

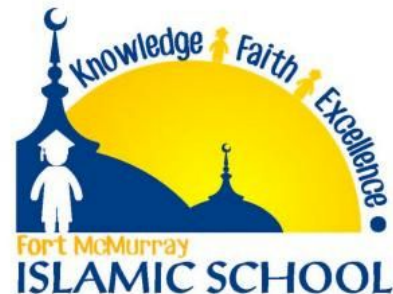
Fort McMurray Public School District

School Review Report

Fort McMurray Islamic School

**Presented by the School Review team
(Joe Champion, Jeff Porter and Rick Thorne)**

March 22, 2016



Fort McMurray Public School District

School Review Process

TERMS OF REFERENCE (March 2, 2015)

A. BACKGROUND

The School Review Process, supported by the Board of Trustees and administration, will involve conducting external school reviews which are meant to be both formative and supportive. Two or three schools will be reviewed each year.

B. REVIEW TEAM MANDATE

The Review Team will provide information in the form of observations, commendations, and recommendations to the school Administration and staff, the School Councils, and the District Leadership Team with respect to the following areas:

1) Implementation of FMPSD and Alberta Education Goals

- Education plans
- Timetabling and time allocations
- Professional Growth Plans
- Course Outlines

2) Core, Co-curricular and Extracurricular Programs

- Core program offerings
- Extra-curricular program
- Intramurals
- Student Council (if applicable)

3) School Communications

- Newsletters
- Phone calls home
- Email

4) Support Staff

- Secretaries
- Teacher Assistants
- Support Staff evaluations

5) Parent/Community Involvement

- School Council
- Volunteers

6) School Leadership

- Teacher supervision
- Staff meetings
- Decision-making process
- Budget

7) School Climate

- Student satisfaction
- Parent satisfaction
- Staff satisfaction

8) Student Achievement and Recognition

- Achievement results
- Achievement analysis
- Recognition programs

9) The School as a Safe and Caring Environment

- Student conduct
- Bullying issues

10) Professional Development

- Professional Learning Communities/Professional Learning Fridays
- Staff attendance at workshops and in-services
- Available funds

11) Technology

- Equipment and facilities
- Future plans

12) Library

- Resources available
- Programs offered

13) Physical Facilities

- Appropriateness
- Custodial services
- Central Office Maintenance

14) Student Support Services

- Identification
- IPPS, Inclusion & Programming
- Central Office supports

15) Other priorities identified by the Fort McMurray Islamic School administration

- Value of The Leader in Me program
- Effectiveness of the EDGE program
- Quality of the French Immersion program.

C. REVIEW TEAM MEMBERSHIP - Fort McMurray Islamic School (April 2015)

- Rick Thorne - District Principal
- Joe Champion - Principal, Fort McMurray Christian School
- Jeff Porter - Principal Westview Public School

D. PROCESS FOR GATHERING INFORMATION

- Staff and Parent surveys
- Staff, Student & Parent interviews
- School Council interview
- Review of school based documents and materials

E. HOW THE REVIEW RESULTS WILL BE USED

1. To affirm the positive features and practices which are taking place at the school and to provide positive feedback where appropriate.
2. To provide feedback to the school Principal/staff/School Council that will assist the school with planning for the future.
3. To develop a short-term and long-term action plan to address any areas that need strengthening.
4. To provide a Review Report to the District Senior Leadership team.
5. To produce a one page summary that can be shared with the School Community.

F. ACTION PLAN FOLLOW-UP

1. The responsibility for follow-up monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan will rest with the Superintendent or designate.
2. The principal shall be responsible for reporting progress on the Action Plan to the Senior Leadership Team.

