

2007 - 2008

District Accountability Contract:
Transition Plan

Guidelines

Available on the Ministry of Education website
www.gov.bc.ca/bced/



July 2007

Guidelines for District Accountability Contracts: Transition Year 2007-2008

Introduction

Recent amendments to the *School Act* require British Columbia's Boards of Education to prepare and submit to the Minister of Education, an Achievement Contract with respect to standards for student performance, plans for improving student achievement in the school district and any other matters as determined by the Minister. These matters may be addressed through the completion of an addendum to the Achievement Contracts. The addendum will serve as a confirmation of district work related to specific initiatives. Achievement Contracts are submitted by July 15 each year.

As the 2007/08 school year is a transition year, Boards will not be required to submit an Achievement Contract by July 15, 2007. As an interim measure, boards will be required to submit an Accountability Contract: Transition Plan by October 31, 2007.

Overview of the Accountability Contract: Transition Plan

The Accountability Contract: Transition Plan is a statement of commitment by a school district to improve success for each student and is developed collaboratively on an evidence-based assessment of the needs and priorities at each school. These plans identify areas of focus for the improvement of student success, describe strategic actions and outline processes to monitor progress and make adjustments in order to improve results. Key Elements are listed in Appendix A. The Addendum, to be completed as part of the Accountability Contract: Transition Plan is attached as Appendix B.

Many of the expectations for Achievement Contracts will be similar to those in previous Accountability Contracts. The major differences are listed below and it is expected that the changes will be reflected in the Accountability Contract: Transition Plan this year. The Plans will:

- Be three-year plans, annually updated and connected to the superintendent's annual report on achievement to the board.
- Focus on continuous improvement for all students in the district.
- Provide a summary statement of progress made in the achievement of performance targets related to goals and objectives.
- Be developed based on the analysis of evidence of the needs of students in the district.
- Have targets established to address district needs and priorities including early learning, and include specific targets for Literacy K-12, completion rates and Aboriginal student improvement.
- Require consultation with the Superintendents of Achievement.

- Combine strategies and structures into specific actions to address goals as well as a description of how they will be implemented and evaluated for effectiveness. Analysis will include evaluation of the actions, the efficacy of their implementation and the alignment of resources to support implementation.
- Provide an explanation of the connection between the Achievement Contract and the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (EA), and the required inclusion of the most recent EA progress report. Or, if an EA is not signed, a status report on the process to complete an EA.
- Be reviewed by the Ministry with feedback provided early in the fall which may include a request for further information on specific elements.

Appendix C compares Accountability Contracts and Achievement Contracts.

The following are the elements expected in the 2007/08 Accountability Contracts: Transition Plan. Districts will receive feedback on these documents in early 2008 in preparation for the July 15, 2008 submission of the first Achievement Contracts.

2007-2008 Accountability Contract: Transition Plan

Description of Elements

Context

The context is a brief statement about the district and may include:

- Demographic data identifying major community groups (such as ESL, Aboriginal, Special Education) as well as student enrolment information;
- Unique characteristics of the district; and
- Two or three areas of strength based upon student performance.

District Review Response

The district is expected to outline its progress in addressing the Recommendations from the most recent District Review.

District and School Connections

Efforts to improve student achievement are enhanced through a common vision, shared goals, effective use of resources and connections among district, school and parent priorities.

A description of the alignment between district and school directions illustrates the relationship between the district plan and school plans, as well as the EA. This description includes:

1. The process used to approve school plans.

2. The process to consult with School Planning Councils about:
 - a) the allocation of staff and resources in schools,
 - b) the contents of the district plan in relation to school plans,
 - c) educational services and educational programs in schools.

3. The connection between the EA, the district plan and school plans illustrating the collective responsibility for promoting the success of all Aboriginal students. If an EA has not been signed, progress made in completing an agreement is provided.

Goals and Objectives

Goals

Clear goals help to focus district priorities for improving student learning. District priorities are made visible in two to three goals based on analysis of student performance data from a range of sources.

Goal statements from the previous contract are brought forward each year until the Goal is no longer applicable. Plans for improvement may require changes as a result of circumstances in the district. If a goal has been eliminated from a previous contract, an explanation is provided.

Objectives (Specific Area of Focus)

Objectives help to focus district goals into more specific areas of attention. The District considers the performance of all students, including any specific group of under-performing students, when determining objectives.

Objectives from the previous contract are brought forward each year until the Objective is no longer applicable. If an objective has been eliminated from a previous contract, an explanation is provided.

