

Unaudited Information

Summary of Accomplishments - Alberta Learning Business Plan April 1, 2003 to March 31, 2004

Presented below are Alberta Learning's accomplishments for 2003/04 in implementing the Ministry's Business Plan for 2003-06. These are organized by the goals and strategies of the business plan. Many of these accomplishments also address the strategic priorities of the Ministry for 2003/04, which are:

- continuous improvement of the learning system;
- labour market demands and sharing/creating knowledge;
- First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner success;
- collaboration with partners and stakeholders; and
- financial sustainability of the learning system.

Strategy 1A: Continue to promote learning excellence through the continuous improvement of the learning system.

- Invested an additional \$20 million to support pre-school and Kindergarten children with special needs, to accommodate the increased number of students returning to complete or upgrade Grade 12, and to provide educational supports for students in government institutional programs such as group homes and treatment centres for youth.
- Approved a new language initiative to make learning a second language a requirement for students in Grades four through nine. Beginning in 2006/07, Alberta students in Grades four through nine will be required to learn one of these languages: Chinese, Cree, French, German, Japanese, Punjabi, Spanish, and Ukrainian.
- Approved the following new Programs of Study for implementation: German Language and Culture 7-8-9, 10-20-30 and 10S-20S-30S; Italian Language and Culture 10-20-30; Spanish Language Arts K-3; Spanish Language and Culture 7-8-9, 10-20-30, and 10S-20S-30S; and Ukrainian Language Arts K-9.
- Initiated a collaborative exchange relationship between Alberta and the state of Jalisco, Mexico to support second-language learning and training.
- Redeveloped social studies curriculum, with an increased focus on Canadian and Albertan history, citizenship, and First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures. The revised curriculum will be implemented beginning in 2005 with Kindergarten to Grade 3.
- Implemented strategies to address the goals of the Renewed Vision for the K-12 curriculum, focusing on areas relating to primary programs (K-3), daily physical activity, second language learning and Individualized Learning Career Pathways.
- Held consultations in Grande Prairie, Red Deer, Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat on the Daily Physical Activity (DPA) Initiative. Over 400 stakeholders participated, including teachers, administrators, health professionals and representatives of sports and recreation organizations. Daily physical activity will be phased in over three years, and will increase student activity levels and healthy behaviours, with mandatory implementation of 30 minutes/day starting in September 2005 for Grades 1-9 and in September 2006 for high school. Schools may choose to implement DPA in the 2004/05 school year.
- Enhanced the interface of the Grade 9 science e-text in response to feedback from teachers, students and parents, as part of a three-year research study in collaboration with publishers.
- Trained 57 additional school teams and 88 coaches in using the Effective Behaviour Supports (EBS) process for a total of 249 school teams and 121 coaches since the introduction of EBS in 2001/02.
- Held the Third Annual Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AIS) Conference in January 2004 that highlighted effective school improvement practices and strategies for integrating these practices into new

projects as part of the second three-year cycle of AISI projects.

