

# Education Sector Workforce Planning Framework for Action

*Helping to place the right people  
with the right skills in the right places  
at the right times to meet the needs of Alberta's learners.*



**we explore**

**A Five Year Plan  
2008-2013**



Freedom To Create. Spirit To Achieve.

**Government of Alberta** ■  
Education

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## Vision

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*In partnership with its stakeholders, Alberta Education will develop strategies, policies and actions to ensure the right people with the right skills are in the right places at the right times to meet the needs of Alberta's learners*

## Introduction

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In the midst of Alberta's changing economy, school systems across the province are facing some significant workforce planning challenges: the number of educators who are eligible for retirement is at an all time high; student enrolment is climbing in more than 80% of school jurisdictions in Alberta; the supply of qualified teachers available to teach in certain geographic regions and subject areas is decreasing and the attrition rate for early career teachers is an issue. Recent reductions in class sizes, declining interest in education faculty study and a generally robust and competitive labour market all contribute to the workforce planning challenge that is imminent.

The Alberta education system stakeholders recognize that the work required to address these challenges does not rest on the shoulders of one organization; rather, a collaborative process and an unwavering commitment by all the parties will be needed to ensure that students in Alberta have access to high-quality instruction for many years to come.

Alberta Education, along with post-secondary (teacher preparation) institutions, the Alberta Teachers' Association, the College of Alberta School Superintendents and the Alberta School Boards Association commits to supporting the key action items represented in the *Education Sector Workforce Planning Framework for Action*.

## Purpose:

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This *Education Sector Workforce Planning Framework for Action* is a 5- year strategic plan designed to provide proactive solutions to emerging demands in the education sector workforce. It is intended to serve as a roadmap for change in the endeavour to provide students in Alberta with access to high quality education professionals, now and in the future. The development of this comprehensive document represents the education sector's commitment to attract, develop and retain professional teachers in Alberta's education system. It articulates key challenges facing the education sector workforce and offers strategic recommendations aligned with the vision of having the right people with the right skills in the right places at the right times to meet the needs of learners.

The *Framework for Action* is linked to Goal 2 of the *Government of Alberta Strategic Business Plan*: Albertans will be well prepared for lifelong learning. The *Framework* is also specifically referenced in Alberta Education's Business Plan for 2009-12 with the following strategy: *implement the Workforce Planning Framework for Action and coordinate the implementation of strategic activities to address emerging challenges within the education sector workforce*. Further, the *Framework for Action* is connected to the Ministry's strategic priorities referencing *Success for all Students, First Nation, Métis and Inuit Student Success* and *Enhancing Relationships*. Finally, the *Framework for Action* supports the Minister's mandate (Enhance value-added activity, increase innovation and build a skilled workforce to improve the long run sustainability of Alberta's economy) and his leadership in increasing student participation and completion rates in Health, Math, Science and CTS courses to grow the Technical and Science sectors.

The *Framework for Action* is also aligned with *Building and Educating Tomorrow's Workforce* (BETW), Alberta's 10 year, labour force development strategy. Embedded within the BETW are strategies to ensure there is a skilled and knowledgeable workforce to help sustain Alberta's thriving economy now and in the future. Accordingly, BETW focuses on three main outcomes:

- More workers – An improved supply of appropriately skilled, knowledgeable workers in the province.
- Better trained people – Highly motivated and skilled, educated and innovative people.
- Innovative environments – High performance work environments that can make maximum use of innovation and technology.

Strategies in support of these outcomes are recognizable throughout the Framework for Action.

## Strategic Policy Direction 1: Attract

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*Attracting competent, skilled individuals to teacher preparation institutions and careers in education*

### Rationale

Alberta school systems are challenged in recruiting sufficient numbers of qualified individuals to careers in teaching and educational leadership. Currently, teacher and school administrator recruitment efforts span the country as K-12 education providers seek to find the right people with the right skills to meet the needs of students in Alberta classrooms.

Teacher attraction challenges are expected to continue in Alberta over the next ten years. With declining numbers of applications to post-secondary teacher education programs and with increased numbers of students enrolling in schools, Alberta's education system must work proactively to respond.

The Alberta education system stakeholders have an opportunity to work collaboratively in the creation of a higher level of provincial, national and international awareness of the teaching profession in Alberta with a view to attracting increased numbers of qualified individuals to a career in education.

