 85% of the school division’s First Nations students and 71% of Métis students attend school in the City of Prince Albert, it seems appropriate to review the population profile of Aboriginal1 people living in Prince Albert.

First Nations and Métis People in Prince Albert: A Summary of 2006 Census Data

Loder, R: 2006 Aboriginal Population Profile for Prince Albert. Statistics Canada (February 2010)

Population

The Aboriginal population living in the census agglomeration of Prince Albert is young and growing.

In 2006, a total of 141,890 Aboriginal people lived in Saskatchewan, representing 15% of the provincial population.

In 2006, the census agglomeration of Prince Albert, with 13,570 Aboriginal people, had the highest concentration of Aboriginal people of any city in Saskatchewan. About one in three (34%) people in Prince Albert were Aboriginal. By comparison, Saskatoon had the largest Aboriginal population (21,535) of any city in Saskatchewan, but the Aboriginal population only represented 9% of that city’s total population.

Between 2001 and 2006, the Aboriginal population in Prince Albert grew by 17%, from 11,640 to 13,570 people. The First Nations population grew by 25%, while the Métis grew by 12%.

Over half (56%) the Aboriginal population in Prince Albert was under the age of 25, almost double the proportion of 28% for the non-Aboriginal population.

Education

Aboriginal youth aged 15 to 24 in Prince Albert had lower school attendance rates than their non-Aboriginal counterparts (51% versus 59%). Aboriginal people also have a greater tendency to return to school later in life than do non-Aboriginal people.

Aboriginal women in Prince Albert were slightly more likely than Aboriginal men to have completed postsecondary education. Almost half (47%) of Aboriginal women aged 25 to 64 years had completed postsecondary education, compared to 45% of their male counterparts.

1. Statistics Canada defines Aboriginal persons as those who reported identifying with at least one Aboriginal group, that is, North American Indian, Métis or Inuit, and/or those who reported being a Treaty Indian or a registered Indian as defined by the Indian Act of Canada, and/or those who reported they were members of an Indian band or First Nation.
Employment
The unemployment rate for the Aboriginal core working age population (aged 25 to 54) in Prince Albert was higher than that of the non-Aboriginal population (14.3% compared to 5.2%). While First Nations women were more likely to be unemployed than their male counterparts, the inverse was true in the Métis and non-Aboriginal populations.

Métis men and women aged 25 to 54 had employment rates (79.8% and 76.8%, respectively) that most resembled those of their non-Aboriginal counterparts (86.2% and 83.2%, respectively). In 2000, Aboriginal people working full-time, full-year, earned 86% of what their non-Aboriginal counterparts were earning. By 2005, this percentage had increased to 87%.

Income
Statistics Canada uses the concept of low-income cut-off (LICO) to indicate an income threshold below which a family will likely devote a larger share of its income on the necessities of food, shelter and clothing than the average family. In 2005, in Prince Albert nearly four in 10 (38%) Aboriginal people were living under the LICO, compared to 12% of non-Aboriginal people. In addition, almost half (47%) of Aboriginal children in Prince Albert were living under the LICO, compared to 15% of non-Aboriginal children. These data are based on the before tax LICO.

Transiency
In 2006, four in 10 Aboriginal people in Prince Albert had lived at the same address five years ago, compared to 65% of the non-Aboriginal population. From 2001 to 2006, almost four in 10 (37%) Aboriginal people had moved at least once within Prince Albert, and the rest (24%) had moved to Prince Albert from another community.

Living Conditions
In Prince Albert, about one in seven (14%) Aboriginal people lived in homes requiring major repairs in 2006, compared to 13% in 2001. In comparison, the share of Prince Albert’s non-Aboriginal population living in dwellings in need of major repairs was 7% in 2006 and 8% in 2001. The share of Aboriginal people living in crowded homes was 11% in 2006 up from 10% in 2001. The comparable rates for the non-Aboriginal population were about 1% in 2006 and in 2001.

