

Investment Management Agreement for Public Post- Secondary Institutions

Northern Lakes College
Department of Advanced Education
2021-2022

Her Majesty the Queen in right of
Alberta, as represented by the
Minister of Advanced Education



Minister

June 10, 2021

Date

SIGNED for and on behalf of Northern
Lakes College



Board Chair

May 25, 2021

Date

Table of Contents

Intent of Investment Management Agreement (IMA)	3
Legislative and Policy Requirements	4
<i>Post-secondary Learning Act</i>	4
<i>Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act</i>	4
Operating and Program Support Grant Agreement	4
Mandate	4
Objectives and Priorities	10
Government of Alberta	10
[Northern Lakes College]	10
Operating and Program Support and Performance Based Funding Allocations	12
Performance-based Funding Methodology	12

Intent of Investment Management Agreement (IMA)

Alberta's twenty-six publicly funded post-secondary institutions provide a variety of learning opportunities to people from within Alberta, across Canada, and abroad. These institutions are often world-class organizations which excel in teaching and research. They prepare graduates for fulfilling careers and additional learning, while contributing to Alberta's economic and community development through skill development, research and innovation.

To support system coordination and optimize the allocation of public investments in adult education, each of these institutions is designated to a sector based on its programming, research and scholarly activity, and collaboration initiatives.

For 2021-2022, each institution will also have an Investment Management Agreement with government. This agreement will include the institution's mandate, the 2021-22 Operating and Program Support Grant Amount from government, mutual priorities, and a performance metric to facilitate the allocation of outcomes-based funding, to ensure government and institutions are focused on meeting the needs of the province. Specifically, the Investment Management Agreement:

- Identifies and explains the shared objectives and priorities between the Alberta government and the institutions; and
- Describes the agreed upon investment framework that includes the key performance metric in a priority area.

While the IMA was originally designed to be a 3 year agreement between each institution and the government, this year's IMA is serving as a pilot. Therefore its term is one year, from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022, with performance evaluated at the end of the fiscal year to provide learnings and identify improvements that could be incorporated into a three year IMA.

The Investment Management Agreement is not intended to be the sole element of the relationship between the institution and the government, nor to include all decisions and issues in the post-secondary system. Government will continue to work closely with institutions and other stakeholders in a number of areas, and provide many aspects of system direction through legislation, regulation, policy, and other processes.

Investment Management Agreements may be amended in the event of substantive policy or program changes that would significantly affect joint commitments made in the agreement. Any such amendment would be mutually agreed to in writing, dated, and signed by both signatories.

Legislative and Policy Requirements

Post-secondary Learning Act

Section 78 of the Post-secondary Learning Act requires the boards of all 21 public post-secondary institutions, and Independent Academic Institutions, to enter into an Investment Management Agreement with the Minister of Advanced Education, which must include: the mandate of the institution (not applicable to Independent Academic Institutions), a performance metric(s) for the institution, and anything else determined by the Minister. The Minister may specify the form of the agreement, and the date by which it must be in effect. The boards of the 21 public post-secondary institutions are also required to prepare, approve and submit to the Minister a budget and a capital plan. The budget submitted by an institution may not project consolidated operating expenses exceeding consolidated operating revenues, unless the board has the written approval of the Minister.

Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act

Section 10 of the Act requires the board of a public post-secondary institution to provide a business plan for each fiscal year to the Minister. This requirement is fulfilled by each institution entering into an Investment Management Agreement with the Minister, delivering a budget and capital plan in accordance with section 78 of the *Post-secondary Learning Act*.

Operating and Program Support Grant Agreement

Each institution's Investment Management Agreement is referenced in its respective Operating and Program Support Grant Agreement, and future funds will be distributed in accordance with the institution's performance in meeting the target established in the Investment Management Agreement.

Mandate

This mandate statement has been developed by [Northern Lakes College] in consultation with Alberta's Minister of Advanced Education pursuant to Section 78 of the *Post-secondary Learning Act* (PSLA).

1. Type of Institution, Sector, and Governance

Northern Lakes College is a board-governed public post-secondary institution operating in Alberta as a comprehensive community college under the authority of the PSLA.

2. Outcomes

Northern Lakes College provides access to students in rural and remote regions of Alberta through our Supported Distance Learning model that enables students to participate in post-secondary education regardless of their location. Northern Lakes College places a high value on collaboration with our Campus Alberta partners to ensure we are providing accessible programs and services to students. Northern Lakes College embraces dual credit programming and has numerous partnerships with School Boards throughout the province. The College also values our working relationship with Community Adult Learning Programs (CALP) to ensure we are working together to provide pathways for students into post-secondary programs.

3. Clients/Students

Northern Lakes College students are adult learners, lifelong learners, and dual credit students. The College has a mandate region that encompasses four Metis Settlements and 15 First Nations and the majority of our students are of Indigenous heritage. Northern Lakes College is committed to providing incremental educational opportunities enabling students to progress through all levels of the learning continuum.

