

7. Results Analysis

Deputy Minister's Message

Alberta's learning system operates in a dynamic environment and is influenced by a wide variety of internal and external factors. This past year brought a number of successes and opportunities, as well as a number of significant challenges that ranged from shifts in the global economy to shifts in relationships among the Ministry and some of our stakeholders.

Throughout this year, education issues in the Kindergarten to grade 12 system garnered more public attention as many jurisdictions were involved in teacher contract negotiations, which in some jurisdictions evolved into strikes and even further highlighted public debate. As all Albertans have a stake in the learning system, this participation in community issues is a positive outcome and can bring valuable alternative perspectives.

The year also saw a continuation of the trend of increased demand for higher education and training as Albertans recognize that jobs increasingly require higher levels of education and training.

On the economic front, the province experienced volatility as a result of a downward trend in the North-American economy and its further contraction after September 11th. Declining energy prices and a temporary weakening of the provincial economy led Government to respond with a mid-year adjustment to the provincial budget in anticipation of lower resource revenues. For its part, Alberta Learning deferred some projects and reduced spending. These adjustments were achieved with minimal impacts on school authorities and post-secondary institutions across the province, reflecting the high priority the provincial government places on learning.

These challenges were important factors that may have affected our results, some of which are different from those planned for the year and achieved in prior years. Even so, the Ministry's performance results demonstrate improvement in many areas across the learning system, and our students lead Canada and the world.

The strength of our learning system, including its responsiveness and flexibility, continues to ensure that the system provides quality learning opportunities for Albertans of all ages. I am confident that our sound learning system has the capacity to address significant factors as they arise, whatever they may be. On a personal note, I am pleased to have returned to the Ministry of Learning in January 2002 and to have been a part of transforming challenges into opportunities.

This year's annual report shows our learning system has again risen to the challenge and found success. In this report, you will find details on how we have effectively managed our financial resources – even with the mid-year adjustment, and a list of accomplishments that continues to gratify and inspires us to achieve even more. The many initiatives and programs within the report illustrate that the Ministry continues to find new, innovative ways to improve its world-class learning system.

[Original Signed]

**Maria David-Evans
Deputy Minister
Alberta Learning**

Auditor General's Report



REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL ON THE RESULTS OF APPLYING SPECIFIED AUDITING PROCEDURES TO KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

To the Members of the Legislative Assembly

I have performed the following procedures in connection with the Ministry of Learning key measures included in the *2001-2002 Annual Report of the Ministry of Learning* as presented on pages 17 to 37, and pages 204 to 213.

1. Information obtained from an independent source, such as Statistics Canada, was agreed with the information supplied by the stated source. Information provided internally was agreed to the reports from the systems used to develop the information.
2. The calculations which converted source information into reported measures were tested.
3. The appropriateness of the description of each measure's methodology was assessed.

As a result of applying the above procedures, I found no exceptions. However, these procedures do not constitute an audit, and therefore I express no opinion on the key measures included in the *2001-2002 Annual Report of the Ministry of Learning*.

[Original Signed]

**Fred J. Dunn, CA
Auditor General**

Edmonton, Alberta
September 13, 2002

Ministry Performance

Goal 1 – High Quality Learning Opportunities

OUTCOMES

Flexibility and responsiveness:

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

Accessibility:

- All Albertans can participate in learning.
- Albertans with special needs can participate in learning.

Affordability:

- Cost is not a barrier to learners participating in learning opportunities.
- The learning system is affordable.

✓ Met target

Results since base year for measures without target or with target not met:

= No change

↑ Improved performance

↓ Performance decline

There are seven Ministry core measures to assess and report on the goal of High Quality Learning Opportunities for Albertans. **Targets were met on three of the four core measures with targets.** Performance declined on three measures and remained unchanged on one. Below are the performance highlights for 2001/02 for this goal.

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

Quality of Post-Secondary Education

- ✓ A substantial majority (81%) of post-secondary graduates continues to be satisfied with the overall quality of their education, meeting the target of 80%.

Quality of Apprenticeship Training

- = A very large majority of recent apprenticeship graduates continues to be satisfied with their on-the-job training (92%) and with their technical training (95%). There is no target for 2001/02 for this additional core measure.
- ✓ **Adult Participation in Learning** – 36% of adult Albertans participated in credit or non-credit courses last year, meeting the target of 33%.
- ✓ **Financial Assistance Award** – The average financial assistance award to post-secondary students increased to \$7,577. The target of “at or above \$7,200” was met.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- ↓ **Quality of Basic Education** – A majority of the public (63%) is satisfied with the overall quality of basic education, a lower satisfaction level than in recent years. The target of 69% was not met.
- ↓ **Access to Lifelong Learning** – A majority of the public (63%) agrees that adult learners have access to education and training. There is no target for 2001/02 for this replacement core measure.
- ↓ **Affordability of the Learning System** – A majority of the public (63%) agrees that the learning system is within the means of most Albertans. There is no target for 2001/02 for this replacement core measure.

GOAL 1 CORE MEASURES

Quality of Basic Education

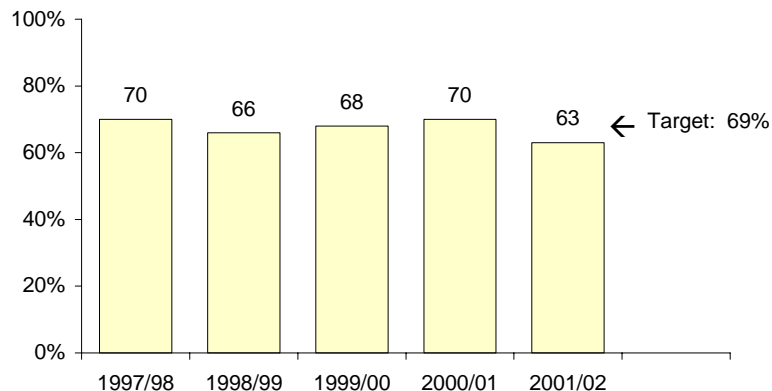
TARGET:

- The target was not met.

DISCUSSION:

- A majority of the public continues to be satisfied with the overall quality of basic education.

Percentages of the Public Satisfied with Overall Quality of Basic Education



Source: Alberta Learning: The Advisory Group – 1998, 1999; Criterion Research Corp. – 2000, 2001; R.A. Malatest & Associates – 2002.

Note:

- See Endnote A, pages 204-207, for information on surveys conducted for Alberta Learning.

Quality of Apprenticeship Training

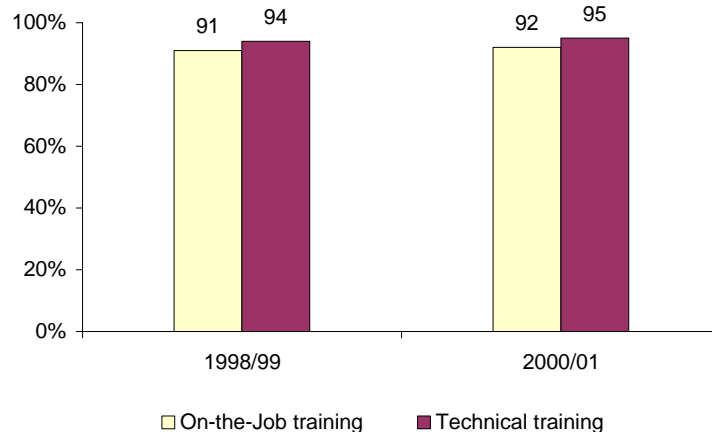
TARGET:

- No target for 2001/02 was set for this additional core measure.

DISCUSSION:

- A very high percentage of recent apprenticeship graduates continues to be satisfied with the quality of their on-the-job training and technical training.
- Results of the survey in 1998/99 indicated similarly high levels of satisfaction among apprenticeship graduates.

Percentages of Apprenticeship Graduates Satisfied with their On-the-Job Training and Technical Training



Source: Alberta Learning: Nichols Applied Management – 1999, R.A. Malatest & Associates – 2001.

Notes:

- Identified as a core measure after release of the ministry business plan for 2001-04.
- Survey is conducted every other year. Graduates of apprenticeship programs in 1997/98 and 1999/2000 (based on the August 1 – July 31 year) were surveyed six to 18 months after graduation.
- In 2000/01 only graduates who took technical training as part of their apprenticeship program are included in the results for satisfaction with technical training. The number of respondents to the technical training question was 2567 with a confidence interval of plus or minus 1.9%. It was not possible to separate these respondents from the total in the 1998/99 survey.
- See Endnote A, pages 204-207, for information on surveys conducted for Alberta Learning.

