

# Education

BUSINESS PLAN 2014-17

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## ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

This business plan was prepared under my direction, taking into consideration the government's policy decisions as of February 12, 2014.

*original signed by*

Jeff Johnson, Minister  
February 19, 2014

## THE MINISTRY

The ministry consists of the Department of Education and the Alberta School Foundation Fund. Although school jurisdictions are accountable to the minister and included in the government's consolidated financial statements, they are not fully consolidated within the ministry for budget reporting purposes.

The ministry ensures that inclusive learning opportunities enable students to achieve success as engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit. Key outcomes are focused on providing policy direction, funding and assurance to the kindergarten to grade 12 education system so that all students are successful at learning.

A more detailed description of Education and its programs and initiatives can be found at [www.education.alberta.ca](http://www.education.alberta.ca).

## RESULTS-BASED BUDGETING AND THE GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA STRATEGIC PLAN

Programs and services delivered by the ministry are reviewed for relevance, effectiveness and efficiency in accordance with the Government of Alberta's *Results-based Budgeting Act*.

This business plan supports the themes outlined in the *Government of Alberta Strategic Plan* in the following ways:

- Investing in Families and Communities. Education is working with Health and Human Services to achieve improved outcomes for child health and development by age five. An Alberta Approach to Early Childhood Development is grounded in common outcomes, shared priorities and targeted, measureable actions.
- Securing Alberta's Economic Future. The vision of Inspiring Education is an educated Albertan who is an engaged thinker and ethical citizen with an entrepreneurial spirit. Education is helping to bring Inspiring Education to life by continuing its work on curriculum redesign. This work includes revising programs of study, assessments and learning and teaching resources, as well as processes for developing curriculum, to ensure curriculum continues to be relevant and responsive in meeting students' future post-secondary studies and careers and to contribute to healthy, inclusive communities and thriving economies. This includes exploring approaches to entrepreneurship and cultivating an entrepreneurial spirit as a desired outcome for every K-12 student in Alberta. The Provincial Dual Credit Strategy is supporting transitions to post-secondary education by creating more opportunities for students to earn credits in high school and post-secondary education institutions at the same time, and to explore their interests and potential career options. Education is continuing to focus efforts on improving levels of educational attainment through initiatives under the High School Completion Strategic Framework, including High School Redesign. This initiative will bring all education partners together to rethink how high schools can begin to focus explicitly on creating flexible, student-centered approaches to 21st century learning. This redesign work is critical as finishing high school is an important step for young people to create a positive future for themselves, their families and their communities.

The plan supports the achievement of the following strategic goals set out in the government's strategic plan:

- Goal 1: Honour Alberta's Communities. Alberta's education system plays an important role in supporting strong communities and societies. Schools serve not only as the venue for basic education, but also bring communities together for physical activity, celebration and civic engagement.
- Goal 3: Healthy Albertans. Education endorses government's commitment to support healthy Albertans by encouraging schools to adopt a comprehensive school health approach to increase levels of physical activity, healthy eating and positive mental health.
- Goal 4: Invest in Learning. The ministry's fundamental purpose is to enable children and youth to develop into responsible, caring, creative, self-reliant and contributing members of society. The education system helps students develop the learning, work and life skills they need to become engaged thinkers and ethical citizens with an entrepreneurial spirit.

## **STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

Alberta's K-12 education system is held up as a standard of excellence around the world. As global society takes on increasing complexity and a pace of change like never before, it is not enough to maintain the status quo. Students today understand that knowledge is a key resource of the world's economy. Strong economies are becoming progressively more knowledge-based, diverse and grounded in value-added industries. In order to operate productively within these competitive and diverse economies, Albertans will need to be innovative, creative and skilled in leveraging knowledge as a resource. Government must maintain alignment between the K-12 education system and post-secondary institutions, the apprenticeship and industry training system, as well as business and industry, to ensure that students graduating from high school have the knowledge and skills they need to thrive in the economy of today and tomorrow.

