

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT
ON
PEACE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, CHETWYND
September 28 & 29, 2009

INTRODUCTION

Peace Christian School (PCS), located in Chetwynd, BC and affiliated with the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church of BC, hereinafter referred to as 'the School', is classified as a Group 1 independent school. It currently enrolls 81 students in K-10 and has no registered home-school students.

The External Evaluation Committee, hereinafter referred to as 'the EEC', visited the School on September 28 and 29, 2009.

This External Evaluation Committee has been appointed in accordance with Section 3 of the *Independent School Act*, which authorizes the Inspector of Independent Schools to appoint external evaluation committees and to specify their duties.

The EEC consisted of Mr. Pasquale Balletta and Mr. Ed Noot (chair). Upon arrival at the School the EEC met with the principal and teachers to outline the external evaluation process.

Throughout the visit the EEC had opportunity to meet with the principal, teachers, and students. The EEC examined students' work, school records, teacher long range and daily plans and student assessments. At the end of the visit the EEC met with the principal and staff to review its findings.

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Since the school's previous EEC report in 2003 the School has made changes in the following areas:

- Schedule changes
- Introduction of teacher prep time
- Introduction of electronic grade book
- Increased offerings in fine arts / drama
- Increased community involvement
- Provision for teacher laptops
- Library is being catalogued electronically

The Seventh-day Adventist Church (BC Conference) through its Vice President for Education (Superintendent) and the K-12 Board, sets policies, hires teachers, evaluates schools and teachers, and is the final authority for all matters pertaining to education. At

the local level authority is vested in Peace Christian School's locally appointed school board. The principal is a member of this board.

The School is incorporated under the Private Act PA#0000371 and as such is not required to file an annual report with the Registrar of Companies.

The School runs on a standard 10 month calendar and does not operate any programs outside the K-12 framework.

2. FACILITIES

The School is situated on a parcel of land in the town. The facilities are shared with the Seventh Day Adventist Church. The building was originally constructed in 1971, with additions in 1986 and 2008.

The main building contains 4 classrooms, a library, and an office. The church sanctuary is also accessible from the main building. Classroom space is augmented by a single portable. The building also contains a kitchen and multi-purpose room situated in the basement. The school has a spacious paved parking lot, some grass areas and a playground area. The school has maximized usage of the current facility and is exploring options to allow for increased enrolment and possible program expansion. The building is clean and well maintained.

A letter was provided from the District of Chetwynd which indicated that the property is suitably zoned and that there are no outstanding compliance issues with the building or land. The EEC noted that the letter pre-dated the last building renovation, which was the addition of a portable classroom. The EEC could verify proper building permits for this project, however, no final occupancy permit is on file in the school, therefore; **the EEC requires the principal to provide an updated letter of compliance from the District of Chetwynd to the Inspector of Independent Schools by December 15, 2009.**

Fire equipment is well maintained and inspected at regular intervals. Emergency exit routes are posted in all classrooms. A recent fire inspection report noted the need to upgrade the smoke detectors in the school. The team viewed the report and noted the progress that has been made to date. **The EEC requires the school principal to verify completion of this work with Inspector of Independent Schools. Should completion not occur by December 15, 2009, the principal should issue a progress report to the Inspector.**

3. SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE

The philosophy of the school is based on the beliefs and practices of the SDA church. The Word of God is the foundation on which educational practices are based. The School believes that God-centered education strives for the harmonious development of the physical, mental, social and spiritual abilities of the student, enabling him/her to meet life's present challenges and to prepare for the future. The program at PCS is designed to guide the student in developing a meaningful, personal relationship with God, church, country, community, family and self.

The stated philosophy and activities observed by the EEC suggests that the School is fulfilling the requirement of Section 1 of the Schedule of the *Independent School Act*, regarding school programs.

4. SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

The principal is in his third year at the school. He teaches several courses and receives approximately 40% administrative time, which is an increase over past years. He is assisted by a volunteer administrative assistant. The principal expressed reservations about the adequacy of his administrative time, and the current administrative structure and the EEC concurs. The EEC also noted that no current job description for the principal exists. **The EEC recommends that the PCS Board and the Superintendent develop a job description for the principal and secretary/admin assistant, in addition to reviewing the current administrative time allotment and support to ensure that it is adequate to meet the needs of the school.**

Student records contain Permanent Record Cards and are stored in a locked, fire-proof filing cabinet in the office area. Student records contain most of the items specified in the Inspector's document, *Student Records: Requirements and Best Practice Guidelines for Independent Schools*. The EEC noted that several files were missing copies of the BC residency verification and the permission to collect, use and disclose information. **The EEC recommends that the school take steps to carefully review all student files, ensuring that they comply with the document, "*Student Records: Requirements and Best Practice Guidelines for Independent Schools*".**

The EEC confirms that the School is in compliance with Section 12 (3) of the Act specifying that grants may only be used for operating expenses, and Section 12 (4) of the Act specifying that grants may not exceed the total operating costs.

The School is receiving special education grants for 2 students. Individual Education Plans (IEP) are in place to reflect these grants and students are provided with one on one assistance in class.

The school received a \$549 Innovation Literacy Grant last year and used the materials to buy supplemental language development materials.

Most staff communication occurs informally as this small group meets every morning before school for prayer, devotions and information sharing. Staff meetings occur on an ad hoc basis. No Staff Handbook currently exists. A Student/Parent Handbook outlines the necessary policies and procedures for students and parents. Included in this handbook are policies and procedures, fire drills, earthquake drills, field trips, emergency procedures, discipline, safety rules, admissions and the like. The handbook has a very nice look and is creatively assembled. One policy that should be added is the appeals procedure. **The EEC recommends that the School include an appeal policy in the handbook.** The process should reflect procedures of natural justice and procedural fairness as articulated in the FISA/Ministry document, *Procedural Fairness: Best Practices Guidelines for Independent Schools*.

The School currently makes minimal use of data from FSA or government exams to enhance instruction. Professional development funds are limited.

The school has informal guidelines for the special education program, along with a policy that addresses referral procedures for diagnostic testing. Given the important nature of this program, and the funding that it comes with, **The EEC recommends that the School develop a comprehensive special education policy that covers admissions (including any limitations), program development, use of funding and the like.**

5. TEACHER CERTIFICATION

The EEC confirms that **the principal of the School is a BC certified teacher, as required by section 8 of the Act.**

Five full-time and one part-time (.50 FTE) teachers staff the School. All teachers hold valid teaching certificates issued through either the BC College of Teachers (BCCT) or the Office of the Inspector of Independent Schools (OIS). The EEC confirms that those teachers with restricted certificates are appropriately assigned.

Teachers employed by the School as of September 30 (note that the EEC visit ended on September 29, 2009), as reported on the Ministry I-2001 forms and in the Evaluation Catalogue, were found to be BC certified as required by Section 3(1)(d) of the Schedule to the *Independent School Act*.

The school relies heavily on a volunteer secretary / admin assistant. The school employs two special needs assistants and two educational assistants – one for Kindergarten and one for upper level math. The church pastor is also present on campus and volunteers as a chaplain to the school community. The EEC confirms that **there is evidence on file that criminal record checks have been completed for all employees or contractors “working with children”**. The EEC is satisfied that staff members have been appropriately assigned.

The School currently has 2 days allotted for professional development. They are used for a variety of purposes including, SDA teacher conferences and in house professional development activities. An orientation is provided to new teachers prior to the beginning of the school year.

The School has policies and procedures in place regarding teacher and principal evaluation. Teachers are evaluated by the principal, and the principal is evaluated by the superintendent. Files contain evidence that evaluations are carried out in accordance with school policy.

The School has no new teachers this year, and had 3 the previous year.

A program of principal and teacher evaluation is coordinated through the central SDA office. Reports reflecting classroom observations by the school principal are on file. The principal works with the central office in evaluating staff according to policy.

6. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

The EEC is pleased to note that the minimum instructional time requirements set out in the Educational Standards Order (Section 3) and The Kindergarten to Grade 12 Educational Plan (September 1994) are being adequately met, with a total of 467 hours of instruction offered in Kindergarten and with 955 hours of instruction in grades 1 - 10.

The Ministry of Education's Integrated Resource Packages (IRPs) are evident throughout all subject and grade levels and are the basis on which the school curriculum is developed. The EEC confirms that the scope and sequence for most courses taught is derived from the provincially developed IRPs. Resource material from other sources is also used, but provincial IRPs are being followed.

The Educational Program of Peace Christian School consists of five classrooms – a Kindergarten/grade 1/2, a grade 3/4/ 5, and a 6 /7/8 and 9/10 homerooms all located on a single floor of a long main building. There is also a portable where science 7-10, math and languages 5-8 are taught. Kindergarten is 2 full days per week for the first half of the year and 3 full days in the second half of the year.

The classrooms are spacious and well equipped with learning resources. Student seating is mainly in rows and has been arranged to facilitate the delivery of split class instruction. Teachers have shown resourcefulness in using a variety of commercial and teacher-made materials in developing and adapting a split class curriculum. Christian principles are integrated into all areas of the curriculum. The EEC observed cheerful, well-behaved students involved in various learning activities in each of these classrooms. There was a genuine and respectful communication between students and teachers. Classrooms were well organized students were cooperative and engaged in their learning. The EEC commends the entire staff of Peace Christian in creating a warm and creative educational program for their students.

There is evidence that in all courses, curriculum goals have been set, yearly and daily plans are in place, teaching strategies and learning activities have been specified, and evaluation methods and educational resources are in evidence. The EEC commends all teachers for their dedication to utilize up to date and subject appropriate resources.

The instructional program is presented as split grades throughout the educational program from grades K to 10, therefore, for the purposes of this report, there will be three main sections: Primary (K to 3); and Intermediate (4 to 9); and, Grade 10 (year 1 of the Graduation Program).

Primary (Grades K – 3) Programs:

a) Delivery of Core Subjects:

The Language Arts program provides instruction in the areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Kindergarten and grades 1/2 utilize a thematic approach "Literacy Place" that integrates all of the subject areas across the curriculum. Assessment and evaluation is an on-going process that involves observation, verbal interaction and anecdotal records. Phonetic and whole language resources, along with Anthology's are used with students to teach literacy and to develop a love of reading. Teachers assess and evaluate their students' progress through anecdotal records, checklists, classroom-based testing of letter recognition and sound identification, daily work assignments, and informal observations.

The Mathematics program is supported by a variety of resources and materials including the "Prism" workbook, and teacher-made materials. The EEC observed creative hands on approach to learning math concepts. The Mathematics curriculum is uniquely planned

as students work at a single grade level rather than at the alternating curriculum as other split classes. Student work consisted of daily assignments, quizzes, and tests, of which much has been marked and assessed by teachers.

Teachers often integrate Social Studies and Science into thematic units with other subjects. In Social Studies and Science the EEC observed the students engaged in various activities that have been designed to meet the learning outcomes. Student evaluation has been based on classroom assignments, experiments and reports, projects, quizzes, tests, observation and participation.

Non- core subjects:

Physical Education and Visual Arts are taught to students by the classroom teacher with the exception of the Music class, which is taught by the grade 3-5 teacher. The Physical Education program includes activities such as: fitness and healthy living. A combination of games and skills are emphasized along with appropriate preparation and participation by the students. Daily Physical Activity (DPA) has been organized school wide, along with the regular PE schedule, as to increase the benefits of physical activity throughout the school day.

Art instruction is integrated with the primary themes and provides students with the creative opportunities to express themselves artistically through a variety of mediums.

The EEC observed that the development and delivery of education was in evidence throughout the primary grades at Peace Christian School. The Primary Program meets the time requirements and learning outcomes of the BC Curriculum for all subjects, as specified in the Educational Standards Order (Section 2, 3, 4)

The course outlines in the all subjects include content, planning for assessment (teaching strategies and learning activities) and achievement indicators (assessment and evaluation methods) and linkage with Ministry or authority – approved learning outcomes as required.

