

Executive Director's Annual Work Plan (September 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009)

AAC Purposes:

- Develop a broad range of assessment materials that are directly tied to the Alberta curriculum, based on grade level standards, and that will enhance student learning;
- Support teachers by providing opportunities for quality professional development;
- Facilitate networking and sharing knowledge, skills and expertise; and
- Establish liaisons with other agencies.

The following highlights / profiles the significant evolution in AAC resources and services that has provided its growing membership with a significant return on its investment.

- Liaise with education partners, stakeholders, member boards, and teachers to build networks, linkages, and partnerships.
- Professional development resources and experiences that are of the highest quality. These include professional publications and an annual fall conference that both showcases Alberta professionalism in assessment practice and provides progressive, inspiring and informative professional development experiences.
- Ability to respond to member requests for information and support through an international network of assessment authorities (e.g. articles on topics like honour rolls and determining a grade; and ability to attract the best minds to participate in conferences and symposia).
- Assessment specialist initiative designed to build assessment capacity through collaborative professional development supportive of the work of professional learning communities.
- Development of quality performance assessment tasks and rubrics that model sound assessment practices in support of fair assessment practices. These are supported by samples of student work.
- Web site as a professional resource centre with practical linkages for the timely access and use of busy educators.

Action 1.0

Provide leadership support and professional development in student assessment

Context:

Learning leadership in assessment at all parts of the educational community is essential to achieving high levels of student performance and meeting achievement standards. Professional development through the purposeful application of principles and practices of a comprehensive professional development plan is essential to foster assessment literacy. Professional development opportunities need to be designed for and provided in both face-to-face and distributed learning environments to meet the diverse and complex needs of a widely dispersed consortium community. Logical constraints include:

- travel,
- supply teacher costs and availability,
- sufficient support for teachers/learning leaders to be released for professional development, and
- teacher desire to be with their students.

Strategy 1:1 Expand AAC human resources to respond to inquiries and provide services in a timely way.	
Indicators	Source of Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional staff contracted/hired including the possibility of part-time secondment of assessment specialists on a regional basis [in preparation for the human resource needs associated with the Building Classroom Assessment Capacity project] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Functioning within parameters of annual human resources budget
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timely response to inquiries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Log of inquiries and responses
Year End Report and Reflection on Lessons Learned	
Strategy 1:2 Develop assessment literacy and leadership by providing sustainable professional development experiences.	
Indicators/Evidence	Source of Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialist seminars focused on assessment literacy, skill development in assessment design, strategies for leading adapted PD sessions, and opportunities to share ideas, experiences and concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialist seminar agendas 3 -2 -1 reflection data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialists regularly participate in seminars Provide opportunities for specialists to bring guests to expand the 'close to home' human resource base of expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance at specialist seminars Number of guests attending specialist seminars
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment specialists are prepared to provide active leadership in jurisdictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment specialist and jurisdiction representative satisfaction that specialists are well prepared to lead and model sound assessment practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment specialists are actively supported by jurisdiction leaders and are providing services to colleagues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction survey results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face-to-face / personalized contact with jurisdiction leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of face-to-face/personalized contacts with jurisdiction leaders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning leaders including school, department, and jurisdiction administrators /consultants are actively involved in consortium face-to-face and distributed learning experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of learning leaders engaged in PD experiences facilitated by the consortium Satisfaction survey results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual fall conference continues to showcase and advocate sound assessment principles and practices - serves as catalyst for further professional development in jurisdictions/regions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Session and whole conference evaluations Survey jurisdiction leaders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and implement distributed learning modalities to provide 'just-in-time' professional development opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of educators accessing professional development sessions/courses
Year End Report and Reflection on Lessons Learned	