GOAL 1 CORE MEASURES (CONTINUED)

Quality of Post-Secondary Education

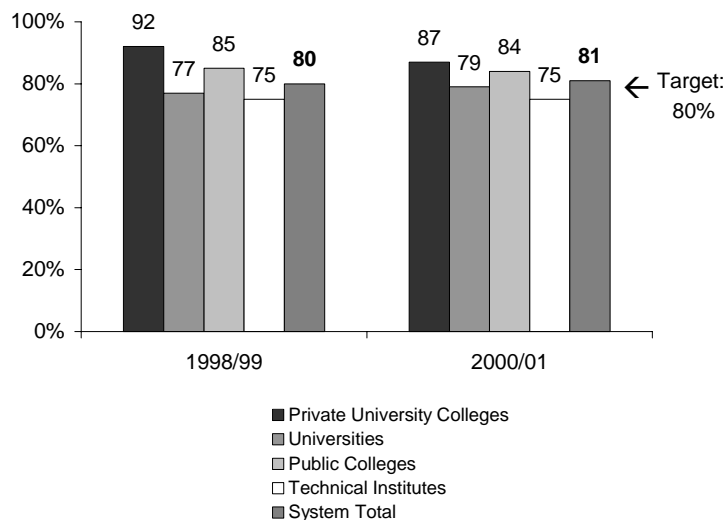
TARGET:

- The target was met.

DISCUSSION:

- A substantial majority of graduating post-secondary students continues to be satisfied with the overall quality of their post-secondary education.
- The satisfaction rate for the system overall has increased slightly from 80% to 81% since 1998/99.
- The satisfaction rate has changed most in the Universities and Private University College sectors. The satisfaction of university students increased from 77% to 79%, while the satisfaction rate of private university college students declined from 92% to 87%.
- Only 4% of the graduating students expressed some dissatisfaction with the overall quality of their education, and 15% were neutral.

Percentages of Post-Secondary Students Satisfied with the Overall Quality of Their Education (new)



Source: Alberta Learning.

Notes:

- Graduating students of degree, diploma, certificate and academic upgrading programs are surveyed every other year.
- See Endnote C, Post-secondary Graduates' Satisfaction, page 209.

GOAL 1 CORE MEASURES (CONTINUED)

Access to Lifelong Learning

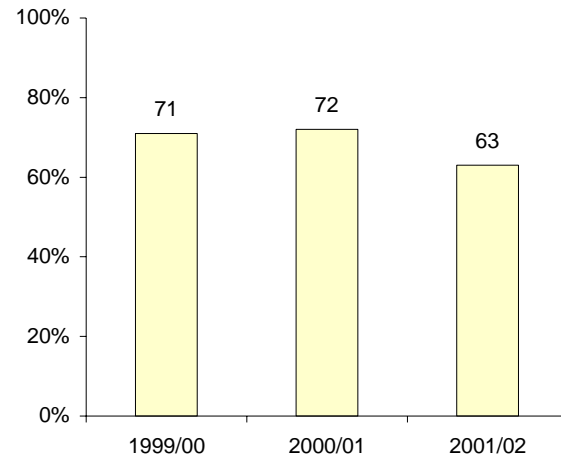
TARGET:

- No target was set for this replacement core measure.

DISCUSSION:

- A majority of the public is satisfied that most adults have access to the education and training they want.
- This measure has been selected as the indicator of learning system accessibility as it provides the overall view of Albertans on their access to learning opportunities. It replaces adult participation in learning (below).

Public Satisfaction that Most Adults have Access to Education and Training



Sources: Alberta Learning: Criterion Research Corp. – 2000, 2001; R.A Malatest & Associates - 2002.

Note:

- Identified as a core measure after release of the ministry business plan for 2001-04.
- See Endnote A, pages 204-207, for information on surveys conducted for Alberta Learning.

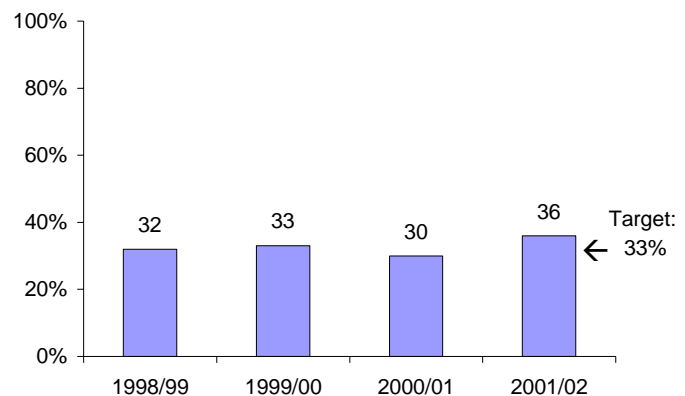
TARGET:

- The target was met.

DISCUSSION:

- The percentage of the public reporting participation in learning in the past 12 months remains stable.
- This measure has been discontinued as an indicator of learning system accessibility as its focus is on those who have access.

Participation Rate of Adult Albertans in Credit and Non-credit Courses



Source: Alberta Learning: Banister Research & Consulting Inc. – 1999; Criterion Research Corp. – 2000, 2001; Malatest & Associates - 2002.

Notes:

- See Endnote A, pages 204-207, for information on surveys conducted for Alberta Learning.

GOAL 1 CORE MEASURES (CONTINUED)

Affordability of the Learning System

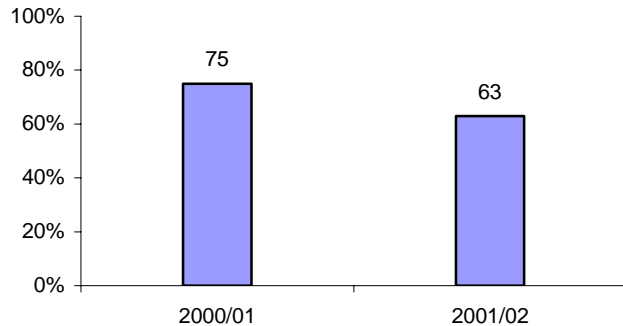
TARGET:

- No target was set for this replacement core measure.

DISCUSSION:

- The majority of public agrees that the learning system is within the means of most Albertans.
- This new measure was selected as the indicator of affordability as it provides an overall perspective on Albertans' perceptions of the affordability of the learning system. It has replaced the average post-secondary student financial assistance award (below).

Percentages of Public Who Agree the Learning System is Within the Means of Most Albertans



Sources: Alberta Learning: Criterion Research Corp. – 2001; R.A Malatest & Associates -2002.

Note:

- Identified as a core measure after release of the ministry business plan for 2001-04.
- In the survey, the learning system is defined in the introduction to the question: “Thinking about Alberta’s learning system as a whole – that is, including elementary, junior and senior high schools, apprenticeship, and post-secondary institutions”.
- The sample size for this question was 1067 in 2000/01, with a confidence interval of plus or minus 3%.
- See Endnote A, pages 204-207, for other information on surveys conducted for Alberta Learning.

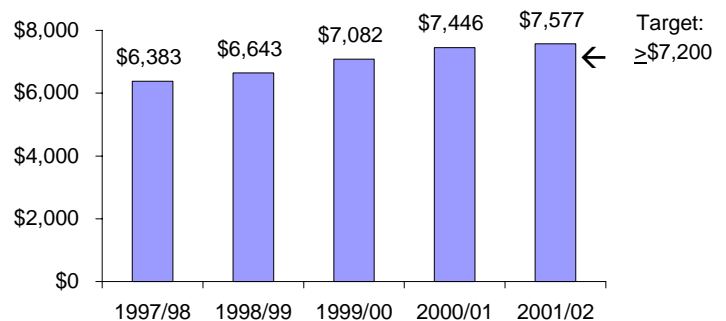
TARGET:

- The target was met.

DISCUSSION:

- The average financial assistance award continues to increase, reflecting a contribution to the rising cost of post-secondary programs.
- This measure has been discontinued because it focuses on a single aspect of learning system affordability.

Average Post-secondary Student Financial Assistance Award



Source: Alberta Learning.

Note:

- See Endnote C, Average Financial Assistance Award, page 209.

Goal 2 – Excellence in Learner Achievement

OUTCOMES

- Learners demonstrate high standards.
- Learners complete programs.

There are four Ministry core measures, two of which have targets, for the goal of Excellence in Learner Achievement. **Targets were met for**

educational attainment and overall results at the acceptable level for students writing provincial achievement tests. The following are the 2001/02 performance highlights for this goal.

✓ Met target

Results since base year for measures without target or with target not met:

= No change

↑ Improved performance

↓ Performance decline

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

Student Results

- ✓ **Grades 3, 6, 9 Achievement Tests** – Overall results for students writing provincial achievement tests met the aggregated target of 84.7%. For specific tests, students writing met targets for acceptable in all grade 6 subjects and in grade 9 science and social studies. They met targets for excellence in math and social studies in all grades and in grade 9 language arts. The results for total enrolment in each grade met targets for acceptable in grade 6 science, for excellence in grade 3 math, and for both levels in grade 9 social studies.
- ↑ **Grade 3, 6, 9 Achievement Tests** – Overall results for writers and for all students in grade have improved since 1997/98 at both the acceptable and excellence levels.
- = **Grade 12 Diploma Examinations** – In 2001/02 students met or exceeded provincial expectations at the acceptable level in three diploma exams and at the excellence level in six exams.

Educational Attainment

- ↑ **High School Completion** – The high school completion rate within 5 years of entering grade 10 rose to 73%. No target was set for the new method of calculating high school completion.

