

# COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

## ANNUAL REPORT - 2004/2005

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In accordance with the direction provided by the Board of Trustees, the Comprehensive Assessment Program was conducted across the Division in grades N to 6 during the first two months of the 2004/2005 school year. On or before October 31, the Grades 1 – 6 individual student data was entered onto the Division's student recording sheets and sent by the classroom teacher to the Research, Planning and Systems Management of the Winnipeg School Division N/K data was entered by November 30th. Within approximately two weeks of receipt of the data classroom summaries were prepared and returned to the classroom teacher for use in school/classroom program planning for the remainder of the school year.

In 2004/2005 the district councils held regular discussions on the Comprehensive Assessment Program throughout the year. The administrators in each district have discussed the results of CAP and reviewed how this data can be used effectively in the classroom and school planning. School administrators were kept fully informed of the development of CAP and were also provided with the feedback regarding the Grade 6 assessments and a summary of the changes made to the CAP to date.

## 2004/2005

### Professional Development Activities

The Comprehensive Assessment Program training for N to Grade 6 teachers who were new to the Division was held from September 14 to 24, 2004. The professional development plan to support teachers began in November 2004. The type of workshop was governed partially by requests from schools that examined the results of the Comprehensive Assessment Program and identified their own professional development needs. Workshop sessions in the area of assessment included the Use of *Running Records* to Assess Reading; Observation as an Assessment Tool; Writing Narrative Report Cards; Understanding of Place Value. In the program development area there were 3-part workshops on the Nursery Program, Guided Reading as part of a balanced literacy program, Numeracy Development in grades 1-2 and 3-4 and Strategies for Teaching French.

Other workshops in the Early Years area included Organizing Literacy Centres, Organizing a Kindergarten Program, Phonological Awareness, Interactive Writing; Retelling as a Comprehension Strategy, Math and Literature, Problem-solving, Math for Resource Teachers, Teaching Multiplication, Using Math Journals. There was also a workshop on the Basic Movement Program called Step By Step and another on practical and concrete strategies on using the information from the Social-Emotional assessment. Workshop in the Intermediate Years included 3-part series in Guided Reading, Strategies for Success in Mathematics, and Lat Litteratie equilibree. Additional workshops offered were The First Twenty Days to Independent Reading, Writing Strategies to Support Student Learning Involving Students in the Assessment Process-Assessment for Learning Strategies, Mental Math Strategies, Algebraic Reasoning, Problem-solving, Fractions & Decimals, Multiplication & Division, Mathematics and Literature.

Additional professional development opportunities were provided by several speakers. Sharon Taberski presented a workshop on the Reading Workshop, part of a balanced Literacy Program to an audience of 200 early years teachers in March 2005. In December 2004, Dr.

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Anne Brailsford and Dr. Jan Coles presented a workshop on Balanced Literacy in the Intermediate Grades to an audience of 50 teachers. Resource Teachers had the opportunity to spend a day with Marilyn Friend on models for the organization of resource programs. In May Dr. Kathie Nunley presented a workshop on Differentiating Instruction that combined the latest brain research with teaching strategies to be used in diverse classrooms. One substitute was provided for each elementary school and over 200 teachers and administrators attended Dr. Nunley's workshop.

The Learning Together Conference provided additional professional development opportunities for teachers N - 6. The keynote speaker, Kathy Miyata, spoke of the importance of integrating the arts and of beginning literacy with oral language. Approximately 300 teachers participated in the 44 workshops.

A workshop on "Models for Implementing CAP" was held on June 8, 2005. Four teachers at a variety of grade levels presented a look at how they conduct the Comprehensive Assessment Program in their classrooms. Following the presentations there was a question and answer session and time for individuals to plan how they might use the information. Over 70 teachers attended this workshop.

### Projects/Materials

In 2004 - 2005 a number of schools applied for grants totaling \$ 12 000 through the Division Early Years Committee. The guidelines for the grants specified that school-based instructional projects should establish effective linkages between assessment and instructional strategies. Funded projects included Nurturing Language, Phonemic Awareness, Guided Math, and Phonemic Awareness. In addition \$ 10 000 was available for schools to develop projects that link home and school. Funded projects included Parent-Child Centres, Home Reading, Homework Bags, Reading to your Child, Nutrition and Literacy and more.

