



## Questions on Vision and Principles

1. *Will this way of defining “inclusive education” lead to further segregated programs (especially because it seems to be a non-standard definition - the current definition focus on attitudes when traditionally there has been an element of place)?*
2. *You speak about “program of choice” - whose choice will it be?*
3. *At what point will limited language acquisition over a period of years cause reconsideration of placement option?*
4. *Does the Steering Committee believe that each child has an unequivocal right to an inclusive education? If so, this is not reflected in the Vision statement. Shouldn't accountability measures primarily address parents and communities, in line with primary responsibilities?*
5. *What will inclusive education look like for teachers? Service providers (educational assistants, speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, behaviour specialists, etc)? For children?*
6. *How will we support programming for students with special needs within the context of “one system where each child is successful” - engaging other partners (Health, cross-ministry, etc.); expertise in remote areas; Individual Program Plans-what will they look like in this system?*
7. *If an inclusive system exists, how would segregated schools and classrooms continue to operate - specifically for students who will never catch up?*
8. *Will “opportunity” still allow choice of learning environment and who determines a “typical” learning environment?*
9. *The Vision statement did not come across as giving parents choices. Example, if they feel their child should not be in an inclusive situation, it should be stated that there still will be a choice for them. I know the deaf community and gifted education parents were concerned that their choices were going to be diminished.*
10. *How will the framework impact current segregated settings designed for children with special needs and private and charter schools with a defined student population and mandate?*
11. *I need to know the systematic approaches to helping my child, whom has coding and specialized needs, what do I do if for example I am told a program is inclusive but is not as inclusive as the parent needs in order to create the framework at home? What are the steps, how do I approach? What can I do if my needs are not being met for my child? What if additional supports are needed in classroom for the majority of the time and funding is restricted to only, for example, half the time?*
12. *I really like the idea of “eliminating the place of Special education” and bridging that within the school structure, but am having some difficulty with visualizing just what that would really look like as most schools and Post Secondary Institutions have a designated “place” for students with disabilities to access necessary supports*



13. *My biggest concern is how you plan on meeting the needs of children with learning disabilities (LD) who do not do well in large classrooms with standard instruction practices? How do you provide for the LD student's needs without singling them out for "special" instruction or relying on a teacher assistant who has no special education training? How do you plan on incorporating the fairness of inclusion without sacrificing the educational needs of the LD student? - parent of an LD student*
14. *How do the "grandfathered" Designated Special Education Private School fit into this picture? How will the mandate change?*
15. *Will labels such as Deaf, Visually impaired still be utilized in setting standards for individualized programming?*
16. *What does inclusion mean for students with mental health challenges who potentially can impact the learning of students in the classroom?*
17. *How does this affect home/cyber schooling and charter schools?*
18. *I was inspired by Dr Broken Leg's presentation. I feel that the sense of community, and belonging is not as strong as it used to be in our schools. For example, the school is no longer allowed to give out class lists, due to privacy concerns. This makes it more difficult to contact your child's friends. Also, with all the special programs offered, the neighborhood school is no more. How can we foster a sense of community and belonging with all these changes?*

## General Response to Questions on Vision and Principles

The Steering Committee's recommendation for the future of special education in Alberta is for the development of an inclusive education system that fully supports ALL students. Throughout this past year, the many discussions that influenced this recommendation centered on the meaning of inclusion, and the committee acknowledges that there has been a request for a clear definition of the term, 'inclusion'. To gain an understanding of the varying opinions and experiences of inclusion, the committee looked to the research. The committee acknowledges that the research clearly indicates that within an educational context, inclusion has been defined in multiple ways. For example, inclusion refers to the practice of educating students with special needs in regular classes for all or nearly all of the day instead of in special education classes. Inclusion is also a term used to describe the idea that all people should accommodate any person with a disability without restrictions or limitations of any kind being placed on that accommodation. On a grander scale, inclusion is used to describe a society that values all individuals, promotes belonging and acceptance of all individuals and is built on practices of inclusive behaviours.

