

Issue Resolutions Preview 2018



Dear Alberta School Councils' Association Parent Members,

The Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) advocacy efforts are informed and shaped by provincially relevant resolutions that parents on school councils bring forward, debate, and pass into policy each year at the ASCA Annual General Meeting.

Step 1:

Parents of member school councils draft and submit issue resolution ideas and explanations to the ASCA provincial office. (Draft resolutions may be submitted to the office any time from the first call for resolutions that is issued at the close of one AGM, up to the submission deadline date for the upcoming AGM, which was December 19, 2017.)

Step 2:

Using this Resolutions Preview document, parents, through their ASCA member school councils may discuss, consider review and then provide input to the proposed draft issue resolutions sponsors. (The Preview will also be available on our website at <https://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca/about/annual-general-meeting/meeting-documents> so more of your parent community can review it if they wish.)

Step 3:

Further drafts of the issue resolutions that may reflect member input will be posted on the ASCA website on March 12, 2018 as part of the complete set of AGM materials. Your school council parent members decide how your AGM parent delegate or proxy delegate will vote to represent your council on these resolutions and other association business. A number of documents are already posted for your consideration.

<https://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca/about/annual-general-meeting/meeting-documents>

Please take time to review this year's attached preview. The comments and/or questions of clarification your council parents may have about the proposed resolutions should be forwarded directly to the sponsoring council contact and you may choose to cc ASCA also. Contact sponsors through email using the addresses provided on the Summary Table.

Your input/questions/comments about provincial scope, intent, relevance to school councils, sources of information provided etc. may be considered by the sponsors with respect to their next drafts.

If your council is seeking additional information, some links related to the draft resolution topics are provided in this package.

All input must be sent to sponsors by February 28, 2018.

ASCA thanks you for your valuable participation in the policy setting process.

Summary Table

ASCA Board proposed bylaw revisions and advocacy policy updates and member school council proposed draft advocacy issue resolutions for the 2018 ASCA AGM

#	Title	Sponsor	Email Use these email addresses to contact the issue resolution sponsors with your council's questions and feedback
P18-01	Provincial Standard for Annual Criminal Record Check	Peace Wapiti Academy School Council (Peace Wapiti)	Tina Nelson Christinalesley@hotmail.com
P18-02	Cumulative CEU cap per High School Student	Peace Wapiti Academy School Council (Peace Wapiti)	Tina Nelson Christinalesley@hotmail.com
P18-03	Supports for Learning Success for all Students	Ekota School Council (Edmonton Public)	Greta Gerstner Gerstner.andreas@yahoo.ca
P18-04	Religion and Sexual Content within Student-Led Clubs	Raymond High, Raymond Elementary, Cardston Elementary, Mountain View School Councils (Westwind)	Tammy Hill Tjhill5@hotmail.com
P18-05	PRISM ATA Toolkit and Provincial Curriculum Development	Raymond High, Raymond Elementary, Cardston Elementary, Mountain View School Councils (Westwind)	Tammy Hill Tjhill5@hotmail.com
P18-06	Ensuring Healthy Food at Schools for our Children and Youth	Belgravia School Council (Edmonton Public)	Kim Kelly kpkelly@ualberta.ca

P18-01

Provincial Standard for Annual Criminal Record Checks

Sponsored by: Peace Wapiti Academy School Council

Contact: Tina Nelson via email at christinalesley@hotmail.com

Because Alberta Education should have the highest standards where student safety and well-being is concerned;

Because annual criminal record and vulnerable sector checks will improve levels of confidence that people working with children in schools will honour and promote safe and caring environments;

Because it is important to protect students from predatory behavior;

Because it can reduce liability for a school board;

Because it is impossible for administration to know employees well enough to be aware of their involvement in criminal behavior;

Because this is an area where parental concern, school concern and societal concern are directly aligned;

Because other provincial ministries require an annual criminal record and vulnerable sector check (E.g. Family Supports for Children with Disabilities (FSCD), Alberta Agriculture with the 4-H Program);

We request that Alberta Education develop a provincial standard that requires school authorities to conduct annual criminal record and vulnerable sector checks for all employees and volunteers of school authorities under the authority of Alberta Education.

