

Standing Committee on Public Accounts
 Education and Childcare - March 31, 2026
 Written Response

| Question: | Response: | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <p>Member Eremenko: Is there a minimum period of time where we're expecting teachers to stay in the north?</p> <p>Why was there such a significant reduction from the beginning of the program? Has that followed trend lines over the years?</p> <p>(PA-493, page 9)</p> | <p>Under the Northern Student Teacher Bursary (NSTB), recipients in their second-last year of a teacher education program receive \$18,000 over two years in exchange for 3 years of return of service in the North. Recipients in their last year of a teacher education program receive \$9,000 in exchange for 2 years of return of service in the North.</p> <p>In 2009, there were 56 successful candidates who were awarded the Northern Student Teacher Bursary. From 2010 until 2024, between 20 and 37 Bachelor of Education students received NSTB each year. In the 2024/25 year, the program awarded a bursary to 37 recipients. The number of NSTB bursaries awarded each year is dependent upon how many applicants choose the 2-year or 3-year return of service.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Mr. Schmidt: What is the deferred maintenance liabilities for Alberta schools at the end of 24-25?</p> <p>(PA-498, page 14)</p> | <p>Based on Alberta Infrastructure's reporting, the approximate deferred maintenance cost is \$950 million.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Ms Renaud: Explain how the wildfires and security breach would be an impact or a factor in the declining numbers {PAT results for Grade 9 in 2024-25.}</p> <p>(PA-501, page 17)</p> | <p>Participation in the provincial achievement tests was affected by the wildfires in 2022/23, by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020/21 and 2021/22, and by security breaches that occurred over the last few days of the 2021/22 provincial achievement test administration window.</p> <p>Data for Grade 9 provincial achievement tests in language arts and mathematics were not available at the time of writing the <u>June 2024-25 Education Annual Report</u>. These results were subsequently reported in the December 2025 Annual Report Update.</p> <p>The department continues to monitor education system performance and work with partners to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.</p> <p><u>Provincial Achievement Tests and Impact of Wildfires</u></p> <p>Number of students and communities that were affected by wildfires:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="598 1318 1898 1453"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="598 1318 732 1453">Year</th> <th data-bbox="732 1318 846 1453">Grade</th> <th data-bbox="846 1318 989 1453">Number of Schools Affected</th> <th data-bbox="989 1318 1171 1453">Number of Students Affected</th> <th data-bbox="1171 1318 1354 1453">School Authorities</th> <th data-bbox="1354 1318 1898 1453">School Authorities (communities)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Year | Grade | Number of Schools Affected | Number of Students Affected | School Authorities | School Authorities (communities) | | | | | | |
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|-----------|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----|---|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|---------|--------|-------|-------|
| | 2024/25 | 6 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 9 | N/A | N/A | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2023/24 | 6 | 3 | 69 | 4 | Fort McMurray Montessori Foundation; Fort McMurray RCSSD; Fort McMurray School Division; Greater North Central Francophone School Division | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 9 | 9 | 1,048 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 2022/23 | 6 | 12 | 266 | 15 | Dene Tha' Band; Fort Vermilion School Division; Grande Yellowhead School Division; Holy Family CSSD; Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council; Little Red River Board of Education; Living Waters CSSD; Mikisew Cree First Nation Education; Northern Gateway School Division; Northern Lakes College; Parkland School Division; St. Thomas Aquinas RCSSD; Sturgeon Lake First Nation; Wild Rose School Division; Yellowhead Koinonia | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 9 | 18 | 674 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | <p><u>June 2022 Provincial Achievement Tests Security Breach</u></p> <p>Number of students impacted by the June 2022 security breach:</p> <p><i>The following table provides the number and percentage of students who were removed from the provincial results for each of the affected subjects. The provincial results are still representative of the Alberta student population.