

**Ministry of
Education**

**2010/11 – 2012/13
SERVICE PLAN**

March 2010



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Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement



Our Government wants all children to have access to a high-quality, progressive, and responsive education in British Columbia. The recent Speech from the Throne underscores our commitment to renew and revitalize public education by paying close attention to the unique needs and interests of every child.

The throne speech highlights our plan to integrate family and community needs with early learning initiatives and educational services. It also supports the need to involve parents and caregivers in the education of their children and to maximize educational choice and diversity to meet the individual needs of students.

In the months and years ahead, we will be pursuing bold strategies to improve the delivery of education in this province, to help students discover and pursue their passion, and to secure and protect our children's future.

We are expanding our focus on early learning as part of our efforts to improve long-term learning outcomes. An investment in a child's early years is critical to his or her life-long success; that's why we are moving ahead with full-day kindergarten for five-year-olds starting in September 2010. Up to half of kindergarten-aged children will begin in the 2010/11 school year and all children will be included in the 2011/12 school year.

Full-day kindergarten will build on the success of our StrongStart BC early learning centres. We are proud to have more than 300 StrongStart BC early learning programs operating across the province today. In 2007/08, there were over 91,000 visits by children to StrongStart BC centres. In 2008/09, that increased to over 276,000 visits.

We are increasing our focus on skills such as reading, writing, and numeracy that are essential components of every child's education. The Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) will continue to be an important tool for assessing student learning outcomes. We are also continuing to review the curriculum, focusing on areas such as climate change, Aboriginal history, personal health, and personal financial planning.

We are proud to have signed Aboriginal education enhancement agreements in more than three quarters of all B.C. school districts as part of our efforts to improve Aboriginal achievement levels. These agreements ensure that Aboriginal culture is integrated in public schools, and Aboriginal communities are involved in the design of programs, services, and curriculum delivery for our Aboriginal students.

Neighbourhood learning centres give us the opportunity to partner schools with community organizations to provide a place where people can access education and community services under one roof. These centres may include many services, such as child-care programs, office space, health clinics, sports programs, seniors' centres, and family resource centres. This spring, Revelstoke will be breaking ground on B.C.'s very first neighbourhood learning centre. That community will be welcoming a theatre and adolescent health programs at the new secondary school while the new elementary school will have an early learning hub, a youth and therapy centre with medical, dental, literacy, and community services, and an acrobatic centre.

Boards of education continue to incorporate high environmental standards in their buildings and operations, and, as part of a carbon neutral government, all boards will measure and report their greenhouse gas emissions.

Together with our education partners, we continue to seek better, more effective ways to direct dollars toward student learning, focus resources on individual students, and trim administrative costs.

The Ministry of Education *2010/11 – 2012/13 Service Plan* was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared, and for achieving the plan's specific objectives. All material fiscal assumptions and policy decisions as of February 12, 2010 have been considered in preparing the plan.



Honourable Margaret MacDiarmid
Minister of Education and Minister Responsible for Early Learning and Literacy
February 12, 2010

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Purpose of the Ministry

A strong character, an understanding of the world, and the skills that allow individuals to flourish are all products of a high-quality education.

That's why the Government of British Columbia is working to make B.C. the best educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent, helping its citizens and communities thrive.

The Ministry of Education is leading the way by supporting early learning, the K–12 school system, and life-long literacy, including neighbourhood learning centres and public libraries.



Preschoolers and their families benefit from Ministry initiatives such as StrongStart BC early learning centres, which help children develop the skills they need to succeed in school and life. Full-day kindergarten for five-year-olds, which will be phased in starting September 2010, will further prepare these young people for a lifetime of success.

The Ministry provides leadership and funding to the K–12 education system through governance, legislation, policy, and standards. The Ministry monitors performance through superintendents of achievement, who provide guidance and support to help school districts respond to struggling students.

The K–12 system serves approximately 580,000 public school students, 69,000 independent school students, and 2,400 home-schooled children. Approximately 64,000 Aboriginal students are included in these numbers, as are 4,300 students enrolled in Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique, exercising their right to a Francophone education.

The Ministry of Education funds adults completing secondary school or upgrading their skills. British Columbians of all ages can also take advantage of the many services and resources available through public libraries to improve their literacy levels and continue to learn at all stages of life. Neighbourhood learning centres recognize the central role schools play in communities by working to address local needs, such as literacy and recreational programs, in schools.

The Ministry also recognizes that health and learning are linked. The BC Healthy Schools Network and ActNow BC are working to help students realize the full potential of their bodies and minds.

