

# Unaudited Information

## Summary of Accomplishments - Alberta Learning Business Plan

April 1, 2001 to March 31, 2002

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### Cross-Ministry Priority Initiatives and Government Administrative Priorities

Cross-ministry priority initiatives and administrative priorities have been established by government to address priorities that transcend the mandate of individual ministries. Each year, some of these are selected for special emphasis. Government's cross-ministry priority initiatives for 2001/02 were the Aboriginal Policy Initiative, the Economic Development Strategy, the Seniors Policy Initiative and Alberta Children and Youth Initiative. The Administrative priorities were the Alberta Corporate Service Centre, the Corporate Human Resource Development Strategy, the Corporate Information Management/Information Technology Strategy and the Alberta One-Window Initiative. The following briefly highlights Alberta Learning's major involvement in these priorities in 2001/02.

### Cross-Ministry Priority Initiatives

#### Aboriginal Policy Initiative

- Completed and released the *First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Educational Policy Framework*.
- Completed developmental work on a consultation process for data collection with stakeholders and aboriginal communities regarding tracking progress toward goals identified in the Aboriginal Policy Framework and the *First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Educational Policy Framework*.
- In collaboration with industry and Aboriginal groups, implemented the Alberta Aboriginal Apprenticeship Project with the goal of increasing Aboriginal peoples' participation in apprenticeship training.
- Collaborated with Human Resources and Employment to develop the Aboriginal Pre-Trade Skills for Work Program.
- Worked with the University of Alberta to develop the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program.

#### Economic Development Strategy

- Signed an agreement with the federal government to develop a Provincial Nominee Program for Alberta and contributed to the development of Alberta's program, approved in March 2002. This program is designed to facilitate the immigration of workers into areas of labour shortages in Alberta.
- Supported the development and release of industry's *Alberta Construction Workforce Supply Demand Forecast 2002-2005* to address labour shortages.
- Worked with industry stakeholders to identify trades shortages, and develop and implement appropriate training and recruiting strategies.
- Established, in conjunction with Human Resources Development Canada and the Canada Immigration Centre, a temporary foreign worker process to assess foreign applicant trade credentials.
- Developed initiatives, measures and targets for Learning's contribution to Government's new Labour Force Strategy: *Prepared for Growth – Building Alberta's Labour Supply*.
- Increased post-secondary spaces in areas of high labour market demand including a temporary expansion of apprenticeship technical training seats to accommodate current industry needs.

#### Alberta Children and Youth Initiative

- Provided input, including Alberta Learning statistics and performance measures results for the Alberta *Children and Youth Initiative (ACYI) 2000-2001 Annual Report*.
- Supported the second Children's Forum in Calgary in October with a focus on improving the quality of life for Alberta's children and youth.

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- Implemented a number of key strategies, including:
    - contributed to increasing the number of professionals trained in the area of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome through provision of training materials.
    - provided youth opportunity to access educational programs if detained under the protection of The Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution Act.
    - contributed to the development of a provincial integrated policy framework for the Children’s Mental Health Initiative
    - developed Early Childhood Development initiatives to support healthy birth outcomes and parenting skills
    - developed a policy framework to assist youth in transitions from school to further learning and work
    - developed an Abbreviated Service Plan format as a first step in implementing the transfer of increased responsibility for student health to the Partnerships and in collaboration with Partnerships,
    - planned “Kids + Teams = Success” forum and have begun development of tools/instruments for measuring student outcomes.
  - Began implementation of a Parent-Child Literacy Strategy to help children start school ready to learn.

## **Government Administrative Priorities**

### **Alberta Corporate Service Centre (ACSC)**

- Collaborated with ACSC on the Information Technology (IT) implementation phase of government corporate services model.
- Worked with ACSC to implement IT services provided to Learning and shared e-mail environment for Learning, Human Resources and Employment, and Children’s Services.
- Negotiated an operational agreement with ACSC.

### **Corporate Human Resource Development Strategy**

- Developed and initiated the Leadership Development and Continuity Plan for the Ministry.
- Initiated a multi-year human resources plan to coincide with the Ministry’s multi-year business plan.

### **Corporate Information Management/Information Technology (IM/IT) Strategy**

- Collaborated with Innovation and Science on the identification of Information and Communication Technology plans, initiatives and priorities.
- Participated in the development of government’s Enterprise Architecture that defined corporate principles, standards and guidelines that will guide provincial IM/IT investment and design decisions.

### **Alberta One-Window Initiative**

- Provided input on strategy development and website standards for the one-window initiative, Albertans’ electronic gateway to government services.
- Initiated the redevelopment of the Students Finance System that will support one-window access for Albertans.

