



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

2015/16 Distributed Learning Enrolment Audit

AUDIT REPORT

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 69 (Qualicum)

**COLLABORATIVE EDUCATION ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM
(CEAP)**

2015/16 DISTRIBUTED LEARNING ENROLMENT AUDIT REPORT SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 69 (Qualicum)

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 Distributed Learning (DL) 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.

DL programs and courses are alternatives to regular classroom-based instruction for students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 providing a method of instruction that relies primarily on indirect communication between learners and British Columbia (B.C.) certified educators, including internet, other electronic-based delivery, teleconferencing, and correspondence. DL takes place when a student is primarily at a distance from the teacher.

There are 61 centres reported as public DL schools in the Province totalling 3,985.9375 FTEs as at February 2016 for the 2015/16 school year. The Collaborative Education Alternative Program (CEAP) at School District No. 69 (Qualicum) reported a total of 71.1250 FTEs on their February 2016 enrolment.

Purpose

The purpose of the DL 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*, current DL Agreements, and related Ministry policies.

Description of the Audit Process

A DL audit was conducted at CEAP in School District No. 69 (Qualicum) during the week of April 18, 2016. The total enrolment reported at February 12, 2016 was 71.1250 FTEs, of which 136 student files were reviewed.

Entry meetings were held with the Superintendent and assigned staff and with the DL Centre's Principal and Secretary 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 the information provided in advance by the Principal about the procedures and processes followed by the School

were discussed. The Principal and the audit team discussed the steps which the auditors would take to ensure effective communication between the auditors and the Principal.

The audit team worked out of a large classroom within the school and were provided with a set of computers for use to access the school's program database. Paper records for each student included in the audit sample were located in the work room. The auditors sought evidence to determine that the courses claimed met the active criteria by the activation submission date and other related Ministry directives. Throughout the audit there were ongoing discussions with DL Principal and Career Program staff to ensure the audit team members had an understanding of all aspects of the program claims. All recommended adjustments were discussed with the Principal during the course of the audit, providing every opportunity for the staff to locate the necessary evidence.

Exit meetings were held with the DL Principal and Secretary, and the Superintendent and Secretary Treasurer. At each 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.

Description of the Program

The auditors had the opportunity to meet with the DL staff to clarify the rationale for the move of all career related courses to the DL Program. During these meetings the auditors were able to verify that career program course claims meet the DL Active Policy requirements as well as the various Ministry policies and directives pertaining to career program course claims.

The auditors also met with the DL Principal to clarify the two unique programs the District was offering through DL to ensure that course claims met the required criteria. The Principal described ROAMS (River, Ocean, and Mountain School) as an outdoor leadership option which focuses on career preparation, work experience, adventure education and community leadership. The Principal also described VISSPP (Vancouver Island School Ski Patrol Program). Information was provided to verify that each component of both educational options met course definition requirements.

Observations

The auditors found that:

- Evidence required to verify the audit was readily available in the student files. Any clarification requests were responded to in a timely manner.
- Many files contained the required information including individual course plans for every course students were enrolled in.
- There were a number of cross-enrolled student files containing timetables from the students' school of record along with evidence of the additional DL courses students were enrolled in. This combined list of courses was utilized as verification in lieu of the required Course Selection Form.
- There were instances where additional FTE were incorrectly generated. These claims were

identified by the District staff prior to the start of the audit.

- There were Graduated Adult students reported for ineligible claims. The courses were not the eligible Tuition Free Foundation Courses. Additionally, it was verified by the District staff that these students were charged a tuition fee.

Audit Sample Findings

The auditors found that:

- 1.0000 Grade 10-12 school-age FTEs were active in fewer courses than reported.
- 0.5000 graduated adult FTEs were not tuition free options for graduated adults. In accordance with Form 1701 Instructions, the DL Funding Policy and the [Adult Funding Policy](#) graduated adults are only funding eligible for those courses listed as [Tuition Free Foundation Courses](#).

Recommendations

The auditors recommend that:

- The DL program staff ensure that every Grade 10-12 student (including adults) claimed for funding have a current Course Selection Form aligning with the requirements of the DL Active Policy. The DL Active policy says that there must be “*Evidence of a current course selection or enrolment form, dated and signed by the student or parent or both. These forms must list each eligible course that is reported for funding. **The forms must be on site, or documentation must be readily available to verify that the school of record maintains the course selection or enrolment form***”. A course selection/enrolment must be in evidence including those students who are cross-enrolled.
- The District report student claims in accordance with the Form 1701 Instructions and the DL Funding and Active Policies, including verification that claims are accurate and eligible for funding before finalizing the Form 1701 Data Collection process.
- The District ensure that all schools enrolling adult students are aware of and adhering to the Adult Funding Policy, including the course claim eligibility for graduated adults.
- Fee-paying graduated adults are not to be reported for funding.

Auditors' Comments

The auditors wish to express their appreciation to the District staff for their cooperation during the audit.