



**Central Okanagan
Public Schools**

Together We Learn



Background:

In 2022-23, the District Assessment Committee has been reviewing all our current district literacy and numeracy assessments in response to the feedback from educators on the [District K-12 Evidence of Learning Continuum](#) (i.e., K-12 Assessment Plan). This review has included a specific district-wide engagement on our district [Early Learning Profile](#) (ELP).

From October 2022 to March 2023, focus group conversations were held at all 32 elementary schools in Central Okanagan Public Schools to gather feedback from educators to uncover **what is working well** and **what feedback they might have** through their experiences in using the ELP to support their learners over the years.

More than 1,200 pieces of feedback were collected from more than 350 educators, as well as over 100 additional survey response comments as part of a follow-up survey that was provided to all focus group participants.

In April 2023, an expression of interest went out to all educators to join a **District ELP Working Group**. From this expression of interest, ~40 educators, principals, and vice-principals came together over multiple sessions to identify the trends within all the collected feedback and to co-develop both short-term and long-term recommendations for future explorations. We would like to thank the following educators, for both their time and commitment as part of our **District ELP Working Group**:

April Smith	Ashley Watson	Barbara Marcuk
Brenda Kirsch	Bridget Brousseau	Casey Nye
Christie Russell	Christine Wengenmeier	Corry Wright
Dawn Buehner	Jami Prasad	Jamie Mcevoy
Janet Slaney	Jen Adamson	Jennifer Sandvold
Jeremy Sanbrooks	Jessica Prediger	Jill Voros
Joanne Lapointe	Jordan Kleckner	Julie Rosco
Kristy Fletcher	Kyla Babcock	Lisa Wilson
Marlo Konneke	Michelle Apps	Michelle Newman
Monique West	Nina Ferguson	Parvina Panghali
Raelyn Larmet	Reanna Lamb	Robbi Martens
Robin Kimmie	Stefani Oakes	Tara Scott

This document provides an overview of the identified trends and subsequent next steps for future changes for the district Early Learning Profile (ELP), as determined by the **District ELP Working Group**.

The strengths we heard in our focus group conversations

- Helps identify learners' strengths and areas of growth to support instruction.
- Helps educators develop their practice in early literacy instruction and assessment.
- Guides the whole school support team in decision making.
- Consistency from grade-to-grade across all schools for all students in our district.
- Useful to have a common database with assessment information on all learners.
- Helpful training and learning resources that are provided.
- General positive feedback - overall a good assessment tool.

The suggested feedback we heard in our focus group conversations (with subsequent immediate and/or long-term actions)

Educators:

- are seeking clarity on the purpose of the ELP and the performance data.
- are seeking clarity on how often they should be completing the ELP subtests.
- noted uncertainty on when they can use professional judgement.
- are seeking alignment in the descriptors with the new Ministry Reporting Policy.
- are requesting for a more simplified numeracy assessment that spans across all grades (not just kindergarten).
- French Immersion educators are seeking training for the required K-3 French Immersion ELP (Profil de l'élève M à 3).
- noted resources for the ELP are often difficult to locate and not always accessible.
- are seeking more equitable supportive time to be provided to administer the ELP.
- are requesting a more structured and intentionally differentiated approach to the ELP.
- are requesting a review of the various targets/benchmarks throughout the ELP.
- are requesting certain words in the ELP be replaced.
- are requesting a review of the alphabet knowledge subtests in kindergarten.
- shared concerns on TTOC reliability/availability for supportive time to administer the ELP.

- are seeking clearer communication on ongoing updates made to the ELP.
 - are interested in having the ELP organized as a continuum rather than by grade.
 - are interested in a greater focus on phonics within the ELP.
 - are seeking further guidance and resources to support instruction in relation to the ELP.
 - brought up concerns of the overall size of the ELP and the efficacy of certain subtests within it.
 - are seeking more guidance on how best to support emergent ELL learners and the use of the ELP.
 - are requesting more ongoing professional learning in administering ELP and designing learning in response to the data from various subtests.
 - are interested in a shift to a digital version of the ELP.
 - are interested in a word bank for various subtests that can be used.
 - had positive feedback on the new alternative high frequency word list and would like a more streamlined process to assess students overtime in the ELP booklet.
 - are seeking a more simplified and aligned approach to the writing assessment in the ELP.
 - are requesting professional learning for intermediate educators to develop their understanding and use of the ELP.
 - are looking for guidance on how best to communicate data from the ELP with parents.
 - noted how changes made to the ELP can take years to be fully implemented due to the student ELP booklets moving from grade to grade throughout the primary years.
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The strengths we heard in our focus group conversations:

In asking, “*when it comes to the ELP, what is working well for you?*”, the following trends were identified from the feedback collected from educators:

- 1) Helps **identify each learner’s strengths and areas of growth**, and in **designing responsive learning** to support each learner in their ongoing skill development.
- 2) Supports educators in **developing their practice in early literacy instruction and assessment**, especially those new to teaching or new to a grade.
- 3) **Helps guide the whole school support team in decision making** in areas such as: school-based team meetings, class profile/review meetings, class placement meetings, identifying the use of support staff across all classrooms in the school, etc.
- 4) Many noted the **importance of having a district-wide assessment to help in developing consistency and alignment** across classrooms, grades, and schools.
- 5) Many noted that **having a common database with assessment information on all learners is useful** in supporting both educators and schools.
- 6) Many noted the **value of the training provided** to educators, as well as the **learning resources available** online and in the teacher resources package.
- 7) **General positive feedback** - there were a variety of comments that the ELP (and sub-assessments within it) is a helpful tool for educators and schools.

Various comments related to the strengths of the ELP:

- *“It really helps guide my teaching. When I first entered K it just started, and I wonder what did we even do before this?”*
- *“The data really helps drive support in the school.”*
- *“I like that we have something that provides consistency across schools.”*
- *“It’s really great for new educators or if you are changing grades.”*
- *“I like the instructions included in the ELP and the resources on what to do if a student is struggling with a certain skill.”*
- *“I came from SD53 and I couldn’t believe how incredible this was!”*
- *“It is really valuable to gain information for struggling learners, and find specifics on what they need next.”*
- *“I value the class summary sheet and print it out from EdPlan Insight.”*
- *“For emerging students, the ELP helps us show and celebrate growth even if they are not at where we would expect them to be.”*
- *“I like that we have a research-based, common assessment tool like this.”*

The suggested feedback we heard in our focus group conversations (with subsequent immediate and/or long-term actions):

In asking, “*When it comes to the ELP, what feedback might you offer up?*” educators provided many valuable suggestions. Below is a summary of the significant trends in feedback, as well as the short and long term actions to be explored in relation to each trend. These have been organized first by trends with immediate actions for 2023-24, and then by trends that will require more time to explore in order to determine possible future actions.

Feedback Trend: Educators are seeking clarity on the rationale and purpose of the ELP and the performance data from the various subtests within it.

Immediate Action: The following overview is intended to provide clarity on the rationale and purpose of the ELP, as well as the use of performance data from the various subtests:

The Early Literacy Profile (ELP) is an assessment tool that has been designed to assist educators in meeting learners at their point of development with respect to their foundational literacy skills. The subtests within the ELP have been created in alignment with current literacy research, the Ministry curriculum, and British Columbia's Early Learning Framework.

- The performance data is **first and foremost for classroom educators to design responsive instruction** for each student in their unique journey of literacy development.
- **School teams use performance data to make decisions** on how best to use support staff across classrooms. School teams also use performance data to inform the progress of their school learning priorities and for decisions on budget, staffing, and resources.
- The district uses data to **understand overarching trends** in literacy, to offer **professional learning**, and to **make informed decisions** on resources and staffing across schools.

Feedback Trend: Educators are seeking clarity on how often they should be completing the ELP subtests with students throughout the school year.

Immediate Action: The following clarifications are intended to support educators and schools in the administration and entering of performance data into EdPlan Insight:

- *The ELP is a **district-required assessment** consisting of subtests that shall be administered to all children in the primary grades (K - 3)*
- *Students identified as “not yet proficient” with respect to their performance on the ELP **should be re-assessed** to monitor their progress after targeted instruction (including students in intermediate who have not yet shown proficiency).*
- *The timing and scheduling the ELP subtests will be determined through consultation between the Principal and teachers, **guided by recommendations contained in the ELP.***
- *The Principal will ensure the classroom teacher is provided with appropriate class coverage to **support the administration of the ELP.***
- *ELP data **must be entered into EdPlan Insight prior to the end of the current school year**, and it is recommended that it is entered each term to help classroom teachers and support staff in decision making to support students in their literacy development.*

Feedback Trend: Educators noted uncertainty on whether they can use professional judgement on a subtest when they have observed a student demonstrate that skill proficiently in the learning environment.