Education is about more than preparing children and youth for work. It is about the formation of the individual person, family, community and society. Education is one of the most crucial ways to develop citizens who share common democratic values of freedom, equality, compassion and respect for diversity. Education fosters one's ability to think for oneself and to think critically, integrating ideas from a variety of sources into a coherent whole. It enables individuals to find creative solutions for complex problems, to take initiative, and to incorporate global perspectives into their decisions. It enables learners to discover their passions, make successful transitions to adulthood, and envision and embrace the kind of lives they want for themselves and their children.

The model that has dominated the past century of K-12 education has to be transformed if Alberta is to sustain its world-class education system. This is the vision of Inspiring Education. It includes a shift toward education that is more focused on the unique needs, strengths, challenges and passions of individual learners, and less centred on the traditionally structured education system. The rapid pace of technological innovation challenges the education system to find the right balance in integrating technology into the effective delivery of educational programs and services. Technology will be employed to support the creation and sharing of knowledge, not simply as a tool to support teaching. A focus on building competencies will be critical to move education to a process of inquiry and discovery, not only the dissemination of information and recall of facts.

Alberta is experiencing extraordinary population growth, outpacing even the robust rates of the mid 2000s boom years, due primarily to migration from other provinces and countries. This growth creates challenges for expanding the capacity of facilities, student transportation systems, and programs that meet the needs of immigrants, many of whom are from non-English speaking countries. These issues are likely to be most acute in urban areas and northern communities with strong economic growth that attracts in-migrants.

In June 2013, devastating floods took place in Southern Alberta and the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. Full recovery from the disasters will take years. The ministry is supporting the flood recovery and mitigation efforts by working with school jurisdictions, other ministries and insurance companies to restore facilities and provide additional modular classrooms, replace damaged portable classrooms with new modular classrooms, and restore facilities where necessary. Work will continue to monitor enrolment and space needs in flood affected jurisdictions, and to support the future relocation of students from their present temporary accommodations back into remediated permanent space.

## GOALS, PRIORITY INITIATIVES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES<sup>1</sup>

As a result of the ministry's review of its goals, environment, opportunities and challenges, a number of priority initiatives have been identified. Focused agenda items, several specific areas where government will focus its attention over the next three years, are identified with a \*.

### Note:

1 Performance measure targets are considered met if the result is not significantly different from the target value using statistical tests.

### Goal One: An excellent start to learning

The outcomes for Goal One are that children are reaching emotional, social, intellectual and physical development milestones and are ready for school.

#### Priority Initiatives:

- \*1.1 In collaboration across government and with communities, lead the implementation of An Alberta Approach to Early Childhood Development, including targeted full-day kindergarten and the development of an integrated Early Learning and Care System.
- \*1.2 Use the learnings from the Early Child Development Mapping Initiative to guide strategy development and coordinated actions within and across ministerial priorities.

Performance Measure	Last Actual 2012-13	Target 2014-15	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17
1.a Participation rate of grade 1 students in Early Childhood Services programs in a prior year	96.2%	97.0%	97.0%	97.0%

### Goal Two: Success for every student

The outcomes for Goal Two are that students achieve Alberta's student learning outcomes and demonstrate citizenship, entrepreneurship and proficiency in literacy and numeracy and that the achievement gap between First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) students and all other students is eliminated.

#### Priority Initiatives:

- \*2.1 Contribute to education and entrepreneurship through strategies that create flexible, student-centred approaches to learning, including expanding dual credit opportunities and high school flexibility.
- 2.2 Develop and implement online Student Learning Assessments and grade 12 examinations to provide more flexibility and an improved response to students' needs.
- 2.3 Redesign provincial curriculum (including assessment) to be entirely competency-focused and student-centred.
- 2.4 Review high school credentials to take into consideration the changing needs of students, post-secondary institutions and employers.
- 2.5 Collaborate with First Nations and the federal government to implement the long-term strategic plan under the Memorandum of Understanding for First Nations Education in Alberta.
- 2.6 Develop and implement a strategic roadmap for kindergarten to grade 12 international education.