Strategy 1:3 Support post-secondary faculties of education in providing professional learning experience for instructors and faculty leaders	
Indicators/Evidence	Source of Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment seminars and other learning experiences tailored to the needs and interests of faculties and instructors to support the learning and application of sound assessment practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seminars provided Satisfaction survey results
Year End Report and Reflection on Lessons Learned	
Strategy 1:4 Design workshops and specialized professional development opportunities to provide 'just in time' learning opportunities for educators.	
Indicators/Evidence	Source of Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops selection addresses the learning needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction survey results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Availability of web-based professional development resources Support provided to enable specialists to draw upon the wide range of ideas embedded in the consortium collection of workshops and adapt sessions to meet local needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of resources/activities available for use/purposeful adaptation Satisfaction survey results including practicality and utilization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment camps (retreat opportunities) build assessment literacy and leadership capacity [anticipated for summer 2009] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction survey results Number of Alberta and non-Alberta jurisdictions engaged in camp-like experiences
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops focused on building capacity of advisers and specialists to coach colleagues in the use and development of outcomes-based performance assessments and rubrics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of advisers/specialists with proven ability to model performance assessment development and coach colleagues in the same
Year End Report and Reflection on Lessons Learned	
Strategy 1:5 Contribute to the building of classroom assessment capacity in Alberta within the context of mathematics program implementation: "Develop a sustainable, transferable, and scalable model for establishing (classroom, school and school jurisdiction) communities of practice (face-to-face and digital networking) involving rural and urban teachers and learning leaders at all levels of the system."	
Indicators/Evidence	Source of Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fulfill the requirements of and provide the deliverables for the Alberta Education conditional grant A (project charter) – see Appendix A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project charter submitted by February 16, 2009
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin to fulfill the requirements of Alberta Education conditional grant B 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual report submitted by May 31, 2009
Year End Report and Reflection on Lessons Learned	

Action 2.0	
Collaborate with education partners in the interest of advancing classroom assessment practices and policies that enhance student learning and professional practice	
Context: The Alberta Assessment Consortium is a recognized education partner in the province of Alberta. As such it is essential to forge positive and lasting relationships with other partners.	
Strategy 2:1 Identify ways to work collaboratively with education partners in areas of mutual interest.	
Indicators	Source of Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-sponsoring regional assessment mini-conferences with ARPDC partners using face-to-face and distributed learning modalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Session and conference evaluations Partner satisfaction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the collaborative research study on literacy and numeracy with Alberta Teachers' Association and Alberta Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on progress toward publication of a monograph or other meaningful and informative product/process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete project with the University of Alberta and the Alberta Teachers' Association that addresses the issue of how assessment of historical thinking and outcomes might be developed using our research database on African Canadians in Alberta as a case study. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue providing consultative support for jurisdiction projects and research initiatives by providing member service support or on a cost recovery basis (for instance, the Canadian Rockies SD pilot project on assessment and accountability in the context of civic engagement) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress report Publication of results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively participate by sponsoring sessions and providing information displays at ATA and other education partner conferences and conventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activity report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue contract work with Alberta Education to develop assessment models for social studies for the <i>Social Studies Online Guide to Implementation</i> (English Language) for grades 6, 9, 11, and 12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress report Models published online – LearnAlberta web site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue participation as a member of the advisory committee pertaining to the Alberta Education project being completed by the three Alberta universities titled: <i>Alberta Student Assessment Study</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop an ELL Handbook and introductory professional learning experience under contract with Alberta Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of deliverables early in 2009
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide cohort training in assessment (second languages) under contract with Alberta Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of training in summer 2009 Submission of deliverables - quality assessment tasks and their posting on the AAC web site
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to permit Pearson Custom Publishing to publish AAC assessment resources for universities (e.g. University of Alberta) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources are published
Continue to provide leadership within the ASCD Learning and Assessment Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress report

Year End Report and Reflection on Lessons Learned

Action 3.0

Develop high quality classroom assessment and professional learning resources.

Context:

AAC has a reputation for creating/ providing leading edge, high quality everyday assessment tools in support of student and professional learning. Print and electronic resources support the diverse and complex needs of the 21 century learner.

Strategy 3:1

Continue to develop new / re-design existing performance assessment materials for inclusion on the web site.

Indicators

- Summer development workshop – high performance task group with priority on new curriculum implementation schedule and involving educational partners [summer 2009]
- Re-design goal for the current year- 50 assessment tasks and rubrics

Source of Evidence

- Purposefully seeking input from the field for further / ongoing refinement
- Web site postings

Year End Report and Reflection on Lessons Learned

Strategy 3:2

Continue to support the authorship of timely, relevant, high quality professional learning resources.

