



ALBERTA
EDUCATION

*Office of the Minister
MLA, Calgary - Bow*

AR 128638

March 13, 2025

Mr. Ken Glazebrook
President
Alberta School Councils' Association
207, 11010 142 Street
Edmonton AB T5N 2R1

Dear Mr. Glazebrook:

Thank you for your letter regarding issues being raised by school councils about the safety and well-being of our students. As Minister of Education, I appreciate the opportunity to respond.

Regarding your concern about the education support worker strike, under the [Education Act](#), the Government of Alberta recognizes the importance of an inclusive education system that provides each student with relevant learning opportunities and supports necessary to achieve success.

While Alberta Education is responsible for legislation, funding, and ensuring accountability within the education system, school authorities are responsible for the operation of the programs that meet the needs of the children and students they serve.

This includes managing their resources, determining their class sizes and configurations, and making hiring decisions that reflect local priorities, while making the best use of public funds to meet their students' needs. This also includes establishing policies and procedures for matters such as supports for students who have special education needs. Labour disputes such as that involving educational support workers are matters that are between the union and the school authority, as the employer, to resolve.

Regarding your second concern about the rise in cyberattacks, such as the 2024 PowerSchool data breach, I recognize that this has raised concerns amongst parents about the safety and privacy of children.

While the Government of Alberta does not contract PowerSchool directly, some school authorities have their own agreements with PowerSchool to support school operations. I understand that school authorities with contracts are working directly with PowerSchool to address the impacts of this breach.

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It is important to note that school authorities' use of third-party vendors, such as PowerSchool, is an operational choice made at the local level. School councils and parents who have concerns regarding the policies surrounding the use of third-party vendors such as PowerSchool and school authority cyber security may wish to contact their local school authority.

I encourage parents concerned about identity theft to visit [Protect Yourself Against Identity Theft - Canada.ca](https://www.proteccanada.ca) for more information. For additional enquiries related to Alberta's student records, parents may email studentrecords@gov.ab.ca or call 780-422-9337 (for toll-free access within Alberta, first dial 310-0000).

Regarding concerns about students' time online, Alberta's government is committed to ensuring students receive a world-class education that will help them become successful. This includes removing impediments to student learning. On June 20, 2024, the Government of Alberta issued a [Ministerial Order](#) establishing standards to limit children's and students' use of personal mobile devices and access to social media in Alberta's Kindergarten to Grade 12 schools. As part of these standards, students are not permitted to use personal mobile devices during class time, and social media use on school networks is restricted. These changes will improve education for Alberta learners by limiting distractions and supporting student mental health.

Parents who would like more information may refer to the parent guide on the Standards for the Use of Personal Mobile Devices and Social Media in Schools, which is available in both [English](#) and [French](#).

School authorities are required to have had policies and/or procedures for the use of personal mobile devices and to limit access to social media on school networks and devices in place by January 1, 2025. If parents have questions or suggestions regarding their school authority's policy, I encourage them to contact their school principal, school division superintendent, or local trustee.

To support our commitment to all learners, *Budget 2025* provides more than \$1.6 billion in learning support funding to support children and students who have specialized learning needs. Learning support funding includes grants like the Program Unit Funding Grant, Specialized Learning Support Grant, and Classroom Complexity Grant.

The Specialized Learning Support Grant enables school authorities to deliver appropriate education programming to meet the needs of all students by providing a range of supports and services consistent with the principles of inclusive education. School authorities have the autonomy to allocate this funding to support child/student needs required for learning, including access to additional supports and services and educational assistants. This may include hiring or contracting health professionals like speech-language pathologists and occupational therapists.

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Through the Classroom Complexity Grant, we are providing \$55 million in 2025/26, a 20 per cent increase from the previous year, to address complex classrooms and give students the focused time and attention they need. This funding allows school authorities to hire more educational assistants or increase their hours; provide more training opportunities for staff; and/or hire specialists such as counsellors, psychologists, and interpreters, as well as more teachers. School authorities have a high degree of flexibility to use this funding where they feel it is needed most.

Education has also invested more than \$50 million to support 79 Mental Health in Schools pilots, as part of our continued commitment to supporting school authorities in maintaining welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environments. These pilots provide access to a continuum of mental health supports and services in schools.

For information on recognizing, preventing, and responding to bullying in schools, please visit [Teen Dating Violence for Educators | Healthy Relationships – PREVNet and Bullying for Educators | PREVNet](#).

I trust this information is helpful and I appreciate you sharing parents' concerns with me.

Best,

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

Demetrios Nicolaides ECA PhD
Minister of Education