



BOARD OF TRUSTEES BRIEFING FOR MLAs

November - December 2023

Briefing Note for:

MLA for Highwood, RJ Sigurdson, Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation

MLA for Livingstone-Macleod, Chelsae Petrovic

MLA for Banff-Kananaskis, Sarah Elmeligi

Purpose

To provide concise, reliable, and accurate information to assist the Honorable Minister and Foothills School Division MLAs in their advocacy for their constituents and for the Foothills School Division.

Subject/Issue: *Sufficient, sustainable, and equitable funding for dual credit programming to support proven success in pathways to post-secondary education and workplace training in addition to the existing start-up grants and enhancement grants.*

Summary

For the 2023-2024 school year Foothills School Division was successful in applying for the \$50,000 dual-credit start-up grant to support our Vertical Farming Initiative at Oilfields High School in Diamond Valley. In addition, our dual credit partnerships with Olds College (1 student) and SAIT (8 students) were supported by the dual credit enhancement grant we received in 2022-2023. Unfortunately, the current model, of grant funding, does not provide sustainability for programs after the first year and foists the responsibility of continued costs on to the Division without sustained and predictable support.

Quick Facts

- Dual Credit Tuition Grants are available for School jurisdictions to start new opportunities with post-secondary institutions, as it is a “start-up” grant.
- These grants are not intended to support existing Dual Credit programming, and therefore do not provide sustainability for programs after the first year.
- Dual credit courses were piloted in Alberta as far back as 2008 with special funding put in place for approved projects. Currently Alberta Education Funding Manual delineates funding for “start-up” dual credit courses. For 15 years with ongoing rollouts of “pilot projects” with different funding amounts and requirements

Considerations

Minister of Education, Demetrios Nicolaidis’s [Mandate Letter](#) initiative directing the Minister to “[work] in cooperation with the Minister of Advanced Education, fund growth of “CAREERS” with public and separate school divisions to increase student participation in off-campus programs or paid internships.”



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Subject/Issue: *Concerns with the Alberta Teaching Profession Commission, specifically that existing dispute resolution processes are being bypassed and complaints are not being met in a fair, just, and timely manner.*

Summary

Created under the [Education \(Reforming Teacher Profession Discipline\) Amendment Act](#), the newly established Alberta Teaching Profession Commission has been established to oversee disciplinary matters for teachers. The commission is to review and investigate complaints of alleged unprofessional conduct and professional incompetence filed against Alberta certificated teachers and teacher leaders – something that historically has been done at the local level and through the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA). With the creation of the Teaching Profession Commission, there are now two complaint processes that could see investigations (at the Division level and the Provincial level) occurring in parallel.

Quick Facts

- As outlined in FSD [Administrative Procedure 151 – Parental/Guardian Complaints or Concerns & Dispute Resolution](#) and supported by the [Education Act](#), concerns or complaints are best resolved as close to the source of the concern or complaint as possible beginning at the classroom and school level.
- FSD [Administrative Procedure 408 – Staff Grievances](#) outlines the procedure for staff members not covered by collective agreements to have access to an orderly process for resolving grievances related to their employment that follows the rules of natural justice.
- Current legislation (Section 43, *Education Act*) has additional provisions for a parent or community member to request a Ministerial Review if the concern/issue have not been resolved.
- When staff members are part of a division office team (and not part of the ATA) the division provides resources for any legal representation required. The legal costs associated with complaints, again initiated by a simple online form, has the potential to cost school systems greatly.

Considerations

Minister of Education, Demetrios Nicolaidis's [Mandate Letter](#) initiative directing the Minister to “[explore] incentives to support the recruitment and retention of teachers, educational assistants and support staff in underserved areas of the province.”

Yours in Education,

Theresa Letendre, Board Chair | Ward 3
Lisa Penzo, Vice Chair | Ward 4
Jack Molyneux | Ward 1

John Evans | Ward 2
Sharon Nichols | Ward 4
Phil Irwin | Ward 5

