

## Government of Alberta Response to the Recommendations of Alberta's Commission on Learning

| Recommendation             |  | Status       |
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| <b>Ready to Learn</b>      |  |              |
| 1                          | Establish parenting centres in communities across the province with close links to elementary schools  | Support      |
| 2                          | Establish new junior kindergarten programs on a phased-in basis  | Under review |
| 3                          | Establish full-day kindergarten programs   | Under review |
| 4                          | Ensure better coordination of programs for children provided by the provincial government and at the community level   | Support      |
| <b>What Children Learn</b> |  |              |
| 5                          | Ensure that clear outcomes and expectations continue to be in place and supplement those expectations with a set of values to be reinforced and reflected in all schools   | Support      |
| 6                          | Maintain and continuously improve Alberta's comprehensive and balanced curriculum with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- emphasis on core areas</li> <li>- opportunities for fine arts, languages, maintain active and healthy lifestyles, and careers</li> </ul> The following specific areas should be reviewed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fine Arts – Mandatory up to grade 9 then optional for students in grades 10 to 12</li> <li>- Career and Technology Studies (CTS) review</li> </ul> | Support      |
| 7                          | Introduce a new wellness program for all students from kindergarten to grade 12  | Support      |
| 8                          | Provide all students with the opportunity to learn a second language   | Support      |
| 9                          | Ensure that when new curriculum is implemented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- adequate support is available for comprehensive in-service activities for teachers</li> <li>- support for new learning resource materials</li> <li>- whether or not new high school courses will be accepted for post-secondary admission purposes</li> <li>- mechanisms are in place to quickly and effectively address any problems that may occur</li> </ul>   | Support      |
| 10                         | Improve students' transitions from grade to grade and school to school by ensuring better communication, coordinated plans, and appropriate support for students   | Support      |
| 11                         | Develop and implement a comprehensive, province-wide strategy with the goal of ensuring that 90% of students complete grade 12 within four years of starting high school   | Support      |
| 12                         | Undertake a comprehensive, independent review of Alberta's post-secondary education system   | Under review |

| <b>The Schools We Need</b> |  |                |
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| 13                         | Require every school to operate as a professional learning community dedicated to continuous improvement in students' achievement  | Support        |
| 14                         | Establish and implement province-wide guidelines for average class sizes across school jurisdictions   | Support        |
| 15                         | Abandon the use of pupil-teacher ratios and replace it with measures of class size and the range of professional and paraprofessional support available for classrooms                             | Support        |
| 16                         | Maintain current guarantees for hours of instruction available to students and ensure flexibility in scheduling to allow professional learning communities to work effectively                     | Support        |
| 17                         | Encourage schools and school jurisdictions to explore alternatives to the current school year  | Support        |
| 18                         | Ensure that all students have access to adequate counselling, diagnostic and other specialized services necessary for them to succeed  | Support        |
| 19                         | Establish a province-wide "education link" telecommunications service to provide teachers, parents and students with immediate access to specialized services and advice                           | Support        |
| 20                         | Ensure that schools become the centre of a wide range of coordinated, community services targeted at meeting the needs of children and youth   | Support        |
| 21                         | Encourage shared use of facilities, programs and services among school jurisdictions and with the community  | Support        |
| 22                         | Ensure that sufficient and predictable funding is available to renovate existing schools and build new schools where and when they are needed  | Support        |
| 23                         | Consolidate funding for building and renovating schools, as well as the operation and maintenance of schools, within the Alberta Learning budget   | Do not support |
| 24                         | Ensure that all schools encourage positive attitudes, good behavior and respect for others, provide a safe environment for students, and address incidences of disruptive behavior when they occur | Support        |
| 25                         | Continue to provide high quality choices while, at the same time, preserving and enhancing public schools  | Support        |
| 26                         | Maintain current limits on the number of charter schools and the length of their terms and expand efforts to share their outcomes with the rest of the education system                            | Under review   |

