

# Homework and Study Skills Initiative

## **Background**

Homework and study skills was identified by South Slave school principals as requisite to improved student success. In recognition of the connection between appropriate study habits, school achievement and success in the workplace in adult life, homework and study skills received official SSDEC sanction as a priority regional initiative. In the interests of representing student needs at all grade levels, the SSDEC Homework and Study Skills Committee, consisting of one teacher from each school in the South Slave region, was established in 2001-2002. Since its inception, the Homework and Study Skills Committee and various subcommittees meet during the year to plan, implement, evaluate and update the overall initiative work plan and the various strategies identified as integral to improved student success at all grade levels in schools throughout the South Slave.

## **Purpose**

The intent of this initiative is to strengthen school/home partnerships, encourage student development of appropriate study habits, consolidate and reinforce student knowledge and skills acquisition, and support academic success across all grade levels in the South Slave region.

## **Accomplishments to Date**

Through sponsorship and dedicated funding (approx. \$85,000), the schools have provided the following:

**Student agendas** – provided for all grade levels to encourage school/home communication, student completion of homework and parental involvement in student programs of study;

**Parent homework handbook** – provided to all student homes to encourage parent/student involvement in student assignment completion and student development of study skills;

**Student homework bags (k-3)** – provided to all K-3 students to encourage parental participation in student homework completion at the primary level;

**Homework clubs** – intended to provide students with opportunities for tutor-assisted help with homework completion;

**Homework help lines** – intended to provide parents with information regarding student assignments;

**Assigned homework days for designated grades** – intended to promote student and parental scheduling of homework into after school hours to encourage homework completion and promote successful homework policy implementation;

**Incentive programs** – implemented in various schools to promote homework completion.

## **Key Upcoming Strategies**

- Continuance of student agendas, parent homework handbook, and student homework bags strategies;
- Implementation of homework motto contest to promote the profile of the initiative and the importance of homework completion and the acquisition of study skills;
- Development of homework newsletter and news releases to highlight both the importance of homework completion, student accomplishments, and parental involvement with student programs of study;
- Development of homework links for students and teachers on official SSDEC website to promote the importance of homework and study skills and assist students with assignment completion;
- In-services provided to committee members in order to encourage building a homework team in each school and promote the assignment of meaningful and relevant homework;
- Implementation of colour-coded binder/duo tang strategy in all schools intended to promote the importance of in-school and at-home completion of work assigned in the four core courses from grades 1 to 9;
- Implementation in all South Slave schools of a Learning Strategies course from elementary to high school levels intended to teach skills that promote the link between academic achievement and workplace success in adult life;
- Implementation of a calendar strategy in all South slave schools to promote teacher awareness of the homework and study skills requirements of other courses during the school year so that teacher planning of major assignments, quizzes, and tests allows for the greatest possibility of student success.