SCHOOL REVIEW

The findings in this school review are based on:

Online surveys:

Survey	# of Respondents	Total Possible	Return Rate %
Parents	Students represented 165	Total # of students 377	43.8%
Teachers	14	17	88%
Support staff	5	17	29%

Individual interviews (conducted at Fort McMurray Islamic School April 20-23, 2015)

- ATA teachers (4 staff randomly selected + 1 who requested to be interviewed)
- CUPE Support staff (2 staff randomly selected)
- CUPE Islamic Support staff (2 staff randomly selected)
- Interview with School Council with school admin absent
- Student focus groups
 - Division one – **Ten students**
 - Division two – **Ten Students**
- Interview school administration Ms. Rahman and Ms. Jeelani)

Other Documents

- Fort McMurray Islamic School Growth Plan (SEP/AERR 2014-15)
- Alberta Education Accountability Pillar Results Fall 2015

The School Review team spent several days at the school in January, 2016. As much time as possible was spent in and around the school trying to get a sense of the 'feeling' of the school.

Data collected from each of these sources provided the review team with critical input into this report. Although we do not mention every comment written on the surveys or made during our interviews, we have included trends and recurring themes identifying areas of satisfaction and/or areas of concern.

Though sheer volume prevents us from including all responses in this report, the survey results in their entirety have been available to the Fort McMurray Islamic School Administration for their use in continuous improvement.

1. IMPLEMENTATION OF FMPSD AND ALBERTA EDUCATION GOALS

Observations:

- The school's Annual Education Plan is complete, including a school philosophy and mission statement.
- The principal and vice principal meet annually with each teacher to review their growth plans and course outlines.
- Class sizes:

Grade	Avg. class size for grade	Total students
ECDP	15	30
Kdg.	24	48
Grade 1	18.7	56
Grade 2	19.3	58
Grade 3	29	58
Grade 4	22	44
Grade 5	21	42
Grade 6	20.5	41

- Most areas of the Accountability Pillar remain very high.
- Student Learning Achievement has declined slightly in Acceptable Standard and improved slightly in Standard of Excellence from previous year.
- PAT acceptable remains above province with PAT Excellence slightly below.

Measure Category	Measure Category Evaluation	Measure	Ft. McMurray Islamic			Alberta			Measure Evaluation		
			Current year	Prev Year	Prev 3 Year Avg.	Current	Prev Year	Prev 3 Year Avg.	Achievement	Improvement	Overall
Safe and Caring Schools	Excellent	Safe and Caring	95.8	97.4	97.4	89.2	89.1	88.9	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Student Learning Opportunities	n/a	Program of Studies	88.9	87.1	88.4	81.3	81.3	81.2	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
		Education Quality	97.6	95.4	96.7	89.5	89.2	89.5	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Student Learning Achievement (Grades K-9)	Issue	PAT: Acceptable	77.4	83.3	91.6	73.0	73.1	73.9	Intermediate	Declined	Issue
		PAT: Excellence	17.3	13.9	23.6	18.8	18.4	18.9	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable
		Work Preparation	86.7	90.9	90.0	82.0	81.2	80.4	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
		Citizenship	95.4	96.4	96.4	83.5	83.4	83.1	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Parental Involvement	Excellent	Parental Involvement	85.0	95.2	92.6	80.7	80.6	80.2	Very High	Maintained	Excellent
Continuous Improvement	Acceptable	School Improvement	83.3	95.9	94.6	79.6	79.8	80.1	Very High	Declined Significantly	Acceptable

Commendations:

- 81% of parents indicated satisfaction with the overall quality of education their child is receiving.
- 88% of parents are satisfied with the instructional methods used by teachers in the school.
- Out of the nine 'current year' measures on the Accountability Pillar, seven are very high and all but PAT excellence are above the province.
- The Education Quality measure is at 97.6% compared to 89.5 for the province.
- 86% of staff felt they were involved in and know the key strategies in the School Growth Plan

Recommendations:

- Though class sizes, with the exception of grade 3, are in line with Alberta CSI recommendations, only 50% of teachers feel that the number of students in their classes are acceptable. When programming for 2016-17, care should be taken to ensure the grade 4 classes come closer to this CSI recommendation.
- Only 21% of teachers are satisfied with timetable, citing longer school days, increased supervision varied amounts of instructional time and minimal prep time.
- Only 50% of staff felt they had a reasonable teaching assignment.
- When timetabling for 2016-17 school administration should ensure that care is taken to assign teaching responsibilities and supervision in an fair and equitable fashion.
- Concern was expressed by parents, teachers and students about the large number of teachers teaching the grade 5 class. When scheduling for 2016-17, school administration and district should explore ways that classes have a limited number of teachers.
- Based on input from Islamic support staff, consider ways to increase 30 minute block daily to 60 minute blocks every other day for each Quranic/Islamic/Arabic class.
- Based on input from Islamic support staff as well as the School Council, consider regular Professional Development for Islamic support staff to improve instruction in Islamic/Arabic/Quranic studies.

2. CORE AND CO-CURRICULAR* AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR* PROGRAMS

Observations:

- The school’s educational program is currently supported by 17 FTE teaching staff (ATA) including a principal and vice principal. At the time of this report, Ms. Rahman had recently been appointed acting principal and hadn’t yet hired a vice principal. Subsequent to this report Ms. Jeelani, a current FMIS teacher was appointed as vice principal.
- Fort McMurray Islamic School has 382 students from ECDP to grade 6, offering alternative programming to students in Arabic, Islamic Studies and Quran as well as the regular Alberta School Curriculum. While the regular Alberta curriculum is delivered by ATA teachers, much of the alternative programming is delivered by CUPE instructors under the supervision of an ATA member.
- The school has also been an APPLE healthy and active school since 2014. There is currently no FTE assigned to an APPLE school facilitator, but the school does have an health champion who attends APPLE meetings.
- The school also practices environmental stewardship through Green Scene, Amazing Waste Race and a school wide Recycling club
- The school offers a wide range of co-curricular activities including

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Commendations:

- 76% of parents are satisfied with the variety of courses offered.
- 71% of parents also feel that students have a good choice of lunchtime and after-school clubs, teams and programs.
- 81% of parents are satisfied with academic progress of their child.
- Programs such as this demand a major commitment from staff and other leaders. That such a large number of activities can be offered speaks well of their commitment.

Recommendation:

- Keep up the great work and continue to strive to offer programs that meet the needs of students with a diverse range of interests and aptitudes.

*The terms co-curricular and extracurricular are often used interchangeably . For the purpose of this

report we will most often use the term co-curricular to represent both, as we feel that all experiences that children are exposed to support the education of the whole child and are not necessarily 'extra' to the curriculum. According to the Glossary of Educational Reform, 2013,

*“Generally speaking, co-curricular activities are an extension of the formal learning experiences in a course or academic program, while extracurricular activities may be offered or coordinated by a school, but may not be explicitly connected to academic learning. **This distinction is extremely fuzzy in practice, however, and the terms are often used interchangeably.** Athletics, for example, are typically considered to be extracurricular activities, while a science fair would more likely be considered a co-curricular activity, given that students are learning science, participation may be required by the school, students may be graded on their entries, or a science teacher may coordinate the fair. Still, in some schools certain athletics activities might be considered “co-curricular,” while in other schools a science fair may be labeled “extracurricular.”*”

3. SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

Observations:

- School administration employs a number of means to communicate to parents, staff and students.
- Communication to the parent community occurs through a website, Facebook and Twitter page along with the usual emails. Communication to individual parents tends to happen through telephone or face-to-face conversations.
- Communication among staff generally occurs through e-mail or face-to-face.
- Admin communicates with staff face-to-face where possible or through e-mail.
- Teachers communicate with parents in person, by email or by phone where possible.

Commendations:

- 87% of parents were satisfied with the information they receive from the school.
- 95% were satisfied with how they receive information from the school.
- 91% of support staff feel there is good communication among school staff.
- 100% of teachers and 100% of support staff indicated that staff meetings were effective.
- 91% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that their child's report card provided them with clear and useful information regarding his/her program.

