



# **The Guiding Framework for the Design and Development of Kindergarten to Grade 12 Curriculum**

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# Contents

<b>Foreword</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Visions Statement (Ministerial Order on Student Learning)</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Overall Guidelines for Drafting the Curriculum</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Subject-specific Guidelines for Kindergarten to Grade 12</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Language Arts and Literature.....	12
Mathematics.....	12
Science.....	13
Social Studies.....	13
Physical Education and Wellness.....	14
Arts.....	14
<b>Considerations for the Development of Alberta’s Kindergarten to Grade 12 Curriculum</b> .....	<b>16</b>
Essential Knowledge for Critical Thinking and Civic and Cultural Literacy.....	16
Sequencing.....	17
What to Teach, Not How to Teach.....	17
Pluralism.....	18
Inclusion.....	19
First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Experiences and Perspectives.....	19
Francophone Perspectives.....	20
<b>Features of the Curriculum</b> .....	<b>21</b>
Architecture and Design of the Curriculum.....	21
• Organizing Ideas.....	21
• Guiding Questions.....	21
• Learning Outcomes.....	21
• Knowledge.....	21
• Understanding.....	22
• Skills and Procedures.....	22
• Literacy and Numeracy.....	22
• Competencies.....	22
• Critical Thinking.....	22
• Problem Solving.....	23
• Research and Managing Information.....	23
• Creativity and Innovation.....	23
• Communication.....	23

- Collaboration..... 24
- Citizenship ..... 24
- Personal Growth and Well-being ..... 24
- Conclusion..... 25**
- References..... 26**
- Bibliography ..... 27**

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## Foreword

Alberta has a world-renowned tradition of educational excellence. *The Guiding Framework for the Design and Development of Kindergarten to Grade 12 Curriculum (The Guiding Framework)* builds on that strong history and applies the Ministerial Order on Student Learning in Alberta,<sup>1</sup> research into best practices, and successful innovations from other world-leading jurisdictions. *The Guiding Framework* sets clear direction for developmentally appropriate curriculum of high academic standards for personal excellence. Together, *The Guiding Framework* and the curriculum are central elements of formal education in Alberta and the basis for students' learning and assessment.

Through the curriculum, students will gain the knowledge and skills to shape their future with a critical self-awareness of their role in the common good. All students will learn the history of Alberta and Canada, and about diverse traditions around the world. In a rapidly changing world, students need foundational knowledge more than ever. Every Alberta student will have the opportunity to graduate with the mathematical, science, and language skills to lead a meaningful, fulfilling life and to succeed in a changing economy. By understanding civic institutions and history, students will be equipped to be responsible and active citizens with rights, freedom, and prosperity.

*The Guiding Framework* guides curriculum development. Curriculum is the content—what students learn. This learning includes what students should know and what students should be able to do. The facts and skills that students learn are interrelated. For example, research shows that when a child is coached to be able to write with clear grammar and logic, the skill of writing about substantive content reinforces long-term memory and clear thinking (Hochman, Wexler, & Lemov, 2017; Kirschner & Hendrick, 2020). There is a mutually beneficial relationship between what children do and what children know. The breadth and depth of thoughtfully sequenced learning that results in long-term memory is necessary for clear thinking and the potential for wisdom. Following the vision of the Ministerial Order on Student Learning, students will be introduced to a rich, interconnected knowledge base. Students will also be practiced in free, lively, and respectful dialogue with varied viewpoints.

One goal of *The Guiding Framework* is to provide transparent guidelines to help parents and caregivers, educators, and curriculum developers understand curriculum development in Alberta. *The Guiding Framework* describes the logical arrangement of the common components (architecture) and the relationships among the components (design) for all subjects. This will make it easier for parents, caregivers, and teachers to understand what is being taught and why it is being taught in each subject, and from grade to grade. Specific content is designed to create connections between subjects and a predictable progression of knowledge. With the foundation of factual knowledge that is necessary for critical thinking, students will learn to question assumptions with reason. Students will aim toward the knowledge, understanding, skills, and competencies valued by Albertans. With the opportunity to discover and develop their strengths, students will strive for and attain personal excellence.

Where possible, *The Guiding Framework* avoids currently fashionable jargon and abstract language. It recommends that the curriculum be written without needless technical language so that the findings of research can be more easily accessed and used by teachers, parents, and caregivers alike.<sup>2</sup> Where required, technical language that connects teachers to research-informed practice and professional knowledge will be included in curriculum in parentheses.

There is a focus on competency development and common humanity. The focus is on what brings people together. Diverse backgrounds bring strength and unity. A goal of education in Alberta is to help individuals transcend differences and unite in a peaceful, pluralistic society that respects different beliefs, perspectives, experiences, and cultural and religious traditions. *The Guiding Framework* guides curriculum to affirm the dignity of every Albertan while highlighting the common goals that Albertans share.

The curriculum will be inclusive from Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K–12) and incorporate a diverse range of insights, understandings, and perspectives. It will include all Albertans, such as Alberta's First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (and their knowledge, language, and pedagogies), as well as the diverse peoples who have come to make a home in Alberta. All students will see themselves in the curriculum in multiple ways. They will see themselves as complex and developing human beings. They will learn from the greatest works of art and science that transcend differences of time and culture. They will see

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<sup>1</sup> See the next section of this document for the Ministerial Order on Student Learning in full.

<sup>2</sup> "Ensure curriculum is written in clear, concise, and unbiased language that enables consistent understanding and application" (Curriculum Advisory Panel, 2019, p. 7).

themselves represented in a curriculum that presents a variety of perspectives and traditions, both similar to and different from their own. Students should perpetually seek to both know themselves and understand their neighbours. Such knowledge can shine the light of truth on prejudice. Truth overcomes the ignorance and lack of empathy and imagination that lead to racism, bigotry, and intolerance and that stand as a barrier to reconciliation with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

Education, when properly conducted, brings people together to learn the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of their society and of diverse traditions. Individuals build on that knowledge and understanding, so it may be passed on intact, and improved, to the next generation. Students in Alberta will pursue learning thoughtfully, cultivate competencies and skills, and gain essential knowledge to set them on the path for productive work and well-rounded personal and public lives. They will understand their debt to the past, learning from both the good and the bad of the generations that came before. They will also appreciate their obligation to the future to leave their children a flourishing society in a clean and sustainable environment. In this way, education will ensure that Alberta is always a place of freedom, security, equal opportunity, and welcoming hospitality.

