

**NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
ANNUAL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 2011-12**



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ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

The accountability report of the Department of Education for the year ended March 31, 2012 is prepared pursuant to the Finance Act and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Department of Education Statement of Mandate for the fiscal year 2011-12. The reporting of the Department of Education outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgments and opinions by Department of Education management.

We acknowledge that this accountability report is the responsibility of Department of Education management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Department of Education 2011-12 Statement of Mandate.

Originally Signed by

Hon. Ramona Jennex
Minister

Originally Signed by

Frank Dunn
Acting Deputy Minister

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

It is my pleasure to present to you the Department of Education's twelfth accountability report. This document reports on the department's activities as outlined in the Department of Education 2011-12 Statement of Mandate.

This has been an important year for education in Nova Scotia. In February 2012, the Government of Nova Scotia released *Kids & Learning First: A plan to help every student succeed*. *Kids & Learning First* will focus on improving student learning and outcomes, while better aligning resources and programs within the province's existing budget. The plan builds on what schools are doing well, and targets funding toward strategic priorities that have a proven track record of helping students succeed.

Through *Kids & Learning First*, the province is allocating additional resources to support small schools. In 2012, the Department of Education, in collaboration with school boards, introduced a new Small Schools Supplement to help protect small, isolated schools. The department will further improve access to online learning opportunities for students across the province by continuing the expansion of the Nova Scotia Virtual School. Improved access to online learning will help address some of the challenges related to delivering programs in small, isolated schools. Over the next three years, the number of students who have access to online courses through the virtual school will triple to 1,500, and the number of courses will more than double to 46.

There are a number of programs and initiatives in Nova Scotia that have a proven track record for engaging students in their education and encouraging them to continue their studies at the post-secondary level. These include Options and Opportunities (O₂), Skilled Trades courses, and Co-operative education opportunities. As part of *Kids & Learning First*, the Department of Education plans to expand on these highly successful programs and provide students with more opportunities to engage in hands-on learning with a career focus. In early 2012, the department also announced a new Discovering Opportunities program for junior high students. This program will be based on O₂ and will initially target grade nine students who are disengaged or performing below their potential. The department will also introduce new personal development credits, which will offer students an opportunity to gain a high school elective credit for pursuing their interests and developing their talents with approved organizations outside of school.

The Department of Education is not only building on successful programs, but also taking measure to make schools safer, more welcoming environments. In March 2012, the department released the Cyberbullying Task Force's report, *Respectful and Responsible Relationships: There's No App for That*. The Task Force was chaired by Professor Wayne MacKay. Its report contained 85 recommendations aimed at addressing bullying and cyberbullying. Work has already begun to address these recommendations. The *Education Act* has been amended to provide the legislative framework for further development of an Action Plan in response to recommendations of the Task Force, and further legislative amendments are being considered to more specifically respond to some of the Task Force's recommendations. In addition, the department launched a public awareness campaign with the goal of engaging youth and encouraging them to speak out against bullying.

The 2011-12 accomplishments of the department reflect our continued focus on building a high quality public education system, while working to help Nova Scotia get back to balance. The work undertaken by the department and its partners in 2011-12, reinforces our commitment to put students first and help them gain the knowledge and skills they need to succeed, while also outlining our plan to continue to strengthen public education in Nova Scotia.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND STRUCTURE

The Department of Education Accountability Report for fiscal 2011-12 provides information on departmental performance measures and department finances identified in the Department of Education 2011-12 Statement of Mandate.

The accountability report is structured into three main sections. The first section (2.0) reviews the departmental performance measures for 2011-12 and provides commentary on departmental accomplishments over the course of the year. The second section (3.0) reviews the financial results. The final section (Appendix 1) provides required information on any wrongdoings disclosed in good faith, findings of those wrongdoings, and recommendations and actions taken by the Department of Education during the 2011-12 fiscal year.

2.0 DEPARTMENT PROGRESS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2011-12

The following is a summary of the progress and accomplishments of the Department of Education in addressing the performance measures outlined in the Department of Education 2011-12 Statement of Mandate.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS INVOLVED IN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING/ACCREDITATION

One of the department's core business areas is primary-12 education. The number of schools involved in school improvement planning through the Nova Scotia School Accreditation Program (NSSAP) is one of the measures for a desired outcome that falls within this core business area.

WHAT DOES THIS MEASURE TELL US?

Accreditation provides schools with a formal process to examine both the validity and the implementation of their school improvement plans. It also encourages schools to set clear, measurable goals for school and student improvement. As part of the accreditation process each school receives an independent judgment from an accreditation team from the Department of Education, on its accomplishments in relation to its goals.

REPORTING ON 2011-12 TARGETS

The target for this measure was to have all 427 schools involved in the accreditation process by 2013-14. Since the target was set the number of public schools operating in Nova Scotia has declined to 419. In 2011-12, all 419 schools were involved in some stage of the accreditation process, meeting the target for this measure.

A number of schools that have successfully gone through the NSSAP have now entered their second round of accreditation.

