
Opportunities for Education on Residential Tenancies in the Alberta School Curriculum

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this study is to determine when education on residential tenancies is best handled in the current Alberta school curriculum and to determine ways that the teaching of this subject might be enhanced.

Three areas of the Alberta school curriculum, Social Studies, Legal Studies, and Career and Life Management (CALM), were assessed for this purpose with particular attention to instruction in high school. Part of the assessment also involved speaking with officials from Alberta Learning and with teachers.

The study looks in detail at each area of the curriculum in turn, focusing on content and structure, and then looks at the opportunities for instruction in matters relating to residential tenancies.

This study was completed by the Project Team of Lois Gander, Professor and Director of the Legal Studies Program and Lynn Parish, Legal Specialist. The Legal Studies program would like to thank and acknowledge the Alberta Real Estate Foundation and Alberta Government Services for their funding of this project.

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Findings

There is potential in three areas of the Alberta school curriculum for instruction on residential tenancies. The areas are Social Studies, the Legal Studies component of Career and Technology Studies, and the Career and Life Management (CALM) component of Health and Personal Development.

With regard to opportunities for the maximum number of students to receive information about residential tenancies, the study finds that all students receive instruction in Social Studies and in CALM, whereas Legal Studies is an optional course of study. The most opportune time for students to receive specific instruction about residential tenancies is probably in the high school years, and preferably close to their time of leaving school.

Information specifically on residential tenancies is probably too detailed for inclusion in the current Social Studies curriculum, although there could be room for more legal education in a broader sense. Such background legal education would go towards enhancing an understanding of political systems, judicial systems and the reasons for societies to enact laws.

Although Legal Studies is an optional program with no pre-requisite courses required, several modules within the program include the most detailed instruction about residential tenancies in the Alberta school curriculum as a whole. The modules are "*You and the Law I*" and "*Consumer and Property Law*". Students that take even one of these modules will gain an appreciation and awareness of contract law as the basis for a lease, together with some familiarity of important basic issues that apply in the field of residential tenancies. Although there are no course pre-requisites, it is likely that many students who take Legal Studies as an option will take the course "*You and the Law I*", as it is an introductory course.

The current CALM curriculum includes a component of instruction on renting a residence. CALM is a practically oriented course which has as its aim to prepare students for life after high school. Although all students have to take CALM, there is considerable variation as to how the course is delivered, both in terms of how a particular school treats the course and how individual teachers deliver the instruction. The current curriculum does not set out particular outcomes for the component of the course that deals with renting premises. The CALM curriculum is currently being revised and may increase the amount of time that teachers spend on this course. The new draft curriculum covers outcomes for education about renting premises.

There is also some discussion as to when students should receive instruction in CALM. The new curriculum is to be taught in grade 10, but there is an opinion that this is too early and that CALM should be taught as close as possible to the time when students leave school.

In terms of resources on residential tenancies, there does not appear to be a wide variety used by teachers. With limited time for sourcing information, teachers appreciate straightforward documents that are appropriate for the students. The Alberta Government Services "Tip Sheets" are popular with the teachers spoken to in this study, as they are easily found on the Internet and include concise information about the law. Expanded information geared specifically to the curriculum might however expand the amount of time that teachers are prepared to spend on information about residential tenancies.

Conclusion

This report concludes that opportunities exist in the Alberta Curriculum for education about residential tenancies. The best opportunity for the most students to receive this instruction is currently through the delivery of the CALM curriculum. There is some debate about which grade level is appropriate for instruction in CALM. Given the overall content of CALM, it is probably better to have the instruction as close as possible to the time for leaving school, as long as that catches the majority of students.

The report also concludes that improved resources would likely improve the willingness and ability of teachers to include more information in their courses about residential tenancies, particularly in CALM. This probably has to coincide with a more widespread recognition of the value of the CALM curriculum overall. Due to budget constraints in many schools, emphasis should be placed upon low cost resources tailored to specific course requirements. Information on the Internet that teachers can access and make available to students appears to be a suitable method of providing information to teachers.

Some consideration might be given to those students who leave school at the end of grade nine or grade ten. Those students will have limited or no opportunity to access information about residential tenancies through the school curriculum.

Introduction

Three areas of study in the Alberta curriculum present opportunities for legal education generally, and more specifically in the area of residential tenancies. They are Social Studies, the Legal Studies strand of Career and Technology Studies, and the Career and Life Management (CALM) component of Health/ Personal Development. This report will look at each subject area in detail. First the report looks briefly at the methodology used in the compilation of the report, teaching training required in each of the relevant subjects, and legal education that student teachers receive at the University of Alberta. It is recognized that there are other teacher training facilities in Alberta besides the University of Alberta, which may have other course available in law for teachers.

