

WMES Parent Council Meeting Minutes: Wednesday April 24, 2024

Meeting called to order at: 7:02 pm

Attendance:

Principal Sean Latta, Assistant Principal Heather MacDonald, Chair Rachel Green, Vice-chair Joseph Steeves, Shauna Fankhauser, Sandra Detmers, Trustee Carla Gimber, Trustee Brad Toone, Judy Benson, Yasmin, Amelia Hatch, Chelsea Petrovic, Catherine Chaykowsi and other online attendees.

Approval of the Agenda

- Add two ASCA resolutions to be voted on (Shauna motions, Judy seconds)
- Shauna motions to ratify minutes and Judy seconds

Business from last meeting

- Shauna got in touch with Dr. Chris Mattatall (from Lethbridge) to be a guest speaker on child development, a current theme is social media and the effects it has on development. Cost would be \$250 plus mileage and he would be willing for us to record his session for parents to review after the event. Discussion of opening it to other surrounding schools. Motion passed to use the parent engagement funds from the government to bring Dr. Mattatall to speak, the remaining funds to be used to add books he recommends to the parent library.
- Request for fundraising committee (in attendance at meeting) to advertise the session in the paper. The Fundraising committee vote had a majority to approve.
- Sean Latta asked for the Lighthouse team to have additional time to prepare their presentation. The invite for the Student Lighthouse Team will be for the May council meeting (May 22). They have some topics to present on and will be ready for a Q&A.

Trustee report:

- Trustees met April 22 - Key messages attached hereto.
- Livingstone Leaders presentation
- Occupational Health and Safety Presentation from Laura Stocker
- Announcement regarding 4 day week and parent feedback - this will be part of key messages moving forward as feedback is gathered

Principal Report:

- Swimming is almost wrapped up (Kinder last day tomorrow and grade 6 to go)

- Grades 4, 5, 6 went to the career fair in Stavely today. It was a great opportunity, lots of booths. Only feedback was maybe in a slightly larger venue next time so it wasn't as full/congested, although once the Nanton schools left and went back to their schools it wasn't as crowded as when we first arrived.
- Field trips are all planned and will be happening.
 - Kindergarten - Granary Road in June
 - Grade 1 - Zoo in May
 - Grade 2 - Fort in Fort MacLeod
 - Grade 3 - Ukrainian Village
 - Grade 4 - Frank Slide/Mine
 - Grade 5 – Heritage Park
 - Grade 6 - Calgary Zoo
- Discovery Days again in May
- Teaching allocations and budget:
 - Decrease in our teaching staff 2.0 FTE
 - We are seeing an increase in transient populations and class complexities that also make class configuration decisions challenging. There will be change, but we aren't completely certain on what the change will look like yet.
 - Clarification of loss of funding was due to the socioeconomic status of our area rising.

New business:

- Our council has been working on updating bylaws throughout this year. Two options for objectives for council: based on the Education Act and based upon this and the Admin Procedure 110.
 - Making a motion to accept the Admin Procedure and the Legislation from the Education Act to become the objectives for School Council (Amelia motions, Judy seconds)
- **Two resolutions have come from ASCA:**
 - First resolution voted down unanimously
 - Second resolution voted down unanimously
- Fundraising committee has paid for field trips and swimming. Parent volunteer admission has sometimes been paid for in the past and sometimes not. Can the fundraising group pay for the admission of parent volunteers? Yes all agree.
 - The outdoor classroom may have a staff member willing to lead the brainstorming/organization of this endeavor moving forward again. With potential class configuration shifts, field trips may change next year as well.

- Fundraising committee does have an anticipated surplus from casino funds following swimming and field trips this current and next academic year. Spending of those funds will be decided next year.
 - Fundraising committee and Sean Latta briefly held a discussion regarding colour run materials previously ordered (minutes not exhaustive of this conversation nor their vote as unrelated to School Council).
- Can we clarify the relationship between the School Council and the Fundraising Groups.
 - No further events for fundraisers.
 - Often a year end BBQ both the council and fundraising society work together on this event.
 - Fundraising Committee to discuss internally the partnership with School Council

Meeting adjourned at 8:03

WMES SCHOOL COUNCIL INVITES YOU TO JOIN US
on Wednesday May 15, 2024 at 7 pm
at the WMES Commons and livestreamed (and
available after the event) via our WMES YouTube Page