- ✓ High school completion of Alberta 25-34 year-olds remains high at 90%. The target of 88% was met.
- ✓ Post-secondary completion of Alberta 25-34 year-olds has increased steadily in recent years, reaching 59% in 2001/02 and meeting the target of 56%.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- **Participation in Provincial Achievement Tests** – A higher percentage of all students in grades 3, 6 and 9 would demonstrate the acceptable standard if more students wrote the tests.
- **Grade 9 Mathematics** – Effort is needed to ensure a larger percentage of grade 9 students achieve the acceptable standard in math.
- **Diploma Examinations** – A larger percentage of students should be meeting the acceptable standard in Social Studies 33, Pure Math 30, Chemistry 30, and Science 30.
- **High School Completion** – With jobs increasingly requiring higher levels of education and training, effort is needed to ensure more students complete high school in the basic learning system.

GOAL 2 CORE MEASURES

Achievement Test Results Overall

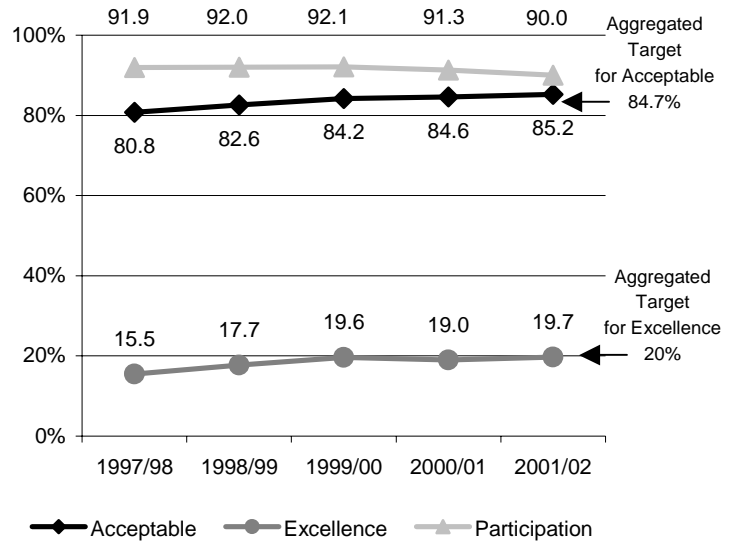
TARGETS:

- The aggregated target of 84.7% for overall results at the acceptable standard was met in 2001/02 for students who wrote provincial achievement tests.
- The aggregated target for overall results for the standard of excellence of 20% was not met in 2001/02 for students who wrote.
- The aggregated targets for overall results for total enrolment in grades 3, 6 and 9, 77.9% for acceptable and 18.4% for excellence, were not met (second graph on page).

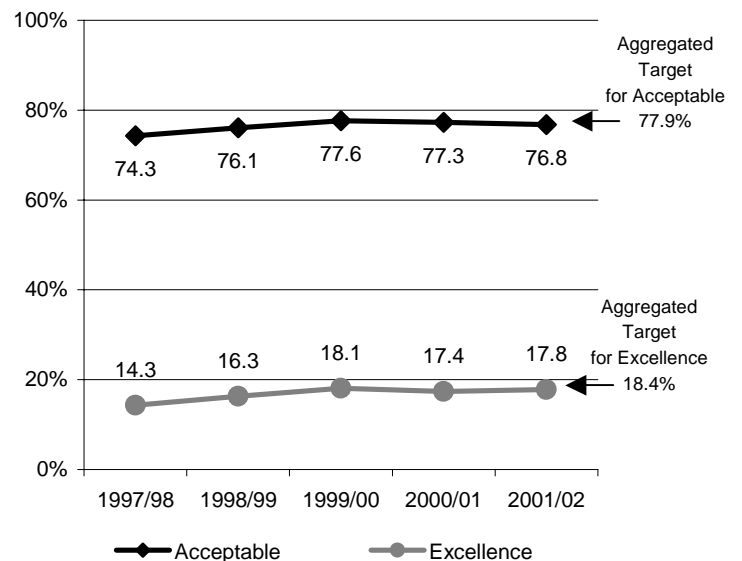
DISCUSSION:

- In the 2001/02 school year there was a slight increase in the percentages of students who achieved standards overall for students who wrote (top graph).
- The participation rate in achievement tests declined to 90% in 2001/02.
- For overall results calculated on the basis of total enrolment in grade (second graph), the slight decline each year in the percentage meeting the acceptable standard since 1999/2000 parallels the decline in the participation rate.
- The lower overall performance in 1997/98 is attributed to grades 3, 6, and 9 mathematics. In that school year, new standards were set for the mathematics tests to reflect the revised Alberta Program of Studies.

Provincial Combined (All Grades and Subjects) Participation Rates and Percentages of Students Who Wrote and Met Standards on Provincial Achievement Tests



Provincial Combined (All Grades and Subjects) Percentages of Students Who Demonstrated Standards on Provincial Achievement Tests (total enrolment in grade)



Source: Alberta Learning

Notes:

- The percentages of students achieving the acceptable standard include the students achieving the standard of excellence.
- Aggregated targets are the averages of the targets for each subject and grade for the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence for both methods of calculating results.
- See Endnote C, Provincial Achievement Tests, page 210.

GOAL 2 CORE MEASURES (CONTINUED)

Achievement Test Results for Test Writers

TARGETS:

- In the 2001/02 school year, students met the targets for the acceptable standard in six of ten tests.
- Students also met the targets for the standard of excellence in six of the ten tests.

DISCUSSION:

- Student performance at the acceptable level improved in seven of ten tests in 2001/02, while declining on three tests.
- Student performance at the standard of excellence also improved in seven of the ten tests, while declining on three tests.
- There were improvements in performance of students in two of the three language arts tests at both the acceptable standard and the standard of excellence.
- There have been steady improvements at the acceptable level in Social Studies 6 and 9, and Science 9 over the reporting period.
- The percentages of students who achieve the acceptable standard in the grade 9 language arts and mathematics achievement tests are reported annually by the provincial government as indicators of literacy and numeracy, as adult literacy surveys are not conducted regularly. Students who achieved the acceptable standard have developed the foundation skills needed to become literate and numerate adults.

Percentages of Students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 Who Wrote and Achieved the Standards on Provincial Achievement Tests

Subject	1997/	1998/	1999/	2000/	2001/	Targets
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2001/2002
Grade 3						
Language Arts						
excellence	15.2	15.8	19.3	17.4	16.4	20%
acceptable	86.0	88.7	90.7	89.4	89.6	92%
Mathematics						
excellence	20.7	25.2	27.5	25.4	29.2	28%
acceptable	80.5	84.8	87.9	87.6	88.7	89%
Grade 6						
Language Arts						
excellence	14.4	17.4	20.9	16.2	16.5	21%
acceptable	83.8	84.4	86.3	85.4	88.6	87%
Mathematics						
excellence	16.8	17.2	17.6	19.3	19.7	18%
acceptable	82.0	83.2	84.2	85.4	85.2	85%
Science						
excellence	18.3	24.1	26.5	27.2	24.6	27%
acceptable	80.3	84.4	84.9	88.0	86.7	85%
Social Studies						
excellence	16.6	17.3	21.2	20.2	21.3	21%
acceptable	78.0	81.9	84.1	84.7	85.9	84%
Grade 9						
Language Arts						
excellence	11.3	12.1	15.1	14.9	16.7	16%
acceptable	87.4	87.6	89.5	89.2	89.8	90%
Mathematics						
excellence	14.3	15.5	16.1	18.4	19.1	17%
acceptable	71.9	72.4	74.4	75.2	73.7	75%
Science						
excellence	12.8	14.8	13.9	13.3	12.8	14%
acceptable	78.7	78.5	79.4	79.9	80.7	79%
Social Studies						
excellence	14.1	17.7	17.8	17.9	20.3	18%
acceptable	78.9	80.5	80.9	81.5	83.2	81%

Source: Alberta Learning.

Note:

- The percentages achieving the acceptable standard include the percentages achieving the standard of excellence.

Participation Rates for Provincial Achievement Tests

Subject	1997/	1998/	1999/	2000/	2001/
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Grade 3					
Language Arts	93.3	94.1	93.0	92.6	90.6
Mathematics	93.4	94.6	93.4	93.4	91.6
Grade 6					
Language Arts	93.5	93.1	93.0	92.1	91.2
Mathematics	94.2	93.1	93.7	92.9	91.8
Science	93.2	93.3	93.1	93.1	91.6
Social Studies	93.7	93.1	93.6	92.8	91.2
Grade 9					
Language Arts	89.3	89.7	89.6	88.3	87.5
Mathematics	89.4	88.9	89.9	88.4	87.5
Science	89.9	90.2	90.7	89.7	88.7
Social Studies	89.5	90.3	90.7	89.3	88.7

Source: Alberta Learning.

Note:

- See Endnote C, Provincial Achievement Tests, page 210.

GOAL 2 CORE MEASURES (CONTINUED)

Achievement Test Results for All Students in Grade

TARGETS:

- In the 2001/02 school year, results for all students in grade met targets for the standard of excellence in four of the ten tests.
- Results for all students in grade met targets for the acceptable standard in two of ten tests.

DISCUSSION:

- Student performance at the acceptable level improved in two of the ten tests in 2001/02, while declining in eight of the ten tests since last year. Results over time have improved in all grades and subjects at the acceptable level.
- Student performance at the standard of excellence improved in seven of the ten tests, while declining on three tests since 2000/01. Results have improved over time in all grades and subjects except Science 9 at the excellence level.
- Higher percentages of students would achieve the acceptable standard if a larger percentage of students wrote the tests (see participation rate table, previous page).