Methodology

For the purposes of this study the researcher read the curriculum materials provided by Alberta Learning in the areas of Social Studies, Legal Studies and Career and Life Management (CALM), together with related materials. This comprised the following:

- Social Studies curriculum, program rationale and philosophy- K-12 (1990)
- Western Canadian Protocol for collaboration in basic education (working draft); February 2001
- CTS programs of study (Alberta Learning)
- CTS Curriculum structure (Alberta Learning)
- CTS Guide to Standards and Implementation (Alberta Learning)
- Legal Studies Modules (1997) (Alberta Learning)
- CTS Credit completion statistics (Alberta Learning, 2000)
- Career and Life Management curriculum (Alberta Learning, 1989)
- Draft Career and Life Management curriculum (2001)

The researcher interviewed officials from Alberta Learning in each of the three curriculum study areas and a CTS consultant from Edmonton Public Schools. Also interviewed were a few teachers in the three study areas in order to gain an impression of how the subjects are taught, and resources which are used.

Teacher Training in specific subject areas and in law at the University of Alberta

All undergraduate teachers at the University of Alberta, primary and secondary, are required to take a course called Ethics and Law in Teaching. The focus of the course is on how the law affects educators, but students also look at issues involving the Charter, the court system, individual versus collective rights, the *Young Offenders Act*, freedom of speech, and parent's duties and parent's rights. Some familiarity would therefore be gained with basic legal concepts. Undergraduate teachers are not required to take any further courses in law unless they major or minor in Career and Technology Studies (CTS).

Social Studies can be taken as a major or minor in an education degree. Training in Social Studies covers the concepts taught in the curriculum around systems of government and legal institutions. However, not all Social Studies teachers have majored or minored in Social Studies. Teachers may be moved in from another area to teach Social Studies when there is not a Social Studies teacher available.

Students taking secondary education have an opportunity to take CTS as a major or minor subject. This opportunity has only existed for the past three years. The 22 strands of CTS are grouped within 4 majors and 4 minors. Students cannot enroll in a major and a minor within CTS. One group of CTS strands is Business and Technology, which includes Legal Studies. The Business and Technology group of CTS strands can be taken as a major or minor and both include Legal Studies. The required course on law is Law 301, which is taught through the Faculty of Business and Technology.

There is no specific teacher training for CALM. However there is a Human Ecology component to CTS which could be relevant to the CALM curriculum. There is also a Health Education minor. Six education students are taking Health as a minor this year. Physical education teachers are also often called upon to teach CALM. Again, in practice it can be any teacher who is available that teaches CALM, rather than someone with specific training.

Social Studies

Social Studies is a core program of the Alberta curriculum. It is a mandatory program of study followed from grade one to grade twelve. As expressed in the 1990 Alberta Learning curriculum notes, the aim of the current Social Studies program is to

"... assist students to acquire the basic knowledge, skills and positive attitudes needed to be responsible citizens and contributing members of society."

To achieve this goal the Social Studies curriculum draws upon history, geography, economics, other social sciences, the behavioral sciences and the humanities.

Structure of curriculum

At the elementary levels (grades one to six) and in grade seven, there is one curriculum followed by all students. In grades eight and nine there is the regular curriculum and also an Integrated Occupational Program for students who have experienced difficulty with Social Studies in the regular program.

At the senior high school level (grades ten, eleven, twelve), there are two sequences of the Social Studies program characterized as Social Studies 10, 20, 30 and Social Studies 13, 23, 33. The content, skills and attitudes are similar for both sequences, but the 10, 20, 30 levels have more challenging expectations of the students than the 13, 23, and 33 levels. At the senior high school level there is also a two strand Integrated Occupational Program characterized as 16, 26 courses, which are directed towards students who are having difficulties with the regular programs.

Legal content of current curriculum

In terms of legal education, the current Social Studies curriculum can be viewed as providing the background and context for more specific education about law. Students learn about the nature and role of government and the judiciary. At the elementary levels the topics range from looking at various basic needs in the community in grade two, to looking at local government functions in grade six. In the Integrated Occupational Program in grade nine, students look at concepts relating to justice and laws.

