The Right Angle:
Report from Alberta Education

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The New Learn Alberta Website

The new Learn Alberta website, www.learnalberta.ca, incorporates digital learning and teaching resources, implementation supports, and distributed learning courses. Previous versions of LearnAlberta.ca and the online guide to implementation are no longer available.

The supports previously available through the online guide to implementation can now be accessed on the LearnAlberta.ca site through links embedded within the applicable program of studies or by using the search function. Users who have created links to resources found in the former online guide to implementation will be automatically redirected to the same resources on the new website.

Teachers in Alberta who hold an active and valid professional certificate can create a personal teacher account by selecting the Sign Up link at the top right-hand corner of the home page. To complete the sign-up process, teachers will require a jurisdictional username and password for LearnAlberta.ca, a professional certificate number, and access to an e-mail account.

A personal teacher account gives increased functionality within the My Workspace feature of the website. Within My Workspace, teacher account holders can save resources, add their own Web-based resources, create folders to organize resources, add notes to resources and folders, and publish lists of resources using either e-mail or a Web link.

Finding Learning and Teaching Resources

The new design of the homepage gives users a number of ways to find learning and teaching resources. Tabs allow users to choose whether they wish to find resources within the context of the program of study or to search for resources. The online reference centre is also available at all times to allow users easy access to the collection of multimedia encyclopedias and online databases to support inquiry and research. The Find Resources box on the homepage also allows users to perform a quick keyword search using grade and subject filters.

New Resources/Most Accessed Resources Area

The homepage offers users a snapshot of the most accessed resources, as well as any new resources available on the site. On the lower right of the homepage, a statistics area offers users a choice of information they would like displayed for their own interest. Users may choose to display resources for all subjects or for a specific subject by making a choice from the drop-down menu. Users with a personal account may also choose to display resources according to the personal preferences set in their account profile. These preferences will be automatically displayed in the resource box on the homepage whenever the user returns to the site.

Program of Study Search

The Program of Study tab offers users a choice of either French or English programs. From a drop-down menu, users can select a subject area to reveal a list of all available programs in that subject area. For example, if a user chooses English social studies as a core program, a list of all Alberta Education social studies programs of study will appear on the right side of the screen. Clicking on the appropriate program and grade will open the program of studies with a table of contents on the left and the text of the program of studies on the right.

As they scroll through the program of studies, users will see icons. These icons indicate that resources are available for a particular outcome, generalization or key understanding. By hovering over the icon users will see a pop-up information box indicating the number of resources available and whether the resources are for teachers or students. Clicking on the icon will reveal a list of those resources. The list includes information on each resource, such as the resource name, description, grade level, subject and media format. Expanding the list by clicking on the "more info" link provides the language of the resource, keywords, intended audience and learner outcomes. Clicking on the title of the resource from the list will launch the resource.

A user who has signed in to a personal account will see the words "Save to My Workspace" to the right of the resource's title. The Save to My Workspace link will be active if the user has signed in using his or her personal account information. Clicking on this link allows users who have set up a personal account to save the listed resource directly to their My Workspace area. After clicking the Save to My Workspace link, users will see a pop-up window notifying them that the resource has been successfully saved to My Workspace.

Search

The Search tab allows users to refine their search in more detail than they get using the Find Resource box on the homepage. By clicking on the Search tab, the user is taken to a page that lets them search using the options of grade, subject, audience, language of the resource, media format and learning resource type. The number of individual resources available on the website is shown in brackets beside the check boxes within each filter.

Of course, if the user knows the name of the resource, he or she can simply type it in the Find Resources box at the top of the page. However, if the user types in a broader search term, such as *Gizmo*, the search will return a list of all the resources on the website that contain the word *Gizmo* in the description or title. Refining a search by using the available filters allows users to narrow their search, thereby retrieving fewer resources and improving the likelihood of locating a useful resource.