Recommendations:

- 64% of teachers are satisfied with the level of communication at the school. Continue to find ways to improve communication with teaching staff.
- Only 34% of staff indicated that they knew how staff funds were allocated. Set aside staff meeting time for sharing budgeting process and priorities.

4. SUPPORT STAFF

Observations:

- Delivery of the school's educational program is supported by 19 CUPE staff. Including 14 educational assistants, 2 secretaries, and 3 custodians, shared with Greely Road School.
- The school also has a counsellor (ATA) for 0.5 FTE.

Commendations:

- It was clear that support staff is a valued part of the the Fort McMurray Islamic team, and every effort was done to involve them in all aspects of the school. This is supported by the fact that:
 - 100% of support staff feel that other staff understand and support their role in the school.
 - 100% of support staff enjoy working at this school.
- 94% of parents felt that support staff (eg. Educational Assistants, secretaries, librarian and custodians) are helpful and friendly.
- 93% of teachers felt that support staff in their school provides effective support for students and teachers.
- 100% of surveyed support staff enjoyed working at this school.

Recommendations:

- Continue to fully involve support staff in all aspects of school life.
- Support staff responsible for Quranic/Islamic/Arabic instruction indicated that they had inadequate preparation time. Explore ways to increase prep time for these instructors if necessary to bring them in line with prep time for teachers.

5. PARENT/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Observations:

- The school has a School Council, with representation from their parents as well as the Markaz.
- The School Council meets monthly.
- School admin meets with representatives of the Markaz approximately once monthly. Topics covered by this meeting include an administrative report, facility, personnel, academics, extra Curricular and discipline. The admin team feels significant accountability to the Markaz on most of these topics. The Markaz also has a representative on the School Council which serves an advisory role.
- It is important to note that ultimate accountability is to FMPSD.

Commendations:

- 100% of teachers surveyed felt that parents are supportive of the school.
- Parents appear to be engaged and committed to their school community. 72% of parents surveyed agreed that they have the opportunity to provide input into decisions that are made at the school that impact their child.
- Through parent surveys, there were 44% of students represented in the response to the parent survey for the School Review. This is an extraordinarily high response rate for an online survey of this sort.
- 81% of parents felt their concerns were taken seriously by the school.
- School Council felt that their opinions were valued by school administration who often ask the Council for input in important decisions.

Recommendations:

- There appeared to be some confusion among the School Council at the time of this visit about the roles of the School Council and that of the Markaz. It is essential to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of each group are clearly identified and shared with all stakeholders, especially as it relates to the level of and type of accountability of the school administration to each of these groups.
- It is recommended that FMIS School Council contact Alberta School Councils Association, to arrange a session to discuss the role of the School Council. ASCA does these presentations regularly all around the province, and can likely do a presentation specifically about the role of a School Council in an Islamic School.

6. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

At the time of the School Review (January 2016) the school had just appointed an acting principal Sr. Shabana Rahman, who had previously been vice principal. The school year began with Br Taj Mohammed as principal, He has since assumed a role at district office. For a period of time in the fall he was replaced by David Parsons, who had been vice principal at FMIS for a few years up to the end of the 2014 school year.

This mixture of leadership responsibilities over the brief 4 month period leading up to the School Review, complicates the ability of the School Review team to comment on School Leadership.

Observations:

- Principal and Vice principal conduct formal supervision/evaluation.
- Principal and Vice principal also review Professional Growth Plans with teachers.

Commendations:

- 72% of parents agreed that they have the opportunity to provide input into decisions that are made at the school that impact their child. School council concurred that they felt they had input, especially with regards to the Arabic/Islamic/Quranic programming.
- 81% of parents expressed satisfaction that when they bring concerns to the school, they feel they are heard and taken seriously.
- 80% of support staff felt that they have the opportunity to provide meaningful input into the decision-making process at the school.
- 80% of support staff also felt that they receive appropriate feedback about their performance.
- 93% of teachers feel they receive appropriate supervision/evaluation at school.