The Ministry of Education works closely with boards of education and independent school authorities, professional education organizations, community literacy organizations, First Nations representatives, provincial ministries and agencies, the private sector, and public libraries. Roles and responsibilities are set out under the *School Act*, the *Independent School Act*, the *Teaching Profession Act*, the *Library Act*, the *First Nations Education Act*, the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*, the *Special Accounts Appropriation and Control Act* and accompanying regulations.

Strategic Context

The Ministry of Education is influenced by the social, economic, and contextual factors of life in British Columbia. Examples include declining student enrollment, labour relation issues, children's health, and special needs. Identifying those factors likely to affect the Ministry's ability to achieve its goals allows the Ministry to anticipate challenges and act on opportunities.

Social Factors

- Enrolment in the K–12 system declined between 1997/98 and 2009/10 by approximately 59,000 students (public only).
- Online learning is increasingly in demand despite the decline in overall student enrolment.¹ The upcoming generation of students is accustomed to technology and at home in the digital age.
- Almost 40 per cent of adult British Columbians are unable to understand complex printed information in one of Canada's official languages.²
- Almost one in three children starts kindergarten without the skills needed to succeed. These students are likely to have difficulty throughout their education.
- Aboriginal student outcomes continue to demonstrate that the K–12 system needs to better meet their needs.
- The number of children with identified special needs receiving supplemental funding increased by almost 5,500 in the last eight years from 18,360 in 2002/03 to more than 23,850 in 2008/09.
- More than 64,800 students receive English-as-a-second-language services, up from approximately 60,150 in 2003/04.
- In 2004, more than 25 per cent of B.C. children ages 2–17 were obese or overweight. In the past 25 years, the number of obese adolescents ages 12–17 has tripled.³

¹ Data includes all school-age and adult full-time equivalent students enrolled in public schools. For more information and complementary facts in the Ministry's Student Statistics report, please visit www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/

² Statistics Canada. (2005). *Building on our Competencies: Canadian Results of the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey 2003*. (Catalogue no. 89-617-XIE). www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-617-x/89-617-x2005001-eng.pdf#page=109

³ Shields, M. (2005). *Measured Obesity: Overweight Canadian children and adolescents*. Statistics Canada (Catalogue no. 82-620-MWE2005001). www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-620-m/2005001/pdf/4193660-eng.pdf#page=2

Economic Factors

- British Columbia's real GDP experienced no growth in 2008, following gains of 2.9 per cent in 2007 and 4.2 per cent in 2006.
- Due in part to economic volatility and the 2.6 per cent contraction of B.C.'s real GDP in 2009, B.C. had an increase in the number of adult learners in the K–12 system, from 17,700 in 2005/06 to more than 22,600 in 2009/10.
- The Economic Forecast Council expects economic growth to resume in 2010 and 2011, with real GDP expected to increase by 2.9 per cent and 3.1 per cent, respectively, in those years.

Public Education Spending Reaches Record Level

Despite the continued weakening of the global economy, in 2009/10 the operating funding provided to school districts increased by \$84 million.

This represents a historic high in B.C., totaling \$4.551 billion, and demonstrates the Province's on-going strategic goal of maintaining and enhancing its education investments.

For the Ministry, and its education partners, this record marks an opportunity to look at how we can make the most of taxpayers' dollars in the classroom and focus on the needs of each and every student.

Contextual Factors

- The Province is implementing full-day kindergarten for five-year-olds over the next two years. As the economy grows again, Government is committed to voluntary preschool opportunities for three- and four-year-olds.
- The Province created StrongStart BC early learning centres, which offer free, drop-in programs for families to help preschool-aged children develop the skills they need to succeed in school. There are now more than 300 StrongStart BC early learning programs across British Columbia.
- B.C. is the pan-Canadian lead on literacy for the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada.⁴
- The Province, federal government, and First Nations Leadership Council signed the Transformative Change Accord in November 2005. That accord aims to close the gap between First Nations and other British Columbians in health, housing, education, and economic opportunities.
- The Ministry and First Nations Education Steering Committee signed an agreement in November 2009 that provides full funding for students who, while the funding responsibility of the Province, choose to attend a band-operated school. Under this reciprocal tuition agreement, the Province will provide tuition for provincial students living off-reserve who are enrolled in a band school.
- B.C. is expanding Canada's gateway to the Pacific by building stronger relationships with Asia-Pacific nations through transportation links, cultural exchange, and educational partnerships.

