In Parkland School Division (PSD), Kindergarten teachers are keeping a close eye on their students as they assess each child’s development in five key areas.

This year marks the second year that this assessment, also known as the Early Years Evaluation (EYE), is being completed through observation across the division.

Included in the assessment is each child’s awareness of self and environment, social skills and approaches to learning, cognitive skills, language and communication and physical development.

"Over the first six to eight weeks of the school year, teachers are getting to know all the children,” said Raelene Finlayson, PSD early childhood development co-ordinator, to PSD board of trustees on Oct. 6. “(Through the evaluation) they target certain skills so we can determine if the child has the skill or needs to learn the skill.

Teachers will assess their students each fall and then work with “at risk students” throughout the year to see them make improvements. Then, in the spring, a second assessment will be completed for those students who required additional supports.

When the evaluation was completed in the fall of 2014, 60 per cent of all Kindergarten students across PSD performed at an appropriate level, meaning nearly half of all Kindergarten students required additional supports in at least one of the five assessment areas.

In the spring of 2015, 82 per cent were performing at an appropriate level.

Finlayson added that all of the information collected from the EYE program has been shared with Grade 1 teachers to allow for continued programming and support for students who will require similar attention this year.
“We are going to continue our literacy journey,” she said. “The reason we have this data is to ensure all our kids become readers by Grade 3. We can only do better when we know better and this will help us track those particular students.”

Here grows Stony Plain

According to PSD’s Sept. 30 enrolment figures, the division’s Stony Plain schools grew by a higher percentage than Spruce Grove or the division’s west end schools.

With 118 newly registered students, Stony Plain enrolments increased by 3.83 per cent since last year. In Spruce Grove, enrolments increased by 1.84 per cent.

Administration noted that data concerning the number of students who transfer out of the division is not readily available and so these figures do not reflect net new students. However, it does indicate that the enrolment pressure in Stony Plain is a concern.

In total, there are 10,688 students enrolled with Parkland School Division so far this year.

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