- Updated the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement Clearinghouse website with a series of new promising practices from school jurisdictions.
- Provided technical and administrative support to the Alberta Commission on Learning (ACOL).
- Accepted the vast majority of the 95 recommendations contained in the ACOL report: *Every child learns. Every child succeeds*, and developed implementation plans for the accepted recommendations. Many of the recommendations supported work underway within government and among school boards.
- Launched a process for policy development to support government-approved recommendations from ACOL.
- Developed a framework to implement the recommendations from the Members of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Lifelong Learning based on consultation with Government of Alberta ministries, aligning the framework with ACOL recommendations.
- Conducted an impact study of year-round schooling options on student achievement.
- Conducted a review of Quebec's results in international and national assessments to identify factors contributing to strong performance with a particular focus on the subject of Mathematics, as this is a priority area for Alberta schools.
- Introduced Bill 25, the *School Amendment Act*, and Bill 26, the *Teaching Profession Amendment Act*, the government's response to recommendations of Alberta's Commission on Learning related to the teaching profession.
- Renewed a five-year Memorandum of Agreement with the five teacher preparation institutions in Alberta, whereby deans confirm to the Minister that teachers have the required knowledge, skills and attributes for interim certification.
- Completed an assessment of the six Regional Professional Development Consortia. These facilitate professional development for teachers and other staff involved in Alberta's basic education system. The review found a high level of support for the goals and activities of the Consortia.
- Established guidelines and criteria for the identification of Small Schools by Necessity and worked with Alberta Infrastructure to ensure that they are included in the capital projects plan. Small Schools by Necessity exist when the distance between schools of the same jurisdiction is such that transporting students to other schools is not practical.
- Maintained a high level of satisfaction (86%) among employers with apprenticeship technical training curriculum.
- Maintained a high level of apprentice graduate satisfaction (89%) with alternative delivery of technical training. Supported alternative delivery approaches for apprentices through development and marketing of Individual Learning Modules (ILMs). Implemented modules for electrician trade and continued work on modules for the carpenter and plumber trades. In 2003/04, approximately 600,000 ILMs were ordered, including 15% of them from outside Alberta. ILMs facilitate flexibility and standardization in training.
- Completed the implementation of new record books to improve the consistency of on-the-job training. Record books track an apprentice's progression through on-the-job training and encourage the development of a broad base of skills.
- Reported on the Survey of 2001/02 Graduates of Apprenticeship and used the results to inform policy and program development.
- Reorganized and updated the Private Vocational Training Regulation. Revisions to the regulation include enhancing the significance of Class A and Class B status of licensed vocational programs and requiring

distance learning training to meet the same requirements as training delivered on-site.

- Completed consultations and established regulations for the Campus Alberta Quality Council, which will facilitate the development and expansion of degree-granting opportunities for learners.
- Passed and proclaimed Bill 43, the *Post-secondary Learning Act*, setting the stage for increased access to high-quality degree opportunities through a more adaptable and seamless post-secondary system. The legislation combined and updated four previous acts that each governed a separate area of the system: The *Universities Act*, the *Colleges Act*, the *Technical Institutes Act* and the *Banff Centre Act*.
- Enhanced on-line access to post-secondary education, and created spaces for 692 more students at Alberta's post-secondary institutions in the fields of health sciences, Aboriginal teaching, management and apprenticeship technical training through a \$30 million boost to the Access Fund.
- Accredited six new degree programs to be offered by private institutions, through authorization by Order in Council.

Strategy 1B: Ensure the learning system is responsive to labour market demands and supports the creation and sharing of knowledge.

- In response to industry needs, provided \$20 million to post-secondary technical training providers to maintain an additional 5,780 apprenticeship spaces and enhance technical training equipment and facilities.
- Maintained a high level of satisfaction of employers (95%) and apprenticeship graduates (93%) with the quality of services received from Apprenticeship and Industry Training staff.
- Provided registration and counselling services to apprentices and employers and monitored compliance through a total of 13,154 shop visits.
- Developed a strategic framework in consultation with over 40 stakeholders for integrating skilled immigrants into the Alberta economy, including employees, post-secondary institutions and occupational credentialing bodies.
- Added 400 nominations for skilled immigrants to the Provincial Nominee Program, allowing Alberta to nominate a total of 800 candidates over the course of the agreement.
- Signed international student processing and work permit agreements in support of the Alberta International Education Strategy.
- Concluded two foreign student agreements: the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Priority Processing of International Students and the Agreement on Post-Graduation Employment for Foreign Students. Both agreements support the Alberta International Education Strategy and labour force strategy, *Prepared for Growth*.
- Responded to industry requests for new designations of trades and occupations. Progress includes reviewing the following applications:
 - designation of oil and gas driller as a compulsory certification trade from the Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors (CAODC);
 - designation of six groups of occupations from the Petroleum Services Association of Canada (PSAC);
 - designation of natural gas compression technician as a compulsory certification trade;
 - designation of structural steel and plate fitter to a compulsory certification trade from an optional trade.
- Continued to market Alberta's expertise in apprenticeship and industry training internationally and maintain services to international clients. Collaborated with representatives from Bermuda's government and industry to help them develop a national certification system based on Alberta's apprenticeship and industry training model.