# **Visions Statement (Ministerial Order on Student Learning)**

Education in Alberta will promote the acquisition of skills and the pursuit of knowledge with wisdom, while valuing equality of opportunity, parent and caregiver responsibility, personal responsibility and excellence, and respect for difference and the inherent dignity of each individual. Students will understand the rights and benefits of democratic citizenship and their personal and community responsibilities. They will explore life opportunities that develop their unique talents and potential, provide a sense of purpose and belonging, and affirm the dignity of work. Students will engage in career education pathways that provide the relevant and timely support they need to prepare for fulfilling careers. They will become lifelong learners who will cultivate the competencies of critical thinking, communication, problem solving, collaboration, research and managing information, citizenship, creativity and innovation, and personal growth and well-being.

## **Vision for Student Learning**

Students will gain the skills, knowledge, and competencies they need to live fulfilling lives and make meaningful contributions to their communities and the world. Alberta Education's objective is to deliver a world-class education for every student while expanding choice in education. Expanding parent and student options in Alberta's public, separate, Francophone, charter, independent, early childhood, and home education systems will ensure parents and caregivers have a host of tailored options for their children's education that best suit the needs of their children.

## **Foundations for Learning**

Literacy and numeracy are the foundational building blocks of learning. They shall be pervasive across all subjects and grades and specifically taught using developmentally appropriate texts of high quality in language classes and standard algorithms in mathematics. These foundations establish knowledge, shared civic and cultural literacy, and skills that enable students to solve problems and think critically as they become active and informed citizens leading healthy lives of meaning.

## **Objectivity and Impartiality**

An objective and impartial presentation of the facts, without editorialization or personal bias, in a fair and neutral manner is essential. This will enable students to strengthen objectivity, balance critical thinking while learning a diversity of viewpoints, learn in an inclusive environment where all students feel valued and where multiple perspectives are encouraged and respected, build evidence-based viewpoints by using credible and reliable evidence, and have open and honest dialogue and discussion.

## **Outcomes for Learning**

### **Communication**

Students will develop superior written and verbal communication skills. Becoming confident and skilled communicators prepares students to successfully share their ideas and make substantial contributions locally and internationally. Throughout their education journey, students will learn how to structure their communication, provide evidence, and communicate in a precise and concise manner. Students will be able to communicate their ideas and views with intellectual rigour, participate in everyday communication experiences, prepare for the workplace and/or post-secondary, and excel in meetings, presentations, interviews, and other communication engagements.

### **Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking enables students to understand complex problems, develop creative solutions, gather and assess information objectively, and make reasoned decisions. Students will strengthen their critical-thinking skills by exploring alternative viewpoints, questioning assumptions, anticipating potential problems, and proactively finding ways to prevent or mitigate them. Students will learn to promote innovation and creativity, approach situations with objectivity and rationality, and separate fact from fiction.

Alberta's students will have opportunities to build evidence-based viewpoints, using credible and reliable evidence, and have open and honest dialogue and discussion in a fair, neutral, and objective manner. This will enable students to strengthen objectivity, balance, and critical thinking while learning a diversity of viewpoints in an inclusive environment where all students feel valued and where multiple perspectives are encouraged and respected.

## **Knowledge Development**

Students will demonstrate mastery in foundational, subject-specific content and a familiarity with world history, particularly the cultures and institutions that have shaped the history of Canada. The development of literacy and numeracy will be reinforced, enriched, and supplemented by the study of Alberta, Canada, and world history, geography, mathematics, science, technology, philosophy, literature, languages, physical education and wellness, and the arts, which shall be taught with specific factual content and measurable outcomes. Students will demonstrate competence in managing personal finances, applying their critical thinking, and engaging with various media.

A strong foundation in mathematics and science plays a crucial role in preparing students for the challenges and opportunities of the modern world. Alberta's curriculum will prepare students for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics careers and post-secondary opportunities, help them develop digital and technological literacy and cultivate problem-solving and analytical skills, and prepare them for global competitiveness by driving innovation and technological growth.

It is crucial for students to have advanced knowledge of literacy and English comprehension that will be supported with early student assessment and intervention. Developing a strong proficiency in English will help students communicate effectively, access a wider range of academic and professional opportunities, build clarity of expression and overall cognitive development, grow personally and professionally, and have greater civic and democratic engagement and participation.

Today's students require a well-rounded education strengthened through the inclusion of art, music, dance, and drama. Students can develop creative expression, appreciate diverse artistic and cultural perspectives, strengthen their emotional and social development, and learn about the historical and cultural significance of artworks and artistic movements, fostering a deeper understanding of human history and cultural heritage. Students will integrate the broad knowledge base of these subjects to learn to think for themselves, solve problems creatively, collaborate, and communicate effectively. Students will be encouraged to approach the world with intellectual curiosity and humility, understanding inherited traditions, engaging with new ideas and diverse viewpoints, questioning assumptions with reason, evaluating sources of information with discernment, and applying learning in a variety of life and work situations.

Hands-on and experiential learning experiences will allow students to learn by doing. Opportunities for students to be active participants in learning will promote an understanding of the practical application of knowledge and enrich students' learning experiences. Students will be prepared for the real world as they strengthen critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills, and practise self-reflection for personal growth.

## **Health for Life**

Through physical and health education, students will develop physical fitness abilities and a healthy lifestyle. Students will develop coordination, balance, and spatial awareness; understand the importance of teamwork and sportsmanship; respect the abilities of others; and develop a lifelong commitment to physical activity. They will also make healthy lifestyle choices by recognizing the importance of healthy habits, self-care, preventatives, and proactive health practices to reduce the need for medical interventions; monitoring and tracking health indicators; practising self-care; making informed nutritional choices; and recognizing the health complications that can arise from inactive and unhealthy lifestyles.

Alberta Education acknowledges the growing needs of students with mental health and other learning challenges. These children will be provided with every opportunity to flourish in Alberta's education system and economy. They need to be successful, fulfilled, and fully participative in building this province. All students will gain an understanding of mental health and mental illnesses and the factors that influence mental well-being, reduce the stigma and discrimination associated with mental illness, and equip students with the knowledge and skills needed for early identification and intervention.



## **Character Development**

Students develop honesty, integrity, and self-reliance through the application of their knowledge and skills. They recognize truth, beauty, and goodness through exposure to the best and most enduring art and writing across different time periods and places. They will demonstrate resilience and good judgement in a rapidly changing world, building positive relationships and taking responsibility for their personal health and well-being. Students will demonstrate a commitment to the common good by exercising compassion, empathy, and support for one another in their diverse society.

## **Preparing Students for Their Future**

Students will learn foundational life skills that will enable them to develop and sustain healthy behaviours. This will help them build healthy relationships, manage and resolve conflicts, manage personal finances, build confidence, deal with failure, and be prepared for everyday life.

Students will have rich and diverse opportunities to engage in work experience, including internships, summer jobs, placements, fieldwork, and/or practicums. Through these experiences, students will develop a strong work ethic, prepare for their future careers, explore career options, strengthen workplace skills, establish professional connections, enhance their resumé, increase self-confidence, understand workplace culture and etiquette, learn the importance of time management and work-life balance, and strengthen financial literacy.

