



## Accountability Statement

The Annual Education Results Report for the 2020/2021 school year for Aurora School Ltd. (otherwise identified as Aurora Academic Charter School, or AACs) was prepared under the direction of the Board of Directors in accordance with its responsibilities under the Education Act and the Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act. This document was developed in the context of the provincial government's business and fiscal plans. The Board has used the results reported in the document, to the best of its abilities, to develop the education plan and is committed to implementing the strategies contained within the plan to improve student learning and results.

The Board approved this Annual Education Results Report for the 2020/2021 school year on November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

*Arlene Huhn*  
Arlene Huhn, Chair

Aurora School Ltd. Board of Directors

*Ian Gray*  
Ian Gray, Superintendent

## Whistleblower Protection

Our Aurora Whistleblower Protection Board Policy 5450 is in alignment with the Alberta Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act.

As of November 18, 2021, we have had no disclosures reported over the last year with our Aurora School Ltd. Staff.

## Domains

Student Growth & Achievement

Teaching & Leading

Learning Supports

Governance

Local & Societal Context

## Student Growth & Achievement

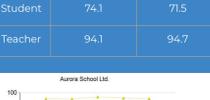
### Student Learning

Alberta Education Assurance Measures

Local Performance Measures

Results from the Provincial Achievement Tests are normally required for reporting, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, results for last year were not included in the Authority Report. Below are the results of the past three years in both Acceptable and Excellent achievement levels.

	Alberta			Aurora School Ltd.		
	Current Result	Previous Year Result	Previous 3-Year Average	Current Result	Previous Year Result	Previous 3-Year Average
PAT: Acceptable	NA	NA	73.7	NA	NA	99.6
PAT: Excellence	NA	NA	20.3	NA	NA	52.1



Although PAT testing was not a requirement for schools in 2021, AACs chose to participate. All students in grades six and nine who attended school in-person, approximately 75% of the student count, completed the tests in May and June.

These results were utilized as part of students' class marks, in keeping with student evaluation policies 6190 BP and 6190 AR.

In order to continue strong results with regard to student learning, the following processes and strategies have been put into place:

### Processes & Strategies

- Curriculum leads/coaches established among teaching staff to assist teacher collaboration and reflect/input on pedagogy and student achievement
- Middle school sets SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-based) goals each reporting term;
- Student involvement in rubric creation for learning objectives and student competencies;
- Provide more teacher collaboration time for Curriculum alignment across grades to reduce barriers for students;
- Examine assessment practices among grade groups and review reporting structures to accurately communicate student learning;
- Integrate enhanced technology into classrooms to further engage students and enhance the learning experience. Simultaneously as Pacesetter Reading Comprehension which has been expanded across K-4 from a pilot project in grade 2. These technological supports are especially useful for students and teachers to continue learning at home during isolation and quarantine periods;
- As the school adds new staff members, curriculum meetings are becoming more valuable
- Teachers are increasingly clarifying issues of curriculum and assessment and discussing student learning needs;
- Elementary staff are aligning instruction around the Empowering Writers model through the opportunity to invite students' achievement across all facets of English Language Arts
- The continuation of the Elementary School Special Project program, where all teachers can apply for micro-grants to target specific areas of school improvement. This use of resources has been incredibly successful and has engaged teachers - both experienced and new - as leaders in improving school outcomes in a team-based approach. Projects completed to date include:
  - Vertically integrating the mathematics program across grades 1-6 with a new program in grades 2 and 3
  - Creating student-centred assessment rubrics in partnership with the Alberta Assessment Consortium
  - Adding research-based Mindfulness resources to the grade 3 and 4 Health resources to improve student mental health
  - Updating the reading program in grade 1
  - Creating and implementing cohesive student-centred, experiential learning programs for Music and Health across grade 4
  - Updating a cohesive literature program across grade 4
  - Creating concept-based math review sheets for grade 2
  - Mandating new staff provide a highly cohesive program to all students
  - School staff continue through a generative literacy-based art project to inspire students' love of reading
- The development and integration by our Aurora teaching and learning team of leading-edge instructional technologies to complement our whole group instructional. Students receive a coaching approach. Ongoing professional development includes the employment of a collegial coaching model to build our capacity to employ computer applications such as G Suite Enterprise for Education and similar programs to enhance the learning experience for every student. Moreover, we are extending the envelope of access to teaching and learning resources toward a 24/7 accessible model that optimizes access and use by all stakeholders via PowerSchool and Family Zone online supports. COVID-19 has accelerated our implementation of many technologies as necessitated by changes to instruction both for at-school and at-home learners.