Immediate Action: Educators should **use professional judgement** when it comes to the ELP. For example, when they observe a student has mastered a skill in their classroom environment (e.g., rhyming), they can enter a proficient score (e.g. 5/5) in the ELP, rather than having the student go through one-on-one administration of that specific subtest.

Feedback Trend: Educators are seeking alignment in the descriptors used throughout the ELP with the new Ministry Student Reporting Policy.

Immediate Action: All descriptors in the ELP will be updated to align with the descriptors in the new Ministry Reporting Policy (i.e., Emerging, Developing, Proficient). It is important to note as well that **the ELP is a formative assessment tool**, and triangulation of evidence is needed when considering evaluation on Written Learning Updates.

Feedback Trend: Educators provided feedback on the size, length, and rationale of the current kindergarten numeracy screener and are requesting for a more simplified numeracy assessment that spans across all grades (not just kindergarten).

Immediate Action: The current kindergarten numeracy screener will be **optional** for starting in 2023-24, and the district will continue its work in the co-development and prototyping of a numeracy assessment across all grades that addresses the concerns of the size, length, and rationale.

Feedback Trend: French Immersion educators are seeking training for the required K-3 French Immersion ELP (Profil de l'élève M à 3).

Immediate Action: In 2023-24, all French Immersion K-3 teachers will be provided release time to participate in training on the Profil de l'élève M à 3.

Feedback Trend: Educators noted that resources for the ELP are often difficult to locate and are not always accessible.

Immediate Action: The ELP will be updated to include QR codes that go directly to relevant resources (including resources on how to administer each subtest, resources on curriculum and research connections, and resources on instructional strategies educators can use to support students in the development of various skills within the ELP).

Longer Term Action: All resources for the ELP will be organized and included on the new [District Assessment & Reporting Website](#).

Feedback Trend: Educators are seeking more equitable supportive time to be provided to administer the ELP.

Immediate Action: Re-communicate the expectation that educators are provided with appropriate class coverage to support the administration of the ELP.

Longer Term Action: Explore the development of a guiding framework to support schools in allocating support time for K-3 educators in completing the ELP with their students.

Feedback Trend: Educators are requesting a more structured and intentionally differentiated approach (by design) to the ELP.

Longer Term Action: Explore how the ELP might be redesigned to have a differentiated approach built into it so educators are not doing all subtests on all students and instead take a more needs-based, personalized, tiered approach depending on the student.

Feedback Trend: Educators are requesting a review of the various targets/benchmarks throughout the ELP.

Longer Term Action: All targets/benchmarks throughout all ELP subtests will be reviewed to ensure they are developmentally appropriate, aligned with research, and aligned with the Ministry curriculum and performance standards/learning progressions.

Feedback Trend: Educators are requesting certain words in the ELP be replaced. Several words were flagged as being outdated (e.g., “telephone” and “refrigerator”), not culturally sensitive (e.g., “cowboy” and “mermaid”, and/or the majority of students struggle with, even those who are proficient in their phonological awareness (e.g. “seashell”).

Longer Term Action: Originally the District ELP Working Group contemplated simply changing the handful of words that came up across the feedback that was collected. However, after conversation, it was decided that since all words used in all subtests need to be reviewed to ensure they are culturally sensitive, no longer outdated, and effective in determining a student’s skill level, that a full review of all words used in the ELP will be conducted, and subsequent changes will then be made to all flagged words all at once across the whole ELP.

Feedback Trend: Educators are requesting a review of the alphabet knowledge subtests in kindergarten.

Longer Term Action: Alphabet knowledge subtest will be reviewed to consider layout, font, highlighting system, as well as the identification of words for each letter.

Feedback Trend: Educators shared concerns on TTOC reliability and availability for supportive time to administer the ELP.

Longer Term Action: Explore how to address concerns of TTOC reliability and availability and how we might provide more consistent support for educators to administer the ELP.