Year	# of Schools
2005-06	49
2006-07	115
2007-08	210
2008-09	312
2009-10	408
2010-11*	419
2011-12	419

*Baseline

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

Beginning in September 2012, Nova Scotia will transition away from the NSSAP to a continuous learning approach to school improvement. This approach will focus on continuous school improvement, whereby schools, with the participation of teachers, will develop and implement a school improvement plan. This measure will be discontinued in 2012-13.

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS RECEIVING ACCREDITATION

One of the department's core business areas is primary-12 education. The number of schools officially accredited under the Nova Scotia School Accreditation Program (NSSAP) is one of the measures for a desired outcome that falls within this core business area.

The NSSAP is the government's quality assurance mechanism for schools. Accredited schools have demonstrated improved results in student achievement and school performance. Accrediting schools represents an opportunity for government to celebrate the good work happening in schools.

WHAT DOES THIS MEASURE TELL US?

Schools that are successfully accredited in the NSSAP have proven that they have the capacity to create meaningful, long-term, sustainable change, with improved outcomes in student achievement and school performance.

Accreditation is achieved when a school presents convincing evidence (data) indicating growth in relation to the goals identified in their school improvement plan. Accreditation is about the demonstration of improvement. Accreditation provides a means to address both the validity and the implementation of the school's improvement plan. Each school receives an independent judgment from an accreditation team from the Department of Education, on its accomplishments in relation to its goals.

REPORTING ON 2011-12 TARGETS

The target for this measure was to have 408 schools accredited by 2013-14. In 2011-12, 93 schools, representing all school boards, were officially accredited by the department, bringing the total number of accredited schools in the province to date to 204.

Number of Schools Officially Accredited under the NSSAP	
Year	# of Schools
2007-08	11
2008-09	17
2009-10	49
2010-11*	111
2011-12	204

*Baseline

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

Beginning in September 2012, Nova Scotia will transition away from the NSSAP to a continuous learning approach to school improvement. This approach will focus on continuous school improvement, whereby schools, with the participation of teachers, will develop and implement a school improvement plan. This measure will be discontinued in 2012-13.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT IN ONLINE PUBLIC SCHOOL COURSES (PROVINCIALY FUNDED STUDENTS)

One of the department's core business areas is Primary-12 education. Student enrolment in online public school courses is one of the measures for a desired outcome that falls within this core business area.

WHAT DOES THIS MEASURE TELL US?

This measure is an indication of level of access to current public school courses online. It indicates demand for alternative credits to achieve high school certification. Nova Scotians seek alternative opportunities to continue to study toward secondary and post-secondary goals. With a greater range and distribution of courses at the senior high grades, it is possible for students, particularly those in small high schools, to meet individual educational priorities.

REPORTING ON 2011-12 TARGETS

The target for this measure was to increase the number of provincially funded seats for high school students over the baseline of 2010-11 (200 provincially funded seats) by 2013-14.

Department of Education funding enrolment in online courses	
2010-11	200
2011-12	500

The department currently funds 500 seats annually for students to take online courses through the Nova Scotia Virtual School, meeting its target.

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

Under the objective "Protect the quality of education in rural communities," *Kids & Learning First* identifies the need to triple the number of students to 1,500 who can take online courses through the NSVS by 2013-14.

NUMBER OF COURSES DEVELOPED/REVIEWED TO MEET THE NOVA SCOTIA VIRTUAL SCHOOL STANDARDS

One of the department's core business areas is Primary-12 education. The number of courses developed and reviewed to meet the Nova Scotia Virtual School (NSVS) standards is one of the measures for a desired outcome that falls within this core business area.

WHAT DOES THIS MEASURE TELL US?

This measure is an indication of course development and review to provide Public School Program courses online that meet the NSVS standards. This provides greater variety of course options to Nova Scotian students. Nova Scotia students seek alternative opportunities to continue to study toward secondary and post-secondary goals. With a greater range and distribution of courses at the senior high grades, it is possible for students, particularly those in small high schools, to meet individual educational priorities.

REPORTING ON 2011-12 TARGETS

The target for this measure was to increase the number of courses meeting the NSVS standards over the baseline of 2010-11 (2 courses) by 2013-14.

Number of Courses Meeting NSVS Standards		
Year	# of courses developed/reviewed	# of courses available to students
2010-11	2	Courses offered by specific Boards
2011-12	10	22

In 2011-12, eight courses were developed and/or reviewed, meeting the NSVS standards, bringing the total number of courses to ten.

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

Under the objective "Protect the quality of education in rural communities," *Kids & Learning First* identifies the need to double the number of courses offered through the NSVS, to a total of 44. The Department of Education will continue to develop/review courses with the goal of having enough courses meet the NSVS standards so that a student could complete the requirements for a Nova Scotia high school diploma online by the end of the 2013-14 school year.

EARLY LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT (GRADE 3)¹

One of the department's core business areas is primary-12 education. The percentage of Early Language Assessment (grade 3) students meeting provincial expectations in language arts is one of the measures for a desired outcome that falls within this core business area.

WHAT DOES THIS MEASURE TELL US?