What Every Parent Wishes
Someone Had Told Them About
How Their Child's Brain Learns

University of
Lethbridge



Dr. Chris Mattatall

GoodTeaching.ca



DEAR WMES LIGHTHOUSE TEAM

You are invited

to our Wednesday May 22, 2024 school council meeting
at the WMES Commons at 7 pm

We as parents and guardians would love to have you come and share about your experience at the school and on the Lighthouse team. In particular, could you please be prepared to share about:

1. What have you learned about leadership while on this team?
2. How have you incorporated the 7 habits in this leadership role and personally?
3. What have you learned from your grade 6 mentors?
4. Please tell us about your volunteering experience at the Soup Bowl!

We look forward to meeting and hearing from those of you able to attend!

Thank you

WMES School Council





BOARD OF TRUSTEES KEY MESSAGES

Following are the Key Messages from the Board of Trustees Regular Meeting held on Monday, April 22, 2024. Each month the Board Key Messages are shared at School Council Meetings. See your school's website for information about upcoming meetings and agendas.

1) Presentations:

- a. **Livingstone Leaders Presentation** – Teacher Advisor Alysa Fisher with the executive members Daniel & Cordelia (FPW), Jennifer (JTF), Grace & Nadine (LIV), Meya (MHHS), and Kassidy & Brody (WCCHS) gave a very informative and insightful presentation. Each school executive gave the Board of Trustees information as to what their individual schools are doing to inspire students and provide student voice and leadership in their school. This information included 1) Who we are: leaders who strive to make a difference in our schools and in our communities! 2) Purpose and Vision 3) Goal: as youth leaders, is to be a voice for students and create an impact by recognizing what needs to change for the better of our education, connections, and futures. One new and exciting event that the Livingstone Leaders introduced and hosted this year was a division wide dance called the Snowball. Each executive and school should be very proud of the leadership and participation within this program. Livingstone Leaders are student leaders who strive to be a voice for students and create a positive impact in their schools.
- b. **Occupational Health & Safety Update** - Laura Stocker, Health & Safety Coordinator, presented to the Board of Trustees. Laura manages the Safety Department and the Custodial Department within LRSD. She assists with the division's Health and Safety Committee, facilitates safety courses, reviews incident reports, safety inspections and overall ensures that LRSD meets or exceeds the legislative requirements for work, field trips and activities. The exemplary work and pride that Laura uses for each facet of her work, ensures that the health and safety of our students, employees, contractors, visitors and stakeholders is paramount.

2) **Personal Communication Devices** - The Board of Trustees moved to designate a special meeting to develop a policy limiting personal communication devices in the classroom.

3) **Livingstone Range School Division 4-day School Week** – The Board of Trustees received a presentation by Karly Bond: Coordinator of Communications, Culture & Engagement on the 4-Day School Week: Developing Project Scope & Engagement Objective Plan. The Board approved moving forward and engaging stakeholders as presented in the plan. For more information please check the website at lrsd.ca/4dayweek. Information will be added as available.

Every student, every day.

- 4) **Livingstone Range School Division Funding Profile** - The Board of Trustees directed the Advocacy Committee to write a letter to the Minister of Education and cc: ASBA regarding their concerns about our 2024-2025 provincial funding profile and ongoing funding challenges.

Every student, every day.

Revised Proposed Advocacy Resolution P24-05

Preserving Safe and Inclusive Spaces for 2SLGBTQI+ Students

ASCA preface:

Advocacy policies proposed for ASCA Member consideration belong to the Sponsor, until such time as they are moved and seconded on the floor of the ASCA Annual General, or General, Meeting. As such, a Sponsor of a Proposed Advocacy Resolution (PAR) may modify, or entirely withdraw, their PAR. Sam Livingston School Council has exercised this right, by revising their original submission (Preserving Safe and Inclusive Spaces for 2SLGBTQI+ Students) for ASCA Member consideration at the April 28th, 2024, ASCA Annual General Meeting. This **revised** PAR (P24-05 on the AGM Agenda) was received by ASCA on 04.22.24 and posted separate from the AGM Package on 04.23.24

P24-05 REVISED

Preserving Safe and Inclusive Spaces for 2SLGBTQI+ Students

Note: Revisions/additions noted in green font.