Recommendations:

- Based on the leadership changes in the first four months, the School Review Team is unable to make valid recommendations in the area of School Leadership.
- District office leadership should work with and support the school administrative team to ensure continuous improvement in the school.

7. SCHOOL CLIMATE

Observations:

- Fort McMurray Islamic School is a place where visitors immediately feel welcome and the staff and students are clearly very happy to be. Smiling faces are evident everywhere.
- Pride in their school and its program are exhibited by students, staff and parents alike, through their words, actions as well as the many displays around the school.

Commendations:

- 91% of parents said they feel welcome when they visit the school
- 90% of parents indicated that their child enjoys attending school
- 92% of parents felt that their child's teacher cares about their child.
- 100% of teachers indicate they would recommend district to a friend
- 100% of support staff indicate they enjoy working at this school
- 93% of teachers feel their contribution is valued

Recommendation:

- Continue to foster the positive environment and pride that is felt by this school community.

8. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND RECOGNITION

Observations:

Accountability Pillar Report (2015) Student Learning Achievement:

Course	Measure	Ft. McMurray Islamic						Alberta				
		Achievement	Improvement	Overall	2015		Prev 3 Yr Avg		2015		Prev 3 Yr Avg	
					N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
English Language Arts 6	Acceptable Standard	Intermediate	Declined	Issue	42	83.3	23	98.6	47,446	82.8	44,338	82.4
	Standard of Excellence	Intermediate	Maintained	Acceptable	42	16.7	23	20.5	47,446	19.5	44,338	17.2
Mathematics 6	Acceptable Standard	Intermediate	Declined	Issue	42	76.2	23	93.6	47,377	73.3	44,292	73.8
	Standard of Excellence	High	Maintained	Good	42	23.8	23	31.2	47,377	14.1	44,292	16.2
Science 6	Acceptable Standard	Intermediate	Declined	Issue	42	81.0	23	91.1	47,379	76.4	44,273	77.1
	Standard of Excellence	Low	Maintained	Issue	42	16.7	23	20.9	47,379	25.3	44,273	26.3
Social Studies 6	Acceptable Standard	Intermediate	Declined	Issue	42	69.0	23	83.1	47,385	69.8	44,226	72.1
	Standard of Excellence	Low	Declined	Issue	42	11.9	23	22.0	47,385	18.1	44,226	18.4

- Grade 6 PAT Acceptable Standard and Standard of Excellence for 2015 is down from 3 year average in all 8 measures..
- When compared to province, FMIS scored above the province in mathematics 6 both in Acceptable Standard and Standard of Excellence,
- FMIS scored below the province in Social Studies in both measures.
- In ELA and Science it performed better than the province in Acceptable Standard, and below the province in Standard of Excellence.
- In their Three Year Strategic Education Plan 2014-2017 (School Growth Plan) the school has identified a number of strategies designed to address the decline.

Commendations:

- 81% of parents are satisfied with the academic progress of their child.
- 72% of parents are satisfied that the school recognizes students for their accomplishments (ie. academic achievement, athletics, fine arts, etc..) in a variety of ways.
- 79% of teachers surveyed are satisfied that the school has an effective program for recognizing student achievement.

Recommendation:

- A well thought out 3 year plan is in place, having been developed through a collaborative process involving staff analyzing available data and developing strategies for improvement. It is recommended that this plan be revisited regularly, and that various forms of current data be analysed throughout the year, with the plan and its strategies revised as necessary to improve the results on all measures in the Accountability Pillar.

9. THE SCHOOL AS A SAFE AND CARING ENVIRONMENT

Observations:

- The Principal And Vice Principal handle discipline when necessary. Teachers refer students to the office when there is repetitive/disruptive behavior. Consequences are determined based on the details of the individual case.
- 78% agreed bullying was NOT a major problem at their school.