Social Studies students at high school look in more detail at areas that cover where law comes from and philosophy behind the law. In grade 10, there is a section under the "Politics and Government" unit that deals with a brief overview of the judicial branch of government. Students look at issues relating to citizenship in Canada that includes the role of the law. In the textbook "*Canada Today*" (McDevitt, Daniels, Scully; 3rd ed. 1996) which is used by teachers, there is a chapter dealing with legal issues called

"Rights and Responsibilities- You and the Law". The chapter is not in the curriculum but many teachers apparently use it. The text covers the reasons to have laws, the Charter, the Canadian legal system, and a discussion about civil and criminal law. The chapter has more discussion on the criminal aspects of law rather than the civil.

In grade eleven (SS 20) the focus is on the global perspective, which includes looking at justice as a global issue in certain areas of concern, such as the spread of disease and distribution of wealth.

In grade 12 there is a larger unit on democracy that deals with the separation of powers, role of the judiciary, the Canadian government system, a look at the U.S. judicial branch and a comparative study of Sweden (as an example of a system with proportional representation). Students look at the way decisions are made by governments, the functions of different aspects of government, including the judiciary, and issues of individualism versus collectivism. The 13, 23, 33 and the IOP programs of study look at these same issues with a progressively less intensive course of study.

Constant themes throughout all strands of the current Social Studies curriculum are respect and appreciation for the rights and views of others, positive attitudes about democracy and a responsible attitude toward the environment and the community.

Review of curriculum

The Social Studies curriculum is currently under review. During that process, New General Learning Objectives (GLO) have been put in place for the whole K-12 Social Studies curriculum. The new GLO's will be The Land; Places and People; Time, Continuity and Change; Global Connections; Power, Authority and Decision-making; Economics and Resources. Themes of the new curriculum will be Citizenship, Identity, Culture and Community and Diverse Perspectives (especially aboriginal and francophone issues).

Grades K-9 are being reviewed as part of a Western Canadian Protocol (WCP) process involving several western provinces and territories. A Western Protocol document was released in February 2001, which set out a draft curriculum.

The curriculum for grades 10, 11, 12 is being reviewed separately from the WCP process with a schedule of implementation as follows:

Grade 10:	2005
Grade 11:	2006
Grade 12:	2007

The review process for grades 10-12 is underway. At present this involves doing a needs assessment with various groups. Parents, teachers and students will be asked to fill out a needs assessment survey, which is administered through the school boards. The survey will also possibly be taken to the university level and to business groups, although the business influence is not as great in Social Studies as it is in math or science. There is also some interest from Alberta Learning in holding a legal forum to assess the degree of legal content that a new curriculum might include. With the emphasis on citizenship issues, it is felt that the legal input could be helpful from the perspective of improving public knowledge and awareness of the law and its significance.

A Social Studies Discussion Paper will be released in March 2002 with a draft program of studies later in the year. There will eventually be three draft versions leading up to the implementation dates as stated above.

Information about Residential Tenancies in the Social Studies curriculum

There is no direct information about specific areas of law such as residential tenancies in the current Social Studies curriculum. The way in which the current curriculum is designed would not lend itself to such specifics. However, over the course of their education in Social Studies, students are given the opportunity to learn about the roles of government and the judiciary in making and interpreting laws. They also learn about their own role as citizens in participating in law making and law keeping exercises, all of which are important to an understanding of the law in specific areas.

It is possible that the review underway for the new Social Studies curriculum will recommend that Social Studies should contain more legal content. Given the many areas that the Social Studies curriculum has to cover, it is unlikely that specific topics such as residential tenancies would be included. However, particularly with the advent of Charter issues, there could be some recognition that more general legal content is required which will enhance further learning of legal matters in other areas of the curriculum.

Legal Studies component of Career and Technology Studies

Career and Technology Studies (CTS) is an area of study that is directed towards learning in a career context. It is taught at the junior high and senior high levels as an optional course of study.

CTS was provincially implemented in 1997. Prior to that time there had been a number of courses making up Practical Arts. In 1988 Practical Arts had been identified as an area to be updated. The CTS initiative evolved from that review process. Prior to the review there had been two optional high school courses of Law 20 and Law 30.

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Within the CTS program there are twenty-two strands of study. Each strand of study includes various course modules which are worth one credit each. One strand of study is the Legal Studies program, which includes thirteen modules.

Legal Studies is viewed by Alberta Learning as a practical area of study in the same vein as other CTS course such as Construction Technologies, Fashion Studies and Fabrication Studies. There is some feeling that if Legal Studies was presented as more of an academic subject, students might not be as interested. The intention of Legal Studies is not to duplicate courses or information offered elsewhere in the curriculum.