## Strategic Action 1

### **Elevate and promote the status of the teaching profession and related careers within the education sector workforce:**

- With key education system stakeholders, develop a comprehensive marketing and promotional campaign to promote careers within the education sector workforce amongst individuals whose knowledge, skills and attributes match the needs demonstrated by the diverse group of learners in Alberta classrooms
  - Identify priorities, resource requirements and then plan for the long-term processes needed to enhance public appreciation and awareness of the teaching profession and related careers in education.
- Consider focused education sector recruitment efforts in high-demand/low-supply areas:
  - Teachers prepared in Early Learning Education
  - Second language teachers and teacher program candidates including Francophone and immersion teachers
  - Teachers with specialized training in special education,
  - Teachers of English as a Second Language
  - Teachers of aboriginal ancestry and those whose with specific training related to FNMI education, culture and languages
  - Teacher candidates interested in pursuing education careers in northern, rural and remote areas
  - Teacher candidates representing visible minorities
  - Non-teaching professionals such as speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, mental health therapists and others
  - Para-professional staff such as teacher assistants and language assistants

## Strategic Action 2

### **Develop a bridging program to attract increased numbers of journeymen tradespersons, health care and Information Technology**

## **(IT) professionals to careers in teaching.**

- Work with education system stakeholders to address the provincial concern about the current shortage of teachers qualified to instruct in Career and Technology Study programs, where individuals with dual qualifications in education and in journeyman trade specialties, Health Care and Information Technology are required
  - Conduct a CTS teacher needs assessment across Alberta school jurisdictions to determine real and projected demand for “specialized/credentialed” teachers
  - Focus attraction strategies for bridging program candidates on the cohort of individuals (journeymen tradespersons, health care and IT professionals) with the credentials necessary for teaching in the “specialized” or “credentialed” skills pathways of the revised CTS program of study
  - Identify eligibility criteria, education program requirements and applicable employment/certification conditions for journeyman tradespersons, health care and IT professionals seeking a bridge to teaching in the CTS program area
  - Define the post-secondary programming requirements and the timeline by which such bridging professionals might be expected to acquire the training necessary to qualify for an Interim Professional Certificate
  - Collaborate with teacher preparation institutions to ensure bridging program teachers have access to the education courses they will need to satisfy the requirements outlined in their Letters of Authority
  - Ensure the nature and the terms of the teaching authority (Minister’s Letter of Authority) provided to eligible bridging candidates is clearly communicated to employees, employers and cross-jurisdictional stakeholders
  - Develop an employment framework/agreement for eligible bridging program teachers to ensure:
    - teachers have regular mentorship and supervision provided to them during the period of their transition
    - teachers have access to time and supports for completing the professional requirements outlined in their letters of authority

- appropriate and equitable compensation is provided to bridging program teachers
- Provide increased opportunity for active certificated Alberta teachers to participate in professional development or in-service to increase their skill sets and expertise in CTS specific subject areas.
- Work with Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board and other stakeholders such as NAIT and SAIT to increase opportunities for currently certificated CTS teachers to acquire journeyman certification, where they wish to pursue such credentialing.

### **Strategic Action 3**

#### **Create bridges to employment for teachers prepared in jurisdictions outside of Alberta or those Alberta prepared teachers who have been out of the workforce for some time:**

- A. Ensure that internationally prepared, certificated teachers are able to enhance their professional competency and understanding of Alberta teaching contexts through access to transition-to-employment programs:**
- Consult with school board employers and with internationally prepared teachers themselves to better understand the barriers to employment that may exist.
  - Collaborate with boards and ATA to plan for the development of transition-to-employment programs, using the KSAs of the Teaching Quality Standard as the basis for any such program development along with the provision of practical experience in Alberta classrooms.
  - Provide funding supports to school jurisdictions or other stakeholders who undertake to provide such transition programs.
  - Provide timely feedback, support and direction to those internationally prepared teachers who may need to upgrade qualifications before being authorized to teach in Alberta schools.
  - Identify enhancements to the application and review processes currently used by Alberta Education to assess the qualifications of internationally prepared teachers.

**B. Develop and provide professional teacher orientation programs to ensure the highest likelihood of success for:**

- Alberta prepared and certificated teachers who have been out of the workforce for a period of 10 years or more and need to meet professional currency requirements before returning to active work in the profession.

## **Strategic Action 4**

### **Consider financial incentives to attract individuals to studies in education and to employment as teachers in rural and remote Alberta locations:**

- Develop bursary programs designed to attract teacher education program students to communities in northern, rural and remote Alberta in exchange for return service employment agreements.
- Explore the implementation of enhanced Northern Allowance funding similar to the GOA “North of 57 Parallel” and “Attraction Bonus” programs to support cost of living challenges for staff living and working above the 57 Parallel.

## Strategic Action 5

### **Increase the number of educators in Alberta schools with the knowledge, skills and attributes necessary to support FNMI student success:**

- Develop strategies to increase the number of FNMI teachers in Alberta schools through increased opportunities for individuals living in FNMI communities to participate in community based teacher education programming or diploma study programs related to teacher support roles, such as early childhood or special needs assistant programming.
- Explore cost-of-living support options for FNMI adults to help address travel, child care and accommodation costs for individuals committed to pursuing educational study and subsequently working in schools where high numbers of FNMI students attend.
- Work with cross-Ministry partners and educational stakeholders to develop a long term strategy to help all teachers acquire the knowledge, skills and attributes necessary for facilitating improved success for FNMI students.