Commendations:

- In the focus groups with students it became evident that students could define bullying and distinguish it from isolated acts of aggression. The students were able to identify specific incidents of bullying occurring in the school and how they were being positively dealt with by all levels of staff.
- When asked who they could turn to if they had a problem, students mentioned their teachers, administrators and parents. The school counsellor, Ms Doiron, though relatively new in her position, was mentioned by many students, indicating that they knew her and were very comfortable with her.
- 93% of teachers and 72% of parents agreed that the students are respectful and well behaved,
- 75% of parents felt that the school's discipline policy and procedures are effective
- 92% of parents felt that their child's teacher cared about them.
- 86% of teachers and 81% of parents felt the school provided a safe and orderly environment.

Recommendation:

- Only 50% of teachers felt the school's discipline policy and procedures are effective. It is important that the staff all be aware of the school's discipline policy/procedures and have input to refining it as necessary.

10. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Observations:

- In an effort to build leadership capacity among staff, a number of young teachers who had begun to assume some leadership responsibilities for their division, have been given the opportunity to attend the Provincial U Lead conference.
- 100% of teachers were satisfied with the opportunities they have had to be part of a collaborative group that communicates regularly to share resources and ideas.
- 100% of teachers felt that Professional Development opportunities have enhanced their teaching skills and effectiveness.

Commendations:

- 100% of teachers were satisfied with the opportunities they have had to be part of a collaborative group that communicates regularly to share resources and ideas.
- 100% of teachers felt that Professional Development opportunities have enhanced their teaching skills and effectiveness.

Recommendation:

- 60% of support staff felt that they had access to adequate PD opportunities. Given that a number of the support staff take on instructional roles in Arabic/Islamic/Quranic Studies, avenues should be explored to ensure that these staff members are exposed to PD in things such as instructional practice and classroom management. Given that this is a core value in an Islamic school, seek funding from school community to support this area in particular.

11. TECHNOLOGY

Observations:

- The school is well equipped in the area of personal electronic devices. All students from Kindergarten to grade 5 have a Ipad or Ipad mini. All grade 6 students have laptop computers.
- The school has recently purchased 20 chromebooks for their STEM program.
- Two classrooms are operating as Google classrooms.
- Interactive boards are available in all classrooms.

Commendations:

- 89% of parents surveyed felt that their child is utilizing technology in the school that assists his/her learning. There were some comments however indicating the need for more 'computers'.
- 93% of teachers were satisfied with the technology available at the school.

Recommendation:

- Staying on top of evolving technology in a large school with limited resources is indeed a challenge. It is recommended that the school continue its commitment to staying current with the technology with the support of their community and any other means available to them.

12. LIBRARY

Observations:

- FMIS shares the Library/Learning commons with Greely Road School 50/50. FMIS library time is predominantly in the afternoon. There is no library tech person available.
- The main uses of the library space is for teacher resources and for students to check out books.
- The counselor's office is also in this area.
- There was general consensus among admin, staff and students that they need more library time.

Commendations:

- 83% of parents surveyed felt that the school library contributes to their child's quality of education.
- 86% of teachers felt that the school library effectively supports student learning.

Recommendation:

- Along with continued efforts find a more equitable distribution of school space, look to see that this extends to use of the library as well.

13. PHYSICAL FACILITIES

Observations:

- Fort McMurray Islamic School with its 22 students became a part of the Fort McMurray Public School District in 2004. From its beginnings in a small school in Waterways, it has experienced significant growth and quickly outgrew its first facility.
- Currently, FMIS houses its ECDP to grade 6 program in Greely Road School, sharing this building with the students and staff of Greely Road School, an ECDP to grade 8 school, currently with 136 students.
- As the population of FMIS has grown, measures have been taken to assign more classroom space to that school. In September 2012, the grade 7 & 8 FMIS students moved to Fort McMurray Composite School, allowing them a broader program, while maintaining their Islamic environment within that school. This had the effect of slightly alleviating the crowding somewhat, but only temporarily. Since that move, the student population ECDP - Grade 6 is 21% higher than it was prior to moving grades 7&8 students.
 - Enrolment: September 2007: 88
 - Enrolment: September 2008: 111
 - Enrolment: September 2009: 158
 - Enrolment: September 2010: 233 (Grades 3-8 move to Greely Road School site)
 - Enrolment: September 2011: 260
 - Enrolment: September 2012: 317 (All grades K-8 at Greely Road site)
 - Enrolment: September 2013: 349
 - Enrolment: September 2014: 339 (Grade 7 & 8 moved to FM Composite High)
 - Enrolment: September 2015: 382
 - 334% growth from 2007-2015
 - 1636% growth from 2004-2015
- 85% of parents indicated that the school facility and its physical condition are adequate to accommodate the programs offered at the school. Not surprisingly, the comments express some concern about crowding as a result of the rapid growth of the school.

