



Every child **learns.**
Every child **succeeds.**

Report and recommendations
Alberta's Commission on Learning

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A word of thanks

Albertans care deeply about the education of their children and the future of their education system. That was obvious from the literally thousands of individuals who took the time to participate in this review. It was obvious from the passionate and heartfelt views expressed by parents and students, teachers and trustees, and the staff at Alberta Learning. It was obvious in the pride people showed in their schools, their programs, their teachers and their students.

While there may be divided opinions on what should be done, there is no division when it comes to an overriding commitment to education and to giving Alberta's children the very best education we can provide.

The Commission would like to thank all of the individuals and organizations that participated fully and openly in this review process. Your views have been heard.

We encourage all Albertans to read our report, to discuss and debate the ideas we've proposed, and to continue your strong commitment to Alberta's children and the future of our education system.

Commission members:

Patricia Mackenzie (Chair)
Michael Davenport
Thomas Erasmus
Joan Green
Jack H. Hole
Kabir Jivraj
Nancy Knowlton
Bob Maskell
Mark Sollis

Support staff and advisors:

Scott Graham - Executive Director
Barb Noble - Administrative Support
Peggy Garritty - Writer and communications consultant
Nelly McEwen - Research
Neil Henry - Research
Stacy Hanscom - Research
Charlotte Landry - Research
Al O'Brien - Financial consultant

The Commission would also like to thank the staff of Alberta Learning who provided outstanding support to the Commission in compiling the workbook results, providing information, and assisting with the Commission's research program.

October 2003

Honourable Dr. Lyle Oberg
Minister of Learning
Government of Alberta
#204, 10800-97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Dr. Oberg:

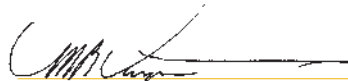
As members of Alberta's Commission on Learning, we are pleased to provide our report and recommendations for the future of Alberta's education system.

This report is a culmination of months of work listening to the views of hundreds of Albertans, reviewing research and trends, seeking the best advice from experts, exploring options, and developing our own ideas and recommendations.

We sincerely hope that our report will stimulate discussion and debate. More importantly, we hope it will act as a catalyst for concerted and deliberate action across the province. Throughout our consultations, we learned how deeply Albertans care about education. In their view, and ours, education is, and will continue to be, the best investment we can make in the future of our children and our province.

As members of the Commission, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to participate in such a challenging and important task. We now turn this report over to you and encourage you and all Albertans to take up the challenge, to work together and to ensure that every child learns and every child succeeds.



Patricia Mackenzie, Chair


Mike Davenport


Thomas Erasmus


Joan Green


Jack Hole


Kabir Jivraj


Nancy Knowlton


Bob Maskell


Mark Sollis

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Highlights

Every child **learns**. Every child **succeeds**.

After months of consulting with Albertans, listening to ideas and suggestions from a wide range of education stakeholders and experts, and reviewing research studies and reports, the Commission's vision for the future of education in Alberta comes down to a few simple but compelling words - every child learns, every child succeeds. Surely, that is what we all want for Alberta's children - for every one of them to learn and every one of them to succeed in school, in their careers, and in life.

This final report from Alberta's Commission on Learning provides highlights of our extensive consultation process, the views we heard from countless individuals and organizations, along with a comprehensive review of research on a wide range of topics related to the Commission's mandate. It challenges all of us to look beyond the issues of today, to imagine our province ten or more years from now, and to think of the kinds of skills, knowledge, programs and supports children will need to succeed now and in a future that could be very different from what we see today.

The Commission's vision begins with five very important starting points.

The first is that Alberta has an outstanding education system. This was reinforced in comments and presentations throughout our public consultations. That doesn't mean, however, that we can be complacent and accept what we have as "good enough." It simply means we have a higher platform to spring from.

Second, education is the most important investment we can make as a society. Our education system not only shapes individual students' lives, it shapes the very nature of our society. A strong and vibrant public education system - a system that values each and every individual, instills positive values, and builds tolerance and respect - is critical to develop social cohesion and the kind of civil society Albertans want for the future.

The third point is that it's critical to look beyond the pressing issues of today and prepare for the future, whatever that future might hold. The best approach is to ensure that the education system remains flexible, resilient and able to anticipate and adapt to what will undoubtedly be a climate of perpetual change.

