



**Ministry of Education
Knowledge Management and Accountability Division**

2013/14 Continuing Education Enrolment Audit

AUDIT REPORT

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 28 (QUESNEL)

2013/14 CONTINUING EDUCATION ENROLMENT AUDIT REPORT

School District No. 28 (Quesnel)

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.

The Ministry of Education 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.

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.

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.

In the 2013/14 school year, boards of education reported a total of 5,637.2737 full-time equivalent (FTE) students. School District No.28 (Quesnel) reported 324 Continuing Education students or 72.2500 FTEs for the September and February reporting periods.

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

A Continuing Education enrolment audit was conducted in School District No. 28 (Quesnel) the week of April 7th, 2014. The total enrolment reported at September 30, 2013 and February 14, 2014 was 72.2500 FTEs, of which 324 student files were reviewed.

A combined entry meeting was held with the Superintendent and the Continuing Education Centre's Principal to review the purpose of the audit and the criteria for funding as outlined in the Form 1701 Instructions. The process of the audit was 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 out of the School District's Board office. The Helen Dixon Centre which houses the Continuing Education program was being used for Kindergarten screening. All the student files and evidence needed for the audit had been moved to the Board office where a work space was made available to the audit team for the week.

The audit team followed a process which gave District staff the opportunity to locate and present additional evidence when the team found that such evidence was not available in the documentation presented by the school. To minimize the likelihood of missing relevant data, the staff were also given the opportunity to seek further information on all student claims when there was a discrepancy in the FTE calculation. Throughout the audit the Principal and the Superintendent were kept apprised of any issues.

A combined exit meeting was held with the Continuing Education Centre's Principal as well as with the Superintendent. At the exit meeting the auditors presented their preliminary results and clarified any outstanding issues.

Prior to the audit visit, the auditors undertook a verification of the school-assigned teachers' status with the Teacher Regulation Branch. It was verified that all the teachers were certified by the Teacher Regulation Branch.

Description of the Programs

The Continuing Education program in Quesnel operates out of two sites. The main site is located in the Helen Dixon Centre which is in the downtown area of North Quesnel. The Helen Dixon Centre is open to students on a drop-in basis Monday to Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and by appointment on Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Two classrooms, each equipped with a bank of computers, are available to students. There are four teachers assigned to the Continuing Education program located at the Helen Dixon Centre providing instruction in Math, Science, English/Humanities and Business. Students have access to their teachers at designated times throughout the week for small group or individual face-to face instruction. A lab instructor is available to ensure students have access to their electronic on-line self-paced courses.

Continuing Education programming is also available at Nazko Valley Elementary School and Community Centre. This site is located near the Nazko Band Reserve, approximately 100 kilometers west of Quesnel. The program site occupies a classroom space in the Community Centre of this joint-use building. The classroom is equipped with a bank of computers and high speed Internet. Students may register at the site during regular hours of operation or at the Helen Dixon site. Students may access their programming at either site. The hours of operation are flexible and fluctuate depending on attendance patterns. There is a weekly community bus into Quesnel which students take advantage of if they wish to meet with their teacher(s). Teachers are also available through email and telephone. A lab instructor is available during opening hours to ensure that students have access to their electronic on-line self-paced courses.

Observations:

The auditors found that:

- 0.2500 FTEs (0.125 school-age and 0.1250 graduated adults) were claimed in September for a course where the student did not meet the attendance requirements. The Form 1701 Instructions (P.14) states: “*school-aged students enrolled in Continuing Education Schools are reported when they meet the Adult Funding Policy’s definition of attendance...For all adult students enrolled in a continuing Education School, report according to the Adult Funding Policy”.*
- The Adult Funding Policy’s [definition of attendance](#) is defined to be over one reporting 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 Grade 10-12 active requirements as outlined in the [DL Active Policy](#).
- 0.1250 non graduated adult FTE were claimed in February for a course where the student did not meet the attendance requirements.
- 0.5000 graduated adult FTEs were claimed in September for courses which were ineligible because they were not on Appendix 1. The Adult Funding policy states that “*boards of education may receive funding for adult students who have graduated and who take a select group of upgrading and literacy courses....Courses eligible for funding for adults who have already graduated can be found in [Appendix 1: Courses Funded Under the Education Guarantee of the Education Guarantee page](#)”.*
- 0.1250 graduated adult FTE was reported in February for an ineligible course not listed on Appendix 1 of the Education Guarantee.
- 0.1250 non graduated adult FTE was claimed in February for a course that did not meet course requirements. The District had intended to offer a BAA course entitled, Introduction to Trades, which not fully developed to meet course requirements at the time of the reporting period. As the course was removed as an option in October 2013, the one student claim was reported in error.
- One student was claimed for Aboriginal Education supplemental funding. The District explained they are unable to provide additional programs and services to Aboriginal students in the Continuing Education Program.
- Evidence verifying students’ BC residency was not always available in the school files but was provided by the District upon request.
- Not all course claims were listed on the signed and dated Course Enrolment Form. Evidence for the courses claimed was available in the student file. In accordance with the [Adult Funding Policy](#) requirements, “*Eligible courses must be documented on a [Course Enrolment Form](#).*”
- There were a number of course claims reported in the wrong data collection period. These claims were reported after the funding collection period when the attendance requirement was met. The Form 1701 Instructions (P.14) state for the September Data Collection to “*report all new courses leading to graduation in which the student has met the attendance requirements between May 4, 2012 and September 30, 2013*” and for the February Data Collection period “*report all courses leading to graduation in which the student has met the attendance requirements between October 1, 2013 and February 14, 2014*”. The District explained that not claiming the courses in the funding period they were eligible were missed during the applicable data entry period. No recoveries were made in this instance as it was

verified these claims were not reported in a previous collection period.

Recommendations

The auditors recommend that:

- The District's Continuing Education Centre only report courses when the student claim meets the Adult Funding Policy's attendance requirements and ensure claims for funding correspond to the Form 1701 Instruction reporting timelines.
- The District's Continuing Education Centre ensure courses claimed for graduated adults are only those eligible courses listed on Appendix 1 of the Education Guarantee.
- The District ensure their Continuing Education Centre is adhering to the [Adult Graduation Program](#) and Adult Funding Policies requirements when reporting their student claims.
- The District ensure all student claims for Aboriginal Education supplemental meet the requirements in accordance with the Form 1701 Instructions.
- The District ensure evidence verifying student's ordinarily resident in BC status is readily available in the school files.
- The District's Continuing Education Centre ensure all course claims are listed on a current signed, and dated Course Enrolment/Selection Form.

Auditors' Comments

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

**Education Sector Quality Assurance Branch
Knowledge Management and Accountability Division
Ministry of Education
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