

# DIPLOMA EXAMINATIONS

## Response Report

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2024–2025



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# INTRODUCTION

Edmonton Catholic Schools is dedicated to providing a Christ-centered education that nurtures excellence in learning and the full development of every student. Grounded in our mission to provide a Catholic education that inspires students to learn and that prepares them to live fully and to serve God in one another, and our vision of excellent Catholic education for all students delivered with faith, hope, and love, we remain committed to helping every learner reach their God-given potential.

This report provides an analysis of the most recent Diploma Examination results, offering subject-specific insights that inform instructional planning and system-wide improvement. These results are one part of our

broader efforts to create optimal learning conditions that empower students to engage deeply, think critically, and demonstrate high levels of achievement.

Learning Services continues to prioritize collaboration and continuous improvement. By seeking input from administrators, instructional coaches, and department heads, the department refines supports and professional learning opportunities to meet the evolving needs of teachers and students. Together, we strive to ensure that every classroom across Edmonton Catholic Schools reflects our shared commitment to faith, excellence, and success for all learners.

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERATURE (ELAL)

## ENGLISH 30-1 AND 30-2 DIPLOMA OVERVIEW

In English 30-1, ECSD students have again exceeded provincial average in students meeting the *Acceptable Standard*. When comparing the 2024–2025 year's results to the previous years, ECSD has improved in *Standard of Excellence* by 2%, and is above the provincial average in that category. We will continue our work to support teachers to ensure that school awarded marks more closely reflect the level of student performance demonstrated on the Diploma Examination.

On the English 30-2 Diploma Examination, ECSD students consistently exceed the Province in meeting the *Acceptable Standard*. The *Standard of Excellence* achievement is above the provincial average while enrollment in the course continues to climb.

### Analysis

When examining the results of the reading comprehension exam, it appears that 30-2 students would benefit most from targeted instructional support with poetry.

Analysis of the written exam shows that the greatest area of focus continues to be in the Personal Response, where the data suggest that students need further guidance in developing insight and precision in their written responses. In all other writing categories, ECSD students exceed the Province in both proficient and excellent scoring categories. On the reading comprehension exam, ECSD students remained consistent with provincial results.

### Response to Data

- The High School Anthology project will continue to target and cultivate excellent writing in our Grade 12 students and create opportunities for teachers to celebrate and recognize the strengths of our Division's excellent student writers.
- A Community of Practice (CoP) has been formed to bring teachers together over a shared book study. The topics of this CoP will include targeted and efficient feedback, strategies for building student insight and high level thinking skills, and best practices in teaching student writing.
- The English Consultant will develop a reading comprehension teacher resource for student preparation and familiarity with the multiple choice format that includes readings and data from previously administered Common Summative Assessment (CSA) items. This resource will support and complement the ongoing field testing, blueprinting, and development of multiple-choice items to deepen teachers' understanding of the reporting categories and cognitive levels of ELAL multiple choice questions.
- The High School Department Head Professional Learning Community (PLC) will collaborate with the Consultant to refine scoring guides for both ELAL streams, build new common writing assessments, and hone and implement ELAL-focused Universal Design for Learning (UDL) materials. These materials will contribute to the development of support in students' writing assessments.

# MATHEMATICS

## MATHEMATICS 30-1 AND 30-2 DIPLOMA OVERVIEW

### Analysis

Data from the 2024-2025 Mathematics 30-1 Diploma Examination show that ECSD students performed slightly above the provincial achievement percentage for *Acceptable Standard* (+0.7%) but below the provincial achievement percentage for *Standard of Excellence* (-3.5%). Overall, 78.5% of ECSD students achieved the *Acceptable Standard* and 33.6% achieved the *Standard of Excellence*. Over the past three years, ECSD has shown steady improvement, with an 8.1% increase in the percentage of students achieving the *Acceptable Standard* and a 7.2% increase in those reaching the *Standard of Excellence*. In 2024-2025, ECSD's average Diploma Examination score was 0.4% below the provincial average. This is an improvement of +0.6% from the previous January. While the ECSD average in January 2025 was 4.4% below the provincial average, the June 2025 average rose to 2.5% above the provincial average. Interestingly, from January to June, the provincial average decreased by 0.7%, whereas the ECSD average increased by 6.2%, indicating a strong upward trend in ECSD student performance.

ECSD student achievement on Mathematics 30-2 Diploma Examination continues to exceed provincial performance. In 2024–2025, ECSD results exceeded the Province in the *Acceptable Standard* (+3.5%) and were above the provincial achievement percentage for *Standard of Excellence* (+5.5%). Over the past three years, ECSD maintains an *Acceptable Standard* of around 95% and improved significantly in *Standard of Excellence* (+7.2%). The average on ECSD Diploma Examination in January was 3.3% higher than the provincial average and in June it was 1.6% higher than the provincial average.