Fourth, education will become even more critical to individual Albertans, to their communities, and to our province as a whole, especially with the growing importance of skills, knowledge and ideas to the future of our society and Alberta's role in a global economy. Albertans are strong supporters of their public education system. However, it will only remain one of the best systems in the world if we take deliberate actions to keep it that way.

Finally, the most important point is that everything in the education system must start and end with children and youth. Schools are not there for teachers, for administrators or trustees. They're not there for parents, for businesses, or for governments. They're there for students. And the first and only criterion for judging the success of schools and the education system should be how well every child learns.

To achieve the vision we set, the Commission believes that concerted and deliberate actions are needed in eight areas:

1. **Ready to learn** - Making sure all children come to school ready to learn. That means actions are taken early, by their parents and by all the adults involved in children's lives, to ensure that all children get a positive and healthy start in their lives, and to identify and address potential problems before children come to school.
2. **What students learn** - Maintaining a world-class curriculum and ensuring that students learn the skills, knowledge and attributes they need to succeed in learning, in the workplace, and in life.
3. **The schools we need** - Developing excellent schools - schools with a compelling drive to improve students' outcomes, ensure they learn to the best of their abilities, and help them become confident, capable and productive individuals, prepared to pursue their goals and contribute to society.
4. **Success for every child** - Adapting programs and providing support so that all children, including Aboriginal children, children with special needs, children new to Canada, and children who have special gifts and talents, get every opportunity to succeed in school.
5. **Making the grade** - Setting high standards and ensuring they are met through ongoing assessment, improvements and accountability.
6. **Technology plus** - Not just learning about computers or adding computers to schools but learning with technology and making sure a range of technologies is fully integrated and used as powerful tools for both teaching and learning.
7. **Excellent teachers and school leaders** - Ensuring that every child is taught by capable and caring teachers and every school is led by an outstanding principal.
8. **Good governance** - Providing thoughtful and capable governance, positive labour relations, and engaging the various partners in education in an environment of mutual trust and respect.

Key directions and recommendations

Ready to learn

The seeds for success in learning are planted well before children come to school. Children need a healthy and nurturing start in life, early detection of problems that could affect their learning, and a chance to have those problems addressed before they start school.

Recommendations

Support the role of parents

1. Establish parenting centres in communities across the province with close links to elementary schools.

Expand kindergarten programs

2. Establish new junior kindergarten programs on a phased-in basis.
3. Establish full-day kindergarten programs.

Coordinate services for children

4. Ensure better coordination of programs for children provided by the provincial government and at the community level.

What children learn

Alberta has an excellent curriculum. It provides a sound balance of reading and mathematics, understanding history, geography and world events, learning about sciences, appreciating the arts, keeping physically active, learning languages, and getting experience in a number of career areas. This balance should be maintained. The key challenge is to ensure that the curriculum is continuously updated and revised so that it remains a rigorous, thoughtful and world-class program. It's also critical that schools prepare young people for a growing realization that a high school diploma is the minimum ticket for entry to the workforce. Far too many Alberta students drop out of school and too few of them go on to complete post-secondary education.

Recommendations

Expect clear outcomes and values

5. Ensure that clear outcomes and expectations continue to be in place and supplement those expectations with a set of values to be reinforced and reflected in all schools.





Maintain and improve Alberta's world-class curriculum

6. Maintain and continuously improve Alberta's comprehensive and balanced curriculum with:

- An ongoing emphasis on core areas such as language arts, mathematics, social studies and science
- Opportunities for students to gain an appreciation of the fine arts, learn languages in addition to English, maintain active and healthy lifestyles, explore emerging careers, and develop specific career-related skills.

In addition, the following specific areas should be reviewed:

- Fine arts - All students should have opportunities to learn and experience the fine arts at all levels in the education system. Fine arts should be mandatory up to grade 9 then optional for students in grades 10 to 12.
- Career and Technology Studies (CTS) - The program should be reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of students and provides them with focused experiences in a number of career fields.

7. Introduce a new wellness program for all students from kindergarten to grade 12.

8. Provide all students with the opportunity to learn a second language.

9. Ensure that when new curriculum is implemented:

- Adequate support is available for comprehensive inservice activities for teachers
- Support is available for new learning resource materials
- Arrangements are in place so that it is clear to teachers and students whether or not new high school courses will be accepted for post-secondary admission purposes
- Mechanisms are in place to quickly and effectively address any problems that may occur.