⁴For more information on the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, please visit www.cmec.ca

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

The Ministry of Education, together with its partners, has three main goals:

- ensuring B.C.'s young children benefit from high-quality early learning experiences;
- extending the success of B.C.'s K–12 system by responding to the unique needs of all students; and,
- helping all learners improve their lives through life-long learning and literacy opportunities.

With the Province and its partners giving the very young the best possible start in school and life, responding to the needs of those students throughout school, and supporting all learners who need or want to learn more, all British Columbians will have the opportunity to develop essential skills, starting with reading. Our citizens can then pursue their dreams, strengthen their communities, and contribute to a better, more prosperous British Columbia.

Goal 1: High-quality early learning

To ensure young children benefit from high-quality early learning experiences, the Ministry and its partners must build a variety of learning options, from coaching families on how best to encourage the development of babies and toddlers at home to creating province-wide programs that allow parents and caregivers to access professional early childhood educators.

Objective 1.1: Increase the focus on reading for families



A child's first teacher is always a parent or caregiver.

Reading to children, and playing games using language, such as singing and rhyming, can spark a love of learning in those children and help them develop the skills and knowledge they need to be successful.

Strategies

- Lead with the ReadNow BC⁵ strategic plan, coordinating other ministries, boards of education, community organizations, literacy stakeholders, libraries, post-secondary institutions, Aboriginal groups, businesses, and communities, to support families and engage young people in learning.
- Ensure district literacy plans⁶ include early learning goals on which boards of education and communities can collaborate.
- Promote public library programs and resources⁷ for families with young children.

Objective 1.2: Improved school readiness

Rich, play-based, early learning experiences benefit children, academically and socially, increasing the likelihood of their success in school, and in life.

Strategies

- Offer full-day kindergarten for five-year-olds.⁸
- Establish neighbourhood preschools for three- and four-year-olds.
- Reach all areas of the province with StrongStart BC⁹ early learning centres and outreach programs.
- Distribute a StrongStart BC operations guide to boards of education to inform local programs.

StrongStart BC Early Learning Centres

Almost 30 per cent of children start kindergarten without the skills they need to succeed.

That's why the Province has established StrongStart BC centres for preschool-aged children and their caregivers. More than 15,000 children registered in 2008/09, and, with over 300 programs now open, StrongStart BC has become an important service in B.C. communities.

— “In one month, I've seen amazing progress and I'm learning, too, as a parent.”

— “Children in my class attended StrongStart BC last year. This year, these children were not anxious about attending. [They] had good focus and [the] ability to transition between activities.”

^{5/6} For more information about ReadNow BC and district literacy plans, please visit www.readnowbc.ca

⁷ For more information about the Libraries Without Walls strategic plan, please visit www.bced.gov.bc.ca/pls/library_strategic_plan.pdf

⁸ For more information about full-day kindergarten, please visit www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early_learning/

⁹ For more information about StrongStart BC, please visit www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early_learning/strongstart_bc/

Performance Measure 1: School readiness

Performance Measure ¹	2009/10 Forecast	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target	2012/13 Target
The percentage of children who enter kindergarten "developmentally ready" to learn ²	72%	75%	76%	77%

Data Source: The Human Early Learning Partnership, through the University of British Columbia and funded by the ministries of Children and Family Development, Education, and Healthy Living and Sport.

¹ This used to be reported as Performance Measure 6; all performance measures are now in chronological order, which reflects a commitment to students as they progress through the education system.

² In the 2008/09 year, the means of collecting this data was upgraded from a sample to a census.

Discussion

This performance measure is now the Ministry’s first because it is important to celebrate success right from the start, and it is even more important that together we also focus on who needs help in order to provide help as early as possible.

The Early Childhood Development Instrument¹⁰ collects information through kindergarten teachers in all 60 B.C. school districts and measures five key areas of a child’s development: physical health and well-being; social competence; emotional maturity; language and cognitive development; and, communication skills and general knowledge. The information gathered is then examined to reveal any trends in the development of children that could lead to better early learning education policy and practices.

Though sponsored in full by the Province, the Early Development Instrument is administered by its creators: the Human Early Learning Partnership at The University of British Columbia.



¹⁰ For more information about the Early Childhood Development Instrument, please visit www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/EDI/

Goal 2: Responsive K–12 education

Choice, excellence, and accountability are the hallmarks of a high-quality education system and inspire higher levels of student literacy and achievement. The Ministry's superintendents of achievement meet regularly with school districts across the province to help districts better serve all students, and especially those who might be struggling.