Performance Measures	Last Actual (Year)	Target 2014-15	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17
2.a Percentages of students who achieved standards on grade 6 and 9 provincial achievement tests: <sup>1</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language Arts, all students</li> <li>• Mathematics, all students</li> </ul>	A   E 80.4%   15.5% 70.4%   17.1% (2012-13)	A   E 82.8%   18.7% 70.9%   17.5%	A   E 83.0%   18.8% 71.0%   17.7%	A   E 83.1%   18.9% 71.1%   17.9%
2.b Percentages of students who achieved standards on Language Arts diploma examinations <sup>1</sup>	A   E 87.4%   10.8% (2012-13)	A   E 87.9%   11.5%	A   E 88.2%   11.8%	A   E 88.4%   11.9%

Performance Measures	Last Actual (Year)	Target 2014-15	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17
2.c Agreement of parents, teachers and students that students model the characteristics of citizenship	84.8% (2012-13)	87.0%	88.0%	88.0%
2.d Satisfaction of parents, teachers and the public that students demonstrate attitudes, skills, knowledge and behaviours to be successful when they finish school	76% (2012-13)	79%	80%	80%
2.e Agreement of students, parents and teachers that students are engaged in their learning at school	85.4% (2012-13)	88.0%	89.0%	89.0%
2.f Annual dropout rate of students aged 14-18:				
• All students	3.5%	3.3%	3.1%	2.9%
• FNMI students	8.5% (2011-12)	8.3%	8.1%	7.9%
2.g High school completion rate of students within five years of entering grade 10	80.8% (2011-12)	82.0%	82.5%	83.0%
2.h Percentage of students entering post-secondary programs (including apprenticeship) within six years of entering grade 10	59.5% (2011-12)	61.0%	61.5%	61.7%

**Note:**

1 A|E: Acceptable | Excellence – the acceptable standard results include the standard of excellence results.

### Goal Three: Quality teaching and school leadership

The outcomes for Goal Three are that teacher preparation and professional growth focus on the competencies needed to help students learn, and that effective learning and teaching are achieved through collaborative leadership.

**Priority Initiatives:**

- 3.1 Develop teacher and school leadership competencies that are current, relevant and appropriate.
- 3.2 Attract and retain increased numbers of FNMI education professionals.
- 3.3 Provide leadership, support and direction to build capacity of superintendents, principals, teachers, non-certificated staff, parents and trustees to realize the outcomes of Inspiring Education.

Performance Measures	Last Actual 2012-13	Target 2014-15	Target 2015-16	Target 2016-17
3.a Agreement of teachers and school board members that teachers are prepared for teaching	79.5%	83.0%	84.0%	84.0%
3.b Satisfaction of parents, teachers and school board members that education leadership effectively supports and facilitates teaching and learning	74.7%	75.0%	76.0%	77.0%
3.c Satisfaction of students, parents, teachers, school board members and the public with the opportunity of students to receive a solid grounding in core subjects	84.5%	88.0%	89.0%	89.0%
3.d Satisfaction of students, parents, teachers and school board members with the opportunity of students to receive a broad program of studies	83.4%	86.0%	87.0%	87.0%

### Goal Four: Engaged and effective governance

The outcomes for Goal Four are that the education system demonstrates collaboration and engagement with business, industry, Aboriginal communities and the public, and that students and communities have access to safe and healthy learning environments.