The book "**On Solid Ground: Strategies for Teaching Reading K - 3**" by Sharon Taberski was provided to all elementary schools. This book should assist early years teachers in setting up and running a reading program. The book "**36 Games Kids Love to Play**" was also provided to all elementary schools to assist teachers in providing more movement activities in their programs. "**50 Early Childhood Literacy Strategies**" was also provided to assist Nursery, Kindergarten and Grade 1 teachers to integrate literacy into their programs in developmentally appropriate ways.

The **Numeracy Project** has continued through this past year with 20 more schools being involved. The work of the support teachers, in-service sessions, modeling and providing support to teachers in Grades 1 and 2 has been guided by the Mathematics Consultant. Linking the Comprehensive Assessment Program to the number framework used in the project assisted teachers in planning intervention to information obtained through the assessment.

Funds obtained through the Early Childhood Development Initiative (ECDI) grant were used to support the Speech Language Project. The Speech Language Project involved Nursery teachers and students in seven additional schools who had the highest numbers of students needing support in Language and Speech according to Comprehensive Assessment Results. The

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teachers, teaching assistants, parent volunteers and personnel from Day Care Centres in the area around the schools were given training in language facilitation techniques. Speech Language pathologists worked for a twelve week period with targeted Nursery students. Teachers who had been involved the previous year met with the Speech Language Pathologist who conducted the workshops to share strategies and address concerns. Across the division other ECDI grant funds have been used to support language development, pre-literacy language skills, Early childhood Home Visitors, Early Literacy and so on. The impetus for many of these applications has been the Comprehensive Assessment results in these schools.

### **Additional Supports**

Development of the N-4 CAP Support Document for English Language Arts continued throughout this past year. The document has been completed and distributed to all schools. The document provides curriculum-based references for teaching in all areas of the ELA CAP at the Needs Support, Developing and Independent levels. It also provides a concise reference for the benchmarks for each grade level. It is colour coded to correspond with the Administration Guide to make it as user-friendly as possible. Reviewers have indicated that this will be a very useful resource. At their request the document will be supplied to CGC clinicians as well.

A Nursery guide aptly titled, "Start With the Child" which discusses the characteristics of the 3 and 4 year old child and the impact of these characteristics upon classroom practice was developed. Suggestions for best practice in all areas of the Nursery Program was also included. This document was distributed to all schools in Fall 2005.

The CAP brochure for parents is now available from Stores so that schools may order the numbers required for use in the fall. The brochure is being translated into 12 languages and will be available online.

A Handbook for teachers in Grades 5 and 6 has been compiled and addresses many of the questions that teachers ask about the assessment. This document will be in schools in the fall. Feedback on the document will direct additions and revisions during the 2005/2006 school year.

Throughout the year the CAP support teacher provided assistance to the consultants involved with CAP, provided assistance to individual teachers and schools as requested. She has completed the N – 4 ELA Support Document and the draft of the Grade 5 and 6 Handbook.

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## Revision to CAP

Each year various aspects of the Comprehensive Assessment Program are reviewed and revisions are made as required. The Grade 6 Comprehensive Assessment was implemented in 2004/2005 Grade 6 teachers were surveyed after they had implemented CAP.

The following are some of the more significant changes:

- **English language Arts**

- Specific changes were made to the grade 6 instrument in the self-assessment for writing and spelling/conventions
- A checklist of Assessment Supports was provided for classroom teachers to use with students needing support.

- **Mathematics**

- The grade 6 Algebraic Reasoning: Performance Task was reformatted
- Specific questions were rewritten and instructions clarified.

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## 2. HIGHLIGHTS

### Description of the Scoring

- **Independent** indicates that a student is working at or beyond the beginning Grade level and should be able to proceed with the material for that grade level with ease.
- **Developing** indicates that the student is approaching beginning Grade level and ready for instruction at that level.
- **Needs Support** indicates that the student will require additional instruction and support to reach the beginning Grade level and to continue to make progress toward grade level outcomes.

- **English Language Arts**

N-4 In English Language Arts there have been steady improvements over the years in how well Nursery students performed in *Reading Environmental Print and Drawing*.

*Alphabet Knowledge* is a strong early indicator of reading success. There have been significant gains in *Alphabet Knowledge* with Grade 2 students with a 15% increase in *independent* scores from 2002 to 2004.

Significant gains have also been made in *Oral reading* scores from Grade 2 to Grade 4. In grade 2, 40.3% of students score needs support in oral reading. By Grade 4, 79.6% of students are reading with 90% or greater accuracy.

*Conventions and Legibility* scores show an increase in the number of students who score *independent* from Grade 3 to Grade 4. However, there are fewer students in the *developing* range and more students score *needs support* from Grade 3 to Grade 4 in *Conventions and Legibility*. By Grade 5 and Grade 6 there is improvement in spelling scores but conventions remains an area of difficulty for most students.