Intermediate (Grades 4 – 9) Programs:

a) Delivery of Core Subjects:

The Intermediate grades of Peace Christian School consist of three combined grade classrooms. The intermediate classrooms were observed to be well managed, with students working in a task-oriented manner. The overall tone in these classes was very good; students were respectful and cooperative. Students were observed actively participating in classroom discussions and engaged in the learning opportunities provided. Student work reflected an appropriate quantity and quality for this time of year.

The Language Arts program demonstrates a balance of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Novels and anthologies have been used to teach reading comprehension and to develop essential reading skills. Writing assignments serve a variety of purposes: story writing, journals, poetry and essentials of the writing process as well as writer's workshop. Student work is evaluated based on teacher observations, projects,

classroom participation, quizzes and tests. The Language arts program “Literacy Place” has been purchased and continues through to grade 8. There is also a planned Drama program for grades 6-10.

The Mathematics program is supported by a variety of resources and materials including the “*Prism*” workbook in Grades 4-5 and teacher-made materials. Evaluation of student work consists of daily assignments, classroom observations and quizzes and tests.

The Mathematics curriculum is uniquely scheduled in grades 6-10 as students work on line through a distant learning arrangement made with another school (West Coast Christian School). **Current regulations prohibit cross enrolment of intermediate students between schools and the EEC recommends that the principal contact the Inspector of Independent schools immediately to resolve this matter.**

In Social Studies the students use a variety of text resources such as Outlooks, Pathways and Horizons, for acquiring the specific knowledge and understandings of the world around them. Worksheets, oral discussions and a variety of teacher-designed materials are used to meet the learning outcomes. Appropriate resources were also evident in the upper grades (6-9) and the EEC noted that the staff of Peace Christian School were well assigned to teach to their particular strength areas.

Science in the intermediate grades is organized by grades. Course outlines reflect that the study of science in these grades has been designed to stimulate students’ interest and curiosity in the natural world through exploration of the sciences – Life, Physical, and Earth and Space Science. Assessment and evaluation is primarily through experiments and reports, participation, quizzes and tests, projects and oral presentations.

The EEC is able to confirm that the course outlines in Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science are derived from the provincially developed IRPs and include content, teaching strategies and learning activities, assessment and evaluation methods and linkage with either the Ministry curriculum organizers or Ministry learning outcomes. **The staff is encouraged to continue to develop the course outlines to clearly indicate Ministry learning outcomes taught for each of the years “A or B” of the multi-graded classrooms more specifically in grades 7-10.** The school must clearly indicate how the topics and prescribed learning outcomes will be covered on a rotational basis over the required number of years as well as map the cycle taught for each subject area of the consecutive years of the split classes.

Non- core subjects:

French instruction is given by a qualified language specialist in grade 5 through to grade 8. Students learn concepts from “French for Christian Schools” textbook as well as teacher created materials. The EEC did not observe any formal plans for this course, as it is the first year the school offers French Language instruction. **The EEC recommends that course overviews for French, containing all of the required elements, be developed.**

Intermediate students are provided with a comprehensive, well-balanced physical education program based on the Ministry learning outcomes. A diverse variety of activities help students learn that physical activity is an essential component of a healthy

lifestyle. The program includes team sports, games, and a healthy living component. Daily Physical Education has been implemented and supplements the regular physical education classes and is well tracked in the upper grades. The intermediate grades 3-10 have additional co-curricular activities such as flag football; adventure sports racing, street hockey, swimming and fitness training at a local gym and recreation center as well as offering mountain biking.

The grade 3-5 teacher offers students opportunities mainly in choral music, as the school prepares for 3 musical performances throughout the year. The EEC did not observe formal plans for this subject.

The principles of Art in grade 3-5 are often taught through integration with the themes being covered. Each teacher is responsible for the planning and implementation of the art curriculum.

