



JAN 31 2020

January 27, 2020

Dr. Shawn Davidson, President
Saskatchewan School Boards Association
400-2222 13th Avenue
REGINA SK S4P 3M7

Dear Dr. Davidson:

Thank you for your letter to the Honourable Gordon S. Wyant, Q.C., Minister of Education, regarding resolutions that were passed at the Saskatchewan School Boards Association (SSBA) Annual General Meeting. I am pleased to respond to you directly as the Deputy Minister of Education. Please see the Ministry of Education's response to the resolutions below:

AGM-19-07

Local improvement costs incurred by a school division are eligible expenses under the Preventative Maintenance and Renewal (PMR) Program. In 2019-20, the ministry's budget included \$50.4 million in PMR funding, which is a \$6.3 million increase, or 14 per cent, from 2018-19. The ministry continues to have conversations regarding taxation matters with the Ministry of Government Relations.

AGM-19-08

The ministry supports school division collaboration to inform school level actions, guided by the needs-based service delivery model, focusing on advocacy for students with intensive needs and efforts related to inclusion and equity.

At a provincial level, \$285.8 million or 15 per cent of total operating funding is allocated to address the Supports For Learning needs of students. This is an increase of \$3 million or 1.1 per cent over the previous year. This funding is allocated in order to ensure that support services such as social workers, family-school liaison workers and nutrition services can be made available in schools to address student vulnerability.

AGM-19-09

In addition to the funding provided through the First Nations and Métis Education Achievement Fund, school divisions also receive funding support for students in vulnerable circumstances within the Supports for Learning component of the Prekindergarten to Grade 12 funding distribution model. These supports allow school divisions to provide services for students including First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, immigrants and refugees who are vulnerable students and/or require English as an additional language support.

The ministry is currently in the process of updating the First Nations, Métis and Inuit enrolment data used in the First Nations and Métis Education Achievement Fund to distribute funding to school divisions. This enrolment data is currently being reviewed by the Operating Grant Advisory Committee (OGAC).

AGM-19-10

The ministry evaluates the Relocatable Classroom Program annually and the last review was on October 28, 2019. This evaluation is done through consultation with the sector and the ministry is open to the feedback. Changes are implemented as necessary based on the feedback. The next evaluation will take place once classrooms provided in the 2020-21 program have been installed.

AGM-19-11

General Elections are governed by *The Local Government Elections Act* which include the requirements for school board elections. The ministry supports school division collaboration with Municipalities to administer election proceedings so long as the school divisions meet the requirements of *The Local Government Elections Act*.

AGM-19-12

The ministry is committed to reconciliation and recognizes the importance of enhancing knowledge of Truth and Reconciliation, the Treaties and supporting connections to some of the Truth and Reconciliation's Calls to Action. The ministry would be interested in having conversations about joining together with Boards of Education (trustees, LEADS and SASBO members) and SSBA to offer this professional learning to ministry staff.

AGM-19-13

We recognize that the management of health concerns in schools is a shared responsibility involving the family, the school and the health sector. Our province is guided by the philosophy and principles of a needs-based service delivery model to support all students. In alignment with this direction, school divisions are encouraged to make decisions based on the premise that the needs of individual students, including those with a compromised immune system, are of most importance. The ministry will work with school divisions to provide guidance and consultation as to the accommodations necessary to support these students.

AGM-19-14

To discourage use by young persons, the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly unanimously passed amendments to *The Tobacco Control Act* on November 6, 2019, to restrict the sale, display, advertising and use of vapour/e-cigarette devices and products. The legislative amendments and supporting regulations are expected to be in force on February 1, 2020. Flavoured vapour products are not addressed at this time as these products require additional consultation.

The Ministry of Education will work with the Ministry of Health to advise school divisions and schools of the new legislation and regulations and new signage to be posted in schools. It is anticipated that the information will be shared in January 2020. New signage will be provided to provincial schools and independent schools by the Ministry of Health and schools can purchase additional signage if required.

On September 17, 2019, a sample letter on vaping was provided to Directors of Education and to First Nations education authorities for school divisions and/or schools to use when communicating with parents/guardians. A *Vaping Resource for Schools: Addressing student use of e-cigarettes and other vaping products* was also sent to support school staff to address the use of e-cigarettes and other vaping products in schools.

Dr. Shawn Davidson, President

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I appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on your resolutions and look forward to continuing to work with the SSBA.

Thank you for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J. Robert Currie". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

J. Robert Currie
Deputy Minister

cc: Honourable Gordon S. Wyant, Q.C., Minister of Education