-
- Signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with Saxony (Germany), Denmark, Vietnam, and China to share Alberta Learning's expertise and assist them in enhancing their learning systems.
 - Signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Energy Skills Centre Trinidad and Tobago to formalize the relationship with Alberta Learning with respect to the development of industry standards and training and certification for worker mobility.
 - Arranged visits for Minister-led delegations from Saxony, Basque (Spain) and Jalisco (Mexico) and coordinated Ministerial missions to Vietnam, Ireland and Sweden.

Strategy 1C: Continue to develop a learning system that integrates new learning technologies.

- Received Standing Policy Committee approval for the *Learning and Technology Policy Framework*. Developed a learning and technology research strategy in consultation with Ministry staff and stakeholders.
- Established the Technology Standards and Solutions initiative to identify and share standards and best practices on the use of technology to enhance the delivery of programs and improve learning.
- Increased the amount of digital content posted on the LearnAlberta.ca website, including French resources, the National Geographic Science Centre, and other resources in support of the curriculum. Launched the new English and French interfaces for LearnAlberta.ca, which support search/browse capabilities.
- Developed the LearnAlberta.ca Content Delivery Device solution and initiated a pilot, with full deployment anticipated by Fall 2004.
- Initiated videoconferencing research pilot projects in various areas of the province.
- Supported a variety of learning and technology professional development partnership initiatives, including the TELUS Learning Connection, Galileo Educational Network, Alberta Online Consortium's Information and Communication Technology in High School Learning program, Edmonton Public Schools' Leadership Link initiative, and Palliser Technology Leadership Needs Assessment.
- Provided information on the Technology Standards and Solutions initiative to identify and share standards and best practices on the use of technology to enhance the delivery of programs and improve learning.
- Provided guidance and support to stakeholders and partners on SuperNet implementation. In partnership with NAIT, SuperNet IT training course development was completed.
- Provided support for the Alberta Computers for Schools Program, which has distributed almost 50,000 computers to schools and libraries since 1993.

Strategy 1D: Develop a learning system that maximizes accountability to Albertans by identifying common desired outcomes for the learning system.

- Began implementing outcomes and measures for the Kindergarten to Grade 12 learning system as defined by the Review Committee on Outcomes in provincial surveys of parents, high school students, teachers and the public.
- Conducted field validation of the following Integrated Occupational Programs: English Language Arts, Grades 8-12; Mathematics, Grades 8-11; Science, Grades 8-11; Social Studies, Grades 8-11; Occupational Courses, Grades 8 and 9.
- Completed draft tests for field validation of Grade 9 student performance in Mathematics, English Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies in the Integrated Occupational Program.
- In response to stakeholder expectations for a written component in all diploma examinations, re-designed the Mathematics and Science diploma examinations to include a separate written response portion.

-
- Designed a methodology and phased approach to ensure that diploma examinations are comparable from year to year. Implementation began with Social Studies 30 and 33.
 - Released high school drop-out rates of students aged 14-18 and returning rates of youth who dropped out the previous year to school jurisdictions and the public for the first time.
 - Reviewed school jurisdictions for compliance with Credit Enrolment Unit (CEU) funding guidelines.
 - With NorQuest College, initiated development of measures for services such as library, registration, computer services and counselling.
 - Launched the Beyond MIRS (Management Information Reporting Schedules) Pilot Project with six school boards to assess the usefulness of grade level achievement data for program evaluation at the classroom, school, jurisdictional and provincial levels.

Strategy 2A: Improve First Nations, Métis and Inuit learner success.

