

The following is government's response to seven of the nine recommendations of Alberta's Commission on Learning that remained under review:

Recommendation		Status	Rationale
12	Undertake a comprehensive, independent review of Alberta's post-secondary education system	Do not support	While the Commission was doing its work, there was extensive review and consultations in preparation for the <i>Post-secondary Learning Act</i> (Bill 43). The review is ongoing as Alberta Learning drafts related regulations and develops policies and implementation plans in relation to the Campus Alberta Quality Council. Also, in response to recommendations made by the MLA Post-secondary Funding Review Committee in 2000, a funding review for the post-secondary system is planned for 2005.
26	Maintain current limits on the number of charter schools and the length of their terms	Do not support	There are 13 charter schools in the province at this time. Currently, there is limit of 15 and restrictions on the length of their terms. There are no restrictions on the number of applications for renewals that can be made by a charter school. Choice is one of the strengths of our learning system. If the limit of 15 is reached, government wants to retain the option to review and decide if an expansion beyond the current limit is appropriate.
	Expand efforts to share charter school's outcomes with the rest of the education system	Support	Government supports the sharing of effective practices and will look at ways to expand efforts to improve communication and share information between charter schools and other schools in the learning system.
72	Develop and implement comprehensive professional development plans for every school jurisdiction and every school	Support	Government supports the need for quality professional development opportunities for teachers. This recommendation relates to recommendation 73, already supported by government, requiring all teachers to have targeted annual professional development plans linked to their schools' improvement plans. However, government does not support the removal of teacher convention days from the <i>School Act</i> – although there is a need to review teacher conventions.

	Recommendation	Status	Rationale
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	Do not support	<p>After discussions among Alberta Learning, the Alberta School Boards Association, and the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA), a new model for reviewing the practice of teachers has been developed. The new practice review process will provide an effective way to address situations where the competence of a teacher is called into question. The process will be monitored by the ATA with respect to its own members, and modeled after similar processes in other professional associations.</p> <p>Implementing the new process will ensure that teaching in Alberta's classrooms is of the highest professional quality.</p> <p>The Board of Reference will continue to play an important role in hearing employment issues that are beyond the scope of the practice review. Amendments to the <i>School Act</i> will be introduced in the Spring sitting of the Legislature that will improve the functioning of the board.</p>
78	Establish a new Council of Education Executives to provide certification, ongoing support and professional development for principals and assistant principals	Support	<p>Government supports the establishment of a Council of Education Executives to meet the unique professional development needs of principals and assistant principals. Membership will be voluntary.</p> <p>However, principals and assistant principals will remain within the ATA for collective bargaining purposes.</p> <p>A certification process for all school administrators will also be established. Once in place, the Council of Education Executives will have input, along with other education stakeholders, into implementing the certification process.</p>
80	Remove the current requirement for the appointment of superintendents to be approved by the Minister of Learning	Do not support	<p>The Minister of Learning is ultimately responsible for all matters within his/her area of responsibility. Superintendents are responsible for implementing education policies established by the Minister. To ensure the Minister's educational policies are effectively implemented, it is essential that he/she continue to approve the appointment and reappointment of superintendents.</p>

	Recommendation	Status	Rationale
81	Create a new approach to collective bargaining with four key components:		
	1) establishing a legislated employer bargaining association	Under review	Requires further discussion with stakeholders most affected by the recommendation.
	2) maintaining the ATA as a single organization responsible for professional services and collective bargaining for teachers	Support	<p>Government supports maintaining the ATA as a single organization responsible for professional services and collective bargaining for teachers.</p> <p>The professional association side of the ATA serves to enhance the professionalism of Alberta’s teachers through various means, including professional development activities. The ATA proposed the new model for reviewing the practice of teachers, which will result in the ATA monitoring the practice of its members to ensure competence. This is similar to other professional organizations.</p> <p>Currently, the ATA is responsible for reviewing cases of alleged unprofessional conduct by its members and for imposing disciplinary measures on members who are determined to be guilty of unprofessional conduct.</p> <p>Also, the professional association side of the ATA has a moderating influence within the association.</p> <p>Government also supports the Commission’s recommendation that certificated central office staff who are not included in the collective agreement should not be required to be members of the ATA, but should have the option of associate membership as is the case for chief and deputy chief superintendents.</p>

	Recommendation	Status	Rationale
	3) limiting what can be bargained for collectively	Under review	Requires further discussion with stakeholders most affected by the recommendation.
	4) expanding teachers' professional responsibilities while maintaining their right to strike	Support	<p>Government supports the Commission's recommendation to expand teachers' professional responsibilities to include not only teaching in the classroom, but also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – participating in curriculum development and field testing new curriculum; – developing, field testing, and marking provincial achievement tests and diploma examinations; and, – supervising student teachers. <p>Expanding teachers' duties will ensure that teachers continue to provide these critical education services during times of potential labour uncertainty. Legislative amendments to the <i>School Act</i> will be introduced in the Spring sitting of the Legislature in order to support this recommendation.</p> <p>Teachers will retain the right to strike.</p>

The following two recommendations remain under review:

	Recommendation	Status
2	Establish new junior kindergarten programs on a phased-in basis	Under review
3	Establish full-day kindergarten programs	Under review