Students can participate in apprenticeship programs to begin certification in a skilled trade while also completing their academic graduation requirements. This will enable students to start developing trade-specific skills at an early stage and give them a head start on certification and career entry, explore career options before committing to a particular career path, experience a seamless transition from school to work, enhance their employability, increase their financial independence, and strengthen personal growth and self-confidence.

Students will meaningfully apply their learning in a variety of life and work situations, including managing personal finances. Students will learn concepts such as debt and debt management, credit and credit management, interest rates, savings, borrowing, investing, budgeting, inflation, taxes, and planning for the future. This will enable students to practise financial independence, make informed and prudent financial decisions, distinguish between needs and wants, understand and appreciate the value of money and the importance of work, and build healthy financial habits early in their lives to avoid mistakes that may lead to lifelong challenges and implications.

## **Community and Civic Engagement**

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the needs, beliefs, and expectations of diverse communities and identify connections that transcend difference. All students will see themselves, their families, and their communities in the curriculum, with space in the curriculum for the study of local traditions, history, and geography, including Alberta's Francophone history.

The curriculum will include a strong commitment to advancing Indigenous reconciliation, which begins with a strong understanding of residential schools, treaties, and Indigenous peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Alberta. This will ensure students establish and maintain respectful relationships with Indigenous communities. Students will also learn about and work toward reconciliation so that Indigenous peoples and communities are engaged as economic partners and take full advantage of the natural resources that enrich this province and that will empower Indigenous communities to become full partners in prosperity.

Students will recognize the impact of their actions and demonstrate an understanding of individual rights and freedoms, which are secured by Canadian law and which reflect our shared history and traditions, as well as the social and organizational skills required for civic participation. Students will demonstrate respect for others and an understanding of Canada's political institutions as they prepare to participate knowledgeably and responsibly in a democratic society, parliamentary democracy, and constitutional monarchy. They will understand Canadian and world history, the debt to previous generations, and obligations to future generations. Students will also learn the importance of individual rights, responsibilities, and the duties of citizenship generally, as well as the structure and functioning of government and the democratic process. This will enable students to understand how government works and how decisions are made and the relationship between government and its citizens. Students will learn about fundamental rights and freedoms, the electoral process, the importance of political participation and engagement, the rule of law, and civil discourse and respectful dialogue. They will also build media literacy.

## **Alberta, Canada, and the World**

Students require a strong understanding of their communities and province and the ability to apply this knowledge when engaging on topics of national and international importance.

By exploring topics in Alberta's and Canada's history and culture, students will develop a strong appreciation and understanding of Canada's military history, the sacrifices made by Canadian servicemen and women, and their impact on Canada's development and global peace and security. Students will understand Canadian heroism during the First World War and Second World War and the importance of these events in the formation of Canada, in the creation of United Nations Peacekeepers and Canada's involvement in peacekeeping missions around the world, and in Canada's commitments to and influence on global peace and security.

Equipped with a strong understanding of Alberta's and Canada's unique contributions and histories, students are encouraged to explore and engage in international educational opportunities that will strengthen their intercultural skills and build global career and educational networks. Through these experiences, they will learn about different societies, cultures, and perspectives; gain a higher degree of cultural acceptance, tolerance, and understanding; and prepare for global career and educational competition.

Students will recognize their shared responsibility for environmental stewardship and sustainability. They will engage in discussions on Alberta's natural resources, including oil sands, oil, natural gas, minerals, agriculture, and forests, in building and sustaining Alberta's economy, creating jobs, ensuring prosperity, and enabling a high quality of life. They will know the global significance of Alberta's vast oil reserves and Alberta's reputation as the most ethical producer of oil in the world. They will also understand the importance of natural resources in enabling and sustaining Alberta's society and Albertans' quality of life. Students will learn about advancements for cleaner extraction of natural resources and about renewable energy sources.

## **Conclusion**

The education of Alberta's children and youth is central to the future prosperity and social well-being of the province. Parents and caregivers deserve the best from those who help them educate their children. Students will develop intellectual ability and practical skills and be taught by caring and knowledgeable teachers. They will inherit a rich, interconnected knowledge base and be practiced in free, lively, and respectful dialogue with varied viewpoints.

# Overall Guidelines for Drafting the Curriculum

The curriculum will

- 1) be consistent with the Ministerial Order on Student Learning
- 2) require developmentally appropriate high academic standards
- 3) support opportunities for students to reach their personal best
- 4) have content that is logically sequenced within each grade and from grade to grade
- 5) encourage students to examine a rich variety of ideas and viewpoints
- 6) respectfully include First Nations, Métis, and Inuit histories, contributions, and perspectives, with explicit knowledge about treaties and the history and legacy of residential schools (with developmentally appropriate content)
- 7) respectfully include Francophone histories, contributions, and perspectives
- 8) be developed in English and French
- 9) be scientifically rigorous while respecting a variety of beliefs in Alberta's pluralistic society
- 10) be developed in six subject areas: language arts and literature (English, French—Francophone and French immersion), mathematics, science, social studies, physical education and wellness, and arts
- 11) reinforce essential knowledge and skills across subjects
- 12) be clear and concise, avoiding specialized jargon so it is easily understandable by parents, caregivers, and teachers
- 13) focus on content (curriculum), not teaching methods (pedagogy)
- 14) have the following structure for all subjects:
  - organizing idea (overall subject-specific theme that may span multiple grades)
  - guiding question (a question that leads to the learning outcome)
  - learning outcome (what students must know, understand, and do by the end of grade)
  - knowledge (what students know)
  - understanding (how facts and knowledge fit together in a logical and meaningful order)
  - skills and procedures (what students learn to do to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding)
- 15) identify opportunities where literacy and numeracy will be developed within and across subjects
- 16) identify opportunities where competencies will be developed within and across subjects

# Subject-specific Guidelines for Kindergarten to Grade 12

Each subject area has a body of knowledge that includes the facts, symbols, rules, principles, and concepts that constitute the subject area. Each subject also has skills, strategies, processes, steps, and systematic approaches that students use to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the subject. The following lists represent, but do not limit, the body of knowledge and skills for specific subject areas.