The Early Language Assessment was first administered to grade 3 students in the Fall of 2007. The assessment provides grade 3 English program teachers with information about student performance relative to the Early Stage outcomes in reading, writing, and listening. Students who do not meet the provincial expectations are supported.

Results aggregated at the school, school board, and provincial levels are published annually in the Minister's Report to Parents and Guardians. Schools receive a comprehensive report about each student.

REPORTING ON 2011-12 TARGETS

The target for this measure was to increase over the baseline of 75 percent by 2011-12. In 2011-12, 74 percent of students met expectations in reading. This result is slightly below 2007-08 (the baseline year), at 75 percent meeting expectations, and a decrease from 78 percent meeting expectations in 2010-11.

Year	% of students meeting expectations
2007-08	75%*
2008-09	82%
2009-10	76%
2010-11	78%
2011-12	74%

*baseline

The Early Language Literacy Assessment evaluates Early Stage student writing. Students complete a Narrative writing task and an Information writing task. Both tasks are assessed for Conventions, Ideas, and Organization; the Narrative task is also assessed for Language Use. In 2011-12, students performed very well in all criteria assessed, except for the criteria of Language Use in the Narrative writing task. The lower performance in this area brought down the overall average of students meeting expectations on this assessment.

Beginning in the 2008-09 school year, the Department of Education changed the age of entry for students beginning grade primary from children 5 years of age on or before October 1, to children 5 years of age on or before December 31. The 2011-12 Early Language Assessment, was delivered to the first cohort of students enrolled under the revised age of entry. Students from this cohort may have been slightly developmentally behind students who participated in this assessment in previous years.

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

Beginning in the 2012-13 school year, the province will implement a revised set of provincial assessments in order to better support instructional planning and better inform education decision making at the school, board, and provincial levels. All provincial assessments will present results in relation to four performance levels. This change, as well as changes to the curriculum itself in the case of elementary mathematics, means that comparisons to earlier school year results will not be possible. Therefore, new baseline measures will be established relative to the 2012-13 Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading and Writing in Grade 3.

¹ The reporting years for all assessment results in the Accountability Report reflect the academic year.

ELEMENTARY LITERACY ASSESSMENT (GRADE 6), PERCENT MEETING EXPECTATIONS IN READING

One of the department's core business areas is primary-12 education. The percentage of students (grade 6) meeting provincial expectations in reading is one of the measures for a desired outcome that falls within this core business area.

WHAT DOES THIS MEASURE TELL US?

The Elementary Literacy Assessment has been administered to grade 6 (English and French) students in October of each year since 2003. This assessment provides data on how grade 6 students are performing in basic functional literacy through assessments in both reading and writing.

Results aggregated to the school, school board, and provincial levels are published annually in the Minister's Report to Parents and Guardians. Schools also receive comprehensive individual student reports. Parents receive individual reports on their children's results.

REPORTING ON 2011-12 TARGETS

The target for this measure is to increase the percentage of students meeting expectations in reading over the 2010-11 baseline of 84 percent. The overall percentage of students meeting expectations in 2011-12 is slightly above the baseline at 85 percent.²

Percent of Grade 6 Students Meeting Expectations in Reading	
Year	% of students meeting expectations
2010-11*	84%
2011-12	85%

*baseline

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

Beginning in the 2012-13 school year, the province will implement a revised set of provincial assessments in order to better support instructional planning and better inform education decision making at the school, board, and provincial levels. All provincial assessments will present results in relation to four performance levels. This change, as well as changes to the curriculum itself in the case of elementary mathematics, means that comparisons to earlier school year results will not be possible. Therefore, new baseline measures will be established relative to the 2012-13 Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading and Writing in Grade 6.

² Prior to the 2011-12 Statement of Mandate the reading and writing results for the Elementary Literacy Assessment (grade 6) were combined. In the 2011-12 Statement of Mandate, results were separate to more accurately report on the percentage of students meeting expectations in each area. As a result, the baseline for this measure was changed to 2010-11.

ELEMENTARY LITERACY ASSESSMENT (GRADE 6), PERCENT MEETING EXPECTATIONS IN WRITING

One of the department's core business areas is primary-12 education. The percentage of students (grade 6) meeting provincial expectations in reading and writing is one of the measures for a desired outcome that falls within this core business area.

WHAT DOES THIS MEASURE TELL US?

The Elementary Literacy Assessment has been administered to grade 6 (English and French) students in October of each year since 2003. This assessment provides data on how grade 6 students are performing in basic functional literacy through assessments in both reading and writing.

Results aggregated to the school, school board, and provincial levels are published annually in the Minister's Report to Parents and Guardians. Schools also receive comprehensive individual student reports. Parents receive individual reports on their children's results.