### Citizenship

Alberta Education Assurance Measures

Local Performance Measures

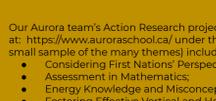
Percentage of teachers, parents and students who are satisfied that students model the characteristics of active citizenship.

The following processes and strategies are being employed at the local level in order to encourage active citizenship at AACs:

### Processes & Strategies

- Highly effective teacher, student and parent engagement with clearly articulated expectations and accountability processes that model and reinforce active citizenship with school and community stakeholders;
- Increased communication with teachers, parents and students to build coherence and opportunities to develop characteristics of active citizenship;
- Middle School continues to recognize students who display exemplary citizenship at awards ceremonies each school term. This was put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic but has now restarted;

	Alberta	Aurora School Ltd.
	%	%
Overall	83.2	86
Parent	81.4	91.9
Student	74.1	71.5
Teacher	94.1	94.7



- Held more parent open meetings to discuss pertinent issues, including 2 town hall meetings to discuss school re-opening plans and COVID-19 health and well-being;
- We offer Leadership and Business as a Middle School options available to all students;
- The Elementary instituted a "Cubs" Leadership group to provide grade four students with the opportunity to instill student leadership to their peers and younger students. Students themselves set their own goals and undertook projects they felt would improve the learning experience for all stakeholders in the school. (The CUBS program is paused during Covid);
- The Elementary and Middle Schools participate in and lead numerous charity campaigns to increase our students' understanding of issues and engagement with the community. Students support the local community league as well as local, national, and international causes.

### Student Learning Engagement

Alberta Education Assurance Measures

Local Performance Measures

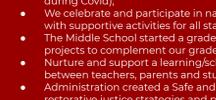
The percentage of teachers, parents and students who agree that students are engaged in their learning at school.

AACS is dedicated to ensuring that students are engaged in their learning through the following activities:

### Processes & Strategies

- Middle School reinforces appreciation of original literature with the annual field trip to the Citadel Theatre's production of A Christmas Carol as a part of the novel study. The Middle School also has an optional theater club that exposes students to the exciting world of theatre;
- Aurora Academic Charter School Committee with external members of the year to promote reading and the appreciation of stories. Guest readers invited each year; a number of readings-related activities are organized, and funding is provided generously by the School Council;

	Alberta	Aurora School Ltd.
	%	%
Overall	85.6	87.8
Parent	89.0	98.3
Student	71.8	66.9
Teacher	96.0	98.2



- Provide parents with various opportunities to build their own skill-set so that they can assist their children at home through digital resources and information evenings, high school preparation night, study skills and stress management night, etc;
- Enhance our students' understanding of issues and engagement with the community through our Learning Resources Coordinator

## Teaching & Leading

### Education Quality

Alberta Education Assurance Measures

Local Performance Measures

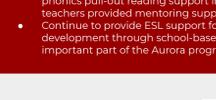
Percentage of teachers, parents and students who are satisfied with the overall quality of basic education.

AACS is dedicated to quality education that aligns with the Alberta Education Quality Standard. To continue this trend, AACs utilizes the following strategies and processes:

### Processes & Strategies

- Initiation of a 3rd volume of school-based action research and community of practice along with publication online of our many recent research partnerships, presentations and publications.
- Establishment of a new Research Committee with external members and partnerships aimed at a teaching and enhancing learning at Aurora.
- Establishment of Research Coordinator and Assessment Coordinating Committee to facilitate collaboration and learning among staff.