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## Goal One: High-Quality Learning Opportunities

**During 2001/02 Alberta Learning continued to work with stakeholders and partners to provide a responsive, flexible learning system that:**

- **meets the needs of all learners, society and the economy; and**
- **is flexible and provides a variety of programs and modes of delivery.**

### *Enhanced funding for changing needs*

- Issued funds to post-secondary institutions for equity adjustments, and implemented a Faculty and Staff Retention Grant Program to aid post-secondary institutions in attracting and retaining faculty, staff, researchers and graduate students.
- Developed a model and issued funds to address un-funded enrolment in the Kindergarten to Grade 12 system.
- Responded to high-energy costs through development and delivery of a rebate program for post-secondary institutions.
- Reached a new agreement among the four western provinces on the Western College of Veterinary medicine.

### *Developing and updating curriculum*

- Approved, printed and distributed interim programs of study for English Language Arts 10-1 and 10-2 to all superintendents, schools and post-secondary institutions.
- Developed Language and Culture programs in Spanish for grades 7 to 12, Ukrainian for kindergarten through grade 12 students, Italian for grades 10 to 12 and German for grades 7 to 12.
- Implemented programs of study for French Language Arts 20 and Français 20.
- Approved and distributed to schools updated programs of study and basic resources for Science 7 and 8 in both English and French.
- Distributed to schools revised Curriculum Handbooks for Parents.
- Completed and approved kindergarten to grade 9 Health program of studies in both English and French for optional implementation in September 2001.
- Integrated career education outcomes into Career and Life Management (CALM) program of studies in both English and French.
- Revised and approved the Pure and Applied Mathematics programs to reduce the length of the Pure Mathematics program and to more clearly identify the algebra content in the Applied Mathematics program.
- Authorized student and teacher resources to support Career and Technology Studies (CTS) courses in both English and French.
- Facilitated industry's review of course outcomes and examinations to ensure apprenticeship programs are keeping up with emerging skill requirements. The Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board approved updated course outlines for the following trades: crane and hoisting equipment operator - tower crane, electronic technician, motorcycle mechanic, parts technician and plumber.
- Posted on Alberta Learning's web site, Career and Technology Studies Information Processing 1060, an introductory course on spreadsheets.

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### *Enhancing flexibility through alternate delivery*

- Launched the LearnAlberta.ca Project web site to provide teachers, students and parents with project information and access to a variety of online learning resources including an online reference centre.
- Signed a licensing agreement with National Geographic for the use of video, CD-ROM and print resources in the preparation of online resources on natural science topics to support grades 1 to 9 science programs of study.
- Supported stakeholders in the second year of the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) curriculum by addressing implementation issues and providing additional information about new developments in ICT.
- Completed, in partnership with the Regional Consortia, Phase 1 of the Web Awareness workshop training, including participation of about 800 people from the Kindergarten to Grade 12 system and post-secondary learning institutions. Initiated Phase 2 of training.
- Provided funding support for completion of year 4 and initiation of Year 5 of the TELUS Learning Connection (TLC). Provided management support to the TLC Board and to the TLC provincial team to assist in setting directions, resolving issues, and enhancing the [www.2learn.ca](http://www.2learn.ca) website in English and French
- Acquired educational broadcast programs and provincial duplicating rights for some programs through ACCESS-LTA.
- In response to industry demand, arranged for alternative delivery modes for apprenticeship technical training such as distance delivery; mobile delivery; Weekly Apprenticeship Training (WATS); and Competency Based Apprenticeship Training (CBAT).
- Facilitated the completion of Individual Learning Modules (ILMs) for automotive service technician, heavy equipment technician, millwright and machinist to make technical training more flexible.
- Clarified policies for charter schools and enhanced support for facilities and other areas that contribute to providing choice programs.

### *Meeting the needs of Aboriginal learners*

- Collaborated with Human Resources and Employment to develop the Aboriginal Pre-Trade Skills for Work Program.
- Published Grade 9 Blackfoot and Cree curriculum materials.
- Submitted draft units of Nakoda 15 and 25 for the Recognizing Diversity & Promoting Respect (RD&PR) analysis.
- Identified institutional initiatives in response to the Native Education Policy Review, as part of the post-secondary institution visits.
- Completed the Native Education Policy Review with the assistance of the Native Education Policy Review Advisory Committee; established priorities for action and released the *First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Educational Policy Framework*.
- Developed a plan to work with Aboriginal communities, school jurisdictions, post-secondary institutions, and other government departments to collect Aboriginal learner information.
- Contributed to a cross-government database and tracking system to identify Aboriginal peoples' participation in programs by providing for self-identification of Aboriginal peoples on apprenticeship training and certification applications.

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- Included Aboriginal representation in the designing of all Kindergarten to Grade 12 Social Studies programs.