REPORTING ON 2011-12 TARGETS

The target for this measure is to increase the percentage of students meeting expectations in writing over the 2010-11 baseline of 90 percent.³ The overall percentage of students meeting expectations in 2011-12 is below the baseline at 87 percent.⁴

Percent of Grade 6 Students Meeting Expectations in Writing	
Year	% of students meeting expectations
2010-11	90%*
2011-12	87%

*baseline

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

Beginning in the 2012-13 school year, the province will implement a revised set of provincial assessments in order to better support instructional planning and better inform education decision making at the school, board, and provincial levels. All provincial assessments will present results in relation to four performance levels. This change, as well as changes to the curriculum itself in the case of elementary mathematics, means that comparisons to earlier school year results will not be possible. Therefore, new baseline measures will be established relative to the 2012-13 Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading and Writing in Grade 6.

³ The baseline identified in the 2011-12 Statement of Mandate was 94% meeting expectation. This should be corrected to 90% meeting expectation.

⁴ Prior to the 2011-12 Statement of Mandate the reading and writing results for the Elementary Literacy Assessment (grade 6) were combined. In the 2011-12 Statement of Mandate, results were separate to more accurately report on the percentage of students meeting expectations in each area. As a result, the baseline for this measure was changed to 2010-11.

JUNIOR HIGH LITERACY ASSESSMENT (GRADE 9)⁵

One of the department's core business areas is primary-12 education. The percentage of students meeting provincial expectations in junior high literacy is one of the measures for a desired outcome that falls within this core business area.

WHAT DOES THIS MEASURE TELL US?

The purpose of the Junior High Literacy Assessment (French and English) is to monitor the progress of individual students in reading and writing, relative to a representative number of Atlantic Canada Language Arts curriculum outcomes or French first-language curriculum outcomes. Results aggregated to the school, school board, and provincial levels are published annually in the Minister's Report to Parents and Guardians. Schools also receive comprehensive individual student reports. Parents receive individual reports on their children's results.

This measure indicates how our students are performing in relation to provincial expectations in reading and writing.

REPORTING ON 2011-12 TARGETS

The target for this measure was to increase over the baseline of 2006-07 (82 percent). In 2011-12, 76 percent of students met provincial expectations in junior high literacy, which includes results from both reading and writing. This is up from 2010-11 (74 percent) and down from baseline.

The percentage of students meeting expectations for this measure is calculated by combining those students who meet expectations in both the reading and writing components of the assessment. While there a significant number of students are not meeting expectations in both areas of the assessment, the percentage of students meeting expectations in one of the two areas of assessment is improving, with 80 percent of students meeting expectations in reading and 91 percent meeting expectations in writing. The department is taking steps to help more students meet expectations in both areas assessed through the Junior High Literacy Assessment, to help ensure that they have the skills and knowledge they need to be successful as they enter high school.

Percent of Junior High Students Meeting Expectations	
Year	% meeting expectations
2006-07	82%*
2007-08	81%
2008-09	81%
2009-10	78%
2010-11	74%
2011-12	76%

*Baseline

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

Beginning in the 2012-13 school year, the province will implement a revised set of provincial assessments in order to better support instructional planning and better inform education decision making at the school, board, and provincial levels. All provincial assessments will present results in relation to four performance levels. This change, as well as changes to the curriculum itself in the case of elementary mathematics, means that comparisons to earlier school year results will not be possible. Therefore, new baseline measures will be established relative to the 2012-13 Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading and Writing in Grade 8.

⁵ Please note that the reporting year has been adjusted for the Junior High Literacy Assessment (JHLA). The data has not changed and reflects the same cohort of students. The reporting years for the JHLA results have been adjusted from the 2010-11 Statement of Mandate, which reported JHLA results by fiscal year. Results now reflect the academic year to maintain consistency with the reporting method used for assessment results by the Program of Learning Assessments for Nova Scotia (PLANS).

EARLY ELEMENTARY MATHEMATICAL LITERACY ASSESSMENT (GRADE 3)⁶

One of the department's core business areas is primary-12 education. The percentage of students meeting provincial expectations on the Early Elementary Mathematics Literacy Assessment (grade 3) is one of the measures for a desired outcome that falls within this core business area.

WHAT DOES THIS MEASURE TELL US?

The Early Elementary Mathematical Literacy Assessment in English, French, and French Immersion formats provides information about individual student achievement as well as system performance in relation to the English and French mathematics curricula. Information from the assessment is reported at the student, school, school board, and provincial levels. Detailed student reports are provided to schools so that teachers can use the information to support students in areas of need. The department also prepares a report for parents, which is sent home from schools.

The measure will indicate the percentage of students who are meeting provincially established expectations for mathematics achievement.

REPORTING ON 2011-12 TARGETS

The assessment was first administered in 2006-07. In this baseline year, 67 percent of students met the provincial expectations. The target was to increase the percentage of students meeting expectations over the 2006-07 baseline by 2011-12.

Percent of Grade 3 Students Meeting Math Expectations	
Year	% meeting expectations
2006-07	67%*
2007-08	72%
2008-09	71%
2009-10	75%
2010-11	75%

*baseline

In 2010-11, 75 percent of students met expectations, meeting the target for this measure. The results indicate that more students are having success in mathematics at the grade 3

level. The final administration of the Early Elementary Mathematical Literacy Assessment will be in June 2012. Thereafter, an assessment of mathematics ability will be administered to students at the beginning of grade 4, starting in October of 2013. This assessment will take account of changes to the mathematics curriculum as the province adopts the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol for mathematics.