	Alberta	Aurora School Ltd.
	%	%
Overall	89.6	91.7
Parent	86.7	92.7
Student	86.3	84.3
Teacher	95.7	98.2



- Our Aurora team's Action Research projects are accessible online on our Aurora website located at <https://www.auroraschool.ca/> under the Research tab. The research project titles/themes (a small sample of the many) include:
  - Considering First Nations' Perspectives in Successful Music Pedagogy;
  - Assessment in Mathematics;
  - Energy Knowledge and Misconceptions in Grade 8 students;
  - Fostering Effective Vertical and Horizontal Collaboration within Single School and Multi-School Settings Simultaneously and Independently;
  - Creating Chromebook Implementation at Aurora Academic Charter School;
  - Creating Opportunities for the Growth of Student Success;
  - Exploring the Efficacy of Flipped Classrooms Compared to Traditional Lecture Classrooms;
  - Transjunctively in mathematics provincial achievement test student performance longitudinally;
  - Parent voice and perspective on the parent-teacher interview process and social media connections with the school community;
  - Literacy knowledge and skills development; and
  - Building a student-centred approach in assessment, both formative and summative.
- The continuation in the Middle School of its Curriculum Lead program with experienced teachers actively engaged in a vital role as department heads for core subject areas. Their responsibilities included organizing department meetings, gathering resources, helping to implement teaching strategies or resources, helping to analyze and then write the analysis reports for the PATs, leading teachers in assessment creation and implementation, scheduling final exams, and taking on the role of acting administrators as opportunity arises. Curriculum leads have been actively engaged in assessment professional development to disseminate new learnings and practices to the teaching team.
- Growing our Action Research Community of Practice to include multiple school/division partners as well as sponsored projects in collaboration with the University of Alberta, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University (Dr. Malcolm Steinberg, Principal Investigator), Aurora Academic Charter Schools, and Edmonton Public Schools. We were the successful recipient of an Alberta Education call for research proposals that resulted in \$50,000.00 in grants to explore parents' perspectives in parent-teacher interview processes with a lens to improve social connectedness and communication. We are honoured to continue our innovation and research partnerships with Alberta Education, The Association of Alberta Charter Schools, and multiple school authorities, and universities across Canada.
- Teachers continue to refine their skills and knowledge of assessment through professional development and training through the Alberta Assessment Consortium. These workshops provide greater perspectives on assessment in the digital era with focus on refining skills towards a student-centered approach on assessment. Aurora School visits this development in teachers and has ensured funding to allow teachers to attend these workshops.

## Learning Supports

### Welcoming, Caring, Respectful, and Safe Learning Environment

Alberta Education Assurance Measures

Local Performance Measures

The percentage of teachers, parents and students who agree that their learning environments are welcoming, caring, respectful and safe.

AACS is dedicated to making our schools positive places for our staff, students, parents, and visitors. To that end, we utilize the following processes and strategies:

### Processes & Strategies

- Middle School continues to focus on safe and caring presentations for students and all staff have completed the "Expecting in School" program (The Middle School also hosted parent evenings on "cyber bullying" as well as whole school presentations on internet safety from the Saffron Centre including an evening presentation for parents;
- The Saffron Centre does a yearly presentation to grade three and four students about cyberbullying and an evening presentation for parents;

	Alberta	Aurora School Ltd.
	%	%
Overall	87.8	88.4
Parent	88.2	94.9
Student	79.8	75.9
Teacher	95.3	94.3



- Grade 4 and Kindergarten are paired in a buddy system to reinforce responsibility, caring and empathy. Students work with their buddies on reading and other projects. (Paused during Covid);
- We celebrate and participate in national bullying awareness week and Pink Shirt Day with supportive activities for all stakeholders;
- The Middle School Leadership and Social Justice team that focuses on social justice projects to complement our grades 7 to 9 Student Council;
- Nurture and support a learning/school culture that builds social connectedness between teachers, parents and students;
- Administration created a Safe and Caring School Report to identify and restore the restorative justice strategies and philosophy behind our Anti-Bullying practices and to ensure alignment and clarity;
- Both schools are employing practices in addressing student behaviour and actively engage parents in finding solutions;
- Implementation of Restorative Leadership and Social Justice Clubs;
- Expansion of Physical Activities for students to include Cross-Country Running, Volleyball, Basketball, Soccer, Skating, Yoga, Dance, Track and Field, and Participation in a number of Edmonton area athletic and wellness events;
- Enhancement of our student staff with centres that include both cardiovascular and strength training resources and equipment;
- Teacher Action Research projects focused on improving systemic physical and mental wellness;
- Continuing emphasis of social activism for students such as Pink Shirt Day, Orange Shirt Day, WE Day, and presentations by the Saffron Centre on Internet safety. The message and attitude conveyed is that Aurora School cares about the wellness of students and that we recognize and celebrate differences;
- Strengthening our community relationship with amiskwacy Academy and Mother Earths Charter School and the inclusion of those schools' Elders and students in Aurora School activities.

