

**ALBERTA EDUCATION REPORT  
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION  
Reporting Period: 2018 - 2019**

**Overview**

Golden Hills School Division strives to provide a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging. Alberta’s education system is built on a values-based approach to accepting responsibility for all children and students.

**Who do we serve?**

All students within GHSD demonstrate differences in their interests, aptitudes and competencies and teachers are committed to meeting students’ individual needs. In every classroom there are students who by virtue of their behavior, communication, intellectual, learning or physical characteristics, may be deemed to be in need of specialized supports and services. Many of these students meet criteria for an Alberta Education Special Needs designation.

***GHSD Coding Profile***

	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>
Mild/Moderate	771	908
Severe (including PUF)	315	355
ELL	806	965

In addition, many more students who do not meet coding criteria still receive appropriate specialized learning supports. Not only does the population of students with diverse needs continue to grow, but so does the complexity of needs that these students, and often their families, present with.

**How do we meet the needs of diverse learners within GHSD?**

In accordance with the Alberta Standards of Special Education, school principals within GHSD are responsible for ensuring that the school has processes and a learning team in place to provide consultation, planning and problem solving. All schools within GHSD have an established process for considering how to best support students with diverse learning needs with the majority of the schools using a School Resource Team Model. In this model the Learning Team (i.e. Administrator, School Counsellor, Educational Consultant, Family School Resource Counsellor, Specialized Learning Teacher(s) and classroom teacher(s), collaborate on a regular basis to assess the need of identified students, and develop a plan of action. The students’ response to intervention is carefully monitored and changes to the plan are made as required. The rights of parents/guardians, to participate in the decision-making process affecting their child’s education is considered throughout the intervention planning process.

The Student Learning Team may also work closely with professionals from Health, Children’s Services, Community and Social Services and other community professionals from a wide variety of community agencies when a student requires specialized support outside of school-based resources. Regional Collaborative Service Delivery is an important initiative in ensuring government systems, education, Health, Children’s Services, Community and Social Services are working closely to meet the needs of children, youth and their families. GHSD has representatives at the Leadership (co-chair) and Executive Level and serves as the Banker Board.

Services to students are delivered using a Response to Intervention Model.

**GHSD Continuum**

**Response to Intervention of Supports and Services**

*Modified Program (IPP)*

*Parent / Guardian Involvement Throughout*

**Complex Needs**

A few students require intensive supports from many government systems which may exceed their service baseline. In partnerships with another system GHSD may make a referral to the Tri-Region Complex Case Initiative, which includes the CONex team. Supports may include access to specialized expertise for capacity building, extra support in the school or home setting and/or access to specialized processes in Calgary i.e. Society for Treatment of Autism.

**Individual Support**

Students who demonstrate limited response to intervention at the Universal and Targeted level of support may be referred for specialized assessment. In 2018-2019 Educational Consultants administered 182 psycho educational assessments, 41 behavioural assessments, 10 Capacity Assessments and 4 risk assessments. Students may also be referred to speech-language/occupational/physical therapists and the Connections Clinic Program (Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist) for assessment. A recommendation may be made for placement in a congregated special education program (Green Zone, Anchor/Strive), provision of Educational Assistant support and/or support for an FSCRC, OT/PT/SPL or community professional.

**Targeted Supports**

The Students Learning Team may determine that the child/youth would benefit from targeted supports to enhance their competence as a learner and for overall well-being. Specialized programs vary from school to school but include Early Levelled Literacy, Early Numeracy, Social-Emotional Learning Groups, Learning Assistance Centres, Resource Program (e.g. Math Boost), OT/SLP Group.

**Universal Supports**

All students have a variety of needs that can be met to a varying degree through Powerful Learning practices including responsive teaching and differentiated instruction. Many professional supports are available to teachers within GHSD to help them meet their students' diverse learning needs in the classroom: School Administrators, Instructional Coaches, Educational Consultants, FSCRC, SLP/OT/PT, teacher mentors, PD, Collaborative Days.