Rationale

Providing a rationale demonstrates that districts have considered the performance of each of their students, school/community context and values when identifying goals and determining objectives. The rationale connects the analysis of student performance (classroom, school, district and provincial data) and other pertinent information with goal decisions. A clearly understood rationale builds commitment to the goals and objectives.

Performance Indicators/Evidence

Performance indicators are measures used to indicate progress towards attainment of goals and objectives. A variety of indicators, that are suitable for showing student performance over time, generate a more complete picture of student achievement in a district. Indicators include sources of information drawn from classroom, school, and district results from provincial data¹, with an emphasis on school and district measures that lead to changes in classroom practice and impact success for each student. Once performance indicators have been identified, expected results are set (see Performance Targets).

Performance Targets (Expected Results)

Clearly articulated expectations for short-term (one to two years) and long-term (three or more years) results support district planning for enhanced student performance. They help to determine progress towards meeting goals and objectives. Performance targets are directly linked to established goals and objectives, expressing both the desired level of student performance to be attained and the anticipated timeframe for achievement.

Although targets may be set in a number of areas specific to the priorities in the district, including early learning, it is expected that as of July 15, 2008, each district will have targets for Literacy (K-12), completion rates and Aboriginal student improvement.

Progress Towards Achievement of Performance Targets

Achievement or progress towards achievement, of established performance targets informs ongoing district planning. A statement of progress in achievement of specific performance targets is presented as “met” or “not met”. A summary statement of the progress made in the overall achievement of district goals and objectives is also provided. When targets are not met or exceeded, results are presented together with an explanation and any district actions to be taken to support improved success for each student in the district.

Actions (Strategies/Structures)

Clearly articulated actions (formerly strategies and structures) connect district efforts and activities with desired student results. They are a combination of the specific actions, activities, resources, time, personnel and organizational planning directed toward and supportive of improved student learning in the classroom. Actions are clearly linked to the district goals and objectives. Actions are selected to achieve the goals and objectives and are drawn from research, best practice, and innovative thinking.

¹ Please refer to Ministry website (<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/>) for information about provincially collected data.

It is expected that districts will provide an explanation of how the actions will be implemented and evaluated for effectiveness at meeting achievement targets. Analysis will include evaluation of the actions, the efficacy of their implementation and the alignment of resources to support implementation.

Reporting

The Accountability Contract: Transition Plan is to be submitted on or before October 31, 2007, as follows:

A paper copy is sent to:

Honourable Shirley Bond
Minister of Education
Parliament Buildings
Victoria BC V8V 1X4

An electronic copy (PDF format) is sent to:

EDUC.AMR@gov.bc.ca

The District will ensure that a copy of their Accountability Contract: Transition Plan, submitted to the Minister October 31, 2007, is available for public review in the District office, in both electronic and a hard copy formats. The Ministry will also place this Accountability Contract: Transition Plan on the Ministry website.

Appendix A
Key Elements
2007-2008 Accountability Contract: Transition Plan

The following elements will be required in each District Accountability Contract: Transition Plan:

1. District Context.
2. Response to most recent District Review.
3. Explanation of the alignment between school plans and the District Accountability Contract including the Board's process to consult with each School Planning Council and approve school plans.
4. Explanation of the connection between the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (EA), the District Accountability Contract and school plans. If an EA has not been signed, a status report on the process to complete an EA is provided.
5. District goals and objectives to support each goal.
6. Rationale for the selection of each goal based on analysis of student performance information.
7. Performance Indicators/Evidence drawn from classroom, school, district and provincial data, with an emphasis on school and district measures.
8. Performance Targets (Expected Results) and timelines directly linked to each goal and/or objective. It is expected that districts will have targets for Literacy (K-12), completion rates and Aboriginal student improvement.
9. Statement of progress in the achievement of performance targets related to goals and objectives with district actions to be taken when targets are not met or exceeded.
10. Actions (Strategies/Structures) directly linked to each goal and/or objective with an explanation of how the actions will be implemented and evaluated for effectiveness in meeting achievement targets.
11. A copy of the most recent Enhancement Agreement Annual Report (if applicable).
12. The Addendum.