## Strategic Policy Direction 2: Develop

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*Developing teachers through faculty study, practicum, in-service and professional practice in such a way that they have the knowledge, the skills and the passion to remain engaged as education professionals*

### Rationale

Individuals wishing to become teachers have traditionally had a clearly defined path: *be successful in a teacher preparation program and then apply for a job.* This narrow approach to teacher preparation is no longer sufficient. Students of the twenty-first century require teachers who know their subject well and who can help make meaningful, relevant connections between the world of the classroom and the world within which the student lives. To do this, the concept of teacher preparation must be broadened to include early preparation, teacher qualification, sustained professional development and life-long learning.

Alberta's education system must position itself to support the efforts of its pre-service institutions and its K-12 education providers to prepare high quality teachers for work with an increasingly diverse group of students in a continuously changing, knowledge-focused learning environment.

## Strategic Action 6

### **Establish a provincial data collection system to improve the ability of the government and school jurisdictions to adequately describe education sector workforce characteristics and needs:**

- Improve current data collection practices by establishing a streamlined process for workforce data collection, transmission, storage and report generation
  - Work with 3 pilot jurisdictions to develop processes to collect, transmit, store and generate data and reports relevant to the education sector workforce
  - Use the findings of the pilot data collection projects to inform the potential for a provincial approach to workforce planning data collection
  - Establish partnership agreements with cross-ministry departments to share data relevant to the education sector workforce
- Strengthen the education sector's ability to use workforce data analysis to inform teacher attraction, engagement and staff retention priorities through enhanced:
  - workforce planning reports
  - strategic planning
  - scenario building capabilities
  - ability to describe education sector workforce planning trends in Alberta
- Improve Education's ability to respond to internal and external data requests that relate specifically to the education sector workforce.
- Starting in 2011-2012, expand the workforce data collection and analysis initiative to include all school authority employees resulting in a more accurate and complete perspective of the education sector workforce

## Strategic Action 7

### **Support beginning teachers through the development and implementation of a provincial program of staged transition:**

- Establish provincial guidelines to highlight the important roles and responsibilities of supervising teachers in providing support and coaching to student teachers during the practicum phase of their study.
- Implement a “pilot” induction program to support the transition of beginning teachers from teacher preparation and practicum experience, to employment.
  - Ensure “Time” for beginning teacher learning and development and the provision of “mentorship” services for beginning teachers are considered critical elements of the induction program
  - Develop provincial resources and professional development support for “mentorship” training
  - Provide financial support to participating boards in the pilot
  - Call for the development of Teacher Induction Action Research Proposals by interested school jurisdictions
  - Call for multi-institutional research by Teacher Preparation Institutions in Alberta to investigate the phenomenon of early career attrition by teachers new to the profession
- Establish partnerships between post secondary institutions and education stakeholder groups to study and report on the efficacy of such induction and transition programming.
- Use the findings of the pilot program to further inform the potential for provincial implementation of a comprehensive teacher induction program.

## Strategic Action 8

**Establish an educational partners’ research initiative to measure principal and teacher engagement in the workplace, and develop a report to provide insight and recommendations for the education system.**

## Strategic Action 9

### **Develop comprehensive and coordinated professional development planning and continuing education supports for teachers and other education sector workers:**

- Engage the education system stakeholders in dialogue and focused conversation about the education system's shared responsibility to develop and maintain a contemporary education sector workforce, ready to support the increasingly non-traditional, diverse learners in Alberta classrooms.
  - Use the Teaching Quality Standard and the *Teacher Growth, Supervision and Evaluation Policy* to provide a foundational reference point for teacher transition and on-going professional development
  - Use the *Guide to Comprehensive Professional Development Planning* to support school jurisdictions and schools in the development of comprehensive professional development plans
- Establish a professional development leadership structure and governance model with a mandate to determine “what the system needs to continue to do, or do more or less of, to ensure the development and maintenance of a contemporary 21st Century teacher workforce
- Develop a 3-year implementation framework to highlight targeted Ministry and system initiatives and to assist stakeholders and school jurisdictions in professional development planning
- Communicate internally and externally the activities of AE in areas related to teacher development, including information about new curricula, learning technologies, resources, professional development initiatives, new program areas and implementation plans
- Contribute to the development of a business case and strategic implementation plan for a common virtual professional learning environment (including a gateway or portal) that will enable all system stakeholders to share knowledge, resources and best practices.
- Establish a provincial professional development evaluation protocol for use by Alberta's education system in measuring the impact of teacher development/professional development on organizational change, teacher behaviour and student learning outcomes.

