

P21-XX

Achieving Universal Public Education

Sponsored by: Foundations for the Future Charter Academy, Southwest Elementary

Co-sponsored by: Valhalla Community School Council

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Background / Overview:

The following 3 Advocacy Resolutions were passed at the October 17th, 2020 ASCA Regular General Meeting¹:

P20-04A – Carried

Minister of Education Definition of Public Education

We request that the Minister of Education define public education as the public, francophone and separate, and charter school systems.

P20-04B – Carried

ASCA Definition of Public Education

We request that ASCA define public education as the public, francophone, and separate, and charter school systems and use this definition when interpreting existing and new resolution statements such as “all schools” and “school boards”.

P20-04C – Carried

Integration and oversight of Charter Schools

We request that the Minister of Education integrate charter schools into the public education systems making them accountable to locally elected trustees and school boards and ensuring access to all students.

Because Alberta Public Charter Schools are subject to the same accountability requirements to the Minister of Education, as all other public schools are, as per Section 67 of the Education Act² which states “A board shall disseminate any information [...] produced under the reporting and accountability system it develops [...] to students, parents, electors or the Minister in the manner the Minister prescribes”.

Because Alberta Public Charter Schools are subject to the same financial accountability requirements to the Minister of Education, as all other public schools, as per Part 6 Division 1 of the Education Act.

(2) The board shall, in each year:

- (a) prepare and submit to the Minister a budget for the fiscal year;
- (b) submit to the Minister copies of
 - (i) the board’s financial statements,
 - (ii) the auditor’s report on the board’s financial statements, and
 - (iii) any written communications between the auditor and the board respecting the systems of internal control and accounting procedures of the board³.

¹ 2020 ASCA Resolution Results: <https://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca/public/download/files/156366>

² Alberta Education Act: <https://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/e00p3.pdf>

³ Part 6 Division 1 of the Education Act - edited for space

Because Alberta Public Charter Schools are subject to the same curriculum and professional standards requirements as all other public schools are, as per Part 7 of the Education Act.

Because a locally elected divisional School Board elected by general election is NOT a prerequisite of “Public Education” in Canada as evidenced by the lack of such a model of governance in Nova Scotia⁴ and Quebec⁵.

Because Alberta Public Charter School Boards are elected by the school communities they serve and are accountable to the Minister of Education.

Because Alberta Public Charter Schools are subject to additional accountability that divisional school boards are not subject to, through regular reviews to renew their charter mandates conducted by the Ministry of Education Field Services department and available for public scrutiny.

Because Alberta Public Charter Schools are subject to accessibility reviews that divisional school boards are not subject to, by the Minister as per Section 16(2) of the Charter Schools Regulation which states *“If an individual has been refused enrolment in a charter school, the individual or the individual’s parent may ask the Minister in writing to review the matter to determine the individual’s eligibility to be enrolled in the charter school”*⁶.

Because Canada ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (“the Convention”)⁷ on December 13, 1991⁸.

Because Alberta Public Charter Schools are subject to Section 3 of the Education Act to provide an equal opportunity for students to access their educational programs, as is also a child’s right under Article 28.1 of the Convention.

⁴ Nova Scotia Provincial Advisory Council on Education: <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/PACE>

⁵ Quebec Board of directors of a school service centre: <https://www.quebec.ca/en/education/preschool-elementary-and-secondary-schools/school-governance/board-directors-school-service-centre/>

⁶ Alberta Charter Schools Regulation: https://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Regs/2019_085.pdf

⁷ OHCHR - Convention on the Rights of the Child: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>

⁸ Canada Convention on the Rights of the Child: <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/canada-united-nations-system/reports-united-nations-treaties.html#a6>

Because Alberta Public Charter Schools provide an option for diversity of socio-economic backgrounds, ethnicities, languages, and opinions because attendance is not based on geography, religion, or mother tongue.