**Priority Initiatives:**

- 4.1 Develop and implement regulations and policies to support the *Education Act*.
- 4.2 Continue government’s commitment to provide 50 new schools and modernize 70 existing facilities in collaboration with other ministries and community partners.
- 4.3 Support school authorities in developing collaborative frameworks with local Aboriginal communities.
- 4.4 Implement the revised Learning and Technology Policy Framework to enable technology as an accelerator of learning.
- 4.5 Implement an enhanced governance model for Northland School Division.
- 4.6 Develop legislation related to education professions and occupations.
- 4.7 Improve engagement of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to focus the strategic directions and improve operations of the secretariat.
- 4.8 Develop and implement a provincial bargaining model for Alberta teachers.

<b>Performance Measures</b>	<b>Last Actual 2012-13</b>	<b>Target 2014-15</b>	<b>Target 2015-16</b>	<b>Target 2016-17</b>
4.a Satisfaction of students, parents, teachers, school board members and the public that their input is considered, respected and valued by the school, jurisdiction and province	62%	65%	66%	67%
4.b Perception of parents, teachers and school board members that Alberta’s education system has improved or stayed the same in the last three years	83.1%	84.0%	85.0%	86.0%
4.c Satisfaction of students, parents, teachers, school board members and the public with the quality of basic education	86.4%	89.0%	90.0%	90.0%
4.d Satisfaction of students, parents, teachers and school board members that school provides a safe, caring and healthy learning environment	87%	89%	90%	90%
4.e Satisfaction of students, parents, teachers and school board members that the learning space in schools meets the needs of students	80.1%	81.0%	82.0%	83.0%

## OPERATIONAL PLAN

(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable			2014-15 Estimate	2015-16 Target	2016-17 Target
	2012-13 Actual	2013-14 Budget	2013-14 Forecast			
<b>OPERATIONAL EXPENSE</b>						
Operating Support for Public and Separate Schools	6,065,222	6,130,319	6,192,919	<b>6,393,944</b>	6,716,443	6,824,559
School Facilities	-	300	300	<b>13,571</b>	28,975	43,625
Basic Education Programs	88,715	85,020	92,720	<b>74,561</b>	74,561	75,016
Accredited Private Schools and Early Childhood Service Operators	209,165	206,281	213,681	<b>220,191</b>	228,196	233,673
Less: Property Tax Support to Opted-Out Separate School Boards	(211,041)	(223,000)	(201,000)	<b>(204,000)</b>	(219,000)	(222,000)
Ministry Support Services	28,153	24,304	24,304	<b>24,469</b>	24,469	24,512
2013 Alberta Flooding	-	-	-	<b>15,200</b>	15,200	-
Consolidation Adjustments	(1,443)	-	(1,050)	<b>(1,050)</b>	(1,050)	(1,050)
Sub-total	6,178,771	6,223,224	6,321,874	<b>6,536,886</b>	6,867,794	6,978,335
Debt Servicing						
Alberta School Foundation Fund	2,578	3,330	2,750	<b>5,960</b>	7,590	8,975
Consolidation Adjustments	(2,578)	(3,330)	(2,750)	<b>(5,960)</b>	(7,590)	(8,975)
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,178,771</b>	<b>6,223,224</b>	<b>6,321,874</b>	<b>6,536,886</b>	<b>6,867,794</b>	<b>6,978,335</b>

Total Operational Expense includes cash payments towards unfunded pension liabilities, which will be eliminated under a separate, legislated plan. Subject to the *Fiscal Management Act*, total Operational Expense excludes annual changes in unfunded pension obligations, which are a non-cash expense and which do not affect borrowing requirements. Annual increases/(decreases) in Education's unfunded obligations for teachers' post-1992 pension plan are estimated to be:

	57,208	36,683	(12,372)	<b>29,953</b>	32,077	26,465
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## CAPITAL PLAN SPENDING

School Facilities	306,531	563,571	652,935	<b>622,969</b>	607,562	607,692
Basic Education Programs	6,201	895	5,895	<b>895</b>	895	895
2013 Alberta Flooding	-	-	21,530	<b>25,340</b>	460	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>312,732</b>	<b>564,466</b>	<b>680,360</b>	<b>649,204</b>	<b>608,917</b>	<b>608,587</b>