

How do SCHOOL COUNCILS contribute to Alberta Education's ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK?

Alberta Education changed the way it demonstrates confidence in meeting the needs of students and enabling their success with the adoption of a new *Assurance Framework*, implemented alongside funding changes in 2020.

Assurance is a concept that encompasses accountability, engagement, transparency and reporting.

The assurance model creates new opportunities for parents to engage with the education system and help shape local priorities and initiatives. This new process (*or mindset*) affects school council activities.

The new approach changes the focus of the work of School Boards and schools from being *accountable* to the Ministry - to that of *demonstrating* to (local and provincial) Albertans that the system is meeting the needs of students, and that students are successful.

The concept is about continuous improvement – not a reaction to yearly results, but ongoing reviews of actions being taken, and sharing these reviews.

It is about conferring with stakeholders, including parents, about what is expected – in the LOCAL context as well as Provincial – creating and initiating plans that correspond to those expectations, following up those plans on a constant basis, to find out if there is success or a need to change direction, and checking in with stakeholders to demonstrate the results, and asking “*Did we get it right?*”.

School Boards are also expected to include evidence of stakeholder engagement in their planning documents. This approach relies on creating strong relationships between education partners and stakeholders, and a commitment to transparency.

The new framework is an excellent opportunity for school councils to be engaged.

Alberta Education sees the involvement of school councils contributing to assurance in valuable ways, including the following:

- Become familiar with the *Assurance Framework* and the related school authority planning and reporting requirements
- Review the School Board's education plan and annual education report (*posted annually on Board's website by November 30 and May 31, respectively*) and those of the school (*posted annually on either the school or School Board website*)
- Participate in engagement opportunities surrounding the development of school and School Board education plan priorities
- Participate in engagement opportunities respecting results and progress towards meeting the School Board's priorities
- Participate in the development of school education plans, annual education results reports, and budget
- Educate Grade 4, 7 and 10 parents about the *Alberta Education Assurance Parent Survey* and encourage their input