Sponsor: Sam Livingston School Council

Contact: Tosca Nesbitt ecolesamchair@gmail.com

Issue:

Within the province of Alberta, supports for 2SLGBTQI+ students are already in place. In other provinces across Canada, there have been legislative changes to erode similar supports. We believe it is important to ensure these supports remain intact in the province of Alberta.

Background:

While the number of 'out' youth and the acceptance of them in their communities is increasing, many 2SLGBTQI+ youth still live in fear of being rejected by their family and peers and are afraid of queerphobic bullying. Research out of Toronto indicates that potentially as many as 1 in 5 homeless youth identify as 2SLGBTQI+, and that they are more likely than other youth to be on the streets instead of in shelters due to queerphobia and the fear of violence. Putting this in context, it's important to note that approximately only 4% of Canadians aged 15+ identify as 2SLGBTQI+, meaning a disproportionately high number of 2SLGBTQI+ youth end up experiencing homelessness.

In addition, they often face discrimination. An Alberta study noted that three quarters of trans youth faced discrimination because of their gender identity and more than half because of their sexual orientation.

Repeated discrimination can weaken self-confidence and lead to mental health issues, including suicidal ideation and self-harm. Research indicates that approximately 30% of youth suicides are by 2SLGBTQI+ youth. This risk of suicide is even higher if youth have not come out yet or have not been accepted by their family. Family relationships are important, and while younger trans youth generally reported feeling their parents cared about them, 81% reported their family did not understand them at all or only understood them a little, and only about 1 in 3 had an adult in their family they could talk to about problems. The same Alberta students noted that 75% of trans youth reported self-harm in the past year, nearly 65% reported thoughts of suicide in the past 12 months and more than 2 in 5 had attempted suicide.

One way to maintain supportive environments is through the continued support of Gay Straight Alliances/Queer Straight Alliances (GSAs/QSAs) within schools. Under Section 35.1 of the Education Act, students in Alberta have a right to establish a voluntary student organization intended to promote a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment. This includes GSAs or QSAs. The

Revised Proposed Advocacy Resolution P24-05 Preserving Safe and Inclusive Spaces for 2SLGBTQI+ Students

Government of Alberta notes that 2SLGBTQI+ students are more likely to feel safe and are more comfortable being open about their sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression in schools with GSAs/QSAs because they provide a place to create a sense of belonging. They go further and note that when students feel accepted for who they are, it can positively impact both academic performance and self-esteem as evidenced through:

- greater school attachment
- improved attendance
- increased sense of empowerment and hope
- new friendships
- improved home and school relationships
- increased comfort being visible as 2SLGBTQI+ or as allies
- reduction of stress due to hiding one's identity
- increased confidence
- enhanced sense of pride

While GSAs/QSAs are an excellent and proven approach to supporting 2SLGBTQI+ students, visibility also matters. As with many other forms of inclusion, seeing relatable examples in curriculum and resources and adjusting policies, forms, and signage to use gender-inclusive terminology can make 2SLGBTQI+ students feel seen, safe, and included.

Following submission of this resolution, the Alberta Government signaled their intention to change current practices regarding 2SLGBTQI+ policies. It is anticipated that this fall, the Government will formally introduce changes to legislation. The anticipated changes as they relate to education are:

- Parents will need to give permission before a student aged 15 and under can use a name or pronoun at school other than what they were given at birth. Students who are 16 or 17 won't require permission, but schools will need to let their parents know first.
- Parents will have to opt-in students to every lesson about sex education, sexual orientation, or gender identity (currently, the law requires one notification, and parents can opt-out)
- Teachers need to get any third-party instruction material on gender identity, sexual orientation, and human sexuality approved by the Education ministry before they are used in the classroom.

