

What is Curriculum Redesign?

Curriculum Redesign is one of the many initiatives, arising from Inspiring Education, to support the evolution of the Alberta education system. Curriculum Redesign will build on the strengths of our existing provincial programs of study, resources and assessments, and more effectively support teachers in their professional efforts to be responsive to students' individual learning needs and aspirations in our global economy and society.

Our future provincial curriculum will continue to include the basics, with a focus on literacy and numeracy. In fact, teachers will have tools they've never had before to assist them as professionals in supporting student learning: literacy and numeracy benchmarks in every subject and every grade level. Our provincial programs of study for each subject (e.g., Language Arts, Social Studies) will have a common look and feel, and be designed so teachers and students can focus on the outcomes that matter most within subjects. The programs of study will include the cross-curricular "competencies"* Albertans told us were needed for successful living and working in the 21st century. Examples: creativity, innovation and collaboration.

Student success will also be supported through other aspects of Curriculum Redesign, such as the new Student Learning Assessments, new dual credit opportunities, and the development of a provincial resource strategy.

More information about Curriculum Redesign and the documents noted in this newsletter are available on the ministry's website at education.alberta.ca/curriculumredesign.

** Competency: an interrelated set of attitudes, skills and knowledge drawn upon and applied to a particular context. In other words, it is about what you can do with what you know.*

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Alberta Education broadening scope of collaboration for curriculum development

Alberta Education is collaborating with publicly funded school authorities and other education partners through the various stages of development of future provincial curriculum. One of these processes is [Curriculum Development Prototyping](#), which provides the opportunity for our education partners to make a greater contribution earlier in the process of curriculum development.

Alberta Education broadening scope of collaboration for curriculum development (continued)

The [prototyping partners](#) represent more than 30 school authorities across the province, including public, separate, private, charter, and Francophone Regional authorities and First Nations schools. The lead school authorities are involving a broad range of community members in their networks and partnerships, including post-secondary and technical experts, employers, not-for-profit organizations, and First Nations, Métis and Inuit partners. Community members will provide feedback to prototyping partners on the first draft aspects of curriculum developed by classroom teachers and other educators. Ultimately, the drafts will be submitted to Alberta Education for consideration by our curriculum development staff.

Curriculum Development Prototyping underway

Our prototyping partner leads are: Edmonton Public School Board, Edmonton Catholic School District, Black Gold Regional Division and Calgary Board of Education.

Phase 1

Building on the strengths of Alberta's existing curriculum, prototyping partners are in the process of developing draft aspects of provincial curriculum for all grade levels for six subject/discipline areas (Arts Education, Language Arts*, Mathematics, Social Studies, Sciences, Wellness Education)



Phase 2

These draft aspects will then be considered by Alberta Education to develop future provincial curriculum for kindergarten to Grade 12 (K–12), which will undergo further review by education partners.

Current status and next steps

Curriculum prototyping partners have each developed an initial draft of a possible K–12 Scope and Sequence for each of the six subject/discipline areas for the Ministry's consideration (a Scope and Sequence identifies the concepts that are essential and unique to a particular subject and are ordered in a logical manner to ensure student learning is supported from one grade to another). Prototyping partners' various Scope and Sequences will help inform the Ministry's creation of K–12 Scope and Sequences for consideration at the provincial level.

The main task of our prototyping partners is to identify the essential learning outcomes students are to achieve in each subject at each grade level. That way, teachers and students can focus on the most important learning outcomes. This will also provide teachers and students more flexibility so that deeper learning for students can occur. It is important to note that our prototyping partners are using the current programs of study as a starting point for their work. As stated above, we are building on our strengths; we are not "throwing out the baby with the bathwater."

* English/French Language Arts, Français

Curriculum Development Prototyping underway (continued)

A short [video](#) highlighting Curriculum Development Prototyping has been released by Alberta Education on the Inspiring Education YouTube channel. For more information about the development of curriculum, please contact Merla Bolender, Executive Director of the Programs of Study and Resources Sector, at Merla.Bolender@gov.ab.ca or by phone at 780-644-2530 (toll-free by first dialing 310-0000).



Curriculum Redesign conversation tools available online

[What will future programs of study mean for teachers?](#) and [What will future programs of study mean for students?](#) are new online tools that highlight the benefits of redesigned curriculum for teachers and students.

Additional tools that can help facilitate conversations with your community about future curriculum changes are also available in the [Communications Toolkit](#).

Curriculum Redesign engagement opportunities

Highlights from April–June 2014 engagements

In collaboration with the [Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia](#) (ARPDC), Alberta Education invited educators to attend professional learning sessions to provide feedback on draft competency indicators, and draft literacy and numeracy benchmarks. These sessions were also an opportunity for participants to increase their awareness and understanding of the Assessment Capacity Project and the requirements around the readiness capacity instrument (readiness to implement future provincial curriculum).

