



Alberta School Councils' Association

Our Vision Path

2021-2024



Mission

To engage and empower Alberta school councils while advocating for the parent voice in the education system.

Vision

A respected and empowered school council in every Alberta school.

Belief

Parents are recognized and respected as knowledgeable, supportive contributors to their children's education, and are provided a variety of opportunities to be authentically engaged in all levels of the education system.



Alberta School Councils' Association 2021-2024 Vision Path

Background

In September and October of 2020, as stewards of the organization, the Alberta School Councils' Association Board of Directors engaged in a reflective process that led to the following agreed upon statements that reflect the Association's current and future priorities.

As an independent not for profit organization focused on supporting parental engagement through school councils, and focused on representing the collective voice of parents from school councils to the provincial education Ministry, and with appreciation for the opportunity to be recognized as a provincial partner in K-12 education through ongoing grant funding from Alberta Education, the ASCA Board is pleased to have been able to identify alignment in many areas of its own organizational goals with the goals of other provincial level education partners, solidifying the opportunity to make the K-12 system stronger for all learners in Alberta.

Overarching Philosophy

Alberta School Councils' Association focuses its time and energy in ways that attract and retain sufficient human, social and financial resources to ensure its long-term sustainability.



Alberta School Councils' Association 2021-2024 Vision Path

ASCA Destinations 2021-2024

- 1) Destination: The Ministry of Education and partners in the education system seek the Alberta School Councils' Association provincial perspective prior to implementation of new education directions and policy.**

Priorities for 2021-2024

The ASCA Board will

- 1) Genuinely assemble and communicate the broad perspectives of parents through our Member School Councils.*
 - a) Action:** Through the use of advocacy policy positions.
 - b) Action:** Through member engagement opportunities including, but not limited to, the School Council Engagement Task Force and real time interactive virtual events.
 - c) Action:** Through dialogue at partner meetings; at meetings with the Minister and ministry staff; at Board appropriate external advisory committee opportunities.
 - 2) Provide Member School Council based input to current and emerging Alberta Education initiatives and/or legislation as required/requested.*
 - a) Action:** Monitor the status of legislation that impacts education and respond by providing feedback to ministry(s) as required/requested.
 - b) Action:** Monitor the status of any regulations relevant to parents on school councils and initiate, or respond to, opportunities for advocacy.
 - 3) Communicate effectively with elected officials and the education community at the provincial and school district levels of governance.*
 - a) Action:** Stay current with developments taking place at Ministerial, District and local levels.
 - b) Action:** Be knowledgeable about Alberta's education system and political environment.
 - c) Action:** Provide opportunities for school councils to enhance their capacity for engagement.
 - d) Action:** Empower school councils to engage with their elected officials.
 - e) Action:** Empower school councils to advocate for the provincial level parent voice through, and the value of, Alberta School Councils' Association.
 - 4) Elevate the understanding and value of the Association with the Ministry of Education, Boards of Trustees, MLAs and other partners in the education system.*
 - a) Action:** Actively develop relationships and share appropriate organizational information according to the work outlined by the relevant committees of the board, including, but not limited to, the ASCA Value campaign.
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Alberta School Councils' Association 2021-2024 Vision Path

- 2) **Destination:** Through Alberta School Councils' Association, all school councils are recognized by education stakeholders, and school and system leaders, as essential because of their valuable perspectives and contributions.

Priorities for 2021-2024

The ASCA Board will

- 1) *Empower rural, urban and metro school councils to recognize the importance of their advisory role in the K-12 education system.*
 - a) **Action:** Offer an annual conference focused on knowledge and skill development for parents involved with their school councils.
 - b) **Action:** Offer registered attendance opportunities to school board trustees, school administrators, school system leaders, and education ministry staff.
 - c) **Action:** Provide access to information for school councils about provincial level initiatives to increase system knowledge of parents.
 - d) **Action:** Accept input and perspectives from parents through school councils on provincial level initiatives.
 - e) **Action:** Provide leadership and guidance to school councils enabling them to connect meaningfully to their school communities.
- 2) *Recognize parents' contributions on school councils.*
 - a) **Action:** Offer a provincial level recognition and awards program.
- 3) *Support the development of Councils of School Councils allowing for school councils to contribute directly at a district level.*
 - a) **Action:** Promote knowledge and skill development opportunities to system leaders.
- 4) *Encourage school and system leaders to acknowledge the value of empowered school councils.*
 - a) **Action:** Promote the importance of school council development opportunities to partner organizations, and school and system leaders as part of an overall engagement strategy.
 - b) **Action:** Encourage system leaders to work with the Alberta School Councils' Association office to create clear division policies for school councils.



Alberta School Councils' Association 2021-2024 Vision Path

3) Destination: ASCA Member School Councils are aware of, and contribute to, the influence the Alberta School Councils' Association casts on their behalf.