#### *Providing electronic solutions*

- Consolidated initiatives to develop a *Learning and Technology Policy Framework*:
  - Held a Kindergarten to Grade 12/post-secondary Learning and Technology Forum to receive input on development of the draft policy framework
  - Completed a position on licensing and accrediting on-line learning programs that will be integrated into the *Learning and Technology Policy Framework*
  - Worked with the Alberta On-line Consortium (AOC) to support shared practices for the development of online content, instruction, and teaching practices. The AOC and Alberta Learning have undertaken research (the Schollie Report) regarding online learning and related student outcomes.
- Implemented new software standards for electronic information exchanges between the department and Kindergarten to Grade 12 stakeholders.
- Incorporated stakeholder requirements into the contract and customer service offerings for SuperNet. Resolved issues and communicated information to stakeholders regarding the Year 1 rollout and implementation process.

#### *Expanding post-secondary programs to meet demand*

- Established an agreement to transfer Alberta College – Edmonton programs to Grant MacEwan College, with technical studies transferred to the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. Transferred operations will commence in the next academic year.
- Created more than 1,300 new post-secondary student entry spaces in priority areas such as health, business, teacher education and information and communication technology through the Access Fund.
- Created new programs, under the Access fund, in ultrasound, magnetic resonance imaging, geomatics and supply chain management. Under the apprenticeship part of Access, funded curriculum development in outdoor power equipment, elevator construction, and crane and hoist technology.
- Under the Access Fund, supported a new Aboriginal Teacher Education Program, delivered by the University of Alberta in conjunction with local colleges, to help meet the staffing needs of schools in aboriginal communities.
- In cooperation with post-secondary institutions, approved Math Transitions 101 designed for students who have completed Applied Math 30 but need Pure Math for post-secondary studies.
- Approved English 30-1 and 30-2 courses for entrance to various post-secondary programs.

#### *Supporting community learning and involvement*

- Increased annual grants to community-based voluntary organizations by 5%.
- Supported community-based voluntary organizations in delivering learning opportunities in over 84 communities, with over 86,000 participants accessing part-time, non-credit programming in the priority areas of adult basic literacy, English or French as a second language, citizenship, vocational/occupational, and community issues.

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- Planned the strategy for development of a guide for school principals to enhance the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to work effectively with school councils and the larger educational community.

#### *Meeting infrastructure needs of the adult learning system*

- Consulted post-secondary institutions, in partnership with Alberta Infrastructure, to understand the ongoing capital needs. Institution business plans have identified capital needs for the next 5 years, including ongoing operations funding requirements.
- Ensured that issues around enabling and sustaining access to quality learning programs in sparsely populated rural communities were addressed in the Adult Learning Strategic Framework Initiative.
- Worked with Health and Wellness, Finance, Innovation and Science, and Infrastructure to determine ways to expand the doctor of medicine program and health research capacity.

#### **A second desired outcome is system accessibility, so that:**

- **all Albertans can participate in learning, including those with special needs**

Alberta Learning initiatives designed to promote system accessibility are summarized below.

#### *Enhancing accessibility*

- Released the results of the *Post-Secondary Accessibility Study*, developed in conjunction with external and internal stakeholders.
- Conducted the *2001 Students Finance Satisfaction Survey*, which showed the majority of students who used the various services offered by Students Finance were satisfied with them. 71% were satisfied with the length of time between their application date and notice of the funding decision; 90% said it was very easy or somewhat easy to complete the application on their own and 24% (more than double the preceding year) had used the Adult Learning Information System (ALIS) website.
- Developed and released *Planting the Seeds, Growth in Rural Education - a Series of Choices* in partnership with Buffalo Trail Regional Division and the Alberta School Boards Association.
- Addressed issues identified by the Minister's Committee on Admission and Transfers: acceptance of high school courses for post-secondary admission, transfer issues, consistency of grade conversion, and exploration of a common application form. One specific outcome was the acceptance by the universities and private university colleges of a common grading scheme.

#### *Improving programs and services for children with special needs*

- Prepared and released the first issue of the *Effective Practices in Special Programs - Transition Planning* newsletter at the Special Education Conference in October 2001.
- Developed and implemented a pilot of *Programming Standards Review for ECS and Grades 1 – 12* to ensure compliance with provincial policy and the requirements in the *Guide to Education for Students with Special Needs*.
- Implemented 37 recommendations from *Shaping the Future for Students with Special Needs: A Review of Special Education in Alberta*, including a proposal to allow Regional Consortia to provide teachers with professional development needed to support students with special needs.

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- Published *Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Prevention: Teaching for Prevention and Healthy Life Skills K–12*, and *Make School Work For You*.
  - Prepared the first draft of the *Special Education Accountability Discussion Paper* and shared it with the Special Education Advisory Committee in preparation for release of the draft discussion paper/workbook for stakeholder review in early 2002.
  - Completed all Jurisdiction profiles for severe disabilities funding and shared with Directors of Special Education and Superintendents. School jurisdictions received funding for students with severe disabilities in grades 1 – 12 based on the jurisdiction profiles.
  - Completed revisions to the *Guide to Education for Students with Special Needs* and prepared a draft document entitled *Standards for Special Education* that incorporates stakeholder feedback from parent consultation sessions, the May 2001 Special Education Symposium, focus groups of directors of special education, and the Special Education Advisory Committee.

