



ALBERTA  
EDUCATION

*Office of the Minister  
MLA, Calgary - Bow*

AR 129446

May 6, 2025

Ms. Theresa Letendre  
Board Chair  
Foothills School Division  
PO Box 5700  
High River AB T1V 1M7

Dear Ms. Letendre:

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Foothills School Division Board of Trustees regarding recent changes to Jordan's Principle funding and their implications for First Nations children attending provincial schools. I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

I want to acknowledge Foothills School Division's commitment to improving outcomes for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students. I understand that in 2023/24, the school division reported a high graduation rate among First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students, a clear indicator of your efforts to support student success.

As you note in your letter, Jordan's Principle is a federal initiative intended to help address systemic barriers and gaps that First Nations children may experience when accessing health, social, or educational supports. While the Government of Alberta is not involved in Jordan's Principle applications or agreements, we share your concern that provincial school authorities and the First Nations students they serve will be significantly impacted by recent changes to Jordan's Principle funding eligibility.

I have written to the federal government to advocate on behalf of provincial schools, and my staff continue to meet with Indigenous Services Canada to better understand how the changes will impact school authorities so that we can advocate effectively.

Alberta Education understands that school authorities across the province are facing a number of challenges. We have listened to educators and system leaders and are taking the necessary actions to help ensure Alberta students receive the world-class education they deserve.

.../2

Alberta has committed more than \$1.6 billion for the 2025/26 school year to provide supports for students, including First Nations students, who require additional help. As part of this funding, \$55 million will be provided so school authorities can address complex classrooms by adding staffing support like educational assistants and specialists and give students the focused time and attention they need.

We are also providing \$93.9 million so school authorities can provide system, program, and instructional supports that improve education outcomes for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students and support the implementation of Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations.

Alberta Education has offered several targeted grant programs to help improve outcomes for Indigenous students, including the Innovation in First Nations Education Grant Program you refer to in your letter, and most recently, a three-year \$10.2 million investment in the Bridging Classrooms to Communities Grant Program. Your feedback on these grant programs is appreciated and will be taken into consideration in the development of potential new programs.

I appreciate you taking the time to share your board's perspective on this important issue.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Demetrios Nicolaides". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Demetrios Nicolaides ECA PhD  
Minister of Education

cc: Honourable Rick Wilson  
Minister of Indigenous Relations