P18-02

Cumulative CEU cap per High School Student

Sponsored by: Peace Wapiti Academy School Council

Contact: Tina Nelson via email at christinalesley@hotmail.com

Background:

Schools have resources to support access to programs that students may choose to engage in outside of the classroom setting such as Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP), Green Certificate, Work Experience, Citizenship Programs, Career Classes, Summer School Programming, Driver's Education, First Responders, and Locally Developed Courses such as Paleontology

Because students who may experience gap time in their learning (for personal, social or emotional reasons) should be able to access resources that will see them able to build a graduation plan with a shorter time frame;

Because students who desire to graduate within two years, should be able to access resources that will allow them to build a plan to attain this goal;

Because these programs support diverse student populations;

Because students in non-academic programs are more likely to engage in options which are impacted the most by the current CEU cap;

Because a cumulative CEU cap per high school student could improve access to the variety of programs which will maintain student interest and engagement in their education

Because the relevancy of what high school students are learning prepares them for careers and post secondary training to fit with their individual goals for success;

Because these programs provide opportunities that motivate students to become successful high school graduates;

Because the current CEU cap may impact the resources required to continue with initiatives introduced through high school redesign to build more supportive and flexible learning opportunities for students;

We request that Alberta Education replace the annual CEU cap of 45 per high school student with a cumulative CEU per high school student cap of 135 for the tenure of the student's high school experience.

P18-03

Supports for Learning Success of all Students

Sponsored by: Ekota School Council

Contact: Greta Gerstner via email at Gerstner.andreas@yahoo.ca

Background:

When schools fail to provide enough support for students, the social, emotional and behavioural challenges that often come along with learning and attention issues can lead to serious consequences. These include social isolation, anxiety, depression, suicide ideation, disproportionate disciplinary rates and an increased likelihood of skipping school, dropping out and becoming involved with the criminal justice system. With the appropriate, timely intervention, these students can go on to achieve high levels of success.

Learning and attention issues are more common than many people think, affecting 1 in 5 children. With supportive policies and increased awareness among parents, educators and communities, these students can thrive academically, socially and emotionally. http://www.ncl.org/the-state-of-learning-disabilities-understanding-the-1-in-5%20?utm_source=Facebook&utm_medium=CustomAud&utm_campaign=SApaidsocial

We believe mandatory early screening for reading readiness in conjunction with the Early Years Evaluation (EYE) in Kindergarten is needed to identify children with learning challenges sooner. If we can identify children sooner, we can provide appropriate support at the earliest opportunity so that children do not need to fail before they receive help.

We believe that enhanced teacher training specifically in learning challenges is needed so that teachers are better equipped to manage increasingly diverse classrooms. New teachers are coming out of University with only one special education course in their four-year degree which will not equip them to teach in an inclusive setting. Many experienced teachers have never had any formal training in learning challenges. We need to give our teachers the training they need so they can help all children learn.

Lastly, we believe that class size and composition need to be considered when determining what supports and resources are needed to teach in a classroom based on the needs of the children and teacher. We must stop expecting the teacher to be an expert on all learning challenges. We need teachers to have the ability to have a reading specialist help a child with reading disabilities and a Psychologist help a child with mental health challenges so that their needs are properly met. We need to have the experts who are trained providing that support to children, as they can modify what supports they provide depending on how a child is progressing.

Because early screening for learning and developmental challenges can identify necessary learning supports at the commencement of a child's educational journey;

Because enhanced teacher training will result in teachers having the skills they need to teach in increasingly diverse classrooms;

Because class size and student learning needs are necessary considerations when resources and support allocations are determined for classrooms;

We request that the Alberta School Councils' Association advocate to the Ministries of Children Services and Education for mandatory early screening for learning and developmental challenges so that children will be identified earlier in their educational journey, receive the needed supports and resources and experience success from the beginning.

We further request that the Alberta School Councils' Association will advocate to the Ministry of Education that each teacher receive enhanced teacher training so that they are each better prepared to meet the diverse and complex learning needs of children in classrooms;

We further request that the Alberta School Councils' Association will advocate to the Ministry of Education that class size and composition must be considered when determining what supports and resources are needed to teach in a classroom based on the needs of the students and the classroom teacher.

P18-04

Religion and Sexual Content within Student-Led Clubs

Sponsored by: Raymond High School Council

Co-Sponsors: Raymond Elementary School, Cardston Elementary School, Mountain View School Councils

Contact: Tammy Hill via email at tjhill5@hotmail.com

Background:

Student-led clubs are for the purpose of promoting a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe place for all students. Students being exposed to religion or sexual content without parental notice and consent, in any situation related to the school, violates Section 50.1(1) of the School Act, as well as Section 21(6)(c) of the Family Law Act and Article 18(4) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The discussion of religion or sexuality and/or sexual morality are not to be discussed without parental notice and consent of all involved. This protects children who are not developmentally capable of understanding what is being presented, children who have suffered from sexual abuse, and children who are especially vulnerable to sexual exploitation and/or abuse. Religion and sexual content may also go against morals parents are teaching their children.

Section 50.1 (1) of the School Act states that "A board shall provide notice to a parent of a student where courses of study, educational programs or instructional materials, or instruction or exercises, include subject-matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion or human sexuality.