Percentages of Students in Grades 3, 6 and 9 Demonstrating the Standards on Provincial Achievement Tests

Subject	1997/ 1998	1998/ 1999	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	Targets 2001/ 2002
Grade 3						
Language Arts						
excellence	14.2	14.9	17.9	16.1	14.9	19%
acceptable	80.3	83.5	84.3	82.8	81.2	86%
Mathematics						
excellence	19.4	23.8	25.7	23.8	26.7	26%
acceptable	75.2	80.2	82.1	81.8	81.2	83%
Grade 6						
Language Arts						
excellence	13.5	16.2	19.4	14.9	15.1	19%
acceptable	78.4	78.6	80.3	78.7	80.8	81%
Mathematics						
excellence	15.9	16.0	16.5	17.9	18.1	16%
acceptable	77.3	77.5	78.9	79.3	78.3	79%
Science						
excellence	17.1	22.5	24.7	25.3	22.6	25%
acceptable	74.8	78.8	79.0	82.0	79.5	79%
Social Studies						
excellence	15.6	16.1	19.9	18.7	19.4	20%
acceptable	73.1	76.2	78.7	78.6	78.3	79%
Grade 9						
Language Arts						
excellence	10.1	10.8	13.6	13.1	14.6	15%
acceptable	78.0	78.5	80.1	78.8	78.5	80%
Mathematics						
excellence	12.8	13.8	14.4	16.3	16.7	15%
acceptable	64.3	64.4	66.9	66.5	64.5	67%
Science						
excellence	11.5	13.3	12.6	11.9	11.4	13%
acceptable	70.7	70.8	72.0	71.7	71.6	72%
Social Studies						
excellence	12.6	16.0	16.2	16.0	18.0	16%
acceptable	70.6	72.7	73.4	72.8	73.8	73%

Source: Alberta Learning.

Note:

- The percentages achieving the acceptable standard include the percentages achieving the standard of excellence.
- See Endnote C, Provincial Achievement Tests, page 210.

GOAL 2 CORE MEASURES (CONTINUED)

Diploma Examination Results

TARGET:

- No targets were set for 2001/02 as the diploma examinations are not comparable from year to year.

DISCUSSION:

- Students continue to exceed provincial expectations at the acceptable level in three diploma exams: English 30 and 33 as well as Social Studies 30.
- In the 2001/02 school year, students exceeded provincial expectations for the standard of excellence in six exams: English 30, Social Studies 30, Pure Mathematics 30, Biology 30, Chemistry 30, and Physics 30.
- Completing either English 30 or 33 and either Social Studies 30 or 33 is required for high school graduation. In the 2001/02 school year, the percentage of students in their third year completing one of the English courses (83.4%) and the percentage completing one of the Social Studies courses (83.7%) increased over the previous year.
- Larger percentages of students completed English 30, Social Studies 30, Biology 30, Chemistry 30, Physics 30, and Science 30 in the 2001/02 school year than in 2000/01, while lower percentages of students completed English 33 and Social Studies 33 this year.

Percentages of Students Writing Diploma Examinations who Achieved Standards

Course	Standard	1997/ 1998	1998/ 1999	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002
English 30	excellence	14.1	12.9	16.2	18.6	19.0
	acceptable	87.6	85.7	89.2	89.1	88.4
English 33	excellence	7.7	9.0	8.0	7.6	7.2
	acceptable	87.5	86.4	87.9	86.9	86.5
Social Studies 30	excellence	16.5	17.6	16.1	18.6	21.0
	acceptable	83.7	85.2	84.0	85.2	86.0
Social Studies 33	excellence	9.4	10.6	12.5	12.8	11.5
	acceptable	83.6	83.2	81.0	81.4	80.6
Pure Mathematics 30	excellence	-	-	-	-	28.3
	acceptable	-	-	-	-	81.4
Biology 30	excellence	24.9	25.9	23.2	27.2	25.6
	acceptable	80.5	83.1	81.0	80.8	83.6
Chemistry 30	excellence	19.9	18.7	24.2	22.0	24.1
	acceptable	86.0	82.1	84.2	79.1	82.0
Physics 30	excellence	29.5	31.5	27.8	24.3	32.6
	acceptable	85.8	86.8	82.8	78.5	84.4
Science 30	excellence	11.4	16.9	11.4	14.3	12.2
	acceptable	83.0	88.3	78.0	82.5	81.5

Source: Alberta Learning.

Notes:

- At least 85% of students are expected to achieve the acceptable standard and at least 15% are expected to achieve the standard of excellence.
- The percentages of students achieving the acceptable standard includes the percentages of students achieving the standard of excellence.

Percentages of Students Completing Diploma Examination Courses in Their Third Year of High School

Subject	1997/ 1998	1998/ 1999	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002
English 30	54.7	55.0	55.0	55.0	56.9
English 33	28.8	29.1	29.0	27.8	26.5
Social Studies 30	49.6	49.3	48.8	48.6	50.5
Social Studies 33	33.6	34.1	35.3	34.0	33.2
Pure Mathematics 30	-	-	-	-	41.9
Biology 30	40.3	38.6	38.1	39.0	40.7
Chemistry 30	36.6	36.7	36.1	35.2	36.3
Physics 30	22.0	22.1	22.0	21.5	22.5
Science 30	3.2	4.6	6.4	6.6	6.9

Source: Alberta Learning.

Notes:

- Students can choose among courses to complete high school and meet post-secondary entry requirements; only part of the grade 12 class writes each diploma exam.
- See Endnote C, Diploma Examinations, page 210.

GOAL 2 CORE MEASURES (CONTINUED)

High School Completion

TARGET:

- The target of 71% is not applicable as the methodology has been revised. No target for 2001/02 was set for the new method.

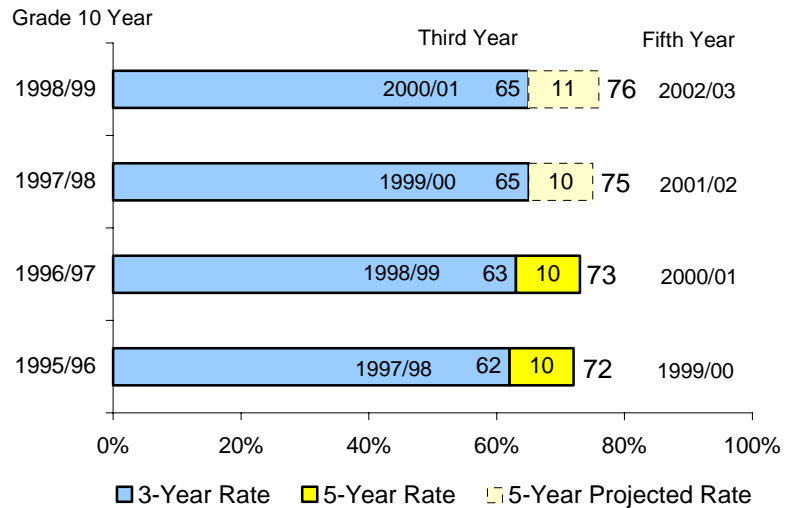
DISCUSSION:

- The high school completion rate within five years of entering grade 10 has increased slightly to 73% over the previous year.
- Completion within three years of entering grade 10 (i.e., “on-time”) has been stable at 65% for the last two years.
- The new methodology was developed to provide high school completion rates for school jurisdictions to use to address and report on this ministry priority.
- A substantial portion of students who do not complete high school in the basic learning system attain high school completion status as adults (see Educational Attainment measure, next page).

Note:

- Previous results using a slightly different method that tracked grade 9 students for four and six years show gradual increases in the high school completion rate to 71% in 1999/2000 for the six-year rate and to 66% for the four-year rate.
- Completion rates for students attending Alberta post-secondary institutions are under development for reporting in future years along with apprenticeship completion rates to provide a fuller perspective on completion in Alberta’s learning system.

Percentages of Students Completing High School Within 3 and 5 Years of Entering Grade 10 (revised methodology)



Source: Alberta Learning.

Notes:

- Projections indicate results likely to be achieved given the three-year completion rates for these groups of grade 10 students and completion rates in prior years. The projection for 2002/03 also considers the projected 5-year rate for 2001/02.
- See Endnote C, High School Completion Rate, page 211.

GOAL 2 CORE MEASURES (CONTINUED)

Educational Attainment

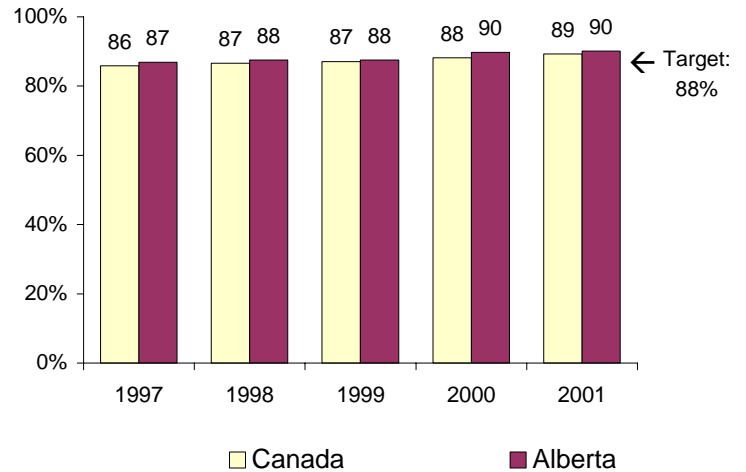
TARGET:

- The targets were met.

