

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGES FOR 2003-2004 FUNDING MANUAL FOR SCHOOL AUTHORITIES FOR THE 2003-2004 SCHOOL YEAR

The following outlines the significant changes to the manual, including those relating to the renewed Funding Framework.

1. PART 1 begins with a section entitled Renewed Framework for Funding School Jurisdictions. It explains the Principles and the Flexibility, Accountability, and Funding Pillars of the renewed Funding Framework. The Flexibility and Accountability Pillars are being implemented in the 2003-2004 school year. Accountability measures are included in the explanation of the Accountability Pillar. These measures will be used in assessing and reporting results. School jurisdictions have the flexibility needed to accommodate local decision-making and are publicly accountable for the use of resources and for results achieved.
2. ECS funding for school jurisdictions described in PART 2 of previous funding manuals has been moved to PART 1 of this manual.
3. In PART 1 the funding categories are divided as Base Funding and Differential Cost Funding. Base Funding deals with base cost of operations and Differential Cost Funding deals with cost factors that are beyond the control of the board and vary across jurisdictions.
4. PART 1 FORMAT CHANGES:
The sections in PART 1, Funding for School Jurisdictions, have been reformatted to assist in providing maximum flexibility to school boards. The Purpose statement has been removed and the Conditions, Requirements and Considerations have been replaced by the following:
 - ALLOCATION FORMULA: states the formulas that determine the amount of funding for which a school jurisdiction is eligible.
 - ALLOCATION CRITERIA: describes the necessary conditions under which the funding is provided, for example, what senior high school credits are eligible for funding; eligible student counts for specific programs; how to determine the number of full-time and the number of part-time grade 10 students eligible for funding.
 - PROCEDURES, DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING: describes what procedures to follow for submitting student counts; what coding to use for specific student counts; what forms are used for specified funding; what documentation school jurisdictions are to keep on file (transportation bus routes and maps) and special reporting requirements.

- ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: other information that is useful to school jurisdictions relative to funding, for example, fee deductions for Edulink and the Alberta School Boards Association and students transfers between school authorities and the effect on funding.
5. Education program requirements that are described in Alberta Learning documents, for example, the *Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12* and the *Standards for Special Education*, have been removed from Part 1 of the Funding Manual. However, these documents are to be used in conjunction with the Funding Manual in determining the education program requirements and standards for which funding is provided.
 6. References to expenditure reporting in the Audited Financial Statements have been removed from Part 1 of the Funding Manual. The reporting requirements will be outlined in the documentation accompanying the Audited Financial Statement.
 7. PART 2 describes Early Childhood Services funding for private ECS operators and funded private schools.
 8. PART 4 includes Francisation (previously in PART 1) as this program is funded by the Federal Government and is now together with other federally funded programs.
 9. PARTS 5 and 6, Other Provincial Funding and Services Contracted by Government includes funding such as the Student Health Initiative, and programs under contract, such as Institutional Programs. These programs remain unchanged for the 2003-2004 school year.
 10. Basic Instruction, sections 1.2 and 3.1, have been revised to bring the minimum course completion requirements for the funding of CEUs earned in grade 10 regular courses into alignment with the grades 11 and 12 minimum course completion requirements for funding. A student must now earn a final mark of at least 25% (but less than 50%) in the grade 10 course, and have attended at least 50% of the classes in the course or have worked on and been assessed for at least 50% of the course content. In the 2002-2003 school year, a grade 10 regular course was funded if an earned mark was at least 25%.
 11. Basic Instruction, section 1.2, includes the requirement that the Chairman, Superintendent and Secretary-Treasurer sign a Declaration of the School Board and Management certifying that the Credit Enrolment Units submitted are complete, accurate and do not contravene the funding guidelines for CEU funding as outlined in the Funding Manual. The declaration will be included in RACERS and should be printed, signed and submitted to School Finance.
 12. Section 1.9, Funding in Transition, includes seven funding areas from the 2002-2003 school year that have been combined for 2003-2004 but the same formulas (2002-2003) are used to calculate funding. This funding will be rolled into new formulas with the implementation of the Funding pillar.

13. New one-time funding for Resources for the Classroom (sections 1.15 and 3.7) is included for school jurisdictions and private schools.
14. Enhanced Opportunity funding (section 1.12) and Program Enhancement Project funding (sections 1.6 and 2.4) for school jurisdictions and private ECS operators have been extended for one more year. New applications for the 2003-2004 school year will not be accepted.
15. The Regional Assessment Services name has changed to Regional Educational Consulting Services (section 6.2). The rate charged for consulting services has increased from \$35 to \$45 per hour to recognize the increased costs of providing these services.
16. The holdback in Program Unit Funding (section 2.5) for private ECS operators has been reduced from 20% to 10%. This reduction recognizes that operators are using the majority of their approved budgets and that the 20% was causing some financial difficulties for private ECS operators.
17. School jurisdictions are asked to retain transportation data in electronic form for a minimum of three years as described in PART 1, sections 1.17 1.18, 1.19 and 1.20, and on request submit the data either electronically or on a computer disc to School Reporting.