Objective 2.1: Engage students through new and flexible choices

Strategies

- Develop new forms of schooling to support the unique needs and interests of students.
- Revise curriculum to ensure students have the knowledge and skills needed for the future.
- Establish neighbourhood learning centres¹¹ that create rich learning opportunities for students by introducing a variety of community groups and services, such as Aboriginal or senior centres.
- Support recent agreements that recognize First Nations' jurisdiction over on-reserve K–12 education and ease transitions between the public and band school systems by supporting reciprocal tuition and facilitating the sharing of information and resources.
- Support French immersion, which is the most popular program of choice in the province.
- Provide, through the Distributed Learning Strategy, high-quality distributed learning choices, including online education,¹² which can be combined with classroom instruction.
- Continue to support choice for families through independent schools and home schooling options.

Objective 2.2: Accommodate students' academic and non-academic interests and goals

Students should be encouraged to discover their passions and pursue their interests. Many have goals that require academic post-secondary study. Others respond best to options created to help them realize their dreams even sooner, such as a head start on a career in the trades. Still other students are interested in athletics and the arts.

¹¹ For more information about neighbourhood learning centres, please visit www.neighbourhoods-of-learning.gov.bc.ca/create/

¹² For more information about distributed learning courses and student services available online, please visit www.learnnowbc.ca

Strategies



- Ensure students can choose from a variety of courses that prepare them for post-secondary studies.
 - Promote career exploration and development.
 - Provide, as part of the graduation program, opportunities for students to practice skills commonly used for employment.
 - Highlight occupation-specific training opportunities for students who plan to enter the workforce directly after Grade 12.
 - Reinforce the importance of sport and healthy living through Daily Physical Activity¹³ requirements, the *Guidelines for Food and Beverages Sales in BC Schools*, and the BC Healthy Schools Network.¹⁴
 - Continue to support the Distributed Learning Strategy, which provides online education opportunities.
- Encourage school districts to accommodate passionate students through programs that pair B.C.'s curriculum with intensive instruction in an art form, sport, or subject.

Objective 2.3: Identify and better serve students who need extra help

Strategies

- Increase the effectiveness of intervention designed to help under-performing students through the work the Ministry's superintendents of achievement do with district superintendents.
- Expect all school districts and schools to address the needs of under-performing students in achievement contracts and annual school plans.
- Insist that every student with special needs entitled to an individualized education plan has a current, fully implemented plan, developed in consultation with his or her parents.
- Provide targeted funding for instruction tailored to Aboriginal students, including efforts to engage students by bringing Aboriginal culture into the classroom. (See Aboriginal education enhancement agreements on pages 3 and 18.)

¹³ For more information about the Daily Physical Activity Strategy, please visit www.bced.gov.bc.ca/dpa/

¹⁴ For more information about how the Ministry promotes healthy schools, please visit www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/

Performance Measure 2: Reading at grades 4 and 7

Performance Measure ¹	2009/10 Forecast	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target	2012/13 Target
The percentage of students in Grade 4 who meet reading expectations ²	70%	72%	74%	75%
The percentage of students in Grade 7 who meet reading expectations	68%	70%	72%	73%

Data Source: Foundation Skills Assessment data, Ministry of Education.

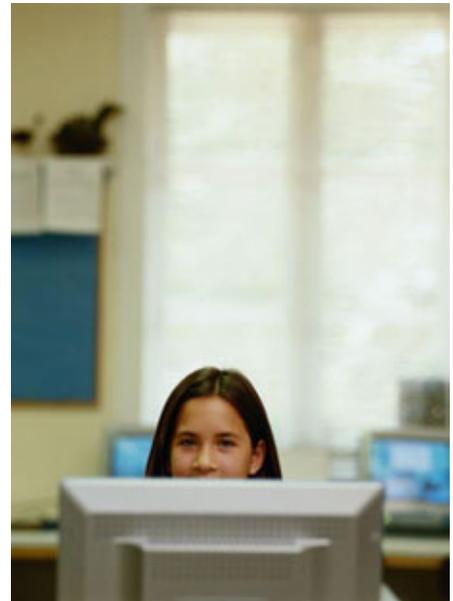
¹ This used to be reported as Performance Measure 4; all performance measures are now in chronological order, which reflects a commitment to students as they progress through the education system.

² This should be the first performance measure to reflect the effect of full-day kindergarten on student achievement; however, that positive influence will not be evident until at least 2014/15 when students now entering kindergarten reach Grade 4.