Commendation:

- 93% of teachers, 100% of support staff and 94% of parents feel the school is clean. This sentiment was echoed by the students interviewed and the School Council.

Recommendations:

- Only 43% of teachers expressed that the school facilities are adequate.
- While FMIS students make up 74% of the total number of students occupying the Greely Road School Building, they occupy a disproportionately small percentage of the physical space in the building. The issues related to the lack of space increases as the FMIS population increases, despite efforts on the part of the Greely Road administration to find more space for FMIS, while ensuring that Greely Road students are not negatively impacted. It is strongly recommended that efforts continue to find a more equitable division of the school space.

14. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Observations:

- Along with the 0.8 FTE LAC and a half time Counselor (ATA) students are served by 14 Educational Assistants,
 - 8 for the Arabic/Islamic/Quran instruction.
 - 6 are inclusive block, supporting students from ECDP-grade 6
- Students with an IPP:
 - ECDP/Kdg - 6 students
 - Grades 1 - 6: 19 students
- 75% of the student population (283 students) are identified as English Language Learners (ELL)

Commendations:

- 90% of parents felt that their child receives the help needed to succeed in school
- 88% of parents agreed that the school teaches all students in a fair and equal manner, while at the same time taking individual learning styles into consideration.
- 93% of teachers feel supported regarding inclusion of ALL student in their classroom.
- 93% of teachers agree that support staff provide effective support.

Recommendations:

- A large percentage (75%) of students who are English Language Learners poses unique and significant challenges. There was a sense among staff that there is a need for greater professional development in the area of ELL instruction.
- The following excerpt from FMIS School Growth Plan highlights the school's commitment to meeting the needs of ELL students: "***ELL:*** *With increased student enrollment each year, we have put an emphasis on training our staff to effectively implement various literacy programs. This will assist teachers in supporting the language development and literacy needs of FMIS students. We are also implementing a Literacy Intervention Program, to support students who need additional support in this area. In addition, we have purchased the RAZ Kids reading program for all FMIS students for use at home as well as school. This program is highly encouraged as an in-school and home support program to assist with vocabulary development, reading fluency, and comprehension. We have licence for Lexia Core this year and will be helping students through the program.*"
- It will be essential for the staff to revisit this commitment regularly to see if it is having the desired effect of improving learning among our ELL students, and make necessary revisions to ensure this strategy is effective.

15. Other areas identified by school administration

Observations:

- The administration of the school was given the opportunity to add items specific to their school. Items were added to the parent survey were:
 - FMIS is creating an Islamic environment to help children be steadfast on Teachings of Quran, sayings of Prophet (P.B.U.H.) and to practice them when they are grown ups.
 - FMIS alternate program has made obvious changes in my child's Arabic/ Islamic/ Quranic education level before and after each educational year.
 - I am aware of FMIS's vision.
 - The school is helping students achieve its vision.

- In School Council Focus group, concern was expressed that students were not receiving the level and quality of instruction in Arabic that is making an obvious improvement in students proficiency in Arabic.