Indicators/Evidence

- Regular publication of the *AAC Communique: a Journal for Advocates of Student Learning* with case studies and promising practices solicited from assessment specialists and leaders in the field
- Professional resource development: DVD with illustrative examples to complement to *Conversations to Enhance Learning*
- Professional resource development: focused on instructional and assessment planning- *The Cart and Horse: Where Does Assessment Belong?*
- Professional resource development: second edition of *How Develop and Use Performance Assessments in the Classroom*
- Professional resource support: TIPS for the Professional Learning Community to provide ideas and strategies for the effective use of AAC professional resources
- Resource for parents on assessing, evaluating and communicating student learning

Source of Evidence

- Publication three times during the current year – on-line and print
- Work in progress with publication anticipated by 2010
- Published during 2009 under contract with author, Sherry Bennett
- Published during 2009 under contract with authors, Anne Mulgrew and Sherry Bennett
- Online and print for each of the published professional resources
- Published during 2009 under contract with authors, Sandra Carl-Townsend and Marnie Beaudoin

Year End Report and Reflection on Lessons Learned	
Strategy 3:3 Complete the re-design of the web site as a more practical, interactive resource centre for educators and advocates of student learning.	
Indicators/Evidence	Source of Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15% increase in daily web site traffic during the current year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Web site visitor analysis software
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey jurisdiction leaders and assessment specialists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction survey results
Year End Report and Reflection on Lessons Learned	
Strategy 3:4 Engage assessment specialists in modeling the use of selected performance assessment materials and the collection of student exemplars with the intent of significantly increasing the number of exemplars on the web site.	
Indicators	Source of Evidence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment advisers will have coached two assessment specialists through the submission process of exemplars. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction survey results Progress report
Year End Report and Reflection on Lessons Learned	

Appendix A

Alberta Assessment Consortium Conditional Grant

BACKGROUND

Alberta Education has been working with key stakeholders and clients in the Building Classroom Assessment Capacity to Enhance Student Success project to:

- identify opportunities to improve classroom assessment practices.
- consider ways to build shared understanding and commitment to quality assessment of, for, and as learning.
- identify how stakeholders and clients can work together to improve and enhance classroom assessment practices to enhance student success.
- provide advice on strategies designed to improve classroom assessment.
- provide advice on the allocation and management of funds to support the building of classroom assessment capacity of teachers and school based administrators to enhance student success.
- review and consider findings from the Alberta Student Assessment Study conducted by the University of Alberta, University of Calgary and the University of Lethbridge to support related research into classroom assessment needs and to develop a plan that incorporates existing assessment initiatives into a holistic approach to student assessment.
- identify opportunities to improve and enhance the assessment capacity of pre-service and in-service teachers.

A key outcome of this work was the development of the following shared vision:

Student growth, understanding and engagement in learning are enhanced by quality classroom assessment practices focusing on the *Goals and Standards Applicable to the Provision of Basic Education in Alberta* and are supported by jurisdiction and ministry policies.

This vision requires:

- **Support for the teacher's** role and capacity as the primary agent in providing ongoing assessment of students' success in achieving provincial goals and standards.
- **Proactive leadership** in developing a shared vision and understanding of quality assessment among educators at all levels of the system, students, parents, and the community.
- **A comprehensive approach to professional development** that includes dedicated time to practice and share ideas.
- **Sustained funding** to build quality classroom assessment capacity.
- **Coherent policies** related to assessment, evaluation, and reporting.

FOCUS AND IMPLEMENTATION

To support the achievement of this vision the following five strategic directions within three phases was developed by an advisory committee comprised of key stakeholders and clients of Alberta Education.

Phase One:

- Collecting, developing, and sharing exemplars of classroom assessment practice
- Developing and aligning assessment policies

Phase Two:

- Planning a comprehensive communication plan
- Enhancing assessment practices

Phase Three:

- Engaging students in assessment

The first strategic direction to be implemented is that of collecting, developing, and sharing exemplars of classroom assessment practice with a focus on assessment in mathematics. This strategic direction relates to the following vision statements:

- **Support for the teacher's** role and capacity as the primary agent in providing ongoing assessment of students' success in achieving provincial goals and standards.
- **Proactive leadership** in developing a shared vision and understanding of quality assessment among educators at all levels of the system, students, parents, and the community.
- **A comprehensive approach to professional development** that includes dedicated time to practice and share ideas.

