



December 10, 2021

The Honourable Adriana LaGrange
Minister of Education
127 Legislature Building
10800 – 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister LaGrange,

RE: Draft K-6 Curriculum Feedback

As you may recall, Rocky View Schools (RVS) made the decision April 13 to provide feedback on the draft K-6 curriculum without piloting the draft in our classrooms. Given the heavy burden the pandemic was placing on schools, along with concerns about some of the specific topics and approaches described in the draft, we were not comfortable introducing it to students. At that time, we said we would engage our teachers to provide feedback to Alberta Education.

RVS is committed to engaging our stakeholders and held separate parent and teacher sessions to hear their thoughts on the draft curriculum. Questions were tailored to each group recognizing the different level of direct experience with curriculum. Highlights from these parent and teacher sessions, as well as a full discussion summary, have been provided to your staff at Alberta Education and we are including them below for your information. In summary, there were very few positive comments, and parents and teachers alike have significant concerns.

Parent Sessions

Approximately 35 parents of K-6 children attended video sessions held in November to provide their feedback. They were asked three broad questions to facilitate conversation:

- What do you want to see in the K-6 curriculum?
- What skills do you feel RVS students should have by Grade 6 and by graduation?
- What overall comments/feedback about the new draft K-6 curriculum do you want the government to hear?

Parents spoke sincerely about their desire for their children to be given an education that provides them with a wide range of skills and allows them to develop socially and emotionally, and for learning to occur in a way that inspires creativity and encourages them to explore their passions.

Parents overall comments indicate concern with the developmental appropriateness of this curriculum and provided many specific examples which are captured in the detailed comments attached. Parents spoke passionately about the challenge for both their children and teachers in implementing this curriculum as it stands and included comments about leaving the province if this is implemented and moving to home schooling as options. There were concerns about the experts that provided the content and helped to

Ward 1 Shali Baziuk	Ward 2 Shelley Kinley	Ward 3 Melyssa Bowen	Ward 3 Todd Brand	Ward 3 Fred Burley	Ward 4 Norma Lang Vice-Chair	Ward 5 Judi Hunter	Ward 6 Fiona Gilbert Chair
403-850-5758	403-371-7860	403-835-6673	403-608-2710	403-874-9062	403-921-0303	403-888-1831	403-200-8968



arrange the scope and sequence. There were very few positive comments regarding the draft curriculum. Many comments called for an inspiring curriculum that would set all students up for success.

What parents have been told is in the curriculum via Alberta Education's overview of the changes and what is in the actual draft curriculum does not align – this is concerning and perhaps setting up false expectations.

Teacher Sessions

Approximately 25 teachers of K-6 students attended video sessions held in November to share their thoughts. They were asked the following questions and we welcomed all general comments:

- What do you believe are the areas of strength of the different subject areas of the draft? Where do you see opportunities for improvement?
- What would you recommend for potential refinements to sequencing of learning?
- What is your perspective on content load?
- What supports will need to be considered as part of the planning for provincial implementation?

Generally, teachers liked the approach of offering the four strands of Fine Arts and combining the PE and Health into one curriculum. In both the Social Studies and the English Language Arts curriculum, teachers noted the expectations are clear. The focus on oral language in French Language Arts is appreciated. Including modeling in math was noted as a positive.

Across all subject areas, teachers felt the inclusion of Indigenous ways of knowing and being scratched the surface and each subject offers the opportunity for much more engagement with Indigenous teachings seems to be lacking. Overall, teachers felt the number of outcomes in each subject area was far too onerous and the complexity of the content was not age appropriate for the grade level it was assigned to. With so much content in each area, teachers expressed concern about how to meet students where they are at and those who need more time will be at risk of being left behind or without the knowledge they need to be successful at the next grade level. The level of Bloom's Taxonomy is felt to be too basic overall with too many facts and figures rather than including critical thinking, communication and problem solving. There are significant concerns with the Social Studies curriculum, and it was felt a complete re-write would be needed. Teachers indicated there is too much content in the curriculum coming from the United States and Europe and not enough focus on our own country and province.

Teachers felt there is a disconnect between grade levels when looking at the progression of learning. There is not proper flow from grade to grade and even within a grade, and some pieces are not sequenced properly. They also expressed concerns about the resources and professional learning required and that they are unsure how they will assess the significant amount of content in each subject area.

Overall teachers felt the curriculum implementation will need to be slowed significantly and there is a high risk of leaving many students behind due to the combination of the heavy content contained and the disrupted learning of the recent school years. Concerns were expressed the draft K-6 curriculum will not prepare students for the future.

Ward 1 Shali Baziuk	Ward 2 Shelley Kinley	Ward 3 Melyssa Bowen	Ward 3 Todd Brand	Ward 3 Fred Burley	Ward 4 Norma Lang Vice-Chair	Ward 5 Judi Hunter	Ward 6 Fiona Gilbert Chair
403-850-5758	403-371-7860	403-835-6673	403-608-2710	403-874-9062	403-921-0303	403-888-1831	403-200-8968



In addition to these recent focus groups, the Board of Trustees (the Board) has been hearing from parents and other stakeholders since the release of the draft curriculum in March 2021, and it was the hot topic during the recent school board elections. What we continue to hear consistently from our school communities is grave concern. Given this strong unified perspective, we firmly believe that the draft needs substantive changes to get it into a state that can be effectively implemented in classrooms.

The Board recognizes your legislative authority to design and implement the curriculum for Alberta students. Based on the current drafts, the lack of support from stakeholders, and the time it will take to support teachers to implement effectively, we strongly encourage you to reconsider implementation in the 2022/23 school year.

We ask the Ministry to take a staggered implementation approach and only implement select subject areas within a year or two. Other subject areas will need more time, given the present state of the current draft. We encourage government to actively engage a wide variety of classroom teachers for a full year to help refine the draft and ensure this important curriculum change is successful.

In closing, it is an unreasonable ask, given all that is going on, to expect teachers to implement all subject areas across all grades starting the fall of 2022. We strongly believe significant revisions, especially in social studies, are warranted. We appreciate that updated drafts will be released in the weeks ahead, but this does not leave enough time for our teachers to review and prepare for implementation in the fall. The lack of resources alone should be a major factor when considering staggering or delaying implementation across the province.

Thank you for the opportunity to share feedback from parents, teachers, and ourselves on the draft K-6 curriculum. We look forward to our continued work together to redesign and refine the Alberta curriculum in support of students and their continued success.

We wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season and all the best for the coming year.

Sincerely,

Board Chair

ecopy: local MLAs
Greg Luterbach, RVS Superintendent of Schools
ASBA

Ward 1 Shali Baziuk 403-850-5758	Ward 2 Shelley Kinley 403-371-7860	Ward 3 Melyssa Bowen 403-835-6673	Ward 3 Todd Brand 403-608-2710	Ward 3 Fred Burley 403-874-9062	Ward 4 Norma Lang Vice-Chair 403-921-0303	Ward 5 Judi Hunter 403-888-1831	Ward 6 Fiona Gilbert Chair 403-200-8968
--	--	---	--------------------------------------	---------------------------------------	--	---------------------------------------	--