



For Member Review, in advance of the ASCA Annual General Meeting (AGM).

ASCA Member School Councils participate in the policy setting process of the Association by reviewing the **Proposed Advocacy Resolutions** submitted for consideration (discussion and voting on) at the AGM.

In order to prepare for the AGM efficiently, ASCA is asking school council members to review and discuss, determining their support or disapproval of the resolutions proposed.

Three (3) **Proposed Advocacy Resolutions** were submitted by Member School Councils in [SECTION I](#).

Administrative Resolutions are provided in [SECTION II](#) for Member School Council review and discussion to determine how their parent delegate will vote on them at the AGM.

Thank you for your efforts in this important piece of policy development for the ASCA, and your opportunity to make a difference in public education.

Related information:

[ASCA Advocacy Overview](#)

[Types of Resolutions](#)

[AGM Meeting Planning and Preparation](#)

SECTION I: Proposed Advocacy Resolutions for Member Review

Please review and discuss with your school council members and determine support (yes) or disapproval (no) for the following 3 proposed resolutions, to provide voting direction to your parent voting delegate attending the AGM.

Note – if additional information or clarification is required – please contact the sponsor of the resolution by email as provided. Resources/references are indicated as applicable.

Member School Council and ASCA Board* proposed Resolutions for the 2022 ASCA AGM

#	Title	Sponsor	Contact
P22-01	Diploma Exam Weighting Change	George McDougall High School Council	Kelli Ellington kellielli@mail.com
P22-02	Policy Review for Operations and Maintenance Funding	Sam Livingston School Council	Cassandra Wyatt samlivingstonkeycommunicator@gmail.com
P22-03	Restoration of Funding for Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA)	Gateway Christian School Council	Stephanie VanderLeek gcs-schoolcouncil@rdpsd.ab.ca
A22-01	Revise Advocacy Policy: 12-2	ASCA Board of Directors	Wendy Keiver wendyk@albertaschoolcouncils.ca

**The ASCA Board of Directors will not present a Board Sponsored Advocacy Resolution for Member School Councils' consideration at the 2022 AGM due to the significant funding shortage resulting in a reduction of staff and Director capacity.*

Diploma Exam Weighting Change

Sponsor: George McDougall High School

Contact: Kelli Ellington kellielli@mail.com

Background / Overview:

ASCA Advocacy Policy 20-02 reads; "That the Minister of Education maintains the weighting of Diploma Exams at 30% for the foreseeable future". This is open to change, 30% is too high of an impact for the students of covid and be changed forever.

Because: times are changing, education is changing, learning is changing, and we as advocacy representatives need to understand this.

Because: not everything is all black and white.

Because: expecting all learners to fit into the one size fits all diploma exam isn't right.

Because: data from the province-wide standardized tests can be collected at 10%.

Because: money spent writing and marking diploma exams could be better spent elsewhere, for example in the classroom.

Because: this pandemic isn't over. As of January 14, 2022, we are still VERY much in it. What about students who haven't had a normal school year in three years? Students and teachers remain on the carousel of covid. Students don't have the knowledge or understanding of writing exams.

Because: diploma exams should not unduly erode instructional time. Unfortunately, grade 12's are taught to diploma exams.

Because: "Many Alberta students had their education disrupted during this pandemic, which resulted in lost classroom and instruction time. We are committed to addressing this learning loss, and this funding will support students who need extra help to improve their reading, writing, and numeracy skills." February 2021.

~Adrianna LaGrange

Because: in a response of feedback from students, parents and education partners about stress and anxiety around academic achievement exams, Alberta Education will temporarily change the weighting of diploma exams to 10 per cent from 30 per cent for the 2021-22 school year.

Because: "Alberta students continue to face challenges due to the pandemic and I have heard concerns for our graduating class of 2022. I've heard feedback from students on my Minister's Youth Council as well as from education parties changing the weight of diploma exams will reduce the burden on students while still giving them valuable exam writing experience. We're making this temporary change in recognition of these circumstances, which we hope will place less burden on these students." ~Adriana LaGrange

We request that ASCA Advocacy Policy 20-02 be amended to read *That the Minister of Education extends the weighting of Diploma Exams at 10% in perpetuity.*

Policy Review for Operations and Maintenance Funding

Sponsor: Sam Livingston

Contact: Cassandra Wyatt samlivingstonkeycommunicator@gmail.com

Background / Overview:

Sufficiently maintaining public school buildings is the responsibility of the provincial government. Safe, healthy, and well-maintained buildings provide an environment conducive to learning for students and staff. Unfortunately, the current funding policy does not adequately provide for maintenance and operating costs. For example, Edmonton Public School Board’s website notes: “To ensure we invest responsibly and strategically in all our school buildings, it’s important that we clearly understand the condition of our school infrastructure. Audits on 171 school buildings show that the total deferred maintenance is \$757 million. That means we need to spend \$757 million on those schools to keep them in suitable operating condition”.