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

Beginning in the 2012-13 school year, the province will implement a revised set of provincial assessments in order to better support instructional planning and better inform education decision making at the school, board, and provincial levels. All provincial assessments will present results in relation to four performance levels. This change, as well as changes to the curriculum itself in the case of elementary mathematics, means that comparisons to earlier school year results will not be possible. Therefore, a new baseline measure will be established relative to the 2013-14 Nova Scotia Assessment: Mathematics in Grade 4.

⁶ Please note that the reporting year has been adjusted for the Early Elementary Mathematical Literacy Assessment. The data has not changed and reflects the same cohort of students. The reporting years for the JHLA results have been adjusted from the 2010-11 Statement of Mandate, which reported Early Elementary Mathematical Literacy Assessment results by fiscal year. Results now reflect the academic year to maintain consistency with the reporting method used for assessment results by the Program of Learning Assessments for Nova Scotia (PLANS).

EARLY MATHEMATICAL LITERACY ASSESSMENT (GRADE 6)

One of the department's core business areas is primary-12 education. The percentage of students meeting provincial expectations on the Early Mathematics Literacy Assessment (grade 6) is one of the measures for a desired outcome that falls within this core business area.

WHAT DOES THIS MEASURE TELL US?

The Early Mathematical Literacy Assessment in English, French, and French Immersion formats provides information about individual student achievement as well as system performance in relation to the English and French mathematics curricula. Information from the assessment is reported at the student, school, school board, and provincial levels. Detailed student reports are provided to schools so that teachers can use the information to support students in areas of need. The department also prepares a report for parents, which is sent home from schools.

The measure will indicate the percentage of students who are meeting provincially established expectations for mathematics achievement.

REPORTING ON 2011-12 TARGETS

The assessment was first administered in 2009-10. In this baseline year, 63 percent of students met the provincial expectations. In 2010-11, 62 percent of students met expectations. More data is needed to determine a trend in the results. The final administration of the Early Elementary Mathematical Literacy Assessment will be in May 2012.

Year	% meeting expectations
2009-10	63%*
2010-11	62%

*baseline

Thereafter, an assessment of mathematics ability will be administered to students at the beginning of grade 6, starting in October of 2013. This assessment will take account of changes to the mathematics curriculum as the province adopts the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol for mathematics.

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

Beginning in the 2012-13 school year, the province will implement a revised set of provincial assessments in order to better support instructional planning and better inform education decision making at the school, board, and provincial levels. All provincial assessments will present results in relation to four performance levels. This change, as well as changes to the curriculum itself in the case of elementary mathematics, means that comparisons to earlier school year results will not be possible. Therefore, a new baseline measure will be established relative to the 2013-14 Nova Scotia Assessment: Mathematics in Grade 6.

PROGRAMME FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ASSESSMENT

One of the department's core business areas is primary-12 education. The results of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) are included as the measures for a desired outcome that falls within this core business area.

WHAT DOES THIS MEASURE TELL US?

PISA is a well-respected international instrument sponsored by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Every three years it provides reliable measures of student performance in reading, mathematics, and science.

The estimated average score for the OECD countries participating in PISA is 500 in the year when each subject is the primary domain assessed. The assessment allows us to compare the performance of 15-year-old students in Nova Scotia with the performance of students in other jurisdictions in reading, mathematics, and science. The first PISA was administered in the spring of 2000. Over 60 countries and all the Canadian provinces participated in PISA in 2009.

REPORTING ON 2011-12 TARGETS

The target for this measure is an improvement of the estimated average score of Nova Scotia students over the Nova Scotia result for the reference year of that domain.

PISA Results ⁷				
Subject	NS Average - Target	NS Average*	Canadian Average	OECD Average
Reading	521 (2000)	516 (2009)	524 (2009)	500 (2009)
Math	515 (2003)	512 (2009)	527 (2009)	500 (2009)
Science	520 (2006)	523 (2009)	529 (2009)	500 (2009)

*2012 results not yet available

The 2009 PISA results indicate that Nova Scotia is performing on par in reading, mathematics, and science in relation to the OECD average and in relation to the performance of most other Canadian provinces. However, Nova Scotia continues to perform below the Canadian average in all three areas. The average performance for Nova Scotia in 2009 in all three subjects was not statistically significantly different from earlier provincial results.

Results from the 2012 PISA assessment will be available in December 2013. The major focus of the 2012 PISA assessment will be Mathematics, and the major focus of the 2015 PISA assessment will be Science. The 2012 and 2015 assessments will provide more robust results for comparing the Nova Scotia Mathematics and Science results with the baseline.

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

The targeted performance for PISA 2012 is a statistically significant improvement over the baseline performance for each domain.

⁷ Note: Averages are presented as scaled scores where 500 is set as the OECD average for the administration when the subject was first the major focus of the assessment. Both Nova Scotia and Canada performed above the OECD average.