First Nations and Métis Students in the School Division
As of September 30, 2009, 3947 students in Prekindergarten to Grade 12 students declared themselves to be of First Nations, Métis or Inuit ancestry. This number represents 44.2% of the total student population in the school division. Figure 5 provides more details:

Figure 5

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Nations:</td>
<td>2672 (29.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Métis:</td>
<td>1270 (14.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inuit:</td>
<td>5 (0.1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3947 (44.2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6 illustrates the First Nations and Métis student enrolment by school. 81% of First Nations and Métis students in the school division attend school in Prince Albert and 41% attend one of the school division’s ten Community Schools.
85% of all First Nations students and 71% of all Métis students attend school in the City of Prince Albert. Most First Nations students in the school division do not live on a First Nation. However, 150 students (6% of First Nations students in the school division) do travel to our schools from 9 different First Nations.
3 First Nation and Métis Education Plan

The Plan
The Ministry of Education in its document *Inspiring Success: Building Toward Student Achievement* set an expectation that each school division will create a First Nations and Métis Education Plan that aligns with the Continuous improvement Framework. This plan will includes the following expectations:

- A focus on supports and improved outcomes for First Nations and Métis learners.
- Ensure all learners have knowledge of First Nations and Métis peoples’ histories, perspectives, worldviews and contributions, including mandatory treaty education, throughout the learning program.
- Collect data and report on measures outlined in the Ministry’s First Nations and Métis education policy framework.
- Build partnerships with First Nations and Métis peoples, where applicable, in support of shared management of the provincial education system.
- Develop resources and establish supports including Elders, cultural advisors and traditional knowledge keepers, to build capacity throughout the school division to implement First Nations and Métis education.

In response to this expectation, the school division has developed the following plan of action:

Step 1 Discover the current state of First Nations and Métis education in the school division. This work will be accomplished by a small team of employees in the Education Centre. The outcomes of this work will include:

- A set of disaggregated Student Assessment Data identify the learning strengths and challenges of First Nations and Métis Learners; and,
- An inventory of programs that currently meet the Ministry’s criteria for a First Nations and Métis Education Plan.

Step 2 Second an individual and/or establish a Committee from the school division to:

- Review the research on best practices to eliminate the academic gap between First Nation and Métis students and the general student population.
- Consult with groups and agencies that represent First Nations and Métis children, youth and their families and discover their vision for First Nations and Métis education.
- Meet with First Nations and Métis youth who attend schools in the division.
- Meet with groups and agencies who represent First Nations and Métis children, youth and their parents:
  - First Nations officials from bands that purchase education services from the school division;
  - School Community Councils from schools with a large population of First Nations and Métis students;
  - The Prince Albert Métis Women’s Association;
  - Prince Albert Indian and Métis Friendship Centre; SIAST Woodland Campus Students’ Association (75% of SIAST students are of First Nations or Métis ancestry);
  - Prince Albert Grand Council Urban Services; and,
  - Prince Albert Kids First.
Step 1 of this process will be completed by the end of the 2009-2010 school year. Step 2 will await the results of the partnership discussions between the school division and the Prince Albert Grand Council.

The Board of Education Three Year Plan
The Board of Education has developed a Three Year Plan. Four sections of this plan specifically address the First Nations and Métis education program:

5.1 Continue to work to enhance relationships with First Nation and Métis communities. There is a need to open up lines of communications and cooperation on educational issues with the Prince Albert Grand Council. Partnerships need to be established to expand programs to:
   - develop schools that meet the needs of urban First Nation and Métis children and their families; and,
   - develop an outreach program/school that focuses on youth age 10 to 15 years who are already outside of the school system.

5.2 Strengthen the Board’s relationship with the Prince Albert Grand Council by establishing a tri-party committee (school division, Ministry, PAGC), whose mandate will be to work together to improve the academic achievement of First Nation and Métis students.

5.3 Establish a Roundtable on First Nation and Métis Education, for two purposes:
   - to recognize the shared responsibility among parents, community, First Nation and Métis organizations, government, and the school division to ensure the success of First Nation and Métis learners; and,
   - to eliminate the academic gap between First Nation and Métis students and the general student population.

5.7 Develop a protocol to acquire a school division elder, by utilizing the Prince Albert Grand Council elder pool.

Letter of Intent with the Prince Albert Grand Council
Both the Prince Albert Grand Council and the Board of Education of the Saskatchewan Rivers School Division expressed a desire to begin discussions to create a partnership agreement.

On April 28, 2009 representatives from both organizations along with officials from the Ministry of Education met to discuss a formal partnership between the Grand Council and the school division. The Ministry of Education agreed to fund a facilitator and in the fall of 2009 Rita Bouvier was engaged as the facilitator and led the process to develop a formal partnership. To date, a draft Letter of Intent has been prepared and awaits approval from both parties. A excerpt from the letter’s introduction is included on this page. To achieve the purpose of the letter, the parties agree to work address four areas of common interest:

- Improving Student Outcomes;
- Joint Planning for Staff Development Opportunities;
- Discussing Issues of Common Interest; and,
- Communication.