Feedback Trend: Educators are seeking clearer communication on ongoing updates made to the ELP.

Longer Term Action: Explore strategies to enhance communication of changes that are made to the ELP over time.

Feedback Trend: Educators are interested in having the ELP organized as a continuum rather than by grade.

Longer Term Action: Explore what a continuum-based ELP might look like (e.g., having one high frequency word list across K-3 with benchmarks noted on it, providing the possibility of kindergarten teachers to enter a PM benchmark if applicable, etc.).

Feedback Trend: Educators provided feedback on the emergent trend of the Science of Reading and are interested in a greater focus on phonics within the ELP.

Longer Term Action: Explore how we might create a more responsive approach to reading assessment within the ELP that has an earlier focus on phonics and decodable reading and a shift towards independent, leveled reading over time.

Feedback Trend: Educators are seeking further guidance and resources to support instruction in relation to the ELP.

Longer Term Action: Develop and curate resources for educators to support instructional decisions in response to the ELP and their students' unique literacy development.

Feedback Trend: Educators brought up concerns of the overall size of the ELP and the efficacy of certain subtests within it.

Longer Term Action: Review the efficacy of all subtests within the ELP, and explore how we might reduce the over size of the ELP (particularly in kindergarten and grade 1).

Feedback Trend: Educators are seeking more guidance on how best to support emergent ELL learners and the use of the ELP.

Longer Term Action: Work collaboratively with ELL educators and LATs in developing guidance for transitioning in using ELL assessment to using the ELP with emerging ELL students (and how we might differentiate the ELP for ELL students).

Feedback Trend: Educators are requesting more ongoing professional learning in administering ELP and designing learning in response to the data from various subtests.

Longer Term Action: Explore opportunities to provide professional learning beyond the current training provided to new educators.

Feedback Trend: Educators are interested in a shift to a digital version of the ELP.

Longer Term Action: Explore possible solutions for a digital version of the ELP that includes a more streamlined process to enter data into EdPlan Insight and a better way to see growth over time for each student.

Feedback Trend: Educators are interested in a word bank for various subtests that can be used (beyond the words in the initial subtest in the booklet).

Longer Term Action: Explore how we might create word banks that can be used for various subtests within the ELP.

Feedback Trend: Educators had positive feedback on the new alternative high frequency word list (organized in a developmental progression of phonics) and also voiced concerns on the organization, highlighting system, and the need to copy results between grades.

Longer Term Action: Explore how we might update our approach on high frequency words to better align with phonics development and to potentially have a more organized, continuum-based approach to avoid copying words from year to year.

Feedback Trend: Educators are seeking a more simplified and aligned approach to the writing assessment in the ELP.

Longer Term Action: Explore how we might update the writing assessment to be more simplified and aligned with the Ministry curriculum and performance standards, and the approach to writing assessment in grade 4 and up.

Feedback Trend: Educators are requesting professional learning for intermediate educators to develop their understanding and use of the ELP.

Longer Term Action: Explore how we might continue the ELP past Gr. 3 and how we might support professional learning for intermediate educators (as well as guidance for intermediate educators on how to interpret and use the ELP that is passed along to them).

Feedback Trend: Educators are looking for guidance on how best to communicate data from the ELP with parents and families.

Longer Term Action: Develop guidance for educators in communication information from ELP assessments with parents and families, as well as understanding on the formative vs. summative approach to this assessment.

Feedback Trend: Educators noted how changes made to the ELP can take years to be fully implemented due to the student ELP booklets moving from grade to grade.

Longer Term Action: Determine how we might implement changes to the ELP that can be applied to all students K-3 (including the possibility of a digital ELP where changes could be made electronically across the whole system at once).

Our District's Assessment Committee would like to once again thank all teachers, principals, and vice-principals for their feedback on the ELP, as well as the District ELP Working Group in mapping the trends and future actions to explore. Your input is invaluable and continues to support the evolution of the ELP as an assessment tool that has been designed to assist educators in meeting learners at their point of development with respect to the foundational building blocks of literacy.

Please continue to visit the District Assessment & Reporting Website (www.assessment.sd23.bc.ca/elp) for ongoing updates, information, and resources on the Early Learning Profile (ELP) assessment.