PAN-CANADIAN ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (PCAP)

One of the department's core business areas is primary-12 education. The results of the Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP) are included as the measures for a desired outcome that falls within this core business area.

WHAT DOES THIS MEASURE TELL US?

PCAP is an assessment instrument developed by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). It is administered every three years and provides reliable measures of student performance in reading, mathematics, and science. As initially conceived and as first administered in 2007, the target population of this assessment was 13-year-old students, almost all of whom are in either grade seven or eight. The target population was changed to students in grade eight in preparation for the second administration in 2010. The estimated average score for Canada as a whole is 500, with a standard deviation of 100.

REPORTING ON 2011-12 TARGETS

For the comparison between 2007 and 2010, there was a shift in the population definition from an age basis (13-year-olds) to a grade basis (Grade 8). Because of subtle but substantial changes in the mathematics and science assessment instruments, it was possible to make the comparison only for the reading results.

PCAP Results 2010		
Subject	NS Average	Canadian Average
Reading	489	500
Math	474	500
Science	489	500

Source: 2010 Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (CMEC)

When adjustments are made to accommodate this change, the 2007 estimated average score for Nova Scotia grade 8 students in reading increased from 471 to 483. The 2010 PCAP result for reading was 489, a slight increase over the adjusted 2007 results. The increase however was determined to be not statistically significant, and Nova Scotia performed below the Canadian average in all three subject areas.

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

The target for this measure is to improve the estimated average scores of Nova Scotia's grade eight students above the 2007 baseline as demonstrated on the next administration of PCAP in 2013 (results expected in December 2014). However, due to the shift in the population definition from 2007 to 2010, baseline results are not available for either Mathematics or Science. Therefore, it may be necessary to develop a new performance measure for PCAP results using PCAP 2010 as the baseline.

NOVA SCOTIA EXAMINATIONS

The Nova Scotia Examinations (NSE) are administered in senior high school to students in grade twelve English language arts and mathematics courses.

A number of issues have affected collecting data on this measure, including an anticipated labour dispute in January 2010, which resulted in the NSEs being cancelled. Therefore, there are no results to report relative to the 2009-10 school year. In addition, beginning in the 2013-14 school year, the department will administer provincial examinations in English language arts (French language arts for student whose first language is French) and in mathematics at the grade ten level. As a result, this measure will be discontinued.

PERCENT OF GRADE 4-6 CLASSROOMS WITH THREE OR MORE CURRENT COMPUTERS

One of the department's core business areas is Primary-12 education. The percentage of grade 4-6 classrooms with three or more current computers is one of the measures for a desired outcome that falls within this core business area.

WHAT DOES THIS MEASURE TELL US?

This is a measurement of access to information and communications technology (ICT) in Primary-12 classrooms. Ready access to ICT is critical to aid in the support of student learning.

REPORTING ON 2011-12 TARGETS

A three year infusion cycle of support through the Information Economy Initiative Extension (IEIE) for grade 4-6 classrooms began in the 2010-11 school year. Beginning in 2010-11 and continuing to 2012-13, more than 6,000 new computing devices will be purchased for grade 4-6 classrooms, with the goals of continuing to refresh technology, improving the ratio of students to computers, and providing access to tools needed to support technology use and integration within the classroom.

Grade 4-6 classrooms with 3 or more current computers	
Year	Percentage of classrooms
2009-10	68.2%
2010-11	69.3 %
2011-12	Currently being compiled from Board inventory data

The target for this measure is to sustain or increase the percentage of grade 4-6 classrooms with access to three or more computers over the base target of 65 percent by 2013-14. In 2009-10, the baseline year, 68.2 percent of grade 4-6 classrooms had access to three or more computers, and in 2010-11 the percentage increased to 69.3 percent.

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

The Department of Education will continue to ensure that students develop the information and digital literacies required of information-age learners, employers, and employees. It is the department's target to ensure that all graduates have had access to learning experiences to support digital literacy and the effective use of technology for productivity, research, problem solving, decision making, creativity and communication in part by sustaining or increasing the percentage of students who have access to three or more computers in their classroom.

STUDENT ENROLMENT IN THE OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM

One of the department's core business areas is primary-12 education. This measure reports the number of students enrolled in the Options and Opportunities (O₂) program falls within this core business area. O₂ offers students hands-on learning experiences with a career focus. It is designed to prepare students for successful transitions from high school to work, a career path, or a post-secondary program. O₂ offers flexible courses delivery, including integrated courses, course clustering, flexible scheduling, and a school-within-a-school model.

O₂ Students graduate from high school with a solid career plan. Schools report that many students, who may otherwise not have been successful, develop confidence and an academic direction as a result of participating in the O₂ program. Further, most O₂ graduates who go on to pursue their studies at the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) are successful in the programs they chose to study.

WHAT DOES THIS MEASURE TELL US?

This is a measurement of the extent to which students, families, employers, and educators see value of O₂ through high school. In particular, growing enrolment reflects not only initial interest in the program but also continuing commitment through the three years of high school. It also measures teachers' capacity to offer this demanding and highly effective program.

