

Sun West School Division
No. 207

Continuous Improvement Report

2007-08 School Year

February 2009



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The results identified in this report are for 2007-08.

Chapter 1

School Division Context

Sun West School Division Context

Sun West School Division (SWSD) is a rural school division in the west central area of Saskatchewan. Sun West serves 4,635 students in 39 schools comprised of three elementary schools, nineteen K- 12 schools and three high schools, as well as 15 Hutterite Colony schools. Sun West's geographical composition is approximately 28,000 square kilometers.

All schools provide the provincial core curriculum and deliver a multi-faceted program to meet the diverse learning needs of all students. Programming opportunities include: pre-kindergarten in two communities, advanced placement, alternate education programs for high school students seeking to complete their education and special needs programming for a diverse group of learners.

Sun West School Division Mission

Our Mission is *Learning together*.

Sun West School Division Vision

Our Vision as a school division is *Success for All*.

Shared Values of Sun West School Division

Meeting the *Success for all* in Sun West School Division is achieved through commitment to shared values:

1. ACCOUNTABILITY

We value individual and organizational accountability.

We champion responsibility toward each other as individuals, as governing bodies, schools, and communities.

2. RESPECT

We value a culture of mutual respect, trust, and understanding.

We champion the creation of safe, positive, caring environments.

3. COOPERATION

We value cooperative and collaborative relationships which promote responsible citizenship and the appreciation of a rural culture.

We strive to be approachable, active listeners who openly share information, express our ideas, and attempt to understand the ideas of others.

4. LIFE LONG LEARNING

We value teaching the whole child in learning environments that develop the student's potential.

We strive to provide meaningful, creative, and innovative learning opportunities.

5. LEADERSHIP

We value responsible leadership which is committed to creating and maintaining a positive, productive, and unified school division.

We strive for excellence in teamwork and shared effective leadership in our school division.

Sun West School Division Board Goals

A. LEADERSHIP

To create a unified board which leads with a proactive approach, innovative thinking, and is accountable for its actions.

B. FUNDING EDUCATION

To achieve fair and equitable funding for education.

C. GOVERNANCE

To govern through strategic board governance which includes alignment with the division's needs and monitored through a focus on outcomes.

E. PARTNERSHIPS

To continue to seek partnerships that enhance the educational opportunities for students.

F. COMMUNICATIONS

To implement the Board communication strategy to effectively inform and engage staff, School Community Councils and the public, as well as promoting the division through effective public relations.

Governance Structure

Organizational Overview

Sun West School Division is governed by an elected board of ten trustees, each representing one of ten geographical subdivisions in the school division. Trustees are elected for three-year terms and are responsible for the policy direction that guides the school division. The Board's governance goal is to govern through strategic governance, which includes alignment with the division's goals and monitored through a focus on outcomes.

At the school level (non-colony), a School Community Council works with the school staff to support the school community in achieving *Success for all* for the students and families in their community. The SCC is elected for a two year term with half of the council members being elected each year at the SCC Annual General Meeting.

The Hutterite Colonies are each represented by their German teacher and the First Minister from their specific colony. The SWSD teaching and support staff on each colony meet regularly with the colony representatives to dialogue about colony students. As well, the school division hosts one to two meetings a year to collaborate with all colonies in a group forum.

In January, 2006 Sun West School Division was the result of the amalgamation of four complete and two partial school divisions. Since that time much effort has been given to the formation of a strategic plan with Board and system goals as well as administrative policies and operations. The plan is a three year plan that is renewed annually.

The Learning Program

Sun West schools range in enrolment from 31-282 students in an elementary program to a range of 69-369 students in a K-12 program to 310-458 students in a high school program. As well, the colony schools are multi-grade classrooms with 6-28 students. Programming in all schools follows the provincial Core Curriculum Required Areas of Study and the Six Effective Practices of Effective Schools. Elementary schools provide both adaptations and enhancement of programming as required by students. Modified, alternative education and functional integrated programming is available at the middle/secondary level, as well as advanced placement courses, distance learning courses and alternate education programs in some schools and communities. Career and Work Exploration programs are available in all schools and an apprenticeship partnership is in progress in our largest community.

Sun West schools offer a varied and extensive extra-curricular program which includes the arts, sports, special groups, and recreation activities outside the classroom environment.