10. Improve students' transitions from grade to grade and school to school by ensuring better communication, coordinated plans, and appropriate support for students.

Prepare the next generation

11. Develop and implement a comprehensive, province-wide strategy with the goal of ensuring that 90% of students complete grade 12 within four years of starting high school.

12. Undertake a comprehensive, independent review of Alberta's post-secondary education system.



The schools we need

Schools must be places where excellence is the hallmark of everything they do. For all children to learn and succeed, schools should operate as professional learning communities dedicated to constantly improving results, students should be in classes where they are able to receive the attention they deserve, students should have access to adequate support from counsellors and other supports, and schools should be the centre of coordinated services for students. With a strong public education system as the foundation, parents should continue to have choices in public and separate schools, francophone schools, alternative programs, charter schools, distance learning, virtual, and private schools, and home schooling.

Recommendations

Develop professional learning communities

13. Require every school to operate as a professional learning community dedicated to continuous improvement in students' achievement.

Implement class size guidelines

14. Establish and implement province-wide guidelines for average class sizes across school jurisdictions.
 - Rather than set legislated limits or hard and fast rules, there should be flexibility in the size of classes.
 - School jurisdictions should be expected to meet the guidelines on average class sizes across their school jurisdiction. That means the guidelines would not necessarily be met in each and every classroom but should be met on average across the school jurisdiction.

- The suggested provincial guidelines should be:
 - Junior kindergarten to grade 3 - 17 students
 - Grades 4 to 6 - 23 students
 - Grades 7 to 9 - 25 students
 - Grades 10 to 12 - 27 students.
 - Class composition should be considered by schools in setting class size. Generally, classes with special needs students, students whose first language is not English, and vulnerable and at-risk students should be smaller than the suggested guideline. Classes should also be smaller in cases where there are safety considerations such as vocational classes.
 - School jurisdictions and the province should be required to report annually on average class sizes and should be accountable for explaining whether or not the guidelines have been met.
 - The province should provide adequate funding to enable school jurisdictions to meet the class size guidelines. Information on average class sizes should be included in school jurisdiction profiles and used to determine provincial funding levels.
15. Abandon the use of pupil-teacher ratios and replace it with measures of class size and the range of professional and paraprofessional support available for classrooms.

Guarantee adequate time for students

16. Maintain current guarantees for hours of instruction available to students and ensure flexibility in scheduling to allow professional learning communities to work effectively.
17. Encourage schools and school jurisdictions to explore alternatives to the current school year.

Expand students' access to counselling and other specialized services

18. Ensure that all students have access to adequate counselling, diagnostic and other specialized services necessary for them to succeed.

Establish a new "education link"

19. Establish a province-wide "education link" telecommunications service to provide teachers, parents and students with immediate access to specialized services and advice.

Develop schools as hubs of services for children and communities

20. Ensure that schools become the centre of a wide range of coordinated, community services targeted at meeting the needs of children and youth.
21. Encourage shared use of facilities, programs and services among school jurisdictions and with the community.

Maintain and build schools

22. Ensure that sufficient and predictable funding is available to renovate existing schools and build new schools where and when they are needed.
23. Consolidate funding for building and renovating schools, as well as the operation and maintenance of schools, within the Alberta Learning budget.

Ensure safe schools and positive choices

24. Ensure that all schools encourage positive attitudes, good behaviour and respect for others, provide a safe environment for students, and address incidences of disruptive behaviour when they occur.
25. Continue to provide high quality choices while, at the same time, preserving and enhancing public schools.
26. Maintain current limits on the number of charter schools and the length of their terms and expand efforts to share their outcomes with the rest of the education system.





Success for every child

Alberta's classrooms include a rich and diverse mix of students with a wide range of abilities, interests, backgrounds, languages, cultures and religions. Deliberate actions are needed to ensure that this diversity is embraced and every child has a chance for success in school.

Recommendations

Improve education outcomes for Aboriginal children and youth

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



Address every child's special needs

42. Ensure that adequate support is in place when children with special needs are integrated into regular classrooms including:

- Access to professional support for assessment
- Access to appropriate learning resources and assistive devices (e.g. Braille)
- Paraprofessional support
- Coordinated services with health centres, Child and Family Services Authorities, community organizations, and parenting centres
- Adequate time for teachers to organize and plan programs and support services with teaching assistants, other professionals, and community agencies
- Smaller class sizes.