Priorities for 2021-2024

The ASCA Board will

- 1) *Commit to being up to date with respect to ongoing education initiatives and directions being contemplated by Alberta Education and other provincial association partners.*
 - a) **Action:** In the Alberta context, support the Call to Action from the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* that speaks to Education of First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners and their families.
 - b) **Action:** Maintain Board meeting discussion on emerging education issues and current initiatives progress.
- 2) *Provide Member School Councils the most up to date provincial developments available with respect to initiatives and directions being undertaken by Alberta Education and other provincial association partners.*
 - a) **Action:** Provide updates from the President.
 - b) **Action:** In collaboration with Alberta Education and other provincial education partners, provide input and engagement opportunities with ASCA Board representatives and school council parent representatives.
 - c) **Action:** Participate in interactive member engagement opportunities.
 - d) **Action:** Encourage participation of Alberta Education representatives in presenting education initiatives and topic sessions at the annual ASCA Conference.
 - e) **Action:** Maintain an active social media presence.
 - f) **Action:** Provide updates from other provincial association partners as appropriate.
- 3) *Inform Member School Councils of any advocacy undertaken between Annual, Regular and Special General Meetings.*
 - a) **Action:** Provide periodic updates as necessary on emergent education issues.
 - b) **Action:** Present to the assembly of delegates at the Annual General Meeting.
 - c) **Action:** Seek input from parents through member school councils regarding provincial initiative developments and progress.
 - d) **Action:** Participate in interactive member engagement opportunities.
 - e) **Action:** Maintain an active social media presence.
- 4) *Provide forums for Member School Councils to express their perspectives on province-wide K-12 education issues.*
 - a) **Action:** Represent the will of the membership on K-12 education issues identified through the Annual General Meeting and member engagement opportunities.
 - b) **Action:** Present Board sponsored proposed Advocacy Resolutions when appropriate.
- 5) *Support school councils continuing to be reflected in education legislation as essential organizational elements.*
 - a) **Action:** Advocate to the Ministry of Education about the value of school councils as advisors to the K-12 education system at local, division and provincial levels.
 - b) **Action:** Advocate to the Minister of Education the need to clarify problematic areas of the school council regulation.
 - c) **Action:** Advocate to the Minister of Education the need to strengthen the legislated role of school councils in alignment with the expectations of the Assurance Model.



Alberta School Councils' Association 2021-2024 Vision Path

- 4) **Destination: Alberta's School Councils will advance reconciliation by promoting and encouraging knowledge and understanding of First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture, knowledge, worldview, ways of knowing, being and doing in education.**

Priorities for 2021-2024

The ASCA Board will

- 1) *Commit to responding to the Calls for Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Recommendation 10: v, vi)*

We call on the federal government to draft new Aboriginal education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples. The new legislation would include a commitment to sufficient funding and would incorporate the following principles:

v. Enabling parental and community responsibility, control, and accountability, similar to what parents enjoy in public school systems.

vi. Enabling parents to fully participate in the education of their children.

- a) **Action:** Explore opportunities to increase or enhance meaningful representation of Indigenous parents in school councils.
 - b) **Action:** Provide members with resources related to the development of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit focus in K-12 curriculum.
 - c) **Action:** Encourage school council-based activities that promote understanding of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit culture worldview, history and contemporary issues.
 - d) **Action:** Model and share actions that support Truth and Reconciliation
- 2) *Encourage school councils to be ambassadors of, and bridges to, the diverse Indigenous cultures of their school communities.*
- a) **Action:** Model broad and varied methods of providing information to, and gathering feedback from, Alberta school councils.
 - b) **Action:** Build relationships with local and provincial Indigenous communities.



Alberta School Councils' Association 2021-2024 Vision Path

5) Destination: Partnerships, relationships, and strategic alliances strengthen the efforts and influence of Alberta school councils and the Alberta School Councils' Association.

Priorities for 2021-2024

The ASCA Board will:

- 1) *Pursue, build and nurture relationships with diverse populations and organizations seeking to enhance parent and school council engagement in student learning.*
 - a) **Action:** Increase director capacity to confidently represent ASCA.
 - b) **Action:** Increase Alberta School Councils' Association representation in provincial engagement opportunities.
 - c) **Action:** Initiate conversations with the Ministry and partners in the education system.

6) Destination: School Councils are reflections of the diversity in our Province. Parent voices are incorporated in the education system both locally and provincially, and are inclusive to parents of varying ethnic origin, ancestry, race, colour, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, political belief, marital status, socioeconomic status, and physical or mental ability.

Priorities for 2021-2024

The ASCA Board will:

- 1) *Model safe, respectful and welcoming engagement practices and processes that facilitate the inclusive incorporation of diverse Member School Council perspectives.*
 - a) **Action:** Provide resources and materials for school councils containing inclusive language and encourage multiple methods of engagement and connection to their school communities.
 - b) **Action:** Encourage and support school councils to provide a wide variety of information through different means and opportunities to all parents/guardians in their communities.
 - c) **Action:** By example and through resources, mentor school councils to be inclusive, safe spaces that fulfil their legislated roles while observing role and discussion boundaries, remaining non-partisan and being respectful of individuals' beliefs, values, experiences and perspectives.