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Jack Molyneux - Ward 1  
John Evans - Ward 2  
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February 27, 2025

Jennifer Robson,  
Accreditation Officer, School Accreditation, Monitoring and Print Services

Email: [jennifer.robson@gov.ab.ca](mailto:jennifer.robson@gov.ab.ca)

**Re: Notification of Public Charter School Application: *Academy of Business Literacy and Entrepreneurship***

Dear Ms. Robson,

On behalf of the Foothills School Division Board of Trustees, I am writing to express our firm opposition to the proposed *Academy of Business Literacy and Entrepreneurship*. This charter school application is unnecessary, redundant, and diverts critical public funds from existing programs. Our opposition is based on three key concerns: its lack of true innovation, the financial strain it places on an already stretched education budget, and the selective enrollment practices that limit access for students

Foothills School Division is already advancing career education within the **public system**, directly aligning with the Premier's mandate to equip Alberta's youth with the skills and direction they need for meaningful employment. Through structured, career-connected learning opportunities from K-12, we ensure all students—regardless of background or ability—have access to real-world learning experiences. Our **summer career education programs** allow students to earn high school credits while gaining hands-on work experience under the supervision of an off-campus coordinator. In regular programming, students engage in **career education at every stage**: from **Maker-Centered Learning** in K-4, to **Career Technology Foundations** in Grades 5-9, and **Career Technology Studies** in Grades 10-12, where they explore industry pathways and work-integrated learning. These programs are already fostering the career readiness the government is calling for—within an inclusive, well-established public education framework.

The proposed charter school is proposing to offer innovative programming that promotes career pathways, creative problem-solving, and hands-on learning. However, these opportunities **already exist** within the public system, ensuring broad access without barriers to entry. Unlike a charter school, which can limit enrollment based on space, resources and charter criteria, the Foothills School Division **welcomes every student** and provides career-focused education without restriction. It is the belief of our Board that public education is best positioned to expand and adapt these offerings **without the need for a separate, duplicative system**.



Beyond redundancy, establishing a new charter school would result in **significant and unnecessary costs**. A charter school requires additional operational funding for leadership and governance, including a Superintendent and governing Board—resources that public school divisions already have in place. There are also capital costs to secure a facility, while existing public schools have available space to accommodate this type of programming. Additionally, a new charter school would introduce transportation challenges, increasing demand in a province already facing a shortage of bus drivers. Public school divisions have established transportation networks that could support expanded career education without further strain on the system.

Rather than diverting public funds to establish a new charter school with a limited scope, our Board believes the more responsible and effective approach is to invest in strengthening and expanding existing **public-school programs**. Foothills School Division is already delivering career education that aligns with the government’s priorities, ensuring all students—not just a select few—benefit from enhanced career pathways, dual-credit opportunities, and work-integrated learning. Public education remains the most equitable, cost-effective, and sustainable way to equip Alberta’s youth for success in the evolving economy.

The Foothills School Division Board of Trustees stands firmly against the establishment of new charter schools, including the proposed *Academy of Business Literacy and Entrepreneurship*. Public school authorities already offer diverse and comprehensive programming that serves all students equitably. Rather than creating a separate system that benefits only a select few, we urge the government to strengthen and expand public education—ensuring that every Alberta student has access to the opportunities they need to succeed.

Respectfully,



Theresa Letendre  
Board Chair, Board of Trustees | Ward 3  
Foothills School Division

Cc:

Dr. Christopher Fuzessy, Superintendent, Foothills School Division  
Patricia Bolger, Board Chair, Calgary Board of Education Board of Trustees  
Shannon Cook, Board Chair, Calgary Catholic School District Board of Trustees  
Andrea Keenan, Board Chair, Christ the Redeemer Catholic School Division Board of Trustees  
Fiona Gilbert, Board Chair, Rocky View School Division Board of Trustees  
Marilyn Dennis, President, Alberta School Boards Association  
R.J. Sigurdson, Minister of Agriculture, MLA Highwood  
Chelsea Petrovic, Parliamentary Secretary Health, MLA Livingstone-Macleod  
Sara Elmeligi, MLA for Banff-Kananaskis

