



**Ministry of Education  
Resource Management Division**

**2010/11 Continuing Education Enrolment Audit**

**AUDIT REPORT**

**SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 41 (Burnaby)**

## **2010/11 CONTINUING EDUCATION ENROLMENT AUDIT REPORT SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 41 (Burnaby)**

### **Background**

The Ministry of Education funds boards of education based on the number of student full time equivalents (FTEs) reported by the districts on *Form 1701: Student Data Collection* (Form 1701). The FTEs are calculated by factoring the number of qualifying courses the student takes. A funding formula is used to allocate funds to boards based primarily on the calculated student FTE.

Continuing Education centres provide adults who have not graduated from secondary school the option of obtaining a BC Adult Graduation Diploma or a regular Dogwood Diploma by taking courses offered through school districts, and effective September 1, 2008 boards that have passed motions may offer graduated adults specific courses tuition-free. In certain situations, school-age students may also enrol in Continuing Education courses.

The Resource Management Division annually conducts Continuing Education audits, in selected school districts, to verify enrolment reported on Form 1701. School districts are selected for audit based on a variety of factors including the length of time since their last audit, enrolment size, and changes in enrolment.

Since 2009/10 funding recoveries are expanded to include FTEs outside of the sample where the auditors can make a clear link between the audit findings in the sample and those FTEs outside the sample.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Continuing Education enrolment audit is to provide assurance to the Ministry of Education and boards of education that Ministry policy, legislation and directions are being followed. The audits are based on *Form 1701: Student Data Collection, Completion Instructions for Public Schools* and related Ministry policies.

### **Description of the Audit Process**

An entry meeting was held with the Superintendent and Associate Superintendent responsible for Continuing Education. The purpose and processes of the audit were reviewed and information about the programs offered by the Continuing Education Department was provided. The administrators and the audit team discussed the procedures that would be followed to undertake the audit.

The auditors worked in the Burnaby School Board Office. The District provided the registration forms and daily attendance for all the students in the sample. In addition, the auditors requested further information on the progress and grades of some students. To minimize the likelihood of missing relevant data the auditors gave staff the opportunity to provide further information on all students where there was a discrepancy in the FTE calculation or questions related to a student's progress in the Literacy Foundation courses. All the auditors used a clarification sheet which tracked the additional information that was required for students. Throughout the audit the

Associate Superintendent and District Principal were made aware of any issues.

An exit meeting was conducted with the Superintendent and Associate Superintendent. At the exit meeting, the auditors presented their preliminary results and clarified any outstanding issues.

### **Description of the Programs**

School District No. 41 (Burnaby) has a large Continuing Education Department that provides a variety of opportunities to community members who wish to continue their formal schooling. There are seven Adult Education Centres throughout Burnaby offering Dogwood Certificate programs, Adult Graduation programs and Literacy Foundation programs to students of all ages. In addition, they offer many career-oriented certificate programs and general interest programs. The students in the Literacy Foundation courses and the secondary school completion programs come from diverse language and cultural backgrounds with a large range of educational needs. All Literacy Foundation courses and secondary school completion courses are offered in face-to-face, scheduled classes. Courses are offered throughout the day and in the evenings Monday through Friday and are scheduled during 12 months of the year.

### **Observations**

The auditors found that:

- 0.2500 graduated adult FTEs reported in September did not meet the attendance requirement for eligible courses at September 30, 2010. The Adult Funding Policy states that *“Eligible courses will be funded if they are documented on a Course Enrolment Form and if the student taking the course(s) meets the attendance requirements”*. *“Attendance is defined to be over one registration period AND either 1) a minimum of 10 hours of instruction in a classroom or learning centre for each course or a demonstrated completion of 10% of the course requirements OR 2) meets the active policy for distributed learning”*.
- 0.6250 graduated adult FTEs (0.5000 for September and 0.1250 for February) were claimed for students who were enrolled in and attending fewer courses than reported.
- 0.2500 non-graduated adult FTEs (0.1250 for September and 0.1250 for February) were claimed for students who were enrolled in and attending fewer courses than reported.
- 0.3750 school-age student FTEs reported in February were claimed for students who were enrolled in and attending fewer courses than reported.
- In each of the student categories above where funding claims were recommended for adjustment based on “enrolled in and attending fewer course than reported”, there were instances where it was verified students had transferred from a class scheduled in one part of the day to the same course scheduled at a different time in the day with both courses claimed for funding.
- There was no evidence that students in the Literacy Foundations courses received any formal Progress Reports. The auditors were advised that teachers met with the students when the Literacy Foundation course(s) ended, to discuss the students’ performance. At that time the teacher, either in consultation with the student or without input from the student, made a determination which course the student would be enrolled in for the next term. The Literacy Foundation Curriculum 2010 Manual (Page 4) states that *“Although the Literacy Foundations courses within each subject area are not creditable toward a graduation credential for either adult or school-age students, they are designated as four-credit courses*

*for Ministry of Education reporting and funding purposes. Student achievement in Literacy Foundations courses must be reported in accordance with provincial policy. According to the information provided to the auditors, no written statement of final grades was provided to students.*