Many other school boards also have an increasing deferred maintenance challenge. While the factors contributing to this situation are many, part of the problem lies in how operations and maintenance grants are linked to utilization rates.

The Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Grant is provided to school authorities to address the jurisdiction's responsibility for the operation, maintenance, safety, and security of all school buildings. Upon initial review, there is a lack of clarity and certainty as to how all the various formulas related to utilization are defined, calculated, and connected. This is concerning for a topic as important as the maintenance of safe and appropriate school facilities for both the children of this province and the staff who work in those buildings.

The following paragraph, summarizes, to the best of our understanding, how these formulas operate. The table below outlines how operations and maintenance grants are impacted by utilized area which is calculated as Utilized Area = (Gross Area – Exempt Area) x Utilization Rate of the School. The Utilization rate of the school is provided each year by Alberta Education and calculated as Utilization rate = (Total Adjusted Enrollment/Net Capacity)*100. Net Capacity of a school is determined by dividing the instructional classroom area of the school less any designated exempt areas and designated outreach areas by the Instructional Area per Student, and adding the Rated Capacity for CTS labs, gymnasiums, physical activity rooms and learning commons (libraries).

School-Based Grants		
Operations & Maintenance Grant		
REVISED	Student Allocation (WMA FTE Rate)	\$213.00
REVISED	Alternative Programs in privately owned space (WMA FTE Rate)	\$639.00
REVISED	Utilized Area (per square meter)	\$62.00
REVISED	Underutilized Area (per square meter)	\$42.00

Source: [Funding Manual for Alberta – Sept 2021](#) Page 55

This linking between O&M grants and utilization rates ignores consideration of building needs and creates fluctuations in funding. It also creates a situation where:

- Older schools get unfairly penalized, as do the students who attend them
- Infrastructure problems grow and get more costly to fix as maintenance continues to be deferred

- Boards are incentivized to close schools prematurely, before allowing for the natural life cycle of population turnover and/or student access to a public school within a reasonable distance is hampered as students are redirected to other schools and costs, such as bussing, increase
- The needs of students become secondary to the utilization rate without necessarily achieving the goal of efficiency
- Some costs are downloaded to parents through requests to parent fundraising associations
- There is no-win because to meet or exceed the government's target of an 85% utilization rate means that most schools do not have sufficient resources to accommodate each class equitably creating educational penalties to students such as overcrowded classrooms and multiple classes sharing the gym, music room and library at the same time.

It is time for a policy review that explores how we might keep up with the maintenance requirements of our schools in a way that centers student needs, promotes learning excellence, and ensures the health and wellbeing of students and staff.

Because:

- School buildings will be maintained creating safe and healthy environments for students and staff
- Centering student needs creates equitable access to school facilities such as gyms and libraries
- Class sizes can be smaller without risk of negative consequences of lower utilization rates

Because:

- Every school across the province has maintenance needs
- As buildings age, maintenance needs increase
- Multiple school boards across the province have deferred maintenance budgets that are increasing
- Public school infrastructure is the responsibility of the provincial government

We request that the Minister of Education Conduct a policy review of the current infrastructure maintenance funding formula to:

- a) address the large deferred maintenance problem facing Alberta schools
- b) ensure Alberta schools receive operations and maintenance funding that considers building needs and allows for efficient, ongoing maintenance of schools into the future
- c) center the needs of students ensuring they have equitable access to safe and healthy schools that are well maintained
- d) remove utilization rates as a factor in operation and maintenance funding

We further request that the Minister of Education engage key stakeholders in the education system in the policy review including school boards, school councils, and teachers.

We further request that the Minister of Education work with the municipal level of government to coordinate planning and ensure that building new and maintaining old schools are considered as communities grow and change.