Letter of Intent to Work Together to Improve Educational Outcomes for Students
We, the undersigned, have agreed to work together to improve the educational outcomes for students who reside in member First Nation communities of the Prince Albert Grand Council and in the Saskatchewan Rivers School Division. In recognition of the inherent treaty rights of each First Nation community, this working relationship is intended solely to augment the education support services offered by the Prince Albert Grand Council and the Saskatchewan Rivers School Division.
The Education Outcomes of First Nation and Métis Students

Graduation Rates

In Saskatchewan, students require 24 secondary credits in Grades 10 to 12 to graduate. Typically, a student can earn these credits over a three year period but some students will take more than ten years to complete high school. Therefore, measuring graduation rates after only three years does not provide an accurate graduation rate. A better measure is Persistence to Complete data provided by the Ministry of Education. These data show how many years it takes students to graduate after starting Grade 10.

After three years from the start of Grade 10, an average of 69% of students in this school division graduate. However, when these numbers are disaggregated by ethnicity, 80% of non-First Nations and Métis students and 37% of First Nations and Métis students graduate after three years. Figure 7 illustrates the average graduation rates by ethnic group from three to ten years following the start of Grade 10.

Data Source: Persistence to Graduate, Ministry of Education
These data include students who began Grade 10 by registering in at least two credits in the Saskatchewan Rivers School Division. Data from 1995-1996 to 2006-2007 were used to calculate the averages. Students illustrated in this figure graduated from a school in Saskatchewan but not necessarily in this school division.
Figure 7 illustrates that First Nations and Métis students have a higher persistence rate than other students. Following three years, an additional 22% of First Nations and Métis students complete high school. These data speak to the success of high school programs that encourage youth to return to school many years after the traditional high school completion period of three years.

Other data point to an increasing number of First Nations and Métis students who are graduating from high school in this school division. Figure 8 illustrates that over the last ten years, the number of First Nations and Métis students in graduating classes in this school division has increased by 58%. In the spring of 2000, 62 First Nations and Métis students graduated from high school. This number represented 12% of the graduating class. By the spring of 2009, First Nations and Métis students made up 29% of the graduating class. This number, although encouraging, is still not representative of the total population of First Nations and Métis students for in 2008-2009 this group represented approximately 44% of the student population in the school division.
Introduction to the Reading Assessment for Learning
The Ministry of Education provides province-wide assessments of student learning for reading, writing, and mathematics. The Assessment for Learning Project gathers data about student proficiency and opportunity-to-learn in the three subject areas which schools and school divisions can use to improve student learning. In the spring of 2007 and 2009 students in Grades 4, 7 and 10 participated in the provincial Reading Assessment. In the pages that follow, the 2007 and 2009 AFL Reading data is presented by reading strategy. As an introduction to reading strategies, the Ministry of Education provides the following overview.

Analysis of Reading Comprehension Categorized by Reading Strategy
Although reading is a complex act involving many processes simultaneously, it is possible to make inferences about some of the reading strategies students had to use as they responded to each multiple-choice item. The strategy analysis may be useful for discussion about strengths and needs of students and to guide planning around future strategic reading instruction. It is important to note that large-scale assessments are limited in assessing all important reading strategies, and that other forms of assessment and other sources of evidence are required for meaningful improvement planning and intervention.” (Ministry of Education, 2009)

The 2007 and 2009 Reading Assessment for Learning measured the following reading strategies:
- **Using Cueing Systems** to construct meaning (pragmatic, textual, syntactic, semantic, and graphophonic), and other cues and conventions including visual clues;
- **Connecting to Prior Knowledge** and experiences that relate text to self, text to other texts, and texts to the world;
- **Making Inferences/ Predictions** based on textual information;
- **Noting Key Ideas and Finding Support**;
- **Summarizing/ Recalling Information/ Drawing Conclusions** (including organizing and synthesizing the information); and,
- **Recognizing** (and evaluating) **Author's Message and Craft** including distinguishing facts from opinions.

(Ministry of Education, 2009)

An Analysis of the Assessment Results by Ethnicity
The assessment data, including both the achievement scores and performance outcomes, are displayed in graph form for each grade, year and ethnic group in the Appendix.

For the purpose of comparing student results from 2007 to 2009, the Performance Outcomes using the standards established by the Ministry will be used. Please see the Data Note below for an explanation of standards.