Fundamentally, the committee agreed and supported all of these views of inclusion and could see benefits for students within each interpretation.



The committee was charged with the responsibility of recommending a future vision for special education in Alberta. Their vision is clear. Their desired end point is a system that meets the needs of students with special education needs within the education system rather than in a perceived separate system they heard described as special education. They chose to describe this new system as an “inclusive system”, meaning that every student is considered as a part of the whole. The committee has recommended a fundamental shift in attitudes and responsibilities.

The committee is aware that there have been significant strides made in Alberta to ensure that all students are meaningfully included in school life, and the practice of integrating students into typical learning environments is prevalent. They’ve heard many of you report that the typical classroom is not always the most appropriate placement at some points along the way for some students nor is it the desired choice for some families. How then does an inclusive system respond to choice? What choices should be available? Within those choices are needs of all students being met? The following points help to explain the need for choice in the education system.

1. An inclusive system is guided by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Act* to ensure that no decision regarding choice violates any students’ rights as outlined in the Charter and legislature.
2. An inclusive system ensures that within programs of choice (such as charter schools and private schools) students with diverse learning needs are accepted and supported to allow them equitable opportunities for success.
3. An inclusive system recognizes that students, at certain points along their journey, may require a specialized setting for intense support that assists them in returning to typical environments and experience success.

Decision-making about choice of the educational environment within an inclusive system is made within the context of the learning team of which parents are a vital and necessary member. School authorities are responsible and accountable for the education of their students and therefore must make the final decision.



## **Questions on Curriculum**

- 1. How are we going to manage this “philosophy shift”? How does this affect Alberta’s curriculum?*

## **General Response to Questions on Curriculum**

During the consultation phases of this project, the committee experienced many discussions about Alberta’s Program of Studies and the debate about whether or not Alberta’s current Program of Studies was the appropriate beginning point for developing educational programs for all students. As a result of these discussions and input from experienced professionals and experts within the field of education and special education, the committee has recommended that Alberta Education needs to develop strategies and tools to support teachers in the use of the current Program of Studies to support diverse learning needs.



## Questions on Capacity

1. *How are we going to build capacity in our educators?*
2. *What is meant by a provincial service delivery model? What are the existing regional services?*
3. *What specifically will be put into place to develop teacher competency so that they feel confident going forward (embracing the new direction)?*
4. *How do we build teacher capacity and increase available resources within a system that is already stretched by the ability of outside support services limitations?*

## General Response to Questions on Capacity

Building capacity within our system is an essential and necessary aspect of moving successfully toward a new future. Building capacity can occur in a number of different ways and may include some of the following:

- influencing and informing pre-service training programs to ensure that new teachers are well equipped to manage and take responsibility for a diverse group of students
- providing inservice opportunities to support staff in the development of inclusive educational environments
- identifying, within the *Teaching Quality Standards* and *Principal Guidelines*, necessary attributes to ensure success within diverse learning environments
- mentoring, as part of educational practice.

These are a few of the ideas posed as considerations by the committee for building capacity. A more comprehensive list of considerations can be found on page 9 of the [proposed framework](#).

The committee recommended that in the very early stages of phase 4, the educational system needs to take stock of existing resources and supports and identify where efficiencies and re-distribution of resources needs to occur prior to identifying any shortfall. Some of the existing supports and services that are known to many of us include: Regional Educational Consulting Services, Children and Youth with Complex Cases, Student Health, private practitioners, Regional Consortia, Alberta Mental Health Building Capacity projects, and Alberta Initiative for School Improvement. There are many other supports and services that have been developed within regions or authorities based on perceived needs. A provincial service delivery model makes reference to a service delivery structure or model that is adopted throughout the system to ensure that necessary supports and services are available, timely and personalized to the needs of the community they are serving.



