



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Backgrounder for News Release Provincial Auditor's 2016 Report – Volume 2

Education

Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81 – English as an Additional Language Programming (Chapter 29)

Learning and developing English-language skills plays an important role in the academic success of immigrant Kindergarten to Grade 8 students. Provincial Auditor Judy Ferguson examined Regina Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 81's (Regina Catholic) processes to deliver English as an Additional Language (EAL) programming. From 2012 to 2015, enrolment in Regina Catholic's EAL programming increased by 22%. While Regina Catholic was informally estimating future enrolment of EAL students in Kindergarten to Grade 8, it needs to reassess its estimates each year to help it better determine the amount of resources needed to deliver EAL programming. Regina Catholic also needs to rationalize the number of teachers required for its EAL programming, as not all students assessed as needing EAL support in the 2015-16 school year received it (14.9% at the beginning of the 2015-16 school year and 9.5% at the end of the school year). Without sufficient EAL support, EAL students may take longer to learn English, making it harder for them to succeed academically.

Health Care

Ministry of Health – Special Needs Equipment for Persons with Disabilities (Chapter 27)

About one in seven Saskatchewan residents aged 15 years or older have a disability that limits their daily activities. Since 1987, the Ministry of Health has delivered the Special Needs Equipment Program through the Saskatchewan Abilities Council. This Program provides free loan and repair of special needs equipment to eligible clients throughout the province.

At June 30, 2016, for almost 70 pieces of equipment (e.g., wheelchairs, hospital beds), clients waited more than four weeks to receive the requested equipment. To ensure clients are receiving special needs equipment within an acceptable timeframe, the Ministry needs a strategy to actively manage wait lists for equipment.

To reduce the risk of buying additional equipment when it has suitable unused equipment on loan, the Ministry needs to work with the Saskatchewan Abilities Council to identify and recover, within a reasonable amount of time, equipment on loan that is no longer in use so that it is available for redeployment. To keep the equipment in safe working condition, the Ministry needs to develop a process to complete the appropriate preventative maintenance on all special needs equipment that is on loan. Provincial Auditor Judy Ferguson found for seven of the ten items of lift equipment tested, preventative maintenance was not done for over four years. By taking these additional steps, the Ministry can help clients to have timely access to properly maintained special needs equipment.



Protecting Personal Information

Ministry of Finance—Public Employees Benefits Agency – Securing Personal Information (Chapter 26)

The Public Employees Benefits Agency (PEBA) administers 34 pension and benefit plans which have about 90,000 participants. PEBA maintains personal information on each participant, which is stored in physical and electronic formats. Provincial Auditor Judy Ferguson found that it had effective processes to secure the plan participants' personal information, with a few exceptions. PEBA needs to ensure its procedures used to secure personal information are readily accessible to its staff, and periodically review and update its non-IT security policies. This will help PEBA to secure the personal information entrusted to it and reduce the risk of inadvertently disclosing plan participants' personal information.

Managing Museum Collections

Western Development Museum – Permanently Removing Historical Artifacts (Chapter 30)

With over 75,000 artifacts in its collection, the Western Development Museum (WDM) is Saskatchewan's largest human history museum. Provincial Auditor Judy Ferguson examined WDM's processes to manage and maintain its collection, specifically the removal of historical artifacts. WDM needs to thoroughly review its collections to identify potential artifacts for removal, such as duplicate artifacts or deteriorating artifacts. Use of its existing collection database to analyze its collection would help it to make artifact removal decisions. Once WDM has selected artifacts for removal, it should dispose of them within an established timeframe. Actively removing artifacts can help WDM to manage its collection more effectively as storing and caring for duplicate or similar artifacts can waste scarce resources. In addition, systematic removal of artifacts can help relieve storage space pressures.

For More Information

The full Provincial Auditor's *2016 Report – Volume 2*, which includes details on all of the Provincial Auditor's recommendations, is available online at www.auditor.sk.ca.

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