#### *Meeting the needs of employers*

- Conducted a survey of employers who indicated that they are very satisfied with apprenticeship technical training and with the skills of certified journeymen working for them.
- Designated outdoor power equipment technician as a new trade effective April 1, 2001, and steel detailer as a new occupation effective January 1, 2002.
- In concert with post-secondary institutions, the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS) and the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA), conducted an interim survey of education graduates on the efficacy of their teacher preparation programs.
- Conducted a survey of employers of recent high school and post-secondary graduates. Overall, 90% of employers were satisfied with the skills and quality of work of the graduates they hire.

#### **A third desired outcome is system affordability, so that:**

- **cost is not a barrier to learners participating in learning opportunities; and**
- **the learning system is affordable.**

The following Alberta Learning initiatives in 2001/02 addressed system affordability.

#### *Ensuring post-secondary study is affordable*

- Consulted with post-secondary student and institution representatives regarding the *Tuition Fee Policy*. Provided options for consideration, and the policy will also be considered in the context of the Adult Learning Strategic Framework Initiative consultation.
- Implemented the Student Loan Relief Benefit on August 1, 2001 with about 8,400 first-year first-time students receiving the benefit.
- Implemented direct lending of provincial student loans to respond to the banks' decision to not renew risk-share lending contracts. \$82 million in Alberta Student Loans have been issued since July 31, 2001.
- Provided financial assistance with increased awards to approximately 46,500 students.

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## Goal Two: Excellence in Learner Achievement

**One of the desired outcomes is that learners demonstrate high standards across a full range of areas, optimizing full potential.**

### *Improving learner assessment and achievement*

- Alberta students achieved their best ever results on the 2001 School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP) Mathematics Assessment and ranked number one in Canada for problem solving.
- Published results in 2001 indicated that Alberta students scored the highest marks in reading and were among the top three in science and mathematics in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA 2000).
- Completed a study that led to the proposal of 18 recommendations for improving student achievement in Kindergarten to Grade 9 mathematics.
- Developed and administered diploma examinations in 13 subjects and achievement tests for three grades and five subjects and reported results to school authorities and the public. The 13 diploma exams were administered in June, August and January, and 3 exams were administered in April and November. Overall more than 1.2 million student assessments were processed and scored.
- Responded to the need for a more meaningful assessment of potential apprentices by implementing the alternative assessment tools (entrance examination) in September 2001.

### *High quality teaching and instruction*

- Produced the *Guide to Assist School Jurisdictions to Retain and Recruit Teachers*.
- Developed and released *Promising Practices in Teacher Recruitment and Retention* in collaboration with the College of Alberta School Superintendents.
- Approved over 730 Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AISI) projects.
- Held an AISI conference in November 2001 to provide the opportunity for those involved in AISI to share and learn from the most effective practices that enhance teaching and student learning.
- AISI Project Annual Reports demonstrate commitment by school authorities to enhance teacher knowledge and skills through extensive professional development.
- Implementation of AISI projects across Alberta resulted in the engagement of an additional 600 teachers.
- The Faculty Attraction and Retention Working Group completed its review and prepared a recommendation report for the Minister that outlined strategies.

### *Recognition of learner achievement*

- In total over \$29.7 million in scholarships were awarded to more than 17,000 outstanding Albertans, including:
  - Expanded the Jason Lang Scholarships to 1,500 third year students, issuing approximately \$5 million to post-secondary students entering their second or third year of full-time studies. Plans to further expand the scholarship to 4<sup>th</sup> year post-secondary students starting in 2002/03 were announced.
  - Issued over \$1.8 million in graduate scholarships to more than 900 graduate students.
  - Issued more than 1,800 athletic scholarships, representing a total of more than \$2.9 million.
  - Increased the number of Heritage Scholarships, awarding over \$19 million to 9,300 Albertans.



