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SUBJECT: **Follow-up to February 3, 2016 Public Accounts Committee Meeting**

As a follow-up to the February 3, 2016 meeting, I am pleased to provide the Standing Committee on Public Accounts with additional information on:

- potential courses for Indigenous peoples under investigation for dual credit opportunities (PA-83); and
- initiatives to improve PISA math results (PA-84).

Please contact my office if you have any further questions.



Lorna Rosen

Attachments

- 1) Potential courses for Indigenous peoples under investigation for dual credit opportunities (PA-83)
- 2) Initiatives to improve PISA math results (PA-84)

Potential courses for Indigenous peoples under investigation for dual credit opportunities (PA-83)

- The Provincial Dual Credit Strategy funded two opportunities that benefited Indigenous students.
 - Atikameg School (part of the Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council) established a partnership with Northern Lakes College to provide high school students the opportunity to access the Pre-Employment Carpentry Program for dual credit.
 - The Kainai Board of Education (part of the Kainai Nation Blood Tribe) established a partnership with Lethbridge College to provide students the opportunity to complete certification requirements for a Level 1 Child and Youth Care Worker.
- Additionally, outside of the funded partnerships under the Provincial Dual Credit Strategy:
 - Grande Prairie Regional College is offering a Native Studies 1000 (NT1000) course that aligns to Education's Aboriginal Studies 30 and is available to both regular college students and high school dual credit students; and
 - Grande Prairie Regional College is also offering an Introduction to Cree course (NT1521) that aligns with Education's Cree Language and Culture 30-3Y. These courses can transfer to a number of universities in Alberta.

Initiatives to improve PISA math results (PA-84)

Alberta Education has been examining the math program, results from international and provincial assessments, conversations with partners, feedback from Albertans, and the implementation process.

- In June 2014, Alberta Education updated the Kindergarten to Grade 9 (K-9) math program to clarify program expectations:
 - students recall, understand and apply basic number facts;
 - students learn at least one strategy that is effective and efficient; and
 - teachers use their professional judgment to select teaching approaches.
- Elementary Math Professional Learning Opportunities
 - A \$1 million grant was provided to the Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia in the last fiscal year to develop and deliver more professional learning opportunities on elementary math.
 - These opportunities provide additional support in the areas of math content, assessment, choices for instructional approaches, selection of resources and communication with parents, and are offered at no cost for teachers and preservice teachers.
 - These opportunities started in the 2015/2016 school year and will extend beyond the 2016/2017 school year.
- For the 2015 school year, new and updated supports and professional learning opportunities were created to assist teachers with the implementation of Alberta's mathematics program. These included:
 - an updated achievement indicator resource to include standard/traditional algorithms;
 - a vetted list of additional support resources, created and maintained by Alberta Education; and
 - the inclusion of basic number facts without the use of a calculator on the Grade 3 provincial assessment.
- Initiatives in progress:
 - Clarify expectations in some outcomes and add a note to indicate that the standard/traditional algorithms are to be taught. This will be completed for September 2016.
 - Regularly update and enhance the list of additional support resources.
 - Use plain language in documents for parents explaining what students are expected to learn.
 - Establish jurisdictional math contacts to share updates with teachers more directly.

ATTACHMENT 2

- Continue to share information and raise awareness of clarifications to the math program (basic number facts and number operations and use of standard/traditional algorithms) with stakeholder organizations.
- As part of the Annual Education Results Report discussions, school jurisdictions will:
 - o specifically examine math results;
 - o share best practices with other school jurisdictions; and
 - o develop plans to improve math education.