Analysis of written response data shows continued improvement in ECSD student performance. In previous years, several parts of written response questions had over 50% of students scoring zero. In contrast, during the 2024–2025 Mathematics 30-1 Diploma Examination, the highest percentage of students scoring zero on any question part dropped to 28%, representing a significant reduction compared to past years.

### Response to Data

- As part of the ongoing Common Summative Assessment (CSA) development process, data analysis is being leveraged to guide improvements to CSA questions.
- The Mathematics Consultant, in collaboration with teachers, has developed outcomes-based reviews for Mathematics 20-2, Mathematics 20-1 and Mathematics 30-1. These reviews are designed to ensure that every specific outcome from the course Program of Studies is addressed, supporting thorough student preparation for final exams. Development of a similar review for Mathematics 10C is currently underway this year.
- High School Mathematics Department Heads are participating in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) series. This series covers a range of topics, including ongoing implementation of the Universal Design for Learning framework, the launch of the ECSD Mathematics Framework, and an in-depth review of the Combinatorics Teacher Resources that was developed last year.
- ECSD's Division Focused Professional Development (DFPD) series for High School Mathematics Teachers is centered on the Division-wide launch of the ECSD Mathematics Framework. This initiative supports consistent instructional practices and deepens understanding of the framework across all high school sites.

# SCIENCE

## BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY, PHYSICS AND SCIENCE 30 DIPLOMA OVERVIEW

### Analysis

Recent Diploma Examination data highlights ECSD's notable progress across several key areas in High School Science over the past three years.

#### Biology 30

Biology 30 emerged as ECSD's most notable success in the 2024–25 school year. Improvements were observed across all metrics:

- Since June 2023, the school-awarded mark has increased by 2.2%, and the Diploma Examination mark has risen by 1.6%. These gains have resulted in a blended mark of 76.4%, which **exceeded** the provincial average of 75.3%, in June 2025.
- Another notable achievement in Biology 30 is the increase in students reaching the *Standard of Excellence*. Since June 2023, the percentage has risen by 2.3%, bringing ECSD's rate to 46.0%, **surpassing** the provincial average of 44.1% by 1.9%.

#### Chemistry 30

Chemistry 30 continues to demonstrate steady improvement:

- Since June 2023, school-awarded marks have remained at or above the provincial average, while Diploma Examination scores have **increased** by 2.1% over the past three years.
- January 2025 stands out as a key milestone: ECSD students **outperformed** the provincial average in both the blended mark (by 0.6%) and the *Standard of Excellence* (by 2.3%).

These achievements in both Biology 30 and Chemistry 30 reflect the Science Academy's strategic emphasis on strengthening metacognitive practices in science instruction. In collaboration with teachers, the development and implementation of enhanced resources to support student learning have also likely contributed to these positive outcomes.

#### Science 30

Science 30 demonstrates consistent excellence and sustained success.

- School-awarded marks have trended upward by 1.5% over the past three years, remaining **consistently above** the provincial average.
- Since 2023, ECSD continues to **outperform** the Province in the percentage of students achieving the *Acceptable Standard*. Since June 2023, on average, 97.94% are achieving a score of 50% or greater.

## Physics 30

Physics 30 has emerged as an area of concern and is now a key focus for improvement. Since June 2023, Diploma Examination scores and the percentage of students achieving the *Acceptable Standard* and the *Standard of Excellence* have steadily declined.

### Response to Data

In response, to 2024–2025 data, specifically to Physics 30 results, the 2025–26 school year will prioritize targeted interventions, including:

#### Subject Specific Professional Learning

To maximize impact and deliver timely, actionable, and data-driven learning opportunities, Science Consultants will offer topic-specific sessions tailored to the teachers for whom the learning intentions are most relevant.

#### Communities of Practice as the Foundation for Professional Learning

In lieu of large-scale professional development, professional learning will be delivered through Communities of Practice. Within this framework, Science Consultants will identify areas of concern informed by data and divisional priorities, while teachers will engage actively and collaboratively in addressing these focus areas. This approach enables consultants to guide collective progress while honouring the expertise and experience of classroom teachers.

#### Enhanced Support for Teachers who are New to the Course

This school year has seen an unusually high number of new teachers entering High School Science classrooms. As a result, targeted engagement and support for these educators has been identified as a key priority, ensuring they are well-equipped to thrive and contribute meaningfully to student success.

# SOCIAL STUDIES

## SOCIAL STUDIES 30-1 AND 30-2 DIPLOMA OVERVIEW

### Analysis

Division focus and targeted professional learning continue to produce strong results in High School Social Studies. Students in 30-1 continue to exceed provincial averages in both *Acceptable Standard* and *Standard of Excellence*. These results are consistent with the direction results in Social Studies have been trending since 2022–2023 when ECSD students were below provincial averages in *Standard of Excellence*. The continuation of this trend points to the success of Division focus on process work at the classroom level, teacher familiarization with assessment standards, and a growing diversity of sources and experiences for students. Teacher confidence in using data to inform instruction through professional learning around the Common Summative Assessment (CSA) may also be a factor, as the results improved once the move to common exams was implemented. Furthermore, teacher participation in the CSA process has led to broader teacher and student understanding of Diploma Examination expectations.

