

COMPETENCIES FAQs

FOR EDUCATORS

1. WHAT ARE COMPETENCIES?

Competencies are combinations of knowledge, skills and attitudes that students develop and apply for successful learning, living and working. They accentuate aspects of learning that apply across all subject areas. Alberta's Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum promotes development of the following competencies, which are a streamlined expression of the competencies in the *Ministerial Order on Student Learning* (#001/2013):

- Critical Thinking
- Problem Solving
- Managing Information
- Creativity and Innovation
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Cultural and Global Citizenship
- Personal Growth and Well-being

2. WHY IS ALBERTA EDUCATION FOCUSING ON THIS STREAMLINED EXPRESSION OF COMPETENCIES?

The *Ministerial Order on Student Learning* (#001/2013) outlines the goals and standards applicable to the provision of education in Alberta. The eight competencies listed above capture the intent and essence of the Ministerial Order and are supported by national and international educational research. As students develop and apply these eight competencies, they will achieve the competencies identified in the Ministerial Order.

3. WHY ARE COMPETENCIES IMPORTANT FOR ALBERTA STUDENTS?

Through competencies, students develop and connect key aspects of knowing, thinking and doing across a variety of learning contexts, both within and outside school. When students develop competencies, they acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes that contribute to their success as lifelong learners and active citizens.

4. HOW DO EDUCATORS HELP STUDENTS DEVELOP COMPETENCIES?

When educators teach Alberta's Kindergarten to Grade 12 Programs of Study, they design learning activities for students to apply and develop competencies in relevant situations. Some competencies are naturally part of learning outcomes while others can be emphasized to enrich learning. Competency descriptions and indicators assist educators in identifying aspects of a competency that are evident within learning outcomes, learning activities or assessments.

5. ARE COMPETENCIES INTENDED TO BE DEVELOPED USING A CROSS-CURRICULAR APPROACH?

Competency-focused approaches to learning may be applied within specific subject/discipline areas. They also create opportunities for interdisciplinary or cross-curricular learning. Educators choose approaches to developing competencies in response to local needs and opportunities.

COMPETENCIES FAQs

FOR EDUCATORS

6. DO EDUCATORS ASSESS COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT? IF SO, HOW?

Evidence of competency development is contextualized by subject-area learning content. Educators are not required to formally evaluate and report on competencies separately from learning outcomes. Educators are encouraged to give students feedback on competency development as it relates to specific learning outcomes and activities.

A variety of formative tools and strategies are effective for assessing competency development. Classroom summative assessment of subject-area learning outcomes may also reveal evidence of competency development. Educators use their professional judgment to select assessment strategies that are appropriate for their students.

7. WHAT SUPPORTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR EDUCATORS DEVELOPING STUDENT COMPETENCIES?

The Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortium (ARDPC) offer a variety of professional learning opportunities and supports for educators. Competency descriptions and indicators clarify the scope and characteristics of each competency. Supports are available through the Alberta Education Website and new.learnalberta.ca.