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- Awarded over 7,400 Rutherford Scholarships, 50 Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) scholarships and 2 additional Grant MacEwan United World College scholarships were awarded, bringing the total to 8.
  - Industry raised over \$1 million and Alberta Learning provided \$2 million in matching funds to create a new general scholarship program to fund annually 165 apprentice scholarships of \$1,000 each. The combined fund will create a perpetual scholarship program ensuring apprentices are recognized and rewarded for their excellence.
  - Assisted the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board in honoring 56 apprentices from across Alberta with a 2000-2001 Top Apprentice Award for their achievement in the final year of their apprenticeship program.
  - Increased awareness of Skills Canada as a means of promoting apprenticeship training through provincial and national trade skill competitions. There has been a steady increase in competitors.
  - 83% of Alberta's graduating apprentices were certified and received their Interprovincial Standards (Red Seal) Program designation that allows them to work across Canada in their trade.
  - Provided International Qualification Assessment System (IQAS) certificates to approximately 2,100 individuals that will assist them with entry into the labour force and institutions.
  - Very high levels of satisfaction were reported by the *2001 Customer Evaluation Survey for International Qualifications Assessment System (IQAS)*. 91% of respondents claimed overall satisfaction with IQAS; 94% said they would recommend IQAS to others who need an educational assessment and 94% indicated that their assessment would help employers to understand their qualifications.

**A second desired outcome of this goal is that learners complete programs.**

- Released the *Removing Barriers to High School Completion* report and developed an implementation plan.
- Developed, in consultation with school jurisdictions, a new methodology for calculating high school completion rates appropriate for the school jurisdiction level.
- Released the high school completion rates to jurisdictions and posted rates for the first time on the Alberta Learning website.

**Goal Three: Well-Prepared Learners for Lifelong Learning, the World of Work and Citizenship.**  
**A desired outcome of this goal is that Alberta Learning works towards ensuring learners are well-prepared for lifelong learning.**

*Children start school ready to learn*

- Implemented the first year of the *Parent-Child Literacy Strategy* which provided training and awareness raising materials for family literacy practitioners; funding 40 projects that benefited over 5,000 families with preschool children; and developing demonstration projects with two Children's Services Home Visitation programs.
- Funded 30 family literacy projects that benefited over 5,000 parents and over 5,000 pre-school children.
- Implemented an accountability framework for the *Family Literacy Strategy*, a comprehensive initiative for parents with children up to age 6 to improve family literacy practices and children's readiness for school.

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- Developed an inventory of the best assessment tools for describing levels of learning in pre-school children.
  - Summarized and presented research on assessing the school readiness of Alberta's children to a cross-ministry Deputy Minister's committee.
  - Contracted with five school jurisdictions for Early Childhood Services teachers to pilot McMaster University's Early Development Instrument in spring 2002 and evaluate its ability to assess school readiness in Alberta.
  - Developed a prototype for Kindergarten to Grade 3 curriculum linkages.

#### *Contributing to lifelong learning*

- Implemented a rural innovation and access strategy, plus a strategy to increase access to English as a Second Language in rural communities.
- Assisted over 14,000 immigrants, with settlement services, and English language assessment and referral services. In addition, 2,300 adults in over 74 communities worked to improve their basic literacy skills with the help of volunteer tutors.
- Adult Albertans contributed 300,000 volunteer hours assisting community-based adult learning.
- Released the Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) *Committee on Lifelong Learning "What We Heard"* report and provided a report on the recommendations to the Minister of Learning.
- Completed the *Campus Alberta* report on the vision, providing goals and principles for creating a learner-centered system.
- Introduced a revised Achievement in Business Competencies (Blue Seal) program, encouraging Alberta-certified trade and occupational certificate holders to enhance their business knowledge and careers. Under this program, certificate holders can receive credit for relevant course work, employment and practical experience. Programs offered by NAIT, SAIT and Athabasca University provide the business skills needed to qualify for a Blue Seal.

**A second desired outcome is that learners are well-prepared for work so that learners are successful in finding/maintaining work.**

#### *Preparing learners for the world of work*

- Collaborated with Human Resources and Employment to effectively make changes to enhance the delivery of services, navigation and search functionality on the Adult Learning Information Services, EdInfo and OccInfo websites which assist in career planning.
- Validated and approved Information Processing and Communication Technology courses.
- Developed Electro-technologies and Financial Management courses.
- Developed Career and Technology Studies (CTS) accreditation agreements for warehousing, and updated the accreditation for welders in order to allow high school students to obtain credit for their high school training.
- Increased student participation in the Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) in 2001/02 by 29% over the previous year, with over 180 high schools now participating in RAP.
- Provided leadership and support for interprovincial initiatives that enhance trades training and recognition across Canada, through the Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship (CCDA) and the Interprovincial Standards Examination Committee (ISEC) for interprovincial mobility.

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- Worked with post-secondary institutions to address collaboration initiatives between institutions (e.g. University business programs, conjoint nursing and accelerated nursing programs).

**A third desired outcome is that learners are well-prepared for citizenship, so that:**

- **learners have the knowledge, skills and attitudes to become contributing members of society; and,**
- **learners have an awareness of the increasing global interdependency.**

Following are key accomplishments that assisted the Ministry in preparing learners for citizenship.

