



Video Transcript

Value-for-Money Audit: Curriculum Development, Implementation and Delivery (2020)

In our work on the 2020 Annual Report, we performed a value-for-money audit of Curriculum Development, Implementation and Delivery.

Appropriate curriculum is important to ensure Ontario students are learning the most current and relevant material in a world of quickly changing technology and cultural diversity.

Responsibilities for curriculum in Ontario are shared. The Ministry of Education develops curricula for students, and assessment policies for educators. Teachers develop instructional strategies to help students learn, and methods for assessing, evaluating and reporting student achievement. Principals supervise and evaluate the performance of teachers, and school boards ensure that their staff are teaching curriculum as expected.

This audit allowed us to review the process used to develop or revise curricula, as the ministry has released many curricula in the last five years.

We found that a substantial portion of the current curricula in Ontario was developed many years ago: 15% were released 15 or more years ago, and another 51% were released 10 to 14 years ago. Similarly, some approved textbooks were just as old.

In most cases in the last three years, the Ministry followed the steps in its review and revision process. But there were instances where steps were fast-tracked or skipped, including obtaining stakeholder input on the new Health and Physical Education curriculum before development, and obtaining current research and analysis for First Nations, Metis and Inuit Studies.

In addition, 4 of 5 recent new curricula were released without enough time for boards and teachers to prepare to deliver it effectively. For curricula released in the last five years 57% of teachers surveyed said they did not receive training and of those that did receive training, only 8% found it useful.

The Ministry and school boards do not have processes to ensure consistency across the province in high quality delivery or assessment. This is because performance standards for evaluation are not clearly defined.



The COVID-19 pandemic presented additional issues. During the spring 2020 lockdown, the Ministry did not provide clear expectations for the frequency or duration of teacher-led, real-time, remote learning instruction. 48% of school boards surveyed by the Ministry reported that only half or fewer of their teachers were offering their students live, real-time instruction as of May 20, 2020.

Our report contains 15 recommendations, consisting of 29 actions, including that the Ministry of Education:

- develop a risk-based approach for selecting curriculum to revise;
- provide sufficient lead-time before new curriculum is rolled out, ranging from six months to one year, to allow teachers to prepare;
- provide additional training and supports to teachers to use for curriculum delivery;
- provide teachers with further guidance and tools to support remote learning;
- address issues of inconsistent assessment; and
- establish a province-wide educator network to create and share assessment materials and strategies.

As well, we recommend that school boards:

- require principals or vice-principals to review teachers' plans to ensure all curriculum expectations are appropriately taught.