While it is unclear how these changes will be implemented, it is clear that many critical stakeholders were not consulted prior to the announcements including students, parents, and teachers. Below is a list of organizations that have voiced concerns with the proposed changes:

- Alberta Teachers' Association
- Canadian Pediatric Society
- Alberta Medical Association
- United Nurses of Alberta
- Social Workers Association of Alberta
- Canadian Anti-Hate Network
- Canadian Women's Foundation
- Women's Shelters Canada
- Several (over 5) YWCAs
- Several (over 40) queer representing community organizations

Revised Proposed Advocacy Resolution P24-05 Preserving Safe and Inclusive Spaces for 2SLGBTQI+ Students

Concerns raised include:

- “We are concerned about how students may feel forced to suppress their identities and to be afraid of reaching out to teachers as an avenue for support. Transgender youth are five times more likely to think about suicide and nearly eight times more likely to attempt it than other children. We must be mindful of the vulnerability of these students and their need for safety, security, and support.” ***Alberta Teachers’ Association***
- “We are also deeply concerned about your announcement to require parental opt-in for each instance a teacher intends to give formal instruction on subjects involving gender identity, sexual orientation, or human sexuality in schools. This will pose an extremely high barrier to formal education on these fundamental and universal topics for all of Alberta’s children and youth. Comprehensive, evidence-based, medically accurate, and age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health education has an overwhelming evidence base for its impact on positive health outcomes. As such, it should be a priority for the overall health and well-being of adolescents and the downstream positive effects on the population as a whole. Open communication on issues of gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, and human sexuality is key to improved well-being and health outcomes and can reduce risk of illness and disease, sexual exploitation and violence, stigma, misinformation, harassment, bullying, prejudice, and discrimination. Comprehensive sexuality education is therefore essential to ensure that children and youth have access to accurate information and are equipped to make healthy and informed decisions.” ***Canadian Pediatric Society***
- “We strongly urge the Premier to reconsider the proposed policies and offer her the opportunity to collaborate with experienced professionals, including Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists, to find a better way. One in which all Albertans feel accepted, loved, and have access to the care they need to become their best selves.” ***Alberta Medical Association***
- “Children and youth want and need to be unconditionally accepted and loved. Trans children and youth are not always ready to share their intimate thoughts and feelings with their parents. They may turn to trusted teachers until they are ready to share with their families. Parents have a responsibility to create safe, trusting, and loving relationships with their children, and in doing so, young people will tell their families about their preferred pronouns and/or name. Forcing teachers and schools to notify parents and to seek parental consent from unaccepting families will place children in harm's way. Youth homelessness is known to very often be caused by breakdowns in family relationships (Quilty, et al., 2022), and this is especially true for ‘Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning (LGBTQ) youth [who] are 120% more likely to be homeless than cisgender and heterosexual youth’ (Ormiston, 2022). When educators are forced to notify parents and guardians about their child’s gender, they may put that child at risk for homelessness, which has doubled in Edmonton alone over the last three years (Smith, 2022; Homeward Trust Edmonton, 2024).” ***Social Workers Association of Alberta***

The concerns above are echoed across many of the open letters issued by organizations concerned that these proposed changes will cause harm to some of Alberta’s most vulnerable children and youth. Many of these organizations are also willing to be part of an authentic, open, and meaningful consultation process.

In addition to these concerns, there is the administrative burden these changes will place on schools, parents, and even the Ministry of Education. Requiring parents to sign a form for a name change (there

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are many reasons why a name change could happen, including shortened names like Samantha to Sam and going by a second name instead of a first) and/or an opt-in form for every lesson about sex education, sexual orientation or gender identity will be overwhelming. Teachers will need to take time from their already full days to create and track the forms and busy parents will need to ensure they are watching for and signing the forms as they come. Teachers will also need to take extra time to submit materials to the Ministry of Education for approval and track that they have received the necessary permissions to use the materials required. The Ministry of Education will also need to take time to review all the submissions and issue approvals or rejections.

Resources:

<https://www.alberta.ca/gay-straight-alliances>

<https://oipc.ab.ca/privacy-laws-gay-straight-alliances/>

<https://oipc.ab.ca/resource/school-clubs/>

<https://www.aclrc.com/2-lgbt-youth>

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/12-581-x/2022001/sec6-eng.htm>

https://apsc-saravyc.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2018/04/SARAVYC_Trans-Youth-Health-Report_Alberta-V2-WEB.pdf