#### *Preparing Learners for Citizenship*

- Released the International Education Strategy to stakeholders to provide direction to Alberta Learning's efforts to raise the international profile of Alberta's learning system and prepare Albertans for participation in an increasingly global economy and society.
- Renewed teacher exchange agreements with New South Wales and Queensland, Australia to facilitate ongoing teacher exchanges.
- Included outcomes that address citizenship in the draft Kindergarten to Grade 9 Program of Studies.
- Launched student exchanges with Jalisco, Mexico with two Alberta high school students participating and provided Ministerial awards to support four Jalisco students attending Alberta post-secondary institutions.
- Adopted the International Education Strategy to guide efforts to internationalize the province's education system.

#### *Promoting second language learning*

- Completed and distributed the French language consultation report.
- Completed French language Kindergarten to Grade 9 Western Canadian Protocol (WCP) Common Curriculum Framework.
- Promoted second language learning through cooperative ventures with stakeholders.
- Conducted an inventory of second language credit programs in 13 post-secondary institutions, which showed more than 14,000 students registered in 25 different language courses.
- Developed an Enhancing Second Language Learning Project web page on the Alberta Learning web site that provides initial information/updates in regard to the Project tasks.

### **Goal Four: Effective Working Relationships with Partners**

A desired outcome of this goal is that Alberta Learning strives to ensure joint initiatives meet the learning needs of Albertans.

#### *Meeting the learning needs of Albertans through partnerships*

- Promoted the benefits of a healthy, active lifestyle in schools through implementation of the Ever Active School project in partnership with Children's Services, Community Development and Health and Wellness.
- Designed a set of criteria in conjunction with Infrastructure to help determine capital project prioritization for the building of new schools.

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- The partner satisfaction survey indicated that cross ministry partners have a high degree of satisfaction with their working relationships with ministry staff. 83% of respondents from partnering ministries agreed they have effective working relationships with Alberta Learning staff, up from 73% the previous year.
  - Developed an issues paper identifying key issues associated with indirect costs of research and infrastructure needs in collaboration with Innovation and Science, and through discussion with universities.
  - Initiated discussions with Innovation and Science to respond to the federal Innovation Strategy.
  - Identified the key issues and trends that would set the context for the Adult Learning Framework consultations. Developed two key papers to facilitate the consultation, and held a two-day workshop with a broad cross-section of stakeholders to identify next steps and confirm issues.
  - Conducted consultations for the Tuition Fee Policy Review and Faculty and Staff Attraction and Retention. The Faculty Attraction and Retention Working Group completed its review and prepared a recommendation report for the Minister that outlined strategies.
  - Drafted the Accessibility Communication Framework and developed consultation processes and enhanced communications with stakeholders.
  - Developed and supported a variety of partnerships with the federal government, other provincial governments and Human Resources and Employment to initiate a national language competencies standard for English as a Second Language programming.
  - International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), a founding member of the Alliance of Credential Evaluation Services of Canada, received the Canadian Recognizing Learning Award.

#### *Enhancing integration of lifelong learning*

- Organized the Alberta Student Number (ASN) Online Assignment Study by post-secondary institutions into two main phases: ASN inquiry phase and Learner Registry (ASN Assignment) phase. Completed an ASN Inquiry prototype for review with participating ministry business areas, partners and stakeholders, with implementation of ASN Inquiry scheduled for spring 2002 and the first phase of implementation of the new registry system planned for fall 2002.
- Consulted with over 160 community-based stakeholders in the drafting and introduction of the *Community Adult Learning Program Policy*.
- Led the Parent/Child Literacy Strategy Implementation Team, which included members from Health and Wellness, Human Resources and Employment, Justice and Attorney General and Alberta Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development.

#### *Providing learning resources*

- Negotiated with ten publishers to reduce the costs of learning resource materials by an additional 5%.
- Produced selected learning resources through agreements with publishers at reduced costs to school jurisdictions.

#### *Developing collaborative and consultative models*

- Provided research and analysis support at Future Summit fall sessions and the February conference.

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- Co-led the cross-ministry initiatives of the Economic Development Strategy, People and Prosperity, Alberta Youth Employment Strategy, Alberta Labour Force Development Strategy and the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative, and supported the Seniors Policy Initiative, and the Aboriginal Policy Initiative.
  - Led development of Alberta policy responses to federal immigration legislative changes and negotiated a provincial nominees immigration agreement.
  - Held a successful interprovincial Ministers' conference that established inter-provincial priorities in online learning and concluded with Alberta being assigned leadership on initiatives to move forward on connectivity, research and best practices, and content development issues in technology and learning.

#### *Clarifying roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities*

- Completed Athabasca Tribal Council Schools Review consultations and advice.
- Negotiated and signed an agreement with the Métis Nation of Alberta to improve the coordination and efficiency in the delivery of supports and services related to education for the Métis people.

