

ESTABLISHING ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS

Background:

The Division is responsible for the provision of programming to all students. It provides a wide range of program choice for students and parents to increase student engagement and accommodate diverse learning needs and interests.

Programming for all Division students is in alignment with the [Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12](#) and, in the case of alternative programs, is also in alignment with the outcomes and expectations as approved by the Board of Trustees.

Definitions:

An alternative program:

is an educational program that emphasizes a particular language, culture, religion, or subject matter, or uses a particular teaching philosophy. It is not a special education program.

Procedures:

1. In order for a new alternative program to be considered, the Principal, Alternative Program Society or other proponents shall submit to the Superintendent or designate a proposal to establish an alternative program.
2. Each alternative program submission shall include the following elements:
 - 2.1. background research;
 - 2.2. defined and consistent set of unique features intended to be long-term and sustainable as the programming often involves the entire elementary, junior high or senior high grades or a combination of these grades;
 - 2.3. philosophy, objectives and mission statement, including the following:
 - 2.3.1. an educational approach that affects the entire schooling experience of a child;
 - 2.3.2. a school culture or environment that reflects the uniqueness of the program; and
 - 2.3.3. any faith-based alternative program delivery model shall be of a non-proselytizing nature, for example, instruction about a religion or religions rather than inculcation; and, based on a general faith rather than emphasizing or promoting a particular denomination or division of a given faith.
 - 2.4. operational budget including all instructional and support costs;
 - 2.5. proposed fees for non-instructional costs;
 - 2.6. staffing profiles desirable to meet the alternative program objectives;
 - 2.7. evaluation of alternative program methodology and objectives;
 - 2.8. projected student population and geographical location/ages;

- 2.9. transportation of students to and from the alternative program if other than through [Board Policy 17: Student Transportation Services](#);
 - 2.10. list of curriculum and instructional materials in addition to those approved by Alberta Education;
 - 2.11. completed [Initiative Impacts Checklist](#) (Form 220-1) and a summary of possible human and financial resource implications for any other part of the current system; and
 - 2.12. list of start-up costs and sources of funding.
3. The submission shall be made with sufficient time before the expected establishment date to allow clarification, discussion, planning and approval before the Division budget for the first year of operation is determined.
 - 3.1. Feedback regarding the proposal shall be provided to the originators of the alternative program proposal.
 - 3.2. Once the proposal is complete, the Superintendent shall arrange for the originators to make a presentation of the proposal to the Board.
 - 3.3. The Board may accept or reject the proposal or may direct administration to bring a recommendation to the Board for further discussion and a decision to accept or reject the proposal.
 - 3.4. If the proposal is accepted by the Board, the proponents of the program in conjunction with the Superintendent and/or designates, shall complete detailed preparations (timelines, transportation, student recruitment, staffing, location, budget, administrative services and fees, as required) and submit them for approval to the Superintendent or designate.
 - 3.5. An alternative program shall be reviewed on an ongoing basis by the Superintendent to assess its viability. Additionally, section 197(c) of the *Education Act* states: "Principals must evaluate or provide for the evaluation of programs in the school."
 - 3.6. The Superintendent shall provide six months' notice to the Principal, Alternative Program Society or other advisory body (as approved by the Board) if the alternative program is to be considered for termination. Notice of less than six months may be accepted by mutual agreement.
 - 3.7. The Principal, Alternative Program Society or other advisory body (as approved by the Board) shall provide six months' notice to the Superintendent or designate that it no longer plans to offer or support the alternative program. Notice of less than six months may be accepted by mutual agreement.
 4. The Superintendent shall consider the following when recommending to the Board of Trustees the addition, expansion, deletion or consolidation of Division program delivery models (programming):
 - 4.1. compliance with the *Education Act*, Alberta Education's policies, regulations, standards, mission and mandate for education;
 - 4.2. compliance with all EIPS board policies and administrative procedures;
 - 4.3. consistency with sound educational theory and practice;
 - 4.4. impact on financial and human resources, facilities, and current course and program delivery offerings;

- 4.5. availability of staff and resources; and
- 4.6. degree of demand.

Reference:

Section 7, 11, 17(2), 19, 55 *Education Act*
Guide to Education: ECS to Grade 12