</i></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">Grade 9 PAT Subject</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Number of Student Writers Removed</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Percentage of English Writers Removed</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Percentage of French Writers Removed</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Language Arts</td> <td style="text-align: center;">18,785</td> <td style="text-align: center;">34.6%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">N/A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mathematics</td> <td style="text-align: center;">20,960 [19,839 (E); 1,121 (F)]</td> <td style="text-align: center;">39.3%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">32.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Science</td> <td style="text-align: center;">23,202</td> <td style="text-align: center;">42.8%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">41.0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | | | | | Grade 9 PAT Subject | Number of Student Writers Removed | Percentage of English Writers Removed | Percentage of French Writers Removed | Language Arts | 18,785 | 34.6% | N/A | Mathematics | 20,960 [19,839 (E); 1,121 (F)] | 39.3% | 32.8% | Science | 23,202 | 42.8% | 41.0% |
| | Grade 9 PAT Subject | Number of Student Writers Removed | Percentage of English Writers Removed | Percentage of French Writers Removed | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Language Arts | 18,785 | 34.6% | N/A | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Mathematics | 20,960 [19,839 (E); 1,121 (F)] | 39.3% | 32.8% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Science | 23,202 | 42.8% | 41.0% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| Question: | Response: | | | |
| | | [21,796 (E); 1,406 (F)] | | |
| | Social Studies | 24,339 [22,447 (E); 1,892 (F)] | 44.1% | 53.0% |
| <p>Ms Renaud: Is there any kind of data to demonstrate that we're spending a lot of money in complex classrooms on students with disabilities? Are we monitoring them after they leave in any way? Do we have any data whatsoever?</p> <p>Would the department describe the kind of data that is collected for completion rates for disabled students? What is collected?</p> <p>What percentage of disabled students complete high school?</p> <p>What percentage enter postsecondary or apprenticeship within five years?</p> <p>(PA-502, page 19)</p> | <p>The department monitors high school completion and transition rates for students in the Kindergarten to Grade 12 education system. High school completion data reflects students who have completed the high school courses required for further education and training. We track completion and transition to post-secondary programs but no further information on outcomes once students exit the K-12 system.</p> <p>The department collects information on some students with disabilities using exception codes signifying mild cognitive disability, emotional/behavioural disability, learning disability, hearing disability, visual disability, communication disability, physical/medical disability and multiple disability.</p> <p>In the 2023/24 school year, 83.2 per cent of students identified with exception codes completed high school in Alberta. In the 2023/24 school year, 47.7 per cent of students identified with exception codes transitioned from high school into further education/training or the workforce.</p> | | | |
| <p>Member Eremenko: Was the Mandel and Associates grant renewed? Did it go to a different service provider? What has been taken place after the end of the contract in April 2024?</p> | <p>In October 2022, Mandel & Associates Ltd. was awarded a grant to work with qualified professionals to schedule and complete specialized assessments requested by public, separate, francophone, and public charter school authorities. Mandel & Associates Ltd. is a Calgary-based group of psychologists that has specialized in provision of expert assessments in the areas of clinical psychology, educational psychology, neuropsychology, rehabilitation psychology, and vocational psychology since 1997.</p> | | | |

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| (PA-504, page 20) | <p>In March 2024, Mandel & Associates Ltd. successfully completed the project. By the end of the grant contract, approximately \$8.2 million was expended by Mandel & Associates Ltd. 3,227 assessments were completed across Alberta.</p> <p>The grant provided to Mandel & Associates Ltd. was not renewed or transferred to another service provider. When established, the Mandel grant was intended to address the backlog of assessments associated with the pandemic response. The firm completed its contractual work and submitted a final report.</p> |
| <p>Member Eremenko: Does the department collect incidents of aggression and violence toward other students and staff by students? What was the number of incidents reported in the fiscal year? How do they define critical incidents?</p> <p>(PA-504, page 20)</p> | <p>In the 2024-25 fiscal year, Education and Childcare did not compile any reports related to incidents related to aggression and violence.</p> |
| <p>Member Eremenko: What were the hiring targets for fiscal year 2024-25 for educational assistants and teachers? Was the target met?</p> <p>(PA-504, page 20)</p> | <p>School boards are best positioned to determine the composition of their teacher and educational assistant workforce.</p> <p>Alberta's government respects the autonomy of school authorities to manage their resources and make decisions, including on staffing, establishing class sizes, and allocating resources, that reflect local priorities while making the best use of public funds for students.</p> |
