



ALBERTA
EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE

*Office of the Minister
MLA, Calgary - Bow*

AR 129953

June 17, 2025

Mr. Ken Glazebrook
President
Alberta School Councils' Association
207-11010 142 Street
Edmonton AB T5N 2R1

Dear Mr. Glazebrook

Thank you for your letter regarding questions from delegates attending the April 26, 2025 Alberta School Councils' Association Provincial Symposium. I am happy to address the following questions from attendees.

Question 1: What changes will be coming for base funding over the next 1 to 3 years, if there is a forward plan?

No changes to base funding are currently anticipated. Any updates to funding rates, if approved, will be communicated to school boards.

Question 2: Do the increases in education dollars translate to increased funds for school divisions, or will they primarily cover enrolment growth and potential salary/benefit increases as negotiations proceed?

School jurisdictions are expected to see overall increases in operational funding. School boards have the flexibility to allocate funding based on local priorities and needs. To support enrolment growth, government is investing nearly \$1.1 billion over the next three years to help school boards hire additional teachers and classroom support staff. This includes \$185 million in 2025/26. The funding is expected to support the hiring of more than 4,000 teachers, education assistants, and support staff across the province over three years.

To support growth and rising operational costs within Education and Childcare, \$389 million will be provided to support grant rate increases over the next three fiscal years. For the 2025/26 school year, more than \$90 million will be distributed through rate increases. This includes a:

- 2.32 per cent increase to Learning Support rates;
- 20 per cent increase to classroom complexity;
- 3 per cent increase to Operations and Maintenance and a new dedicated supplemental rural allocation component;
- 25 per cent increase to francophone equivalency; and
- 20 per cent increase to SuperNet and an additional \$6.5 million for a new Technology Support component.

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Question 3: Over the past five years, when accounting for inflation, Alberta Education capital spending for public and Catholic schools has decreased by 3% annually, while operational expenses also decreased 3% per year. Meanwhile, charter school capital expenses grew 20% annually, and operational expenses grew 15%. Why is investment shifting away from public and Catholic schools toward charter schools?

Alberta's education system has a number of delivery methods—including public and separate schools, public charter schools, independent schools, francophone schools, and home education—that allow parents to select the method they feel will best help their child reach their potential. School choice is part of what makes our education system strong.

Since 2021, Alberta's government has approved more than 83 school capital projects for public, separate, and francophone schools and 12 projects for charter schools. This translates to more than 62,500 new and updated student spaces in public, separate, and francophone schools, and more than 5,500 new and updated student spaces in charter schools.

Alberta's government recognizes the need for school projects across the province and is delivering this commitment through the School Construction Accelerator Program. This program will deliver over 100 schools in communities of greatest need.

All school capital submissions are assessed by Education and Childcare based on evaluation criteria under the categories of health and safety, enrolment pressures, building conditions, functionality and programming, and legal requirements.

In Budget 2025, the School Construction Accelerator Program approves planning or design funding for 41 school capital projects—38 of these are public, separate, and francophone school projects, and three are charter school projects. This translates to more than 37,000 new and updated student spaces in public, separate, and francophone schools, and more than 2,000 new and updated student spaces in charter schools.

Question 4: Will the provincial government increase wages for education professionals beyond a living wage?

Education and Childcare provided more than \$90 million in rate increases in the 2025/26 school year to support the rising costs experienced within school divisions. For Budget 2025, we are investing \$55 million towards classroom complexity. This will provide school boards with a 20 per cent rate increase in the 2025/26 school year. Funding may be used:

- to hire more educational assistants or increase their hours;
- to provide more training opportunities for staff;
- to hire specialists such as counsellors, psychologists, or interpreters;
- to hire additional teachers; and/or
- for training and development purposes, including an increase in the number of educational assistant graduates in the province through a Provincial Education Assistant Internship program.

Question 5: Is there a plan to fully fund every student in Alberta? In my division, funding numbers have declined with the two-year moving average, yet many students remain unfunded.

School boards told us they want consistent, predictable funding to maintain and operate schools, including those in rural communities. We listened and revised our education funding model to a two-year average enrolment count allocation that is more responsive to boards with significant enrolment growth, while continuing to shield rural and smaller boards with declining enrolment. Allocating funding on a single-year per-student basis would result in more significant year-to-year fluctuations, particularly for some rural boards with declining enrolment.

Question 6: How is the Alberta government investing in ongoing reconciliation education within the Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum? Additionally, what mechanisms exist for parents and community members to formally suggest updates or revisions related to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives?

The [Ministerial Order on Student Learning](#) states that all students will see themselves, their families, and their communities in the curriculum, with space in the curriculum for the study of local traditions, history, and geography, including Alberta's First Nations, Métis, and Inuit history, contributions, and perspectives.

The overall guidelines in [The Guiding Framework for the Design and Development of Kindergarten to Grade 12 Curriculum](#) (*The Guiding Framework*) states "to honour the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Alberta is committed to rebalancing the education system by including the history and legacy of residential schools and local Indigenous knowledge, wisdom, and oral traditions in the curriculum to advance reconciliation for all Albertans."