Structure of curriculum

The 1997 notes to the Legal Studies course from Alberta Learning describe the rationale and philosophy of the course as having three goals for the students:

- To develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to respond appropriately to the influences of law in their daily lives.
- To equip students with the capabilities and confidence required to participate in the changing of laws.
- To create an awareness of the many law-related occupational opportunities that are available.

It was also mentioned by an Alberta Learning official that there have been requests for the Legal Studies program from schools with children who are identified as being at risk of having legal troubles later in life. These schools wish to tap in to the program as a preventative course of study. This aspect was also mentioned by one high school teacher who had taught students who had been in jail, an experience which had piqued their interest in Legal Studies. Another teacher mentioned that a few students take courses in Legal Studies because they are angry with the law for some reason, e.g. a traffic ticket, and want to learn how to deal with it.

All of the teachers who were interviewed, considered interest to be a reason for many students to take Legal Studies modules. The interest could be based upon perceptions from film and television or careers of parents and friends. It was considered that some students also take the modules as a potential career path. When the teachers were asked how they viewed the rationale for the Legal Studies modules, the answers varied from interest and career path opportunities to providing important information with which to understand the world and promoting tolerance and understanding.

It is recommended by Alberta Learning that Legal Studies instruction occur in high school even though junior high schools can offer CTS courses. Alberta Learning does not have any records as to whether or not Legal Studies is taught at any junior high schools.

There is a perception that CTS modules taught in junior high have very little support and weight given to them. Little monitoring takes place, as there is no credit program at that level.

Teachers were asked how instruction in specific areas of law in Legal Studies corresponded with learning about the concept of law in Social Studies. They all commented that the beginner modules in Legal Studies gave sufficient basic background in law so that it did not matter if a student had not yet covered that area in Social Studies.

The Legal Studies strand is made up of module courses worth one credit each. Schools must provide access to 25 hours of instruction per module. The structure was chosen as it makes it easy to add new modules. Funding is based upon the credit model, but the 25 hours of instruction requirement prevents schools from adding more modules just to get funding. The structure of individual modules has been criticized for not providing sufficient continuity or flow.

The modules cover two theme areas, the personal context and the societal context. The thirteen modules are set out in three levels; introductory, intermediate and advanced. There are two modules in the introductory level, four in the intermediate level and seven in the advanced level.

The rationale for the differences in study levels is based upon a building block process. With each increased level of study, students are expected to develop more complex competencies and more responsibility for their learning. However there are no pre-requisites for the courses, only recommendations that it would be better to take some courses before others. The philosophy of Alberta Learning is to only apply pre-requisites for courses where it is determined there is a need for them in order for the student to succeed at a higher level. That is not felt to be the case with Legal Studies. Students can therefore take advanced courses without having covered introductory courses. Schools that were contacted for the purposes of this study varied in their treatment of the modules. At least one school required completion of a beginner level course before taking other courses, while other schools did not impose any pre-requisites.

Alberta Learning collects statistics on how many credits are completed at high schools in CTS. The statistics kept since 1997 show that a fairly consistent number of credits have been completed each year in Legal Studies. The average for the three years from 1997 to 2000 is 21,288 credits with only a 2% variance over that time. Within the whole CTS program these figures are in the mid to low end of credit completions for a CTS course. The highest number is in the Information Processing strand which has an average of 186,745 credits completed over the same three year period with a -1% variance. The next highest is Foods with an average of 86,617 credits and a 4% variance.

Content of Current Legal Studies curriculum

The modules that make up the Legal Studies strand of CTS are determined by Alberta Learning. The thirteen modules currently available are

- You and the Law 1 (as a consumer and as a family member);
- You and the Law 2 (in society and in the workplace);
- Family Law;
- Labour Law;
- Environmental Law;
- Law and the Traveller;
- Consumer and Property Law;
- Dispute Resolution;
- Negligence;
- Law and Small Business;
- Controversy and Change;
- Landmark Decisions;
- Criminal Law.

Individual schools determine which modules to make available to students, how to deliver the program and the extent to which students can plan their own CTS programs. For example, one practice described by a teacher is to plan a Legal Studies 20 course made up of three modules and a Legal Studies 30 course made up of six modules.

Opportunities for instruction about residential tenancies.

Of the thirteen Legal Studies modules, two contain learning opportunities with regard to residential tenancies. They are *You and the Law 1* (introductory level) and *Consumer and Property Law* (advanced level).

