



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

**2015/16 Distributed Learning Enrolment Audit**

**AUDIT REPORT**

**Valley Christian School DL  
(75 96839)**

# **2015/16 DISTRIBUTED LEARNING ENROLMENT AUDIT REPORT: Valley Christian School DL (75 96839)**

## **Background**

Distributed Learning (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 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.

The Ministry of Education funds Independent School Authorities based on the Authorities' reported DL enrolment in September, February and May each year. Independent School Authorities report students undertaking DL programs or courses to the Ministry on [Form 1701: Student Data Collection Completion Instructions for Independent Schools](#) (Form 1701).

The Knowledge Management and Accountability Division conducts DL Enrolment audits to verify enrolment reported on Form 1701. The outcomes of these audits could result in funding implications if adjustments are recommended. Funding recoveries are expanded to include full-time equivalents (FTEs) outside the audit 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 DL Enrolment audit is to provide assurance to the Ministry of Education and Independent School Authorities that Ministry directives and policies are being followed. The audits are based on *Form 1701: Student Data Collection, Completion Instructions for Independent Schools*, current Distributed Learning requirements and standards as well as related Ministry policies.

## **Description of the Audit Process**

A Distributed Learning audit was conducted at Valley Christian School DL on May 25, 2016. The total enrolment reported at February 12, 2016 was 5.0000 FTEs, of which all five student files were reviewed.

An entry meeting was held with the 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 program was offered by the Principal. The administrator and the auditor discussed the procedures that would be followed to undertake the audit.

The auditor worked out of the school's staffroom. The auditor sought documentation to determine that the courses claimed met the [DL Active Policy](#) criteria by the activation submission date and other related Ministry directives. Throughout the audit there were ongoing discussions with DL staff to ensure the auditor had an understanding of all aspects of the

program. During the course of the audit, the DL staff were provided with every opportunity to locate the necessary documentation.

During the exit meeting with the Principal, the auditor presented the preliminary results and clarified any outstanding issues.

Prior to the audit visit, the auditor undertook a verification of the school-assigned teachers' status with the Teacher Regulation Branch.

### **Description of the Program**

Valley Christian School is a small independent Christian school located in Mission, British Columbia. The school offers three programs. The Distributed Learning (DL) program is available for Kindergarten to Grade 9 students only. A traditional campus school program and a homeschooling program are available for students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. The three schools work as a single entity to offer an inter-denominational Christian education. The DL students are encouraged to come to school two days a week for face-to-face opportunities and to attend the school or grade level fieldtrips which are a regular part of the program. The DL school, which opened on Sept 2011, is operated by a school board made up of parents who are also part of the School Society. This Society is divided into a subsection of Directors who are responsible for creating policy.

Each family, who registers at the DL school, is interviewed by teachers/support staff and the administration to set up the student's individual programs and to ensure appropriateness for the school's mission, the parents and the student.

### **Observations**

The auditor found that:

- All members of the teaching staff of the Valley Christian School DL are currently certified with the Teacher Regulation Branch.
- The teachers lead the educational programs of their students. The teachers communicate with students in a variety of ways to support their learning. They predominantly use email, phone and face-to-face communication.
- The teachers evaluate and assess their students on an on-going basis and for all progress reports and interim reports.
- The school records indicate there is no mechanism in place for parents to access student educational services from a third-party provider. Instead, the school has opted to use funding for the purpose of hiring teachers in their traditional campus school to devote time to the DL students two days a week. Upon registration, students are interviewed and encouraged to attend on-site at the traditional campus school two days a week for academic support, or two days a week for fine arts/applied skills and physical education. While there was no evidence on the school's website for parents to enquire about the third-party service provision, the auditor was informed that there is an intake interview with the families where third-party services are discussed.

- The school strongly encourages all DL students to participate in their face-to-face program at the traditional campus school and are further encouraged to participate in the grade level or school field trips.
- The school follows the Distributed Learning-BC Residency Policy.
- The school follows the Distributed Learning Active Policy.
- The Kindergarten to Grade 9 Student Learning Plans (SLP) were incomplete. The SLPs, which are generated when each new student registers, were simply a list of courses that the students were scheduled to take. The components of an SLP are available but need to be coordinated and properly signed to align with DL directives.

### **Audit Sample Findings**

There were no recommended FTE adjustments during the review of the audit sample.

### **Recommendations**

The auditor recommends that:

- The DL school ensure all staff are aware of the various DL operational and funding directives as indicated in the DL Active Policy, [DL Funding Policy](#) and [DL General Policy](#).
- The school administrator be encouraged to be a regular participant in the Ministry's monthly DL Administrators' collaboration session to ensure requirements are understood and met.
- The DL school amend their practice regarding the creation of an SLP to ensure alignment with the directives of the DL Active Policy. For students in Kindergarten to Grade 9 there is: *“Evidence on site of a student learning plan on record, signed and dated by the teacher and parent (and by the student if old enough to understand the plan), referring to these elements: learning outcomes in the Integrated Resource Packages for the program or course(s) or both; required areas of student for the program or course(s) or both; the teacher's plan for providing learning activities; learning resources being used to complete the program or course(s) or both; assessment strategies and standards of performance expected of the student”*.

### **Auditors' Comments**

The auditor extends appreciation to the school staff for their cooperation and hospitality during the audit.