## Questions on Collaboration

1. *How will Alberta Education collaborate with the other ministries (Health, Justice) to facilitate access to front line services (speech pathology, Family and Community Support Services, Royal Canadian Mounted Police) and when will this timeline be achieved?*
2. *Are the other ministries equally committed to be “education system partners” and providing/delivering wraparound services for each child?*
3. *Is this a total government (cross-ministry) initiative?*
4. *How will cross-ministerial cooperation be ensured at the individual child level as much as a system?*
5. *What dialogue and action is currently occurring between other ministries and stakeholders regarding wraparound services and immediacy of implementation to ensure availability of service providers?*
6. *Will there be inter-ministerial co-operation?*
7. *What are some action-steps related to “inter-ministerial collaboration” that will help make it a reality?*
8. *For this initiative to succeed, how can we ensure the mandate being recommended will be expanded to all affected ministries in an attempt to break down jurisdictional barriers?*
9. *What kind of inter-ministerial agreements are in place to support a model of inclusive education...to assist all students to achieve their full learning potential?*
10. *How will we know that the other ministries like Health and Children’s Services will be held accountable to work within the new framework?*

## General Response to Questions on Collaboration

Setting the Direction is a project initiated by the Minister of Education. The scope of this project was special education in Alberta, grades 1 – 12. As the project evolved, Albertans told us that a future vision for special education went beyond the parameters of grade 1 -12, special education and education. In the proposed framework delivered to the Minister, one of the Steering Committee’s major goals was for government to develop a collaborative process to support children, students, communities, schools and families. The Minister of Education has the responsibility to share this framework with his colleagues and together provide a Government Response identifying how a collaborative process will be developed across Ministries. We expect this work will occur into the early fall.



### **Questions on Wraparound Approach**

1. *Do you have a provincial strategy to provide wraparound services in rural areas at the same level as urban areas?*
2. *How do we ensure true collaboration in providing wraparound services - logistics around this type of service? We agree to the merit of this type of service but is there knowledge, understanding and ownership of each other's roles in implementing this type of support?*
3. *How are the resources necessary (occupational therapist, speech language pathologist, physical therapist, psychology, social work, etc.) for each child to succeed going to be brought into the classroom so that each child can succeed?*

### **General Response to questions on Wraparound Approach**

One of the priorities in the Minister of Education's mandate letter from the Premier, dated April 3, 2009, is to continue to improve broad-based supports and early intervention initiatives for at-risk children to improve their learning outcomes. The development of a comprehensive wraparound approach to coordinated supports and services for students and young children supports programming recommendation #9 in the proposed framework. In the Setting the Direction consultations, Albertans told us that obtaining and maintaining supports and services in rural Alberta is challenging and this feedback will be helpful in informing the future work of this strategic priority.



### **Questions on Provincial Service Delivery Model**

1. *Current “best practice” indicates that a multi-disciplinary team of specialists is most effective in identifying learning/behaviour needs and strengths. How is this best-practice of multi-disciplinary coordination and service being visualized in this new model?*
2. *Program recommendations - (8, 10) What will provincial models (to support deaf and hard of hearing students) look like? They are at risk for language acquisition (without language you cannot maximize your potential - how will we be accountable for natural language development of these children (in American Sign Language/English - Province-wide)*

### **General Response to Questions on Provincial Service Delivery Model**

The intention behind the recommendation of a provincial service delivery model is to address concerns raised by Albertans about timely access to specialized services. Albertans clearly reported that these services should be timely and easy to access and should reflect the needs of local communities. A provincial model refers to the development of infrastructure and provincial support in recruiting and sustaining specialized services within communities within a wraparound approach. It is not clear yet exactly what the provincial model will look like in relation to specific learners' needs.