In the module *You and the Law 1*, students look specifically at the concepts of purchasing goods and services, and of renting accommodation. These areas comprise two of the seven concepts covered. The concept of purchasing goods and services looks at the essential elements, forms and types of contracts. The concept of renting accommodation has three specific learner expectations for the student:

- To describe the law that addresses common problems between a landlord and tenant, e.g. giving notice, not paying the rent, disturbances.
- To describe the advantages and disadvantages of signing a lease.
- To research the legal implications of two or more people living together for economic reasons.

The course outline does not allocate specific time periods for the concepts. One teacher estimated that she delivers instruction on landlord and tenant issues as approximately 10-15% of the teaching time of *You and the Law 1*.

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The advanced module *Consumer and Property Law* looks at the concept of renting real and personal property. With regard to residential tenancies the specific learner expectations are for the student to:

- Explain the basic principles of contract law that apply to rental agreements.
- Define different types of rental arrangements (e.g. periodic, fixed term, temporary).
- Describe the liability implications of leasing property.
- Identify items to be considered if assigning or subletting.
- Research the legal implications of two or more people living together for economic reasons.

Consumer and Property Law also includes the concept of "Protecting the Consumer". This concept looks at the various ways a consumer is protected by common law, statute, contract and government agencies, but does not comment directly on consumer protection in the landlord and tenant area.

Resources for Legal Studies

Alberta Learning has authorized a number of legal texts for use with the Legal Studies modules. One text, which was reviewed for the purpose of this study is *All About the Law* (4th. ed., 1996; by Gibson and Murphy). The text is national in focus and includes a chapter on "Property Law- Landlord and Tenant". The chapter includes a fairly detailed discussion on the history of leases, the different classes of tenancy, entering into a lease, terms of a lease, rent, security deposits, repairs, utilities and taxes, landlord and tenant rights, changing the terms of a tenancy, assignments and subletting, and rent control. There are also some case studies provided. Due to the national focus, the text does not comment in detail on specific provincial requirements, but provides sufficient general information in key areas such that a student would be aware of issues to be concerned about.

Teachers are able to purchase a Learning Facilitators Manual to accompany the text that contains answers to assignments, suggestions for resources and other activities. There is not as much material in the residential tenancies area as there is for other areas of law. For example, in terms of resources, teachers are simply recommended to contact local tenants groups or others working in the areas. There are no recommended texts or resources such as videos.

The Alberta Learning curriculum materials do suggest a number of videos available to aid teaching the Legal Studies modules. Two videos appear to contain information about the nature of contract law that is fundamental to the landlord and tenant relationship. They are ACCESS "You and the Law " (Contract and Consumer Law, Landlord and Tenant Law) and a TV Ontario series on Contract Law. The text, *All about the Law*, does

not emphasize the contractual nature of a lease, so that the resources on contract law may not be used in the residential tenancies context.

There is no video specifically dealing with issues about residential tenancies. One of the problems with such a specific title might be the degree to which the material becomes dated. The videos are optional teaching resources and availability to the students will depend upon the allocation of resources of different schools. Access to resources as a whole is a largely unknown factor across the school system. It is difficult to estimate what access to information teachers have or how much access to good resources.

There has been a decline in the central provision of services in CTS. For example, five years ago the Edmonton Public School Board had a full time consultant in CTS. Since that time there has been a resource person who can only be used on a cost recovery basis. The specialist at Edmonton Public School Board has established a Department Head Network for CTS to get information and resources out to the schools. They meet five times a year and the schools that participate share the one time fee for the service. In other areas, e.g. Sherwood Park, there would not be anyone acting as a central resource, although basic questions could probably be answered.

There is also a problem in attracting new CTS teachers overall. Many of the current teachers were Practical Arts teachers previously and many are men who were once in automotives or metal working. Many of these people are now retiring and there are not sufficient replacements. However, Alberta Learning has not identified Legal Studies as specifically having a problem with staffing.

It has been a policy of Alberta Learning not to refer to web sites in curriculum materials. The reasons given are that Alberta Learning cannot check all sites for their content or that the sites remain constant and updated. Also, not all schools have access to computers. One teacher expressed how difficult it would be to use the Internet during class time. Large classes would require much supervision to ensure they were staying on task. Another teacher, however, expressed appreciation in using Internet materials which had been previously checked and endorsed by another agency, and did not have any concern with using class time for Internet access. Alberta Learning has recently licensed a number of online resources which can be accessed through one site, (www.learnalberta.ca/refcentre). The site contains full text magazines, encyclopaedias, including the Canadian Encyclopaedia. A preliminary search of one encyclopaedia (Electric Library) on landlord and tenant issues did produce a list of resources, although many were references to events and materials from the United States.