<http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/F04P5.pdf>

Section 21 (6) of the Family Act states that the parent/guardian is (c) to make decisions about the child's education, including the nature, extent and place of education and any participation in extracurricular school activities; (d) to make decisions regarding the child's cultural, linguistic, religious and spiritual upbringing and heritage. <http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/F04P5.pdf>

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, G.A. Res. 217 A (III), U.N. Doc. A/810 (1948) states in Article 26(3): Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

<http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html>

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 999 U.N.T.S. 171, to which Canada is a signatory, states in Article 18(4): The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to have respect for the liberty of parents and, when applicable, legal guardians to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.

<https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%20999/volume-999-i-14668-english.pdf>

Because as outlined in the aforementioned Acts, parents have a right to choose the kind of education given to their child, and of being informed.

Because while it is important for these clubs, etc. to be established, it is also important to monitor the activities and content of these clubs.

Because parents have a right to be aware of all clubs, and any content that may differ from their cultural, religious, or spiritual heritage.

Because it is also important that the activities and content be monitored for the safety of all involved.

Because this will safeguard our children, as well as those who may present such material or counselling.

Because in the Criminal Code, any who counsels anyone under 16, for a sexual purpose, is guilty of an indictable offence. It needs to be made certain, for all involved, that clubs and organizations promoted by Alberta Education do not allow such counselling to happen. <http://lawslois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-46/page-33.html>

We request that the school communicate with the school council prior to any religious or sexually related content being taught, distributed, or presented through student-led clubs, committees, events, or organizations that are promoted by the school.

We further request that Alberta Education provide clear recommendations to the school divisions as to how these clubs will be safely monitored to ensure they remain safe, caring and welcoming for all involved; this includes the close monitoring of religious or sexually related content being presented or distributed.

PRISM ATA Toolkit and Provincial Curriculum Development

Sponsored by: Raymond High School Council

Co-Sponsors: Raymond Elementary School, Cardston Elementary School, Mountain View School Councils

Contact: Tammy Hill via email at tjhill5@hotmail.com

Background:

The Family Law Act sec. 21 states that parents have the legal right to the following:

(5)(a) -To nurture the child's physical, psychological and emotional development and to guide the child towards independent adulthood;

(6)(d) -To make decisions regarding the child's cultural, linguistic, religious and spiritual upbringing and heritage.

<http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/F04P5.pdf>

In the School Act of Alberta, Section 50.1(1) Page 51, it states:

50.1(1) A board shall provide notice to a parent of a student where courses of study, educational programs or instructional materials, or instruction or exercises, include subject-matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion or human sexuality.

<http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/s03.pdf>

In the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms **Section 15(1)** Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

<http://publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection/CH37-4-3-2002E.pdf>

In the Alberta Bill of Rights, it states under the Recognition and Declaration of Rights and Freedoms:

1 It is hereby recognized and declared that in Alberta there exist without discrimination by reason of race, national origin, colour, religion, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity or gender expression, the following human rights and fundamental freedoms, namely:

(g) the right of parents to make informed decisions respecting the education of their children.

These documents provide evidence that parents need to be able to make decisions for their child regarding education. As well, the documents state the need for equality for ALL; therefore, all diversities need to be acknowledged, respected and protected.

The PRISM ATA Toolkit states:

"The PRISM toolkit was created to help teachers promote safe and supportive classroom discussions about sexual minorities and gender variance. PRISM is an acronym for "Professionals Respecting and supporting Individual Sexual Minorities." Like the brilliant and varying colours of the rainbow refracted

through a prism, Alberta`s students are a vibrant kaleidoscope of diversity. A diverse classroom environment is rich in possibility for teaching and learning for both students and teachers. An inclusive school environment allows all students to feel safe and thrive."

<https://www.teachers.ab.ca/For%20Members/Professional%20Development/Diversity%20and%20Human%20Rights/Resources/Pages/PRISM-Toolkit.aspx>

To reemphasize, Alberta students are "a vibrant kaleidoscope of diversity....An inclusive school environment allows **all students to feel safe and thrive.**"

Because our students are diverse in many ways, including ethnic, religious, and cultural ways, we need to be aware of all diversities. While gender minorities need to be respected and welcomed, we also need to make those with strong ethnic or religious beliefs also feel respected and welcomed. There are diverse beliefs regarding gender and sexual orientation, just as there are on religion and culture.

Because students need to be protected in the following ways:

- a) The consideration for the mental, emotional, and psycho-social development of each child;
- b) Respect and sensitivity for the diverse cultural and religious backgrounds of the families of each child;

Because The PRISM ATA Toolkit challenges the type of education, psychological and emotional development, religious beliefs, and cultural upbringing that is the right of the parents to decide and/or be nurtured for their children if it is implemented as curriculum.

We Request that The PRISM document not be implemented into the Alberta Education curriculum, but remain a resource for teachers to ensure a safe, caring and welcoming classroom for all. It is important all diversities are respected in Alberta Education.