Discussion

The Foundation Skills Assessment¹⁵ measures the percentage of public and independent school students in grades 4 and 7 who meet or exceed grade-level expectations in reading, writing, and numeracy. These skills form the foundation for other learning. The assessment is administered to all students at those grade levels. Standards set by the Ministry are based on the recommendations of B.C. teachers.

With 10 consecutive years of information, and information tied to individual students through personal education numbers or PENs, the Foundation Skills Assessment is one of the strongest collections of knowledge on student achievement in North America. The clear correlation between students’ reading scores and the likelihood they will complete school now allows educators and parents to develop appropriate interventions to assist individual students.



¹⁵ For more information about the Foundation Skills Assessment, please visit www.bced.gov.bc.ca/assessment/fsa/

Performance Measure 3: Reading at grades 10 and 12

Performance Measure ¹	2009/10 Forecast	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target	2012/13 Target
The percentage of students who pass a Grade 10 language arts provincial exam ²	93%	94%	95%	96%
The percentage of students who pass a Grade 12 language arts provincial exam ³	91%	92%	93%	94%

Data Source: Classroom and Provincial Assessment Branch, Knowledge Management Division, Ministry of Education.

¹ This new performance measure may allow for comparisons with other jurisdictions; even if other provinces do not report on their exams, most have this data.

² Exams include English 10, English 10 First Peoples, and Français langue première 10.

³ Exams include Communications 12, English 12, English 12 First Peoples, and Français langue première 12.

Discussion



The Grade 10 language arts exams require students to read and comprehend text, think critically about literature, and write clearly.

These exams offer another opportunity to identify and better serve students struggling in school.

The Grade 12 language arts exams provide a clear indication of whether the exam writer has sufficient reading comprehension skills.

Grade 10 and Grade 12 exams also serve the Ministry and education system as useful performance indicators.

International Assessments

While we continue to focus on ensuring all students reach their full potential, we already know that British Columbian students are matching and outperforming their peers in other jurisdictions.

The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study or PIRLS is an international assessment that measures trends in the reading literacy achievement of Grade 4 students.

Latest Assessment	B.C.'s Current Ranking	Previous Assessment	B.C.'s Previous Ranking
2006	5 of 45	2001	NA

The Programme for International Student Assessment or PISA is an international assessment that measures the knowledge and skills of 15-year-old students in mathematics, science, and reading.

Latest Assessment	B.C.'s Current Ranking	Previous Assessment	B.C.'s Previous Ranking
2006	6 of 67	2003	3 of 51

Objective 2.4: Use achievement statistics to improve education delivery

Even after students leave the K–12 education system, their achievement outcomes and experiences should inform ongoing improvements.

Strategies

- Assist school districts in making better use of information and evidence arising from provincial and district achievement data to better serve all students, with additional attention on Aboriginal students, students with special needs, and students who are children in care.

Superintendents of Achievement

The Ministry monitors student achievement in school districts through the Office of the Superintendent of Achievement.

The superintendents of achievement help school districts interpret provincial evidence and prepare annual achievement contracts to focus attention and resources on improving the achievement of all students. Each unique contract considers the needs of local students, details specific student-achievement goals, and describes strategies to realize those gains.

When a district does not meet its targets, it is expected to outline how it will adjust the following year. For more information, please visit www.bced.gov.bc.ca/schools/sdinfo/acc_contracts/

- Support the development of networks among school districts, schools, and teachers to build capacity in teaching and share promising practices throughout the province.
- Work with individual districts to develop strategies for improving student learning outcomes.

Performance Measure 4: Completion rate

Performance Measure ¹	2009/10 Forecast	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target	2012/13 Target
The percentage of students who complete school within six years of first starting Grade 8	80%	81% ²	82% ²	82%
The percentage of Aboriginal students who complete school within six years of first starting Grade 8	50%	52% ²	55% ²	56%

Data Source: Completion rates are based on data collected by the Ministry of Education.

¹ This used to be reported as Performance Measure 1; all performance measures are now in chronological order, which reflects a commitment to students as they progress through the education system.

² Targets were adjusted in 2009 to maintain achievable goals for the education system.

Discussion

Completion rates are determined by calculating the percentage of students who graduate with a Dogwood Diploma within six years of starting Grade 8 for the first time in a B.C. public or independent school.

Completion rates have long been a performance measure because young adults are better positioned to transition to post-secondary studies or the workplace if they complete B.C.'s graduation requirements and receive a secondary school graduation diploma.¹⁶

To further increase B.C.'s completion rate, government has supported new measures to improve overall student achievement, such as the creation of provincial superintendents of achievement, who are helping school districts examine student outcomes,¹⁷ and the establishment of LearnNow BC, the Province's virtual school, which is providing students around the province with more choices and first-rate tutoring.