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/danielle-smith-unveils-sweeping-changes-to-alberta-student-gender-identity-sports-and-surgery-policies-.7101053#:~:text=and%20a%20psychologist.-,Alberta%20parents%20will%20need%20to%20give%20permission%20before%20a%20student,let%20their%20parents%20know%20first.>

https://cps.ca/uploads/advocacy/Gender-affirming_care_in_AB_Public.pdf

<https://www.albertadoctors.org/news/statement-from-scap-on-gender-affirming-treatments>

<https://www.una.ca/1493/decisions-about-medical-care-must-not-be-left-to-politicians-una>

<https://www.myswaa.ca/news/statement-on-alberta-anti-trans-policies>

<https://egale.ca/egale-in-action/egale-canada-and-skipping-stone-foundation-condemn-albertas-attack-on-2slgbtqi-people-and-promise-legal-action/>

(1 Recommendation replaced by 7 Recommendations. Wording being maintained as identical to previous 1 Recommendation appears in black font below)

Recommendation #1:

That the Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) advocate to The Minister for Education and other education stakeholders and partners to pause the proposed changes until meaningful consultation on the substance of the policy, not only its implementation, has occurred with key stakeholders including 2SLGBTQI+ students, 2SLGBTQI+ community-based organizations, teachers and the ATA, parents and ASCA, and school board associations.

Revised Proposed Advocacy Resolution P24-05 Preserving Safe and Inclusive Spaced for 2SLGBTQI+ Students

Recommendation #2:

That the Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) advocate to The Minister for Education and other education stakeholders and partners to maintain the current legislation for one notification with an opt-out option for sexual education.

Recommendation #3:

That the Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) advocate to The Minister for Education and other education stakeholders and partners for the preservation of GSAs/QSAs in all schools in Alberta with continued protections surrounding the personal information of students participating in GSAs/QSAs. These protections should continue to allow students to participate in GSAs without fear of their families or others being notified.

Recommendation #4:

That the Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) advocate to The Minister for Education and other education stakeholders and partners to continue to allow teachers to use third-party, evidence-based, medically accurate sexual education and gender and relationship materials in developmentally-appropriate ways without requiring prior approval from the Ministry of Education.

Recommendation #5:

That the Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) advocate to The Minister for Education and other education stakeholders and partners to support schools and school boards to be gender inclusive on school forms, websites, and communications, recognizing that gender exists on a spectrum, not as a male/female binary.

Recommendation #6:

That the Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) advocate to The Minister for Education and other education stakeholders and partners to support professional development for teachers to provide the knowledge and skills to a) respond immediately and in developmentally ~~age~~-appropriate ways to discriminatory language and behaviour, b) use inclusive language, and c) incorporate positive examples that affirm and embrace differing sexual orientations and gender identities.

Recommendation #7:

That the Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) advocate to The Minister for Education and other education stakeholders and partners to allow students to use a name and/or pronoun that is different from the one they were given at birth without requiring parental permission.

ER24-01

Opposing the Alberta Government's Proposed Policies Re: "Preserving Choice for Children and Youth"

Sponsor: Bisset School Council

Contact: Robin Kyler bissetparentassociation@gmail.com

Issue:

The policies proposed by the provincial government are lacking direct input from communities, schools, parents, students, physicians, and mental health professionals grounded in the interest of supporting children and youth who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+. While the title of the policy suggests the government intends to protect student choice, in fact it is removing student autonomy in the classroom and interfering with their ability to receive an education that supports their well-being and their understanding of one another. The resulting message communicated to 2SLGBTQIA+ students by the provincial government is that their identities do not deserve to be recognized or understood in the classroom. At a time when the provincial government should be focusing on reducing the harassment and bullying experienced by 2SLGBTQIA+ students, they are instead working to silence them and further stigmatize them. These proposed policies create unsafe classroom spaces where students' ability to express themselves and be understood by their peers and educators will be restricted. The ASCA has already released a statement calling "*...for a halt to this legislation until broad consultation is meaningfully achieved and incorporated.*" While this is an important first step, the ASCA must continue to oppose these proposed policies in all official capacities, and advocate for the following:

- No requirement for parental consent for a student to use a different name or pronouns in class. When teachers respect the student's choice, it demonstrates acceptance and support for their well-being. Accepting this choice does not result in a legal name change for the student in any capacity. The student must have the autonomy to decide how they would like their name/pronoun change reflected in the classroom, and if their family should be informed or not. This is an act of respect and inclusion, which the government must not interfere.
- No requirement for the Ministry of Education to review third-party resource materials or presentations related to gender identity. Schools already have access to professional curriculum consultants that support the implementation of gender related learning resources in the classroom. These individuals are vetted and approved by the school board when they are hired. Adding another level of politically motivated bureaucracy demonstrates an overreach of the provincial government with the goal of reducing inclusion of SOGI related content in classrooms.
- Parents or caregivers should have to opt out if they prefer their child not take part in sexual education or in formal instruction on gender identity, sexual orientation, or human sexuality. Declining one of these subjects should not inherently be interpreted as declining all of them. Parents or guardians should have the ability to decline each subject individually.
- No requirement for school administration to notify the parents or caregivers of children and youth aged 16 or 17 to alter their name or pronouns used at school. Doing so could put these children at risk of physical and/or emotional abuse, psychological stress, and could result in them becoming unhoused if their parents refuse to support them. Youth are also at an increased risk of self harm when they are not accepted at home or in the classroom.
- No segregation of transgender students within school sports. Requiring a student to declare if they are transgender in order to determine what sports team they are permitted to play on is unnecessary and harmful. Doing so could result in verification of gender becoming a requirement when a child joins a sports team. Children and youth must not be subjected to genital inspections or any other form of investigation in order to ascertain their perceived gender by school authorities. To do so would psychologically harm children and educators as

well. Transgender students who play sports have not asked for this separation and it is a demonstration of government overreach for them to be inserting themselves into this discussion.

In addition:

- Proper funding of student access to a Psychologist trained to support 2SLGBTQIA+ students who are struggling with acceptance at home and in the classroom. Working with them to determine if and when it is safe to inform their parents or caregivers of any changes they are making with their name or pronouns. This support must be culturally informed.
- Stronger policies to support educators in preventing targeted harassment and bullying of 2SLGBTQIA+ students at school and to support the children and families who have experienced harassment.
- Stronger policies of accountability to prevent educators and school staff from discriminating and perpetuating harmful stereotypes against 2SLGBTQIA+ students.
- Programming that will better inform all parents and caregivers on the intersectional identities of children and youth, and how to support them as they grow. Breaking down barriers and contributing to a culture of acceptance and inclusivity both at school and in the community at large.

Background:

On February 1, 2024, the Premier of Alberta announced proposed policies that the government would be bringing forward in the fall of 2024. The policies involving education are as follows:

As it relates to Alberta's education system, the following reforms will be implemented:

- Parents must be notified and opt in to any instance when a teacher provides formal instruction on subject matter involving gender identity, sexual orientation, or human sexuality.
- All third-party resource materials or presentations related to gender identity, sexual orientation or human sexuality available in Alberta classrooms must be pre-approved by the Ministry of Education to ensure they are age-appropriate.
- Parents must consent for their child aged 15 and under to alter their name or pronouns used by school teachers, administration and other educational staff.
- Parents must be notified for their child aged 16 or 17 to alter their name or pronouns used by school teachers, administration and other educational staff.

Alberta's government is also developing a counselling pilot project to help youth identifying as transgender and their families work through often difficult and complex issues and discussions.

Women, girls, and transgender athletes

Finally, as it relates to women, girls and transgender female athletes, Alberta's government will work with sporting organizations in the province to ensure biologically born female athletes are able to compete in a biological female-only division without having to compete against transgender female athletes while also expanding co-ed or other gender-neutral divisions for athletic competitions to ensure that transgender athletes are able to meaningfully participate.

RESPONSES (Official Statements):

Canadian Human Rights Commission (Charlotte-Anne Malischewski- Interim Chief Commissioner)

"The Canadian Human Rights Commission is concerned that during debate over some recent legal and policy changes in Canada, what is being lost are the human rights, health, and safety of two-spirit, trans, non-binary, and gender diverse youth. [...] All children and youth in Canada have the right to live and to

learn free from discrimination related to their sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. This is recognized in federal, provincial, and territorial human rights codes, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Canadian and international human rights law requires that all governments in Canada honour their obligations to put the best interests of the child first and foremost, and to protect the rights of children and youth, including members of 2SLGBTQQA+ communities. An integral part of respecting the rights of children and youth is recognizing young people's right to autonomy, development, education, and self expression. They have the human right to have their views taken seriously when decisions are made that affect their lives." ([Click here](#) to read the full statement)