| <p>Mr. Schmidt: How many schools in Calgary were approved – their location, the project details, whether they were high school, junior high or elementary schools – and what stage in the process they are: planning, design, construction?</p> <p>(PA-504, page 20)</p> | <p>Through Budget 2024, 11 new school capital projects, including nine new schools and two modernizations, were approved for Calgary.</p> <p>As of Infrastructure's most recent reporting, three projects are in planning, seven are in design, and one is under construction. Currently, Infrastructure has project completion date estimates for two of these projects, with one being completed in 2028 and another in 2029.</p> <p>Of the 11 projects approved in the 2024-25 fiscal year, eight have received accelerated funding approval through the School Construction Accelerator Program (now known as the Schools Now program), with four projects accelerated in the 2024-25 fiscal year: In November 2024, Calgary Catholic School District's Bishop</p> |

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| Question: | <p>Response:</p> <p>McNally High School received accelerated planning funding approval. In February 2025, the following three projects were accelerated, with all receiving construction funding approval, Calgary Board of Education's new high school in Cornerstone and new Kindergarten to Grade 5 school in Redstone and Calgary Catholic School District's new Kindergarten to Grade 6 school in Redstone. Bishop McNally High School has now been accelerated twice and is currently in design.</p> <p>In total, these eight projects will create more than 10,900 new and renovated student spaces.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #005596; color: white;"> <th>Project Name</th> <th>Project Type</th> <th>School Authority</th> <th>Grades</th> <th>Opening Capacity</th> <th>Estimated Completion</th> <th>Project Status</th> <th>Current Funding</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Annie Gale Middle School Modernization</td> <td>Modernization</td> <td>Calgary Board of Education</td> <td>6 to 9</td> <td>640</td> <td>TBD</td> <td>Design</td> <td>Design</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New 5-9 School in Saddle Ridge</td> <td>New</td> <td>Calgary Board of Education</td> <td>5 to 9</td> <td>1,200</td> <td>TBD</td> <td>Planning</td> <td>Planning</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New High School in Cornerstone</td> <td>New</td> <td>Calgary Board of Education</td> <td>10 to 12</td> <td>2,410</td> <td>Apr 2029</td> <td>Design</td> <td>*Construction</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New K-4 School in Evanston</td> <td>New</td> <td>Calgary Board of Education</td> <td>K to 4</td> <td>650</td> <td>Mar 2028</td> <td>Design</td> <td>Construction</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New K-5 School in Redstone</td> <td>New</td> <td>Calgary Board of Education</td> <td>K to 5</td> <td>890</td> <td>TBD</td> <td>Design</td> <td>*Construction</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bishop McNally High School Modernization and Addition</td> <td>Modernization</td> <td>Calgary Catholic School District</td> <td>10 to 12</td> <td>1,910</td> <td>TBD</td> <td>Design</td> <td>*Design</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New High School in West Calgary</td> <td>New</td> <td>Calgary Catholic School District</td> <td>10 to 12</td> <td>1,230</td> <td>TBD</td> <td>Construction</td> <td>*Construction</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New K-6 School in Redstone</td> <td>New</td> <td>Calgary Catholic</td> <td>K to 6</td> <td>340</td> <td>TBD</td> <td>Design</td> <td>*Construction</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Project Name | Project Type | School Authority | Grades | Opening Capacity | Estimated Completion | Project Status | Current Funding | Annie Gale Middle School Modernization | Modernization | Calgary Board of Education | 6 to 9 | 640 | TBD | Design | Design | New 5-9 School in Saddle Ridge | New | Calgary Board of Education | 5 to 9 | 1,200 | TBD | Planning | Planning | New High School in Cornerstone | New | Calgary Board of Education | 10 to 12 | 2,410 | Apr 2029 | Design | *Construction | New K-4 School in Evanston | New | Calgary Board of Education | K to 4 | 650 | Mar 2028 | Design | Construction | New K-5 School in Redstone | New | Calgary Board of Education | K to 5 | 890 | TBD | Design | *Construction | Bishop McNally High School Modernization and Addition | Modernization | Calgary Catholic School District | 10 to 12 | 1,910 | TBD | Design | *Design | New High School in West Calgary | New | Calgary Catholic School District | 10 to 12 | 1,230 | TBD | Construction | *Construction | New K-6 School in Redstone | New | Calgary Catholic | K to 6 | 340 | TBD | Design | *Construction |