Many students are not able to relocate to pursue their post-secondary goals. The ability to pursue learning in their home communities is key to being able to serve such a broad geographic region of the province. Northern Lakes College accepts students from across Alberta.

4. Geographic Service Area and Type of Delivery

Northern Lakes College serves a vast region of Northwestern Alberta and in 2019-2020 approximately 30% of our students originated external to our geographic stakeholder region. Currently, we have 25 campuses and Community Access Point (CAP) sites, and two additional sites where the College delivers programs at other institutions (Lakeland College and Medicine Hat College). Agreements are in place with Norquest College to offer programming in Drayton Valley and Whitecourt.

To ensure our students have access to a wide variety of programs, and understanding the difficulty of adult learners to relocate to pursue educational goals, Northern Lakes College has developed Supported Distance Learning and Supported Distance Teaching models that ensure our students have access to all programs offered regardless of their location. Our Supported Distance Learning model accompanied by local supports for students has proven to be effective and efficient in providing access to programs and

services for the purpose of upskilling, re-skilling or pursuing further education without compromising on quality.

5. Program Mandates and Credentials Offering

Northern Lakes College offers Foundational programming including literacy and numeracy, Career Preparation programs, post-secondary certificates and diplomas in a range of Health Science programs, Human Service programs, Business, Administrative, and Technology programs, Resource Technology Programs, and Journeyman certificates in a number of trades, and various upskilling and reskilling opportunities. Northern Lakes College also provides access to two collaborative degree opportunities within our University Studies department, Bachelor of Education and the Bachelor of Social Work.

Northern Lakes College enjoys a proud history of collaboration and currently has numerous collaborative agreements with other CampusAlberta institutions, an active collaboration with the Woodland Operations Learning Foundation, 16 transfer agreements for degree or diploma completion with CampusAlberta institutions, active dual credit agreements with 24 School Boards throughout the province, and numerous collaborations with business, industry, and other entities.

Northern Lakes College actively collaborates with CALPs in our region, operating eight CALPs and hosting five CALPs on our campuses.

Northern Lakes College also offers programs at the Peace River Correctional Centre and partners with the Rupertsland Institute, the Alberta Rural Development Network, the Northern Alberta Development Council and our regional Economic Development Committees.

Northern Lakes College also provides access to non-credit programming through our Continuing Education and Corporate Training Department.

6. Special Program Areas/Areas of Specialization

Northern Lakes College offers a broad range of programming that is reflective of the employment opportunities and needs of our communities. Adult Basic Education, including literacy and numeracy, and High School (Academic Upgrading) are key program areas for our service region as they provide accessible pathways. We are

seeing strong growth in our University Studies program and there is continued demand for health programming in the region, including the development of a Registered Nurse program. In addition, our Trades and Resource Technology programs are of key importance to our region. All of our programs are accessible throughout Alberta via our Supported Distance Learning model.

7. System Collaboration and Partnerships

Northern Lakes College has a long history of collaboration that is encouraged by our Board of Governors. Existing agreements enable the College to deliver programs in other regions and other institutions to deliver programming in our region. Many of these collaborative agreements have been long standing, some are new, while others are in development. The College continues to provide and enhance student accessibility to programs and services through collaborative partnerships.

Northern Lakes College has numerous partnerships with School Boards to offer a broad range of access to high school students to obtain dual credits. We partner with CAREERS: The Next Generation, the Rupertsland Institute, economic development groups, First Nations and Metis Settlements and our Community Education Committees to support the educational needs of their communities.

We have co-located one of our campuses with Athabasca University and we offer the Practical Nurse and Academic Upgrading programs at the Vermilion campus of Lakeland College. We partner with the Woodland Operations Learning Foundation to provide forestry related programming throughout the province. We share three of our facilities with Northlands School Division, Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council Education Authority, and Kapawe'no First Nation. We are collaborating with Norquest College to offer our programming in the Town of Drayton Valley and the Town of Whitecourt and also Grande Prairie Regional College to offer programming in the Town of Hinton.

Northern Lakes College is actively engaged in regional stewardship through a number of initiatives and innovations. We have an active Community Education Committee in every campus community. The Chairs of each of those Committees comprise the Council of Community Education Committees that meets regularly with our Board of Governors. We have active and engaged partnerships with our CALPs and have initiatives intended to assist learners to achieve their goals.

The College meets with municipal councils, Chiefs and Chairpersons and their respective councils, and other key stakeholders in our service region providing information on the College and encouraging feedback related to community needs.

8. Research and Scholarly Activities

Northern Lakes College is not actively engaged in discovery research however, a number of our faculty and staff have undertaken research initiatives that focus on our model of teaching and learning specifically to provide insight into how we can better serve our students through active engagement in a distance-learning environment.

We have assisted a number of other institutions in their research endeavours.

9. System Mandate

Northern Lakes College region is geographically large and comprised of mostly small rural and remote communities. The College also provides access to programs and service to many students across Alberta. The impact that Northern Lakes College has on a community, and on students, can be profound. The social impact is significant, as many of our students would not have the opportunity to pursue an education if we did not make our programs accessible. The enrolment growth over the past several years is testament to the demand for accessible programs. Our Community Education Committees and our Municipal governments are continually requesting that new programs be added to meet employment demands in their region. In collaboration with CampusAlberta partners, Northern Lakes College is also servicing towns and communities outside of our service region at their request.