University of Calgary & University of Alberta Law Faculties

"Thirty-six individuals from the University of Calgary Faculty of Law and University of Alberta Faculty of Law have signed an open letter detailing how Alberta's transgender policies violate charter-protected rights. They call on the government to reverse course on these policies. The group believes Alberta's proposed restrictions would violate Section 2(b) (freedom of expression), Section 7 (life, liberty, and the security of the person), Section 12 (cruel and usual treatment), and Section 15 (equality rights) of the Charter, while also impeding Indigenous law." ([Click here](#) to read the full statement)

Alberta Psychiatric Association

"The Alberta Psychiatric Association (APA) which is inclusive of the Alberta Medical Association's Sections of General Psychiatry and Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, wishes to express deep concern around recently announced policies that directly affect transgender individuals in the province of Alberta. These policies have the potential to lead to significant negative mental health outcomes amongst an identifiable, already marginalized population...." ([Click here](#) to read the full statement)

Office of the Child and Youth Advocate Alberta

"It is crucial to remember that what is at stake in this conversation is the lives of vulnerable young people. We must centre their voices and ensure that we are prioritizing their safety and well-being in decisions that affect them. In doing so, we can help ensure their rights are upheld and their futures are bright." ([Click here](#) to read the full statement)

Social Workers Association of Alberta

"The Social Workers Association of Alberta ("SWAA") agrees with medical organizations, like the United Nurses of Alberta (United Nurses of Alberta, 2024) that gender-affirming care is the best evidence-based, safe, and compassionate approach for the well-being of all trans and non-binary people, especially when working with and supporting young people." ([Click here](#) to read the full statement)

Edmonton 2 Spirit Society (E2S)

"The Edmonton 2 Spirit Society (E2S) believes that the gender identity, sexual orientation, and human sexuality legislation proposed on January 31, 2024, by the UCP caucus in Alberta is in violation of Indigenous sovereignty, treaty rights, and traditional laws and culture of Indigenous Peoples. Under the medicine chest clause of Treaty 6, and as affirmed in case law, Indigenous peoples are entitled to the Aboriginal right to health. This important aspect of the treaty has yet to be realized, and this policy suite seeks to further deny Indigenous peoples access to our right to gender-affirming care as we determine necessary. We call on all our relations, including all Albertans, to oppose this legislation and to call their MLAs, MPs, and municipal and tribal governments to stand up for our 2SLGBTQQA+youth and adults." ([Click here](#) to read the full statement)

Resources:

1. [Government News – Feb 1, 2024](#)
2. [Video – Premier’s Announcement on Feb 1, 2024](#)
3. [Audio – Premier’s Announcement on Feb 1, 2024](#)
4. <https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/trudeau-minister-says-alberta-s-trans-policy-proposal-equal-to-nato-moment-for-lgbtq2s-community-1.6751597>
5. [Social Workers Association of Alberta – Statement on Alberta Anti-Trans Policies](#)
6. [Alberta Teachers Association – We must resist anti-trans policies](#)
7. [Joint Statements About Premier Danielle Smith’s Trans & 2SLGBTQ+ Policy Proposals](#)
8. [United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child](#)
9. [OHCR. \(1989.\). Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.](#)
10. [UNESCO. \(2017, September 21\). UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\). UNESCO](#)
11. [United Nations \(n.d.\). Children and Youth | United Nations for Indigenous Peoples.](#)

Recommendation #1:

That the Alberta School Councils’ Association (ASCA) advocates to the Minister of Education and the Premier of Alberta to stop further development and implementation of the proposed policy “Preserving Choice for Children and Youth.”

Recommendation #2:

That the Alberta School Councils’ Association (ASCA) advocates to the Minister of Education and the Premier of Alberta to increase support of 2SLGBTQIA+ students and protect them from discrimination and bullying in the classroom.

Recommendation #3:

That the Alberta School Councils’ Association (ASCA) advocates to the Minister of Education and the Premier of Alberta to dedicate funding, resources, and programming that serve to better educate parents and caregivers on gender diversity and the importance of acceptance and inclusion.