## Questions on Accountability

1. *How do you define success? For the individual student? For the family?*
2. *What will the measures of individual student success be (given that the achievements don't often measure this)? That is: who will determine the specific measures and how they will be weighted? How will this information be shared with parents?*
3. *How will student success be measured?*
4. *Is the level of success going to be measured against a robust typical student's experience (regular classes, sports, student groups, group work, afterschool connections, relationships and friendships)?*
5. *How will the quality of inclusive programming be measured? (to make it a viable choice)*
6. *Will school success be measured by quantitative measures or is there room for qualitative measures?*
7. *How? What? Are you going to ensure that at the school level (every day, every hour, minutes) that all children are in a "learner centred" student-focused environment?*
8. *What measures of accountability will be in place so that rural and urban school divisions will have the same delivery system? How do we ensure equitable distribution of services throughout the province and how do we as school divisions report our need?*
9. *If we are expected to focus on all learner needs, why is the accountability approach focusing on sub-groups (slide #24-Tom Parrish)*
10. *If the indicators of early intervention show success at kindergarten, why does the child lose the support upon entry to the bigger, more complex classroom?*
11. *If we have a "flexible" curriculum, are we going to have "flexible" standardized provincial assessments? Example grade 6 student with grade 3 Grade Level of Achievement*
12. *What will "success indicators" be based on? How are these indicators differentiated for the full range of all learners?*
13. *How do you "rescind" an Aspergers, autism or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder diagnosis? (Doesn't seem to fit under the "funding" section.)*
- 14.

## General Response to Questions on Accountability

The committee recognizes that one of the first things that needs to be done with respect to accountability is to take inventory of the current data collected within the system. The committee was counselled to put forward recommendations that required the system to clearly identify what was valued, put measures into place that measure what is valued and then develop a funding system that funds what is measured. Our proposed new system needs to ensure that indicators for student success are developed and designed to show student progress with respect to the proposed educational programming goals. Indicators



for success as outlined in the framework could include: standardized achievement, grade level achievement, alternative achievement based on an adapted curriculum, early childhood indicators, response to intervention strategies, placement in typical learning environment, testing participation rates, measuring student/parent perceptions of self, understanding learning climate and school as community, educator's perception of success of inclusion, parent involvement, professional development, transition data and school, community, interagency relations and support.



## Questions on Funding

1. *How will we ensure equity of French services, resources and specialists?*
2. *What is geographic banding and how does it affect and ensure accountability for the equitable resource allocation?*
3. *How will the “geographic banding” be determined? What accommodations for school districts with small isolated schools?*
4. *Deaf and hard of hearing students in community schools often need to be in inclusive American Sign Language-English bilingual education (available at Alberta School for the Deaf)- some are falling back and need extensive help to bring up to their potential. Will funding be available for this type of intensive support?*
5. *Since Alberta Education is committed to providing equitable opportunities for all students, will equitable funding also be available for home education students?*
6. *If guidelines do now include a service mandate, how will services for students be seamless across the province - particularly if they move, will they have the same level of service? Who will be responsible for determining needs for improvement and supports in schools deemed falling short of providing an inclusive program?*
7. *How will school divisions be ensured they receive funding that is responsive to the needs in their area when it is so difficult to compare areas of the province and available resources in each place*
8. *Based on new Funding Framework, will the funds that are allocated to a district to support special needs students, be spent on special needs students? Specifically, do boards have the ability to spend the funds in areas other than on special needs students?*
9. *How will the province monitor the districts to determine if funds are being used to meet each student’s needs?*
10. *How will the question of equity be addressed in small and isolated communities?*
11. *Why is Alberta Education stating that only 56% of claimed students met the criteria for “severe” student funding when the promised practice of calling for additional documentation to support for “severe” students was not practiced??*
12. *We need more clarification on how will the census based model provide the appropriate funding necessary to meet the needs of all students within each classroom?*
13. *How will strictly population based funding support specialized needs in rural areas? Example, rural, isolated Northern Alberta - attracting .23 of a psychologist to Fox Lake*
14. *How will census funding be adequate to support this framework in a school division that covers a large geographic area? From semi-urban to a small community four hours from a city*
15. *Will the amount of funding for students with special needs go up or down?*