Grade 4 (2007 and 2009)

In 2007 an average of 46% of First Nations students achieved at the adequate or proficient standard across the six reading strategies. 71% of Métis students and 85% of Non-First Nations and Métis

Data Note: Standards were set by a panel of teachers and academics with language arts and reading skill development and teaching expertise. The panel deliberated over the nature and difficulty of each assessment item, considered the learning environment and assessment context, and discussed rationale for their judgments. To help interpret how well students did in performance areas, two standards were set: one for adequate or higher performance, and one for proficient or higher performance. (Ministry of Education)
students achieved the adequate or proficient standard. The achievement gap was 39% for First Nations students and 14% for Métis students. In 2009 the achievement gap closed significantly for First Nations students as an average of 74% of performed at the adequate or proficient standard which was only 14% below the performance of Non-First Nations and Métis students.

A Commentary on the Results
Assessment data from the Early Literacy Project indicate that students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 have made significant gains in reading. Most of the 2009 Grade 4 students have been involved in this project for over three years. The Early Literacy Project data suggest that there should have been an improvement in AFL Reading scores in 2009. (The Early Literacy Project is described in the school division’s 2009-2010 Continuous Improvement Report on page 27.)

Grade 7 (2007 and 2009)
The results of the Grade 7 students are opposite from their Grade 4 counterparts in that students in all three ethnic groups achieved lower performance results in 2009 than were achieved in 2007. The following table summarizes these results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent Achieving at Adequate or Proficient Standard (Average)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Nations Students 2007  67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009  54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Métis Students 2007  81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009  75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-First Nations and Métis Students 2007  89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009  83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2009 the achievement gap widened for First Nations students as an average of 54% of performed at the adequate or proficient standard which was 29% below the performance of Non-First Nations and Métis students. In 2007 this gap was 22%.

A Commentary on the Results
No definite explanation for these results is evident. Neither the 2007 or the 2009 students were part of the Early Literacy Project or other significant reading intervention program therefore the results of the two years should have at least been similar.

In recognition of the success of the Early Literacy Program and as a response to the 2009 AFL Reading results, the school division has developed the Literacy in Action Project. This reading project is geared for students in Grades 6, 7 and 8. Teachers focus on building critical literacy skills with students so that they are able to question, analyze, and critically examine text. Teachers also learn how to differentiate instruction to meet the variety of student learning needs within the classroom. Teachers receive support from the Integrated Learning Consultant and the Technology coach.

Grade 10 (2007 and 2009)
The Grade 10 AFL Reading results are similar to those of the Grade 4 students in that students in 2009 performed better than students in 2007. The following table summarizes these results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent Achieving at Adequate or Proficient Standard (Average)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Nations Students 2007  66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009  73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Métis Students 2007  78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009  86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-First Nations and Métis Students 2007  87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009  90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 2009 the achievement gap closed for First Nations students as an average of 73% of performed at the adequate or proficient standard which was 17% below the performance of Non-First Nations and Métis students. In 2007 this gap was 21%.

**A Commentary on the Results**
The trend illustrated by the high school AFL Reading results is encouraging. However, a more solid indication of progress awaits additional test results. The AFL Reading Assessment will be written again by Grade 10 students in 2011.

**The School Division Common Mathematics Assessment**

_Grades 1 to 8 (2009)_

The Common Mathematics Assessment was developed by a team of teachers from the school division. The test is based upon the new Saskatchewan elementary and middle years mathematics curriculum. For most grades, 2009 was the first year students participated in this assessment and therefore the results will provide a baseline for future assessments. Assessment data from Grades 1 to 8 are presented in this report. The Grade 9 mathematics assessment was revamped in 2009 to match the strands of the current middle years assessment.

**An Analysis of the Assessment Results by Ethnicity**
The assessment data are displayed in graph form for each grade, year and ethnic group in the Appendix. For this measure, the data do not differentiate between First Nations and Métis students.

The graphs in the Appendix indicate that the performance of First Nations and Métis students is below that of non-First Nations and Métis students for every grade. However, except for Grade 1 and Grade 4, the achievement gap between First Nations and Métis students and non-First Nations and Métis students is between fourteen and seventeen percent even though the overall achievement scores vary widely amongst grades. For example the Grade 2 students as a group performed rather well on the mathematics assessment, whereas the Grade 8 students results showed the students were performing below grade level. However, the gap between First Nations and Métis students and non-First Nations and Métis students was similar.