Resources:

[Funding Manual for Alberta – Sept 2021](#)

[School Capital Manual – July 2021](#)

[EPSB deferred maintenance](#)

[Article on School Closure](#)

Restoration of Funding for Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA)

Sponsored by: Gateway Christian School Council, Red Deer Public School District

Contact: Stephanie VanderLeek gcs-schoolcouncil@rdpsd.ab.ca

Background / Overview:

As parents of students in public school education in Alberta we are gravely concerned that the direction this government has taken in **defunding** our Alberta School Councils Association (ASCA) will dramatically weaken the collective voice of parents in this province. This move by the Minister has occurred during a time when the focus of many school councils has been on the Covid-19 pandemic, and both the funding cuts and the creation of the Minister's Parent Advisory Group have been initiated without broader parent consultation.

Alberta's Education Act states: "[education is a shared responsibility and requires collaboration, engagement and empowerment of all partners in the education system . . .](#)" (pg. 11). To that end, the Ministry has legislated school councils as a voice of parents and other stakeholders in education. School Councils represent a truly democratic parent voice. All parents of students in schools under the jurisdiction of Alberta Education are eligible members of school councils. ASCA has then acted as an umbrella organization, a conduit through which information can be shared between school councils and between school councils and the Minister. In addition, ASCA provides vital training to assist school councils in meeting their legislated role. The selected Minister's Advisory Group stands in opposition to this democratic voice and provides no reciprocal service to school councils.

Because: ALL parents of students in Alberta schools will have the continued strong voice in education that ASCA provides.

Because: School Councils will continue to have the professional development and training services provided by ASCA in order to ensure they can best accomplish their legislated role, and that School Councils will continue to have an effective conduit of information sharing.

Because: As an umbrella organization, ASCA represents over 1300 school councils in the province.

We request that the Minister of Education provide a full and public explanation for the decisions to de-fund ASCA and to create the 35-Member Minister's Parent Advisory Group.

We further request that the Minister of Education initiate a full and broad consultation into the decision to de-fund ASCA

We further request that the Minister of Education reconsider the function of the 35-Member Minister's Parent Advisory Council.

We further request that the Minister of Education validate the important role of ASCA in supporting school councils by reinstating reasonable funding.

In order to ensure the continued strong and democratic, non-partisan voice of parents in education.

SECTION II: Proposed Administrative Resolutions for Member Review

Please review and discuss with your school council members to determine how your parent delegate is to vote on the following items at the AGM on **April 24, 2022**:

Board proposed **Administrative Resolutions** for the 2021 ASCA AGM

#	Title	Sponsor	Contact
A22 -01	Revise Advocacy Policy: 12-2	ASCA Board of Directors	Wendy Keiver wendyk@albertaschoolcouncils.ca

Administrative (or Housekeeping) Resolutions:

Background

As per the approved Management of Advocacy Policies policy at the 2019 AGM, any Advocacy Policy which has not been reaffirmed, or amended and subsequently approved, by ASCA Member School Councils after its tenth (10th) anniversary, will be removed by the Board, and maintained within a public document for historical reference.

The ASCA Board of Directors recommends policies be **revised** if the policy **is still relevant to the current education climate but requires minor changes to keep it relevant. Rationale is provided such as updates to titles of current ministries, deleting timelines, current terminology, practice, or understandings, etc.**

A22-01 Motion to REVISE

(Proposed revised or added language is in red; proposed deleted language is struck through.)

Existing Policy	Amended Policy	Rationale
<p>12-2 High Risk Bus Stop Awareness and Signage</p> <p>That Alberta Education and Alberta Transportation collaborate to develop universally recognized signage and make this signage available to school boards to be placed at higher risk bus stops.</p> <p>That Alberta School Boards Association develop a policy advisory to ensure that school boards across the province have information relevant to appropriate steps that may be taken to ensure student safety at high-risk school bus stops.</p>	<p>12-2 High Risk Bus Stop Awareness and Signage</p> <p>That Alberta Education and Alberta Transportation collaborate to develop universally recognized signage and make this signage available to school boards to be placed at higher risk bus stops.</p> <p>That Alberta School Boards Association develop a policy advisory to ensure that school boards across the province have information relevant to appropriate steps that may be taken to ensure student safety at high-risk school bus stops.</p>	<p>Student safety is paramount. Alberta Education and Alberta Transportation continue to have a shared responsibility to implement provincial policies and expectations that will ensure student safety at high-risk bus stops. The intent of this statement remains relevant.</p> <p>The ASCA Board believes directing the operations of an education partner is ineffective advocacy, and its advocacy efforts should be focused on the ministerial level.</p>