### Access to Support & Services

Alberta Education Assurance Measures

Local Performance Measures

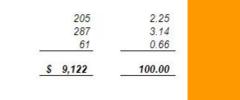
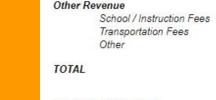
The percentage of teachers, parents and students who agree that students have access to the appropriate supports and services at school.

Significant development has been made over the past year with regard to improve supports for students. Some of the strategies and processes are as follows:

### Processes & Strategies

- Active engagement of psychologists and counsellors to improve teacher knowledge and efficacy to meet the needs of students and provide ongoing supports for successful learning and wellness for our entire Aurora team of stakeholders as well as support for specific students; and
- The building of a specialized hosted parent evening with a learning and wellness for our entire Aurora team of stakeholders as well as support for specific students; and
- The building of a Specialized Pathologist, an Occupational Therapist, and a Psychologist, COVID-19 has the potential to increase the needs of our school community for additional mental health support, and we have the supports in place to be responsive.

	Alberta	Aurora School Ltd.
	%	%
Overall	82.6	84.4
Parent	78.9	91.5
Student	80.2	74.6
Teacher	88.7	87.2



- Continuation and growth with our successful Riggs phonics/spelling program and our phonics pull-out reading support in the Elementary School and Middle School with new teachers provided mentoring support and the opportunity for PD and training.
- Continue to provide ESL support for students and ESL instruction professional development through school-based funding. ESL pull-out time continues to be an important part of the Aurora program.

## Governance

### Parent Involvement

Alberta Education Assurance Measures

Local Performance Measures

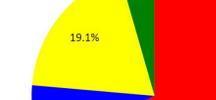
Percentage of teachers and parents satisfied with parental involvement in decisions about their child's education.

As a charter school, parent involvement is the heart of AACs. In addition to having a parent-run Board of Directors, we use the following process and strategies to empower our parent body:

### Processes & Strategies

- A review and overhaul of the Aurora Board of Directors Policy Manual and Aurora Articles of Association to provide clarity, strengthen communication, and ensure coherence for all stakeholders. This process has included:
  - Extensive analysis and refinement of Board Policies in alignment with the Alberta Education charter evaluation recommendations the Education Act, and current Alberta Education legislation, regulations, and in alignment

	Alberta	Aurora School Ltd.
	%	%
Overall	79.5	89.1
Parent	72.2	85.1
Teacher	86.8	93.0

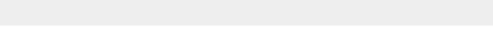


- with our recent charter evaluation recommendations and requirements.
  - Review and update of Administrative Regulations to clearly define administrative operations and procedures to bring clarity and consistency in the roles of governance and administration.
  - Rewrite and approval of our Aurora Articles of Association to assure consistency and alignment with the Education Act and business plan, both short term and long-term.
  - Review and amendments to the current Charter to reflect a more student-centred approach within the direct instruction model of teaching and learning.
- Growing our Action Research Community of Practice to include multiple school/division partners as well as sponsored projects in collaboration with the University of Alberta, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University (Dr. Malcolm Steinberg, Principal Investigator), Aurora Academic Charter Schools, and Edmonton Public Schools. We are honoured to continue our innovation and research partnerships with Alberta Education, The Association of Alberta Charter Schools, and multiple school authorities, and universities across Canada.
- Specialist stakeholder committees chaired by a Director where parents and teachers are invited to participate;
- The Aurora School Council has been provided opportunity for discussion and input on the major issues developed by the Board of Directors in this education plan. For example, parents and teachers on the School Council have discussed school enrollment growth, school renovations, policy development and implementation of technology;
- The School Council provided valuable input with our Aurora AER and 3 Year Plan at their October 2020 meeting. School Council communication and feedback is welcomed by the Aurora Board of Directors;
- The Aurora Board currently is comprised of parents of Aurora children, The Aurora Board and the Aurora School Council have open communication. Parent attendance at the annual AGM is highly encouraged, advertised, supported and improving with dedicated childcare during the AGM to decrease barriers to parent attendance. The November 2020 Annual General Meeting was held virtually.
- The Board of Directors maintains regular communication with the School Council through administration;
- The recent outside school website [www.auroraschool.ca/](https://www.auroraschool.ca/) contains information on how to contact the Board of Directors, School Council, senior administration, school administration, staff, current newsletter, and other pertinent school information. The website also contains a dedicated research and innovation section to share with stakeholders from local to international. A Board Highlights section on the website keeps stakeholders informed of Board decisions.