**A Commentary on the Results**

Since the middle years classes (Grades 6 to 8) show an increasing challenge with Mathematical concepts, the Ministry of Education and the school division have implemented several programs. The first is the Mathematics Curriculum Renewal project. A few years ago the Ministry of Education released a new mathematics curriculum that is based upon the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol (WNCP) in Mathematics. Teachers are supported in the implementation of this new curriculum by an Integrated Learning Consultant and Mathematics Coaches. As well, the school division has implemented the Math Makes Sense and the First Steps in Mathematics resources. Math Makes Sense is the mathematics resource chosen to support the provincial mathematics curriculum. This resource includes print material for students and teachers, assessment tools, and e-learning resources. First Steps in Mathematics is a supplemental resource which includes diagnostic tools for teachers.

It will be interesting to watch these assessment results as the new Mathematics curriculum becomes more fully implemented across the school division. We note that the school division Common Mathematics Assessment showed similar results to the provincial Mathematics Assessment for Learning for Grades 5 and 8.
Appendix

Assessment for Learning: Grade 4 Reading (2007 and 2009)
Achievement Scores by Reading Strategy: Analysis by Ethnicity

Data Note: The numbers in each graph indicate the percentage of students at each school division benchmark.

Figure 9: First Nations Students

Figure 10: Métis Students

Figure 11: Non-First Nations or Métis Students
Using Cueing Systems Connecting to Prior Knowledge Making Inferences/Predictions, Drawing Conclusions Noting Key Ideas and Finding Support Summarizing/ Recalling/ Organizing Information Recognizing Author's Message and Craft

Figure 12: First Nations Students

Figure 13: Métis Students

Figure 14: Non-First Nations or Métis Students

School Division Benchmarks

Green Zone 80% to 100%
Above Grade Level Expectation

Blue Zone 65% to 79%
At Grade Level Expectation

Yellow Zone 56% to 64%
Slightly Below Grade Level Expectation

Red Zone 0% to 55%
Below Grade Level Expectation

2009
Assessment for Learning: Grade 4 Reading (2007 and 2009)
Performance Outcomes by Reading Strategy: Analysis by Ethnicity

Data Note: Standards were set by a panel of teachers and academics with language arts and reading skill development and teaching expertise. The panel deliberated over the nature and difficulty of each assessment item, considered the learning environment and assessment context, and discussed rationale for their judgments. To help interpret how well students did in performance areas, two standards were set: one for adequate or higher performance, and one for proficient or higher performance. (Ministry of Education)

Figure 15: First Nations Students

Figure 16: Métis Students

Figure 17: Non-First Nations or Métis Students
Data Note: The numbers in each graph indicate the percentage of students at each standard.

Figure 18: First Nations Students

Figure 19: Métis Students

Figure 20: Non-First Nations or Métis Students
Assessment for Learning: Grade 7 Reading (2007 and 2009)
Achievement Scores by Reading Strategy: Analysis by Ethnicity

Data Note: The numbers in each graph indicate the percentage of students at each school division benchmark.

Figure 21: First Nations Students

Figure 22: Métis Students

Figure 23: Non-First Nations or Métis Students
Figure 24: First Nations Students

Figure 25: Métis Students

Figure 26: Non-First Nations or Métis Students
Assessment for Learning: Grade 7 Reading (2007 and 2009)
Performance Outcomes by Reading Strategy: Analysis by Ethnicity

Data Note: Standards were set by a panel of teachers and academics with language arts and reading skill development and teaching expertise. The panel deliberated over the nature and difficulty of each assessment item, considered the learning environment and assessment context, and discussed rationale for their judgments. To help interpret how well students did in performance areas, two standards were set: one for adequate or higher performance, and one for proficient or higher performance. (Ministry of Education)

Figure 27: First Nations Students

Figure 28: Métis Students

Figure 29: Non-First Nations or Métis Students
Using Cueing Systems Connecting to Prior Knowledge Making Inferences/Predictions, Drawing Conclusions Noting Key Ideas and Finding Support Summarizing/Recalling/Organizing Information Recognizing Author's Message and Craft

Reading Strategies Adequate Standard Proficient Standard

Data Note: The numbers in each graph indicate the percentage of students at each standard.

