

Chapter 16

Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 —English as an Additional Language Programming

1.0 MAIN POINTS

By October 2022, the Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 implemented the one outstanding recommendation from our 2016 audit of its processes to provide English as an Additional Language (EAL) programming. Since 2020–21, the Division periodically analyzes results of kindergarten to Grade 8 EAL programming.

In 2020–21, the Division began to use a new database to track and report on EAL student progress. It periodically collects and now inputs data about students participating in the EAL program for analysis.

The Superintendent of Education periodically presents results of the kindergarten to Grade 8 EAL analysis to the Board. For 2021–22, 75% of the Division’s EAL students who received EAL support for at least a year and have a global Common Framework of Reference (CFR) level of A1.1 to A2.2 increased one global CFR level, which is a measure of success.¹ The Division was striving for 70% of EAL students to increase their CFR level.

Periodically analyzing results and reporting to the Board on EAL student achievement (e.g., percentage of students progressing) can help the Board evaluate the delivery of the EAL program (e.g., whether expectations were met), and identify whether program changes are needed.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 operates 32 schools located in Regina. It is responsible for educating about 12,000 students including about 3,500 EAL students.² The Division employed 17.5 full-time equivalent EAL teachers at June 2022.³

The Division offers EAL programs at each of its 25 elementary schools. Providing EAL programs at each elementary school enables students to learn English and the curriculum at their neighbourhood school and in their local community.⁴

English-language proficiency of immigrants, refugees, or other residents whose first language is not English, is a key factor in not only attaining Saskatchewan’s educational goals, but also in enabling them to contribute positively to the province.⁵ Students new to Canada may struggle with language barriers that can hinder their academic success.

¹ The Common Framework of Reference (CFR) is a criterion-referenced performance scale, used by several Saskatchewan School Divisions, that supports educators in assessing learners who require English as an Additional Language Programming.

² Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81, *Annual Report 2021–22*, pp. 7 and 17.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 18. At the time of our original audit (2015–16 school year), the Division had 11 full-time EAL teachers.

⁴ Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81, *English as an Additional Language* brochure.

⁵ *The Ministry of Education Action Plan—English as an Additional Language and Immigration*, (2011), p. 3.



2.1 Focus of Follow-Up Audit

This chapter describes our third follow-up audit of management's actions on the recommendations we made in 2016.⁶

In 2016, we assessed Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81's processes to provide English as an Additional Language programming to support students. Our *2016 Report – Volume 2*, Chapter 29, concluded that the Division had, except in the areas of our four recommendations, effective processes to provide EAL programming to support the academic success of kindergarten to Grade 8 students needing additional support to learn English. As reported in our 2020 follow-up audit, the Division implemented three of the four recommendations by June 2020.⁷

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 toward meeting our recommendations, we used the relevant criteria from the original audit. The Division agreed with the criteria in the original audit.

To perform our follow-up audit, we discussed actions taken with Division management, verified the completeness and accuracy of student records in the Division's database (CLEVR), and reviewed reporting prepared by the Division.

3.0 STATUS OF RECOMMENDATION

This section sets out the recommendation including the date on which the Standing Committee on Public Accounts agreed to the recommendation, the status of the recommendation at October 31, 2022, and the Division's actions up to that date.

3.1 English as an Additional Language Program Results Periodically Analyzed

We recommended the Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 periodically analyze the results of the kindergarten to Grade 8 English as an Additional Language program. (2016 Report – Volume 2, p. 203, Recommendation 3; Public Accounts Committee agreement September 21, 2017)

Status—Implemented

Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 periodically analyzes results (i.e., EAL student progress) of its kindergarten to Grade 8 English as an Additional Language program.

At December 1, 2022, the Division had 3,456 EAL students in kindergarten to Grade 8.

Since 2020–21, the Division uses a data management system (CLEVR) to track and report on its EAL program. EAL teachers input data (e.g., EAL students' reading assessment scores) directly into CLEVR. CLEVR allows the Division and teachers to see which EAL students they have assessed and the progress students are making on an individual basis.

⁶ *2016 Report – Volume 2, Chapter 29*, pp. 189–204.

⁷ *2020 Report – Volume 2, Chapter 35*, pp. 261–263.

CLEVR now interfaces with the Ministry of Education's IT system for student demographic information. We compared reports for a sample of three Division schools as of December 8, 2022. We found demographic information (e.g., students' grades, first language) was consistent between both systems.

The Division analyzes EAL students' results throughout the year. The Division expects EAL teachers use the results to modify teaching and learning activities to improve student EAL attainment. The Division also uses this information to evaluate its progress in achieving its EAL goal.⁸

The Superintendent of Education periodically presents results of the kindergarten to Grade 8 EAL analysis to the Board. We observed February 2022 updates to the Board regarding progress on actions to achieve its EAL goal. The Division also reported results in its annual report.

The Division reported in its annual report that, in the 2021–22 school year, 74.8% of the Division's EAL students with a global Common Framework of Reference (CFR) level of A1.1 to A2.2 increased at least one global CFR level (2020–21: 79%).

Periodically analyzing results and reporting to the Board on EAL student achievement (e.g., percentage of students progressing, struggling, or achieving desired CFR levels) helps the Board evaluate the delivery of the EAL program (e.g., whether expectations were met), and identify whether program changes are needed.

⁸ For the 2021–22 school year, the Division had the following goal: "By June 2022, 70% of Grades 1 to 12 EAL students with global Common Framework of Reference levels of A1.1 to A2.2 who have been receiving EAL support for at least a year will increase one global CFR level."