Teachers will refer to web materials by printing them out as resources for students. The Alberta Government Services Tip Sheets appear to be fairly popular and convenient to use amongst the teachers that were spoken to for the purposes of this study.

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Review of CTS courses

In November 2001, the Alberta School Boards Association passed a resolution asking the province to review the CTS course. The request appears to come from a concern that not enough students are taking the trades options as opposed to the computer and technology courses. There do not appear to be any specific concerns raised around the Legal Studies program. Alberta Learning has an online survey available for CTS and there have been very few comments back with regard to Legal Studies. This could be for a number of reasons. The Legal Studies courses may be working fairly well, which is not to say that the program could not be improved.

Career and Life Management (CALM)

Health and Personal Development is a core curriculum course taken from grade one to twelve. In grade eleven the Career and Life Management (CALM) component of Health and Personal Development is taught. This course focuses on teaching students skills to organize and shape their life occupationally, economically and socially.

Structure of curriculum

Alberta Learning identifies six general objectives for the current CALM course:

- To develop a more positive self concept and an understanding of personal interests, values, aptitudes and values.
- Promote independent personal management by developing the ability to make choices, and accept challenges that take into account significant others, values, responsibilities and resources.
- Develop an awareness of health as a resource for every day living.
- Develop knowledge about career options and determine personal career strategies
- Develop an awareness of the relationship between and among personal economics, lifestyle and occupational planning.
- Develop the ability to deal with feelings and to apply effective thinking and communication skills in order to function well in society.

There are two sections in CALM - the core curriculum and the optional curriculum. The CALM curriculum can be taught in whichever sequence a teacher prefers. The optional modules of one credit each are available to expand the core curriculum, if desired. The core can be expanded by one or two credits. The basic CALM curriculum requires 75 hours of instruction. There is an overall elective time period to allocate over all six themes (20%). The elective time can be used for students who have limited background or skill in an area.

The core curriculum (3 credits) is made up of six themes: Self-Management; Well-being; Relationships; Careers and the World of Work; Independent Living and Human Sexuality. The theme Independent Living provides opportunity for instruction about residential tenancies.

Independent Living takes a student through instruction on lifestyle choices, personal financial management, financial institutions, consumer advocacy, credit, insurance, and choices and challenges. The recommended minimum time for this theme is 12 hours of instruction. It is recognized that some students may need enrichment if they are already able to reach the required standard.

The section on Independent Living is where a component on residential tenancies is typically taught. It is worth noting, however, that the curriculum outline does not mention it specifically, so it is likely that the degree to which students receive instruction varies. For example, one teacher reported spending ten minutes on landlord and tenant matters, whereas a teacher at a different school reported spending approximately ninety minutes.

It should also be noted that the focus of instruction on residential tenancies in CALM could be different from the focus in Legal Studies. The CALM course presents information in a practical lifestyle context, so that the students could, for example, look at the rental experience as part of a budgeting strategy. By comparison in Legal Studies, the focus is the formal requirements of the law.

Within the optional curriculum of CALM there are four modules: Dealing with Crises; Entrepreneurship, Consumer and Investment Choices; and Cultural Bridges. One of the objectives of the module, Consumer and Investment Choices, is to recognize the rights and responsibilities involved in consumer and investment decisions. This might also be an appropriate point to make mention of consumer issues as they relate to residential tenancies.

Concerns about delivery of CALM

Concern was expressed generally by those interviewed about the way in which the CALM program is delivered in schools and the way in which it is perceived. Some educators view the course as a hurdle to overcome, rather than an opportunity for an enriching and valuable learning experience. For example some schools have designed a delivery system, such as a weekend retreat or a summer course, which is not consistent with the outcomes of CALM. In those situations the majority of work is completed by students alone and in a short time period, rather than being instructed over the course of a longer period.

Even in schools that do have an extensive CALM program it is still open to students to choose to take the course externally in a condensed time period. Very often this will be the choice of students following an intensive academic course because their timetable and schedule leaves them few other options.

There is also some concern about the background training of the teachers who are instructing CALM. Overall the education system does not have many Health specialists. For the first time this year Health was added as a Minor course of study for secondary level teachers. CALM is therefore taught by a variety of personnel which varies depending upon the teaching resources of individual schools. This can range from the course being taught by counselors, to the course being taught by whomsoever might be available. For example, in one academic high school, CALM was being taught by a math teacher in eight periods formally designated for Physical Education. It must be stated, however, that this situation was not common amongst the schools contacted for the purposes of this study. Most saw huge value in the course for students and had instructors who had been teaching the course for some years.