## Language Arts and Literature

Students will learn

- reading, writing, grammar, structure, phonics, spelling, public speaking, opinion writing, listening, and literature
- to apply phonics, spell words correctly, expand vocabulary, and read with fluency
- the difference between fact and opinion and to evaluate, use, and record information ethically from a variety of sources
- to summarize, analyze, and discuss the arguments as presented by a text creator or an author
- to view, appreciate, and analyze various texts and media
- to speak concisely and with confidence, taking into consideration their volume, tone, pitch, and speed
- to avoid jargon and communicate with clear, precise, and concise language
- to communicate persuasively, using facts and evidence to support their position
- to debate and refute opposing arguments, in both text and speech, by using evidence, logic, and reasoning
- to write in various genres for a variety of audiences
- the art of listening, including active listening and being open to learning from diverse perspectives and opposing views
- to use socially and culturally appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication skills (e.g., respectful and inclusive dialogue, body language, tone, clarity of speech)
- to compose and revise their own texts for a variety of audiences, with attention to correct spelling, vocabulary, punctuation, grammar, and sentence, paragraph, and text structure
- to develop various techniques for adding elements of expression and persuasion to their composition of texts, with their audience in mind
- to appreciate print, visual, aural, and multimodal texts created by local, national, and global text creators, forming a foundation of cultural knowledge within the tradition of the language being studied
- to read, listen to, and view a diversity of the greatest and most influential writers whose works show that humans have much in common that transcends differences and help students find their own unique voice
- that texts from many traditions have shaped Alberta society and the primary language being studied, including texts brought in from other languages
- that multiple perspectives can be provided through enduring traditional and classic works and contemporary texts by diverse text creators, including First Nations, Métis, Inuit, Francophone Canadian, and global text creators from Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East

## Mathematics

Students will learn

- developmentally appropriate factual knowledge, procedures, skills, and conceptual understanding to develop mathematical thinking
- computational skills, mathematical concepts, and logical reasoning
- standard algorithms for common mathematical operations
- to recall basic number facts, represented in addition and multiplication tables
- knowledge and skills necessary to develop financial literacy
- arithmetic
- geometry and trigonometry
- to communicate mathematical thinking through definitions, justifications, arguments, and basic proofs
- how a unit is essential in measurement and comparisons

- to interpret data and graphical representations
- to apply mathematical thinking to decision making and problem solving
- to recognize, create, continue, and generalize patterns
- to create and use mathematical models
- the notation and functionality of the decimal number system
- proportionality through fractions, ratios, and rates
- discrete mathematics
- to interpret and analyze functions and their characteristics
- to solve equations
- to interpret probabilities and statistics to make informed predictions

## Science

Students will learn

- that the practice of science involves refining and developing knowledge and skills in a safe and responsible manner through new evidence of the natural world
- scientific methods that are fundamental to building explanations of a variety of phenomena
- a fundamental understanding of the natural world based on the overlapping disciplines of physics, chemistry, biology, Earth science, astronomy, and computing science
- that science is advanced by necessity, wonder, curiosity, creativity, and perseverance to obtain a deeper understanding of the natural world
- that scientific knowledge and skills are applied in areas such as engineering and design, technology, medicine, agriculture, robotics, and the space industry in ways that can continue to make life better
- classification systems, including the intersecting spheres of Earth science, taxonomies of life forms, the periodic table, states of matter, and planetary and celestial systems
- about environmental stewardship and sustainability, with content about natural historic and prehistoric cycles of climate change
- scientific data related to human impacts on the environment and climate, including global warming
- the history of scientific ideas and discoveries that resulted in changes to everyday life and understanding of the natural world
- computational thinking that builds skills for logical precision, scientific investigation, coding, modelling, data processing, and automation
- the interrelationship of the primary methods of science (i.e., observation, experimentation, computing, and theory) and to apply these methods and skills following best practices
- to be thoughtful and ethical about Alberta's past, present, and future challenges

## Social Studies

Students will learn

- the geography of Alberta and Canada, as well as world geography
- about histories, contributions, and perspectives of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, Francophone communities, and settlers and immigrants
- the select histories of Alberta, Canada, and the world from ancient to modern times, connecting prior knowledge to new learning contexts
- to understand how people in the past understood themselves and how that helps people today know themselves by creating connections to issues and challenges in the present and articulating hopes for a better world in the future
- how to engage respectfully with a variety of contrasting opinions, explore important questions, and actively engage with issues in order to understand the privileges and demands of active citizenship
- to develop, analyze, and respectfully discuss opinions to approach the world with curiosity and humility, engaging with new ideas and diverse perspectives, questioning assumptions, and applying their learning in a variety of situations

- to use various forms of communication, including oral, written, and digital communication
- about civics, citizenship, and political systems, with an emphasis on the principles of Canadian constitutional monarchy, democratic government, and the rule of law
- to understand the differences between the principles and practices of democratic and totalitarian governments, and the ways that equality, freedom, human rights, and the rule of law have been violated by totalitarian regimes and justified by their ideologies throughout history, considering the testimony of those who experienced modern genocides such as the Holocaust
- about economics and economic systems, including principles, practices, and comparative successes and failures of free-market, mixed, and command economies
- about culture, traditions, and heritage
- about Alberta's and Canada's commitments to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples
- to do research, including using primary and secondary sources from a variety of perspectives, evaluating sources, interpreting evidence, and engaging with contemporary issues and questions
- about economic development and environmental stewardship and sustainability
- about injustices and how they have been addressed in the past and may be addressed in the future

## Physical Education and Wellness

Students will learn

- movement skills in a variety of physical activities
- to actively participate in daily exercise through physical education
- basic health practices, including regular physical activity, good nutrition, quality and quantity of sleep, mental well-being, and hygiene
- that consent is giving someone permission to act and that it applies to responsible and wise decision making related to personal health, safety, and positive relationships
- to cultivate the virtues of wisdom, courage, self-control, justice, charity, and hope
- to develop a better understanding of themselves that will allow them to make decisions, achieve goals, build resilience, and adapt to change
- to build mental health literacy, such as where to access credible mental health resources and services
- how to manage stress
- developmentally appropriate information about sexual health and the importance of consent, mutual respect, dignity, and responsibility
- the importance of financial management and its significant impact on personal well-being
- to develop skills, strategies, and behaviours that support injury prevention and promote the safety and well-being of self and others within the community
- the signs of unhealthy addiction, including to electronic devices and substances, and best practices for habituating the virtue of self-control, resisting unhealthy peer pressure, and making wise decisions for a healthy community
- how personal qualities, interests, gifts, and virtues and competencies contribute to a fulfilling life and career
- about entrepreneurship, work and employment strategies, and various future careers
- basic life and home maintenance skills
- how careers are influenced through volunteerism, community, networks, and relationships

## Arts

Students will learn

- the elements of the arts, including artistic skills and techniques, in a logical and developmentally sequenced progression, according to best practices
- to perform through the systematic development of skills and techniques in various arts
- to practise imitating, improvising, interpreting, and creating, based on the best examples of different art forms passed down through what is most aspirational in Alberta's cultural heritages

- appreciation for the master works of dance, drama, music, and visual arts in a way that emphasizes the interconnectedness of the arts
- the differences and similarities between popular and fine art
- how artistic styles change over time
- how dynamic traditions of artwork from the past influence current and future works of art
- how artworks contribute to the development and understanding of cultural heritage
- artistic characteristics that contribute to the inspirational and influential nature of great works of art throughout history
- the inherited traditions and historical influences that help them understand great works of literature and art
- respectful, complex, and nuanced portrayals of artistic practices and traditions from around the world

# Considerations for the Development of Alberta's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Curriculum

The K–12 curriculum is grounded in research-informed decisions regarding the knowledge, skills, and good character and understandings that will best prepare Alberta's students to achieve success, lead fulfilling lives, and make meaningful contributions to their communities and the world. Alberta is well-known for an academically rigorous educational curriculum that is developmentally appropriate. The curriculum will continue to follow the best research to build on the foundations shown to succeed in Alberta<sup>3</sup> and other leading jurisdictions.