Student Services

Support services are critical to the students and families that are faced with managing additional challenges. School psychologists, child and youth counsellors, an addictions educator, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapist, physical therapist and learning/special education consultants work with students, families and teachers on a daily basis to support student learning. Programs are created and revised as necessary for students who experience physical, intellectual, behavioural and emotional challenges, as well as at-risk youth.

Partnerships

As a rural school division Sun West has partnerships with a variety of organizations. Great Plains College is an important partner in our alternate education programming for at-risk youth and special programming needs within the school division. The Youth Apprenticeship Partnership with the Kindersley Business Community and the Ministry of Education has provided direction and support for youth in the trades. As well, Heartland Health has been an ongoing partner with both short term and long term projects and the Saskatchewan Arts Board has partnered for an Artist in School Residence program for a third consecutive year.

Many schools have community-based partnerships with Recreation, towns/villages and community-based groups.

Continuous Improvement Framework

Sun West School Division sets its educational priorities based on the Ministry of Education's priorities. It is important to note that as a school division we have emphasized two main areas of priority – reading and improving student achievement. As a school division we also have a number of secondary goals and priorities in the areas of student achievement, equitable opportunities and smooth transitions. As a school division we believe that we need to focus our energies in a planned way. As a restructured school division developing a learning culture that responds well to change has been a work in progress and has required perseverance and devoted attention to forming our new identity as Sun West.

Since 2007, Sun West has focused its system goals to align with the educational priorities outlined by the Ministry of Education. The focus on improving student outcomes has been in two priority areas:

- Higher Literacy and Achievement
- Smooth Transitions into and through the System

The area of governance and administration has also been a priority area:

- Governance, Facilities and Accountability

Division Challenges

Sun West School Division continues to review and refine the delivery of programming to a diverse culture in rural Saskatchewan.

Our major challenges include:

- Ensuring the development of skills for students to achieve *Success for all*;
- Delivering a core program with options to a declining student population;
- Staffing our small schools with personnel who can meet student needs;
- Meeting the increasing demands of special education students, including English as an Acquired Language program delivery to immigrant families;
- Having the technological infrastructure that can deliver distance learning opportunities to secondary level students;
- Developing a culture in the school division that continues to require attention and is an important foundation for all our work;
- Overcoming the issue of distance for meeting the needs of students and building capacity with staff;
- Accessing the support personnel to deliver and support specialized programming for students;
- Supporting the transition for students throughout their school years and particularly in the post secondary transitioning process;
- Providing effective facilities that address the needs of programming and the age of the facility;
- Continuing to offer programs in and out of the classroom that help develop the whole child.

Chapter 2

Division Priorities Reporting

Division Priorities Reporting

Priority Area: Higher Literacy and Achievement

Division Goal:

By June, 2009, each student will read at grade level or beyond or according to the student's Personal Program or Student Support Plan.

Background:

Sun West School Division has emphasized the importance of reading and the impact that reading has in all areas of learning.

Sun West supports this priority through a broad range of strategies, which include:

- Teams – school/staff
- Division leadership team
- Professional development
- Teacher leaders
- Technology

The school division has established and continues to build a student assessment program which supports and informs our goal achievement.

Type of Assessment	Grade Levels Administered in 2007-08
Reading (DRA Running Records – SWSD)	Grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Reading (SWSD)	Grade 7
Canadian Achievement Test 3 (Canadian Testing Centre)	Grades 3, 6, 9
Provincial Assessment for Learning Ministry of Education	Writing Grades 5, 8,11

Priority Strategy: Provide programming which meets the diverse needs of the student learner and support for staff to provide a positive learning environment.

Key Action	Status	Summary Update
1. Development of school level reading goal which supports the division based goal.	Progressing	Schools with SCCs have developed school level goal(s) as part of their School Learning Improvement Plan for improving reading literacy
2. Reading Initiative Steering Committee established to provide direction and input for promoting reading	Completed	Reading Slogan – “Make Reading Your Escape” and promo poster released to public and schools; reading commercials and reading promo singing commercial spots
	Progressing	Implementation of focus on reading throughout the division
2. Continued implementation of DRA-Running Records and school division implementation of reading strategies and division-based assessment to inform student reading achievement	Progressing	All grade 1-5 teachers inserviced in DRA Running Records Grade 7 division-based reading assessment completed for benchmark data Common assessments being created at the school level
3. Implementation of Guided Reading at the elementary level	Emerging	Ten pilot schools implement
4. Implementation of Math Makes Sense resource	Progressing	Math teacher leader in each school to support math implementation
5. Distance Learning opportunities broadened to provide small schools with a wide range of course offerings from subject specific teachers	Emerging	Distance delivery through the upgrade of hardware and network applications.
	Emerging	Distance Learning Centre established in Kenaston for first year of operation in 2008-09
	Emerging	Bandwidth issue continuing to be addressed to facilitate learning
6. Support Colony school context and Hutterite culture.	Progressing	Oral language development and EAL of colony learners

Outcomes Report:

Student literacy outcomes in the area of literacy, specifically reading, are reported through a broad range of assessment data: Sun West division-based assessments, DRA, provincial Assessment for Learning results and Canadian Achievement Test 3 results.

Note: the term “adequate” is considered acceptable performance for students at a given grade level.

Reading Results

1. Sun West Schools Division-based Assessments (criterion referenced)

Reading	Percentage of Students at Adequate and Above	
	2006-07	2007-08
AFL		
Grade 7	n/a	
• Comprehension		92%
• Readers’ Response		31%
Grade 10		n/a

2. Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) (criterion referenced)

Reading	Percentage of Students at Adequate and Above	
	2006-07	2007-08
Grade 1	n/a	84%
Grade 2		85%
Grade 3		89%
Grade 4		79%
Grade 5		69%

3. Provincial Assessment for Learning Assessments (criterion referenced)

Note: Results that are higher than provincial results are indicated with an “up” arrow, results that are lower than provincial results are indicated with a down arrow. An equal sign indicates the division result is similar to the provincial result.

Higher	↑
Similar	=
Lower	↓

The AFL Reading assessment is conducted every second year.

AFL Reading	Percentage of Students at Adequate and Above	
	2006-07	2007-08
Grade 4		
• Comprehension	90.3% ↑	n/a
• Making Connections	90.5% ↑	
Grade 7		
• Comprehension	93.7% ↑	n/a
• Making Connections	90.5% ↑	
Grade 10		
• Comprehension	91% ↑	n/a
• Making Connections	93.5% =	

4. Canadian Achievement Tests (CAT3) (norm-referenced)

The Canadian Achievement Test – version 3 (CAT3) is a national assessment based on expected student learnings drawn from all provincial curricula. This assessment is developed and provided to the school division by the Canadian Testing Centre. It is not specific to the Saskatchewan curricula. A national set of standards are developed based upon the various provincial curricula. One use of assessment is to gauge the performance of our students relative to students across the country.

Reading	Percentage of Students at Stanine 4 and Above	
	2006-07	2007-08
Grade 3	n/a	85%
Grade 6		82%
Grade 9		80%

Priority Area: Smooth transitions in and through the system

Background:

Sun West School Division is committed to providing a wide variety of programs that enable students to experience success throughout the Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 system. Due to the nature of our rural context there is little transition between schools as the majority of the schools are K-12 facilities. In the four locations where there are elementary and middle/secondary schools transition planning and meetings occur to support students and their families.

Priority Strategy: Support and ensure student success through specific learning and programming to meet their needs.

Key Action	Status	Summary Update
1. Pre-Kindergarten programming for identified groups in our larger communities and identify future growth needs	Progressing	Two established Pre-K programs
2. Alternate Education Programs supported to provide students struggling to succeed in a traditional school setting	Progressing	Three AEP programs in Biggar, Kindersley and Rosetown with a partnership with Great Plains College in each community
3. Access to Advanced Placement Programming	Emerging	AP programs in Calculus, ELA and Studio Art for level 30 students
4. Career Development support for students transitioning to work, trades, postsecondary technical institute, college, university or other	Progressing	Itinerant Career Development teachers to our smaller schools – 3.5 FTE for 11 schools to support students
	Progressing	Apprenticeship Partnership with Kindersley Business Community for 3-4 student apprenticeship placements
	Completed	Division-wide Career Fair hosted for 1,200 Grade 10,11 and 12 students in April 2007; event hosted every two years with multiple displayers and presenters
	Completed	Opportunity for individual student counselling related to professional colleges at U or S

Key Action	Status	Summary Update
5. Provide a voice for students to influence and advocate for their school experiences.	Progressing	Student Leadership Program initiated to provide dialogue among senior students and senior administration and the Board All 18 secondary level student representatives met with the Board to discuss educational matters
6. Monitor Special Education services and supports for student programming and revise as identified	Progressing	Refining the work with regard to Personal Program Plans for students and the Student Outcomes rubric
	Progressing	All schools implement a Student Support Team process for students requiring support
	Progressing	Use of the ISIS identification process for assessing student needs
	Emerging	Early stages of RTI implementation – creating a common understanding of process and work to support student learning and success
7. Student Support Services model reviewed and revised	Emerging	Revised model of delivery for Psych/SLP/ OT/PT services

Grade 12 Graduation Rates:

	2006-07	2007-08
Course Completion Rate - Grade 12	88%	93%
Number of Graduates	366	396
Average Number of Credits	25	27

Priority Area: Governance, Facilities & Accountability

Background:

Governance:

Sun West School Division has implemented strategic planning since its inception in January, 2006. This is an area of continued learning and growth. Sun West is committed to the education of students in rural Saskatchewan and their future success. School Community Councils are supported in their development and voice in the education of our students.

Facilities:

Sun West School Division recognizes the importance of a school facility and its impact on the pride of the community, student achievement and the delivery of programming. Sun West has twenty-four school buildings that it oversees in terms of safety, maintenance and fiscal responsibility. Many of these school buildings are 50 years or more old. Some have had major renovations completed in the past 10-15 years and the division's five year plan continues to address major expenses such as roofs, air quality, school grounds, declining enrolments and use of available space.

Ministry advisement of the approval of Elrose Composite School project in the 2009 budget will address a variety of issues.

Accountability:

Sun West School Division continues to build its capacity in the areas of leadership, planning and allocation of resources to support the priorities of continuous improvement.

Priority Strategy: Provide a stable governance model and school division infrastructure which supports the operation of the school division and its learning program.

Key Action	Status	Summary Update
1. Establish School Community Councils to enhance parent and community involvement in improving student learning and success.	Completed	All communities have established SCCs and have had one subsequent election. Regional workshops held. One SCC disestablished due to school closure. Two SCCs joined due to combining two schools to a K-12 school.
2. Funding support to SCCs provided with best accounting practices support and guidelines.	Progressing	\$2,000 allocated to each SCC during the school year.

Facilities:

Priority Strategy: Provide and maintain safe and pleasing facilities and grounds.

Key Action	Status	Summary Update
1. Monitor and address facility needs in the five year school division plan	Progressing	Ongoing maintenance occurs to maintain and enhance current buildings and plan is to have all detailed in the FAME database Major project work identified in the five year plan
2. Review status and update of school division property in relation to land titles	Progressing	Approximately 100 old school sites transferred to adjacent property owner; approximately 160 sites to be completed

Planned Facilities - Maintenance Funding:

Year	2006-07	2007-08
Overall facilities expenditures	11%	11%
% of total facilities operating costs	4.55%	3.87%
Total SD Expenditures	\$47,027,331	\$ 48,974,411

Completed Major Maintenance Projects:

Location	Budget	Actual
Elrose Composite School lighting upgrade	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,208.47
Eston Accessibility upgrades	20,000	15,960.35
Eston Composite Gym painted	15,000	15,000.00
Eston Composite Furnace Replacement	10,000	9,279.53
Harris-Tessier Central School renovation and relocation of library to reduce school size	10,000	4,999.84
KCS Gym Hardwood Floor Replacement	110,000	111,277.40
North West Central School – four decommissioned rooms removed	30,000	41,656.00
Outlook Elementary Roof Repair	30,000	31,089.60
Outlook Elementary Rooftop HVAC	15,000	13,105.38
Westberry Gym Floor Replacement	45,000	48,554.64
Division Office Renovation (phase 2 of 2)	600,000	369,283.58
New Maintenance Shop – Kindersley area	60,000	122,089.57

Priority Strategy: Support best practices for the management of the fiscal resources of the school division.

Key Action	Status	Summary Update
1. Implementation of Navision	Progressing	Division level financial reporting aligned
2. Education of all in Best Accounting Practices - PSAB	Progressing	Decentralized school level access and management in progress

Priority Strategy: Ensure the system-wide planning and reporting process occurs.

Key Action	Status	Summary Update
1. CIF Alignment at the system level	Completed	Annual division reporting on priorities
2. Mentoring division and school leaders to experience identified priority success	Emerging	New administrator mentorship support
	Progressing	System goals established at the division level

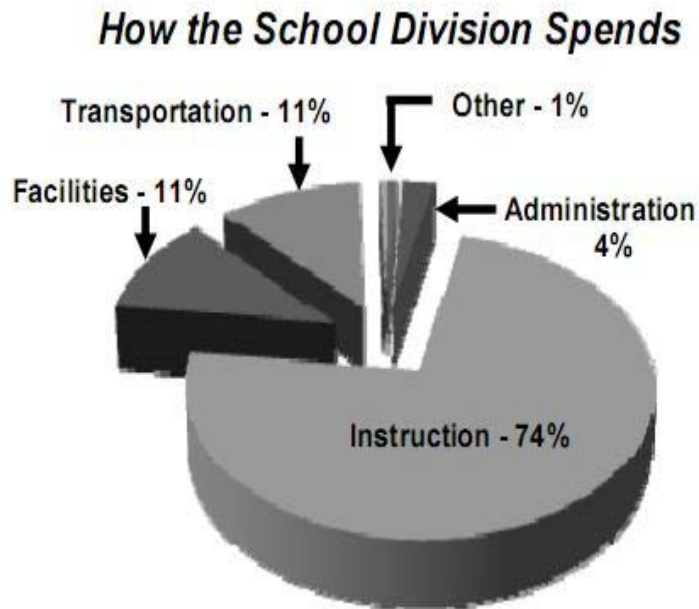
Chapter 3

Financial Plan

Financial Plan

Sun West School Division prides itself on its fiscal responsibility in supporting educational opportunities.

In 2007-08 Sun West adopted an operational budget of \$48.6 million. Of this total budget, 74% was dedicated to the provision of educational programs and services. Another 11% was dedicated to maintaining facilities to support instructional programs and services. A further 11% was dedicated to the provision of transportation services to rural students. Expenditures in the “other” category include interest expenses, tuition fees to other divisions, and school funds. Governance and administration includes expenditures for the Board and division-level administration.



Reporting on the Financial Plan

Priority	2007-08 Budget
Higher Literacy and Achievement	
• Reading Initiative and Assessments	\$ 16,000
• Distance Learning	160,000
• Curricula Implementation	696,075
• Assessment	118,820
• Artist in Residence	10,000

Priority	2007-08 Budget
Smooth Transitions	
• Pre-K Programming & supports	\$ 179,224
• Secondary Level Programming – AEP and AP	161,972 6,500
• Career Development and Transition	339,533
• Student Leadership Program	8,000
• Special Education Supports	339,330
• Student Services Supports	255,075

It is difficult to separate out expenditures in this area as it involves a number of complex areas – division level administration and trustees. Ongoing expenses include governance, division-level administration, facilities operations and transportation expenses for all students' education

Priority	2007-08 Budget
Governance & Accountability	
• Ongoing governance costs	\$ 148,428
• School Community Councils	57,000
• Leadership development	Internal resources re-allocated

Chapter 4

Division Communication Plan

Division Communications Plan

Sun West School Division communicates with its public in a variety of ways:

1. Detailed website which provides in-depth information on school division matters
2. Annual division meeting
3. Communications Bulletin, published monthly
4. Education Today articles for media publication
5. Media releases regarding Board motions and business
6. Support of Student Leadership Program and consultation with students
7. Annual regional workshops for all SCC members
8. Consultation with SCCs regarding educational matters
9. Surveys regarding a variety of educational matters – parents regarding band programming; drugs and other substance use completed by students and parents
10. Public meetings regarding school review and closure process
11. Future public consultation regarding other matters – distance learning opportunities, breadth of program offerings, etc.
12. Strategic planning regarding transparency to all stakeholders

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