- Supported initial implementation of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) School-Community Learning Environment Project with 16 pilot school jurisdictions to improve the success of FNMI learners attending provincial schools by increasing attendance, retention, achievement and high school completion rates.
- Developed the Student Guide for Aboriginal People and the Guide for Counsellors and Educators and distributed them to 1,346 schools and counselling centres.
- Established and co-chaired the Alberta Learning – Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) – Aboriginal organization to identify priority projects for on-reserve education.
- Co-chaired with INAC the Education sub-committee of the Canada/Alberta/Aboriginal Partnership Forum to identify priority projects for on-reserve education.
- Trained 29 Aboriginal people to provide facilitator training or to be facilitators to deliver Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills Programs. Training and family literacy resources that are sensitive to Aboriginal people were provided to 150 home visitors.
- Continued to infuse the Aboriginal perspective into English Language Arts, Health/CALM/ Physical Education, Mathematics and Science programs.
- Exceeded initial target of 45 registered Aboriginal apprentices in the three pilot areas of Edmonton, Fort McMurray and High Level for the Alberta Aboriginal Apprenticeship Project, resulting in 70 registered apprentices participating in 17 different trades.
- Worked with learning stakeholders, industry and Aboriginal organizations to increase Aboriginal awareness and participation in the apprenticeship and industry training system. As of March 30, 2004, there were 688 registered Aboriginal apprentices.
- Developed informational and promotional materials for Aboriginal audiences to increase their awareness and assist them to make choices about career opportunities in the trades through The Aboriginal Communication Strategy. Copies of the *Step Into the Trades* guides for counsellors and educators have been distributed to 1,346 schools and counselling centres.
- Provided presentations on careers in the trades to more than 1,000 junior and senior high school students. Met with members of the First Nations Adult and Higher Education Consortium to provide information regarding licensing of vocational training programs under the *Private Vocational Schools Act* and identify licensing issues that may arise for member institutions.
- Approved several Aboriginal-specific initiatives through the Access Fund to increase access and participation of Aboriginal population, including Aboriginal Teacher Education Program, Aboriginal Teacher (Niitsotapi) Education and the Teacher Assistant Program.

-
- Reviewed and approved 100% of First Nations School Program Declaration forms that ensure Band-Operated Schools' compliance with government requirements.
 - Implemented Aboriginal Learner Data Collection Initiative, requiring public schools and post-secondary institutions to include a voluntary ancestry question on registration forms.

Strategy 2B: Continue to improve learning opportunities for Albertans by enhancing transitions to work and further study for learners.

- Worked with schools, employers and organization such as CAREERS: The Next Generation, Skills Canada and others to communicate career paths in the trades and benefits to high school students resulting in 891 new high school students registered in the Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP). Over 1,500 apprentices who started in RAP are currently continuing in a regular apprenticeship program. Another 487 students who were in RAP have gone on to become certified in their trade.
- Generated 71% of Interprovincial Standards (Red Seal) examinations through the apprenticeship Interprovincial Computerized Examination Management System (ICEMS), to improve the efficiency of the production and administration of Red Seal trade examinations across Canada.
- Provided interprovincial mobility by issuing Red Seal trade certificates to 4,643 tradespersons, up from 4,306 in 2002. The Red Seal allows mobility in designated trades across Canada through recognition of trade certificates among participating provinces.
- Reviewed 3,348 prior learning assessment and qualification certificate applications, up from 3,037 a year ago.
- Certified 603 people through the Qualification Certificate Program, which recognizes prior work experience, knowledge and skills in designated trades and occupations in Alberta.
- Completed almost 800 additional transfer agreements among post-secondary institutions in Alberta.
- Issued 2,754 international qualifications assessment reports to learners with international credentials, a 25% increase from the previous year.
- Negotiated and signed an agreement with the Northwest Territories for the International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS) to provide assessment services to their residents with international credentials.
- Completed a study on employment and educational outcomes for learners with international credentials and published the results and recommendations in the IQAS Outcomes Survey report.
- Released the *Survey of Post-secondary Applicants not Attending Report* on students who applied for post-secondary studies but did not attend, indicating that the extent of unmet demand within Alberta's post-secondary system is lower than Alberta's Duplicate Application Detection project indicated.
- Supported community programs which helped 48,316 participants address a personal learning goal, or work to improve their basic literacy, English as a second language or employability skills through Community Adult Learning Councils and volunteer tutor adult literacy programs.
- Provided settlement services and English as a Second Language assessment services to over 15,000 new immigrants through immigrant serving agencies.
- Developed a methodology for high school to post-secondary transition rate, a new core measure in the Ministry's 2004-07 Business Plan.

Strategy 2C: Enhance accessibility and promote consistent practices of learning programs for all students.