This commitment ensures that future provincial curriculum will contain mandatory content that reflects diverse First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives and experiences. First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives are also mentioned in the Language Arts and Literature and Social Studies sections of *The Guiding Framework*.

Parents and community members who wish to suggest updates or revisions related to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives in the current curriculum may do so through the "contact us" button on [New LearnAlberta](#).

Question 7: What grants or funding are available to help school divisions continue offering French Immersion, particularly in divisions with small class sizes and teacher shortages?

The Federal Official Languages in Education Programs Grant provides funding that Alberta Education and Childcare distributes for a variety of levels of French language education in the province.

Federal French Funding is available to support francophone school boards (code 221), French Immersion (code 221), and French as a Second Language (FSL) courses (code 230). These funds are administered by Alberta Education and Childcare under the Canada-Alberta Agreement on Minority-Language Education and Second-Language Instruction.

French Immersion programs fall under Alternative French Language Programs (code 211). School boards offering these programs may receive federal funding based on the number of funded students and the amount of French instruction provided.

Funding rates vary by the number of FTE students enrolled in French Immersion or FSL courses. Accredited funded private schools are eligible for alternative French Language programs and FSL courses funding at 70 per cent of the public rate for Grades 1 to 12 and 100 per cent for ECS.

The Francophone Equivalency Grant is available to francophone regional boards to support minority-language education. This includes a Small School by Necessity allocation of \$429,557 per school with fewer than 35 Average Enrolment Method FTE enrolments, which may help address challenges related to small class sizes.

These grants are federally funded but administered by Alberta Education and Childcare. They are not part of the provincial base instruction funding.

Alberta Education and Childcare provides funding for the Francisation Grant that is also available to francophone regional boards to support students who require additional French language development to succeed in a francophone education program (similar to the English as an Additional Language Grant in non-francophone school boards).

Question 8: Are there alternatives to emailed surveys for collecting parent feedback?

Alberta Education and Childcare conducts an annual [Alberta Education assurance survey](#), which is made available to parents through a random-access code they can use to complete the survey online. Parents/guardians who wish to complete the survey on paper, or who require a translated version (several languages are available) may request a copy from the System Assurance Branch directly or contact their principal, who will contact the System Assurance Branch on their behalf.

Question 9: Will the public or school divisions see the results of the Mental Health in Schools Pilot Project? If so, when and through what means?

The Mental Health Pilot Program is scheduled to conclude in June 2025. Alberta Education and Childcare has already received final reports from 56 participating sites, with the remaining 23 expected to submit their reports by the program's end.

Once all reports have been received, departmental staff will conduct a comprehensive analysis and prepare a final program report. Decisions regarding the sharing of program results will be made following this analysis.

Preliminary findings from the pilot strongly emphasize the importance of promoting and supporting positive mental health in schools. These efforts are essential in helping students build resilience, succeed academically, and develop healthy relationships. Maintaining a strong continuum of mental health supports and services remains critical to addressing the increasing complexity within classrooms.

In response to these early findings, Alberta Education and Childcare is introducing a new Mental Health and Well-being Fund for the upcoming school year. This fund will provide targeted support to enhance mental health services in schools and promote student success and well-being. Further details regarding the funding formula can be found in Section H6 (Mental Health and Well-Being) of the [Funding manual for school authorities 2025/2026 school year](#).

Question 10: Can you clarify the decision to implement the new curriculum in "chunks" rather than by full grade levels, as historically done? This approach has reportedly caused content gaps between consecutive grades.

Since implementation in the 2022/23 school year, school boards have implemented new curriculum in six subjects:

- Kindergarten to Grade 6 English Language Arts and Literature;
- Kindergarten to Grade 6 Mathematics;
- Kindergarten to Grade 6 Physical Education and Wellness;
- Kindergarten to Grade 6 French First Language and Literature;
- Kindergarten to Grade 6 French Immersion Language Arts and Literature; and
- Kindergarten to Grade 6 Science.

The new curriculum includes cross-curricular connections to literacy, numeracy, and competencies. Developing and implementing several subjects together allows for consistent application of these cross-curricular features. Education and Childcare worked closely with diverse partners from across the education system to develop the balanced and measured implementation approach to get the most out of the cross-curriculum features of curriculum.

In September 2025, implementation of Kindergarten to Grade 6 social studies curriculum will begin in classrooms, starting with Kindergarten to Grade 3. School boards may optionally implement Grades 4 to 6 social studies curriculum at this time; this will further strengthen the cross-curriculum approach. Introducing the new subjects by common grade groupings that school boards follow, such as Kindergarten to Grade 3 and Grades 4 to 6, ensures students learn from updated curriculum in a timely manner.

Unfortunately, my schedule is not able to accommodate a meeting before the end of June 2025. However, I appreciate you taking the time to write, and I hope this information is helpful.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Demetrios Nicolaidis', written in a cursive style.

Demetrios Nicolaides ECA PhD
Minister of Education and Childcare