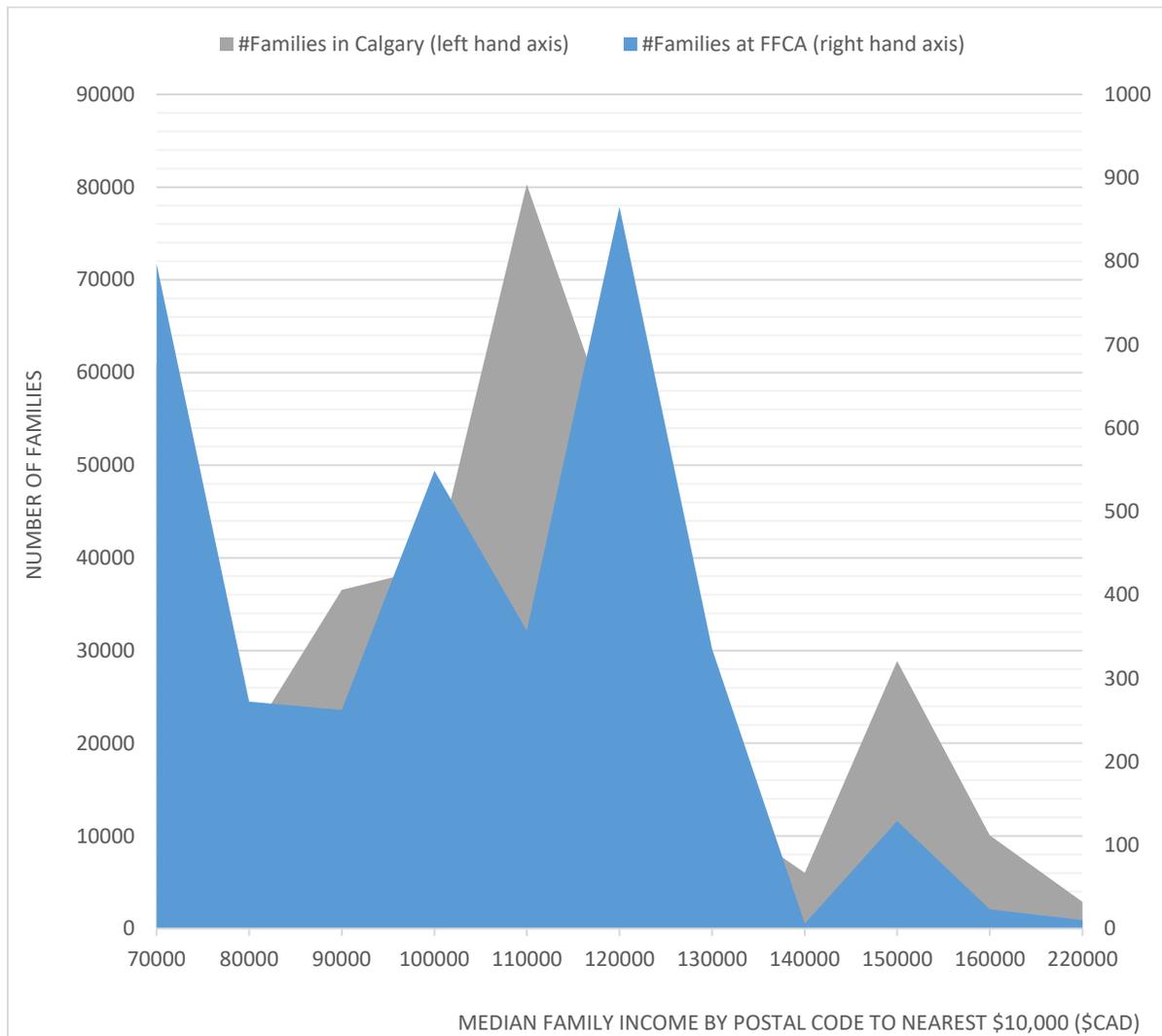


Figure 1: 2017 Census Family Income by Postal Code: Calgary vs FFCA⁹

⁹ Families in Calgary income data used is the 2017 Median Family Income by postal code rounded to the nearest \$10,000. Families at FFCA income data is the median family income for their postal code.

[Family Data - Summary Census Family Income by Postal Area and Postal Walk, 2017 - Open Government \(alberta.ca\)](https://open.alberta.ca/family-data-summary-census-family-income-by-postal-area-and-postal-walk-2017)

Because Alberta Public Charter Schools are available free to all, as much as any other public school is, as per Section 26(5) of the Education Act which states “A charter school shall not charge a fee that may not be charged by a board under this Act” and in the spirit of Article 28.1(a) of the Convention which states, “Make primary education compulsory and available free to all”.