Sponsor provided link:

<https://www.teachers.ab.ca/For%20Members/Professional%20Development/Diversity%20and%20Human%20Rights/Resources/Pages/PRISM-Toolkit.aspx>

P18-06

Ensuring Healthy Food at Schools for our Children and Youth

Sponsored by: Belgravia School Council

Contact: K. Kelly via email at kpkelly@ualberta.ca

Background:

The Alberta Medical Association, an organization of over 10 000 physicians, resident physicians and medical students, passed a motion in March 2017: "that the AMA lobby the Minister of Education for mandatory adherence to the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth in Alberta schools." To date, there has been no government action on this issue.

Because currently, schools can choose whether or not they adhere to the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth;

Because there is no mandatory monitoring or reporting of school compliance the result is that the availability of healthy food found in schools varies greatly across the province.

Because one in three children in Canada are overweight², with similar statistics found in Alberta.

Because huge gains could be made towards improving the health of our children and youth.

Because healthy nutrition plays a significant role in improving the health outcomes for children and youth and is a part of a Comprehensive School Health approach in schools.

Because evidence shows that healthy students are better learners¹.

Because with over 60 school Boards in Alberta, it is almost impossible to make progress on this issue lobbying board by board.

We request that the Minister of Education mandate adherence to the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines of Children and Youth for schools in Alberta, and that that this mandate include a means to monitor and report school compliance.

We further request that ASCA work with or advocate to ASBA to get this advice out to all school boards

Sponsor provided links to research:

1) Health and education are interdependent: healthy students are better learners, and better-educated individuals are healthier. Research has shown that comprehensive school health is an effective way to enhance that linkage, improving both health¹ and educational outcomes² and encouraging healthy behaviours that last a lifetime.

In the classroom, comprehensive school health facilitates improved academic achievement and can lead to fewer behavioural problems³. In the broader school environment, it helps students develop the skills they need to be physically and emotionally healthy for life.

Footnotes:

1 Stewart-Brown, S. (2006). What is the evidence on school health promotion in improving health or preventing disease and, specifically, what is the effectiveness of the health promoting schools approach? Copenhagen, WHO Regional Office for Europe (Health Evidence Network report; <http://www.euro.who.int/document/e88185.pdf>, accessed 16 Sep. 2008).

2 Murray, N.D., Low, B.J., Hollis, C., Cross, A. Davis, S. (2007). Coordinated school health programs and academic achievement: a systematic review of the literature. *Journal of School Health*, 77 (9), 589-599.

3 IBID

Above found at:<http://jcsch-cces.ca/index.php/about/comprehensive-school-health>

2) In 1978/79, about one in four children (23.3%; 95% CI: 20.5–26.0) was overweight or obese. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5129778/#B09> . This proportion is now closer to one in three (31.4%; 95% CI: 26.4–36.4).

1. Public Health Agency of Canada; Ottawa (ON): 2011 Nov 25 [cited 2016 Feb 5]. Actions taken and future directions 2011: curbing childhood obesity: a federal, provincial and territorial framework for action to promote healthy weights. Available from: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/hl-mvs/framework-cadre/2011/hw-os-2011-eng.php>.

Links to Legislation and Resources

Ministerial Order on student learning

<https://education.alberta.ca/media/1626588/ministerial-order-on-student-learning.pdf>

School Act and School Act Regulations

<https://education.alberta.ca/legislation-and-regulations/school-act/>

School Amendment Act and An Act to Support Gay Straight Alliances

<https://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca/education-in-alberta/government/legislation>

Guide to Education

<https://education.alberta.ca/guide-to-education/the-guide-to-education/>

2017\18 Funding Manual and link to Class Size information

<https://education.alberta.ca/funding-framework-for-k-12/>

<https://education.alberta.ca/topic-search/?categoryId=45390&journeyId=0>

About the Accountability Pillar

<https://education.alberta.ca/accountability-pillar/about-the-pillar/>

Provincial Curriculum Development

<https://education.alberta.ca/curriculum-development/why-change-curriculum/>

Inclusive Education

<https://education.alberta.ca/inclusive-education/what-is-inclusion/>

<https://education.alberta.ca/inclusive-education/inclusive-education/everyone/overview/>

Standards for provision of early childhood education

<https://education.alberta.ca/policies-and-standards/early-childhood-special-education/>

Diverse Learning Needs

<https://education.alberta.ca/diverse-learning-needs/?journeyId=1085&resetFilter=1&language=English>

Creating a compassionate classroom ATA and Global 2015

<https://www.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ATA/Publications/Human-Rights-Issues/COOR-79e%202015%2012.pdf>

PRISM for Secondary schools - ATA

<https://www.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ATA/Publications/Research/PD-80-15e%20PRISM.pdf>

Schools and Authorities

<https://education.alberta.ca/school-infrastructure/schools-and-authorities/everyone/schools-and-authorities/>