|---|--|----------------------------------|--------------|------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|--|---------------|----------------------------|--------|-----|-----|--------|--------|--------------------------------|-----|----------------------------|--------|-------|-----|----------|----------|--------------------------------|-----|----------------------------|----------|-------|----------|--------|---------------|----------------------------|-----|----------------------------|--------|-----|----------|--------|--------------|----------------------------|-----|----------------------------|--------|-----|-----|--------|---------------|---|---------------|----------------------------------|----------|-------|-----|--------|---------|---------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------|----------|-------|-----|--------------|---------------|----------------------------|-----|------------------|--------|-----|-----|--------|---------------|
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| Annie Gale Middle School Modernization | Modernization | Calgary Board of Education | 6 to 9 | 640 | TBD | Design | Design | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| New 5-9 School in Saddle Ridge | New | Calgary Board of Education | 5 to 9 | 1,200 | TBD | Planning | Planning | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| New High School in Cornerstone | New | Calgary Board of Education | 10 to 12 | 2,410 | Apr 2029 | Design | *Construction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| New K-4 School in Evanston | New | Calgary Board of Education | K to 4 | 650 | Mar 2028 | Design | Construction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| New K-5 School in Redstone | New | Calgary Board of Education | K to 5 | 890 | TBD | Design | *Construction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bishop McNally High School Modernization and Addition | Modernization | Calgary Catholic School District | 10 to 12 | 1,910 | TBD | Design | *Design | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| New High School in West Calgary | New | Calgary Catholic School District | 10 to 12 | 1,230 | TBD | Construction | *Construction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| New K-6 School in Redstone | New | Calgary Catholic | K to 6 | 340 | TBD | Design | *Construction | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | | | School District | | | | | |
| | New 10-12 High School in North Calgary | New | Conseil scolaire FrancoSud | 10 to 12 | 635 | TBD | Planning | *Design |
| | New K-6 École publique School in North Calgary | New | Conseil scolaire FrancoSud | K to 6 | 590 | TBD | Design | *Construction |
| | New K-9 Francophone Catholic School in North Calgary | New | Conseil scolaire FrancoSud | K to 9 | 465 | TBD | Planning | *Design |
| | <i>*Project has received accelerated funding approval.</i> | | | | | | | |
| <p>Mr. Schmidt: Can the department explain why teachers are so much less satisfied with the quality of education than they were in prior years and explain any links between the perception of quality and the recent decline in provincial achievement test scores across the province? (PA-504, page 20)</p> | <p>Satisfaction with the quality of Kindergarten to Grade 12 education is one measure within a broader suite of performance indicators used by the department to gauge how well the education system is performing and to identify areas for improvement. Respondents for this measure include students, parents, teachers, trustees and members of the public. The respondent groups for the overall satisfaction with the quality of education comment on varying aspects of the education system.</p> <p>The teachers' survey has been administered online since 2021-22; previously, it was conducted by telephone. This change in methodology may have affected the results and caution should be exercised when comparing results over time. Research literature shows that, overall, online participants tend to express less positive feedback compared to those surveyed over the phone. Current results for the teacher surveys indicate that results are beginning to stabilize as we completely transition to online survey methodology.</p> <p>In 2025, Grade 6 students completed provincial achievement tests (PATs) in English language arts and literature and mathematics for the first time under the new curriculum. Standards for the new Grade 6 PATs were set in 2025 and are therefore not comparable to previous years. Grade 9 PAT results remain consistent with the previous year's results.</p> <p>Given disruptions and data gaps in 2019/20, 2020/21, January 2022, and 2023/24 (for new curriculum PATs only), it will take time before the department can fully evaluate student performance against past results in all subjects where tests/exams were cancelled.</p> | | | | | | | |

