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| ***Province*** | ***Législature*** | ***Session*** | ***Type de discours*** | ***Date du discours*** | ***Locuteur*** | ***Fonction du locuteur*** | ***Parti politique*** |
| Alberta | 20e | 3e | Remarques préliminaires à l’étude des crédits du ministère de l’Éducation | 22 avril 1985 | M. David King | Ministre de l’Éducation | PC |

**Mr. King:** Mr. Chairman, it's a real pleasure to have the opportunity that is presented by committee consideration of the estimates for the Department of Education.

I have reason to believe that education is very much on the minds of members in the Assembly and, therefore, I don't intend to make lengthy introductory remarks. I'm sure that in the course of debate all the issues of interest to any or all of the members of the Assembly will be raised. So I would like to make just a couple of points very quickly.

The first of them is to draw to the attention of hon. members the fact that the estimates being proposed for the 1985-86 fiscal year represent an increase of 6.6 percent over the comparable estimates for the fiscal year just finished. I think when some people talk about cutbacks in education or freezes or 2 percent increases in transfers to school boards, it is good to bear in mind that the estimates for this fiscal year are up 6.6 percent from the comparable estimates for the last fiscal year.

Indeed, if we then look at the three votes for the Department of Education, the fact of the matter is that vote 2, financial assistance to schools, the vote that represents the actual transfers to local school boards, is increased by 6.9 percent. The vote that represents departmental support services is down by .5 percent. The vote that represents education program development and delivery is down by .8 percent. I'm sure we'll get into the background. I'm sure that during the course of the afternoon we'll get into a clearer understanding of what is represented by those figures, so I won't say any more about them at this time, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to make only one other comment — again, very quickly. Obviously, there are a lot of things happening in the field of education in Alberta at the present time. These things have been six years in the making. Not one of them has sprung unexpectedly on the professional, the educational community in the province. While there are a number of initiatives that will come to fruition in 1985, there are three that particularly have my attention. With respect to governance, we want to see a new School Act presented to the people of the province for their consideration and review. I expect we will do that this fall so that people can think about it over the winter. I am hopeful that we will be able to introduce a new School Act in 1986.

With respect to delivery, we will make decisions about teaching, the teaching profession, and the professional status of teachers in the province. That concern is represented by the establishment of the Council on Alberta Teaching Standards and, of course, the initiation to teaching project that I announced in the ministerial statement this afternoon. There will be other initiatives that will support our concern for improving the status of teachers as the best possible way of improving the delivery of the educational product in the province.

With respect to the content of education in this province, our focus is, of course, on the review of the secondary program of studies, in which I am being very substantially helped by the work of the committee chaired by my colleague the hon. Member for Ponoka.

With respect to governance, content, and delivery, we are going to see major accomplishments delivered in 1985, and I look forward to the year.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman