INDUS SCHOOL
Report to Council

November 29, 2016

a. Student Population: 208
b. One additional Learning Support Assistant
c. Term 1 ends tomorrow
    i. Term 2 Jr. High Options: Ice Sports (Tomlinson), Woodwork (Winters), Photography (Wyper)

d. Professional Learning
    i. Mental Health in young people
    ii. Communication with assistive technology
    iii. Programming for students with special needs
    iv. Reading intervention (Fountas & Pinnell Leveled Literacy)
    v. Dossier – the new IPP/PLP system
    vi. MANDT training
    vii. Hour Zero emergency preparedness

e. Events/Undertakings:

i. Girls' volleyball
ii. Ultimate
iii. Girls' and boys' Basketball
iv. Lockdown Drill, Fire Drills, On Alert Drill, Shelter in Place Drill
v. CHS students tutoring Jr. Band
vi. Movie Night
vii. Stepping Stones program in Gr. 7
viii. Book Fair
ix. Parent / Teacher / Student interviews
x. Farm Safety presentation
xi. Grade 5 & 9 Vaccinations
xii. Outdoor Education field trip
xiii. Gr 1-3 Dental Health presentations
xiv. Beginner Band concert
xv. We Day
xvi. Google Read & Write tutorial
xvii. Hallowe'en maze
xviii. Tech team
xix. We Scare Hunger food drive
xx. Grade 9 – Take Our Kids to Work day
xxi. Grades 1-4 to Glenbow
xxii. Remembrance Day
xxiii. Bus Evacuation Drills
xxiv. School Photos
xxv. Arena Lunch
xxvi. Hot Lunch
xxvii. "Massed" Band concert @ CHS
xxviii. Safety Audit Dec 1
xxix. Report Cards Dec 2

f. School Annual Results Report
    i. Posted online
    ii. Highlights in upcoming newsletter

OVERVIEW OF ACHIEVEMENTS

It is always exciting to see success and improvement. This year, Indus School takes pride in significant improvements in our Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Test results and in our overall success in the Alberta Satisfaction Survey (APORI) results. The RVS satisfaction survey results also reflected many areas of strength.

It is important to consider, however, that our small numbers mean that caution must be exercised when interpreting our results. The provincial achievement tests are written in Grades 6 & 9. Last year we had 21 students in Grade 6 and 27 in Grade 9. The Alberta Education survey reflects the opinions of 46 students in Grades 4 & 7 along with 10 parents of students in Grades 4 & 7 and 14 teachers. The RVS survey gathered opinions from 119 students in Grades 4 through 9, 40 parents (with half of them having children in Grades 8 & 9) and all staff members.

Goal One – Learners are successful.

Our Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Test results were outstanding. Our students outperformed their provincial counterparts in all four test subjects (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies). Further, if we exclude the results for students who were exempted from the test (they are reported as not having met the acceptable standard), we see that 96% of students who wrote ELA achieved the acceptable standard, 87% did so for Math, 100% in Science, and 92% in Social Studies.

Our Grade 6 results are not as strong overall, but when results for students who wrote the test are compared to the provincial results, we see 90% achieved the acceptable standard in ELA (matching the provincial average) and 95% passed the section specific to reading (exceeding the provincial average by 5%).

These results are supported by the results from questions 25 and 26 on the RVS staff satisfaction survey, which show that 80% (100% excluding undecided responses) of staff members are satisfied that students are demonstrating literacy and numeracy skills appropriate to their grade levels. Additionally 87% of staff members (100% excluding undecided responses) agree that students are developing 21st Century Competencies.

Goal Two – Learners are engaged.

Tangible evidence that students are, or are not, engaged is easy to gather in the classroom. Most students are focused on their assigned tasks most of the time. The majority of assignments are completed by the vast majority of students. Observations of students being engaged in their studies are supported by the response to RVS student question #20, where 86% (96% excluding undecided responses) of students stated that they take responsibility for their learning, and parent question #20 where 75% (90% excluding undecided responses) believed their children take responsibility for their learning. Additionally, 68% (82% excluding undecided responses) of Indus students agree that they are learning the skills they will need when leaving school.

Goal Three – Learners are supported.

Supporting learners is the means by which success is realized. Our great PAT results were achieved through quality teaching, dedicated learning, and a solid base of support. The most fundamental

support students receive is from their peers. On the RVS survey, 61% of students (88% excluding undecided responses) agreed that students care about each other; this is 10% (18% excluding undecided responses) above divisional average. In this case, the high number of undecided responses, 30%, is likely due to the nature of the question (typically indicating that many students do care about each other, but some do not). The caring atmosphere extends to staff members as well: 83% (85% excluding undecided responses) of parents, 74% (86% excluding undecided responses) of students, and 92% (96% excluding undecided responses) of staff members agreed that the staff care about students.