¹⁶ For more information about past and present completion rates and complementary facts in the Ministry's most recent Summary of Key Information, please visit www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting/

¹⁷ Completion rates require an estimate of migration from British Columbia. Rates are calculated for each district, but migration precludes accurate rates for individual schools.

School Completion Demographics — Aboriginal

The Province, its education partners, and Aboriginal communities are working together to empower Aboriginal students to succeed in school and life.

Below is the percentage of Aboriginal students who completed school within six years of first starting Grade 8.

Aboriginal Students	2008/09	Change from Previous Year
Overall	49%	+ 2%
— Female	53%	+ 1%
— Male	45%	+ 2%

In addition, Aboriginal students are best served by improvements designed specifically to engage them and enrich their school experience. The Ministry of Education is working with school districts and Aboriginal communities across the province on Aboriginal education enhancement agreements.¹⁸ There are now 48 of these agreements, helping all students better understand and appreciate Aboriginal culture, language, and history, and encouraging Aboriginal students to participate, enjoy a sense of belonging, and achieve their best.



¹⁸ For more information about Aboriginal education enhancement agreements, please visit www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/agreements/welcome.htm

School Completion Demographics — ESL

English-as-a-second-language (ESL) programs have an admirable record of achievement in this province. At the same time, that data can aid school districts as they aim to continually improve their overall service and ensure they address the needs of all students.

Following B.C.'s overall ESL-student completion rate are the rates for students who, along with at least 200 peers, reported a language other than English or French as the one they speak most at home. Students included here also registered as ESL students at some point during their K–12 schooling.

ESL Students (language at home)	2008/09	Change from Previous Year
Overall	82%	0%
— Cantonese	90%	0%
— Chinese	98%	+ 2%
— Hindi	79%	+ 1%
— Korean	87%	- 1%
— Mandarin	91%	- 3%
— Persian	78%	- 5%
— Punjabi	91%	+ 1%
— Russian	89%	+ 1%
— Spanish	64%	+ 2%
— Filipino / Tagalog	82%	+ 2%
— Vietnamese	75%	- 2%

National Rankings

All provinces and territories track their school completion rate, but factors, such as the number of years in which they expect students to complete school, make direct comparisons impossible.

However, Statistics Canada calculates the percentage of all 20–24-year-olds who dropped out of school. With relatively low percentages, B.C. performs well.

Latest Assessment
2002/03–2004/05
B.C.'s Current Ranking
1 of 10
Previous Assessment
1990/91–1992/93
B.C.'s Previous Ranking
1 of 10

Data Source: www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/81-004-x/2005004/8984-eng.htm#table2

Performance Measure 5: Transition to post-secondary programs

Performance Measure ¹	2009/10 Forecast	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target	2012/13 Target
The percentage of students who enrol in post-secondary study or skills training within two years of completing school ²	66%	67%	68%	69%

Data Source: These rates are based on data collected by the ministries of Education and Advanced Education and Labour Market Development.

¹ This performance measure was last reported by the Ministry of Advanced Education; at that time, 2005/06, the student transition rate to post-secondary programs was 62 per cent.

² Many jurisdictions track comparable data, enabling the Ministry to evaluate B.C.'s relative performance.

Discussion

The rate of transition to post-secondary programs is a good indicator of how well the K–12 education system is preparing students. Research indicates that individuals with post-secondary education tend to have higher rates of employment, higher earnings, and a greater overall quality of life.

Goal 3: Life-long learning and literacy

The ability to read is a critical skill for individuals to function and thrive in society. Life-long learning helps those in the workforce as they face continuous change and develop new skills.

The Ministry of Education is the lead for the Government's first Great Goal, which is to make British Columbia the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent. The Ministry is responsible for acting on that literacy agenda by coordinating ReadNow BC, the Province's literacy action plan.¹⁹ Boards of education, communities, and others are working together to ensure that all British Columbians are literate and to increase access for learners wanting to further their education and upgrade their skills.

Objective 3.1: Guarantee adult learners the basic skills for success

A good education, including strong reading skills, allows individuals to adapt when the world around them changes. The Ministry of Education is working to ensure that every adult in the province has the education and skills they need to thrive, now, and well into the future.