### Budget Actual Comparison

#### Aurora Budget Summary Highlights for 2021-22

REVENUE SUMMARY	Budget	% of Total
	(\$000)	
<b>Alberta Education Funding</b>		
Instruction (Grades K-19)	6,383	69.97
Student Transportation	482	5.28
Plant Operations & Maintenance	1,270	13.92
Amortization of Capital Allocations	435	4.77
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 8,570</b>	<b>93.96</b>
<b>Other Revenue</b>		
School Instruction Fees	205	2.25
Transportation Fees	67	0.74
Other	281	3.16
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 9,122</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>EXPENSE SUMMARY</b>		
Instruction (Grades K-19)	6,551	68.95
Student Transportation	768	8.01
Plant Operations & Maintenance	1,831	19.11
Board Governance/System Administration	435	4.53
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 9,584</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>-\$ 462</b>	



Audited Financial Statements can be located on our website at: [www.auroraschool.ca/](https://www.auroraschool.ca/)

## Local & Societal Context

### Contextual Information

The Charter for Aurora School Ltd. was granted on March 8, 1996. Our school first opened on September 9, 1996 serving 280 students from Kindergarten to Grade 8. The original school location was the former Misericordia Hospital Nurses' Residences located in West Edmonton. In September 1997, Aurora School Ltd. extended the educational program to Grade 9. Our Charter was successfully renewed in 2001, 2006, 2011, and 2016. This school year, 2020/21, Aurora is excited to apply for a 15-year charter renewal. In 2007, Aurora Academic Charter School moved to its current Prospero Park community location, 12245-131 Street in Edmonton. The Aurora school building is leased from Edmonton Public School Division. Our school employs 48 certified teachers, two principals, two assistant principals, a full-time acting superintendent, twelve support staff, a contracted custodial team, a contracted student health support team, and a contracted student school bus service.

Our school includes two gymnasiums, one wellness physical training centre (with both cardiovascular and strength training equipment), an Elementary multi-purpose wellness activity centre (Cub corner), a Foods Lab, a Learning Commons/Library (completed 2016) and state-of-the-art instructional technology, two experimental science laboratories, art facility, and 58 classrooms, all of which contain SMART boards and one-to-one technology devices.

Our Elementary school has recently renovated to include an Elementary entrance area (northwest corner). This renovation design includes a large foyer area for improved parental access and engagement along with upgraded Elementary administration and support team facilities. This addition also includes a flex staff/conference room to allow for increased collaboration and consultation with students, parents, staff, and stakeholders. The anticipated grand opening of our student staff well-being centres is December 2020. Our Aurora programming is in high demand with just over 3000 Edmonton and area students on the waitlist. The large number of applicants share the Edmonton regional area demand for our unique, innovative, and highly successful academic-focused teaching and learning community at Aurora.

Aurora students continue to achieve at very high levels, as is evident by history and current Provincial Achievement Test results. Our enhancements of nomenclature and literacy knowledge, skills, attitudes, and competencies continue to yield strong dividends for our students and their futures. We are proud to note that our grade 9 Provincial Achievement Test results are among the highest in Alberta and we were invited to participate in a provincial research study to extrapolate our results to the wider provincial context.