The concerns that do exist appear to focus on the fact that CALM is designed to teach life skills and cover many sensitive areas. If the course is taught badly or not taken seriously, it will not result in a positive experience for the student. Many educators feel it is a good course to teach to establish rapport with the students. The success of CALM can really depend upon the relationship, between the students and the teacher.

New draft CALM curriculum

The new CALM curriculum has been drafted and it is hoped it will be ready to implement in September 2003. The new curriculum has been completed to update the course and to provide for a more holistic approach to CALM.

The draft provides for CALM to be taught whenever a high school feels it is appropriate. However the draft curriculum goes on to note that achieving the outcomes and aims of CALM may be more successful if it is taught as close as possible to the time for leaving high school. Generally, as the time for leaving approaches, students become more future focused and more receptive to the instruction. Teaching the course therefore in grade ten, may not be as valuable as teaching the course in grades eleven or twelve. Different considerations as to timing may apply for students who are in outreach programs (for example, TERRA program for young mothers) rather than in regular schools.

The approach of delaying the instruction of CALM is in line with the feelings of some educators on this point. They feel that CALM is not appropriate to teach to grade 10 as those students are not ready to hear the things CALM offers at that point. By the time grade 12s need the information they will have forgotten it. However, at least one of the

schools contacted for this study was teaching CALM in grade 10 to assist with grade 11/12 timetabling.

The new draft CALM curriculum also speaks to the benefit of offering the course over a period of time, as opposed to cramming it into a short space of time.

Again, it should be noted that with CALM being delivered as a high school course, those students who leave school at the end of grade nine will not receive this instruction.

The new draft CALM curriculum is described as the "high school component of the comprehensive school health education program in Alberta". The classroom curriculum emphasizes knowledge, behaviours, competencies and values. It attempts to facilitate an understanding of self by the student as the basis for making healthy choices, having healthy interactions and using resources wisely.

Collaboration between schools, parents and communities is emphasized as a central requirement for comprehensive health education. Along with parental involvement, collaborative community partnerships are seen as a way to respond to the context and needs of students.

The new CALM course at senior high will build upon skills learned in Health and Life Skills from Kindergarten to Grade 9. Those skills are Wellness Choices, Relationship Choices and Life Learning Choices. The new skills (General Outcomes) in CALM are Personal Choices, Resource Choices, and Career and Life Choices and aim to achieve a balance in well-being as a framework for the program. Well-being is defined as "having the emotional/psychological, intellectual, social, spiritual and physical dimensions of one's life in harmony with each other". Achieving this state requires knowledge of self-management. The CALM program is intended to offer opportunities to acquire skills and apply strategies to foster that knowledge.

The new curriculum is also designed to be three credits and will be compulsory. The core program covers the three General Outcomes and must be covered. CALM can be extended to four, five or six credits by adding options from other courses. Some of the courses from Legal Studies are identified as possible add-ons. These are *You and the Law 1*, *You and the Law 2*, *Family Law* and *Criminal Law* as they relate to the General Outcome of Personal Choices. Schools can therefore design a course around the CALM and CTS modules. This might perhaps lead to more cross use of resources in the curriculum. As mentioned above one of the recommended texts in Legal Studies "*All About the Law*", includes an excellent chapter on the basics of the legal aspects of residential tenancies.

Opportunities for instruction about residential tenancies in the new CALM curriculum

Opportunities for Education on Residential Tenancies in the Alberta School Curriculum

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Of the three new General Outcomes, Personal Choices, Resource Choices and Career and Life Choices, it is Resource Choices that offers opportunity for instruction in the area of residential tenancies. The general aim of Resource Choices is to teach the student to "make responsible decisions in the use of finances and other resources that reflect personal values and goals and demonstrate commitment to self and others."

Each General Outcome has related specific outcomes. The outcome R5 is to "Determine the varied implications and challenges of independent/ interdependent living. This includes developing a personal budget, assessing strategies for finding a place to live, developing strategies for finding a suitable roommate and living with a roommate, describing the rights, responsibilities of a tenant, examining the obligations of living independently, and discussing the consequences of moving back home. Outcome R5 therefore mentions landlord and tenant issues in a specific way, which the present CALM curriculum does not.

Outcome R6 may also be indirectly related to residential tenancies as it relates to developing strategies to be an informed consumer.

Resources for CALM

The recommended resource for the new CALM curriculum is a series of booklets called "*Lifechoices*". The Lifechoices series is already a resource, but Alberta Learning will be formally endorsing it with the new curriculum. There is a companion teacher book by Judith Campbell. The book in the series that deals with residential tenancies is "*Venturing Out*".