- Passed Bill 1, the *Alberta Centennial Education Savings Plan Act*, which sets the stage for a new program that will encourage parents to open a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) for their children with a \$500 per child investment from government.
- Implemented an Apprenticeship Tuition Fee Policy and monitoring system to ensure that technical training costs are predictable and manageable for apprentices while at the same time maintaining high quality and up-to-date training. Apprentices who demonstrate need may qualify for grants to help pay for tuition, books, supplies and living expenses.
- Established a new Tuition Fee Policy to ensure predictable and manageable tuition increases at post-secondary institutions.
- Awarded \$10 million in Performance Envelope funding to 24 post-secondary institutions in recognition of outstanding performance in areas such as graduate employment and satisfaction, increasing accessibility, reducing administration expenditures and generating enterprise revenue.
- Provided approximately \$84.4 million in loan relief benefits and completion payments to reduce student debt levels. The Alberta Student Loan Relief Benefit and the Loan Relief Completion Payment continued to reduce debt for students in their first and final years of study respectively.
- Increased both the number of scholarship recipients and the total amount awarded under the Alberta Heritage Scholarship Fund. Over 10,600 students received over \$22.2 million in scholarships, an increase of over 5%.
- Issued over \$14.9 million in Achievement Scholarships to over 12,700 Alberta post-secondary students, an increase of over 10%.
- Designed and implemented Belcourt-Brosseau Métis Awards, International Education Awards – Ukraine, Language in Teacher Education Scholarships and Language Teacher Bursary Program.
- The Alberta Scholarships Program handled approximately 16,000 inquiries from learners, parents and educational institutions.
- Recognized and rewarded 50 of Alberta's Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) students with \$1,000 Scholarships.
- Awarded Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Scholarships (valued at \$1,000 each) to 168 apprentices.
- Supported eCampus Alberta, providing Alberta's post-secondary students online access to courses offered by institutions throughout Alberta.
- Continued progress towards completion of the Students Finance System Development Project.
- Completed seven Grades 1-12 Special Education Programming Standards Reviews and 13 Early Childhood Services Programming Standards Reviews.
- Provided ongoing production to convert publisher files into Braille format for use by the visually impaired.
- Collaborated in creation of an inter-divisional accessibility working group whose goal is the enhancement of learner capabilities and the removal of barriers to performance within the educational community.
- Expanded access to learning opportunities in rural communities, through Community Adult Learning Council Initiatives, resulting in an additional 6,359 participants in 491 learning opportunities.
- Completed 89% of the 66 recommendations identified in the three-year Special Education Review Implementation Plan.
- Engaged over 6,500 parents and over 7,000 preschool children in family literacy activities through 53 projects of the Parent-Child Literacy Strategy.

Strategy 3A: Continue to work collaboratively with partners and stakeholders within the learning system.

- Led a collaborative initiative to develop a Pan-Canadian broadband connectivity plan and to introduce the Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP) as a replacement for the School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP).
- Supported government Cross-ministry Initiatives, providing a leadership role in the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative and the Economic Development Strategy, and making value-added contributions to the Health Sustainability Initiative, Aboriginal Policy Initiative, Service Alberta, Information Technology Strategy, Alberta Corporate Service Centre and the Human Resource Development Strategy.
- In conjunction with Statistics Canada, the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada and other provincial and territorial governments, released the *Report of the Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program 2003*.
- Transferred two schools from Grande Yellowhead Regional Division to Living Waters Catholic Regional Division to address changes in student enrolment.
- Participated on the Joint Policy Coordination Committee (JPCC) meetings and worked in partnership with Alberta Infrastructure to plan, evaluate, and develop school capital plans, programs, policies and legislation.
- Approved the cross-ministry *Policy Framework for Services for Children and Youth with Special and Complex Needs and their Families* in July 2003. Provided cross-sector and ministry orientation sessions on the *Framework* and *Information Sharing Guideline* to over 400 participants.
- Developed a cross-ministry tracking system, in collaboration with Children's Services and Health and Wellness, as part of the implementation of Policy Direction #1 under the *Framework* to support regional integrated case management team reviews as well as provide data on the needs of children/youth with complex needs and the nature and costs of the services provided by the various service sectors.
- Contributed to the cross-ministry Service Delivery Working Group for the Mental Health Framework.
- Completed revisions to the Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution handbook.
- Completed revisions to the Young Offender Protocol to reflect the new *Youth Criminal Justice Act*.
- Assumed lead for the day-to-day management of the Student Health Initiative, with support from Children's Services and Health and Wellness.
- Conducted a cross-ministry review of the Student Health Initiative and began implementation of the recommendations.
- Prepared a Provincial Report on the first three years of the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement.
- Reviewed local strategies with school superintendents for improving student achievement in priority schools, promoting continuous improvement, and Credit Enrolment Units (CEU) funding requirements.
- Reviewed and approved Alberta Home and School Councils' Association's 2003/04 Annual Plan and 2002/03 Annual Results Report, as required by the Conditional Grant Agreement to ensure accountability requirements are being met.
- Provided liaison between the department and the regional consortia to facilitate effective implementation of new/revised curricula.
- Developed implementation plans for recommendations assigned to the Implementation Planning Committee – School Councils – Next Steps Report (1999).
- Reviewed Three-Year Education Plans, with school jurisdictions and completed follow up to ensure consistency and compliance with provincial requirements and with the capital and facility plans.
- Reviewed Annual Education Results Reports with school jurisdictions to discuss results and improvement plans.