Appendix B
Addendum
2007-2008 Accountability Contract: Transition Plan

	Yes	No
There is a plan in place to develop and implement codes of conduct that meet the provincial standards.		
There is a process to implement, monitor and annually review the code of conduct at each school in the district.		
There is a plan in place to implement daily physical activity in all schools for all students.		
Tobacco free schools legislation is implemented with a monitoring process in place.		
There is a policy for monitoring and responding to anaphylaxis emergencies at each school in the district.		
The 2005 <i>Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales In BC Schools</i> are fully implemented.		
There is a plan in place to implement the September 2007 <i>Revised Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools</i> .		
A School Planning Council is in place and functioning in each school.		
The Board of Education has reviewed school fees for compliance with legislation.		
The Board of Education has reviewed their appeals bylaws and procedures for compliance with section 11 of the <i>School Act</i> .		

Date

Superintendent of Schools

Board Chair

Appendix C

2007-2008 Accountability Contract: Transition Plan

Category	From Accountability Contracts:	To Achievement Contracts:
Name	Accountability Contracts	Change in name to Achievement Contracts emphasizing the district's role in reporting and supporting student achievement.
Date of Submission	October 31	July 15 (transition Accountability Contract October 31 for 2007).
Focus	A report	Demonstrated commitment to improvement and progress.
Term	Mostly annual plans – short term (some contracts were longer term)	Three-year plans annually updated and connected to superintendent's annual report on achievement to the board.
Consultation	None	Require consultation with the Superintendents of Achievement.
Feedback on Contracts	Feedback provided when requested.	Annual feedback to all districts early in the school year.
District Context	A brief statement about the district which may include demographic and student enrolment information, unique characteristics and two or three areas of strength based on student performance.	Retained
Response to District Review	Forty-six districts (77%) addressed some or all of the recommendations from the most recent District Review in their 2006/07 Contract.	Districts are expected to outline their actions and progress in addressing the recommendations from the most recent District Review.

Category	From Accountability Contracts:	To Achievement Contracts:
Connections to School Plans and Priorities	<p>Explanation of district and school connections, including the process used to approve school plans and process to consult with SPCs.</p> <p>In 2006/07 Contracts, some districts based contracts on the needs and priorities identified in schools; other districts identified priorities at the district level to be addressed at each school.</p>	<p>Explanation of the alignment between school plans and the District Contract including the board's process to consult with each SPC and approve school plans.</p> <p>All Achievement Contracts are developed based on an evidence-based analysis of the needs of students.</p>
Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements (EAs)	<p>Description of the connection between the EA, the contract and school plans.</p> <p>Of the 35 districts with signed EAs, 17 districts (50%) described the connection between the EA, school plans and their 2006/07 Contract.</p>	<p>All districts will provide an explanation of the connection between the EA, the Achievement Contract and school plans, and the required inclusion of the most recent EA progress report. Or, if an EA is not signed, there is a status report on the process to complete an EA.</p>
Goals and Objectives	<p>District goals and objectives to support each goal.</p>	<p>Retained</p>
Rationale	<p>Rationale for the selection of each goal based on analysis of student performance information.</p>	<p>Retained</p>
Evidences used	<p>School, district and provincial measures.</p> <p>Fifty-two districts (87%) draw on data collected at the school or district level to determine success of some or all of their goals.</p>	<p>Individual, school, district and provincial measures, with an emphasis on school and district measures that lead to changes in classroom practice and impact success for each student.</p>

Category	From Accountability Contracts:	To Achievement Contracts:
Targets	<p>Targets established by the district in the goal areas.</p> <p>In the 2006/07 Contracts, 57 districts (95%) set performance targets for some or all of their goals and objectives.</p>	<p>Although targets may be set in a number of areas specific to the priorities in the district, including early learning, it is expected that each district will have targets for literacy (K-12), completion rates and Aboriginal student improvement.</p>
Progress made in Achievement of Targets	<p>Some districts presented targets and results presented as “met” or “not met”.</p> <p>Forty-two districts (70%) provided results and monitored progress towards goal achievement in their 2006/07 Contract. When established targets were not achieved, 28 districts (47%) included an explanation and plans or modifications made to support improvement.</p>	<p>A statement of progress in achievement of specific performance targets, as well as a summary statement of progress made in the overall achievement of goals and objectives. District actions in response to the assessment of progress are included.</p>
Strategies and Structures	<p>Strategies and structures were separate categories. They were often a list of all the activities and opportunities in the district in a goal area.</p>	<p>Strategies and structures are combined into specific actions to address goals as well as a description of how they will be implemented and evaluated for effectiveness. Analysis will include evaluation of the actions, the efficacy of their implementation and the alignment of resources to support implementation.</p>