16. *The education system is not equipped, resourced and ready to support and respond to the needs of all students in an inclusive way, especially for mild/moderate needs.*
17. *How will the funding model “per student” ensure resources are allocated or available?*
18. *How will equity for rural districts be ensured? Costs of services? Availability of services? Cost of providing teacher professional development?*
19. *What is their approach going to be to testing out the implications in changing the funding model? Risks and benefits? Annual profile update?*
20. *Funding/assessment of high/severe needs students. How will this happen? Videos appear to be higher functioning*
21. *Based on the new funding framework, will there be less, similar, or more funding overall for special needs students in Alberta?*
22. *Only one funding model was highlighted. Why?? Highlight pros/cons of other emergent models! Example, adequacy model. To support - curriculum, capacity and collaboration*
23. *Does the census funding model truly account for differences in communities and how hard will we have to fight for the supplementary support?*
24. *Why is the “new direction” in programming and inclusion so disconnected to the funding and accountability?*
25. *How does a census-based funding model ensure that the needs of individual students are met?*
26. *How will you guarantee equitable, sustainable and consistent resources?*
27. *If funding is provided on a census basis, what incentive will there be for private operators to serve students with programming and service needs that cost more than the census allocation?*
28. *Will there be adequate resources to appropriately support all students’ needs?*
29. *On what populations will you base the census information? Provincial or jurisdictional?*
30. *What specific geographic and demographic data will be used to develop census funding? How is it different from coding and labelling students? Are there proven results using this model that preserves the integrity of public education?*
31. *Please elaborate on the funding model. How will money flow from the province to provide resources to the students in the classroom? How will the accountability system ensure that students are provided the resources they need to be successful?*
32. *Without labelling, how will “subpopulations” be identified and how will funding allocation decisions be made? How can we create census funding based on population percent without a framework for identification?*
33. *Given the projected budget cut expected in 2010-2011, how can this process guarantee that funds will be maintained or increased to fulfill the Vision in a sustainable manner?*



34. *Let's be real and specific - can you clearly define (using numbers) what the funding model will look like? How will we be expected to submit/apply for additional top up funding? At the end of the day - will students have more or less money?*
35. *Presuming the new framework does not use coding and labels to classify and measure and at the end of a period of time an "included student" shows gains due to increased funding, will that level of funding remain or will they be deemed "caught up" and the extra funding given to the next student?*
36. *How will the funding base be determined when there is such discrepancy in the severe coding file numbers? One can interpret the data - only 56% of files meeting criteria and an increase of 6% in number of files - as districts artificially inflating the numbers or that the real need is increasing and being truly identified and that the government criteria/assessment is inaccurate. How will this be reconciled?*
37. *How will census funding compare to the current funding?*
38. *What role does "teacher assessment" play in identifying student need? What role will the psychiatrists, medical doctors, psychologists, etc. have?*
39. *Are the "indicators of success" tied to funding? Does funding increase if more success is achieved? Does funding decrease if "success indicators" are not met?*
40. *Why are the fees so low for public school, why are parents not asked to contribute more financially for our children? How can I be more proactive for my child's education?*
41. *Are the needed specialized supports restricted to only during certain times or only for certain needs? Example: a child will only get a .5 support meaning half of the time. This is a reality some are facing*
42. *Could you provide more information about how each child will be funded? It seemed very vague and undefined to me. Some examples would be nice to illustrate. Thank you*
43. *Without coding-based funding, how will students who require extra support/resources be identified? Examples please!*
44. *How and who will develop authentic assessment tools for this wide range of learners?*
45. *What would be the role of the psychologist if they were not testing and labelling students and without the labelling how will the school districts identify extraordinary needs?*
46. *How is the "tracking" mechanism going to be different from coding?*
47. *With the shift to broad-based assessment (parents/teachers/medical/etc) what will initiate and sustain the coordination and delivery of wraparound services to each individual student?*
48. *Are we focusing too much on the special and gifted ends of the spectrum and allowing middle/average students to fall through the cracks?*
49. *Our current system has students falling through the cracks - students who are marginal, mild, gifted, etc. - how will this framework address this?*