Alberta Education and the ARPDC also hosted community partner sessions that provided an opportunity for parents, homeschoolers, employers, students, curriculum coordinators, school administrators, school trustees and educators to gain an understanding of Curriculum Redesign. Participants discussed with Alberta Education the draft competency indicators, draft literacy and numeracy benchmarks, development of a provincial resource strategy, draft guidelines for infusing First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives into curriculum, assessment capacity, digital tests, and the new [Student Learning Assessments](#).

In total, 19 sessions were offered from April 28 to June 4, 2014 in seven locations around the province (Lethbridge, Red Deer, Calgary, St. Paul, Grande Prairie and Edmonton). Approximately 90 percent of participants indicated that their understanding and knowledge of the cross-curricular competencies, the draft indicators, the draft literacy and numeracy benchmarks and the draft standards for curriculum development had increased as a result of the sessions. Participants strongly indicated that the sessions will help them build readiness for Curriculum Redesign in their school authority.



Curriculum Redesign engagement opportunities (continued)

How can you be involved in future engagement opportunities?

Starting in September 2014, Alberta Education will invite interested school authorities to begin to participate in providing input for the ministry's consideration in shaping provincial draft programs of study. Other engagement opportunities, such as online focus groups, are also being planned for the fall of 2014. The purpose is to gather further feedback and advice from teachers, experts and the broader community.



Competencies in action

Visit our YouTube channel and see student competencies envisioned by Inspiring Education already in [action](#)! Students at Michael Strembitsky School experienced first-hand the application of financial knowledge to bidding on a lot in a fictitious development. All of the competencies identified in the [Ministerial Order on Student Learning](#) were used throughout the project.

Government of Alberta commits that all Alberta students will learn about the history and legacy of residential schools

Edmonton hosted the final national event of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) from March 27 to 30, 2014. People from across the province came to learn about the history of the residential schools, talk about their experiences and take part in cultural activities.

During the event, Premier Hancock and Honourable Frank Oberle, Minister of Aboriginal Relations, announced that in the spirit of reconciliation Alberta's provincial K–12 curriculum will include enhanced mandatory content for all Alberta students on the significance of residential schools and treaties. This reinforces one of our K–12 curriculum standards for Alberta: *Curriculum must include the diverse perspectives of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples living in Alberta in relation to historical and contemporary contexts*. This commitment is consistent with what is already planned as part of Curriculum Redesign and also builds on current senior high social studies and Aboriginal Studies courses that deal with the subject of residential schools.

Alberta Education has also created a new Assistant Deputy Minister of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Learning position. This new leadership role will provide a focal point within the ministry and government for implementing First Nations, Métis and Inuit education policies, programs and initiatives. The [complete announcement](#) is available on Alberta Education's website.

For more information, contact the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Services Branch at 780-415-9300 (dial 310-0000 first for toll-free access in Alberta).

Field testing of Grade 3 Student Learning Assessments a success



This fall, almost all of the school authorities will pilot the new Grade 3 [Student Learning Assessment](#) (SLA). This past spring, many school authorities benefitted from an early look at the SLA through field testing that occurred from April 22 to the end of May 2014.

In order to develop fair, valid and reliable assessments, field testing is important to the development process. Teachers can provide feedback to determine difficulty level and appropriateness about potential questions in the SLA.

Teachers may choose to administer a maximum of four digitally scored field tests and two performance tasks:

- > two (2) digitally scored components in Literacy
- > two (2) digitally scored components in Numeracy
- > one (1) performance task component in Literacy or
- > one (1) performance task component in Numeracy.

Students' responses from the performance tasks will be returned to Alberta Education and will be used to create exemplar documents that teachers will use to mark the performance task of the SLA in the fall of 2014. Teachers will also have access to "practice questions" where students can practise interactivity and gain familiarity with the new question types. There are 15 Literacy practice questions and 15 Numeracy practice questions and all are available in English and French.

Components of the Grade 3 SLAs have been determined by Alberta Education in partnership with the Alberta School Boards Association, Alberta School Councils' Association, Alberta Teachers' Association, College of Alberta School Superintendents, and Alberta Assessment Consortium. Alberta Education will continue to work with these partners when they develop the grades 6 and 9 assessments. Once piloting of the Grade 3 SLAs begins in fall, the structure of the SLAs will have four components: digitally scored literacy component, literacy performance-task component, digitally scored numeracy component and numeracy performance-task component.

The new SLAs are part of [Curriculum Redesign](#). SLAs help contribute to realizing the vision of Inspiring Education by enabling parents and teachers to be aware of a child's strengths or areas needing improvement at the start of the school year. The SLAs will be administered at the start of grades 3, 6 and 9 and will reference the current provincial Programs of Study and will transition with the implementation of new curriculum as it becomes available provincially.