Course outlines indicate Health and Career Education learning outcomes are taught and have been integrated throughout the curriculum, particularly in Social Studies, Science, as well as Christian Education.

The Intermediate Program meets the time requirements and learning outcomes of the BC Curriculum for all subjects, as specified in the Educational Standards Order (Section 2, 3, 4)

The course outlines in the all subjects (except for course outlines in Music 4-10 and Visual Arts 4-10 and French Language instruction 5-8 that are not present at this time) include content, planning for assessment (teaching strategies and learning activities) and achievement indicators (assessment and evaluation methods) and linkage with Ministry or authority – approved learning outcomes as required,

Graduation Program (2004) (Grades 10-12)

At this time, Peace Christian School does not offer the Graduation Program, they do however offer grade 10, after which their students transfer to complete the Graduation Program.

The School offers students a complete grade 10 program which includes core offerings in English, Social Studies, PE and Science. Math is currently offered under a unique relationship with a DL school. **The EEC noted that this arrangement is inconsistent with current Ministry regulations and the principal must contact the Inspector immediately to resolve this matter.** The School provides excellent assistance in supporting students enrolled in this course. Should the school decide to expand their program and offer the complete Graduation Program, they would need to make provision to offer Math as part of their program.

In addition, grade 10 students take Religious Studies, Fine Arts, Business Education, and Planning 10. This program of studies meets all requirements and allows students to transfer to other schools to complete the Graduation Program. The EEC noted the absence of a second language course at the grade 10 level.

Planning 10 is taught as a course and meets all Ministry requirements. Daily physical activity requirements are met at the grade 10 level and recorded appropriately.

The School reviews government exams results by having the teachers and principal meet to analyse them.

Policies for challenge, equivalency and the like are developed by the SDA Conference central office. Policies are available on the school site. A school completion policy has not been developed and will need attention if the School expands to offer the entire Graduation Program.

The EEC confirms that all grade 10 courses – with the exception of Fine Arts 10 – include content, teaching strategies, assessment methods and IRP linkage. Long term plans, daily lesson plans and classroom observation give evidence that the Ministry prescribed learning outcomes are being met. A sufficient number of grade 10 courses are being offered to allow students to transition into grade 11 of the Graduation Program elsewhere.

Additional Items K – 12:

The school's **FSA results** have been used as a way to verify the results of the classroom-based evaluation. The EEC did not observe evidence that the school, as yet, uses these results to enhance student learning.

Learning Assistance and Special Education Programs:

Learning Assistance is provided to students on an 'add needed' basis. The School employs 2 special needs assistants to work one-on-one with each of the funded students to provide them with the additional support they require to meet their learning goals. IEP's for the funded special needs students were evident, however were not yet updated to reflect this year's goals. The School does not employ a specialized teacher at the present time.

Diagnostic and Referral Services:

Peace Christian School does not have any formal diagnostic testing tools. All students who are perceived by the classroom teacher as having difficulties are referred to the child development center in Dawson Creek as per the referral policy guidelines set out by the SDABC (Seventh Day Adventists Schools of BC Council)

Library Resources and Access:

The School does stock a library in a centrally located room. A volunteer parent looks after the library as well as the office. Students are given access to visit the library to exchange books. In addition, teachers have opted to stock individual classroom libraries to facilitate the delivery of the Scholastic language arts program, "Literacy Place".

Computer Utilization for Instructional Purposes:

Peace Christian School has roughly 10-12 computers (PC and Mac) spread throughout the school used by teachers and by students to do research through the Internet. The EEC noted that the School has provided all teachers with laptop computers.

The EEC noted appropriate resources were also evident in the upper grades (6-9) as the staff of Peace Christian School was well assigned to teach to their particular strength areas.

Additional Activities:

Peace Christian provides a variety of school-wide challenges and events that are enjoyed by the students in a multi-age, grouping and family atmosphere. Students are also encouraged to participate in special Church Outreach events to help promote school morale and identity, such as Camp Hope, and a yearly trip to Honduras to aide in building of community structures for the poor.