Alberta's curriculum is designed to inspire students to develop integrated understandings within and across disciplines. By learning a broad base of knowledge and skills, students learn to question assumptions while they build understanding. Students will learn rigorous and up-to-date science while also respecting freedom of religion, so as to not undermine the faith and cultural traditions that are important to parents and caregivers and that are consistent with virtue and knowledge.

A good curriculum must (1) provide knowledge as a foundation for critical thinking, (2) be logically organized and sequenced, and (3) leave teachers free to decide how to teach in their particular context, using common themes and engaging narratives whenever possible. Students are more motivated to learn “when they value the subject and have a clear sense of purpose” (Groff, 2012, p. 5). High-quality curriculum must also build horizontal connections across subjects and acknowledge that “a key feature of learning is that complex knowledge structures are built up by organizing more basic pieces of knowledge in a hierarchical way. If well-constructed, such structures provide understanding that can transfer to new situations” (Groff, 2012, p. 7).

## Essential Knowledge for Critical Thinking and Civic and Cultural Literacy

Essential knowledge consists of the global standards for foundations in mathematics and science, as well as the themes, stories, art, and cultural, political, and legal traditions that contribute to understanding a pluralistic society. Literate and informed citizens know how to use modern research tools but do not have to stop to look up every statistic, literary reference, or historical claim while conversing, listening, or reading.<sup>4</sup> If students don't have a basic knowledge of history, geography, science, arts, and other subjects, they don't know what they don't know. On the other hand, students with a broad knowledge base that is built up systematically over time are better equipped to research and evaluate sources of information to fill knowledge gaps for a lifetime of learning. Education should provide this knowledge to all students in order to provide equitable opportunities for all.

Learning the essential content of languages, mathematics, arts, sciences, sports, history, geography, philosophy, economics, and religions will enable students to fully participate in the complexity of civic discussions in today's world and to find joy in lifelong learning.

At a time when society is challenged with competing claims and misinformation, graduates must be able to think independently to evaluate information and bias. Discernment is necessary to come to well-reasoned and wise judgements. Students need to understand enduring areas of knowledge so they can solve problems, innovate, and make sound decisions for themselves, their communities, and the province.

“It's not that people without deep knowledge come to believe nothing,  
but rather they will believe anything” (Egan, 2010, p. 9).

Students need to learn to think clearly and critically. For this reason, the Alberta curriculum needs to identify knowledge that builds toward understanding and skills in each subject area. A knowledge-rich curriculum is fundamental to Alberta Education's goal of deep understanding. Learning without facts does not support the development of deeper understanding and critical thinking.

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<sup>3</sup> Historically, international education scholars and other jurisdictions have recognized the strength of Alberta's curriculum. They have attributed the success of Alberta students to programs of study that are specific about what students should know and be able to do and to the fact that detailed programs are supported by high-quality resources (Stewart, 2012, p. 46).

<sup>4</sup> “You can only rely on being able to look something up when you know quite a bit about it to begin with. Being able to research something effectively is undoubtedly an important skill. But it is a skill that is dependent on broad knowledge” (Christodoulou, 2014, p. 68).



Innovation, freedom, and independence require a strong factual foundation drawn from the best of past civilizations. As students build knowledge into their long-term memory, additional knowledge continually broadens and deepens their ability for nuanced understanding and creative production. Facts do not get in the way of understanding, but are the essential foundation of understanding (Christodoulou, 2014, p. 17).

Intellectual capacity is built over time and through multiple opportunities to use foundational knowledge and skills (Wexler, 2019). With coaching, skills such as writing clearly and organizing thoughts into an orderly and logical structure help to embed knowledge into long-term memory. As such, knowledge and skills are both necessary building blocks for globally competitive educational outcomes. As children mature into educated adults, the best content knowledge that has been passed down through generations will be combined with skills, such as grammar, logic, and rhetoric, to create students who are literate, numerate, wise, innovative, questioning, and creative and have the skills to succeed in work and life.

Literacy will be taught across all subjects, with developmentally appropriate, targeted literacy education in language arts classes that meets the best global standards of literacy science. Mathematics and science will contain the sequencing and content to build a foundation that will enable all students to be functionally literate and prepared to flourish in all fields, including STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). When students learn history, geography, and civics, the curriculum is fact-based and grounded in the history, geography, and civic traditions and institutions of Alberta and Canada, but also exposes students to the broader world with its diverse history, geography, and political systems. The curriculum's approach to language, literature, philosophy, and arts follows the same model. Setting out what students need to know to understand the pluralistic society and culture that they will inherit, curriculum draws upon diverse heritages and particularly upon the diverse traditions that have shaped Alberta.

## Sequencing

To give specific guidance on developmentally appropriate knowledge, curriculum will be sequenced within a grade and from grade to grade. If a teacher knows that all students have been exposed to the same knowledge, they can confidently remind their students of their previous knowledge and move on to build from there.

The curriculum will also be coordinated horizontally to reinforce learning across multiple subjects. For example, students playing a variation of the Indigenous game of hockey in physical education and wellness will at the same time study Indigenous stories in language arts and literature; learn Indigenous geography, place names, and history in social studies; learn Indigenous ways of telling time in mathematics; and have aligned content in arts, such as Indigenous theatre, beadwork, music, or dance. In this way, students will be immersed in a rich world of learning where essential knowledge can build toward understanding and demonstrable skills in a natural progression. When students cycle back to learn more about Indigenous knowledge, skills, and understanding in future years of study, they will continue to build on this memorable foundation in a systematic way.

## What to Teach, Not How to Teach

The curriculum sets out the content of what students are to be taught; it does not dictate how to teach.<sup>5</sup> Teachers learn how to teach in their post-secondary teacher-preparation programs and through ongoing professional development according to research into best practices. Teachers need the flexibility to do what works best for their students in a variety of contexts. To be clear, a curriculum that sets out sequenced essential content does not imply that the content should be taught by any one method by all teachers and for all students. Teaching methods and assessment strategies will help all students understand the content and help teachers to identify gaps in understanding that need to be addressed. Students will gain a progressive understanding of knowledge and an increasing skill set to process and demonstrate their growing knowledge and understanding.