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| <p>Mr. Schmidt: Page 63 discusses \$42.5 million in classroom complexity grants. What were the targets for the number of staff hours to be increased? How much training was intended to be provided? How many additional front-line staff were intended to be hired? And then what outcomes were achieved with that grant? How many additional staff hours were worked? How much additional training was provided? How many additional front-line staff were hired, and which positions and which school boards were those hired in?</p> <p>(PA-504, page 20)</p> | <p>The \$42.5 million grant supported increased staff hours, additional front-line supports such as educational assistants and specialists, and targeted staff training. This included approximately \$480,000 for the Educational Assistant Internship Program.</p> <p>In 2024/25, 281 participants completed or participated in the EA Internship Program, with 400 participants planned for 2025/26, indicating ongoing workforce development beyond the initial funding year.</p> <p>System-level outcomes associated with the Classroom Complexity Grant include: enhanced capacity of school authorities to respond to diverse and complex student needs through additional staffing, training, and supports, strengthened frontline classroom supports, particularly for students requiring specialized assistance, contributing to more stable and responsive learning environments; and increased educational assistant workforce capacity, as evidenced by participation and planned expansion of the EA Internship Program.</p> <p>School authorities are required to report the outcomes achieved through this grant funding, as outlined in the Funding Manual for School Authorities in 2023/24, 2024/25, and 2025/26.</p> <p>With regards to the additional staff hours worked, a total of 237,903 additional hours were worked.</p> <p>With regards to additional training provided, almost half of Alberta's school authorities used part of the grant toward staff training.</p> <p>566 new educational assistants, 24 counsellors, 167 teachers, 4 interpreters, and 65 other positions were hired using Classroom Complexity Grant funding in the 2024/25 school year. Participating school authorities report their results to the department, as outlined in the Funding Manual. A summary of results can be found in Education and Childcare Annual Reports.</p> |
| <p>Mr. Schmidt: The ministry says that it's implementing eight actions to address the first recommendation from the Auditor General to verify the accuracy of child care operator claims, including a child care participant number, a claim submission portal, a child care family portal, new training environments, group</p> | <p>The ministry is implementing 10 distinct and coordinated actions to verify the accuracy of claims submitted by childcare operators and to verify that childcare operators use funding to reduce parent fees and pay educators the wage top-up funding.</p> <p>Several actions have been implemented, with remaining actions to be phased in through April 2028. These measures introduce independent verification, system controls, and strengthened quality assurance through preventative actions, educational actions to support providers, and quality assurance process improvements.</p> |

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| <p>training, one- on-one onboarding, and self-serve resource libraries, with the ministry aiming to implement all of these programs by April 2028.</p> <p>Can the ministry clarify exactly what the eight actions are that they're taking since they only list seven actions in the status report?</p> <p>Can the ministry provide a clear timeline for each of the actions it is taking?</p> <p>Can the ministry describe in more detail how the child care family portal will work and how it will meet the Auditor's recommendation to verify the accuracy of operators' claims to the department?</p> <p>(PA-504, page 20)</p> | <p>The Child Care Family Portal plays a central role by enabling transparency for parents and guardians to better understand how much government funding has been paid on behalf of their child(ren) to ensure that parents pay the same flat monthly parent fee across the province regardless which funded daycare their child attends.</p> <p>Overview of the 10 Actions</p> <p>Preventative Actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement the Alberta Child Care Accountability program and the creation of a unique identifier number for every child (called the Child Care Participant Number). The intention is to fully implement this action by December 2026. 2. Build new Claims Submission Service (online Claims Portal) that requires every child to have Child Care Participant Number (eliminating aggregate reporting without child names) prior to any funding being paid. The intention is to fully implement this action by December 2026. 3. Introduce a Family Portal where families can log in to view and confirm their child's registration records. The intention is to fully implement this action by April 2027. 4. Implement auto-generated in-app tool tips, prompts, and guidance in the new Claims Submission Service portal to help reduce errors from operators. The intention is to fully implement this action by April 2028. <p>Educational Actions to Support Providers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Implement an online training environment for the department to train new operators or users responsible for registering children and submitting claims or adjustments, with the goal to reduce errors. The intention is to fully implement this action by December 31, 2026. 