



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS | EDUCATION RENEWAL FIVE-YEAR EVALUATION

### 1. Why was an evaluation of Education Renewal and Innovation conducted?

*The Education Renewal and Innovation (ERI) 10-year strategy began in 2013, identifying components of the education system that needed refocusing and improved programming. It identified a number of areas of focus, including Indigenous government partnerships, teacher and student wellness, recognizing diversity, educational equity for small communities, identity, and competencies, among others.*

*The evaluation, conducted at the five-year mark, has identified which initiatives are working well, which need improvement and which may no longer be relevant.*

### 2. What does an evaluation tell us?

*An evaluation is a process that comprehensively examines a program's activities and outcomes. Its purpose is to improve program effectiveness, inform programming decisions and determine whether the model is working or requires further development.*

*Government programs are often analyzed to ensure investments are being made in the right areas to improve programs, services and environments.*

### 3. What programs were evaluated?

*There were nine programs evaluated under the ERI strategy:*

- *Residential School Awareness Training*
- *Child and Youth Care Counsellors and Northern Therapeutic Counselling Services*
- *Strengthening Teacher Instructional Practices*
- *Northern Distance Learning*
- *Health and Wellness curriculum*
- *Our Languages curriculum*
- *Career Focusing*
- *Systemic assessment practices*
- *Reporting requirements*

*The evaluation used a variety of qualitative and quantitative data obtained from five primary data collection methods: surveys, focus groups and interviews, administrative student records, results extracted from territorial health and wellness surveys conducted by third parties, and administrative program records review.*



**4. Why were these particular programs evaluated?**

*Programs were chosen based on evaluation readiness, including the maturity of the initiative, the availability of program data, programs invested with numerous resources, and public and internal interest in the results.*

**5. Does the difference between diploma exam marks and teacher awarded course marks mean that teachers are not preparing students for these exams?**

*School-awarded marks and diploma examination marks complement each other but the scope of what each measure is not the same. Alberta's diploma exams assess many of the outcomes in the curriculum, but they do not assess them all. In fact, there are many curricular outcomes, such as those related to spoken and listening skills, that cannot be measured by the multiple choice or written response asked for in diploma exams.*

*Although it is expected that the two sets of marks should be reasonably close, when there is a significant discrepancy between the two marks it only provides an opportunity for a teacher to reflect upon their students' achievement and their own student assessment practices, it does not mean the teachers are not preparing students for the exam.*

*Alberta Diploma Exams are rigorous and well-constructed exams but must be considered for what they are; a single piece of evidence of student achievement of a particular set of curricular outcomes. Teachers work closely with students on a daily basis, and use many different kinds of assessment, which can assess a broader range of students' knowledge and skills. Alberta shifted the weighting from 50/50 to 70/30 to put more emphasis on course work and the school-awarded mark to better reflect the broad range of work students put in over the entire course.*

**6. Under the Strengthening Teacher Instruction Practices (STIP) initiative, how are the extra workloads for teaching principals and impacts to parents being addressed?**

*Education bodies will determine and coordinate how the identified STIP allocated hours are used. Promising practices noted that collaborative time covers involving the school staff in planning collaborative activities, as well as minimizing additional workloads for school leadership with the support of Superintendents and regional consultants and coordinators.*

*Scheduling time for teacher preparation and collaborative learning should cause minimal disruption for parents, and education bodies are reviewing their approaches based on*



*the STIP formative evaluation of the three year pilot.*

*The Directive still allows education bodies significant flexibility and autonomy on how STIP is scheduled in each school.*

**7. Given some of the findings from the evaluation, will Education Renewal still be continued?**

*There are a number of promising programs running under Education Renewal, like Northern Distance Learning and the Child and Youth Care Counsellors initiatives, which specifically address issues of access and equitable education in small communities as well as health and wellness supports.*

*Some programs will continue operating in their current model, and others will be assessed through the findings of the evaluation as well as the findings of the OAG performance audit. The evaluation process provides valuable information on solid practices, where a model should be adjusted, or a different approach might generate better student outcomes.*