Social Studies 30-2 continues to have excellent success helping students credential with the Diploma Examination as ECSD students reach the *Acceptable Standard* at an impressively high 97%. That students in the Division are equal to their provincial peers in *Standard of Excellence*, potentially indicates that students are both successful at the 30-2 level and that the strongest candidates of 30-2 may be challenging themselves with 30-1 as opposed to searching for excellence in 30-2.

### Response to Data

- Frame professional learning through a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) at the Department Head Professional Learning community, to continue Division success in Social Studies and provide more students with opportunities to reach a *Standard of Excellence*.
- The Social Studies Consultant, through the curation and development of resources, will support teachers in designing multiple means of engagement. As teachers face increasing demands on their time and limits on access to diverse sources, assembling new sources linked to specific outcomes provides teachers with new opportunities to optimize relevance, value, and authenticity of student learning for students at different levels.
- Ensuring these sources characterize multiple means of representation through a diversity of media and perspective will equip students with novel arguments and a breadth of evidence which is not common in the Part A of the Diploma Examination. Deliberate study of these sources will help students explore patterns, critical features, and relationships to achieve a *Standard of Excellence*.
- Accompanying these sources is suggestions for ways students can show multiple means of action and expression in response to their engagement. These suggestions will be deliberate and based on the medium and complexity of each source. In-classroom demonstration from the Social Studies Consultant and Teacher collaboration in providing feedback will build fluency and enhance capacity for both teachers and students.
- Continued work with Social Studies CSAs will also continue to provide important professional learning. Encouraging new teachers to participate in item building and supporting department heads with analysis is continuing work. Engaging in this important professional learning that builds the knowledge of Social Studies Diploma Examination question anatomy, question types, and source varieties leads to strong pedagogy and assessment in Division classrooms.

# FRENCH IMMERSION

## GRADE 12 FRENCH LANGUAGE ARTS (FLA)

### Analysis

In Grade 12 French Language Arts, 100% of students achieved the *Acceptable Standard* on the FLA-30-1 Diploma Examination, exceeding the number of students receiving *Acceptable Standard* at the provincial level. Students scored higher on the written response as compared to the reading comprehension, thus indicating the need for a continued focus on reading comprehension across all grades.

### Response to Data

- At the secondary level, there will be an increased focus on reading strategies that span content areas. Higher order thinking skills such as inference and analysis will be a focus.
- Content areas teachers will continue to receive professional development related to the integration of reading strategies across subject areas.
- A continued focus will be working groups in which teachers will explore strategies to implement to best respond to the diverse needs of our learners.
- Teachers will use rubrics that align with the Diploma Examination that will ensure that students fully comprehend the grade-level expectations and will participate in collaborative marking sessions to create common expectations and practices.

# ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL)

## EAL AT THE HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Over the past few years, Edmonton Catholic Schools has built strong foundations to support English language learners, and we continue to strengthen these efforts as our EAL population grows. We are focusing on tracking student progress, using classroom strategies that make learning accessible, providing ongoing professional learning for teachers, and expanding specialized staff to work directly with students. These supports work together to ensure every learner develops English proficiency while succeeding in all subject areas.

Benchmarks 2.0 are now fully implemented in Edmonton Catholic Schools and provide essential data to guide programming for English language learners. This site gathers student assessments and benchmarks. This innovative tool allows us to track language progress over time and filter data in multiple ways, giving teachers a clear snapshot of each student's language abilities and helping them plan more effectively. Of the more than 12,000 English language learners in our Division, 17.5% are high school students.

Building on universal supports, consultants are working with department heads to make student thinking visible and co-create success criteria. These strategies are especially helpful for EAL students. EAL and Curriculum Consultants collaborate to embed these supports into professional development sessions and planning documents, ensuring teachers have practical tools to help students develop academic language.

Ongoing professional learning remains a cornerstone of success. EAL designates receive training several times a year on best practices, and language objectives and key vocabulary are now part of locally developed resources. We also provide sessions for school teams to emphasize integrating language and content objectives in lesson planning so EAL learners can access academic language across all subjects.

High School Department Heads are learning how to plan and differentiate for older EAL students, who face greater academic language demands. Building on last year's Expository English 15/25 Community of Practice, teachers have moved from mapping language progression to creating modules for use across high schools. This ensures consistency and provides explicit scaffolding for language development.

Finally, we have 27 English Language Learner Educators working in the Division, including five in high schools with large EAL populations. These educators support students through both push-in and pull-out models, offering targeted activities that help individuals and small groups develop English proficiency while meeting grade-level outcomes.