O₂ has been successful in helping retain students and in re-engaging them with their learning. It further provides multiple opportunities for cooperative education, where students learn in community and workplace settings, link their in-school learning to the workplace, and enhance their employability skills. Increasing enrolment in O₂ supports both student engagement and government's plan to expand community-based learning opportunities for high school students.

REPORTING ON 2011-12 TARGETS

The target for this measure is to increase enrolment over the 2010-11 baseline of 1,803 students by 2013-14. Enrolment in 2011-12 school year was 1,890, an increase of 87 students over the baseline.

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

O₂ is an exciting high school program that offers students the chance to re-engage in learning, with hands-on, career-related experiences both in the classroom and in the community. In 2012-13, the number of schools offering O₂ will increase from 48 to 50.

Under the objective "Link learning to the workplace," the *Kids & Learning First* plan identifies the need to expand the O₂ program to help engage more students in their learning and to provide a hands-on learning experience that leads to post-secondary studies and/or a career path. *Kids & Learning First* further commits to establishing a Discovering Opportunities program for grade 9 students. This program will be modeled after the successful O₂ program.

NUMBER OF CREDITS COMPLETED BY STUDENTS IN THE CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

One of the department's core business areas is primary-12 education. This measure that reports the number of credits completed by students in the co-operative education program falls within this core business area.

WHAT DOES THIS MEASURE TELL US?

This is a measurement of the extent to which students, families, employers, and educators see value in students' exploration of career interests and experience within the workplace. It also measures system capacity to offer such learning opportunities.

REPORTING ON 2011-12 TARGETS

The target for this performance measure is to increase the number of credits in the co-operative education program over the 2009-10 baseline of 3,350⁸ credits. School boards reported that 3,576 co-operative education credits were earned in 2011-12.

Co-op Credits Earned	
Year	Credits Earned
2009-10	3,350*
2010-11	3,835
2011-12	3,576

*baseline

Data collection for this measure has been challenging. Data is currently collected by school board staff and some variation exists between school boards. Additional challenges exist with respect to gathering data on credits earned by students outside of regular class hours (after school or during the summer break). iNSchool, the provincial student information system, will help to more accurately gather consistent data from school boards with respect to this measure.

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

Kids & Learning First outlines a number of actions to support the co-operative education program, including marketing the program to employers in communities where co-op opportunities are more limited.

iNSchool will help ensure that more reliable data is gathered to more accurately report on the progress of this performance measure.

⁸ The baseline data have been adjusted from 3,612, as reported in the Department of Education 2011-12 Statement of Mandate to 3,350 to reflect revised numbers provided by school board staff.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE

One of the department's core business areas is primary-12 education. The high school graduation rate is one of the measures for a desired outcome that falls within this core business area.

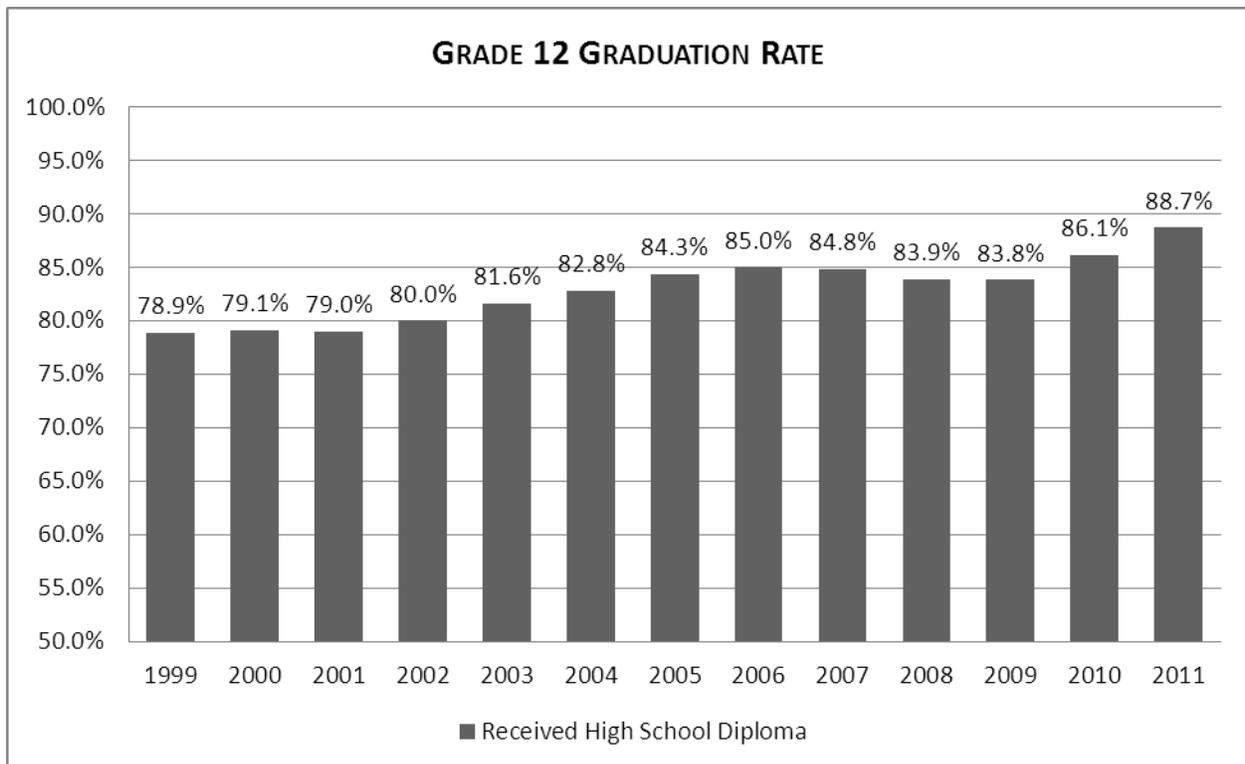
WHAT DOES THIS MEASURE TELL US?