-
- Presented information to stakeholders at regional meetings to facilitate effective implementation of the Renewed Funding Framework in school jurisdictions.
 - Established the Stakeholder Advisory Committee to facilitate the successful development and implementation of the Accountability Pillar of the Renewed Funding Framework for school jurisdictions.
 - Developed and implemented a plan to ensure that student transcripts are monitored at the local level to make certain that students going into Grade 12 have the prerequisite courses necessary to access courses leading to the High School Diploma.
 - Commenced first phase of a pilot project to explore delivery improvements for production of educational resource materials.
 - Worked in collaboration with other provincial and territorial ministries on the Pan-Canadian Online Learning Portal, officially launched by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada. Approval was given by Ministers to fund further work on the portal
 - Worked collaboratively with Alberta Infrastructure to determine the capital priorities for school boards.
 - Presented the Chairman's Award of Excellence to five individuals at the Industry Network Workshop to recognize outstanding dedication and commitment to the trades and to the principles of apprenticeship through many years of service in the industry committee network.
 - Led and supported activities to promote standardization, recognition and mobility of trades across Canada through the Canadian Council of Directors of Apprenticeship (CCDA), Interprovincial Alliance of Apprenticeship Board Chairs (IPA), the Interprovincial Computerized Examination Management System (ICEMS) and the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF).
 - Worked with industry partners and other government departments to forecast employment supply and demand in the trades and develop strategies to address skilled trades shortages.
 - Started collaborations with the Construction Sector Council and other partners to develop construction supply and demand information regionally and across the country.
 - Held a workshop to strengthen the network of industry committees and developed an action plan to enhance the effectiveness of the committees. Members of the network recommend standards for training and certification and identify changes in training, enabling the apprenticeship and industry training system to be timely, up to date and responsive to the labour market and economy.
 - Completed a program review of Career and Technology Studies (CTS) and implemented a prerequisite monitoring plan. Developed an electronic database system that verifies CTS/CEU claims to ensure that prerequisites are in place for failed or withdrawn CTS courses.
 - Consulted with owners of private institutions offering vocational programs licensed under the *Private Vocational Schools Act* regarding the security requirements associated with licensed programs.
 - Developed strategies, in collaboration with Economic Development, to support Alberta's transition to a knowledge-based economy.
 - In collaboration with the federal government and Council of Ministers of Education Canada (CMEC), developed recommendations for improvements to student financial assistance, promoting accessible and affordable post-secondary education.
 - Completed strategic planning sessions with Grande Prairie Regional College.
 - Completed a review of enrolment management processes at Lethbridge Community College.
 - Completed consultations on roles and responsibilities within the post-secondary system and incorporated changes into the *Post-secondary Learning Act*.
-

-
- Developed a priority list, in collaboration with Alberta Infrastructure, which identified the capital projects for 2004-07 for post-secondary institutions, as part of the overall Government Capital Planning Initiative.
 - In collaboration with Alberta Human Resources and Employment, handled over 144,000 inquiries from clients and delivery partners through the Student Funding Contact Centre, resulting in a significant reduction in the average wait time for callers. Approximately 90,000 of these inquiries were related to student assistance programs for post-secondary studies.
 - Signed Memorandum of Understanding to establish Alberta-British Columbia Protocol for Cooperation and Development – Acquisition and Delivery of Learning Resources.
 - Negotiated with the Federal Government to have Alberta's interests and priorities reflected in federal immigration policy and programs.

