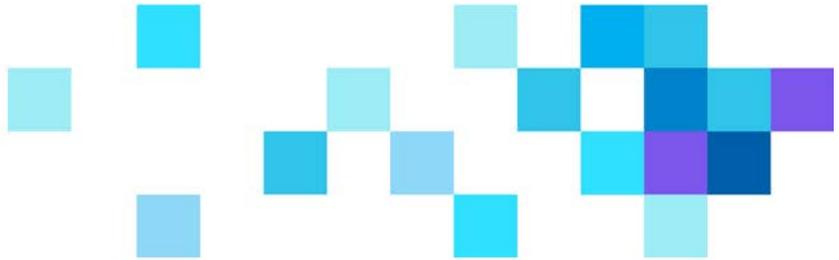


March 2019

Key messages for FUNDING- Board of Director Use

- Locally-elected school boards believe in funding education to prepare Alberta's next generation for success.
- Albertans want a strong and diversified economy. There is no better way to guarantee a positive future than by investing in education.
- Locally-elected school boards believe every student deserves the best opportunities to learn, no matter what needs they may have, no matter what part of the province they are from.
- Locally-elected school boards believe our students deserve to have the resources needed to equip them for a diversified economy.
- Even in times of fiscal restraint, education is not the place to cut—it's the place to invest.
- For too long, many school boards have had to make difficult funding decisions, like choosing between fixing a leaky roof, or hiring an educational assistant.
- These should not be choices we may have to make on the backs of students.
- We believe school boards need to have the flexibility to be able to make the best choices for their students. We can't do this with

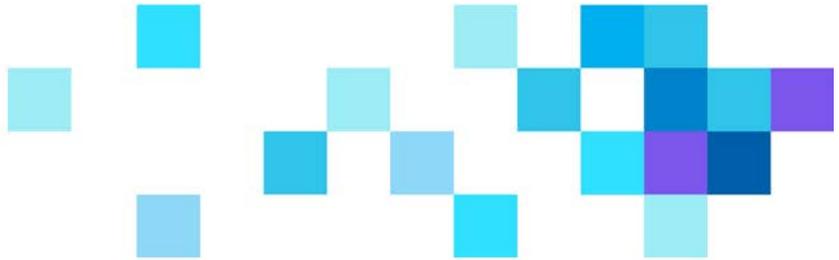


the way we are funded right now, and one size does not fit all.

- In fact, many rural schools in Alberta are facing decreasing student enrolment, but that doesn't change the size of our schools. With the current funding model, school boards need to find creative ways to heat spaces and keep the lights on.
- In some cases the situation is so dire, the loss of five students could mean the loss of a whole program. This isn't fair to the students we are preparing for Alberta's future economy.
- Additionally, many urban and metro schools in Alberta are facing huge influxes of students with complex needs. These students require additional resources and staff to ensure they don't get left behind. There needs to be support to ensure that there is still money left over for other—equally important—needs like textbooks and other materials.

What government can do to make this happen:

- Locally-elected school boards ask that government complete a comprehensive funding formula review, in consultation with ASBA.
- Locally-elected school boards ask that the government provide integrated services from the Ministry of Health and from Alberta Health Services.

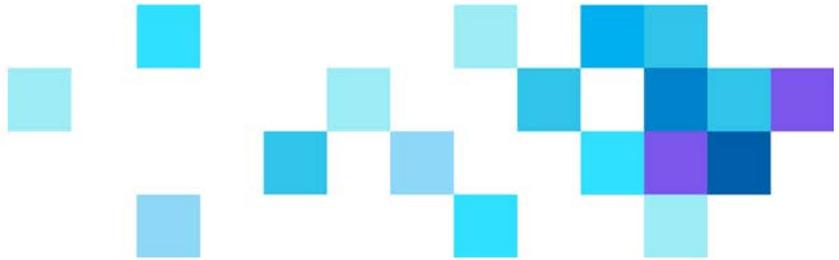


Supplemental messaging:

- Whether from rural or urban/metro settings, schools across Alberta are faced with funding restraints.
- School boards have to find creative ways to pay for basic necessities like programming or modular classrooms, which can lead to huge deficits down the road. That is not what we want for our students.
- School boards need increased, long-term funding to ensure students get the best possible education with adequate supports. One-time grants simply mean programs are started but not funded long-term.

About inclusive funding:

- School boards desperately want to provide the inclusive education our students deserve, but with inadequate funding, we are straining to provide timely intervention, assessments and support for our students with complex needs.
- 79 per cent of ASBA member boards report an inclusive education deficit, with the average deficit coming in at more than \$2 million. This represents a crisis for our schools in Alberta.
- Alberta's current funding model does not address inflation, nor does it address the diverse needs of today's complex school and student systems.
- School boards are experiencing challenges meeting the needs of students with specialized needs.



- Locally-elected school boards need adequate, long-term, sustainable funding to be able to provide inclusive education programs and services including:
 - Adequate supports for students with complex needs
 - Increased mental health supports
 - Supports for English language learners
 - And supports for FNMI students
- For example, 47 per cent of ASBA member boards report an FNMI funding shortfall. That's nearly half of the 61 public, separate and francophone school boards in Alberta who are having difficulty meeting the needs of FNMI students.

About plant operations and maintenance (POM):

- Plant, operations and maintenance funding is tied to enrolment. Schools that experience decreased enrolment still need to maintain and heat their spaces. This issue is especially significant for rural schools.
- When POM funding is insufficient, dollars either need to come out of instructional grants just to get by, or it's being supported by our reserves, and reserves are dwindling.
- In fact, 74 per cent of public, separate and francophone boards are reporting a Plant Operations and Maintenance deficit, with average deficit of nearly \$2.4 million.
- Proper, safe spaces for education are just as important as the education programs themselves.