It was also found that one school used the Alberta Government Services Tip sheet "Information for Landlords and Tenants" as a resource.

Conclusions

Opportunities to educate students about residential tenancies exist within the Alberta curriculum. Currently the best opportunities to reach the maximum number of students are through Social Studies and CALM as they are compulsory for all students. However, on the basis of current curriculum requirements and outcomes, students will likely receive the most detailed instruction about residential tenancies through certain modules of the Legal Studies program.

While the current Social Studies curriculum contains general information about the law, it contains no direct instruction on the law with respect to residential tenancies. It appears that one of the reasons for having little specific content about law in the present Social Studies curriculum is the degree to which it is provided for in other areas of the curriculum. In the 1970's there was a concept in education of "learning across the curriculum"- so that it did not matter if there was some overlap between subject areas. Now there is very little overlap and subjects are treated very individually. There is a concern at repeating material, e.g. a lot of environmental material is now appearing in science- so it raises an issue as to whether it is something that the Social Studies curriculum should repeat, or delete to make room for other material. In the same way the component of legal studies within the Social Studies curriculum is now quite limited because of the Legal Studies strand of CTS.

The reasoning that law is adequately provided for in other areas may be flawed. First, Legal Studies is an option, so, unlike Social Studies, not everyone takes it. At one high school with 1400 students, it was estimated by a teacher, that approximately 350 - 400 of those students would take the Legal Studies option in CTS. This would mean that the majority of students would not take any course in law, other than the legal components of CALM. Even at schools with a highly developed CALM program, students will have the option to take CALM as a condensed summer course, which may not provide detailed instruction. The degree of instruction in the current CALM curriculum about residential tenancies also has much to do with the preferences and resources of the individual teacher.

There may be some interest in more legal content in the Social Studies curriculum following the current review process. However given the amount of material and subject areas that it is currently necessary to cover in Social Studies, it is unlikely that the content would include specific information about residential tenancies, or even about contract law.

If students choose to take Legal Studies they will only receive instruction about residential tenancies if the modules that contain that information are chosen. There is high degree of likelihood that Legal Studies students will take the beginner module, *You and the Law 1*, which does include material on landlord and tenant law. The issue then becomes one of standards of program delivery in the classroom that is difficult to assess without a much more detailed study. If the students have access to the text "*All about the Law*" there is a good deal of useful general information available on residential tenancies. This information is not specific to Alberta but will provide education in basic common concepts. Other resources specifically dealing with the residential tenancies area appear to be thin on the ground. The extent to which other resources are provided to students will likely depend upon the time and interest of the teacher.

Within the current CALM curriculum there is opportunity for all students to take some basic instruction in issues concerning renting property. The degree to which students will receive this instruction appears to vary widely depending upon how the course is taught at a particular school, how a student might choose to take the course (e.g. during the regular classes or as a condensed summer course), the resources used by a teacher and how much time a teacher will spend on that aspect of the course.

It can therefore be seen as positive that information about residential tenancies is available in the school system and that a significant number of students will receive some information on the topic. The CALM curriculum provides an opportunity for all students still in the school system to receive some instruction. In terms of improving the situation, there could certainly be an increased emphasis on landlord and tenant issues in the CALM curriculum. The new draft curriculum does include more detail on residential tenancies and provide for particular outcomes that might lead to improved instruction in some schools. It is likely that there will continue to be some debate as to when it is most suitable to teach the CALM curriculum. Many educators agree that it is most useful as close as possible to when students will leave school, but as the grade eleven and twelve schedules become more streamed, that may not be possible.

Improved access to resources will undoubtedly also improve the level of instruction about residential tenancies. A video might be one possibility for improved resources, together with prepared fact sheets. The degree to which teachers are able to access the resources will again vary, depending upon budget restrictions of each school. This consideration will need to be factored into the provision of resources, so that there is perhaps an

emphasis on low cost resources. Internet access for example, may not be available at every school in a way that each student can use. Internet resources should therefore be appropriate for a teacher to access and provide by way of printed materials to students, as well as being available to those students who do have Internet access.

The nature of the resources should be tailored to individual curriculum requirements. Resources might therefore be different depending upon whether they are intended to be used in CALM which has a practical focus, or whether they will be used in Legal Studies which has a legal focus. Teachers do not have the time to source information from many different areas. It would therefore be useful to have specifically tailored curriculum information available on one web site, perhaps with pre-checked links to other areas. Work sheets or other information sheets that could be printed off would be appreciated. Interactive web opportunities for those with access might also be fun for students and provide a new and different learning experience.