50. *Where does “Assessment for Learning (AFL)” fit into measuring success for all students? (AFL was not mentioned at all when discussing measuring student success)*
51. *Without coding or labels, how can special needs be identified and supported?*
52. *Will labels such as deaf, visually impaired still be utilized in setting standards for individualized programming?*
53. *Will this impact/increase the student basic grant?*
54. *Would the funds be taken from the monies allocated to students for staff pd?*
55. *Prior to determining the funding formula, we have heard that there is still work to be done to better understand what the resource guidelines will be and what factors will be used during the census. Will there be an opportunity to have details on your conclusions in these matters and have an opportunity to provide feedback prior to final funding decisions being made?*

### **General Response to Questions on Funding**

It is clear from the large number of questions on funding, that this is a concern to many participants. Currently, Alberta funds all students on a census model through the basic education grant. The committee recommended a funding model for the distribution of the special education dollars to support the proposed recommendation of an inclusive system. The committee considered the research, listened to Albertans, and discussed options with experienced professionals prior to making their recommendation. During this process the committee considered many options and felt confident that they recommended the best option to ensure success for the proposed model. The recommendation identifies the need to establish resource guidelines that identify a proposed inventory of resources that should be available to support a cluster of (approximately 100) students. The committee acknowledges that public input is a necessary component of completing this task. It is anticipated that this process would evolve over the course of Phase 4 from September 2009 – June 2010.



## Questions on Implementation

1. *When will we hear the details of the funding model so we can begin our transitions?*
2. *How is the transition from our current model to the proposed framework going to occur without risking “special needs” student needs?*
3. *What is the expected timeline? Is there a commitment to implementation after it is completely well thought out? Are we building the 747 in the air?*
4. *How is the government planning on rolling this information out to schools, and how is the lack of supports in urban and rural communities (speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, behaviour specialists, etc) suddenly going to replenish? This needs to be addressed in order to ensure the standards in “Setting the Direction” are met*
5. *How do you improve the system while being sensitive to the reality/perception that this will result in a dramatic increase in workload?*
6. *What is the broad timeline for implementation?*
7. *Is there interim plan for transition funding for all students?*
8. *What is the implementation timeline?*
9. *How will you support the necessary coaching/mentoring of classroom teachers so that they have the knowledge, skills and attributes to truly be successful in implementation of this framework?*
10. *What might this look like in practice? Efficiencies - where are those? How do we see them? Supports - How do you bring those supports and services to the school? How do you determine what they are? How do we bring everyone together to focus on the child? How do agencies work together? Engagement - how do we engage cross-sectional multi-disciplinary partners and stakeholders?*
11. *How will you support this implementation? We cannot expect capacity building to be completed in one year - this will need to take place over 3-5 years and will need to be funded. How can you fund this and what will it look like?*
12. *How are we going to get all (teachers, administrators, bus drivers, staff) on board with this inclusive practice and if they aren't how do we get them?*
13. *How can every teacher possibly be able to address the complexity of learning needs presented by this new model?*
14. *How will the supports be built into the model?*
15. *How will teachers be resourced in terms of time and money to develop the increased need for expertise that this model will require?*
16. *What strategies will be put in place to promote the philosophy of inclusive education among parents, educators, the community, the medical profession, etc.*
17. *How do you effect systematic change required to set new direction for special education (involving thousands of staff, administrators, parents, professionals, organizations, etc)*