Rationale for the selection of mathematics as a focus of this work:

- Teachers and administrators have expressed a need for strategies and resources that are coherent with the philosophy of the revised mathematics Program of Studies to support student learning.
- Concern by the department about student performance evidenced by declining Provincial Achievement Test results.
- Alignment with the department's curriculum implementation schedule for a new Program of Studies in Mathematics.

To support the implementation of this strategic direction, Alberta Education will provide two conditional grants to the Alberta Assessment Consortium (AAC) to work collaboratively with a project development and implementation stakeholder advisory committee that will consist of one representative from:

- Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA),
- College of Alberta School Superintendents (CASS),
- Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA),
- Alberta School Councils' Association (ACSA),
- Faculties of Education, and the
- Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia (ARPD).

This committee will be established coincidental with Conditional Grant A requiring the development of a project charter. The strengths and expertise of the committee will contribute to the accomplishment of the following:

1. Conditional Grant A (October 31, 2008 to February 16, 2009)

Develop a project charter with action, communication, evaluation plans, and budget for approval by Alberta Education by **January 31, 2009**. The charter will be developed using the principles contained in the *A Guide to Comprehensive Professional Development Planning (2005)*.

2. Conditional Grant B (February 16, 2009 to December 31, 2012)

Develop a sustainable, transferable, and scalable **model(s)** for establishing professional communities of practice focused on classroom-based assessment in mathematics involving rural and urban teachers and learning leaders at all levels of the system in both face-to-face and digital networking contexts.

The **model(s)** will be developed using the principles contained in *A Guide to Comprehensive Professional Development Planning (2005)* and take into consideration beliefs surrounding effective curriculum implementation.

Development of the **model(s)** for assessing, evaluating and communicating student learning in mathematics and for a leadership model to support the same will be informed by and reflective of what has been learned thus far from the implementation of the new Programs of Study and Alberta Initiative for School Improvement projects. This development will identify elements that may be transferable across curricula. The **model(s)** will be based on sound principles of assessment, teaching, and learning.

The **model(s)** will inform responses to key research questions pertaining to assessment including:

- What does successful implementation of classroom assessment practices look and sound like in everyday practice?
- What can be done to support teachers to build coherence in their teaching and assessment practices?
- How will we know that the assessment practices make a significant, sustainable difference for teachers and students? What is a body of evidence that allows for valid interpretation of results?
- What are possible implications on assessment practices in other curriculum areas?
- What are implications for comprehensive professional development (sustainable and scalable) in support of teachers as primary agents in providing ongoing assessment of students' success in achieving provincial goals and standards?
- What are the implications for proactive learning leadership at all levels of the system?
 - What leadership practices foster improvement in classroom assessment practices?

- What prior knowledge and skills are needed in order for school and district leaders to engage meaningfully and successfully in implementing a quality classroom assessment program that ensures success for all students?
- What can be done to encourage and support sound assessment practices in the classroom?
- What questions will result in teacher/learning leader reflection on current practice and serve as a catalyst for change?
- What are possible implications on assessment and leadership practices in other curricular areas?

Key elements and deliverables that make up the model(s):

- A. Provide support for teachers and leaders in communities of practice by providing a variety of **professional development/learning opportunities** identified through ATA and ARPDC environmental scans and needs assessments.

The professional learning/development experiences will be reflective of:

- the need to establish and sustain communities of practice with a focus on sound mathematics assessment practice.
- principles of effective assessment, evaluation and communication of student learning, and
- models of building assessment leadership capacity.

Specifically:

A.1 Develop professional development resource material for both classroom teacher and leadership audiences by enhancing/adapting existing professional development resource materials and/or creating new material. Professional development resource materials to be completed by **August 31, 2010**.