Parents, caregivers, Elders, siblings, and friends are encouraged to act in a mutually supportive way with other role models, such as teachers, principals, and coaches. By working together to preserve the best of Alberta's shared heritage and by learning the lessons of history, Albertans have a sacred duty to help guide the next generation with virtue and humility.

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<sup>5</sup> "Ensure curriculum is free from the prescription of pedagogical approaches, such as discovery math" (Curriculum Advisory Panel, 2019, p. 7).

The curriculum and *The Guiding Framework* will be written in plain language, whenever possible, that is free of academic or other jargon. This helps teachers, parents and caregivers,<sup>6</sup> and the community to be fully informed and able to cooperate in the education of their children. When curriculum writing is clear, everyone can more easily come together to help children learn in diverse ways.

Alberta's curriculum is designed to provide

- the factual foundations needed for learning and understanding to emerge. Students build on prior knowledge and experiences in a systematic way, with time to cycle back and use prior knowledge and skills in increasingly complex and integrated ways as education advances.
- a focus on enduring works taught with an appreciation for how and why they have influenced and inspired subsequent generations. Students should be challenged to imaginatively enter the thinking of different times and places rather than just relate history, art, and thought to the present time and place.
- learning outcomes that integrate competencies with subject- and grade-specific knowledge, understanding, and skills, ensuring that students are able to apply what they know to a variety of contexts
- learning outcomes that allow students to develop knowledge and skills related to literacy and numeracy across all subjects
- opportunities for students to make connections within and across subjects

## Pluralism

As a pluralistic society, Alberta recognizes and supports unity and a commitment to the common good among a diverse citizenry. A peaceful, pluralistic society and an energized civilization requires respect and mutual understanding among people of different faiths, experiences, and backgrounds. The curriculum will provide coherent foundational learning to help students develop a respectful understanding of the contributions of the many linguistic, cultural, and ethnic groups in Canada.<sup>7</sup> The curriculum will also prepare students to understand the need for civic responsibility within a democracy that fosters empathy. Pluralism is vital to Alberta's diverse population and resource-rich economy. A strong civil society includes charities, volunteer organizations, and religious bodies that respect rights and freedoms, the rule of law, political institutions, and democracy.

The curriculum will provide a coherent and factual narrative about the origins of Canadian democracy, law, freedom, art, science, and culture. It will face squarely the times and occasions when humans have failed to treat all persons with equal respect and dignity. The curriculum will also celebrate the abundant good in history and teach lessons about what is required of citizens, individually and collectively, to preserve and improve rich cultural inheritances so that all Albertans can share them and newcomers can find their place in them without prejudice.

Seeing one another in the curriculum and coming to know about history and culture in specific detail provides opportunities for prejudice to be overcome. Students will learn significant Alberta history and stories from a variety of perspectives.

In addition to learning about significant Alberta and Canadian history; the history of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit; the coming of the French and the British; and the establishment of modern Canada and subsequent waves of immigration, students will learn world history at a developmentally appropriate level through focused and sustained studies of the classical civilizations of Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

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<sup>6</sup> "WHEREAS parents have the right and the responsibility to make informed decisions respecting the education of their children; WHEREAS parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that may be provided to their children" (Alberta Education, 2020a, Preamble). "A parent has the prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be provided to the parent's child, and as a partner in education, has the responsibility to (a) act as the primary guide and decision-maker with respect to the child's education" (Alberta Education, 2020a, Section 32).

"Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children" (United Nations, 1948, Article 26[3]).

<sup>7</sup> "All courses or programs of study and instructional materials used in a school must reflect the diverse nature and heritage of society in Alberta, promote understanding and respect for others and honour and respect the common values and beliefs of Albertans" (Alberta Education, 2020a, Section 16[1]).

Albertans from varied backgrounds will see themselves in the curriculum, “regardless of race, religious belief, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, family status or sexual orientation, or any other factor(s),”<sup>8</sup> both in their common humanity and in the diversity of valuable contributions to society.

Texts and materials will reflect a diversity of text creators, with an emphasis on those whose works show the transcendence of the human spirit through time and across cultures. While reading works by diverse authors, students will discover that the experience of being human and the problems facing society have been addressed by writers and thinkers throughout history.

With a nuanced understanding of themselves and of humanities and sciences, students will be better prepared to appreciate what is good and to learn from what is bad in history and in contemporary times. Students will learn the value of the fundamental freedoms (as outlined in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*), of open and orderly institutions, and of peaceful pluralism to Alberta’s prosperous economy and free society.

## Inclusion

A high-quality, publicly funded education system is crucial to Alberta’s democratic society. Diversity is an essential part of the human condition and students will learn the value of all people. The “Government of Alberta recognizes the importance of an inclusive education system that provides each student with the relevant learning opportunities and supports necessary to achieve success” (Alberta Education, 2020a, Preamble). Within an inclusive education system, the curriculum plays a vital role in preparing students to participate fully in a democratic and civil society. Quality education of the highest academic standards is provided to all learners, with a focus on ensuring that Alberta’s education system delivers the best possible outcomes for all children and students.

Alberta’s inclusive K–12 education system promotes equal opportunities for all learners to thrive in safe and caring environments that are responsive to their needs. Quality education is extended to all students without prejudice.

## First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Experiences and Perspectives

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit include many diverse peoples and unique ways of life across Canada.<sup>9</sup> Within Alberta, there are 48 First Nations in the territories across Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8; eight Métis Settlements; as well as many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit living in urban and rural communities.

Students from these communities will see themselves within Alberta’s curriculum. Accordingly, the curriculum will have explicitly dedicated spaces for exploring local content. When appropriate to the curriculum content, teachers are encouraged to support education about local traditions by respectfully inviting Elders or Knowledge Keepers who are recognized in their respective communities as those who best hand down their cultural knowledge, wisdom, and oral traditions to speak to students. The curriculum also encourages field experiences led by local First Nations, Métis, or Inuit, such as traditional ways of living with and on the land (e.g., harvesting, hunting, preparing food, building), story- and history-telling, and, where appropriate, and with the permission and guidance of local and knowledgeable community members, culturally significant principles, practices, traditions, events, and ceremonies. All students can benefit from and learn to help preserve the teachings of local wisdom.

To honour the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action* and the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Alberta is committed to rebalancing the education system by including the history and legacy of residential schools and local Indigenous knowledge, wisdom, and oral traditions in the curriculum to advance reconciliation for all Albertans.