6. Within the new training environment, conduct live demonstrations of new and existing features to all childcare providers, including refresher training and large-scale training for significant new services. The intention is to fully implement this action by April 2027. 7. Provide mandatory one-on-one training to inform all new users on how to properly enter child information to register children and create a Child Care Participant Number, use the Claims Submission Service portal, and enter adjustment requests. The intention is to fully implement this action by December 2026. 8. Develop a library of training materials and videos to increase the operators' ability to find relevant information easily. In combination with the individual training sessions and in-app prompts, this action will ensure that the operators have the tools they need to understand the key grants eligibility criteria as they submit their monthly claims. The intention is to fully implement this action by December 2026. |

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| | <p>Quality Assurance Processes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Implement post-payment verification reviews where the department will manually compare child and staff attendance records against the information submitted through the claims system with adjustments processed as required. The intention is to fully implement this action by April 2028. 10. Enhance the Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Portal to add a new feature whereby ECEs will be able to see how much government wage top-up and professional development funding has been paid to the operator on their behalf which should match what they have been paid by their employer. This will help ensure that funding is transferred to the ECEs as intended. The intention is to fully implement this action by April 2027. <p>The Auditor General identified risks where claims relied solely on operator-submitted data, including unsupported child counts and inaccurate registrations. The Family Portal addresses these risks by: introducing third-party confirmation of child registration information from parents and guardians, improving data quality at the source by identifying errors before or shortly after claims are submitted, creating a system-logged record of parent review and confirmation, strengthening audit readiness, and supporting risk-based verification, as family-reported discrepancies can inform targeted follow-up and post-payment reviews.</p> <p>When combined with the Child Care Participation Number and the Claims Submission Service that requires children to have a Participation Number before an operator receives payment, the Family Portal reduces reliance on manual documentation and aggregate reporting and directly responds to the Auditor General's findings related to unsupported and inaccurate claims.</p> <p>The Child Care Family Portal introduces an independent verification mechanism to complement operator-submitted data.</p> <p>Parents and guardians can view their child's registration information as submitted by the operator, including the child's name, date of birth, and care location. Families are asked to confirm whether the information is accurate for their child. If inaccuracies are identified, parents or guardians notify the childcare operator so that the source record can be corrected. The Family Portal unit is also notified when a discrepancy is identified and follows up directly with the parent or guardian, as needed. The portal is directly linked to the Child Care Participant Number, ensuring that corrections apply to the same child record used in claim submissions. Where a discrepancy confirms that a child did not attend and a payment has already been issued, funding is recovered from the operator in accordance with program requirements.</p> |
| Mr. Lundy: Could the department outline the steps Education and | The Northern Student Teacher Bursary provides bursaries to Bachelor of Education students who agree to a return of service as a teacher with a northern Alberta school authority. Program participants are also potential |

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| Question: | Response: |
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| <p>Childcare took during the '24-25 year to support the recruitment and retention of teachers across Alberta?</p> <p>(PA-504, page 20)</p> | <p>candidates for northern jurisdictions looking to fill positions. Through the program, which is also supported by a contribution from Jobs, Economy, Trade and Immigration, students can receive up to \$18,000 to cover their post-secondary education expenses. In 2024-25, this bursary was awarded to 37 recipients.</p> <p>The Rural Practicum Bursary helps rural school authorities recruit new teachers by helping education practicum students explore employment opportunities in rural school authorities. The program helps reduce costs for students who complete practicum experiences in rural areas. The program provides \$2,000 bursaries for rural practicum placements and \$4,000 to students who complete a final field experience placement in Fort Chipewyan. In 2024-25, the Rural Practicum Bursary program awarded 83 bursaries for a total of \$166,000.