Our economic impact is also significant as our graduates have the opportunity to find employment in their communities without having to leave. This is particularly significant in that our University of Alberta Bachelor of Education graduates are employed in School Boards throughout our region, which are constantly challenged to find qualified teachers. The same is true for many of our graduates from other programs. We have recently expanded access to Bachelor of Education through a collaborative agreement with the University of Calgary. In one year, we have increased specializations/teachable areas to include, Early Childhood Education, and Revitalization of Indigenous Languages. Mathematics and sciences will start in the 2021-2022 academic year.

10. Other

DRAFT

Objectives and Priorities

Government of Alberta

The Government of Alberta is committed to post-secondary education as a cornerstone of employment, economic and social development, and overall prosperity for the province. As the province continues to recover from the many challenges caused by the pandemic, post-secondary institutions will play a pivotal role, not only through research, innovation and commercialization of leading edge technology, but also in providing highly-skilled and job-ready graduates for a recovering and dynamic labour market.

The initial goal of the GOA is to highlight the critical role post-secondary institutions play to prepare students for a future career. While this inaugural Investment Management Agreement reflects that goal, it is also meant to serve as a pilot to guide the development of future iterations that will be broader and more comprehensive for Alberta's post-secondary system. By focusing on students, innovation, efficiency, and accountability, and by working to improve system performance and outcomes, Investment Management Agreements will ensure institutions play a vital role in keeping Alberta competitive on the global stage.

[Northern Lakes College]

Northern Lakes College's priorities include:

Accessibility, Community, Collaboration, Excellence, Respect and Lifelong Learning.

Northern Lakes College continues to focus on our key values by ensuring that communities have local access to a wide range of post-secondary, career and foundational learning opportunities in a fiscally responsible manner. In the past year, we have continued or expanded collaborations with Grande Prairie Regional College, Medicine Hat College, Portage College, Lakeland College, Norquest College, and the University of Calgary. Expanded access for students is the goal of all collaborative efforts.

The College has evolved to be a distance learning college using distinct models of online delivery that include wraparound student supports. Our Supported Distance Learning (SDL) model enables flexible online access to both programs and services. This model has been successful due to the level of engagement available with Faculty and staff. Faculty and staff are supported via our Supported Distance Teaching (SDT) model ensuring success on all fronts.

The College will continue to support our communities to ensure that their unique training and development needs are available and addressed at a local level. Our SDL model has proven

resilient during the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring our students ability to access and participate in their education has been only minimally affected. For those students whose access was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, several supportive strategies were implement including the distribution of laptops and learning devices, extended drive-up WIFI access at campuses and increased one-to-one personal support from academics to personal wellness. Our active Community Education Committees continue to support students at their campus and the community through various training opportunities. This year we look forward to working in our new facility in High Prairie and our new Fox Creek campus location.

DRAFT

Operating and Program Support and Performance Based Funding Allocations

Table 1: 2021-22 Allocations for [Northern Lakes College]

Total Operating and Program Support grant	\$26,911,279
Proportion tied to Performance	5%
Performance based funding allocation	\$1,345,564

Performance-based Funding Methodology

This inaugural Investment Management Agreement for [Northern Lakes College], and the performance based funding it represents, is based on one metric—the proportion of approved programs at [Northern Lakes College] that have a Work Integrated Learning component.

Table 2 below provides the specifics on the performance metric that will be used to calculate any funding impacts. A baseline result has been established at the beginning of the 2021-22 fiscal year using data housed in the Provider and Program Registry System (PAPRS). A target and tolerance band has been negotiated with [Northern Lakes College].

Over the next 12 months, as Northern Lakes College] prepares for the 2022-23 academic year, it will provide updates into PAPRS about new or existing programs that have a Work Integrated Learning component. The existing metric will be updated on March 31, 2022. If the result meets or exceeds the target, there will be no adjustments to 2022-23 OPS funding related to this performance metric.

If the result fails to meet the target, and is lower than the tolerance threshold, then an adjustment will be applied against the 2022-23 funding that is proportionate to the achievement from the expected result (to a maximum identified in Table 1).

Table 2: Performance Metric

<p>Work integrated learning: Proportion of approved programs that have work-placements identified as part of the program.</p>				
<p>Core Area: Skills and Labour Market Outcomes</p>	<p><u>Baseline Established</u></p>	<p><u>Baseline</u></p>	<p><u>Target</u></p>	<p><u>Tolerance Threshold</u></p>
	<p>March 31, 2021</p>	<p>58%</p>	<p>64%</p>	<p>3%</p>
<p>Northern Lakes College will be focusing on two pre-employment programs for the 2021-2022 academic year to establish turnaround time, program development, and local industry reception on this new component</p>				

DRAFT

DRAFT