



**Ministry of Education
Resource Management Division**

2020/21 Summer Learning Enrolment Audit

AUDIT REPORT

SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 39 (Vancouver)

2020/21 SUMMER LEARNING ENROLMENT AUDIT REPORT SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 39 (VANCOUVER)

Background

The Ministry committed to provide funding for school age non-graduate students for any course that led to graduation based upon a set funding schedule. The current funded amounts are dependent upon the three categories of summer course claimed. Boards of Education reported the number of course enrolments for those courses offered, attended and completed by eligible students between July 1, 2020 and August 31, 2020.

The audits are based on [Form 1701: Student Data Collection Completion Instructions for Summer Learning](#) and related [Ministry policies](#). The outcome of these audits provides assurance to the Ministry of Education and boards of education that policies, legislation and related directives are being followed.

Funding recoveries are expanded to include FTEs outside of the sample when the auditors make a clear link between the audit findings in the sample and those FTEs outside the sample.

In the summer of 2020 for the 2020/21 school year, boards of education reported a total of 96,329.50 summer learning enrolments for Grade 1 to 12 students. School District No.39 (Vancouver) reported 2,841 students taking summer learning options for the reporting period of July 1, 2020 to August 31, 2020.

Workplace and travel restrictions resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic provided an opportunity for the Ministry of Education and school boards/independent school authorities to transition to digital remote evidence verification during the 2020/21 school year. Due to the remote procedures undertaken, much of the evidence was based on anecdotal explanations when evidence submitted by the District required further clarification.

Purpose

The purpose of the summer learning audit is to determine for the Ministry of Education and boards of education the accuracy and appropriateness of the student and school data reported to the Ministry by school districts through the verification of course enrolment reported on Form 1701; confirmation all students claimed for funding are eligible students including ordinarily resident in British Columbia; and, assurance that students claimed for supplemental funding are receiving those additional services.

Description of the Audit Process

A summer learning audit was conducted in School District No. 39 (Vancouver) during the week of February 22, 2021. The sample consisted of 165 students with 330 courses reported in Grade 9 to Grade 12. There were no supplemental claims reported.

An entry meeting was held on February 22, 2021 with the Superintendent, Secretary-Treasurer, Associate Superintendent, Director-Planning, District Principal-Summer Learning and the Principal-Vancouver Learning Network to review the purpose of the audit and the criteria for funding as outlined in the Form 1701 Instructions.

The audit team reviewed the summer learning student data, interviewed staff, and concluded on their observations. The audit team followed a process which gave staff the opportunity to locate and present additional evidence when evidence was not available in the data presented.

An exit meeting was held on February 26, 2021 with the Superintendent, Secretary-Treasurer, Associate Superintendent, Director-Planning, District Principal-Summer Learning and Principal-Vancouver Learning Network. 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 summer learning-assigned teachers' status with the Teacher Certification/Regulation Branch (TRB).

Observations

The auditors found that:

- Instruction in the summer learning program was offered from Thursday, July 2, 2020 to Wednesday, August 5, 2020.
- All courses were offered remotely. No in-person instruction took place.
- All students in the sample were enrolled in two courses and for Grades 10 through 12 these options were reported as four credit courses.
- Aside from the first two days and the final two days of the educational offerings (when teachers were required to be on site), teachers had the option of working from home. Teachers were also on site for two additional days at the end of June prior to the start of the summer learning program.
- The evidence and data provided were consistent with the Summer Learning Form 1701 Instructions and supported the auditors' efforts to confirm the required information. The information was organized in a logical manner that allowed the auditors to navigate through and search for the required information.
- The District chose to report a selection of students aligned with the portion of the [Eligibility of Students for Operating Grant Funding Policy](#) specific to those families residing in BC on a time limited basis, the "*Other classes of persons for whom the ministry will provide operating grant funding*" segment – which says: "*In addition to those who have a clear entitlement to public education under Section 82 of the School Act, the minister will provide operating grant funding for school age students in the categories listed below if the board of education requests funding via Form 1701*". This segment of the policy is specific to those families who are in BC on a time limited basis yet recognised as funding eligible if specific criteria are followed including providing documentation to substantiate the families have met these criteria. As the District chose to report the students for funding, it is incumbent on the District to follow the requirements in that 'Other classes' segment. This is undertaken through enrolment procedures at the District's Newcomer Welcome Centre where a detailed process is followed to verify eligibility enabling the District to claim funding. School age

students are considered eligible when their parent(s)/guardian(s) provide documentation to substantiate that they meet the “Other classes” criteria (visas for work and study permits, etc.). Visa expiration dates are tracked to ensure each student continues to be considered as funding eligible (in this specific instance recorded in the MyEdBC category ‘International Fundable’). One student was claimed whose parent’s work visa had expired. Documentation was provided to verify the claim prior to the conclusion of the audit.