Strategy 3B: Promote financial sustainability of the learning system.

- In support of affordable learning opportunities, processed over 144,000 applications for student loans, scholarships, and loan relief payments from more than 96,000 clients, an increase of 15.7% applicants.
- Developed an action plan to address prerequisite monitoring for Career and Technology Study courses as requested by the Auditor General.
- Redeveloped financial systems to accept the Renewed Funding Framework and recommendations from the Alberta Commission on Learning.
- Reviewed emergency preparedness and implemented a Business Resumption Plan for the Ministry.
- Announced and provided a one-time funding allocation of \$20 million to enable school jurisdictions to purchase learning resources through the Learning Resources Centre.
- Assisted post-secondary institutions with one-time operations and maintenance grants of \$30 million.
- Acted on the recommendations of Alberta's Commission on Learning by providing \$37 million for increases in funding for students with severe special needs, a return to credit-based funding for Grade 10 students, and other costs identified by the Commission. Also provided \$2.7 million to address needs in school jurisdictions that have experienced large enrolment declines.

Strategy 3C: Ensure Albertans have timely, accurate and relevant information about the learning system.

- Posted the annual Curriculum Handbooks and Summaries for parents on Alberta Learning's website in both English and French.
- Reported results of the 2002/03 surveys of the public, adult learners, parent and high school students and conducted the 2003/04 surveys.
- Launched the Accountability Pillar for the Kindergarten to Grade12 system, including provincial surveys of school board members, Grade 4, 7 and 10 students and their parents and teachers. In total more than 270,000 surveys were distributed.
- Developed the Rutherford Scholarship measure for school jurisdictions as part of the Accountability Pillar.
- Sought input and shared information about LearnAlberta.ca with stakeholders to increase awareness about LearnAlberta.ca at events throughout the year (including focus groups, stakeholder sessions, conferences, teacher and specialist council events, etc.).
- In partnership with Alberta Human Resources and Employment, upgraded the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website to provide timely, accurate and relevant information about the learning system.

-
- Posted the Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board 2002/2003 Annual Report on the Trade Secrets website.
 - Number of visitors to the Students Finance and Scholarships & Bursaries sections of the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website increased by approximately 38% and 32% respectively.
 - Led the development of strategies under the Raising Awareness About Planning for Post-secondary Studies initiative to promote the long-term benefits of post-secondary education and enhance knowledge of parents and learners about planning for post-secondary studies.
 - Worked collaboratively with Alberta Home and School Councils' Association (AHSCA) to raise parental awareness about planning for post-secondary studies.
 - Completed and distributed the Regional Profiles website to post-secondary institutions, making vital information on the province's regions such as student enrollment, population and demographics, available to institutions, the media and the general public.
 - Conducted the first consolidated satisfaction and employment survey of post-secondary students.
 - Worked with school jurisdictions, public post-secondary institutions, the Ministry of Finance and the Auditor General to discuss the impact of expanding the financial reporting entity to include school jurisdictions and public post-secondary institutions.
 - Conducted a satisfaction survey of employers of learning system graduates, including high school, apprenticeship, diploma, certificate and degree graduates.
 - Shared information with Albertans on new initiatives, programs and developments in the learning system through a variety of communication tools, including news releases, fact sheets and the department's website.

Strategy 3D: Develop long-term human resource capacity for the learning system and department.

- Developed 2003-06 Human Resources Plan with a focus on the goals of work-life balance, leadership development and continuity and continuous learning.
- Implemented the use of the Operational Plan Database System (OPDS) to link individual performance plans with Operational Plans.