More information about the SLAs, including the [Spring 2014 issue](#) of the *Student Learning Assessments Update* and details about the [SLA technical requirements](#) are available on Alberta Education's website.

Timeline and Targets for Key Deliverables

Deliverables	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Beyond 2015/16
Ministerial Order on Student Learning				
– Developed	– Approved and announced May 2013; begin to operationalize Ministerial Order	– Transitioning of policies and procedures to align with the Ministerial Order		
New Programs of Study				
– Development of new programs of study for K–12		– Collect feedback and refine draft programs of study developed for larger scale refinement and validation	– Development and engagement continues – Selected draft programs of study approved, March 2016 (tentative)	– Additional opportunities to use and provide feedback on draft programs of study – Programs of study refined for provincial use–TBD* – NOTE: Provincial implementation dates are not yet determined. Dates will be determined in consultation with education partners based on readiness and supports for implementation
Student Learning Assessments (SLAs) to replace Provincial Achievement Tests (PATs)				
– Development of new provincial assessment model	– Student Learning Assessments approved and announced May 2013	– Begin to pilot new Grade 3 SLAs in September 2014 – Initiate development of grades 6 and 9 SLAs	– Administration of Grade 3 SLAs by September 2015 – Begin to pilot Grade 6 SLAs by September 2015	– Begin to pilot Grade 9 SLAs by September 2016
*Curriculum Development Management Application				
– Digital design underway – Draft Guiding Principles developed – Draft Standards and Guidelines developed	– Begin design of digital application – Prototyping begins	– Finalized and approved – Available for use during Prototyping	– Available for provincial use	
*Literacy and Numeracy Benchmarks				
– Prototyping draft developed	– Prototyping begins	– Collect feedback and refine	– Continue refinement	
*Competency Indicators				
– Prototyping draft developed	– Prototyping begins	– Collect feedback and refine	– Continue refinement	
Online Assessment				
– Quest A+ pilot in progress – Project planning underway – Development of business model proposal for IT requirements	– Continue Quest A+ pilot – Explore options to move to more flexible approaches to Diploma Examinations – Overall strategic direction and interim approach announced May 2013	– Begin design of digital system – Initiate data transfer – Begin digitization of the Diploma Exam process based on the business model – Explore new system with selected diploma exams	– Begin piloting new online assessment system	

Curriculum Development Prototyping

* Prototyping involves the development of aspects of future programs of study, and the identification and/or development of associated resources and classroom assessments.

Deliverables	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016 and beyond
Career and Technology Foundations				
– Prototyping underway	– Prototyping continues (larger scale)	– Draft Career and Technology Foundations optional program for grades 5–9 available province-wide for scaling-up	– Provincial implementation begins	
Related Initiative				
Provincial Resource Strategy for K–12 Education				
– Plan for development of Strategy completed	– E-scan – Engage with education partners to help inform Strategy	– Engage with education partners to help inform Strategy – Finalize Strategy	– Plan for Implementation developed for consideration	
Other				
Review of High School Credentialing				
– External Advisory Committee in place	– Engage with education partners to help inform high school credentialing	– Engage with education partners to help inform high school credentialing	– Recommendations for action initiated	– Recommendations for action developed with phasing in dates to be determined.
Dual Credit Strategy				
– Developed	– Approved and announced May 2013; begin to adopt for use – Year 1 of strategy	– Year 2 of strategy	– Year 3 of strategy with review	

Contact Information

Curriculum Redesign Component Lead	Contact Information
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Guiding Principles for Curriculum Development	Paul Lamoureux Paul.Lamoureux@gov.ab.ca 780-422-7793
Standards and Guidelines for Curriculum Development	Paul Lamoureux Paul.Lamoureux@gov.ab.ca 780-422-7793
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Curriculum Development Management Application	Joan Engel Joan.Engel@gov.ab.ca 780-427-2984
Literacy, Numeracy Benchmarks	Joan Engel Joan.Engel@gov.ab.ca 780-427-2984
Competency Indicators	Neil Fenske Neil.Fenske@gov.ab.ca 780-427-0010
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Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of Provincial Assessments/ Student Learning Assessments Online Assessment 	Neil Fenske Neil.Fenske@gov.ab.ca 780-427-0010
Provincial Dual Credit Strategy (cross-ministry strategy)	Merla Bolender – Education Lead Merla.Bolender@gov.ab.ca 780-427-2984
Provincial Resource Strategy for K–12 Education	Paul Lamoureux Paul.Lamoureux@gov.ab.ca 780-422-7793
Review of High School Credentialing (cross-division initiative)	Joan Engel – Education Program Standards and Assessment Division Lead Joan.Engel@gov.ab.ca 780-427-2984

Dial 310-0000 for toll-free access in Alberta.