

**DATE:** April 9, 2024

**TO:** Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Trustee Dawn Hancock

**SUBJECT:** Letter Supporting ASBA's Policy Statement on *Local Authority Election Act*

**RESOURCE STAFF:** Karen Mills, Director Board and Superintendent Relations

**REFERENCE** [Local Authorities Election Act](#)

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## ISSUE

The Alberta School Board Association (ASBA) adopted the following policy position last week: "School trustee elections should remain free from a political party system."

Trustee Hancock is requesting the Board of Trustees to write a letter to the Ministers of Education and Municipal Affairs in support of this policy position statement.

## BACKGROUND

During the spring legislative session, the provincial government may present a potential change to the [Local Authorities Election Act](#) (LAEA) that would introduce political parties into school board elections.

## RELATED FACTS

- Both local municipal elections and local school board elections are governed by the *Local Authorities Election Act*.
- The Government of Alberta conducted a survey in November and December 2023 to gather input on potential changes to local elections. Results are currently under review.
- Feedback from the surveys, along with previous feedback gathered in 2021 and 2022 by the Government of Alberta, will help inform potential changes to the *Local Authorities Election Act* and the *Municipal Government Act*.
- Alberta Municipalities has engaged heavily with members and strongly opposes the proposed changes that would introduce political parties into municipal elections.
- Alberta Municipalities also commissioned a [public opinion survey](#). This research found that "more than two in three Albertans (68 per cent) would prefer to see municipal candidates run as individuals. One in four (24 per cent) would prefer to see them run as members of a political party, and nine per cent are unsure."
- At their Spring 2023 Convention, members of Alberta Municipalities passed a resolution opposing the introduction of partisan politics within local governments.

## RECOMMENDATION

**That the Board authorize the Board Chair to send a letter to the Ministers of Education and Municipal Affairs in support of the Alberta School Board Association's policy position statement, "School trustee elections should remain free from a political party system".**

**OPTIONS**

Based on the information provided in the report, the following options are considered most appropriate:

1. Authorize the Board Chair to proceed as requested.
2. Authorize the Board Chair to proceed with an amended recommendation.

**NEXT STEPS**

Upon approval, a letter will be sent to the following individuals:

- Minister of Education
- Minister of Municipal Affairs

The letter will be copied to the Alberta School Boards Association.

DH:km