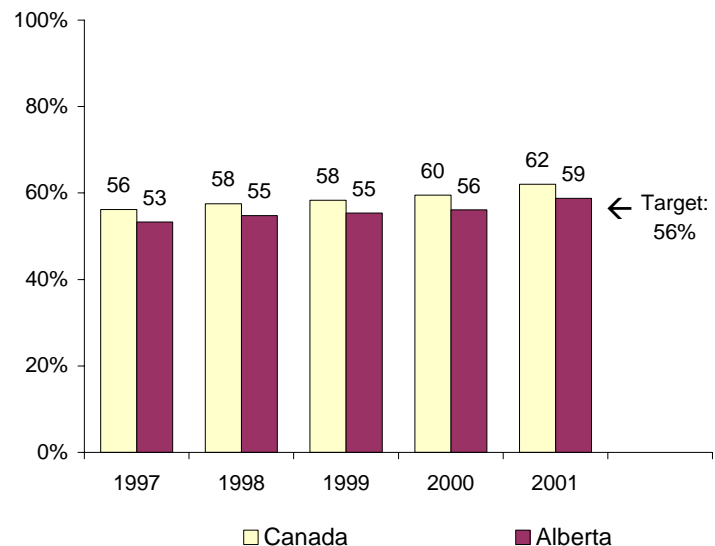
DISCUSSION:

- Both high school and post-secondary completion rates of Albertans aged 25-34 have risen since 1997/98.
- Alberta's results for high school completion continue to be similar to the national average.
- Alberta has maintained its third place ranking after Ontario and British Columbia and has a high school completion rate not significantly different from those of the top two provinces.
- While post-secondary completion rates have increased, they remain below the Canadian average.
- Alberta continues to rank fifth among Canadian provinces for post-secondary completion.

Percentages of Albertans aged 25-34 who Completed High School (new)



Percentages of Albertans aged 25-34 who Completed Post-Secondary Programs (new)



Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey, Special tabulation for Alberta Learning.

Note:

- See Endnote C, Educational Attainment, page 211.

Goal 3 – Well Prepared Learners for Lifelong Learning, the World of Work and Citizenship

OUTCOMES

Learners are well prepared for lifelong learning:

- Children start school ready to learn.
- Learners have the ability to learn continuously: in school, at work and in society.
- Learners' achievement is recognized.

Learners are well prepared for work:

- Learners are successful in finding/maintaining work.
- Employers are satisfied with knowledge, skills and attitudes of employees.

Learners are well prepared for citizenship:

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

✓	Met target
	Results since base year for measures without target or with target not met:
=	No change
↑	Improved performance
↓	Performance decline

There are four Ministry core measures, three of which have targets, to assess progress on the goal of Well Prepared Learners for Lifelong Learning, the World of Work and Citizenship. **All targets were met, and results improved on the proxy measure for readiness to learn.** The following are the 2001/02 performance highlights for this goal.

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

↑ Preparation of Children for School –

The percentage of grade 1 students who participated in Early Childhood Services increased in 1998/99 and has remained very high at 95% since. There is no target for this proxy measure of readiness to learn.

✓ Preparation for Lifelong Learning –

About three out of four (76%) Albertans are satisfied that adult learners are being prepared for lifelong learning. The target of 75% was met.

✓ Employment of Post-Secondary Graduates –

The employment rate of post-secondary graduates has remained very high at 93%, and met the target of 93%.

Preparation for Citizenship

- ✓ Public satisfaction that high school students are well prepared for citizenship (59%) has increased substantially since 1999/2000, easily meeting the target of 42%.
- ✓ Public satisfaction that adult learners are well prepared for citizenship (68%) also has increased since 1999/2000. The target of 65% was met.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Public satisfaction with the preparation of high school students for citizenship remains lower than public satisfaction with other aspects of education.

GOAL 3 CORE MEASURES

Preparation of Children for School

TARGET:

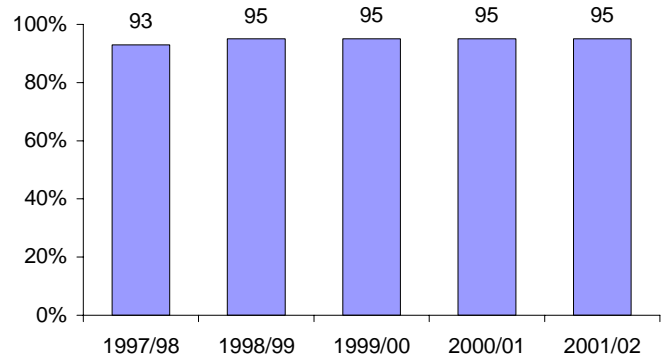
- No target was set for this proxy measure of readiness to learn.

DISCUSSION:

- The percentage of students who participated in Early Childhood Services (ECS) programs prior to grade 1 remains high.
- A very large majority of parents choose to enroll their children in ECS programs even though ECS attendance is not mandatory.
- ECS refers to the broad coordinated system of local and provincial programs provided to meet the developmental and special needs of young children and their families.
- ECS programming is designed to prepare children for entry into grade 1 and to provide a foundation for continued success in school.

Note: A readiness to learn measure is under development.

Percentages of Grade 1 Students who Attended Early Childhood Services Programs



Source: Alberta Learning.

Notes:

- Includes children enrolled in Early Childhood Services or ungraded programs prior to grade 1.
- See Endnote C, Participation in Early Childhood Services Programs, page 212.

GOAL 3 CORE MEASURES (CONTINUED)

Preparation for Lifelong Learning

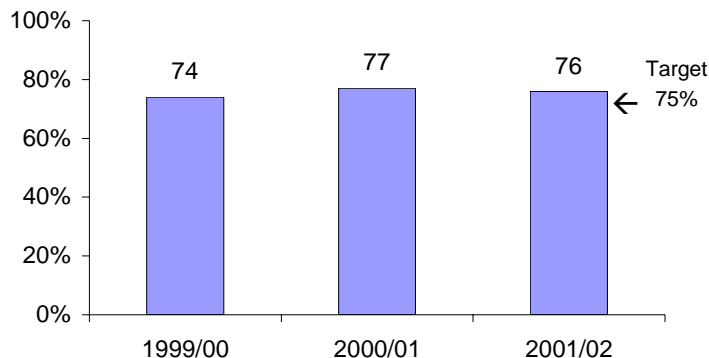
TARGET:

- The target was met.

DISCUSSION:

- About three-quarters of the public continue to be satisfied that adult learners are prepared for lifelong learning.

Public Satisfaction that Adult Learners are Prepared for Lifelong Learning



Sources: Alberta Learning: Criterion Research Corp. – 2000, 2001, R.A. Malatest & Associates – 2002.

Note:

- See Endnote A, pages 204-207, for information on surveys conducted for Alberta Learning.

Employment of Post-Secondary Graduates

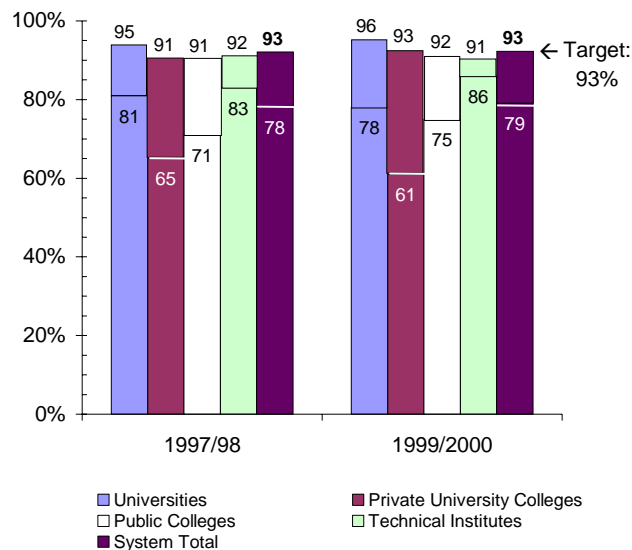
TARGET:

- The target was met.

DISCUSSION:

- The overall employment rate of post-secondary graduates, i.e., the percentage of graduates in the labour force who are employed, has remained high at 93%.
- The employment rate has improved in all sectors except the technical institutes, which declined slightly from 92% to 91%.
- The percentage of graduates in the labour force reporting employment in jobs related to their education has increased slightly from 78% to 79%.
- An additional 11% of graduates report not participating in the labour force. These graduates (not included in the graph) may be pursuing further studies or may not be participating for personal reasons.

Employment Rates of Post-Secondary Graduates Overall and in Jobs Related to their Studies



Source: Alberta Learning.

Notes:

- The 1999/2000 results include 1997/98 university and private university college graduates surveyed two years later, and 1998/99 public college and technical institute graduates surveyed within one year.
- 1997/98 results include 1994/95 university graduates surveyed two years later, and 1995/96 private university college and 1996/97 public college and technical institute graduates surveyed within one year.
- The lower portion of each column represents the percentages of graduates in the labour force who are employed in jobs related to their education.
- See Endnote C, Employment rate of post-secondary graduates, page 212.