Table 1: Summary of publicly available information regarding 2020/2021 school fees grouped by jurisdiction

School Name	Fees
Public Charter Schools	
Almadina Language Charter Academy	School Fees \$0 Transportation Fees \$250
Aurora Charter School	School Fees \$160 Transportation Fees \$600
Boyle Street Education Centre	Fees \$0
Calgary Arts Academy	School Fees \$555 Transportation Fees \$800
Calgary Girls Charter School	School Fees \$160 Transportation Fees \$850
Centre for Academic and Personal Excellence (CAPE)	School Fees \$750 Transportation Fees: \$ - grant ¹⁰
Connect Charter School	School Fees \$615 Transportation Fees \$775
Foundations for the Future Charter Academy (FFCA)	School Fees \$195 Transportation Fees \$855
Mother Earth's Children's Charter School	Fees \$0
New Horizons Charter School Society	School Fees \$0 Transportation Fees \$325/\$100
Suzuki Charter School Society	School Fees \$150 Transportation Fees: \$ - grant ¹⁰
Valhalla Community School	School Fees \$150 Transportation Fees \$0
Westmount Charter School	School Fees \$285 Transportation Fees \$850
Non-Charter Public Schools*	
Edmonton Public Schools (EPSB)	School Fees \$100 - \$6,000 Transportation Fees \$456-\$720
Calgary Board of Education (CBE)	School Fees \$5 - \$300 Student Supplies \$40 Transportation Fees \$465/\$800 Sports Fees < \$1,500 Travel Fees < \$7,500
Francophone	School Fees \$2 - \$4,200 Transportation Fees \$100
Separate	School Fees \$0-\$175 Transportation Fees \$0/\$415
Alternative One school requires a \$7000 bond to be held while the student is in school. Another school requires a \$1200 capital contribution.	School Fees \$0 - \$7,125 Transportation Fees \$250
<i>*A range of fees were identified using publicly accessible sources for all Public School boards. Data from jurisdictions not participating in presenting this motion has been generalized/anonymized to maintain discussion focus</i>	

¹⁰ Transportation Grant is transferred to parents who enter into a transportation agreement with the school.

Because Alberta Public Charter Schools are subject to the same School Fees Regulation¹¹ as any other public school and must also provide policies and procedures to waive school fees.

Because Alberta Public Charter Schools are progressively advancing Alberta’s Public Education System as per 28.1 of the Convention and Section 25(1) of the Education Act which state Charter Schools “[have] the potential to provide improvements to the education system as a whole and to enhance education research and innovation in Alberta”.

Because Alternative Program Charters are only issued to Alberta Public Charter Schools that demonstrate a learning style, teaching style, approach or philosophy or pedagogy that is not already being offered within a specific geographical area, as per Section 25(1) of the Education Act.

Table 2: Alberta Public Charter Schools' focus, grouped by primary criteria satisfied under section 25(1) of the Education Act

Primary criteria	School	Focus
Targeted populations	Mother Earth’s Children’s Charter School	Traditional indigenous teachings.
	Calgary Girls Charter School	Delivering exceptional learning in a safe environment creating generations of strong, confident, empowered women.
Specialized Learning Supports	Almadina Language Charter Academy	English as a second language.
	Boyle Street Education	At risk youth.
	Centre for Academic and Personal Excellence	High Needs Population.
Complex Gifted	New Horizons School	Gifted education.
	Westmount Charter School	Gifted education.
Targeted Pedagogy	Aurora Charter School	Traditional education.
	Connect Charter School	Inquiry-based, technology rich, with outdoor and experiential education.
Arts Immersion	Calgary Arts Academy	Arts immersion curriculum.
	Suzuki Charter School	Suzuki approach to academic, musical and personal excellence.
Character & Leadership Immersion	Foundations for the Future Charter Academy (FFCA)	Academic excellence and character development.
	Valhalla Community School	Rural leadership, direct instruction and second language.

Because Alberta Public Charter Schools help relieve capacity issues in divisional schools and help utilize underutilized divisional school buildings.