43. Ensure that teacher preparation programs and ongoing professional development activities prepare teachers to address the diversity of students, including children with special needs.

44. Provide classroom teachers with adequate support to develop and implement individual program plans for children with special needs.

45. Expand early assessment and intervention to ensure that children with special needs are identified early and get the support and programs they need before they come to school.

46. Provide appropriate training and professional development for teaching assistants who work with children with special needs.

47. Ensure continuity in funding for children with special needs from junior kindergarten through to grade 12.

48. Expand opportunities for students with special needs to continue on to post-secondary education or into the workforce.

49. Develop a province-wide strategy using SuperNet as a vehicle for expanding programs and developing challenging opportunities for gifted and talented students.

Provide support for children with diverse languages and cultures

50. Provide students with English as a second language, students who are not proficient in English, and francophone students who need upgrading in French, and their teachers, with access to appropriate assessment, programs, learning resources, professional and paraprofessional assistance required to meet their needs.

51. Extend funding for English as a second language, English language deficiency, and French language upgrading to children in junior and regular kindergarten.

52. Create provincial proficiency standards for assessing English as a second language students, students who are not proficient in English, and French language upgrading students, and provide funding until students reach the standard.



Making the grade

Accountability is critical. Students want to know that they are making the grade and ready for their next challenges. Parents want to know how well their children are achieving on a regular basis and in comparison with provincial standards. And the public deserves to know how well our education system is preparing young people for their futures. The province's highly regarded testing program should be maintained and enhanced.

Recommendations

Encourage school improvement, research and innovation

53. Ensure that the primary focus of school and school jurisdiction education plans continues to be on improving students' achievement.
54. Continue to support research and innovative approaches for improving student outcomes.

Maintain and improve provincial achievement tests

55. Maintain and improve provincial achievement tests at grades 3, 6 and 9 by ensuring that:
 - Provincial achievement tests continue to be used as a system-wide check on how well students achieve provincial standards
 - Results from the tests are used along with ongoing classroom assessments to guide and inform plans for improving students' achievement
 - The tests are enhanced over time to include a variety of tasks that allow students to demonstrate the full range of their skills, including their ability to apply their knowledge, think critically, and express their thoughts and ideas.

56. Develop and implement a French language arts achievement test for grade 3.

57. Regularly report results from provincial achievement tests as part of ongoing reporting to parents and within a context that helps them understand and interpret the results.

Maintain and continually improve diploma exams

58. Maintain and enhance diploma exams and include a balance of multiple choice and written response questions in all subject areas.

Support ongoing classroom assessment

59. Ensure that all teachers have access to high quality, performance-based and cutting-edge classroom assessment materials and practices.

Provide province-wide information and accountability

60. Provide ongoing, comprehensive, consistent and transparent information to Albertans about the outcomes achieved by Alberta's students.

Technology plus

Technology affects virtually every aspect of our lives and it is changing how people live, how they work and how they learn. We've called this section "Technology plus" because it's not enough to simply have computers in schools. Technology has to be integrated into all aspects of teaching and learning and used wisely and effectively to improve results for students.

Recommendations

Learn with technology not about technology

61. Implement the proposed Learning and Technology Policy Framework and fully integrate the use of technology in every classroom in the province over the next five years.
62. Set province-wide standards for the types of technology that should be available in every classroom.
63. Expect principals to provide proactive leadership in integrating technology in both the instructional and administrative aspects of the school.

Prepare teachers for integrating technology

64. Require all teachers to be proficient in the integrated use of technology and ensure that they have the necessary support in the classroom.
65. Model the appropriate application of technology in all teacher preparation programs and provide adequate, ongoing professional development.

Use technology to improve access

66. Expand the use of technology to improve access to education programs and related services in rural and remote communities.

Provide adequate support

67. Provide adequate funding not only for the purchase of hardware and software but also for necessary technical support, training, and continuous upgrading of equipment.
68. Regularly assess the effectiveness of new technology and applications and provide advice to school boards to guide their decisions about the purchase of new technology.





Excellent teachers and school leaders

Teachers are critical to the success of students and the success of the education system. We need to ensure that they continue to be well prepared for the challenges they face and that consistent professional development activities are available throughout their careers. The role of the principal is becoming increasingly challenging and deserves a special focus within the education system, particularly in preparing principals and providing ongoing support and professional development.