18. *What will be the process for determining funding and accountability and who will be involved?*
19. *How will this framework ensure that some students don't slip through the cracks?*
20. *Where will the special education experts come from?*
21. *When will we receive the information about identification and funding...phase 4? What is the bottom line?*
22. *We've heard this before, how do we know it is going to happen for real this time?*
23. *How do you plan on ensuring that the good things happening with my child presently will not be lost? Transition*
24. *What is the timeline for full implementation? What does the timeline look like? What are the supports for all stakeholders?*
25. *What is the timeline for implementation of the new framework by school jurisdictions - commitment from the government to put the framework into action?*
26. *How will the values/theory/etc. be implemented at a district/school level and how will this impact current programs/services (Early Childhood Services, Program Unit Funding/mild-moderate funded programs)? Who sets objectives/outcomes/success indicators? Funding formula*
27. *How will people be prepared for the upcoming system changes? In all sectors/systems/programs*
28. *What is the implementation plan and what are the related timelines?*
29. *With such monumental change, what are the natural starting points for implementation?*
30. *If premise behind Setting the Direction is success for all students, how do we determine or define success?*
31. *How do we ensure that this framework becomes a reality, despite changes in the minister and Alberta Education? Legislation → Implementation*
32. *What assurances do we have that government will adopt the "framework recommendations" as a whole?*
33. *What will we see as far as implementation in September 2010?*
34. *We love the Vision...does the will exist to do what is needed to support students with exceptional needs in order for them to be fully included?*
35. *To us, it seems key that the roll-out or implementation of the new direction and the implications to our students. Our question - what are the plans for the implementation to ensure the success of the students?*
36. *How are we truly going to implement the Vision or an inclusive education system (as outlined in the framework, page 5) for all of Alberta's students? (belonging in a typical classroom - diverse)*
37. *Alberta's current School Act does not include and provide the same rights and privileges to children ages 3-5 who attend Early Childhood Services (ECS) programs in our province. How then can inclusive education truly occur when current*



- legislation does not include or provide ECS students with the same rights and privileges as children who are six years of age and older? If we do not amend our current School Act to include our children attending ECS programs in Alberta - I see an added challenge to effective implementation of the Capacity Recommendation #4 (4<sup>th</sup> point) and also with the Collaboration Recommendation #10 (first point)*
38. *What are the considerations of utilizing the Early Development Instrument mapping project to facilitate the Early Intervention needs of all children? Example, funding for full day kindergarten*
  39. *What are the current barriers that we are trying to change that are preventing us from realizing the Vision, Mission and goals of the Setting the Direction?*
  40. *Why does the Steering Committee believe (based on what data) that these recommendations will lead to a better system than the one currently in place?*
  41. *Will we be able to implement this new framework at the secondary level as it exists now?*
  42. *By creating uniformity, are we going to depersonalize education?*
  43. *How do we sustain a change in culture and system through the long-term province-wide over all levels of government and all levels of education including post-secondary?*
  44. *Are the needed specialized supports restricted to only during certain times or only for certain needs? Example a child will only get a .5 support meaning half of the time. This is a reality some are facing.*
  45. *Regarding the student centered planning have you looked at Person Centered Planning developed by People with Developmental Disabilities this is a format utilized in the Development and Community Sector and may prove to be a great model in developing the Student Centered planning?!*
  46. *What will the paper work look like for teachers/ administrators?*
  47. *Electronic Placemat It's great to have best practices, but we'd like a place to access these ideas. For us, we'd like a place to share the best practices for handling special education issues in home education. Could stakeholders of home education and representatives of Setting the Direction have a dialogue regarding additional funding and accountability? The most important issue is moving the child forward in any setting. The vision is exciting. "all students will have equitable opportunity to be included in the typical learning environment or program of choice." This tells us that special needs students will also have equitable right to be home educated.*
  48. *How will Alberta Education work with the Universities to ensure that teacher training includes mandatory course work in teaching students with special needs?*
  49. *Curriculum Students – Good idea – a standard for AB and easier when moving schools and districts - Direction for teachers and parents Prepare - Can there be stakeholder input into the curriculum - Will you develop a province wide electronic IPP format – PLEASE!!! - How we will address the issues of what is the appropriate*



