



Overview of Alberta's Education System

Kindergarten to Grade 12

In Canada each province and territory establishes, funds and operates its own education system. There is no national Ministry of Education.

Alberta's Ministry of Education is responsible to ensure every student in the province has the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes needed to be capable, contributing members of society.

At a glance

In 62 school jurisdictions across Alberta, there are over:

- ▶ 2,100 schools
- ▶ 45,400 certificated teaching personnel
- ▶ 589,000 kindergarten to grade 12 students

The success of each student is our highest priority

- ▶ Students can access a quality basic education regardless of where in Alberta they live.
- ▶ Provincial policies allow parents and students to choose their schools and programs.
- ▶ Education programs are appropriate to the unique needs of each child.

Alberta has built a strong education foundation

- ▶ We have standardized our curriculum for all grades and subject areas to make sure every Alberta student has the same learning opportunities.
- ▶ We review our curriculum on an ongoing basis to ensure it is current and focuses on what students need to know.
- ▶ We carefully select and develop resources for learners and support materials for teachers to ensure they complement our curriculum and learning outcomes.
- ▶ We are a leader in school technology; the province supports video-conferencing, high speed Internet connections, and online learning and teaching resources for students and teachers.



Choice and flexibility are strengths of our education system

Alberta students can choose to be educated in public schools, separate schools, Francophone schools, charter schools, private schools and virtual schools. Alternative programs, home education, distance learning, and blended programs are other options available to students.

Alberta meets high education standards

- ▶ We test all students in core subjects in grades 3, 6, and 9.
- ▶ Grade 3 tests include reading, writing and mathematics.
- ▶ Grade 6 and 9 tests include reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies.
- ▶ Grade 12 students write Provincial Diploma Exams in core subject areas; these exams make up 50% of a student's final mark in a subject.



Education is a shared responsibility

Everyone – parents and students, teachers and administrators, the community, business and government –has an important role to play in public education and is accountable for carrying out that responsibility.

Delegation of responsibility for education

- ▶ Through the *School Act*, the Government of Alberta delegates much of its authority for the governance of education to school boards, which are elected by local community members.
- ▶ School boards are responsible to make decisions about education programs that will meet the needs of their students.
- ▶ There are 62 school boards in Alberta. Each board is accountable to the communities it serves.



Highly-skilled professional teachers play a key role

- ▶ Alberta was first in Canada to develop a *Teaching Quality Standard* that outlines the knowledge, skills and attributes teachers are expected to demonstrate throughout their careers.
- ▶ Teachers must hold a university degree, which includes a teacher preparation program.
- ▶ Teachers play a critical role in developing curriculum and learning and teaching resources.

Alberta students are high achievers

- ▶ **Nationally:** Generally, Alberta students score above the Canadian average in all subject areas.
- ▶ **Internationally:** Alberta consistently places among the top five world education systems on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) sponsored by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. On the 2009 PISA, students placed in the top ranks in mathematics, reading and science.

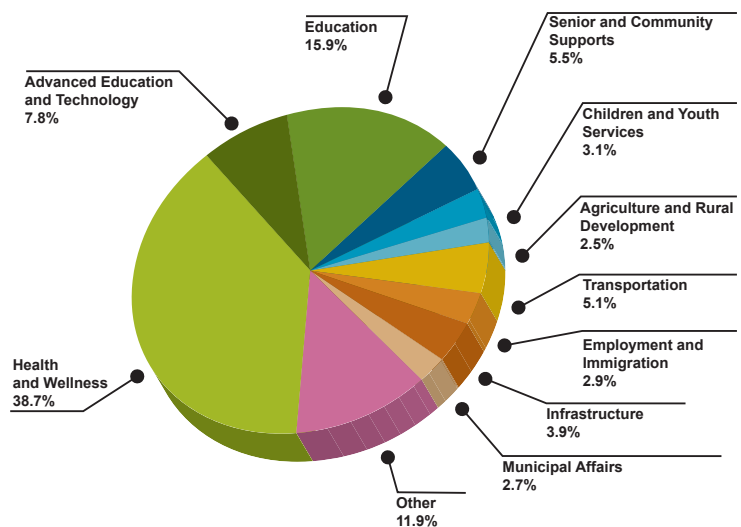
Government supports education

For 2011/2012, Alberta has dedicated over \$6 billion (15.9%) of the provincial budget to our kindergarten to grade 12 education system, making it the second largest government investment.

The Alberta government provides funding to school boards taking into account the unique geographic and demographic characteristics of communities.

School boards are expected to set educational priorities, allocate funding in a fiscally responsible manner, and determine how curriculum is delivered and resources are used.

2011-12 EXPENSE BY MINISTRY \$35.6 billion



Alberta is committed to continuous improvement of its education system

Over the next three years the Ministry will focus on:

- ▶ improving learning outcomes for at-risk children and First Nations, Métis and Inuit students;
- ▶ building a strong workforce through increased high school completions;
- ▶ engaging students and Albertans in discussion about the future of education;
- ▶ working with other Alberta government departments to build stronger, more vibrant communities.

Alberta is committed to preparing students for a global society

Alberta students have the opportunity to acquire the international and intercultural knowledge, skills and awareness to work and live effectively in a global environment.