#### *Improving effectiveness*

- Provided input on strategy development and website standards as a participant on cross-ministry web development work teams for the Alberta One-Window Initiative, Albertans' electronic gateway to government services.
- Piloted Effective Behaviour Supports (EBS), Phase 2 of the Safe and Caring Schools Initiative with 124 schools participating in the EBS pilot and trained 89 coach-facilitators throughout the province.
- Collaborated with International and Intergovernmental Relations on the South Africa Teacher Development Project and Western China Project which provides teacher professional development through distance delivery.
- Collaborated with Infrastructure to facilitate development of joint-use facilities between public and separate school jurisdictions in communities.
- Worked collaboratively with the Students Finance Board in developing and implementing a strategy for improving the awareness among school boards, superintendents, and school-based staff regarding post-secondary financing options for students.
- Provided support to the Alberta Home and School Council Association (AHSCA) in its role as Chair of the Implementation Planning Committee on the Minister's Forum on School Councils Recommendations.
- In collaboration with partners, completed a guide to assist principals engaged in the ongoing supervision and evaluation of teachers. The guide is under review and scheduled for release in the fall 2002.
- Completed the Data Collection Consultation in coordination with the Information Data Management Committee, the College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS), and the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA). Identified and implemented a number of improvements to ensure relevant data collection and effective data management practices.

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**A second outcome is that joint initiatives contribute to the achievement of the social and economic goals of the province.**

*Recognition of Achievement*

- Assisted the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board in presenting awards of excellence to:
  - two employers and two instructors for their exceptional efforts in training apprentices and continuing support of the apprenticeship and industry training system and
  - four long-serving industry network members for outstanding commitment to a specific trade and to the principles of apprenticeship.

**Goal Five: Highly Responsive and Responsible Ministry**

**Demonstrating value for dollars is a key outcome for this Alberta Learning goal.**

*Maintaining Services*

- Defined acceptable service levels for library services to the ministry in consultation with Alberta Corporate Service Center (ACSC) Library Director and Alberta Government Library committee.
- Established service level agreements regarding distributed computing support along with our partners including: ACSC, Human Resources and Employment, Children's Services and Persons with Developmental Disabilities.
- Increased Kindergarten to Grade 12 funding by 6.9% from \$2.9 billion to over \$3 billion.
- Increased funding to post-secondary institutions by 7.9% to approximately \$1 billion.

*Ensuring sound financial policies and practices*

- Adjusted spending to reflect the downturn in the global economic environment in a manner that had the least impact on students, school jurisdictions and post-secondary institutions.
- Implemented growth and density funding changes for the Kindergarten to grade 12 learning system.
- Completed a review of the current funding frameworks that exist across North America for school jurisdictions as part of the K-12 Funding Framework Review to be undertaken in spring 2002.
- Simplified and improved the financial reporting requirements of school jurisdictions.
- Critically evaluated school jurisdictions' and post-secondary institutions' financial statements to monitor their fiscal health and identify any reporting deficiencies.
- Increased monitoring of funding claims from school jurisdictions. Attention was given to funding for high school course completions, including Career and Technology Studies.
- Collaborated with Francophone school authorities to pool federal funding and other funding sources to better meet the needs of all francophone students.
- Implemented monthly Alberta School Foundation Fund payments to opted-out school jurisdictions.

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**A second outcome is that Alberta Learning will show leadership and continuous improvement in administrative and business processes and practices.**

Alberta Learning accomplished a number of business improvements in 2001/02, as listed below.

*Enhancing accountability and validating program quality*

- Endorsed a set of 37 outcomes for the Early Childhood Services to Grade 12 learning system that were used to develop a draft set of indicators and measures.
- Updated guidelines for school authority planning and results reporting in consultation with stakeholders, including improving linkage between education and facilities planning and updating provincial priorities.
- Reviewed school jurisdiction plans and results reports, provided feedback to jurisdictions and used the information in planning system improvements.
- Consulted with stakeholders to improve business planning guidelines for post-secondary institutions, developed annual report guidelines, and improved timeliness and completeness of data collected. Updated reporting manuals for all accountability systems. To improve accountability, provided information back to institutions for verification prior to funding. Provided training on all accountability reporting systems to post-secondary institutions.
- Initiated a comprehensive review of existing Key Performance Indicators and Management Information. Through consultations with institutions, performance measures were simplified and collection process streamlined. Also developed draft recommendations that included allowing measures to evolve in response to key policy reviews.
- Prepared a revised Performance Envelope model and discussion paper, and developed a model to include business plan specific performance measures in post-secondary business plans.
- Developed a plan for monitoring home education programs, with monitoring to be completed in spring 2002.
- Introduced ACCESS – Learning Television Alberta (LTA) accountability framework development processes that guided the preparation of the first ACCESS annual results report.