Figure 30: First Nations Students 2009

Figure 31: Métis Students 2009

Figure 32: Non-First Nations or Métis Students 2009
Assessment for Learning: Grade 10 Reading (2007 and 2009)
Achievement Scores by Reading Strategy: Analysis by Ethnicity

Data Note: The numbers in each graph indicate the percentage of students at each school division benchmark.
Using Cueing Systems Connecting to Prior Knowledge Making Inferences/Predictions, Drawing Conclusions Noting Key Ideas and Finding Support Summarizing/ Recalling/ Organizing Information Recognizing Author’s Message and Craft

Figure 36: First Nations Students

Figure 37: Métis Students

Figure 38: Non-First Nations or Métis Students

School Division Benchmarks

Green Zone 80% to 100%
Above Grade Level Expectation
Blue Zone 65% to 79%
At Grade Level Expectation
Yellow Zone 56% to 64%
Slightly Below Grade Level Expectation
Red Zone 0% to 55%
Below Grade Level Expectation

2009
Assessment for Learning: Grade 10 Reading (2007 and 2009)
Performance Outcomes by Reading Strategy: Analysis by Ethnicity

Data Note: Standards were set by a panel of teachers and academics with language arts and reading skill development and teaching expertise. The panel deliberated over the nature and difficulty of each assessment item, considered the learning environment and assessment context, and discussed rationale for their judgments. To help interpret how well students did in performance areas, two standards were set: one for adequate or higher performance, and one for proficient or higher performance. (Ministry of Education)

Figure 39: First Nations Students

Figure 40: Métis Students

Figure 41: Non-First Nations or Métis Students
Using Cueing Systems Connecting to Prior Knowledge Making Inferences/Predictions, Drawing Conclusions Noting Key Ideas and Finding Support Summarizing/ Recalling/ Organizing Information Recognizing Author's Message and Craft

Reading Strategies

Adequate Standard Proficient Standard

Data Note: The numbers in each graph indicate the percentage of students at each standard.

Figure 42: First Nations Students

Figure 43: Métis Students

Figure 44: Non-First Nations or Métis Students
Figure 45: Common Mathematics Assessment (2008-2009): Grade 1

First Nations and Métis Students

- Numbers: 61%
- Patterns and Relations: 70%
- Oral Numbers: 62%
- Oral Patterns and Relations: 69%
- Oral Shape and Space: 77%

Non First Nations and Métis Students

- Numbers: 71%
- Patterns and Relations: 83%
- Oral Numbers: 81%
- Oral Patterns and Relations: 88%
- Oral Shape and Space: 90%

Data Note: 2008-2009 was the first year the Common Mathematics Assessment was administered to students. The numbers in each graph indicate the percentage of correct answers for each mathematic strand.

Figure 46: Common Mathematics Assessment (2008-2009): Grade 2

First Nations and Métis Students

- Numbers: 63%
- Patterns and Relations: 59%
- Shape and Space: 83%
- Statistics and Probability: 78%
- Oral Numbers: 58%
- Oral Patterns and Relations: 77%
- Oral Shape and Space: 62%

Non First Nations and Métis Students

- Numbers: 73%
- Patterns and Relations: 71%
- Shape and Space: 91%
- Statistics and Probability: 91%
- Oral Numbers: 60%
- Oral Patterns and Relations: 80%
- Oral Shape and Space: 94%

Figure 47: Common Mathematics Assessment (2008-2009): Grade 3

First Nations and Métis Students

- Numbers: 51%
- Patterns and Relations: 44%
- Shape and Space: 51%
- Statistics and Probability: 52%

Non First Nations and Métis Students

- Numbers: 67%
- Patterns and Relations: 57%
- Shape and Space: 64%
- Statistics and Probability: 74%

Figure 48: Common Mathematics Assessment (2008-2009): Grade 4

First Nations and Métis Students

- Numbers: 52%
- Patterns and Relations: 49%
- Shape and Space: 50%
- Statistics and Probability: 42%

Non First Nations and Métis Students

- Numbers: 70%
- Patterns and Relations: 67%
- Shape and Space: 69%
- Statistics and Probability: 67%
Figure 49: Common Mathematics Assessment (2008-2009): Grade 5
First Nations and Métis Students
Non First Nations and Métis Students

Figure 50: Common Mathematics Assessment (2008-2009): Grade 6
First Nations and Métis Students
Non First Nations and Métis Students

Figure 51: Common Mathematics Assessment (2008-2009): Grade 7
First Nations and Métis Students
Non First Nations and Métis Students

Figure 52: Common Mathematics Assessment (2008-2009): Grade 8
First Nations and Métis Students
Non First Nations and Métis Students

School Division Benchmarks

Green Zone  80% to 100%
Above Grade Level Expectation

Blue Zone  65% to 79%
At Grade Level Expectation

Yellow Zone  56% to 64%
Slightly Below Grade Level Expectation

Red Zone  0% to 55%
Below Grade Level Expectation