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## Strengths

- Golden Hills School Division staff including, Administrators, Educational Consultants, Family School Community Resource Counselors, Teachers and community partners continue to collaborate to develop a long term strategy to enhance student well-being and achievement.
  - The Calgary Regional Consortium teamed with GHSD to lead several engagement sessions. The design thinking process was used to identify areas of strength and next steps.
  - The work aligns with the Connecting and Contributing driver in Powerful Learning. Identifying and sharing evidence-based social-emotional learning programs will be the focus in the upcoming year.
  - Collectively the group will move forward with the following goals:
    - Building Capacity to support student Well-Being
    - Maximize the use of evidence-based resources
    - Strengthening community partnerships
- The Student Services team, Family School Community Resource Counselors, Instructional Coaches and outside experts worked collaboratively to build teacher capacity to support students in the areas of differentiation and social-emotional learning. Support and training were provided through professional development opportunities and coaching.
  - “Go To Educator” training was provided and at least one team member from each school was in attendance. The training provides information regarding the early identification of mental health disorders. This knowledge allows teachers to make effective referrals that link students in need of help to the appropriate care within and beyond the school.
  - During Leading and Learning several sessions were offered by the Student Services team. The topics included, differentiation for ELL’s, using ELL Benchmarks, behavior strategies, building resilience, supporting students with anxiety, understanding psycho-educational assessments and creating individual support plans.
  - Schools accessed Psychologists to be a part of their school-based professional development to support social-emotional learning.
  - Instructional Coaches and Psychologists worked directly with teachers to support differentiated instruction and behavior strategies in the classroom.
  - An Instructional Coach connected students with Chromebooks and iPads through the Inclusive Lending Library to utilize technology as a learning tool. The coach supported teachers with effective usage and helped to link individual student needs to appropriate apps and programs.
- Program Unit Funding (PUF) continues to provide excellent programming and early intervention support for our pre K- Kindergarten students.
  - The number of students who qualified for PUF based on their needs increased and funding allows necessary supports be allocated to students.
  - GHSD has maintained quality SLP, PT and OT service providers to support programming for students.
  - Educational Consultants help to identify needs and provide support for teachers.
- The English Language Learning (ELL) team, consisting of Educational Consultants and Instructional Coaches supported teachers to enhance learning opportunities for a growing population of students whose second language is English.

- The ELL team supported lead teachers and classroom teachers in each school to administer Alberta K-12 ESL Proficiency Benchmarks.
  - Professional learning sessions and instructional coaching was provided to set language learning goals and to personalize and differentiate learning for students.
  - A quarterly newsletter, *Every Student Learns*, was created to share high-impact strategies and resources.
  - ELL resources continued to be compiled and distributed through the IMC. Resources include Dual-language literary books, dictionaries and teacher resources.
  - The Inclusive Lending Library also provided access to iPads with a variety of ELL apps and Chromebooks for learners.
- Continued support of new digital Individualized Program Planning and Individual Support Planning documents.
    - Selected teachers piloted Dossier, a digital platform, to create student plans that can be easily accessed and shared with teachers. Recommendations were used to enhance functionality and effectiveness of the plans.
    - Instructional Coaches, Educational Consultants and Teachers collaborated to create a bank of goals and strategies to improve student learning.
    - Professional Development and individualized school/teacher training was provided so the program could be used by all GHSD teachers in the 2019-2020 school year.
    - Templates for Behavior Support Plans, Medical Management Plans, Success in School Plans and ELL Benchmarks were also created in Dossier and will be piloted in the upcoming year.
- Implementation of cross-ministry protocols and training to support administrators and team leads at each school:
    - Threat Assessment (Virginia State Threat Assessment Model – Dr. Dewey Cornell)
    - Suicide Ideation Response Protocol
- Continued a robust school and counselling psychology training program that supports GHSD in providing psychoeducational assessments and targeted SEL Introductory Groups.
    - Provided clinical supervision for Provisional Psychologists and Masters of School Psychology students.
    - Served on the Integrated Services in Education Advisory Board.
    - Able to hire a registered psychologists who completed internships and provisional hours with GHSD.
- Continued active representation from GHSD at the provincial government level through Central East RCSD, Tri-Region Complex Case Initiative and Low incidence Advisory Groups.
- Commitment of the GHSD schoolboard and senior administration to maintain the support of school psychologists and Family School Community Resource counselors in schools.

## Challenges

- Increased complexity of needs and lack of specialized community resources/placements and urgent/acute care service.
  - With GHSD we have seen significant increases in students being brought to hospital for suicidal ideation and significantly more youth engaging in non-suicidal self-injury.
  - In the elementary setting, there has been an increase in severe aggression from students towards staff and peers.
- There is a lack of specialized support for parents with children who have complex behavioral needs and do not meet criteria for children's services supports. Family Supports for Children with Disabilities present with service delivery barriers for many families.
- Allied health services are provided within GHSD by two health zones and there are significant service delivery disparities between Calgary and Central Zone.