A.2 Pilot resource material through learning opportunities designed to support classroom teachers and learning leaders with assessment, evaluation and communication of student learning in mathematics. The breadth of the pilot will be determined in consultation with the stakeholder advisory committee. Pilot learning opportunities for both classroom teacher and leadership audiences will be completed by **March 31, 2011**. A summary report of lessons learned and revised professional development materials will be completed by **August 31, 2011**.

- A.3** Provide a series of learning opportunities based on the project charter in collaboration with the ARPDC and the ATA, including the Mathematics Council of the ATA (MCATA). The intended audience will be teachers and learning leaders from school jurisdictions including francophone authorities, private and charter schools. This will be completed by **August 31, 2012**.
- B. Work with teachers and leaders in communities of practice to collect and develop **exemplars of quality classroom assessment and corresponding leadership practice**. This will include the identification and/or development of tools, processes, stories and exemplars of quality assessment practice and learning leadership aligned with sound principles of assessment and the Mathematics Program of Studies, including its beliefs about students and mathematics learning, mathematical processes, the nature of mathematics, goals for students, the instructional focus as well as the grade level learner outcomes aligned with the mathematics implementation schedule. The collection and development of exemplars is to be completed by **August 31, 2012**.
- C. Develop **English and French resources** (print and digital) of:
- final professional development resource materials for both classroom teacher and leadership audiences (Deliverable A)
 - lessons learned and recommendations for building communities of practice based on classroom teacher and leadership perspectives (Deliverable A)
 - exemplars of quality assessment and leadership practice in mathematics (Deliverable B).

The resources are to be completed by **December 31, 2012**.

- D. Provide annual reports to key stakeholders and the department by **May 31st of each year** and a final report by **December 31, 2012** that includes:
- impact on teaching and learning as informed by analysis of quantitative and qualitative data.
 - sharing lessons learned with Alberta Education, and
 - recommendations to all levels on how to implement sustainable and scalable models and approaches to assessment across grade divisions and subject areas.

Budget:

- The budget will be developed as part of the project charter and will address expenses related to the development of the project deliverables and associated administrative costs.
- Grant deliverables are summarized below for convenience. Specifics of the grant deliverables are found in the previous section.

Conditional Grant A

Develop a project charter with action plan, communication plan, evaluation plans, and budget – **October 31, 2008 to February 16, 2009.**

\$15,000

Conditional Grant B

Develop a sustainable, transferable, and scalable model for establishing (classroom, school and school jurisdiction) communities of practice (face-to-face and digital networking) involving rural and urban teachers and learning leaders at all levels of the system. Annual reports are due **May 31 each year** (2009, 2010, and 2011) with final report due **December 31, 2012.** Specific components within the prototype include:

Deliverable A

Provide support for teachers and leaders in communities of practice by providing a variety of **professional development/learning opportunities.**

Deliverable A.1

Prepare professional development resource materials for both classroom teacher and leadership audiences. To be completed by **August 31, 2010.**

\$__TBD__

Deliverable A.2

Pilot professional development resource material through learning opportunities to support classroom teachers and learning leaders with assessment, evaluation and communication of student learning in mathematics. To be completed by **March 31, 2011.**

Prepare summary report of lessons learned and revise professional development materials. To be completed by **August 31, 2011.**

\$__TBD__

Deliverable A.3

Provide professional learning opportunities for classroom teachers and learning leaders in cooperation with ARPDC and ATA. To be completed by **August 31, 2012.**

\$__TBD__

Deliverable B

Collect/augment and develop **exemplars of quality classroom assessment and corresponding leadership practice** in mathematics in collaboration with the ARPDC, ATA, math advisory committees, teachers and leaders in

communities of practice in both urban and rural contexts. To be completed by **December 31, 2012**.

\$__TBD__

Deliverable C

Develop English and French print and digital (including on-line) resources to capture products created and student exemplars collected from Deliverables A and B to be completed by **August 31, 2012**.

\$__TBD__

Deliverable D

Prepare and submit annual reports to stakeholders and the ministry by May 31 of each year (2009, 2010, 2011) and a final report by **December 31, 2012**.

\$__TBD__

Project coordination (compensation and expenses) – preliminary projection based on a full time equivalency - \$480,000

Project evaluation - \$__TBD__

Project administration and management by the AAC (conditional grants A and B) - \$__TBD__

Total budget for project: \$__TBD__