| <b>Success for every child</b> |   |         |
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| 27                             | Implement and maintain the First Nations, Métis and Inuit Policy Framework  | Support |
| 28                             | Ensure that, when a First Nations student who resides on a reserve attends a provincial school, he or she is funded at the same level as any other student  | Support |
| 29                             | Ensure that, where significant numbers of First Nations parents send their children to provincial schools off reserve, they have a role in the governance of those schools and the school jurisdictions   | Support |
| 30                             | Initiate discussions with treaty region governments and the federal government to address the governance of education for First Nations students  | Support |
| 31                             | Establish appropriate incentives to encourage more First Nations and Métis to become teachers   | Support |
| 32                             | Ensure that at-risk Aboriginal children are identified early and get the support they need before they begin school   | Support |
| 33                             | Take steps to ensure that First Nations and Métis youth are well prepared for post-secondary education and the workforce  | Support |
| 34                             | Ensure smooth transitions for students moving from reserve and Métis Settlement schools to other public schools   | Support |
| 35                             | Establish parenting centres to make a positive link with parents and reinforce the strong parenting skills required to help their children come to school ready to learn  | Support |
| 36                             | Require all schools with a significant population of First Nations and Métis students to have well-trained home-school liaison workers to assist in integrating the school into the community and developing sound communications between Aboriginal homes and schools. | Support |
| 37                             | Explore and implement new governance models for schools in Métis Settlements  | Support |
| 38                             | Develop and implement expanded Aboriginal language and cultural programs  | Support |
| 39                             | Ensure that First Nations and Métis are directly involved in the development of curriculum and learning resources for and about Aboriginal people in all subject areas  | Support |
| 40                             | Continue to provide choices for Aboriginal parents for the education of their children  | Support |
| 41                             | Establish a provincial centre of excellence in Aboriginal education   | Support |
| 42                             | Ensure that adequate support is in place when children with special needs are integrated into regular classrooms  | Support |
| 43                             | Ensure that teacher preparation programs and ongoing professional development activities prepare teachers to address the diversity of students, including children with special needs   | Support |
| 44                             | Provide classroom teachers with adequate support to develop and implement individual program plans for children with special needs  | Support |

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| 45                      | Expand early assessment and intervention to ensure that children with special needs are identified early and get the support and programs they need before they come to school   | Support |
| 46                      | Provide appropriate training and professional development for teaching assistants who work with children with special needs  | Support |
| 47                      | Ensure continuity in funding for children with special needs from junior kindergarten through to grade 12  | Support |
| 48                      | Expand opportunities for students with special needs to continue on to post-secondary education or into the workforce  | Support |
| 49                      | Develop a province-wide strategy using SuperNet as a vehicle for expanding programs and developing challenging opportunities for gifted and talented students  | Support |
| 50                      | Provide students with English as a second language, students who are not proficient in English, and francophone students who need upgrading in French, and their teachers, with access to appropriate assessment, programs, learning resources, professional and paraprofessional assistance | Support |
| 51                      | Extend funding for English as a second language, English language deficiency, and French language upgrading to children in junior and regular kindergarten   | Support |
| 52                      | Create provincial proficiency standards for assessing English as a second language students, students who are not proficient in English, and French language upgrading students, and provide funding until students reach the standard   | Support |
| <b>Making the Grade</b> |  |         |
| 53                      | Ensure that the primary focus of school and school jurisdiction education plans continues to be on improving students' achievement   | Support |
| 54                      | Continue to support research and innovative approaches for improving student outcomes  | Support |
| 55                      | Maintain and improve provincial achievement tests at grades 3, 6 and 9   | Support |
| 56                      | Develop and implement a French language arts achievement test for grade 3  | Support |
| 57                      | Regularly report results from provincial achievement tests as part of ongoing reporting to parents and within a context that helps them understand and interpret the results   | Support |
| 58                      | Maintain and enhance diploma exams and include a balance of multiple choice and written response questions in all subject areas  | Support |
| 59                      | Ensure all teachers have access to high quality, performance-based and cutting-edge classroom assessment materials and practices   | Support |
| 60                      | Provide ongoing, comprehensive, consistent and transparent information to Albertans about the outcomes achieved by Alberta's students  | Support |
| <b>Technology Plus</b>  |  |         |
| 61                      | Implement the proposed Learning and Technology Policy Framework and fully integrate the use of technology in every classroom in the province over the next five years  | Support |