Including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit histories, contributions, and perspectives in the curriculum provides a means for reconciliation and initiates healthy shifts in thinking that will build trust and improve relationships among all Albertans. The inclusion of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit historical and contemporary experiences and contributions, residential schools and their legacy, and the history and continuing importance of the treaties and agreements will help rectify injustices and support

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<sup>8</sup> “To support children and students in attaining the goals as stated in the Ministerial Order on Student Learning, school authorities must ensure that all children and students (Kindergarten to Grade 12), regardless of race, religious belief, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, family status or sexual orientation, or any other factor(s), have access to meaningful and relevant learning experiences that include appropriate instructional supports” (Alberta Education, 2020b).

<sup>9</sup> *First Nations, Métis, and Inuit* are also referred to as *Indigenous* in this document.

better relationships. First Nations, Métis, and Inuit songs, stories, histories, languages, arts, sciences, and contributions to the rich history of Alberta need to be part of every Alberta student's education.

Recognizing the diversity of Indigenous people within Alberta, teachers are required to include content of local First Nations and Métis communities. Every student in the province will learn about the diverse Indigenous peoples of this land and how First Nations, Métis, and Inuit contribute to the vibrancy and fabric of Alberta and Canadian society.

## Francophone Perspectives

French was the first European language spoken in the land that is now Alberta. As representatives of the linguistic duality of Canada, Francophone communities in Alberta continue to grow and actively contribute to Alberta's economy, cultural mosaic, and society as a whole. Today's Francophone communities include generations of Franco-Albertans and newcomers from other Canadian provinces and territories, as well as people from many countries around the world. As such, Francophone communities are a vibrant and integral part of Alberta society.

Section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982) gives Francophones and Anglophones who live in a minority setting the right to a primary and secondary education in their official language. The inclusion of Francophone content in Alberta's curriculum enables every student in the province, not only Francophone students, to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the linguistic, cultural, historical, and contemporary contributions of Francophones and their communities to Alberta and Canada.

To ensure equal access to quality education for students studying primarily in French, the curriculum should be simultaneously released in English and French.

# Features of the Curriculum

The vision for students and the preceding considerations combine to shape Alberta’s curriculum. The curriculum states, in subjects and by grade, what students are expected to know, understand, and be able to do, building to a rich and coherent body of knowledge and skills by the time of graduation.

To ensure the curriculum meets its intended purpose, common features and guidelines are consistently applied. The curriculum is to provide clear guidance and support for teachers and accessible information for parents and caregivers who have the right of oversight and choice in the education of their children. For these reasons, the curriculum must be clear, concise, and as free as possible from ideology, pedagogy, and jargon. The features of the curriculum are consistent across all subjects for easy navigation by all participants in the provincial education system.

Alberta’s K–12 curriculum has three common features:

**Architecture and design:** The architecture and design provides a systematic and logical arrangement that is consistent for all core subjects of the curriculum.

**Structure of learning outcomes:** Each learning outcome includes one or more concepts that are the focus for students’ learning and assessment experiences.

**Clear and concise language:** This helps to give clear direction and accountability for teachers and helps enable parents and caregivers to have oversight of their children’s education.

## Architecture and Design of the Curriculum

### Organizing Ideas

Curriculum is developed with the end in mind. An organizing idea is a statement of the learning within a given section of a subject area or discipline. The organizing ideas are intended to be logical categories that communicate the goals of education within each section of a subject area. They may span some or all grades.

### Guiding Questions

Guiding questions are informed by the organizing ideas and frame the learning outcomes. Questions spark curiosity and wonder, which inspires truth seeking, understanding, and a lifelong love of learning.

### Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes describe what students are required to know, understand, and be able to do by the end of a grade. Student achievement of learning outcomes must be assessed and reported.

### Knowledge

Well-sequenced knowledge is foundational to all learning.<sup>10</sup> Knowledge is learned in order for students to understand and do something. Knowledge, including facts, builds toward understanding and skills and procedures.

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<sup>10</sup> Cognitive principle 1: “Students learn new ideas by reference to ideas they already know.”

Cognitive principle 2: “A well-sequenced curriculum is important to ensure that students have the prior knowledge they need to master new ideas.”

Cognitive principle 3: “Each subject area has some set of facts that, if committed to long-term memory, aids problem-solving by freeing working memory resources and illuminating contexts in which existing knowledge and skills can be applied. The size and content of this set varies by subject matter.”

Cognitive principle 4: “The transfer of knowledge or skills to a novel problem requires both knowledge of the problem’s context and a deep understanding of the problem’s underlying structure.” (Deans for Impact, 2015)

## Understanding

Understanding is about putting pieces of knowledge into logical and meaningful order with other knowledge. Understanding is more complex than knowledge, showing that a student is learning how to organize knowledge to understand a concept. By understanding, students can apply what they have learned to new situations in other contexts. Understanding is more than knowledge but impossible without it.

## Skills and Procedures

Skills and procedures are what students do to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. They are specific skills, methods, tools, strategies, and processes that students will develop as they achieve the learning outcome.

## Literacy and Numeracy

Learning outcomes are designed to support the development of literacy and numeracy within grade levels and across subjects. This foundation builds essential knowledge, shared cultural literacy, and skills that enable students to solve problems, think critically, and manage information that surrounds them.

Literacy involves acquiring and applying the understanding and skills necessary to decode, construct, evaluate, and logically communicate ideas, using oral, written, visual, and multimedia sources. Literacy is embedded in learning across all subject areas. It is foundational to students living, learning, and working as knowledgeable, active participants in a democratic society.

Numeracy involves acquiring and applying the mathematical knowledge and skills needed to engage with quantitative and spatial information in a variety of situations. Numeracy is embedded in learning experiences across all subject areas. It is foundational to students making informed decisions as knowledgeable, active participants in a democratic society.

## Competencies

Competencies are combinations of knowledge, skills, and characteristics that students develop and apply for successful learning, living, and working. They emphasize aspects of learning that apply within and across all subjects. Competencies enhance the foundational building blocks of literacy and numeracy and work together with subject-area learning outcomes to ensure Alberta's students are knowledge rich and well prepared to live successful and fulfilling lives and to make meaningful contributions to their communities and the world.

Critical Thinking	Communication
Problem Solving	Collaboration
Research and Managing Information	Citizenship
Creativity and Innovation	Personal Growth and Well-being

**Critical Thinking** involves reasoning logically to analyze and synthesize new knowledge with existing knowledge in a coherent way. Students reflect on their thinking to improve it. They reason from sound premises. They evaluate arguments and avoid contradictions. They know how to identify and avoid logical fallacies. Critical thinkers can discern the difference between fact and opinion and can back up their opinions with evidence. Students demonstrate the humility to be open to critique, value honesty, and have the courage to question assumptions with demonstrable facts and reason.