*Improving business processes*

- Implemented significant improvements to the Ministry website: for example, implemented the Adult Learning stakeholder component of the extranet site.
- Initiated the redevelopment of the Students Finance System which is proceeding according to schedule with implementation targeted for 2003.
- Began the redevelopment of International Qualification Assessment System (IQAS), which is proceeding according to schedule with completion targeted for late 2002.
- Identified the key issues and trends that would set the context for the Adult Learning Strategic Framework consultation. Developed two key papers to facilitate the consultation, and held a two-day workshop with a broad cross-section of stakeholders to identify next steps and confirm issues.
- Completed and evaluated the pilot of PEAK software as a tool to manage business activities. PEAK will continue to be used for specific information management processes.
- Began development of the Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupation Management System (ATOMS) project to revise the Apprenticeship and Industry Training electronic databases to enhance client service effectiveness and efficiency.

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### *Leadership and continuous improvement*

- Developed and aligned the functional framework for the Students Finance System with the Ministry Enterprise Architecture initiative.
- Completed an environmental scan of the adult learning system and incorporated it into the system profile document.
- Provided input to cross-ministry environmental scan with input from all divisions.
- Provided regional enrolment forecast and participation rate information to post-secondary institutions.
- Initiated discussions concerning enrolment management and developed a regional profiles prototype.
- Initiated a project to assess the level of unmet demand within the post-secondary system and identify potential barriers to access.
- Identified key institution and system opportunities and challenges through a review of post-secondary institution business plans and on-site visits with the goal of influencing subsequent department business plans and funding decisions.
- Ensured alignment of post-secondary institution business plans with Ministry and Government of Alberta goals.
- Completed Alberta's contribution to the examination banks for the Interprovincial Computerized Exam Management Systems (ICEMS).
- Improved and simplified record books, in partnership with the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board, by introducing a single format and design for all trades. The record books track the progress of an apprentice with an employer.

### *Improving business and strategic planning*

- Developed a *Strategic Information Report* to help inform the department's long range and 2002-2005 business planning activities.
- Released to staff and other ministries a departmental *Public Consultation Framework and Resource*.
- Developed the *Key Initiatives Report* to track departmental priority projects. The key initiatives and report were approved and are maintained on the PEAK network.
- Developed a re-designed Operational Planning process that was approved for implementation.
- Identified the need for greater coordination of Issues and Good News Management to ensure the core business goals are being achieved. Developed common definitions and a communication process to ensure consistency across Field Services.
- Delivered workshops to public and private school principals across the province on topics related to school administration and provincial planning requirements.
- Completed the Risk Management module of the Results Oriented Government (ROG) training program. The Operational Planning module will be integrated into the ROG training modules.
- Improved the effectiveness of apprenticeship and industry training field delivery and administrative processes to address increased business (over 38,000 apprentices, an increase of 17% over the previous year) while maintaining industry satisfaction.



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### *Implementing human resource initiatives*

- Initiated a multi-year human resources plan to coincide with the Ministry's multi-year business plan.
- Implemented wellness initiatives including the Weight Watchers Program, Yoga, sessions on Parenting Teens, and continued the flu shot program.
- Enhanced the recognition program to more formally recognize employees' achievements in the year.
- Provided human resource, financial and administrative services to International and Intergovernmental Relations and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development.
- Implemented the Results-Oriented Government learning strategy within the Ministry.

### *Improving electronic solutions*

- Initiated the Corporate Data Warehouse Re-Design project with the architecture to support additional data requirements.
- Posted counseling sheets and course outlines on the Internet for clients, improving their access to Kindergarten to Grade 12 and Adult Learning information.
- Provided on-line access to Alberta high school marks, reducing the processing time for client applications.
- Set up access to the Skilled Trades Information System (STIS) electronic database through laptop computers so that apprenticeship and industry training staff can access important client information while doing shop visits.
- Implemented an electronic Credit Enrolment Unit process for school jurisdictions to use in conjunction with the Revenue Allocation and Credit Enrolment Reporting System.
- Improved bandwidth on several Alberta Learning wide area networks, including establishment of a high-speed fibre connection between Commerce Place and the Devonian Building.
- Developed with all divisions and Communications a Web-based Communications Management Plan to establish a governance structure for coordinating teams involved in web-based communications such as the Internet/intranet/extranet. Redesigned and launched Alberta Learning's intranet site, *InSite*.
- Re-organized and updated the Planning Resources website for school authorities.
- Collaborated with Human Resources and Employment to effectively make changes to enhance the delivery of services, navigation and search functionality on the Alberta Learning Information Services, EdInfo and OccInfo web sites.
- Designed a new Learning and Technology website as a prototype for Learning's new Internet site, with several features targeted to stakeholders.
- Completed development and implemented an innovative technology application, the Annual Report Item Management System (ARIMS), to improve the efficiency of preparing the Annual Report.