Commendations:

- 93% of parents agree that FMIS is creating an Islamic environment to help children be steadfast on Teachings of Quran, sayings of Prophet (P.B.U.H.) and to practice them when they are grown ups.
- 88% of parents agree that FMIS alternate program has made obvious changes in their child's Arabic/ Islamic/ Quranic education level before and after each educational year.
- 90% of parents agreed that they are aware of FMIS's school vision.
- 86% of parents indicated they agree that FMIS is helping students achieve its vision.

Recommendation:

- It is essential that the school administration, district, school council and Markaz work together and remain committed to continuous improvement in all areas, including the Islamic program.

SUMMARY

Upon entering the Fort McMurray Islamic school, one immediately feels welcome. The warm family feel of the school is immediately evident. Smiling children and staff and a friendly main office staff quickly back up the results on the survey that indicate that 91% of parents feel welcome when they visit the school, 90% parents indicated that their child enjoys attending school and 92% of parents felt that their child's teacher cares about their child.

There is a great deal of pride in the Islamic program that this school delivers. The astronomical growth of the program since its inception speaks of the popularity of the program. Evidence of the support and love for this program is found in all that you speak to whether child or adult. Through informal conversations during our school visit as well as our interviews and focus groups of staff students and parents, pride in the program is obvious.

While academic results have dipped somewhat this year, Fort McMurray Islamic School has a proud tradition of superior academic achievement, historically ranking them among the highest in the province in this area. The young teaching staff continues to grow professionally. There is evidence that they are working together to analyse current results and developing strategies to bring about improvement, through their very collaborative School Growth Process. As they implement the plan, they will need to revisit and realign the plan frequently to ensure it is having the desired impact of improving academic achievement.

The fact that 93% of parents are satisfied with the Islamic environment that FMIS is creating and that 88% of parents agree that FMIS alternate program has made obvious changes in their child's Arabic/ Islamic/ Quranic education level before and after each educational year supports the fact that the parents feel the school is meeting its mandate. While survey results and anecdotal data collected at the school show satisfaction with the program, the focus group held with the School Council expressed some concern that students were not receiving the level and quality of instruction in Arabic that is making an obvious improvement in students proficiency in Arabic.

Satisfaction for the programs offered at the school go well beyond the curriculum. Students at FMIS have access to a multitude of extracurricular activities and are fortunate to have a staff that supports these programs. Given the long day that many of these students and staff already have as well as the late dismissal time it is encouraging that so many students see fit to be involved in these programs, and so many staff support them.

That staff would add to their already heavy workload by supporting the students in these activities speaks well of the professionalism and commitment of the staff. Many concerns were expressed by staff of the workload issues, specifically around the length of the day and the amount of supervision teachers have. To maintain staff satisfaction and retain excellent teachers it is incumbent on the administration of the school to attempt to address the concerns of staff, and where possible bring their workloads more in line with staff in other FMPSD schools.

The success of any school is dependent on the level of support it receives from its parent body, The amazing response rate for the School Review Parent Survey is clear evidence that parents feel involved in the FMIS community. The response rate of 43.8% is phenomenal and reflects the highest percentage of parent response of all School Reviews completed in FMPSD. Staff too

feel the level of support by parents with 100% of teachers surveyed feeling that parents are supportive of the school.

Parents appear to be engaged and committed to their school community. 72% of parents surveyed agreed that they have the opportunity to provide input into decisions that are made at the school that impact their child., and 81% of parents felt their concerns were taken seriously by the school.

Maybe one of the most significant challenges that the school faces is related to their rapid growth and limited space available to them at Greely Road School. It should be noted that both schools appear to be working very well operating in a single building, and there is evidence of much sharing and support from each school towards the other. Given that the Islamic Schools population makes up about 75% of the total student population in the building, it is essential that both schools continue to work together to come up with an equitable distribution of the space in the building and time allocated to each on areas such as the gym and library.

While facing numerous challenges, it is obvious to the team that the Fort McMurray Islamic School is thriving both in growth as well as level of satisfaction with their program. The challenges that they face will be to deal with the logistics of their continued growth while at the same time always seeking ways to improve in their academic results as well as alternate Islamic programming.