- Documentation indicated that various staff members who taught Literacy Foundation courses were not providing final grades. Teacher mark books verified some teachers converted the students' total marks into a final letter grade while others reported a final mark based on a performance scale using ratings of 1, 2, 3 or 4. Marks based on performance scale ratings does not meet the directives of Ministerial Order 191/94 -The Student Progress Report Order – which states in Section 7: “(1) Student progress reports for students in grades 8 through 12 must, in relation to expected learning outcomes set out in the curriculum, contain (a) letter grades”; and, Section 8 states “the letter grades to be used and the requirements to be followed in assigning letter grades are those set out in Ministerial Order 192/94, the Provincial Letter Grades Order”.” According to the documentation and information provided to the auditors, final marks for these designated four-credit course claims were not in accordance with this Order.
- The District did not provide the audit team with a Board Policy regarding the use of ‘W’ (Withdrawal). Upon review of teacher mark books by the auditors and discussions with staff at the Continuing Education office indicated the District did not have the required policy when reporting a ‘W’ (Withdrawal) letter grade as either a term or a final grade. The Provincial Letter Grades Order states that for both term reports and final reports “According to the policy of the board, and upon request of the parent of the student or, when appropriate, the student, the principal, vice principal or director of instruction in charge of a school may grant permission to a student to withdraw from a course or subject. Auditors were advised that individual teachers (at times in consultation with the student and at other times solely by the teacher without student consultation), made the decision as to when to withdraw a student contrary to Ministerial Order 192/94.
- Where teachers were using letter grades as the final mark, there was no evidence to meet the directives of Ministerial Order 192/94 when assigning a failing grade. In accordance with the Provincial Letter Grades Order for Term Reports “The letter grade “F” may only be assigned if an “I” (In Progress) letter grade has been previously assigned for that course...”; and for Final Reports “F (Failed) may only be used as a final letter grade if an “I” (In Progress) letter grade has been previously assigned or the “F” is assigned as a result of failing a provincially examinable course”.
- The auditors noted that there were a number of instances where the student repeated a Literacy Foundations course more than once. Teachers’ mark books, which listed the activity for each assignment suggested that the content in a specific Literacy Foundations course was not necessarily the same as the content in the same course when it was taught by a different teacher. This raised the question as to whether these claims were for the same course repeated three times, or three locally developed courses assigned with one course code, particularly in the Literacy Foundations Social Studies course.
- All courses offered by the Continuing Education have a start and finish date but students can begin the Foundation Courses at any time. Regardless of when the students begin their course, all students finish their courses at the same time. This allows a student to begin a course in one funding claim period, drop out part way through and then re-register in the next funding claim period to re-take either all the learning outcomes of the course, or to continue their learning for only a portion of the learning outcomes in the fully funded course that was

not completed the first time the course was claimed for funding.

## **Recommendations**

The auditors recommend that:

- The District ensure that all students reported for funding meet the definition of attendance as defined in the Adult Funding Policy.
- The District's Continuing Education Department ensure that for all courses claimed at each funding claim period, students are enrolled and attending in accordance with Ministry requirements.
- The District's Continuing Education Department ensure that when a student transfers from one section of a course to a different section of the same course as a continuation of their learning, the course is only claimed once for funding.
- The District follow the directives of Ministerial Order 191/94 - Student Progress Report Order ensuring the practice of grading and reporting of progress to students in Literacy Foundation courses meet the requirements of that Order.
- The District ensure there is consistency in the grading of students in the Literacy Foundation courses and that student achievement is reported in accordance with Ministry policy.
- The District develop a policy to enable the use of 'W' (Withdrawal) in term and final reporting in accordance with Ministerial Order M192/94 – Provincial Letter Grades Order.
- The District ensure that an 'F' (Failing/Failed) letter grade is only used in accordance with the Provincial Letter Grades Order directives (including student reporting for Literacy Foundation courses).
- The Continuing Education Program ensure the Literacy Foundation courses are implemented as transition/bridging classes that lead to enrolment in Grade 11 and Grade 12 courses in order for students to be successful in courses required for graduation in either the Adult Graduation Program, the 2004 Graduation Program, or as a mechanism to upgrade their graduation diploma. The Literacy Foundation Courses are to provide standardized, competency-based Prescribed Learning Outcomes to address the eligible student's literacy development needs.
- The Continuing Education Program ensure that if a course is retaken only report for funding 4-credit course FTEs when the student has actually restarted and aims to undertake the course in its entirety. Reporting a 4-credit course claim when the student's intention is not to undertake all the learning outcomes of the course, does not meet the requirements of the Form 1701 reporting directives. Students re-enrolled in the same course who continue their learning from work previously completed or only to repeat activities are to be reported in accordance with a course credit equivalent to a unit of measurement that gives weighting to the value, level or time requirements of that portion of the academic course (i.e., a one-credit claim equals approximately 30 hours of instruction).
- The District's Continuing Education Program be scheduled for a return compliance audit to ensure Ministerial Orders and Ministry directives are met, and that the Literacy Foundations courses reported for funding meet the directives and intent of the current Literacy Foundations Curriculum Manual.

## **Auditors' Comments**

The auditors wish to express their appreciation to the District and program staff for their cooperation and hospitality.

**Funding & Compliance Branch  
Resource Management Division  
Ministry of Education  
April 13, 2011**

---