¹¹ School Fees Regulation: https://www.gp.alberta.ca/documents/Regs/2019_095.pdf

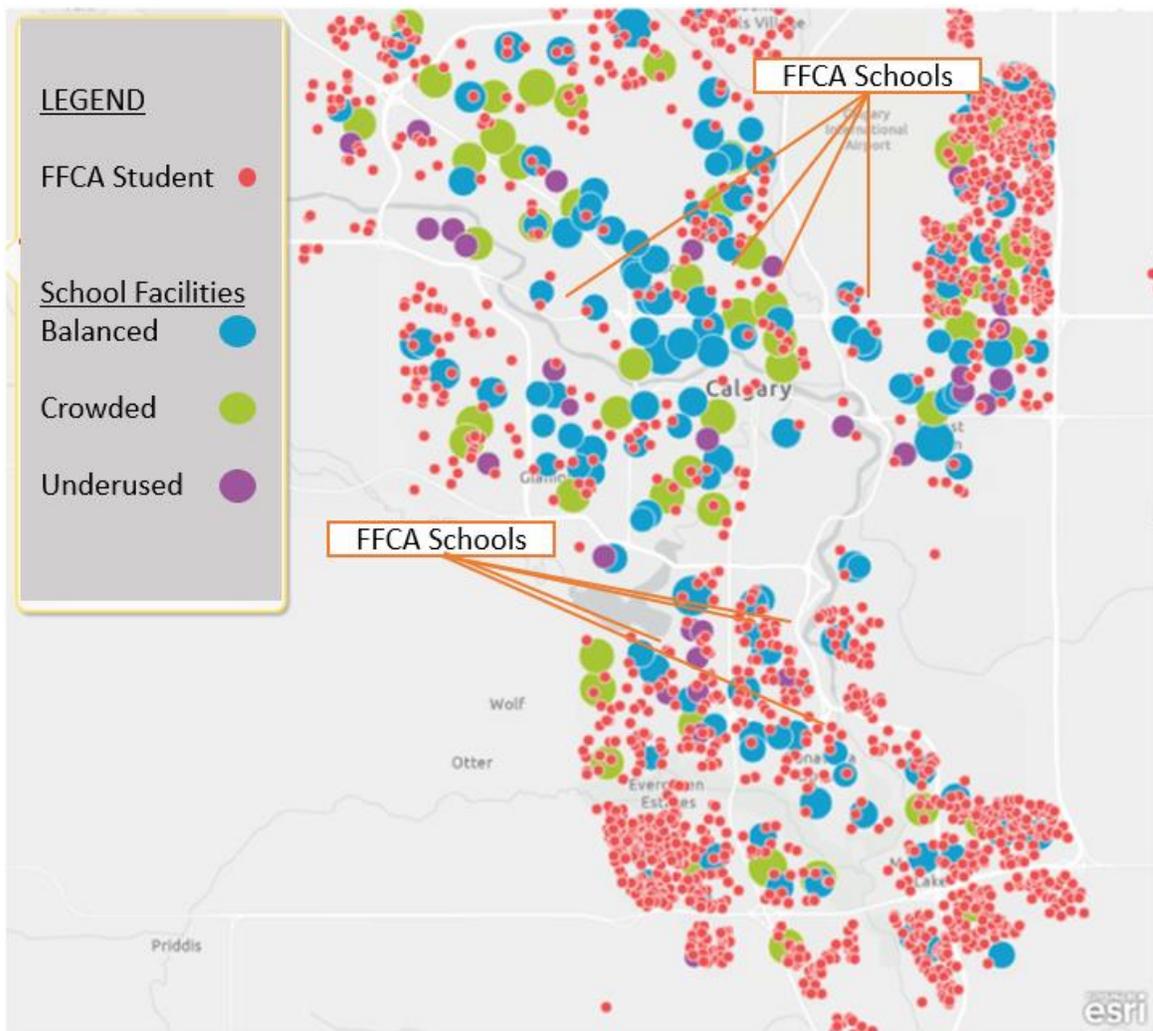


Figure 1: Foundations for the Future Charter Academy student residency, Calgary school facilities and their reported facility utilization

Because ASCA bylaw 3.27 defines public education as “education delivered by any school in Alberta that is publicly funded including public, separate, francophone and charter school systems.”

Because Article 29.2 of the Convention states: “No part of the present article or article 28 shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principle set forth in paragraph 1 of the present article and to the requirements that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State.”

Because Alberta Public Charter Schools are established by individuals and bodies as per Section 24(1) of the Education Act “A person may apply to the Minister for the establishment of a charter school to be operated by a society incorporated under the Societies Act or by a company registered under Part 9 of the Companies Act”¹² and as considered by Article 29.2 of the Convention.

¹² Alberta Education Act: <https://www.gp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/e00p3.pdf>

Because ASCA Advocacy Resolution P20-04C interferes with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, contrary to Article 29.2 of the Convention.

We request that ASCA Advocacy Resolutions P20-04A and P20-04B be amended by replacing “francophone and separate” with “, separate, francophone and charter” to be consistent with bylaw 3.27.

We further request that P20-04C be amended by replacing “making them accountable to locally elected trustees and school boards.” with “by providing them adequate resources.”