For those students who are on Individualized Program Plans, 87% of staff members (100% excluding undecided responses) and 77% of parents (84% excluding undecided responses) agree students are achieving their IPP goals.

PRIORITY AREAS FOR FUTURE SCHOOL EDUCATION PLANS

Despite our overall positive results, the results from our PATs and satisfaction surveys suggest areas for growth. We will be undertaking a detailed investigation into the topics with lower than acceptable levels of satisfaction. Our plan is to conduct interviews and focus groups with parents, staff, and students, along with providing opportunities to provide formal feedback in a revised, more focused, survey. From the information gathered, the staff will develop and implement strategies and interventions around communication, education, and school culture, that will improve the quality of education and overall experience of students at Indus School.

Goal One – Learners are successful.

Other than in ELA, our Grade 6 PAT results were not strong. The 2016 PAT results, which are lower than provincial results in Math, Science, and Social Studies, might suggest a need for examination of program delivery in all Division II classes. With, however, 33% of the 21 students on Individualized Program Plans, it is not unreasonable to anticipate lower than average results on a standardized test.

Another area requiring further examination is citizenship. Only 70% of parents (82% excluding undecided responses) were satisfied that the school is helping students become good citizens. As citizenship is one of the school priorities, we are undertaking an initiative to improve communication through the monthly newsletter and regular email updates, thus reducing the percentage of parents answering “don’t know” regarding this topic. We are also conducting informal and formal information gathering activities to determine the specific concerns of the 15% (18% excluding undecided responses) who expressed dissatisfaction in this area.

Goal Two – Learners are engaged.

Engagement means going beyond basic compliance and completion of assigned tasks; it refers to being actively involved, ideally engrossed or captivated. To examine how successful Indus School has been in engaging students, we can look to the survey results around student confidence (a product of engagement) and perceptions regarding student happiness with school and their classes.

The RVS student questionnaire addressed the notion of learner engagement with several questions. From the responses we learn that only 55% (72% excluding undecided responses) of our students are happy to go to school. Delving deeper, these results ranged from a low of 35% (50% excluding undecided responses) of the Grade 6 class up to 83% (100% excluding undecided responses) of the Grade 5s. Addressing the needs of students who express unhappiness with school will continue to be a priority at Indus School. This will include an examination of how we can improve results such as only 59% (76%) of students feeling their teachers make class interesting. We will also be studying the disconnect between the various stakeholder groups, students, parents, and staff, regarding student attitudes to school. When questioned about whether students enjoy learning, 92% of staff (96% excluding undecided responses) agreed that they do, compared to 73% (85% excluding undecided responses) of parents and 55% (72% excluding undecided responses) of students. While the differences may be a product of the general question to staff compared to a specific question to students, it certainly warrants investigation and intervention.

Another interesting variation in results is related to students taking responsibility for their learning. As noted in *Achievements* above, 86% (96% excluding undecided responses) of students believe they take responsibility for their learning; only 50% of staff members (75% excluding undecided responses) agreed that students take responsibility for their learning. Again, this could result from the student question pertaining to only the student answering it, while the staff question is in regards to the student body in general. It could also result from different beliefs about what taking responsibility for learning constitutes. Further investigation is required.

Goal Three – Learners are supported.

Our results related to learner support were generally very strong. There were however, a few interesting results that suggested areas to examine and address. Only 62% of students agreed they received the feedback on their work that they needed in order to improve. This number increases to 83% once undecided responses are filtered out. This suggests we need to help students develop the metacognitive strategies required to determine if they are improving.

Some very specific needs were also revealed in the surveys. In the Alberta Education survey, satisfaction around the manner in which Indus School prepares students for the *world of work*, at 69%, were well below the provincial average of 83%. This relates to the results of the RVS survey which show that only 56% of Grade 8 and 9 students (57% excluding undecided responses) agree that Indus School helps them plan for their futures. Along similar lines, only 36% (43% excluding undecided responses) of Grade 8 and 9 students expressed satisfaction with their understanding of how to access information regarding post-secondary education. Emphasis on career planning, both in Health class where it is part of the curriculum, and across the rest of the subjects (eg. what jobs exist in the field of mathematics?) in order to improve these results.

A final question, answered by only the Grade 8 and 9 students, revealed that only 44% of those students (55% excluding undecided responses) agreed that they have sufficient opportunities to be involved in decisions that affect student life. This raises some questions; it was difficult to enlist even one representative from each of these cohorts into Student Council, which is one of the official means by which student voice is recognized.