The graduation rate is the percentage of students receiving a high school graduation diploma compared with the number of students in grade 9 three years earlier.

Education is a key variable in improved employment prospects and higher earnings. The successful pursuit of further education depends upon high school graduation. This is the foundation upon which an individual's future success is built.

REPORTING ON 2011-12 TARGETS

The target for this measure is to increase the graduation rate over the 2009-10 baseline of 86.1 percent. The graduation rate from the 2010-11 school year was 88.7 percent, an increase over the baseline.



WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

Our target is to continue to increase the graduation rate. The department has implemented a number of programs aimed at addressing student engagement and encouraging students to stay in school. Senior high students can choose course options that are consistent with their post-secondary plans, be they university, community college, skilled trades, or the job market.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT INDEX

The Department of Education is supported by the Public Service Commission (PSC) as a corporate human resources entity for government to help the department meet its human resources goals.

Employee engagement is the extent to which an individual feels connected to and involved with their job and the organization. By increasing employees' level of connection and involvement, the department and the PSC will ensure that employees feel satisfied and inspired in their work environment. The outcome is to build on current strengths and move the department on a continuum of improvement, with the goal of becoming a preferred place to work.

WHAT DOES THIS MEASURE TELL US?

Indicators of employee engagement as set by the PSC, measure both the level of satisfaction and the level of commitment of employees. Level of satisfaction indicators include employee satisfaction with their job, the organization, and their employment. Level of commitment indicators include employee feelings of pride, intentions to stay with the organization, desire to serve and perform at high levels, positive recommendation of the organization to others, and desire to improve the organization's result.

REPORTING ON 2011-12 TARGETS

For the 2010-11 fiscal year the department set a target to increase the employee engagement index over the 2009 baseline of 71 percent by 2013. The Employee Survey is administered every two-years. The employee engagement index from the 2011 survey was 64 percent, which is above the government wide score of 62 percent, but below the department's base score of 71 percent. This result indicates there has been a decrease in employee engagement at the Department of Education since the 2009 survey.

WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO/BE IN THE FUTURE?

The longer term goal is to improve the employee engagement score. In the shorter term the goal is to maintain and preferably exceed the 2011 score of 64 percent. To support this goal, the PSC will work to better understand the drivers of employee engagement and the necessary change for continued improvement.

3.0 FINANCIAL RESULTS

Education		
	2011-12 Estimate	2011-12 Actual
Program & Service Area	(\$ thousands)	(\$ thousands)
Senior Management	729	780
Corporate Policy	1,729	2,026
Corporate Services	16,323	15,833
Public Schools	34,426	33,320
Acadian & French Language Services	1,715	1,696
Public Education Funding	946,410	943,363
Other Grants	4,900	5,883
Learning Resources Credit Allocation	6,813	7,170
Teachers' Pension	59,631	60,155
School Capital Amortization	62,561	60,829
Total Department of Education	1,135,237	1,131,055

Additional Information:		
Fees and Other Charges	(1,853)	(1,895)
Ordinary Recoveries	(12,036)	(16,437)
TCA Purchase Requirements	93,383	90,447
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	200.1	193.1

The Department of Education achieved its 2011-2012 budget mandate. The Department was under budget by \$4.2M with the majority of the reduced spending derived from lower than expected capital amortization costs.

APPENDIX 1 – DISCLOSURES OF WRONGDOING RECEIVED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – DISCLOSURES OF WRONGDOING	
INFORMATION REQUIRED UNDER SECTION 18 OF THE PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE OF WRONGDOING ACT	FISCAL YEAR 2011-12
Number of disclosures received	Three (3)
Number of findings of wrongdoing	One (1)
Details of each wrongdoing (insert separate row for each wrongdoing)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Classification Appeal 2. Grievance 3. Grievance
Recommendations and actions taken on each wrong doing (insert separate row for each wrongdoing)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Classification Appeal – Letter sent to applicant on July 21, 2011, stating position was properly classified and meets benchmarks of that position 2. Grievance – Redirected to Agriculture 3. Grievance – Health HR CSU is addressing the issue