GOAL 3 CORE MEASURES (CONTINUED)

Preparation for Citizenship

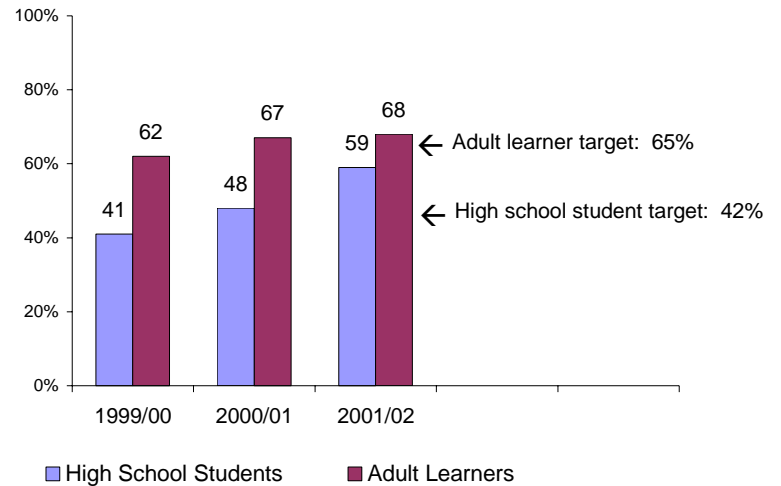
TARGET:

- The targets were met.

DISCUSSION:

- Public satisfaction that high school students are well prepared for citizenship continues to increase.
- Public satisfaction that adult learners are well prepared for citizenship rose in 2000/01. Results in 2001/02 are consistent with the previous year.

Public Satisfaction that Learners are Well Prepared for Citizenship



Sources: Alberta Learning: Criterion Research Corp.– 2000, 2001; R.A. Malatest & Associates - 2002.

Note:

- The questions were clarified in the 2001/02 survey as a result of field testing. The new questions asked the public to indicate how satisfied they are that recent high school graduates are well prepared for citizenship, and how satisfied they are that adults taking education or training are well prepared for citizenship.
- In prior years, the public was asked to indicate if they agreed that high school graduates in Alberta were being taught the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and if they agreed that adult learners are getting an appropriate combination of skills and knowledge to prepare them for the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
- See Endnote A, pages 204-207, for other information on surveys conducted for Alberta Learning.

Goal 4 – Effective Working Relationships with Partners

OUTCOMES

- Effective partnerships meet the learning needs of Albertans.
- Joint initiatives contribute to the achievement of the social and economic goals of the province.

There is one Ministry core measure with three targets to assess the goal of Effective Working Relationships with Partners. **Targets were met on two of the three components of this measure, and results improved in the other area.** The following are the 2001/02 performance highlights for this goal.

- ✓ Met target
- Results since base year for measures without target or with target not met:
- = No change
- ↑ Improved performance
- ↓ Performance decline

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

Working Relationships with Alberta Learning

- ✓ A large percentage (86%) of cross-ministry partners and learning system stakeholders agree Alberta Learning staff are collaborative, an increase over previous years. The target of 80% was met.
- ✓ A very high percentage (90%) of these partners and stakeholders agree Alberta Learning staff are responsive. Results have increased each year, and the target of 80% was met.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Working Relationships with Alberta Learning

- ↑ Two thirds of partners and stakeholders (66%) agree Alberta Learning staff are flexible, up from 61% in 1999/2000. Results remain below the target of 70%.

GOAL 4 CORE MEASURES

Working Relationships with Alberta Learning

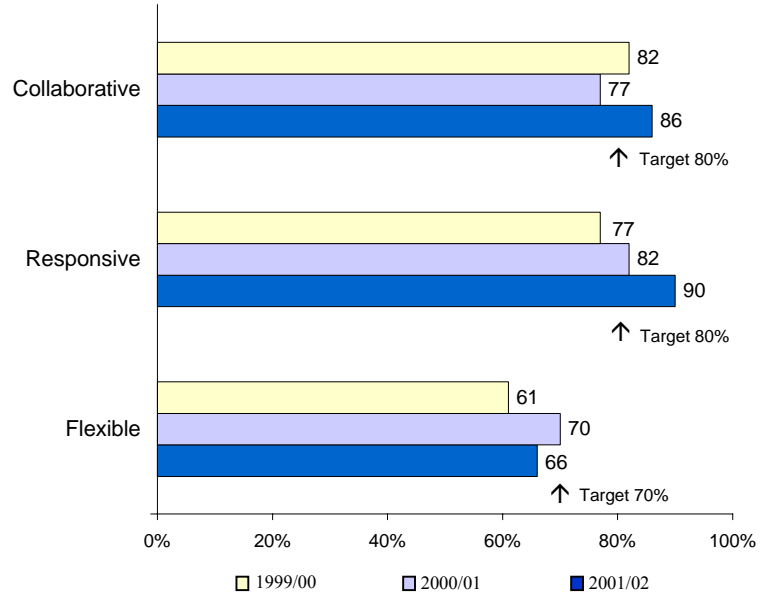
TARGET:

- The targets for responsiveness and collaboration were met.
- The target for flexibility was not met.

DISCUSSION:

- A majority of partners and stakeholders continues to agree that Alberta Learning staff are collaborative, responsive and flexible.
- Results have improved since 1999/2000 for all three attributes.
- Partners and stakeholders continue to be more satisfied with staff responsiveness and collaboration than with their flexibility.

Percentages of Partners and Stakeholders who Agree that Alberta Learning Staff are Flexible, Responsive and Collaborative



Source: Alberta Learning: Hargroup Management Consultants – 2000, 2001, 2002.

Note:

- See Endnote A, pages 204-207, for information on surveys conducted for Alberta Learning.

Goal 5 – Highly Responsive and Responsible Ministry

OUTCOMES

The Ministry demonstrates:

- Value for dollars
- Leadership and continuous improvement in administrative and business processes and practices.

✓ Met target

Results since base year for measures without target or with target not met:

= No change

↑ Improved performance

↓ Performance decline

There are two core measures and three targets to assess and report on the goal of a Highly Responsive and Responsible Ministry. **The target was met for one core measure and results declined for both components of the other core measure.** The following are the 2001/02 performance highlights for this goal.

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ **Ministry Efficiency** – Spending on ministry functions at 1.8% remains a very small proportion of total spending on the learning system. The target of “at or below 2%” was met.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Understanding of Ministry Staff

- ↓ A substantial majority of Alberta Learning staff (77%) continues to agree they understand how their work contributes to the Ministry business plan. The target of 90% was not met.
- ↓ A substantial majority of Alberta Learning staff (75%) also continues to agree that they understand how the work of the Ministry contributes to government goals. The target of 80% was not met.

GOAL 5 CORE MEASURES (CONTINUED)

Staff Understanding

TARGET:

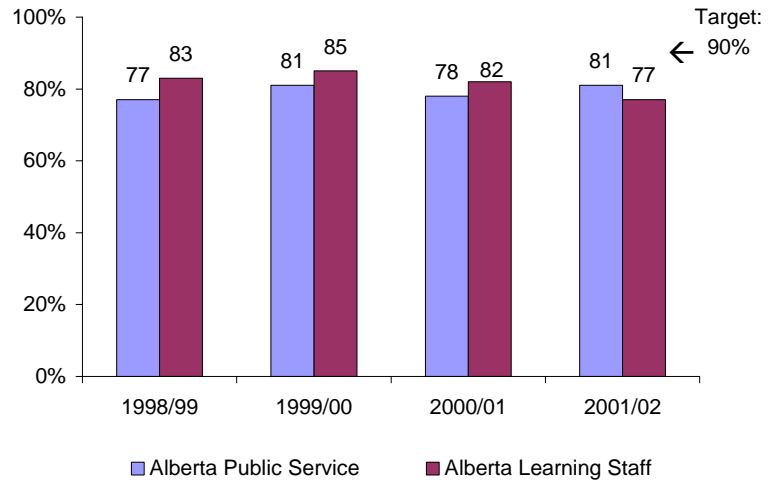
- The targets were not met.

DISCUSSION:

- A substantial portion of Alberta Learning employees continues to agree they understand how their work contributes to the Ministry business plan.
- Three out of four Alberta Learning employees also agree they understand how the work of the department contributes to government business goals. Ministry results in 2001/02 are similar to results for all provincial government employees.

Note: These measures are being replaced by the new measure of investment in staff training and development.

Percentages of Staff Who Agree They Understand How Their Work Contributes to Their Ministry's Business Plan (new)

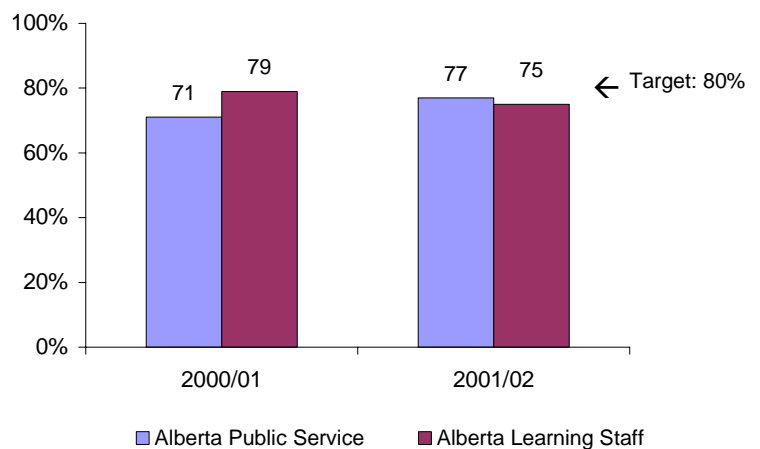


Sources: Personnel Administration Office, The Advisory Group – 1999, Research Innovations Inc. – 2000, 2001, 2002.