¹⁹ For more information about ReadNow BC, please visit www.readnowbc.ca

Strategies

- Offer free K–12 education in essential courses to all adult students, including graduates who feel they could benefit from further study.
- Introduce a Ministry-approved literacy foundations curriculum across the province in 2010 to better serve all learners with a focus on reading skills; the curriculum will allow adults with low levels of literacy to transition into post-secondary education or the workforce.
- Create neighbourhood learning centres that function as community hubs, which will draw in adults and inspire them to take advantage of opportunities for further education.
- Improve literacy rates among inmates, affording them opportunities to better their lives.

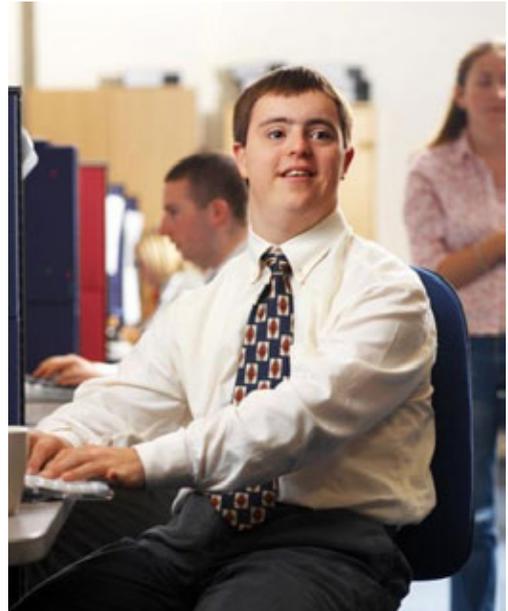
Performance Measure 6: A literacy, employment, or income rate

B.C.'s completion rate and its measure tracking transitions to post-secondary programs are major indicators of success, for the K–12 education system, and for individual students.

At the same time, these measures do not capture the full range of student learning needs, nor do they reflect all paths to academic completion and personal fulfillment.

Successful students can complete school on schedule, graduate late, or earn school-leaving certificates. These students may pursue post-secondary credentials or immediately seek a place in the workforce.

In any case, the final indicator of how well school served any student can be measured through his or her enduring grasp of the literacy skills that help determine an individual's quality of life, including meaningful employment and a satisfactory income.



The Ministry is now deliberating on a new performance measure for 2011. Any measure created and/or chosen is likely to look at the skills or success of all former students and result in data that can further help the Ministry, districts, and B.C.'s other education partners improve on an ongoing basis to meet the evolving needs of each generation.

Objective 3.2: Increase the focus on reading in communities

The Ministry is responsible for ReadNow BC,²⁰ which coordinates with boards of education, community organizations, literacy stakeholders, libraries, post-secondary institutions, Aboriginal groups, businesses, and community members to ensure all British Columbians can access opportunities to improve their literacy skills.



Strategies

- Ensure district literacy plans²¹ address all local learners through literacy goals on which boards of education and their communities can collaborate.
 - Partner with 2010 Legacies Now, the Columbia Basin Trust, and the University of British Columbia to evaluate B.C.'s community literacy planning process.
 - Expand the home libraries of young Aboriginal children through a partnership with the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, the First Nations Education Steering Committee, the Métis Nation of British Columbia, Invest in Kids, and the Dollywood Foundation of Canada.
 - Promote equitable access to provincial public library resources²² for all British Columbians.
- Support citizens in the communities in which they live through neighbourhood learning centres that include a variety of programs and services to engage families and individual learners of all ages.

²⁰ For more information about ReadNow BC, please visit www.readnowbc.ca

²¹ For more information about district literacy plans, please visit www.readnowbc.ca/dlp.html

²² For more information about the Libraries Without Walls strategic plan, please visit www.bced.gov.bc.ca/pls/library_strategic_plan.pdf

Resource Summary

Resource Summary Table

Core Business Area	2009/10 Restated Estimates ¹	2010/11 Estimates	2011/12 Plan	2012/13 Plan
Operating Expenses (\$000)				
Education Programs	4,966,317	5,103,531	5,182,854	5,204,854
Public Libraries	13,130	13,130	13,130	13,130
Executive and Support Services	49,870	48,243	47,291	47,291
Total	5,029,317	5,164,904	5,243,275	5,265,275
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)				
Executive and Support Services	1,436	1,852	1,502	2
Total	1,436	1,852	1,502	2
Capital Plan (\$000)				
Public Schools	372,903	348,883	328,354	242,855
Total	372,903	348,883	328,354	242,855

¹ Amounts have been restated, for comparative purposes only, to be consistent with Schedule A of the 2010/11 *Estimates*. The 2009/10 restated estimates also reflect a change in funding model for corporately provided operations support, such as accommodation, most information technology, freedom of information, corporate accounting services, payroll, and corporate sustainability. Funds previously held in ministries for these activities were centralized into Shared Services BC, the existing service delivery body for these services.