</p> <p>The Career and Technology Studies (CTS) Bridge to Teacher Certification Program provides an opportunity for school authorities to recruit skilled individuals with qualifications aligned to the CTS Program of Studies clusters, alongside journeypersons, health-care professionals, and information technologists. The program authorizes certificated journeypersons, health-care professionals, and information technologists to work as teachers while pursuing a Bachelor of Education degree. Under the CTS bridging program, participants who complete a full 36 credits in specified education courses are authorized to teach under a conditional letter of authority until they graduate from a full Bachelor of Education degree program. Individuals graduating from this four-year program receive a Bachelor of Education, which allows them to teach with full scope in Alberta's schools. In 2024-25, the department provided approximately \$625,000 in funding to support 25 tradespeople to qualify for a letter of authority while completing a university bridging program.</p> |
| <p>Mr. Lundy: Explain how the increased student transportation funding provided through Budget 2024 is improving transportation services for Alberta students and supporting access, equity, and education choice as reflected in the Education annual report '24-25 financial reporting on pages 96 and 99.</p> <p>(PA-504, page 20)</p> | <p>Budget 2024 provided \$492.7 million in transportation funding to school authorities for the 2024-25 fiscal year, an increase of \$79.8 million from the 2023-24 fiscal year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Over the last two years, transportation funding increased by \$154.3 million, or 45.6 per cent. – This increase supported the continued implementation of the updated student transportation funding model announced under Budget 2023 which includes distance eligibility criteria changes and support for transportation to programs of choice. – For 2024/25, school authorities received additional funding if they had capacity to provide transportation services based on the new lower criteria of 1 kilometre for Kindergarten to Grade 6 and 2 kilometres for grades 7 to 12 that officially came into effect on September 1, 2025. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 45 of 61 school boards had capacity to implement the new criteria a year ahead of time and received funding based on the new criteria. – Additionally, students in grades 1 to 12 attending independent schools are now eligible for transportation funding. |

Standing Committee on Public Accounts
 Education and Childcare - March 31, 2026
 Written Response

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| Question: | Response: |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For the 2024/25 school year, 83 independent school authorities received \$15.7 million in transportation funding. – The Fuel Price Contingency Program continued to help offset the impact of rising fuel prices for school authorities by providing additional funding when diesel prices exceeded \$1.25 per litre. ○ Fuel costs make up 20 to 25 per cent of a school authority’s student transportation budget. ○ For the 2024/25 school year, school authorities received \$12.7 million through this program. This ensured that the impact of variable fuel prices were not passed on to parents through higher fees. |
| <p>Mr. Lundy: Follow up – Describe in this investment how this is improving transportation services for Alberta students?</p> <p>(PA-504, page 20)</p> | <p>For the 2024/25 school year, this increased investment and lower distance criteria resulted in more than 37,000 students being able to access provincially funded transportation services as school boards transition to the new criteria.</p> <p>This includes about 15,000 students who previously paid a fee to use bus services and are now eligible for provincial support. This saved parents nearly \$6.5 million in transportation fees. In 2025/26, when the lower distance eligibility criteria came into effect for all school authorities, 65,000 additional students were able to access provincially funded transportation services. This includes about 29,000 students who previously paid a fee to use bus services and are now eligible for provincial support. This will save parents more than \$12.5 million in transportation fees.</p> <p>The introduction of the School Bus Driver Grant is helping address concerns about driver shortages, recruitment, and retention. Since the grant became available in April 2023, school authorities have received more than \$9.6 million in funding for more than 2,540 drivers who completed training by the end of June 2025. For 2024/25, \$5.4 million was provided to support the training of 1,500 drivers. School boards and school bus contractors have said this grant has had a significant and positive impact on the driver shortage challenges that they have been facing. School boards reported that nearly all routes have a full-time permanent driver. This ensures that students have access to dependable transportation services.</p> |