Notes:

- The 1998/99 percentages for Alberta Learning reports the weighted average results of the former Ministries of Education and of Advanced Education and Career Development.
- See Endnote A, pages 204-207, for information on the employee surveys.

Percentages of Staff Who Agree They Understand How the Work of their Ministry Contributes to Government Goals (new)



Source: Personnel Administration Office: Research Innovations Inc. – 2000, 2001, 2002.

Notes:

- See Endnote A, pages 204-207, for information on the employee surveys.

GOAL 5 CORE MEASURES (CONTINUED)

Ministry Efficiency

TARGET:

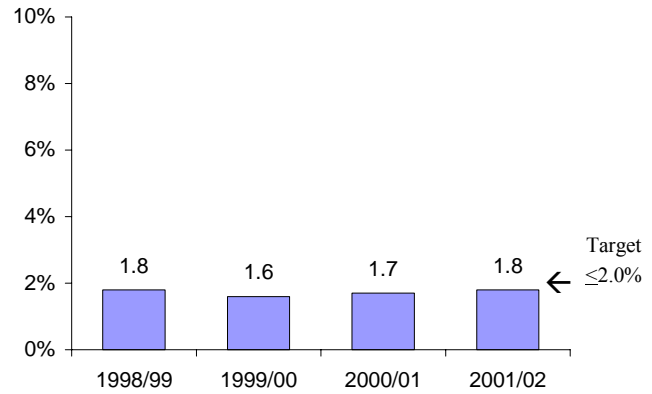
- The target was met.

DISCUSSION:

- Spending on ministry functions remains a very small proportion of total spending.
- There was a slight increase in the proportion spent on ministry functions as a percentage of total ministry spending for 2001/02.
- The increase in spending is primarily due to additional costs associated with the redevelopment of the student loan system and increased program delivery support in Basic Learning.

Note: A replacement measure is under development.

Spending on Ministry Functions as a Percentage of Total Ministry Spending



Source: Alberta Learning.

Notes:

- Results for 2000/01 have been restated to remove amounts that were unrelated to ministry functions.
- See Endnote C, Spending on ministry functions, page 213.

Financial Results and Performance

Financial results of the Ministry of Learning for the year ended March 31, 2002 include the activities of the Department of Learning and the Alberta School Foundation Fund. More detailed information can be found in the Ministry's financial statements (pages 46-110).

	In millions		
	2002		2001
	Budget	Actual	Actual
REVENUES			
Provincial education property taxes	\$ 1,048	\$ 1,094	\$ 1,151
Transfers from the Government of Canada	149	167	177
Internal government transfers	71	71	108
Sales of learning resources	27	29	26
Fees, permits, licences and other revenue	7	10	8
	<u>1,302</u>	<u>1,371</u>	<u>1,470</u>
EXPENSES BY CORE BUSINESS			
Basic Learning	3,626	3,645	3,366
Adult Learning*	1,219	1,176	1,107
Apprenticeship and Industry Training	22	24	21
	<u>4,867</u>	<u>4,845</u>	<u>4,494</u>
NET OPERATING RESULTS	<u>\$ (3,565)</u>	<u>\$ (3,474)</u>	<u>\$ (3,024)</u>

* Includes operating grants provided to post-secondary institutions for apprenticeship and industry training

OVERVIEW

In fiscal year 2001/02, uncertainty over government revenue forced some changes to budget plans. All ministries were asked to reduce their expenses and Learning responded, including decreasing its expenses to \$4,845 million, a reduction of \$22 million from budget for 2001/02.

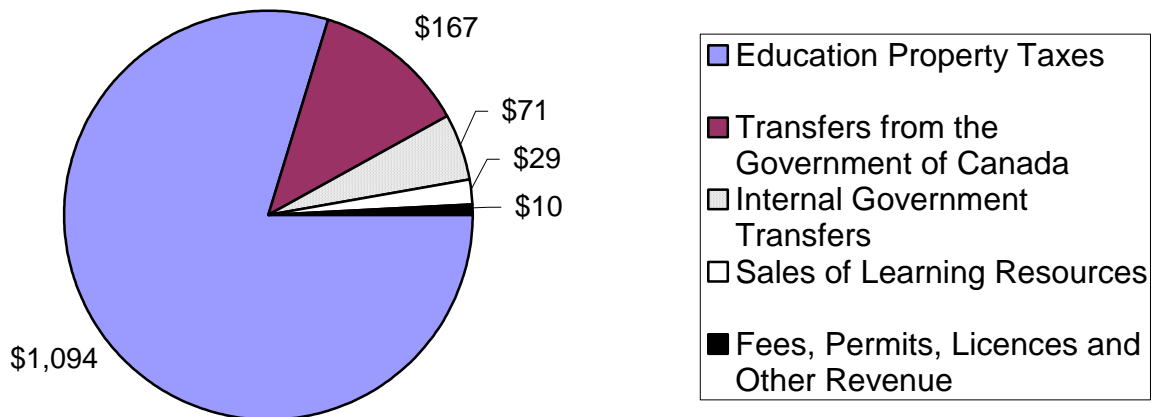
Learning adjusted its spending in a manner that had the least impact on students, school authorities and post-secondary institutions. The Province's commitment to learning is demonstrated by an increased investment of \$351 million from prior year in basic learning, adult learning and apprenticeship and industry training.

REVENUES

Revenue for the Ministry of Learning totaled \$1,371 million for 2001/02, as follows:

- \$1,094 million of the Ministry's revenues was derived from provincial education property taxes which were collected by the provincial government through the Alberta School Foundation Fund
 - \$71 million was received through internal government transfers, including
 - \$52 million from the Lottery Fund
 - \$19 million from the Alberta Heritage Scholarship Fund
 - \$167 million in revenue was received in transfers from the Government of Canada, including
 - \$166 million in Canadian Health and Social Transfers
 - \$1 million in support of Canada Student Loans administration
 - \$29 million in revenues related to the sale and distribution of learning and teaching resources that have been purchased directly from publishers or developed and printed by the Ministry
 - \$10 million in revenues were generated from various programs such as Marketing Apprenticeship, high school transcripts, teacher certification fees, as well as other income sources such as investment income
-

**Revenues by Source
(in millions)**



Comparison of 2001/2002 actuals to budget

Revenues were \$69 million more than budgeted as a result of the following:

- Provincial education property taxes were \$46 million more than budgeted because of a recent trend to less assessment adjustments and appeals against education property taxes and an increased requisition for 2002
- \$18 million increase from budget in Canadian Health and Social Transfer revenue
- \$3 million in increases over budget in refunds of expenditures
- \$2 million increase in sales of learning and teaching resources

Comparison of 2001/2002 actuals to prior year

Revenues for the Ministry decreased \$99 million from 2000/01, as a result of these events:

- Lottery fund contributions were decreased by \$37 million, primarily due a major lottery fund initiative in 2000/01 for school technology upgrading
- \$57 million decrease in provincial education property tax revenue primarily due to the provincial freeze on the 2001 requisition (\$95 million) offset by an increase of \$22 million for provincial education property taxes that were not required to be refunded due to reduced assessment adjustments and appeals and \$10 million increase due to the removal of the freeze on the 2002 requisition
- Although there was an overall increase from prior year in the Canadian Health and Social Transfer from the federal government to the province, there was a \$10 million decrease in the allocation of these revenues to Learning
- \$3 million increase in the sale of learning resources and \$2 million in increases in refunds of expenditure

EXPENSES

Directly incurred expenses for the Ministry of Learning amounted to \$4,845 million for 2001/02, as follows:

- Approximately \$3,645 million in expenses related to Basic Learning:
 - \$3,002 million paid in operating support to Public and Separate School boards
 - Teachers' pension costs of \$281 million for the year
 - Costs relating to early childhood services of \$163 million
 - Support for private schools, excluding early childhood services, totaling \$67 million
 - \$27 million in expenses incurred to support student health
 - \$34 million paid to support other basic learning programs including the production and delivery of learning and teaching resources

-
- Program delivery support of \$45 million and an additional \$22.5 million, which is Basic Learning's share of the expenses incurred by ministry support services¹
 - \$3 million in debt servicing costs incurred by Alberta School Foundation Fund
 - Approximately \$1,176 million in expenses related to Adult Learning:
 - \$899 million was paid to support post-secondary institutions
 - Costs of \$115 million associated with expanding certain programs in post-secondary institutions and recognizing institutions' performance
 - \$29 million in new funding for faculty retention
 - Support to post-secondary learners amounted to \$113 million
 - Program delivery support of \$13 million and an additional \$7.2 million, which is Adult Learning's share of the expenses incurred by ministry support services
 - Approximately \$24 million in expenses related to Apprenticeship and Industry Training:
 - Expenses of \$10 million were incurred to deliver the program
 - \$10 million in grants to post-secondary institutions to increase access to apprenticeship and industry training programs
 - \$2 million in other grants earmarked for apprenticeship
 - Marketing Apprenticeship expenses were \$2 million
 - \$.3 million representing the share of ministry support services expenses allocated to Apprenticeship and Industry Training¹

Comparison of 2001/2002 actuals to budget

Expenses were \$22 million lower than budgeted as a result of the following:

- \$19 million more than budgeted for expenses in Basic Learning consisting of
 - Early childhood services grants increased \$7 million as a result of enhancements to early childhood services, instruction rates and increased instructional hours
 - Private school support increased \$15 million due to higher enrollment, salary enhancements and funding to designated special education private schools
 - Teachers' pension costs were more than budgeted by \$4 million due to poorer than anticipated pension asset performance
 - \$3 million reduction from budget related to operating support for schools
 - \$4 million savings on debt servicing costs
- \$43 million under budget in Adult Learning comprised of
 - \$35 million savings in support to post-secondary learners primarily due to lower than anticipated costs associated with the issue of student loans. Effective August 1, 2001, Learning assumed responsibility for the issuance of loans to qualifying students attending post-secondary institutions.