## Strategic Action 10

### Develop a School Leadership Framework to attract, prepare, retain and engage leaders within the education sector workforce.

- Use the findings of the April 2007 School Leadership Symposium and the continued input of education stakeholders to develop a *School Leadership Framework* that incorporates the following elements:
  - Supporting principles for school based leadership
  - A statement of *Principal Quality Practice*
  - Guidelines for:
    - Principal preparation programs
    - Ongoing professional development
    - Growth, supervision and evaluation
    - Accountability and competency review
  - Stakeholder roles and mandates
- Once developed, the *Framework* should be used to:
  - Examine the issues of principal attraction, retention and recruitment in relation to both the current and anticipated future demand for effective school based leaders in Alberta.
  - Identify criteria upon which high quality principal preparation and professional development programs should be established.
  - Describe the role of key educational stakeholders in training, delivery and sponsorship of principal preparation and development programs.

## Strategic Policy Direction 3: Retain

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### *Retaining highly qualified, professional teachers in the Alberta Education System*

#### **Rationale**

For many years, our K-12 education system providers in Alberta have been fortunate to be able to choose from a broad spectrum of applicants wishing to become teachers; today's reality is remarkably different. Teachers are retiring at rates significantly higher than in the past and the K-12 Alberta student population is increasing at rates unmatched elsewhere in the country.

With the increased demand for teachers provincially and internationally, mobility rates are high amongst teachers, particularly in northern and rural areas, and attrition rates from the profession are in excess of 20 per cent in the early years of a teacher's career. These factors, coupled with the current reality of declining numbers of applications to Alberta's teacher preparation programs, makes it critical that school system employers be strategic in their efforts to engage and support their existing staff.

Alberta's education sector must be proactive in its effort to retain high quality teachers in schools across the province by finding ways to fully engage and support educators throughout their careers. When educators are fully engaged in their work, they have the energy, drive and passion to meet the needs of the learners in their care. Teacher engagement is key to pushing the envelope of learning innovation, student success and teacher retention.

## **Strategic Action 11**

**Conduct research to assess the extent of early career attrition by teachers, and develop a report to describe the reasons for such attrition and to inform possible interventions.**

## Strategic Action 12

### Develop an action plan to encourage extended participation in the workplace by “mature worker” teachers and other education sector staff:

- Review the Teachers’ Pension Plan regulation (A.R. 203/95) to consider allowing retired teachers to teach more than 0.60 FTE without financial penalty.
- Explore the potential for the development of a graduated pension plan to permit teachers who have reached their retirement index to continue to be employed part time while drawing partial pension benefit.
- Review the “School Act” requirements related to the use of “Interim Contracts,” especially with respect to possible barriers to employment of retired teachers.
- Develop a “best practices” handbook describing strategies currently used by school jurisdictions to ensure the participation of mature workers in professional and non-professional roles.

## Strategic Action 13

### Consider incentives to encourage improved teacher retention in remote Alberta locations:

- Recognize significantly higher cost of living and reduced services in some remote parts of the province and consider providing incentive support for attraction and retention allowances in specified geographic areas.
- Provide financial incentives to increase participation of Alberta teacher preparation practicum students in north and remote Alberta school systems.
- Provide information to school systems regarding the variety of incentives (deferred salary leaves, sabbatical leaves, subsidized housing, and bursaries) used to support teachers who may wish to re-train or upgrade qualifications, etc.

## WORKFORCE FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION: OVERVIEW

Alberta Education Business Plan  
Goal 1: High Quality Learning Opportunities for All  
Goal 2: Excellence in Student Learning Outcomes  
Goal 3: Highly Responsive and Responsible Education System  
Strategic Priority 4: Strengthening the Education Sector Workforce



### ALBERTA EDUCATION SECTOR WORKFORCE PLANNING

#### ATTRACT

- SA1 Promote Careers in Education
- SA2 Increase CTS Teacher Workforce
- SA3 Develop Teacher Orientation Programs for Internationally Prepared and Returning-to-the Workforce Teachers
- SA 4 Attract teachers to Northern and Rural Alberta
- SA 5 Support Education Workforce to improve FNMI Learner Success

#### DEVELOP

- SA 6 Collect Provincial Workforce Data
- SA 7 Support the Development of Beginning Teachers
- SA 8 Enhance Principal and Teacher Engagement
- SA9 Coordinate Professional Development Supports
- SA 10 Develop a school leadership framework

#### RETAIN

- SA 11 Address Early Career Attrition
- SA 12 Increase employment opportunities for mature teachers
- SA 13 Explore unique teacher retention strategies for remote and rural Alberta

## Attachment 2

## External Advisory Committee – Workforce Planning Initiative

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### *Stakeholder Representatives:*

#### Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA)

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Labour Relations  
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Executive Director's Office, People Resources  
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Workforce Planning, People Resources