*curriculum for students? Example if a student's assessment indicates they would do well in the K & E stream does the inclusive model mean that they could ask for assistance in the pure stream? What is the place of a student with severe behavior issues in a high school program? Capacity For Students - More expertise in classroom Change for me? - How do we inservice staff in rural remote schools - How do the provincial ratios work in schools of 50 – 80 students? - If it is hard to staff now what will the standards mean? - This year in our jurisdiction TA positions were vacant because there were no applications from anyone - Learn more about instructional technologies, make sure technology in all the schools Please develop online/ webcast information /inservice sessions that could be archived for use with rural schools. We have been doing 1 hr after school VC sessions with TA's and teachers and this has been well received. The time to travel for rural jurisdictions makes PD very expensive. Collaboration Change for students? - Will services be school based??? - Will there be one point of entry??? What does wrap around mean for small schools? Will services be school based or through the health unit and will windshield time still be a factor?? Will some services be combined – i.e. SHP, RECS, OT/PT services for code 42 students Early Entry – will the school district be the key implementation/ service coordinator? Funding and Accountability How will this work? Right now are our jurisdiction students are all served in their home schools – except one medically fragile student and one student who is deaf. Does this mean we are “inclusive”? How do we deliver services? Will we not be coding students again for those with “unusually high costs”*

### **General Response to Questions on Implementation**

The Steering Committee delivered their Setting the Direction Framework to the Minister at the June 8 and 9, 2009 Minister's Forum. Government will carefully review the proposed Framework recommendations and, upon approval, Education will develop comprehensive implementation and communication plans that will be shared publicly.

Phase 4 of *Setting the Direction* will focus on the development of an action plan to support the implementation of the approved recommendations. This may include change management sessions conducted by Alberta Education and a plan for how long-term legislative changes can be carried forward as part of the outcomes of *Inspiring Education: A Dialogue with Albertans*. A comprehensive communications plan will support a smooth transition into implementation of the approved recommendations. This will be achieved through open and frequent communications with Albertans with an added focus on supporting school authorities and educational stakeholder associations that will need time to communicate changes with their constituents.



### **Questions on Early Learning**

- 1. If the indicators of early intervention show success at Kindergarten, why does the child lose the support upon entry to the bigger more complex classroom?*
- 2. Alberta's current "[School Act](#)" does not INCLUDE and provide the same rights and privileges to children ages 3 to 5 who attend Early Childhood Services (ESC) programs in our province. How then can INCLUSIVE EDUCATION truly occur when current legislation does not include or provide ECS students with the same rights and privileges as children who are six years of age and older?*

### **General Response to Questions on Early Learning**

The scope of Setting the Direction was grade 1 – 12 but the steering committee felt that clearly this work extended beyond 1- 12 and includes ECS as well as transitions out of school. As a result, they have included an Early Learning and transitions recommendation in the proposed framework.



## Questions – Other (answered individually)

1. *How does the new definition of “success and fulfillment as citizens in a changing world” affect high schools diplomas and completion certificates? Any other alternatives for these?*

This is an important consideration that can't be forgotten. Looking at alternatives is a natural part of this process

2. *Regarding the student centred planning, have you looked at Person Centred Planning developed by People with Developmental Disabilities, this is a format utilized in the Development and Community Sector and may prove to be a great model in developing the Student Centred planning?!*

Thank you, good suggestion.

3. *To what degree have all branches of Education been informed/working together to ensure Setting the Direction rolls out successfully? Example, Curriculum working with Special Education branch?*

Alberta Education has identified an Advisory Committee with representation across all Education divisions. The Advisory Committee will work closely with the project team to ensure that all divisions, sectors and branches are collaborating with this work. The Advisory Committee will work throughout this upcoming year and develop the implementation plan following the government response.

4. *How does Bill 44 fit into your Vision? (support)*
5. *After Bill 44, why should we trust this process and the idealistic word of “inclusion”, when we see the government working otherwise?*

Bill 44 includes a "parental rights" section that confirms parents' right to exempt their children from course or subject matter that explicitly deals with religion, human sexuality or sexual orientation. This subject matter is contained within curriculum. Information on Bill 44 can be found [here](#).

The Steering Committee's recommendation for the future of special education in Alberta is for the development of an inclusive education system that fully supports ALL students. More information is contained in the general response to questions on vision and principles.