Grade 5-6 This was the first year for the division wide implementation of the grade 6 assessment and the revised grade 5 assessment.

In the English Language Arts component at grades 5 and 6, the reading task provides the student with an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to comprehend a non-fiction text. The writing task provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate their skills by creating an expository piece of writing.

In the reading component at grade 5, the data shows 79.9% of students scored *developing* and *independent* combined, while 21.1% scored *needs support*. In the writing component at the grade 5, the data shows 60.6% of student scored *developing* and *independent* combined, while 39.4% scored *needs support*.

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- **Mathematics**

### Grades N-4

- Student scores in *Rote Counting* are strong. During the first 5 years of schooling (Nursery- Grade 3) over 65% of students are *Independent* at their grade level.
- Students are also successful in the area of *Numerical Identification*. During the first 6 years of schooling (Nursery-Grade 4) over 65% of students are *Independent* at their grade level.
- Students struggle with place value knowledge. This trend begins as early as grade 1 and continues to grow throughout elementary school. By grade three roughly 80% of our students are working below grade level expectations in place value understanding.

Targeting place value concepts as an area to address is vital. If place value understanding is not solidified, then students will continue to struggle with curricular demands as they move through following grades. This will continue to be a targeted focus of the early years professional development, numeracy project and study groups and the math support teachers will continue to provide program support at the middle years.

### Grade 5

**Diagnostic Interview:** The grade 5-6 assessment focuses on strategy based knowledge rather than procedural knowledge.

- There has been improvements in the results from year 1 to year 2 of the assessment, in the area of *Fractions and Decimals*. This could be due to many factors e.g. teachers' comfort with the assessment tool, response to professional development, or the CAP assessment tool driving instruction.
- Student scores in the *Algebraic Reasoning* set were strong. Roughly 65% of students have the foundational skills needed to be successful at algebraic reasoning.

**Algebraic Reasoning:** (whole class performance task)

- With strong foundational skills in place as mentioned above, less than 50% of the same students were able to apply thinking skills in algebra when asked to use them in a real world problem-solving situation.

Algebraic Reasoning is an area that will be targeted through professional development workshops at all grades including early years.

### Grade 6: Pilot year Division wide.

There will be a complete review of math programming and assessment with the implementation of the new math curriculum in 2007.

- **Français**

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The français CAP scores show that based on the majority of items assessed, 80% of French Immersion students at the beginning of Grade 1 and 2 are able to understand and use French well enough to be successful in meeting curriculum expectations. By grade 3, 81.3% of students are reading aloud in French with 86% or more accuracy. The number of students reading at this accuracy level has decreased in each of the last 2 years which indicates that further support might be needed. The validity of the reading assessment will be one of the foci during the revision of the French instrument in 2005/2006.

In each grade from 3 to 6, 90% of students were *developing* or *independent* in their understanding when reading in French, 10% or fewer of the students demonstrated a significant lack of understanding of what they read in French.

In grades 5 and 6, the assessment of writing in French suggest that 87% of the students begin the year with the skills to be able to meet curriculum expectations for writing.

- **Fine Motor Skills**

In *Fine Motor skills*, there was little change in the scores of Nursery and grade 1 students over the years but more Kindergarten students scored at the *Independent* level, and in grades 2, 3, and 4 there was an approximately 7% increase in students “who scored *independent*” in 2003 than in 2002. In *Basic Movement skills*, a high percentage of students are rated as *independent* in all the grades assessed (K-5) over the past three years.

- **Social-Emotional Skills**

In the Social-Emotional assessment fewer students were identified for follow-up in all grades except Kindergarten in 2004. The largest change from one year to the next was that seen for grade 2 students. This result was examined in more detail.

The percentage of males and females in grade 2 identified for follow-up was compared. In 2003, 7.5% of females were identified and 21.1% of males were identified as requiring follow-up. By 2004 the percentage had dropped to 5.8% for females and to 16.7% for males. The percentage of students rated as *Needs Support* in each of the six areas of assessment was compared by gender and year. A higher percentage of males than females were identified in each of the six areas of the assessment in both years but there is a trend towards more equitable scores. A relatively low percentage of females were identified as *Needs Support* in both years. Males’ scores improved consistently across the six areas of the assessment. In summary, the improvement in grade 2 was due largely to the improvement in the rating of the male students and the continued good ratings of the female students.