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| 62   | Set province-wide standards for the types of technology that should be available in every classroom   | Support      |
| 63   | Expect principals to provide proactive leadership in integrating technology in both the instructional and administrative aspects of the school  | Support      |
| 64   | Require all teachers to be proficient in the integrated use of technology and ensure that they have the necessary support in the classroom  | Support      |
| 65   | Model the appropriate application of technology in all teacher preparation programs and provide adequate, ongoing professional development  | Support      |
| 66   | Expand the use of technology to improve access to education programs and related services in rural and remote communities   | Support      |
| 67   | Provide adequate funding not only for the purchase of hardware and software but also for necessary technical support, training, and continuous upgrading of equipment                       | Support      |
| 68   | Regularly assess the effectiveness of new technology and applications and provide advice to school boards to guide their decisions about the purchase of new technology                     | Support      |
| <b>Excellent Teachers and School Leaders</b> |   |              |
| 69   | Review and improve current preservice programs for teachers to ensure that they provide excellent preparation for Alberta's beginning teachers  | Support      |
| 70   | Establish a permanent mechanism for ensuring a closer link among faculties of education, superintendents, teachers, and Alberta Learning  | Support      |
| 71   | Require school jurisdictions to adapt the first-year experience and provide effective coaching for beginning teachers   | Support      |
| 72   | Develop and implement comprehensive professional development plans for every school jurisdiction and every school   | Under review |
| 73   | Require all teachers to have targeted annual professional development plans that are directly linked to their schools' improvement plans  | Support      |
| 74   | Ensure that policies and regulations on supervising and evaluating teachers are well understood and effectively implemented   | Support      |
| 75   | Replace the current Board of Reference process with an arbitration process that is consistent with models in place for employees who have the right to bargain collectively in the province | Under review |
| 76   | Develop a quality practice standard and identify the knowledge, skills and attributes required for principals   | Support      |
| 77   | Establish a new program to prepare and certify principals   | Support      |
| 78   | Establish a new Council of Education Executives to provide certification, ongoing support and professional development for principals and assistant principals                              | Under review |
| 79   | Develop a comprehensive, targeted program for preparing superintendents and providing ongoing professional development to support them in their role as CEOs of school jurisdictions        | Support      |

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| 80   | Remove the current requirement for the appointment of superintendents to be approved by the Minister of Learning   | Under review |
| <b>Good Governance</b>                     |  |              |
| 81   | Create a new approach to collective bargaining with four key components:<br>1. establishing a legislated employer bargaining association<br>2. maintaining the Alberta Teachers' Association as a single organization responsible for professional services and collective bargaining for teachers<br>3. limiting what can be bargained for collectively<br>4. expanding teachers' professional responsibilities but maintaining their right to strike | Under review |
| 82   | Maintain a balance between centralized and decentralized responsibilities for the provincial government and school boards  | Support      |
| 83   | Provide provincial incentives and support to school jurisdictions that wish to consider joint services and amalgamations in order to improve services to their students  | Support      |
| 84   | Develop common technology standards for financial, accounting, student information, human resources, and other key information systems to improve the administration of education  | Support      |
| 85   | Reinforce the role of school councils and require principals to actively engage parents in school improvement planning   | Support      |
| 86   | Clearly define and set province-wide policy on what is considered "basic" and what are considered "extras" in relation to fundraising by school councils. Limit school councils' role in fundraising to "extras" consistently defined across the province and require schools and school councils to report annually on their fundraising activities and how the funds were used   | Support      |
| <b>Investing in our Children's Futures</b> |  |              |
| 87   | Address the current shortfall in funds as soon as possible, but no later than the 2004-05 provincial budget  | Support      |
| 88   | Address the shortfall in operations and maintenance funding on an ongoing basis  | Support      |
| 89   | Implement the Renewed Funding Framework as part of the budget for 2004-05  | Support      |
| 90   | Provide sustainable and predictable funding  | Support      |
| 91   | Implement a transparent, open and understandable financial information system that provides accurate, timely and comparable information on funding for Alberta's education system  | Support      |
| 92   | Establish a mechanism for school boards and teachers to provide ongoing and regular input to the provincial government on the overall costs of education and related issues  | Support      |

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| 93 | Phase in funding for new initiatives recommended by the Commission on a priority basis over the next five years   | Support        |
| 94 | Allow school boards to requisition their local residents for up to 10% of the amount raised through provincial education property taxes   | Do not support |
| 95 | Set province-wide policies on school fees that would:<br>- prohibit fees to cover the costs of basic education items<br>-detail what charges can be levied and set maximum caps on school fees<br>-allow reasonable fees for extracurricular activities | Support        |