Recommendations

Improve teacher preparation programs and experiences for beginning teachers

69. Review and improve current preservice programs for teachers to ensure that they provide excellent preparation for Alberta's beginning teachers.
70. Establish a permanent mechanism for ensuring a closer link among faculties of education, superintendents, teachers, and Alberta Learning.
71. Require school jurisdictions to adapt the first-year experience and provide effective coaching for beginning teachers.

Expand professional development

72. Develop and implement comprehensive professional development plans for every school jurisdiction and every school.
73. Require all teachers to have targeted annual professional development plans that are directly linked to their schools' improvement plans.

Ensure competent teachers for every student

74. Ensure that policies and regulations on supervising and evaluating teachers are well understood and effectively implemented.
75. Replace the current Board of Reference process with an arbitration process that is consistent with models in place for employees who have the right to bargain collectively in the province.

Recognize and support the leadership role of principals

76. Develop a quality practice standard and identify the knowledge, skills and attributes required for principals.
77. Establish a new program to prepare and certify principals.
78. Establish a new Council of Education Executives to provide certification, ongoing support and professional development for principals and assistant principals.

Develop outstanding superintendents

79. Develop a comprehensive, targeted program for preparing superintendents and providing ongoing professional development to support them in their role as CEOs of school jurisdictions.
80. Remove the current requirement for the appointment of superintendents to be approved by the Minister of Learning.

Good governance

No one wants to see a repeat of the labour situation in 2002. Much as some might think we can turn back the clock, it is not possible to go back to the way it was before the strike. A new approach to collective bargaining is needed. In the longer term, it is important for all of the key partners in education to sort out appropriate roles and responsibilities and work together in a positive and collaborative way to achieve the best outcomes for students.

Recommendations

Establish a new collective bargaining model

81. Create a new approach to collective bargaining with four key components:
 - Establishing a legislated employer bargaining association
 - Maintaining the Alberta Teachers' Association as a single organization responsible for professional services and collective bargaining for teachers
 - Limiting what can be bargained for collectively
 - Expanding teachers' professional responsibilities but maintaining their right to strike.

Balance roles and responsibilities

82. Maintain a balance between centralized and decentralized responsibilities for the provincial government and school boards.

Explore opportunities for amalgamating services

83. Provide provincial incentives and support to school jurisdictions that wish to consider joint services and amalgamations in order to improve services to their students.
84. Develop common technology standards for financial, accounting, student information, human resources, and other key information systems to improve the administration of education.

Build effective and engaged school councils

85. Reinforce the role of school councils and require principals to actively engage parents in school improvement planning.
86. Clearly define and set province-wide policy on what is considered "basic" and what are considered "extras" in relation to fund-raising by school councils. Limit school councils' role in fund-raising to "extras" consistently defined across the province and require schools and school councils to report annually on their fund-raising activities and how the funds were used.



Investing in our children's future

Throughout its consultations, the Commission consistently heard that current funding is not adequate to meet the growing expectations of schools. This clearly doesn't mean that money is the only answer or that simply pouring more money into the system will make all our troubles go away. But money clearly is part of the answer and an issue that must be addressed.

Provide adequate funding for the current education system

Based on analysis of the adequacy of current funding done for the Commission, our conclusion is that there is a shortfall of \$90.6 million. That amount covers the additional costs of unfunded salary and cost pressures, provides adequate funding for children with severe disabilities, increases funding for operations and maintenance of schools on an ongoing basis, and reinstates credit enrolment unit funding with caps on the maximum credits allowed for grade 10 students. An additional \$46 million is required to implement a new funding framework. This brings the total amount required to address the estimated shortfall and implement a new funding framework to \$136.6 million.

Recommendations

87. Address the current shortfall in funds as soon as possible, but no later than the 2004-05 provincial budget.
88. Address the shortfall in operations and maintenance funding on an ongoing basis.
89. Implement the Renewed Funding Framework as part of the budget for 2004-05.
90. Provide sustainable and predictable funding.
91. Implement a transparent, open and understandable financial information system that provides accurate, timely and comparable information on funding for Alberta's education system.
92. Establish a mechanism for school boards and teachers to provide ongoing and regular input to the provincial government on the overall costs of education and related issues.





Support new initiatives

Not all of the initiatives recommended by the Commission require additional funding. Many can be achieved over time within existing budgets and several should help streamline services and reduce costs. However, a number of major initiatives such as introducing new junior kindergarten programs or implementing province-wide guidelines on class size will have definite cost implications. The Commission has developed estimates of the costs of each of the major new initiatives.

