

Chapter 22

Regina School Division No. 4—Promoting Positive Student Behaviour

1.0 MAIN POINTS

Regina School Division No. 4 has improved its processes to promote positive student behaviour.

During the 2018–19 school year, the Division systematically collected, analyzed and reported detailed information on attendance. It also systematically collected, and reported to its Board data on behaviour incidents and student suspensions. Analyzing data about attendance and student behaviour enables the Division to determine if its initiatives are making a positive difference.

The Division maintains guidance for schools regarding documentation of steps taken to support positive student behaviour including attendance. It documented key discussions, decisions, and steps taken to support student attendance in accordance with Division guidance. Keeping documentation of actions taken to address attendance issues helps provide a consistent course of action and monitor steps taken to promote regular student attendance.

By September 2019, the Division tracked updates to its administrative procedures resulting from its annual review process. Periodically reviewing administrative procedures helps ensure their continuing relevance and applicability.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Student behaviour influences the extent and quality of education students receive. Positive student behaviour contributes to a safe and accepting learning environment, which is essential for student achievement and well-being.¹ The success of students can have a significant impact on our society and economy. Poor behaviour can contribute to students leaving school before graduating from Grade 12 or without obtaining marks that could assist them in obtaining further education or finding employment.²

The Regina School Division No. 4 is one of the largest public school divisions in Saskatchewan with about 23,000 students in 44 elementary schools and eight high schools.³ Division enrolments continue to grow annually enhanced by economic growth, increased immigration, and record birthrates in the City of Regina.⁴

This chapter describes our second follow-up of management's actions on the recommendations we made in 2016.

¹ www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/safeschools/saferSchools.html (19 December 2019).

² Auditor General of British Columbia, *Fostering a Safe Learning Environment: How the British Columbia Public School System is Doing*, (2001), p. 19.

³ *Regina School Division No. 4 of Saskatchewan Annual Report 2018–19*, p. 7.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 35.



In 2016, we assessed the Division's processes for promoting positive student behaviour. Our *2016 Report – Volume 1*, Chapter 13 concluded that for the 12-month period ended November 30, 2015, Regina School Division No. 4 had, other than in the areas of our recommendations, effective processes to promote positive student behaviour at school. We made five recommendations. By March 2018, the Division had implemented two of our recommendations and partially implemented the other three.⁵

To conduct this audit engagement, we followed the standards for assurance engagements published in the *CPA Canada Handbook—Assurance* (CSAE 3001). To evaluate the Division's progress towards meeting our recommendations, we used the relevant criteria from the original audit. The Division's management agreed with the criteria in the original audit.

To perform our follow-up audit, we discussed actions taken with Division management and school principals. We reviewed agendas and minutes of the Division's Administrative Council Executive, information the Division reported to its Board, and public documents. For a sample of students, we examined documentation maintained by staff to monitor attendance and support students in improving attendance.

3.0 STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This section sets out each recommendation including the date on which the Standing Committee on Public Accounts agreed to the recommendation, the status of the recommendation at March 10, 2020, and the Division's actions up to that date.

3.1 Reporting on Overall Success of Student Behaviour Initiatives

We recommended that Regina School Division No. 4 establish a process to track and report to its Board of Education the overall success of its initiatives to promote positive student behaviour. (*2016 Report – Volume 1*, p. 162, Recommendation 5; Public Accounts Committee agreement September 14, 2016)

Status—Implemented

The Division systematically collects, analyzes and reports detailed information on attendance. The Division also systematically collects, and reports to its Board, data on behaviour incidents and student suspensions.

Each school year, the Division evaluates the success of its initiatives to promote attendance through year-over-year comparisons (e.g., changes in attendance rates, number of suspensions). During the 2018–19 school year, the Division reported information to its Board on the overall success of its initiatives to promote positive student behaviour.⁶

Analyzing data about attendance and student behaviour enables the Division to determine if its initiatives are making a positive difference.

⁵ *2016 Report – Volume 1*, Chapter 25, Regina School Division No. 4—Promoting Positive Student Behaviour, auditor.sk.ca/publications/public-reports.

⁶ Examples of Division initiatives include Attendance Matters campaign, recognition for good attendance, and Violent Threat Risk Assessment Protocol.

3.2 Division Monitors and Supports Student Attendance

We recommended that Regina School Division No. 4 require consistent and accessible documentation of key discussions, decisions, and steps taken to support positive student behaviour. (2016 Report – Volume 1, p. 160, Recommendation 4; Public Accounts Committee agreement September 14, 2016)

Status—Intent of Recommendation Met

Since March 2018 (timing of our last follow-up audit), the Division better and more consistently documents steps taken to support student attendance consistent with its guidance.

The Division uses a tiered intervention process to support students with behaviour and attendance issues. At each tier, interventions become more intensive, and involve more professionals (e.g., school psychologist, guidance counsellor). The Division gives staff guidance on required documentation to keep in the student supports IT system.

In addition to the tiered intervention process, for its high schools, the Division employs a High School Attendance Strategy to improve student attendance. The strategy sets out protocols for responding to attendance issues, such as maintaining documentation of contact and communications with parents or guardians on attendance issues in the Division's attendance tracking system.

For files of 30 high school students we tested, school staff maintained support for actions taken to support student attendance (e.g., phone calls to student's residence, meetings with parents or guardians) in the attendance tracking system and student supports IT system.

For 30 files of elementary school students we tested, school staff sufficiently documented, where required by Division guidance, key discussions, decisions, and steps taken to support the student's attendance in the student supports IT system.

Keeping documentation of actions taken to address attendance issues helps provide a consistent course of action and monitor steps taken to promote regular student attendance.

3.3 Administrative Procedures Reviewed Regularly

We recommended Regina School Division No. 4 review and update policies (administrative procedures) on a regular basis as its policy expects. (2016 Report – Volume 1, p. 155, Recommendation 1; Public Accounts Committee agreement September 14, 2016)

Status—Implemented

By September 2019, the Division conducted an annual review of its administrative procedures, which included administrative procedures related to student behaviour.



The Division tracks when it last updated its administrative procedures, including highlighting those procedures that it has not updated for many years (i.e., more than five years, and more than 10 years). The Division aims to review its administrative procedures on a five-year cycle; approximately 40 procedures annually.

Periodically reviewing administrative procedures helps ensure their continuing relevance and applicability.