¹ Ministry Support Services' costs totaling \$30 million are allocated based on each core business' proportion of overall ministry expenses.

-
- \$5 million reduction in other program support to post-secondary institutions in response to government budget reductions
 - \$3 million reduction in Access funding earmarked for program expansion
 - \$2 million more than budgeted to increase access to Apprenticeship and Industry Training programs

Comparison of 2001/2002 actuals to prior year

Expenses increased \$351 million over 2000/01. This is a result of

- Increases totaling \$279 million in Basic Learning from the following:
 - Grant rate increases, increased enrollment, enhanced funding for special needs, a full year of grants issued under the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement and teacher salary enhancements resulted in an additional \$258 million in support to public and separate school boards
 - Teachers' pension costs increased by \$38 million primarily due to poor investment performance of pension assets
 - There were increases in spending to private schools (\$17 million), early childhood services (\$23 million), and student health (\$1 million)
 - \$4 million increase in program delivery support
 - \$2 million in savings on debt servicing costs
 - \$60 million reduction in school technology funding as this was a funding initiative in 2000/01
- Increases totaling \$69 million in Adult Learning due to
 - \$22 million in increased assistance to post-secondary institutions consisting of \$12 million in operating support and \$10 million in equity adjustments
 - \$20 million in anticipated increases to funding envelopes for expansion of programs for post-secondary institutions and recognition of performance
 - \$29 million in new funding for faculty retention
 - \$3 million in additional program delivery support related to direct lending
 - \$5 million decrease in support to post-secondary learners as increased scholarships have been offset by lower costs associated with providing student loans
- Increases totaling \$3 million in Apprenticeship and Industry Training primarily due to increased grants to post-secondary institutions earmarked for apprenticeship and industry training initiatives.

GRANTS

Grants accounted for \$4,602 million or 95% of the total amount of the Ministry's expenses.

- Grants to school boards totaled \$3,147 million and consisted of
 - \$3,139 million in instruction and support block funding and other enrollment driven funding offset by \$135 million school property taxes already collected by opted-out separate school boards, who have the authority to requisition and collect levies on their residential and non-residential properties
 - \$64 million in grants for the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement

-
- \$27 million for the Student Health program
 - Teacher salary enhancement funding of \$52 million
 - Grants to post-secondary institutions totaled \$1,029 million and consisted of
 - \$848 million in operating and conditional grant funding
 - \$89 million in support through the Access Fund for program expansion
 - \$36 million in funding based on post-secondary institutions' performance
 - \$38 million in faculty retention and equity grants
 - \$18 million in other program support for adult learning programs
 - Grants to adult learners totaled \$67 million and were comprised of
 - \$48 million in assistance to learners in the form of remission benefits, maintenance grants, special needs bursaries, Alberta opportunities bursaries and achievement and other scholarships
 - \$19 million in scholarships funded through the Alberta Heritage Scholarship Fund
 - Other grants in the amount of \$359 million included
 - Teachers' pension contributions of \$113 million for current service and \$111 million for past service
 - \$110 million in financial assistance to private schools such as support for basic education, early childhood services, instruction grants and salary enhancements
 - \$25 million in grants for other areas including community education programs and learning television

Looking Ahead: Opportunities and Challenges for Alberta's Learning System

Alberta continues to be recognized nationally and internationally for the excellence of its learning system. To improve upon this excellence, Alberta Learning and its stakeholders will strengthen the capacity to respond to significant, local and global influences and to use results to make improvements and inform decision making.

High Quality Learning Opportunities for All

Learners and learning stakeholders have rising expectations for a choice-filled, high quality, and safe learning system. Adding to these challenges, Alberta continues to face the complexities of significant demographic trends, including a growing senior population, an increasing Aboriginal youth population, an aging workforce, rural depopulation, an increasing immigrant population, and urban migration.

Opportunities and challenges include:

- undertaking consultation initiatives and establishing review mechanisms in priority areas such as lifelong learning and learning technology to identify and assess stakeholder needs
- promoting the enjoyment of learning and the development of lifelong learning skills to provide a strong foundation for future life choices
- collaborating with stakeholders to assess trends, needs, best practices, and the learning technology opportunities as well as to clarify roles and responsibilities among Alberta Learning, learning providers, and learners on planning and implementing the use of technology in the learning system
- working with communities to address the learning needs of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit youth
- enhancing the learning system's ability to revise programming and curriculum to keep pace with the needs of a fast paced, knowledge-based society
- enhancing lifelong learning opportunities for Albertans through electronic access to learning resources and multimedia learning materials
- developing strategies to recognize the many related factors influencing student success
- attracting and retaining teachers and post-secondary faculty (given improved economies and an ever-shrinking pool of human resources) as the competition for these professions increases. The need for teachers of mathematics, science, and second languages in the basic learning system is especially great
- working with partners and stakeholders to respond to the needs of learners entering the system from outside Alberta and Canada
- enhancing education delivery methods to assist rural communities in maintaining quality service levels.

Excellence in Learner Outcomes

Providing a Strong Foundation for Children and Youth

It is critical that children start school ready to learn. Ensuring school readiness, for instance, may reduce the need for remedial services during and beyond school years. Alberta Learning works with its partners in other Alberta ministries, learning system stakeholders, and Alberta's parents to meet the basic needs of children and enable them to fully benefit from school. For Alberta's youth to take full advantage of opportunities beyond basic learning, well-rounded preparation for further learning, work and community participation is essential.

Opportunities and challenges include:

- promoting consistent and enhanced quality of education practices for students with special needs
- optimizing early childhood development programs and basic education to build a strong foundation of cognitive, physical, emotional and spiritual health
- addressing literacy issues in all age groups, as literacy is a basic foundation for all learning

-
- encouraging high school academic achievement and completion to enable participation in post-secondary education.

Preparing a Highly Knowledgeable and Skilled Workforce

Educational attainment is closely tied to individual success in the workforce and societal prosperity. For Alberta to continue to prosper, emphasis is needed on providing people in the workforce with appropriate lifelong learning opportunities, including those that recognize the pace of technological change, the aging demographic of Alberta's workforce, and the growing demand for skills and abilities that will require training programs.

Opportunities and challenges include:

- enhancing awareness of learning as an investment, of rising workplace skill requirements and skill development opportunities, the affordability of post-secondary education, and the financial support available to access post-secondary education
- enhancing transitions for learners through integrative approaches involving schools, industry, and business
- increasing upgrading and lifelong learning opportunities for individuals to gain greater competitiveness in the workforce
- continuing development and implementation of strategies to address industry's growing need for a highly skilled and trained workforce, and increasing workplace skill requirements, especially where there are expected labour shortages.

Highly Responsive and Responsible Ministry

Sustainability of the Learning system

In addition to maintaining high quality, relevant, accessible, and affordable learning opportunities in the short term, it is essential to sustain the learning system over the long term. Increasing public demand for lifelong learning options and choice filled, learner-centered instruction is creating a more globally competitive market. In the face of these and other changes, the learning system is striving to adapt to varied demands while sustaining itself over the long term.

Opportunities and challenges include:

- evaluating current funding models for basic learning authorities to assess the fairness, flexibility, and level of support
- developing a framework that would serve as the basis for future development and investment in the adult learning system
- streamlining administrative processes and information gathering requirements asked of Alberta Learning stakeholders
- best meeting the needs of Aboriginal Learners, immigrants, and special needs students
- making optimal use of technology to enhance learning and teaching
- updating standards for student assessment that measure the progress of Alberta's youth as they move through the school system
- working with Infrastructure to develop solutions for facilities' renewal and capacity that reflect the shared responsibility between governments, institutions, and communities
- clarifying roles and responsibilities for accountability among the federal government, the province, and learning providers
- providing for sustainable and equitable investment in the learning system throughout the province.

Through continued work with stakeholders, Alberta Learning will address these challenges and opportunities and improve upon the excellence of the learning system by further enhancing the strategic direction of the ministry.