7. REPORT SUMMARY

Commendations

The EEC commends Peace Christian School on the following:

- Developing a warm welcoming atmosphere in the school
- Evidence of extremely high staff commitment to the school
- Exploring some encouraging options that would allow for further growth and program development
- Making PCS highly accessible to members of the Chetwynd community
- Capitalizing on unique strengths and interests of staff – from music to mountain biking!

Policy Issues

The school authority is asked to review the items listed below and report in writing to the Inspector its intended response to each of the following items by February 1, 2010:

- The EEC recommends that the PCS Board and the Superintendent develop a job description for the principal and secretary/admin assistant, in addition to reviewing the current administrative time allotment and support to ensure that it is adequate to meet the needs of the school.
- The EEC recommends that the school take steps to carefully review all student files, ensuring that they comply with the document, "*Student Records: Requirements and Best Practice Guidelines for Independent Schools*".
- The EEC recommends that the School include their appeal policy in the handbook.
- The EEC recommends that the School develop a comprehensive special education policy that covers admissions (including any limitations), program development, use of funding and the like.
- The EEC recommends that staff continue to develop the course outlines to clearly indicate Ministry learning outcomes taught for each of the years "A or B" of the multi-graded classrooms – particularly in grades 7-10.
- The EEC recommends that the PCS develop course overviews at grades 4 – 10 in Fine Arts, Music and French.

Statutory Requirements

The EEC concludes that Peace Christian School has met all the statutory requirements (except the following):

- The EEC requires the school principal to verify completion of required fire code upgrade work with Inspector of Independent Schools. Should completion not occur by December 15, 2009, the principal should issue a progress report to the Inspector.
- The EEC requires the principal to provide an updated letter of compliance from the District of Chetwynd to the Inspector of Independent Schools by December 15, 2009.
- Current regulations prohibit cross enrollment of intermediate students between schools (brick& mortar – DL) for required offerings (e.g. Math 6 – 9). They also require that all Graduation Program core courses be delivered by the school (e.g. Math 10). The principal must contact the Inspector immediately to resolve the matter of cross enrolled students.

The school must report to the Inspector of Independent Schools that it has met (or the process is in place to meet) the requirements by December 15, 2009.

8. SUMMATIVE RECOMMENDATION

It is the opinion of the External Evaluation Committee that Peace Christian School satisfies the requirements for Group 1 classification, and recommends that this classification be granted, contingent on meeting the conditions of Section 3 (1) (a) of the Schedule of the *Independent School Act* regarding the FTE cost per student in the previous school year which is determined by the Inspector of Independent Schools (and contingent on meeting the requirements as set out under the heading Statutory Requirements in the Report Summary).

**APPENDIX A
SUMMARY OF TEACHER CERTIFICATION
NON-COMPLIANCE, APPLICATION(S) IN PROCESS & EXPIRING
CERTIFICATES**

1. NEW TEACHERS WHO HAVE NOT SUBMITTED A TEACHER CERTIFICATION APPLICATION

Name	Subject/Grade
N/A	

2. NEW TEACHERS WHO HAVE A TEACHER CERTIFICATION APPLICATION SUBMITTED AND ARE IN PROCESS

Name	Certification Type applied for
N/A	

3. EXISTING TEACHERS WHO HAVE NOT SUBMITTED A NEW CRC APPLICATION

Name	Certificate Type	Previous CRC on file?
N/A		

4. EXISTING TEACHERS WHO HAVE SUBMITTED A CRC APPLICATION AND ARE IN PROCESS

Name	Certificate Type	Previous CRC on file?
N/A		

5. BCCT TEACHERS WITHOUT CURRENT MEMBERSHIP

Name	Certificate Type	Expiry Date
N/A		

6. PRINCIPAL CERTIFICATION: OIIS 'P'



Additional Certification Concerns: none

APPENDIX B
BOARD AUTHORITY AUTHORIZED (BAA) COURSES THAT DO
NOT MEET THE COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Course Name	Ministry Code Number	Comments
N/A		