Resource Summary Public Schools

School Districts	2009/10 Forecast	2010/11 Estimates	2011/12 Plan	2012/13 Plan
Combined Income Statement (\$000)¹				
Total Revenue	5,396,000	5,440,000	5,509,000	5,527,000
Total Expense	5,393,000	5,440,000	5,509,000	5,527,000
Operating Results	3,000	0	0	0
Gain (Loss) on sale of capital assets (if applicable)	14,000	0	0	0
Net Results	17,000	0	0	0

¹ This combined income statement includes estimates from 60 school districts. Numbers do not include the eliminating entries required to consolidate these agencies with the government reporting entity.

Major Capital Projects

Ministries must report building projects expected to cost over \$50 million.

Alberni District Secondary School

School District No. 70 (Alberni) planned to replace its 1,300-student-capacity school with a 1,000-student-capacity school on a new site in Port Alberni at an estimated cost of \$50.9 million.

However, Government's vision for education includes schools and community organizations partnering to give people access to community and education-related services under one roof. The Ministry has long encouraged districts to consult with community partners and accommodate community use; now, an inclusive approach is a requirement for all new and replacement schools. In fact, in April 2009, the Province announced that nine schools in six districts would be built as neighbourhood learning centres and models for the inclusion of services, such as child-care programs, office space, health clinics, sports programs, seniors' centres, and family resource centres.

The Alberni board of education reconsidered its plan, consulted 23 community groups, and decided on a neighbourhood learning centre with programs that contribute to learning, support youth intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development, suit co-location within the school, operate independently, and help recover operating costs. The board even specified ideal program types:

- First Nations' programs, including a meeting space for First Nations' elders, parents, and students, since approximately 30 per cent of the school's students are First Nations;
- child and youth support programs, including services relating to guidance, health, and welfare for students and families; and,
- community support programs, including a multi-use space for education, community support services, fitness, and the arts.



The new facility will not only be safer in the event of an earthquake, the environmentally friendly secondary school will lower operating and maintenance costs for the board, provide a better learning environment for students, and become an even more integral part of the community.

Risks include changes to scope, schedule, and budget, due in part to any shortages of skilled labour and/or project management expertise, and the increased potential for unforeseen issues when excavating a new site. A cost estimate has not yet been prepared, but a replacement Alberni District Secondary School that will include a neighbourhood learning centre has received support in principle from the Ministry.

Burnaby Central Secondary School

Burnaby Central Secondary School can be replaced with a 1,300-student-capacity school on the existing grounds in School District No. 41 (Burnaby) for an estimated \$50.6 million.

The new facility will not only be safer in the event of an earthquake, the environmentally friendly secondary school will lower operating and maintenance costs for the board and provide a better learning environment for students.

Risks include changes to scope, schedule, and budget, due in part to any shortages of skilled labour and/or project management expertise, and the potential for unforeseen issues with the site.

Chilliwack Senior Secondary School

Chilliwack Senior Secondary School, which can currently accommodate 900 students, can be replaced with a 1,200-student-capacity school on the existing grounds in School District No. 33 (Chilliwack) for an estimated \$52.3 million.

The new facility will not only be safer in the event of an earthquake, the environmentally friendly secondary school will lower operating and maintenance costs for the board and provide a better learning environment for a larger number of students.

The district has also received support in principle from the Ministry to include a neighbourhood learning centre at the school.

Risks include changes to scope, schedule, and budget, due in part to any shortages of skilled labour and/or project management expertise, and the potential for unforeseen issues with the site. Another risk is the potential for poor soil condition issues due to the site's location on a flood plain.

New Westminster Secondary School

New Westminster Secondary School can be replaced with a 1,800-student-capacity secondary school (grades 9–12) in School District No. 40 (New Westminster) for an estimated \$82.1 million.

The new facility will not only be safer in the event of an earthquake, the environmentally friendly secondary school will lower operating and maintenance costs for the board and provide a better learning environment for students.

Also, after extensive conversations with Chinese Canadian communities and First Nations, a plan was developed for 2.5 hectares of the site to be designated as a memorial cemetery.

Risks include changes to scope, schedule, and budget, due in part to any shortages of skilled labour and/or project management expertise.

Ministry Contact Information

General Enquiries

The Ministry of Education provides a single contact point for the public to ask questions relating to the Ministry's activities.

The operating hours for the Ministry's general enquiries line is Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, excluding statutory holidays.

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