Students demonstrate critical thinking by

- questioning and analyzing evidence, assertions, or assumptions using logic, the law of non-contradiction, and factual knowledge
- applying reasoned approaches or relevant criteria to conceptualize, analyze, or make judgements, and spotting and avoiding logical fallacies
- reflecting upon and evaluating the reasoning behind thoughts, beliefs, or actions
- synthesizing thoughts and information to discover or extend understanding
- demonstrating intellectual integrity, humility, fairness, and respect for freedom of expression and the diversity of thoughtful opinions

**Problem Solving** involves selecting strategies and resources to move from what is known to what is sought. Students analyze situations, create plans of action, and implement solutions. They evaluate alternatives and their consequences. Students approach challenges by using factual knowledge, critical thinking, reason, logic, creativity, flexibility, resilience, and determination.

Students demonstrate problem solving by

- identifying the problem
- identifying what is known and what is required to understand a problem
- doing quality research from reliable sources to fill in gaps in their knowledge relevant to solving the problem
- exploring strategies and using relevant information, resources, or criteria
- assessing options to generate courses of action
- evaluating the impacts of possible solutions to carry out the most viable option
- approaching challenges with humility, creativity, flexibility, determination, and a desire for the truth

**Research and Managing Information** involves research skills as well as organizing and using information for specific purposes. Students access, interpret, evaluate, and share information from a variety of sources. They learn about standards of professional peer review and the comparative reliability of sources. They are ethical and effective in how they use and share information. Students value reliability, validity, and integrity of information. They seek truth and know the difference between factual knowledge, opinion, and conjecture.

Students demonstrate research and managing information by

- assessing information from a variety of sources
- synthesizing or organizing multiple pieces of information to enhance or clarify understanding
- evaluating truth, soundness, probability, and validity to appropriately interpret or use information
- using, sharing, or storing information effectively and ethically

**Creativity and Innovation** involves generating and applying knowledge and skill to create something new of value. Students are inspired by enduring truth, goodness, and beauty in art and nature to imitate and create. They are open to and play with ideas, take risks, and adapt to changing conditions. Students demonstrate wonder, curiosity, initiative, and ingenuity.

Students demonstrate creativity and innovation by

- recognizing opportunities and imagining possibilities to apply knowledge, skills, and ideas in new ways
- identifying continuities, breaks, and influences between art and thought across different times and places
- exploring or playing with ideas, materials, or processes to create something new
- evaluating and adapting ideas, materials, or processes in response to feedback or emerging conditions
- demonstrating initiative, resourcefulness, and perseverance when transforming ideas into actions, products, or services

**Communication** involves sharing ideas through oral, written, or non-verbal media. Students engage in formal and informal exchanges for a variety of purposes with their audience in mind. They consider how culture, context, and experience impact messaging. Students demonstrate respect, humility, empathy, and responsibility when communicating with others.

Students demonstrate communication by

- clarifying the purpose or intention of a message in relation to audience, context, or culture
- considering perspectives, emotions, and experiences when seeking to understand or be understood
- decoding and interpreting ideas or information shared through verbal or non-verbal formats
- expressing ideas or concepts through context-appropriate language and other relevant conventions or protocols

**Collaboration** involves working with others to achieve worthy common goals. Students participate, exchange ideas, and share responsibilities in a way that gives everyone the opportunity to contribute their talents and learn. Students respectfully challenge competing views and acknowledge the inherent dignity of each individual. They demonstrate listening skills and choose persuasion rather than force to resolve differences. Students are adaptable, fair, and willing to negotiate reasonable compromises.

Students demonstrate collaboration by

- sharing responsibilities and supporting others to achieve good common goals
- demonstrating sensitivity and actively seeking empathy and understanding of variations in culture, audience, or contexts when working with others
- seeking to understand what is shared in common despite apparent or actual differences
- seeking reciprocity and trust when sharing ideas or roles
- valuing flexibility, compromise, and the contributions of others to nurture positive working relationships

**Citizenship** involves participating in the institutions of our society as educated citizens. Students acquire knowledge and skills to support informed judgements that recognize the value of inherited traditions and the obligation to future generations. Students will build an appreciation of living respectfully in a pluralistic society in such a way that prepares them to one day lead Canada to be a respected and responsible player on the world stage. Students leverage understandings of cultural, political, environmental, or economic systems to identify connections that transcend differences and to make meaningful contributions to their communities and the world. They recognize a shared responsibility for environmental stewardship and sustainability. Students approach the world with intellectual curiosity and humility, demonstrate respect for individuals, and develop empathy for human well-being locally and globally.

Students demonstrate citizenship by

- learning to consider peaceful and respectful ways of resolving differences and cooperating virtuously through persuasion, building common ground, and avoiding the use of force or violence in resolving disputes
- analyzing various ways in which decisions are made within different cultural, political, or economic systems
- demonstrating an understanding of economic development and entrepreneurship, and recognizing the responsibility humans share for environmental stewardship
- demonstrating an understanding of the needs, beliefs, and expectations of diverse communities, and identifying connections between people that transcend differences
- evaluating the moral and ethical impact of decisions or actions on individuals and communities
- understanding the threats of ideology and authoritarian movements
- humbly, courageously, and wisely using their talents to serve their community, country, or the world

**Personal Growth and Well-being** involves managing emotional, intellectual, physical, social, and spiritual aspects of living well. Students set learning, career, or wellness goals and work toward them. They draw upon their strengths to develop interests, skills, talents, and good character. Students are reflective, resourceful, and optimistic as they strive for personal excellence. They demonstrate a commitment to the common good by exercising compassion, empathy, and support for one another. They will become lifelong learners who will cultivate the competencies of critical thinking, problem solving, research and managing information, creativity and innovation, communication, collaboration, citizenship, and personal growth and well-being.

Students demonstrate personal growth and well-being by

- identifying interests or skills to set learning, life, or career goals
- exploring, selecting, or adapting strategies and resources that support personal growth in good character, academics, or career pathways
- making choices or taking action to promote the safety and well-being of themselves and others
- building healthy relationships to support the growth and well-being of themselves and others
- demonstrating humility, flexibility, and resilience when adapting to new situations and transitions



## Conclusion

*The Guiding Framework* interprets the Ministerial Order on Student Learning to give direction for curriculum development. Particular attention is given to keeping language in curriculum free of unnecessary jargon so that parents and caregivers can exercise their right to “act as the primary guide and decision-maker with respect to the child’s education” (Alberta Education, 2020a, Section 32a). Students will be coached by caring and knowledgeable teachers to develop intellectual ability and practical skills. As such, the curriculum will be focused on content and will leave teachers free to make decisions about how to best teach in their context. Students will develop an interconnected knowledge base and be practiced in free, lively, and respectful dialogue with varied viewpoints to broaden horizons and overcome prejudices. The curriculum in Alberta will be reviewed regularly in order to keep up with the latest knowledge and research.

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