While the costs are significant, they need to be placed in perspective. The province currently invests \$3.8 billion in Alberta's education system. The new initiatives recommended by the Commission in phase one would increase that investment by under 6%. Furthermore, the investment we make today in the education of our children will pay substantial dividends for generations of Albertans to come. Albertans have consistently said that education is one of their top priorities. For us to succeed in giving every child the chance to learn and succeed, for us to have a highly skilled and well-educated workforce, and for us to develop the kind of civil society Albertans want, there is no better investment we can make than in education and the future of our children.

The Commission also is confident that there will be substantial long-term savings, particularly from investing in early intervention programs for children at risk. If the province invested \$73.5 million in making sure at-risk children come to school ready to learn, then the long-term savings could range from \$294 to close to \$662 million.

Recommendations

- 93. Phase in funding for new initiatives recommended by the Commission on a priority basis over the next five years.**

Examine and implement new sources for additional funds

Every child should have equitable access to education and an equitable opportunity to learn and succeed. That means equitable funding must be available in every school jurisdiction across the province. The primary source of funding should continue to be the provincial government, through a combination of general revenues and education property taxes. At the same time, the Commission believes that school boards should have the opportunity to raise an additional, limited amount of funds from their residents. This provides a direct link between school boards and their electorate and allows people in different communities to provide additional support to meet local needs and priorities. The Commission also looked at school fees and concerns that school jurisdictions not be allowed to raise school fees to a level where they could compromise some children's access to education.

Recommendations

- 94. Allow school boards to requisition their local residents for up to 10% of the amount raised through provincial education property taxes.**
- 95. Set province-wide policies on school fees that would:**
 - Prohibit fees to cover the costs of basic education items
 - Detail what charges can be levied and set maximum caps on school fees
 - Allow reasonable fees for extracurricular activities.



Proposed Funding Requirements

Funding the current system	Priorities	Estimated cost
Shortfall in current funding	Unfunded salary and cost pressures Children with severe disabilities Operations and maintenance funding Grade 10 credit enrolment funding	\$19.8 million \$23.0 million \$31.0 million \$16.8 million
Total shortfall		\$90.6 million
Implement new funding framework	Fair allocation with no school board receiving less money	\$46.0 million
Total		\$136.6 million

Funding for new initiatives	Priorities	Estimated annual incremental cost
Phase 1 - Years 1 - 3	Class size guidelines for kindergarten to grade 3 Parenting centres Full-day junior kindergarten for at-risk children Full-day regular kindergarten for at-risk children Aboriginal initiatives Second languages Technology standards	\$111.4 million \$10.5 million \$42.0 million \$21.0 million \$17.3 million \$2.2 million \$20.0 million
Total Phase 1		\$224.4 million
Phase 2 - Years 4 - 5	Class size guidelines for grades 4 - 6 and 7 - 9 Half-day junior kindergarten for all children Full-day regular kindergarten for all children Aboriginal initiatives Second languages Technology standards Education link	\$26.4 million \$86.0 million \$86.0 million \$10.0 million \$3.2 million \$20.0 million \$4.0 million
Total Phase 2		\$235.6 million
Total new initiatives		\$460.0 million

Overall Total

\$596.6 million

Concluding comments

The Commission would like to thank the thousands of individual Albertans, parents and students, teachers and trustees, education stakeholders, and experts who participated in this important review.

Clearly, Albertans care deeply about their education system. Alberta is fortunate to have one of the best education systems in Canada and North America. But that doesn't mean what we have today is good enough. The education system can and must continuously improve to meet the challenges of the future.

The Commission urges Albertans to review this report and think about the changes we have proposed. There is no doubt that some of our

recommendations will be well received while others will be the subject of heated debates. That's a good thing. Our education system is too important to ignore, and the best results will come from ongoing discussion and debate, careful thought and deliberate action.

By working together and investing in the future of our children, the Commission is confident that Alberta will lead the country, if not the world, in the quality of education and we'll achieve the vision. Every child will learn. And every child will succeed.

*Many things we need can wait, the child cannot.
Now is the time his bones are being formed
his blood is being made,
his mind is being developed.
To him we cannot say tomorrow,
his name is today.*

Gabriela Mistral, Chilean poet

