

The Honourable Demetrios Nicolaidis

Minister of Education
228 Legislature Building
Edmonton, AB
T5K 2B6

November 22, 2024

Re: Grant Funding Timeline

Dear Minister Nicolaidis:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of Grande Yellowhead Public School Division, I am reaching out to advocate for a change to the timeline for the grant that provides funds for the supports and services our students require. This is in addition to our request that the ministry reduce the red tape in the grant application process.


As you know, we are passionate about our role to ensure excellent public education in rural Alberta. Small boards with small enrollments do not have the economy of scale needed to complete lengthy applications for funds to provide immediate interventions in inclusive classrooms. We do not want our rural children being left behind because of where they live.

As it stands, the release of the Numeracy and Literacy grant late into the fall delays the school's ability to hire additional staff – particularly in rural and remote communities where finding additional staff often takes weeks or months. In addition, September is already a very busy month for teachers who are making relationships, setting up routines, and learning the needs of their students.

Completing the mandatory screens for early literacy and numeracy in such a short timeframe with a relatively new group of students is stressful for both the educator and the student. Would the ministry please consider moving the grant timeframe to June? At the end of the school year, teachers have insight into which students are demonstrating the needed numeracy and literacy skills and which students are at-risk. Receiving the majority of the funds during the summer start up window would allow principals to pick up the staff they need when the school year begins, thus minimizing the gap between intervention *need* and implementation. This would not disregard new students to the school who we would screen as needed.

Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,


Dale Karpluk (Dec 3, 2024 09:33 MST)

Dale Karpluk, Board Chair (Jasper)

Cc: Board of Trustees for Grande Yellowhead Public School Division
Mr. Martin Long, MLA for West Yellowhead
Mr. Shane Getson, MLA for Lac Ste. Anne-Parkland
Dr. Dennis Parsons, Superintendent of Schools
Alberta School Boards Association
Public School Boards' Association of Alberta