- The audit team reconciled the list provided of fee-paying international students who attended the 2020 summer learning program against the list of students in the audit sample to ensure all students in the sample were eligible for operating grant funding. From the evidence received, the audit team were able to confirm that no international students were claimed in error.
- During the audit it was verified that a selection of students were withdrawn from a course. The date of withdrawal the school/teacher provided differed from the withdrawal date of August 4, 2020 that was consistently recorded on the Permanent Student Record.
- Reporting out on summer learning courses was inconsistent. The auditors noted that any student who had been withdrawn from their course in July was not provided with a report card reference for the educational option the District reported for funding.
- Inconsistencies in the attendance data were identified when multiple sources of similar data were reviewed and compared. Data sourced from teacher attendance records was at times inconsistent with the data provided through the Brightspace computer program that tracked student’s logons to their online course(s). The inconsistencies were evident when students were marked as being “in attendance” in one source and “absent” in the other.
- In several instances the attendance evidence provided appeared as blank pages (indicating “no absences”). Auditors were unable to align the attendance included in District evidence to the student as there was no information regarding the student’s name, PEN or other student identifiers on the documents provided as verification of attendance.
- There was evidence where school/teacher records showed that, although students had logged into their summer learning course a few times prior to the Form 1701 claim date, no work was submitted nor were the students in attendance as at the July 10, 2020 claim date (or thereafter). According to school records, these students were withdrawn from the course on July 13, 2020, but were claimed despite non-attendance at the claim date. These claims could have been reviewed prior to the Summer Learning July 17, 2021 Form 1701 reporting deadline and removed from the Form 1701 submission before remitting to the Ministry of Education.
- Five secondary student claims (consisting of six courses) were verified as not in attendance at the Form 1701 claim date.
- The auditors were advised that the District followed a practice of contacting students who demonstrated sporadic attendance prior to July 10, 2020 to confirm that they intended to continue in the course. Those who did not want to continue were withdrawn from the course and those who subsequently failed to check in, or submit work, were contacted by an administrator to follow up on their intentions. There was no evidence of these contacts or attempts at engagement to verify the practice at the time of the audit.
- Students were withdrawn from summer school and a “W” was assigned. If withdrawn on or after July 13, 2020 all withdrawals were recorded on the Permanent Student Record with the date of August 4, 2020 (the last day of the summer learning program) rather than the actual date of withdrawal.

- The District’s summer school adds the letters “COM” to the end of each Ministry of Education course code to indicate course completion. The code is not recognized by MyEdBC. It was understood that this coding will be revised as the District moves from the AS Legacy 400 platform to MyEdBC.

Recommendations

The auditors recommend that:

- District staff ensure all summer learning students claimed for funding are enrolled and attending at the Data Collection claim date.
- District staff recognise that reporting of summer learning claims are specific to the start of the school year and those students completing their program towards graduation in the subsequent school year are not eligible for summer learning courses. School age graduates are not to be reported in the Summer Learning 1701 file (Ref. Summer Learning Data Collection Instructions).
- District staff ensure that all courses claimed for funding for enrolled students are reported to the student/parents regardless of the outcome of that course.
- District staff ensure that all reporting, including courses from which the student was withdrawn, is done according to the [Summer Learning policy](#) (including the SADE reporting requirement) *“All students attending summer school must be assessed and assigned a mark. The courses/programs and marks must be reported to the Ministry in the October SADE submission.”*
- District staff ensure that attendance data is aligned, and that consistent accurate data is maintained and available in all forms of attendance records.
- District staff confirm the accuracy of each funding claim prior to the submission deadline of the Form 1701 Data Collection periods.
- District staff ensure all evidence retained by the District be clearly identified with the student’s name, PEN and any other relevant student identifiers.
- District staff track engagement contacts with students including those student claims for courses withdrawn.
- District staff document the actual date of withdrawal from a course on all student reporting records.
- For all funding claims, the District staff adhere to the directives of the [Provincial Letter Grades Order \(M192/94\)](#), including withdrawals: *“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’ Comments

The auditors extend their appreciation to the District and school-based staff.

Funding and Financial Accountability Branch
Resource Management Division
Ministry of Education
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